

École d'été Courrier

"Literary Journalism

10/2023/2028 2ND TRANSNATIONAL LITERARY JOURNALISM SUMMER SCHOOL Since 2022

of the Interwar Years:

Literary Journalism of the Interwar Years The Cases of France, Germany and England"

23-28 May 2022
Nancy, France

The Cases of France, Germany and England

Following morning and afternoon workshops and lectures on eight principal themes created: literary journalism (war, immigration, autocratic politics, criminality and social inequality).

23-28 May 2022

Université de Lorraine (Nancy)

Course Readings

Keynote:
Alain Lallemand
Le Soir

The second Summer School of the *REPORTAGES* research project, this two-day graduate course for MA, MSc, MPhil and PhD students will explore how historical trends in narrative literary journalism in France, Germany and other nations in the interwar years reshaped the media landscape of each country, establishing a European development of the genre not just between Anglo-American cousins but also from each other.

(Master's, doctoral and postdoctoral) and interested faculty members will explore the cultural motivations behind the current popularity of literary journalism in France, Germany and other nations. Professionals in the field of literary reportage, Alain Lallemand, will share his insights, stories and tactics about their experiences in researching and producing reportages over the years for *Le Soir*.

The Summer School is open to MA, Master's and PhD students, postdocs and faculty members in Europe or abroad (online participation).

Each PhD student will receive credit toward the 2nd year of their discipline. Preference will be given to students of Lorraine and the Grand Est region.

Master's students cannot receive ECTS credits, but the hours can be applied to the completion of a chapter or an entire pedagogical unit.

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Course Readings

Module 1: Großstadtreportagen in der Zwischenkriegszeit aus deutsch-französischer Perspektive | Reportages littéraires des grandes villes pendant l'entre-deux-guerres dans une perspective franco-allemande

Director: Sara Izzo (Languages: Deutsch, Français)

1. **Pierre Mac Orlan: « L'Allemagne en sursis » [1932], *Le mystère de la malle numéro 1 et autres reportage*, Paris : Christian Bourgeois Éditeur 1984 (série « Grands Reporters »), 161–219.**
2. **Pierre Mac Orlan: *Berlin*, hrsg. mit einem Nachwort von Wolfgang Asholt, Berlin: B&S Siebenhaar 2020 [1935].**
3. **Linke Poot [Alfred Döblin]: « Östlich um den Alexanderplatz » [1923], *Kleine Schriften II*, Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau: Walter-Verlag 1990, 298–302.**
4. **Egon Erwin Kisch: « Die Verarmung und Bereicherung Berliner Straßen » [1923], *Läuse auf dem Markt. Vermischte Prosa*, Weimar/Berlin: Aufbau Verlag 1985, 368–70.**

*Série « Grands Reporters »
dirigée par Francis LACASSIN*

Joseph KESSEL, *Marchés d'esclaves suivi de l'Irlande révolutionnaire : chez les Sinn-Feiners.*

Albert LONDRES, *Mourir pour Shanghai suivi de la Chine en folie.*

Albert LONDRES, *le Juif errant est arrivé.*

A paraître :

Albert LONDRES, *la Traite des blanches.*

Gaston LEROUX, *Du Capitaine Dreyfus au pôle Sud.*

TITAYNA, *Une femme chez les chasseurs de têtes suivi de la Caravane des morts.*

Henri BÉRAUD, *le Flâneur salarié.*

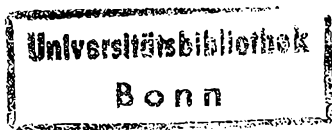
LE MYSTÈRE
DE LA MALLE
NUMÉRO 1
et autres reportages

PAR
PIERRE MAC ORLAN
de l'Académie Goncourt

*Choix, préface et bibliographie
par Francis LACASSIN
Postface de l'auteur*

1018

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PRÉFACE

MAC ORLAN, REPORTER PHOTOGRAPHE DU FANTASTIQUE SOCIAL

Cent ans après sa naissance à Péronne (en 1882, l'année de « L'île au trésor » de Stevenson), douze ans après sa mort à Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin (1970), Pierre Mac Orlan est revenu vers nous. Avec son bonnet écossais à pompon et son perroquet Dagobert qui aguichaient les photographes ; avec son accordéon qui ravissait les preneurs de son.

Il était en voyage dans l'au-delà des mythes où l'attendaient depuis sa naissance un autre perroquet (« Pièce de huit ! Pièce de huit ! ») et le pirate unijambiste John Silver. En son absence, il nous avait laissés en compagnie de ses personnages : « La Cavalière Elsa », jaillie d'une Russie découvrant les délices du communisme, les légionnaires de « La Bandera », visualisés par Gabin, Pierre Renoir, Aimos et Robert Le Vigan ; le soldat perdu et le peintre visionnaire (« *quand je vois une rivière, je peins un noyé* ») revus et corrigés par Carné-Prévert dans « Quai des brumes » ; Petit Morgat que l'amitié d'un criminel détournera du crime dans « L'Ancre de miséricorde ».

Pour l'aider à souffler ses cent bougies, le 15 février 1982, ils se réunissent au Literary Journalism Summer School

tous ses privilèges pour se tenir à la disposition de la justice comme un simple citoyen. En réponse à ces attaques, dont la violence ne peut être dépassée, M. Mussolini fit paraître la loi sur la presse, dont j'ai déjà parlé.

L'avenir du fascisme est donc, en ce moment, inscrit sur les murs intérieurs de Regina Cœli. Cette prison constitue l'avant-dernier décor de la tragédie politique italienne. Quel sera le dernier? Il est difficile d'écrire des conclusions et de juger définitivement une situation si compliquée.

Dans quelques semaines, de l'affaire Matteotti, naîtront toutes les forces qui renverseront, on le dit, un gouvernement né dans la violence, ce qui pouvait s'expliquer, mais qui ne sut pas, ou qui ne put pas abandonner, quand il en était encore temps, les formes les plus agressives et les plus compromettantes de son autorité.

L'ALLEMAGNE EN SURSIS

(1932)

BERLIN ALEXANDERPLATZ

*La misère est à l'intérieur
sous la parure froide des maisons...*

J'emprunte mon titre à l'ouvrage d'un jeune romancier allemand Alfred Döblin. Il est précis puisqu'il indique sans réticences un endroit que tout le monde peut connaître et il convient à ces premières impressions sur Berlin parce qu'il est le centre même de la vie populaire toujours un peu mystérieuse, parce que les pensées secrètes des pauvres sont infiniment plus subtiles que celles des derniers riches, dont chaque jour provoque la génération spontanée mais souvent éphémère. Puisqu'il s'agit pour moi de pénétrer dans le domaine le plus secret et le plus sensible d'un peuple, celui de la misère, je vais donc m'appuyer sur cette Alexanderplatz qui sera en quelque sorte ma base d'opérations. Telle qu'elle est, autour de ses travaux à peu près achevés, l'Alexanderplatz ressemble, surtout au point de vue littéraire et comme situation sociale, à la place de la République, il y a 25 ans, quand Belleville, le boulevard Magenta, le faubourg du Temple possédaient encore une signification littéraire. Summer School

colloration populaire. L'Alexanderplatz possède un très grand magasin, des bars-dégustation économiques, un métro aérien, une partie neuve dédiée aux élégances nouvelles de l'urbanisme, une partie plus ancienne sans prestige spécial. Dans ce cadre évolue la foule régulière de la rue, régulière en ce sens qu'elle est nettement berlinoise et qu'on rencontre peu d'étrangers de luxe oisifs et indécis au bord de la chaussée. Là, semble battre normalement autour d'un shupo bon enfant le cœur de Berlin, l'animateur vrai de la vie de ceux qui travaillent ou qui, hélas ! ne travaillent plus puisque le monde, ayant sans doute terminé prématurément sa tâche, n'a plus rien à faire si ce n'est d'attendre dans une certaine angoisse les résultats de son activité.

Dès le premier contact avec la rue de Berlin, on comprend que la misère est là, tapie comme une bête monstrueuse et informe, mais on ne la voit pas tout de suite, malgré cette longue et célèbre Friedrichstrasse, l'artère la plus commerçante de la ville, dont la plupart des immeubles sont pavoisés de banderoles indiquant les faillites, les appartements vides et les commerces en liquidation. La misère profonde, celle qui prend comme valeur de comparaison la faim, n'est point ici révélée par le pittoresque affreux de la déchéance. Le goût de l'uniforme correct et bien broissé semble protéger les Berlinoises contre les signes extérieurs du désespoir, tels qu'on les rencontre à Londres ou dans le fameux Barrio Chino de Barcelone. Un homme devant une assiette vide ressemble parfaitement à un homme d'une autre race placé devant une assiette vide. Le pittoresque qui différencie les races, commence précisément au moment même que ces assiettes sont pleines : l'une d'une

saucisse par exemple et l'autre d'un bifteck. Les peuples ne sont vraiment différents que dans le plaisir, et toutes les sociétés modernes devraient simplifier leur organisation sociale jusqu'à la création de cinq ministères dédiés aux cinq sens.

Voir ! Ce n'est pas si facile. Nous sommes ici une bonne douzaine d'hommes qui ne manquent pas de cœur et qui veulent voir. Mais la misère est une mégère pudique. Elle n'est point belle, elle le sait et se maquille. Voici par exemple un homme quelconque sur le trottoir de la Mulackstrasse qui est une des rues les plus pauvres de Berlin. Eh bien ! il faut savoir que la Mulackstrasse est une rue désespérée comme il faut savoir également que cet homme au pardessus correct et boutonné jusqu'au menton n'a pas de chemise et de veston sous ce vêtement.

La Mulackstrasse n'est pas une rue pouilleuse. Elle aussi est correcte, correcte comme l'Alexanderplatz, dont elle est voisine. Sa misère est à l'intérieur, sous la parure froide de ses maisons que les circonstances rendent prétentieuses. Elle est dans une pièce interdite au public, où quatre misérables couchent sur un même matelas devant une assiette trop souvent vide et surtout devant le morne et absolu renoncement de ceux qui ne peuvent espérer qu'un miracle. Et c'est précisément cette attente dans le miracle qui est inquiétante, car les miracles inspirés par la misère ne sont pas beaux, ils se présentent presque toujours sous une forme classique, mais homicide.

Celles qui me paraissent annoncer ce miracle sont les mauvais anges de la faim, les misérables filles en veste de cuir, en jupe trop courte qui attendent dans

une résignation de marbre on ne sait quel client. Ah ! celles-là sont bien dessinées par Georges Grosz et donnent à son œuvre une de ses apparences prophétiques. Elles représentent la misère avec toutes les possibilités que ce mot comporte, car ce n'est pas à Charlottenburg, à Moabit qu'il faut rechercher les formes exactes des chevalières de l'Apocalypse. Elles se tiennent, selon la tradition, au coin des rues larges et sinistres qui vont de l'Alexanderplatz jusqu'à la Dantzigerstrasse, dans ce quartier que l'on nomme la Breuzlauerberg et où vivent des personnages vraiment dangereux. Ce sont les fameux poids lourds, les « Schwergewicht » et les Gannoven. Tout ce quartier peuplé d'enfants mal nourris dans la journée commence sa vie secrète, que je ne connais pas, à l'heure des lumières. Il y a les mystères de la Gribenowsstrasse, de l'Elesazerstrasse, de la Grenadierstrasse, tout autour de l'église protestante de la Zionkirche qui protège ce quartier de la révolte clandestine.

Cent maisons portent inscrits en grosses lettres, peintes au minium, ces mots : « Rotfront » et l'invitation à voter pour le chef communiste : « Walt Thaelmann ».

Derrière les filles et leur « lude » il y a le front rouge, car le rouge est une couleur de l'espérance qui, depuis bien des années, a remplacé le vert aimé des poètes et de tous ceux qui ont encore foi dans les boniments du printemps et de la nature, cette coquine, qui nous donne tant de preuves de son aimable perversité.

DEUX ARMÉES D'UNE ÉGALE PAUVRETÉ
SONT PRÊTES A S'ATTAQUER...

*... Dans le but de manger
et de vivre déceimment*

Berlin, 8 mars. — Le pittoresque de Berlin, qui intéresse tant les reporters dont je suis, est un pittoresque purement cérébral. Il est inutile d'en chercher des interprétations plastiques qui puissent devenir des créations définitives. Si l'on ne veut rien demander aux statistiques officielles, on ne peut croire à la réalité de cette agonie sournoise dans laquelle finissent par succomber et les chômeurs dûment reconnus et ceux qui s'exaspèrent à la pensée de le devenir. On peut même dire que ceux qui souffrent le plus, moralement, sont ceux qui voient venir la minute fatale de la cessation du travail parce que l'on ferme la maison où ils travaillent. Les uns et les autres — et ce n'est pas risible — font penser à ceux du bâtiment, dont je ne sais plus le nom, et qui tiraient au sort pour savoir qui serait mangé.

Ville morte

La ville de Berlin, sans voitures de maître, avec des taxis qui ne roulent qu'à tour de rôle, ne tarde

pas à apparaître comme une ville morte quand on la pénètre davantage en essayant de reconstituer son rythme normal. Ce rythme était celui d'une grande cité laborieuse et dépensière, relativement bien payée de son effort quotidien.

Le Berlinoïse dépense ce qu'il gagne et si la ville se mortifie chaque jour davantage, celle ne tient pas à sa volonté, mais au destin parfaitement inconnu d'une société que le malheur semble engourdir. On pourrait peut-être reprocher aux Allemands de réagir mollement devant le malheur. L'Allemand est un peuple fort tant que la chance le nourrit et tant que la prospérité sociale dépend d'une certaine logique. Dans le malheur il réagit moins bien que le Français qui se ressaisit toujours au moment même que la catastrophe paraît inévitable. Personne et pas même Dieu, s'il daignait choisir une nationalité, ne peut remédier à cela. Les hommes sont comme ils sont.

Exaspérée

Et ce fait qui décourage tous les commentaires déjoue en même temps les combinaisons les plus rusées de la politique. Il est évident, en ce moment, que l'Allemagne est exaspérée. Elle recherche les éléments qui, naturellement, lui paraissent responsables de ce lent désastre quotidien, qui n'est pas une exclusivité allemande. Je n'ai pas encore rencontré au cours de mon enquête une attitude réellement agressive soit dans la rue soit dans les établissements fréquentés par le peuple, dans ces refuges d'élection où il est chez lui et où la venue d'un étranger ne

paraît pas désirable. Que ce soit au Haus Vaterland ou au « Chien raide » dans la Friedrichstrasse, on peut parler français sans attirer une remarque désobligeante. Bien entendu, il ne faut pas s'attendre à être porté en triomphe. La question n'est point là. Cette nuit, « c'est encore dimanche », la Friedrichstrasse est animée, sans excès. Pas de voitures sur la chaussée. Les gens qui remontent vers la gare ne sont pas des clients pour les nombreux cafés et petits dancings populaires qui sont assez près de nos bals musette. En voici un, au fond d'une cour, c'est la Hofenblüte, la Fleur de houblon. Il se trouve non loin de l'ancienne caserne des Maikafer, des « Hannelons », ainsi nommés à cause de la couleur brune de leur uniforme. J'entre dans une salle peu lumineuse. Elle est à peu près vide. Un orchestre composé d'un piano, d'un violon et d'une batterie joue « *Liebe kommt, Liebe geht* ». C'est une valse.

Les bonnes et la crise

A côté de moi sept jeunes soldats de la Reichswehr boivent un peu de bière en compagnie de deux ou trois bonniches à qui la journée de huit heures laisse des loisirs. Elles possèdent un peu d'argent. Les bonnes sont moins malheureuses que d'autres. Il en est beaucoup à qui leurs patrons doivent de l'argent, ce qui met ces derniers en fâcheuse posture. Les soldats sont assis à ma table. Mes paroles françaises n'éclatent point comme une bombe. Ils sont paisibles et corrects et ne prêtent aucune attention à ma présence. Il en sera de même au « *Strammer Hund* »,

un peu plus loin, en remontant vers la Elsassers-
strasse. Evidemment, on peut toujours tomber sur le
« coup dur ». Il suffit d'un hasard. Le dimanche
dispose peut-être à la courtoisie qui est une forme de
l'indifférence. Mais je crois que l'attitude du peuple
allemand en présence d'un Français est simplement
celle d'un homme qui respecte les lois provisoires de
l'hospitalité. Quand on pense, ce qui est facile à
constater, à la violence de la lutte politique qui se
prépare, il ne faut pas se hâter de conclure dans un
sens favorable. Cependant, un de mes amis, qui est
aussi un des grands artistes de ce temps, me disait à
midi : « Pierre, nous ne pouvons pas savoir si nos fils
ne se battront pas un jour, mais nous, nous ne
pourrons jamais oublier que nous sommes des
amis. » Je n'ai point de fils, mais lui est père de deux
jeunes enfants qui vinrent me serrer la main, parce
que leur père les a bien élevés et leur a dit qu'en plus
de ma nationalité, j'étais aussi un brave homme.
Cette anecdote n'est pas applicable à tous les cas et la
misère rend les hommes injustes, surtout quand ces
hommes ne parviennent pas à se comprendre réelle-
ment, ce qui est, bien souvent, le cas entre Grüne-
wald et Humboldtthain et, à plus forte raison, entre
Paris et Berlin.

Le Français responsable

Cette question de la compréhension entre deux
races revient toujours dans la conversation quand on
parle du chômage et de la misère qui en découle.
Beaucoup, parmi les Allemands, rendent les Français
responsables de leur situation. D'autres qui ne le

disent pas le pensent. Il me paraît difficile et presque inutile de tenter une explication quelconque à l'un de ces innombrables chômeurs qui attendent entre les arbres effeuillés de Friedrichshain, qui est un parc mélancolique et pauvre. Ces hommes qui errent d'allée en allée dans un décor d'hiver, heureusement clément, ne sont plus que des apparences humaines. Il n'y a de réel en eux que la volonté d'être vêtus encore comme des hommes qui tiennent à garder l'apparence de ce qu'ils étaient il y a encore un mois, quand ils travaillaient comme ils pensaient que ce serait toujours. Car rien ne paraissait aussi éternel aux hommes que la confiance dans la profession qui fait vivre... En ce temps-là...

Deux armées

Cette foule d'hommes résignés, dont nos yeux commencent à comprendre l'attitude incolore, n'est pas si paisible, toutefois, que je le croyais il y a encore quelques heures. Maintenant je suis sûr que la violence travaille derrière ces visages. Hier encore, communistes et hitlériens se sont battus. Les couteaux se sont naturellement trouvés en main. Il y eut une vingtaine de combattants grièvement blessés. Les hommes qui manquent de tout connaissent-ils bien la force exacte de leur misère ? La misère n'enrichit pas les énergies. Les partis se partagent les chômeurs : communistes d'un côté, hitlériens de l'autre. Deux armées d'une égale pauvreté sont prêtes à s'attaquer. Mais quels buts lointains ces hommes cherchent-ils à atteindre ? Manger et vivre décemment, bien entendu. Tout cela dépend-il de la

volonté des hommes, en réalité sans chefs et soumis à une organisation sociale qui manque de solidité? L'Allemagne, et peut-être l'Europe, est reprise par ce mouvement lent et inexorable qui mène au vertige. Que faire? C'est la question que l'on posera à tous ceux qui paraissent de bons conseils. La bêtise des hommes est écoeurante. Cette chanson-là, d'autres que moi l'ont déjà chantée avec plus de grâce, peut-être, mais avec tout autant de succès.

III

UN JEUNE ALLEMAND EST PAR DÉFINITION UN HOMME SANS PLACE

... Or la jeunesse sait d'instinct qu'il faut manger

Berlin, 9 mars. — C'est dans la matinée du lundi 7 mars. Cette fois, il pleut sur le pavé de Berlin. La pluie est froide, aigre et bêtement taquine. On marche le col du pardessus relevé pour cacher les oreilles, et chacun se sent encore plus isolé dans une ville immense, à peine bruyante, une cité où les musiques appartiennent au passé avant de naître. Quelques voitures roulent sur la fameuse avenue « Sous les Tilleuls ». Les taxis attendent dans la pluie les clients pressés, qui peuvent ne pas compter et qui doivent accomplir en huit jours ce qu'il est normal d'ébaucher en trois mois. Ces clients sont assez peu nombreux, et ils ne tiennent pas dans leurs mains les clefs qui doivent ouvrir les portes d'une prospérité que les gens d'ici n'espèrent plus. Quelques amis me permettent de voir vite et d'apercevoir un peu de ce qui est insaisissable. Une fois le rideau soulevé la situation apparaît sans issue. Si j'ai l'impression, moi-même, de suivre une route sans fin, c'est que j'ai rencontré par hasard en sortant du Stempelburo de la mairie de Moabit, ce bureau où l'on timbre les cartes de chômage, celle dont je n'ai pu retenir le nom, ce

qui est sans doute sans importance, car je ne suis pas très certain, après ce que j'ai déjà vu, qu'un nom lui soit nécessaire afin de vivre : un numéro d'ordre suffit jusqu'au jour où ce numéro deviendra lui-même inutile pour les raisons assez tragiques que je vais vous donner.

M^{lle} X 28 est tout d'abord Lettone. Ce n'est pas une héroïne mystérieuse de cinéma social, bien qu'on puisse toucher un fil à son sujet. C'est une jeune employée de bureau, une juive laborieuse, intelligente, qui ne sourit pas et dont le regard n'attend rien de bon de la sympathie qu'on peut lui montrer. Elle se détacha lentement comme une chose morte du groupe d'hommes et de femmes qui attendaient là pour se mettre en règle avec la situation. Cette foule ne ressemblait en rien à ce que nous pouvons voir chez nous dans un endroit où l'on délivre une carte de chômage ou une soupe gratuite. Toutes les classes de la société étaient ou me semblaient représentées. Il y avait des pères qui ressemblaient à des directeurs de banque et d'autres à des employés aisés, plus simplement. Là, encore, il ne fallait pas espérer apercevoir les signes décoratifs de la misère. Mais tous ces gens étaient arrivés au bout d'un trajet dans une sorte de « no man's land » où les lois traditionnelles et le pouvoir de la société ne peuvent même plus recommander la patience.

M^{lle} X 28, parce qu'elle occupait approximativement le numéro 28 dans la foule, ne parla pas la première de cette situation qui était admise.

Ici on peut accepter un repas sans arrière-pensée et sans déchoir. Nous entrâmes tous trois dans un

restaurant, Fraulein X 28 mangeait sans hâte et sans affectation, comme les gens de bonne éducation qui ne veulent pas se révéler par un instinct que l'aisance peut faire paraître vulgaire. Elle était venue, chassée toute jeune de Russie par la Révolution. Elle avait suivi sa route à travers l'Europe, pénétrant dans un pays au moment même que la prospérité abandonnait ce pays. De cette façon, elle avait connu la misère sous ses différentes formes, une misère que les circonstances transformaient en vertige, en torpeur ou en exaspération. Depuis dix ans elle habitait Berlin. Elle avait toujours travaillé et ne pouvait guère regretter une jeunesse sans repos.

— Et maintenant, dit-elle, je sens que le danger m'encerclé. Une par une, mes compagnes de bureau sont parties ! Où sont-elles ? Elles n'ont plus d'argent. L'une d'elles m'a écrit : « Si dans dix jours je ne trouve rien, il ne me reste qu'à me suicider ». Je ne lui ai pas répondu parce que je ne sais pas quoi lui répondre. Dans dix jours, elle ne trouvera rien. Pourquoi trouverait-elle du travail dans dix jours ?

— Et pour vous ?

— Oh ! pour moi, laissez-moi seulement ne pas penser à l'avenir. La journée vaudra ce qu'elle vaudra. N'allons pas plus loin, j'aime mieux ne pas penser. Et je ne lis plus, parce qu'on ne peut lire sans penser. Et toutes ces histoires que je lis me semblent singulièrement inutiles. Elles sont par trop en dehors de la question, trop incompréhensibles par rapport à cette vie indescriptible et si sotté. C'est comme un roman d'anticipation. Qu'arrivera-t-il si l'humanité ne mange plus à sa faim ? Cherchez des hypothèses, si ce jeu vous amuse. Pour moi je le trouve ridicule.

Il fallait répondre quelque chose. L'un de nous

dit : « Les élections peuvent-elles changer la situation économique du pays ?

— Je n'en sais rien. Si Hitler est élu, ce que je ne sais pas, je peux prévoir un peu ce que sera ma vie. Je suis Lettone parce que mes parents étaient Lettons. Hitler, vous le savez, a promis de renvoyer tous les étrangers qui travaillent en Allemagne. Où aller ? Je ne parle pas le letton ; il me sera donc facile de mourir de faim dans mon pays. Je parle français, mais la France ne donne pas de travail aux étrangers, l'Angleterre non plus... Toutes les portes sont fermées pour moi. Cette situation ne vous paraît-elle pas comique ?...

Ce n'était pas le mot qu'il fallait employer. Mais les mots pour l'instant ne valaient guère plus que le reste. Ils étaient usés, usés jusqu'à la corde. Leur pouvoir sentimental fondait dans la pluie fine qui drapait ses voiles sur la Friedrichstrasse et sur des horizons moins proches.

M^{lle} X 23 nous remercia et prit congé. Sa petite silhouette noire, d'une élégance raisonnable, fut longue à disparaître. Elle tourna au coin d'une rue, proprement restituée au néant d'une grande ville, et nous ne la revîmes plus.

Alors nous prîmes une avenue dans le sens contraire.

Pour ma part mon propre avenir n'était pas sans m'inquiéter. Ce que je pouvais contrôler, petit à petit, grâce à des moyens assez faibles, ne me paraissait guère reconfortant. Ce n'était pas tant l'Allemagne qui était en cause dans mes méditations que mon propre avenir. Je tenais compte de l'exagération de certains effets, parce que tout le monde

peut, de bonne foi, exagérer, quand le diable siffle et grince des dents devant la porte. Après le tour des vieillards, victimes régulières de la paix, le tour des jeunes gens allait-il venir ? Un jeune Allemand est par définition un homme sans place, et un homme sans place, quelle que soit sa nationalité, est un homme sans argent, c'est-à-dire sans pain. Or, la jeunesse sait d'instinct qu'il faut manger. On peut à la rigueur persuader du contraire un homme vieux, qui craint l'arthritisme, mais pour un jeune, ce procédé apparaît comme une provocation grossière !

C'est en essayant d'apercevoir le bout de la route que les hypothèses deviennent moins optimistes. J'ai su ce que c'était que d'avoir faim quand j'étais jeune, et c'est pourquoi je prête beaucoup d'attention aux propos inspirés par la faim, même quand ils sont littéraires.

Un livre de talent est quelquefois la conséquence d'une faim ancienne adroitement adaptée à l'une des revanches que la vie tient en réserve. On ne prend jamais la faim des autres au sérieux et c'est un tort. L'humanité est avant tout un ventre. Le pain, le vin et le sel sont à la base de toutes les mystiques. Il est vraiment inconcevable qu'on ne puisse pas manger à sa faim. Je me demande, parfois, pourquoi l'idée de nourriture fut toujours associée au principe du travail. L'erreur doit provenir de cette association d'idées.

C'EST LA « WEDDING » !...

*On se fusille assez souvent
dans cette rue*

Berlin, 10 mars. — Aujourd'hui, la neige est tombée, régulière, tenace et triomphante. Elle donne à Berlin une parure qui ne manque pas de distinction. Les rues de Berlin, qui se ressemblent toutes, revêtent un même uniforme : gris et argent. Dressés au milieu de la rue, les schupos en pèlerine sont pareils à des oiseaux surpris par la neige. Ils guettent à la manière des émouchets perchés sur un fil téléphonique. Ils guettent la boue qui triomphe dans le Tiergarten, les voitures qui paraissent aujourd'hui un peu plus nombreuses et les hypothèses que Berlin sous la neige peut suggérer. Me voici, dans la rue, encore une fois, pour essayer de m'incorporer pendant quelques jours dans le gris du ciel, dans le gris des maisons aux boutiques peintes en vert et en rouge, dans le gris bleuté d'une capote de schupos, dans le mystère social des immeubles presque cossus où la misère s'endort pendant quelques heures au rythme d'une berceuse enfantine. Ce n'est pas possible. Et je ne saurai que ce que mon instinct me dictera au bon

gré de l'heure ou de la minute. Je suis soumis à la puissance d'un détail, d'un mot qui éclate comme une couleur, et d'une couleur qui vaut toutes les explications des théoriciens de tel ou tel parti ! Ceux-là sont vraiment inutiles. Le théoricien qui explique avec aisance comment on souffre de la faim et, peu à peu, comment il est orthodoxe de souffrir de la faim, doit provoquer, à son insu, et par esprit de contradiction des scènes de cannibalisme. Ils sont nombreux qui vivent en vase clos comme les bouillons de culture.

Ce matin, de très bonne heure, je me suis rendu à la *Stempelstelle* de la Gormannstrasse, dans un quartier populaire qui pourrait être dans une ville française de soixante-dix mille habitants le quartier de l'aristocratie locale. Les hommes qui se trouvaient là présentaient sur leur visage le voile léger, mais révélateur, de la misère. La plupart d'entre eux étaient bien habillés. Ils allaient toucher sans joie leur allocation de chômage. Ce spectacle est facile à imaginer. En suivant la Weberstrasse, j'ai visité une vieille cour dans une des plus anciennes maisons de Berlin. Elle est sans caractère, dans la Palissanderstrasse, à côté, quatre jeunes hommes bien vêtus dont l'un jouait de la guitare, chantaient en chœur pour gagner leur vie. Ils étaient coiffés d'une sorte de casquette de marine bleue à grande visière, celle des anciens « gad'zarts » de chez nous, qui me semble ici connaître la faveur des jeunes ouvriers. Après quoi, la voiture roulant toujours à travers les flocons de neige, une neige lugubre, je fis le tour du Friedrichshain qui est un beau parc pauvre, aussi triste et aussi frileux qu'un pigeon sans plumes. Quelques chô-

meurs se groupaient sans parler dans un décor qui complétait bien leur détresse.

Et les rues larges et grises, bordées des mêmes maisons presque neuves où la misère fermente derrière des colonnades Renaissance et des bow-windows élisabéthains, succédaient, impitoyablement, à des rues larges et livides bordées des mêmes maisons. Çà et là, comme dans la Weberstrasse par exemple, quelques fenêtres s'ornaient du drapeau rouge frangé de jaune et écussonné de la faucille et du marteau. A Berlin, chacun affiche nettement ses opinions. D'ailleurs, et je reviendrai sur ce sujet, l'influence *sentimentale*, j'insiste sur ce mot, des soviets est incontestable sur la jeunesse ouvrière. Il existe une mode russe dont les jeunes filles savent tirer parti : elle est sportive et fraîche. Le type de la petite Berlinoise qui travaille est facile à dessiner. C'est pour l'ordinaire une jeune fille au visage clair non fardé, aux cheveux blond pâle, coupés courts et non frisés. Elle est vêtue d'un bonnet de laine blanche, d'un corsage blanc, d'une jupe noire très courte. Les jambes sont celles d'une petite sportive, d'un joli dessin. Ce n'est pas un « Backfisch » mais un type assez nouveau de petite camarade naturellement respectable. Je ne pense pas recommencer l'erreur de Sterne qui, pour avoir vu une servante rousse à Calais, écrivit avec satisfaction que toutes les Françaises étaient rousses. Ce qui fut discuté par la suite. Mon type de petite ouvrière, ou plutôt d'employée berlinoise, existe en grand nombre. Il s'agit d'assister à une de ces fêtes sportives où la jeunesse se divertit et s'attendrit pour en contrôler l'existence. Cette silhouette féminine me semble la seule qui soit vraiment nationale. Pour les autres femmes, elles portent les signes discrets de leur

situation sociale, depuis l'émancipation absolue jusqu'au respect des vieilles traditions. Il y a ici une mode pour la classe ouvrière, ce qui, en somme, n'existe pas en France, tout au moins pour les Françaises, qui suivent, comme elles le peuvent, la mode imposée par les élégantes professionnelles, les mannequins des grands couturiers.

Mais n'oublions pas que je suis toujours sous la neige et que mon but est de vous promener dans un Berlin que les touristes ne fréquentent point parce qu'ils n'ont rien à y trouver de plaisant.

Je me tenais debout comme un voyageur indécis à la porte d'un marchand de cigarettes, quand un homme, que je connaissais pour l'avoir vu à Paris, m'aborda cordialement et me tendit la main. Il parlait français, à tue-tête, ce qui n'attira l'attention de personne. Nous n'étions pas très loin de la Strasburgerstrasse ou de Metzgerstrasse, comme vous voudrez. Nous prîmes rendez-vous pour le soir... mais je vous raconterai cette histoire à son heure, c'est-à-dire dans quelques jours, quand j'en aurai terminé avec ma tâche qui est plus compliquée que je ne le pensais. Elle porte, cependant, en soi sa récompense : celle de connaître et de demeurer un homme honnête et relativement libéré de tout préjugé historique.

La voiture qui revenait pour m'emporter nous surprit au moment que nous prenions rendez-vous. Je repris ma route avec un des Français qui connaît le mieux l'Allemagne sans teinter ses observations d'une nuance politique quelconque. Nous roulions à toute vitesse vers le Wedding fameux dont j'avais entendu parler, car le jour même de mon arrivée, les schupos et les communistes s'étaient battus

(morts et blessés) dans la Koeslinerstrasse, courte rue large, dont quelques portes gardent dans le stuc de leurs ornements des éraflures récentes et suspectes.

A l'entrée de ce quartier que l'on appelle le Wedding et qui se trouve un peu à l'ouest du Humboldthain, nous laissâmes encore la voiture pour visiter, en passant, l'une des plus anciennes maisons de Berlin : la Maison aux sept-coins, au numéro 133 de l'Ackerstrasse. Cette cité pauvre est la seule note pittoresque que l'on puisse garder du Berlin populaire. Imaginez sept voûtes en enfilade qui donnent accès à sept cours. La première cour montre l'échoppe curieuse d'un vieux boucher irascible qui doit être le fournisseur attitré de tout ce « bloc ». Cette cité sombre et surpeuplée est voisine de l'église protestante, la Schrippen-Kirche, l'Eglise des Petits pains, qui recueille, pour les réparer et les faire resservir encore une fois sous forme de dons, les objets les plus attendrissants, les plus détruits et les plus décourageants.

La Koeslinerstrasse n'était point très éloignée de la Maison aux sept-coins. Nous l'aperçûmes tout de suite en tournant au coin de la Weddingstrasse. Elle était littéralement pavoisée de drapeaux rouges ornés de la faucille et du marteau. La plupart des fenêtres portaient ce signe. Les bannières flottaient au vent dans le ciel criblé de neige. La rue était déserte. Ce n'était pas un jour de fête, ni un jour de manifestation. Les drapeaux pendaient simplement du seuil d'un jour terriblement « quotidien ».

— C'est là le Wedding, dit mon ami ; on se fusille assez souvent dans cette rue.

Quand la rumeur gronde dans le Wedding, la police ferme les issues et c'est la bagarre, la bagarre sanglante... une des images les plus normales de l'Humanité en 1932...

LA CROIX GAMMÉE ET LE POINT D'INTERROGATION

Berlin, 11 mars. — Cet après-midi, une animation insolite attire mon regard vers le Tiergarten. Les voitures sont plus nombreuses, les promeneurs marchent d'un pas décidé. Ce sont des jeunes gens en cheveux, les knickerbockers dépassant comme il sied de l'imperméable kaki. Des hommes qui sont bien boutonnés dans leur paletot comme des sous-officiers en civil se hâtent et discutent. Une auto pleine de schupos en capote bleue au col vert clair s'arrête devant ma fenêtre, sur le Pariser Platz. Des avions bourdonnent, ils volent très bas et jettent des proclamations que le vent pousse comme un vol de canard sur les toits de l'Adlon. Des enfants vêtus comme des skieurs donnent la main à leurs parents. De minute en minute, la foule augmente. C'est le moment de descendre et de la suivre. Dehors, la chaussée révèle un petit verglas qui n'empêche pas les évolutions des schupos montés. Evitons cette cavalerie. Le cheval n'est un animal apaisé qu'au moment où il contribue à l'alimentation. Dans ma jeunesse, ayant par hasard contemplé avec intérêt l'enthousiasme des manifestants devant le Fort Chabrol, j'ai reçu un alerte coup de gourdin d'un policier plus agile qu'une soubrette,

mais infiniment moins séduisant. Depuis ce jour, j'ai compris le sens des manifestations publiques et j'en ai retenu l'enseignement spontané. Pour cette raison, je me mêle toujours avec ténacité mais discrétion aux jeux de la rue, quand il y a, comme on dit « de la bagarre dans l'air », j'ai donc suivi, tout en étudiant le terrain en prévision d'évolutions rapides, ce qui pourtant n'est plus de mon âge, cette foule qui, d'ailleurs, n'était point hostile. Du Pariser Platz au Lustgarten, où se tenait une grande réunion hitlérienne, c'est tout droit, et le trajet n'est pas long. On traverse la Sprée sans s'en apercevoir. Avant le Pont du Château, un barrage de police était déjà organisé. Une foule occupait les parapets, une foule complète en tous ses éléments : celle des grands spectacles de la rue, c'est-à-dire des hommes, des femmes et des enfants de toute condition sociale. Toutefois, l'élément bourgeois paraissait dominer. Le Lustgarten était inaccessible. Je retrouvai quelques camarades et nous formâmes tout de suite un petit groupe de cinq Français qui se mêla à la foule allemande pour essayer de parvenir, non pas au pied de la tribune, ce qui était imaginable, mais assez près pour apercevoir l'orateur qui était Goebbels, le chef des troupes d'assaut du parti national-socialiste. Il discourait : des haut-parleurs amplifiaient sa voix. C'est un homme petit et mince, au visage maigre, très brun, les cheveux rejetés en arrière. Il boite, paraît-il. Goebbels est un chef énergique et intelligent. Sa voix portait sur la foule ; les bras se levaient pour saluer, le bras levé à la manière fasciste. Au loin, sur le parvis de la Cathédrale garni de schupos, une musique jouait des marches militaires.

Heil! Heil! Heil! Par trois fois, le cri consacré

s'échappa de toutes les poitrines. A mes côtés, deux jeunes femmes émues jusqu'aux larmes chantaient à mi-voix l'hymne à Hitler, je crois.

La voix de l'orateur résonnait durement : Heil ! Heil ! Heil ! Chaque période oratoire était saluée. Un chœur s'éleva soudain, un chœur parfaitement entraîné, au milieu des bruits familiers de la rue. C'était très loin, à l'autre bout du Lustgarten où l'on n'aurait pu loger une épingle. Cela venait vers nous comme un brouillard de voix, une réminiscence lointaine du passé sentimental de l'Allemagne, telle que nous pouvons la connaître tout de même par ses livres, ses livres classiques.

Pour nous qui ne sommes guère habitués aux grandes manifestations de la rue, le spectacle était solennel et puissant. Une « clique » (das Spiel) de fifres et de tambours, sur le geste d'un tambour-major adolescent, scanda une marche militaire. Les étendards rouges et blancs à la croix gammée s'élevèrent au-dessus des têtes découvertes. Un crêpe était noué à la hampe des drapeaux dont la section avait eu des morts dans les émeutes. Ces étendards cravatés de crêpe étaient nombreux. Goebbels ayant fini de parler, trois cris brefs s'échappèrent de la foule. Les schupos s'affairèrent et, tout naturellement, avec une rapidité un peu décevante, la place se trouva déblayée. Chacun prit la route du retour pour regagner ses quartiers. La plupart des troupes d'assaut défilèrent cependant derrière leurs fifres et leurs tambours. Les jeunes hommes étaient les plus nombreux. Ceux qui ont l'habitude de ce spectacle où la force d'une foule est exaltée à l'extrême, pour demeurer enclose dans les limites d'une discipline rigide, peuvent trouver ce tableau émouvant. La

parade d'une foule sans armes et dont la volonté semble irréductible dépasse de beaucoup la puissance d'une parade militaire, car elle fait naître le mystère et les quelques hypothèses qui en dépendent.

Les peuples qui ont le goût et le besoin d'un mysticisme quelconque offrent facilement les apparences les plus monstrueuses de la collectivité. On se trouve devant une machine invincible ou qui le paraît. La foule est une force de la nature comme le vent, la pluie, le feu, la mer et la peste. Elle peut à la rigueur engloutir ce qui se trouve sur son passage avant de s'apaiser et s'en aller mourir presque sans bénéfice devant une voiture d'enfant. Un tout petit détail suffit à arrêter l'élan d'une foule, comme un geste puéril et saugrenu peut arrêter les ravages d'un cheval enragé. Mais rien n'est plus désagréable que de se trouver dans une foule trop bien réglée, dont on ignore le degré de fièvre, dont on ignore la langue et les antipathies. La misère et la peur d'une misère encore plus grande sont sur le point de créer une foi nouvelle en Allemagne. La peur de la faim illumine les yeux des patriciennes, des bourgeois, des petits voyous et des pauvres filles de la rue qui meurent comme des mouches.

Ce n'est pas tant des journalistes qu'il faut faire venir ici, mais tous les dieux du monde, tous ceux qui ont créé l'homme à son image. Il faut leur montrer les grandes rues vides où de pauvres femmes chaussées de petites bottes molles abordent l'homme en lui demandant du pain.

Je ne sais pas quelle signification les sociétés donneront au mot de pitié dans le courant du mois ou dans quelques années. Si les vieux mots qui nous ont émus ont perdu leur force originelle, il faut changer

ces mots, en adapter d'autres conformes au besoin d'une époque dont les dangers ne peuvent être ignorés que des imbéciles.

Depuis que je suis ici, je n'entends parler que de faim, de froid et d'horreur de l'avenir. Et ce n'est pas dans les souricières officielles de la charité d'Etat que je prends mes exemples. La misère ici appartient aux pauvres. Ils sont les seuls gardiens de ses secrets. Les partis politiques ne vivent que d'elle. Chacun cherche d'instinct celui qui parle le mieux de la nourriture, cette bonne, cette délicate nourriture dont les parfums deviennent de plus en plus cruels.

DANS LES RUES
DU PLAISIR

*La tournée des « grands-ducs », promenade
mélancolique à travers la misère*

Berlin, le 10 mars. — Je vous ai parlé de ce camarade d'un jour et d'une nuit, rencontré par hasard au coin d'une rue. Ce n'était pas un « Kriminalbezirkssekretar », mais un de ces types agréables comme j'en connais à Londres, à Barcelone et à Anvers. Ce sont des hommes qui deviennent précieux tout d'un coup, puis qui disparaissent, se fondent dans la nuit comme un morceau de sucre dans un liquide chaud. Ces hommes-là, on est parfois content de les rencontrer au coin d'une rue d'une ville inconnue, devant un mystère romantique dont il faut se méfier. L'homme qu'on rencontre la nuit se fait un vrai plaisir de remettre les choses au point.

Celui-ci s'appelait Karl Schulz ou Müller, ou Meier, comme vous voudrez. Choisissons Schulz, car il est nécessaire de donner une identité à des personnages qui nous rendent service. Le contraire serait discourtois.

Karl Schulz a vécu à Paris, pas trop à Montparnasse, mais dans le quartier de Montmartre qui est

également le nord de Paris comparable à certains quartiers de l'immense nord de Berlin. Schulz parle la langue d'argot, il en connaît les expressions les plus récentes. Il regrette Paris, parce que la liberté de Paris ne se comprend bien qu'après avoir quitté la ville. Je fus si content de retrouver ce vieux copain que, tout aussitôt, les quelques mots d'allemand qui dormaient dans ma mémoire vinrent tout naturellement à mes lèvres. Pendant une minute et demie, je fus presque éloquent. Mais ce feu s'éteignit. Nous parlâmes d'un ami commun, un Français qui avait eu le courage de passer une nuit et un jour dans l'asile public de Froebelstrasse. Nous étions sur l'Alexanderplatz, non loin du « Mexico », cette petite boîte de la rue que ceux qui ont lu le livre d'Alfred Döblin reconnaissent. C'est toujours la même chose, dans tous les pays. Les gens ne veulent pas comprendre que les types de la rue sont, évidemment, exceptionnels, mais qu'ils sont singulièrement « purs » au point de vue populaire et national. Un petit voyou de Paris reproduit assez fidèlement le caractère (défauts et qualités) du peuple de Paris, l'honnêteté en moins bien entendu. Un voyou de Berlin, de même, est riche en traditions populaires, l'honnêteté en moins, également. Une promenade parmi les « affranchis » berlinois est une image à peine différente des autres, de la misère qui règne ici. Je pense que mes impressions d'Allemagne doivent apparaître encore plus livides que grises. Mais, il faut se rappeler que depuis que je suis ici, par profession, je n'ai vu que des misérables : des malheureux confondus dans un même état d'esprit, fait de révolte et de résignation, dont la valeur exacte m'échappe absolument. Je ne peux vraiment pas imaginer ce qui pourra naître de

cette situation qui est celle de l'Allemagne et qui menace toute l'Europe.

Schulz et moi nous marchâmes dans la Prenzlauerstrasse. Nous donnâmes un regard, à travers les vitres de la porte du « Mexico ». La salle était vide.

— Ce n'est pas la peine d'entrer, dit Schulz, il n'y a personne.

Nous prîmes un taxi pour aller boire un verre de bière dans la Danzigerstrasse, comme vous voudrez, chez l'oncle Machin, ou l'oncle Chose. Je ne cite pas les noms à dessein. Toujours le même lokal, la même bière, le même phonographe et le même vide. Mais ici, la place est dangereuse. Les quelques hommes qui se trouvent là et la fille au nez gelé qui trépigne sur la trappe de la cave ne sont pas des figurants. Ce sont des personnages, comme j'en connais à Paris, dans des établissements semblables. Ils sont ici chez eux et il vaut mieux ne pas prolonger notre séjour. Ces gars-là, à cause de la déformation professionnelle, voient des indicateurs et des policiers partout. Au surplus, rien d'intéressant : c'est le marasme.

Dans tous les « reposoirs » de la rue, la débâcle est absolue. Quelques filles se groupent auprès d'un poêle et se chauffent sous des couronnes de feuillage et de roses artificiels, qui ornent le plafond de toutes ces « boîtes » qu'ici on nomme des « lokal ». Ce n'est pas la tournée des « grands-ducs » que nous commençons Schulz et moi, c'est une promenade mélancolique à travers la misère des rues où le plaisir n'est sans doute qu'un raconter. Cette promenade désœuvrée avec Schulz, je la connais bien, c'est celle que nous faisons souvent Francis Carco et moi, dans les rues de Paris, afin de rechercher la preuve

la plus morne de ce qui fut un peu de notre jeunesse et qui deviendra bientôt à peu près incompréhensible.

En réalité il n'y a rien à voir là comme partout ailleurs. Il faut être aussi simple et aussi imperméable qu'un œuf dur pour croire que les gens, dans n'importe quel pays du nord, éprouvent le besoin de donner en spectacle leur déchéance. A propos d'œuf dur, Schulz m'a dit, comme nous refermions la porte du lokal peint en bleu et blanc, au rez-de-chaussée d'un pauvre immeuble d'aspect impérial, que l'on fabriquait dans ce lieu de faux passeports en subtilisant la forme d'un cachet officiel à l'aide d'un œuf dur. L'albumine prend l'encre d'imprimerie mieux que la gélatine, il ne reste plus qu'à l'imprimer ensuite sur une feuille de papier. J'ai essayé cette combine, ça n'a rien donné.

La Mulackstrasse, qui est la rue des « Tippelschickse », c'est-à-dire des « tapins » les plus sinistres, n'offrait que le tableau familial d'une vingtaine de filles raidies sous le froid, le ventre vide et les pieds gelés dans des bottes de dernière classe.

— Que veut dire le mot « Tippelschickse » ? demandai-je à Schulz. Est-ce de l'argot de malfaiteurs ?

— Nee, nee, c'est du yiddisch, l'argot des malfaiteurs n'existe pas. Ici il n'y a pas de mot pour qualifier un schupo par exemple. Ainsi « Tippelschickse » ? demandai-je à Schulz, par quoi un brave père de famille juif désigne sa petite fille, devient, en tombant dans la rue, un terme qui s'applique aux femmes de la plus basse catégorie. « Ça vient de la Laugestrasse. »

A Berlin, tout est à faire dans ce sens. Nous allâmes boire ensuite un café crème dans un lokal de la Mulackstrasse. Petite pièce chaude, guirlandes au plafond, phonographe. Dans un coin un grand-père lit le journal, une vieille dame qui a posé son sac de cuir sur une table, contemple en souriant deux écureuils dans deux cages accrochées au mur. Il fait trop chaud, le sommeil nous gagne. Nous sortons et il fait trop froid.

— Alors ? dit Schulz.

— Alors... nous allons rentrer... C'est évidemment très bien ; mais j'en ai assez.

— Naturellement ! Ce n'est pas une promenade organisée pour le plaisir des touristes. Il existe quelque chose dans ce genre. Voulez-vous vous en rendre compte ?

C'est ainsi que nous vîmes, en deux heures, l'établissement des « Kleine Loewen » plein de jeunes écervelés sans clients, le « Mikado », où dans une forêt tropicale en carton, le vide s'installe à l'aise, la « Flûte enchantée » où nous pûmes entrer parce qu'un club de dames avait loué le lokal, l'« Eldorado », le « Mississipi », le « Péloponèse », le « Tartempion-Diele », etc., tout ce qu'il vous plaira d'imaginer de vide, de triste et de désespéré sous la clarté rose des lampes voilées.

La vie de Berlin n'est pas là. Et il est facile de comprendre qu'il vaut mieux qu'il en soit ainsi.

Devant mon hôtel, Karl Schulz me serra la main. Il s'éloigna seul, dans l'avenue sans voiture. Il était coiffé d'une casquette, vêtu d'un bon pardessus à martingale. Il ressemblait à tous les personnages de minuit que je pouvais reconstituer dans ma mémoire,

c'est-à-dire à une création parfaitement internationale. Celui-là n'était pas indifférent à la propagande d'Hitler qu'il trouvait plein de fantaisie et conforme au goût français.

UNE EXALTATION RELIGIEUSE ENLÈVE LES PARADES ALLEMANDES

Voici la bannière rouge

Berlin, 13 mars 1932. — Hier, au crépuscule de la nuit, les lumières de Berlin se sont allumées afin d'éclairer la route qui mène au Front Rouge dans la Potsdamerstrasse, au Palais des Sports. C'est un grand meeting. Thaelmann doit parler en présence de toutes les sections. Il faut retenir ses places, car c'est une réunion payante. Le nombre des « resquilleurs » sera toutefois assez nombreux.

J'entrerai dans le Sport-Palatz, transformé en cathédrale rouge, sous la protection de mon ami George Grosz qui aime le peuple et le comprend avec sincérité. Notre amitié est d'ailleurs fondée sur ce détail. Il sait que je suis ici pour voir et dire avec sincérité ce que j'ai vu. Je ne crois donc pas lui faire de tort en le nommant. Ma présence sous la « Rote Fahne » est indépendante de nos opinions sociales.

La foule, qui se rend vers ce lieu de la réunion qui est une immense nef où se courent les « six jours » de Berlin, n'est pas très caractéristique parce qu'ici il est souvent difficile de reconnaître un ouvrier d'un

employé ou d'un petit-bourgeois. La jeunesse ouvrière, seule, adopte un costume civil mi-sportif mi-communiste russe, car les uniformes sont interdits. Des casquettes bleues coiffent les jeunes partisans ; ils portent des knickerbockers, des sweaters, à la mode des vélodromes, ou des blouses russes serrées à la taille par un ceinturon militaire. Dans la rue, les étendards sont roulés dans leur gaine. Dans la petite cour qui accède au Sport-Palatz où se donnent deux réunions communistes, la foule s'entasse et finit par s'infiltrer par les tourniquets. On brandit sa carte jaune à bout de bras. D'aucuns protestent assez aigrement parce que la réunion n'est pas gratuite. Nous sommes poussés d'un dernier élan dans les couloirs du Palais des Sports. On vend l'effigie de Thaelmann en broche, et l'insigne du parti communiste ; des adolescents offrent la Rote Fahne. La cohue augmente. Il est 6 heures. Thaelmann ne parlera pas avant 9 h 30 et déjà toutes les places sont prises. Il y a là, peut-être, trente mille personnes. Un orchestre, placé au-dessus de la tribune pavoisée de rouge et ornée de la faucille et du marteau, joue sans interruption. A côté de nous, dans le couloir du deuxième étage, une section communiste est au repos, prête à défiler. Une centaine d'enfants, des fillettes et des petits garçons, attendent avant de commencer la grande parade qui, tout d'un coup, bouleversera leurs petits visages.

Les balcons de tous les étages qui dominent le parterre, où des boules roses, qui sont des têtes humaines, s'alignent en bon ordre, sont décorés de bandes d'étoffe rouge qui étalent les inscriptions suivantes : « *Pas d'intervention dans la guerre contre la Chine* », « *L'union avec les Soviets* », etc. Un

écran placé à la hauteur du troisième étage fait apparaître des inscriptions et des dessins comiques contre le parti bourgeois. Des éclats de rire saluent chaque image dessinée dans une facture simplifiée qui permet à tous de comprendre. Je regarde. Je suis enfoncé dans la foule très dense comme un coin dans un morceau de bois.

Un remous se produit dans le couloir devant une des nombreuses sorties : un tambour-major, coiffé d'un chapeau en feutre, mesure d'un coup d'œil l'attitude de dix tambours plats et de dix clairons courts, comme ceux de l'armée belge : tout est prêt. Dans la salle, les clameurs de la foule sont celles des « six jours » quand le peloton s'envole à la conquête d'une prime, c'est également la formidable et élémentaire clameur des salles de boxe quand l'un des combattants « encaisse ». Le portrait de Thaelmann apparaît sur l'écran : représentez-vous un homme tout rasé, à l'aspect légèrement ecclésiastique malgré la casquette de marinier qui le coiffe. Les applaudissements font penser à un concours de tir de mitrailleuses. Le portrait de Thaelmann disparaît et la même main mystérieuse, qui dessinait des bonhommes enfantés par l'humour populaire, trace les lignes du programme de la soirée.

1. — Einmarsch der Arbeiter (marche des ouvriers).
2. — Chöre (chœurs).
3. — Rezitation Erich Weinert.
4. — Thaelmanns Rede (discours de Thaelmann).
5. — Internationale.

Au moment qu'apparaît le nom de Thaelmann, les acclamations et les poings fermés saluent l'orateur, les enfants chantent, la musique joue la *Marseillaise*

que tout le monde accompagne en chantonnant et en sifflant en sourdine. N'oubliez pas que la *Marseillaise* est devenue un chant international, simplement révolutionnaire. Il ne représente ici aucune idée française.

De tous côtés, des jeunes communistes se précipitent pour repousser la foule, faire de la place et organiser le défilé le plus extraordinaire qu'il m'ait été donné de voir. Une singulière atmosphère de mysticisme guerrier emplit la salle. Il n'est pas question de résignation. C'est une force qui a trouvé l'expression décorative de ses sentiments, une force où se révèlent la discipline et le courage d'un peuple de soldats — ceux qui ont « fait » la guerre me comprendront. La vieille sentimentalité prolétarienne, encline autrefois à jouer du symbole de l'esclavage, se mue en une parade de défense bien combinée et, sans doute, d'offensive dès que l'occasion se présentera.

Une sonnerie de clairons éclate. C'est une « clique » militaire qui joue des airs de clairon français, sur le rythme un peu lent cher à la Légion étrangère. Tout le monde est debout, les visages se colorent ou deviennent plus pâles selon la manière propre à chacun de subir son émotion. Le nez d'une petite fille rousse se pince, les yeux bleus deviennent durs comme des pierres, les hauts drapeaux rouges pénètrent dans la foule, montent au-dessus des têtes. George est plus pâle et je me sens moi-même perdre ma personnalité. C'est un sentiment extraordinaire qu'il est difficile d'analyser, car c'est plus physique que cérébral. Quel espoir, quelle extraordinaire lumière peut ainsi rayonner dans l'âme de ces hommes ? Qu'attendent-ils de l'homme, ou des hommes

en général ! J'imagine qu'à l'origine de toutes les religions la foi dût produire de ces visages ! Mais la plupart des religions ne furent pas des religions d'offensive. La résignation les habitait comme un ver rongeur avant que la politique ne vint établir définitivement leur autorité. Ici, je suis en présence d'un mouvement religieux qui sait qu'un parabellum vaut mieux que la Croix latine, que le Croissant et que le Bouddha gonflé d'une sagesse que le scepticisme rendra inoffensive. Les tambours et les clairons chantent la conquête. Qu'on imagine la puissance des premiers chrétiens, s'ils avaient été pétris dans la pâte des soldats d'élite de 1914. Tout au plus, peut-on retrouver une image de la Révolution Française, qui fut, elle aussi, plus belle, que les plus beaux désordres de la nature, dont on fait aujourd'hui des couchers de soleil pour salle à manger de petits-bourgeois. Enfin ! Je décris ce que j'ai vu. Il m'est impossible de donner une opinion qui serait trop grave pour moi-même. Tout ce que je sais, c'est que je fus, pendant une heure, quelque chose d'inconsistant : une sorte de feuille morte immobilisée dans un coin, au bord de la route : la route, comme disait Thaelmann, qui conduit au communisme. Aujourd'hui, j'ai repris ma personnalité car je connais, pour avoir suivi trop loin la musique militaire en 1914, l'étrange et puissante « impersonnalité » des fanfares et des musiques d'infanterie.

Le défilé continuait dans l'éclat des cuivres barbares à six ou sept pavillons, comme des klaxons perfectionnés ; des adolescentes habillées en rouge succédaient à des jeunes gens qui marchaient le torse nu. Quand les employés des tramways apparurent dans l'uniforme de leur compagnie, des cris scandés

par les clairons : Rot-Front-Rot-Front... saluèrent leur présence qui pouvait être compromettante pour eux. J'eusse vu des schupos défilér dans ce cortège que ma surprise n'en eût pas été plus grande. Les chœurs s'élevèrent alors. Tout le monde sait que les Allemands savent chanter en chœur. Je le savais comme tout le monde. Puis le silence se fit subitement, car le poète populaire Weinert allait occuper la tribune. Je me sentis soudain, parfaitement vieux, fatigué au-delà de toute expression. Thaelmann apparut en ce moment dans la petite tribune rouge. Mais ceci ne me regarde pas. Un homme plus qualifié que moi a dû vous dire, hier, la valeur et la portée des paroles du chef communiste. N'oubliez pas non plus que toutes les parades allemandes, celles d'Hitler, celles du Front d'Acier ou celles de la faucille et du marteau, pour ne citer que les principales, s'inspirent de la même exaltation religieuse.

VIII

COMMENT SE DÉROULA
LE GRAND JOUR À BERLIN

*Rien à signaler... ou l'apothéose du silence
après une semaine de lutte*

Berlin, 14 mars. — Dès le matin, à 7 heures, chacun de nous se demandait en se rasant de quelles surprises la journée serait faite. Une semaine de spectacle religieux et violent ne nous conduisait pas vers l'optimisme. A tour de rôle, des foules passionnées et ennemies envahissaient le Sportpalace et le Lustgarten. Fifres, clairons, tambours, chœurs et discours violents devaient aboutir à un beau dimanche, où tout Berlin vota dans le calme, le plus vite possible, afin d'aller patiner sur le lac de Wansee, faire du traîneau à voile ou manger des gâteaux dans les pâtisseries de Potsdam.

Le spectacle est provisoirement terminé, apothéose de silence et de calme imprévu.

Après avoir vu les hitlériens, les communistes, les « Casque d'Acier » dominer la rue, chacun leur tour, les promeneurs prirent une revanche dont tout le monde ici paraît confondu.

A 9 heures du matin, j'étais déjà dans la Einbahn-

strasse devant la pâtisserie Rudloff, dont les lettres rouges apparaissent sur un fond gris. Il y a là un peu plus d'une cinquantaine de badauds en me comptant. Deux camions de cinéma, 7 ou 8 photographes, deux schupos, un fox à poil rude. Les membres du gouvernement vont venir voter. Il faut attendre dans une rue sévère et bourgeoise dont le décor n'excite nullement l'imagination. Les opérateurs de cinéma manœuvrent devant une douzaine de facteurs en uniforme. Un jeune voyou en knickerbockers rapiécé, des chaussettes de ski débordantes sur ses chaussures éculées, rit et plaisante. Il n'a qu'une dent, mais elle est en or. Peut-être n'est-elle pas en or. Hommes et femmes viennent voter un à un. Nous attendons M. Brüning qui apparaît à 9 h 20 dans une auto noire. Il descend d'auto, pénètre dans la pâtisserie. Pas un cri, quelques schupos se lèvent, une douzaine au plus ; il sort et la voiture repart. C'est fini. Il faudra encore attendre une heure pour voir entrer M. Meissner, chef du cabinet ; avec le même cérémonial d'une simplicité indiscutable. Le soleil se lève timidement.

La voiture m'emporte encore une fois vers le Wedding, en plein centre du communisme. Voici la Weddingstrasse et, à côté, la Koeslimerstrasse. La police est absente. Les schupos armés de carabines et de mitrailleuses ne sont évidemment pas loin, mais ils sont dissimulés dans une cour quelconque. Le drapeau rouge bat toujours aux fenêtres, un gosse flâne sur le trottoir et c'est tout. Voilà Wedding à midi.

Je redescends par la Ackerstrasse pour gagner l'Alexanderplatz et un restaurant.

J'apprends en lisant un journal : 1) que la vente de l'alcool est interdite pour ce jour ; 2) que les journaux

ne mettent point un transparent et n'affichent pas les résultats de l'élection. Surexcitation d'une part et discussions également dangereuses, d'autre part, me semblent singulièrement compromises par ces mesures préventives.

Vers 3 h 1/2, je roulais dans la direction de Potsdam, à travers le Grunewald. Le paysage qui m'entoure est d'une richesse invraisemblable, urbaine. La nation allemande a dépensé sans compter. On vit mieux en temps normal à Berlin qu'à Paris, c'est-à-dire que la vie est plus confortable pour tous, y compris l'ouvrier et l'employé, qu'en France. Mais pour cela, il ne faut pas faire partie de l'armée des chômeurs. L'Allemagne paye probablement aujourd'hui son goût du confort et de la prodigalité. C'est ainsi que la fourmi de nationalité française peut interpréter ce qu'elle voit sur la route de Potsdam. L'effort accompli par l'Allemagne, dans le sens du confort social, est évidemment grandiose, mais il est disproportionné avec les ressources du pays. A Potsdam, rien à signaler.

Je reprends la route de Berlin. Les lumières s'allument. La nuit va-t-elle tendre un piège à cette tranquillité dominicale qui n'est peut-être qu'un piège ? Voici la Karlsruferstrasse et ses jolis signaux lumineux d'une publicité qui ne manque pas de goût. Voici le téléphone de mon hôtel où un ami m'attend. C'est lui qui téléphonera à la police.

— Allô... Que s'est-il passé ?

— Rien.

— Et ce soir ?

— Probablement peu de choses... Peut-être aux

abords de la gare de Silésie. On ne peut tout de même pas faire une bagarre pour vous plaire...

Les schupos, dont les camions ont parcouru la ville, ont maintenant disparu de la rue.

C'est la nuit, la moitié de la nuit. Nous roulons par la Lintenstrasse, vers le Bulowplatz, en plein quartier communiste, dans un endroit où la vue des schupos en uniforme provoque la haine. Là se dresse la maison de Liebknecht, où se trouvent les bureaux de la « *Rotefahne* ». Je n'aperçois ni communistes, ni schupos. C'est le vide. Autrefois, ce quartier, autour de la Bulowtrasse il y a de cela quelques années pas plus, c'était le plus dangereux de la ville. On a démoli ce quartier pour l'épurer, car il était dangereux, et presque impossible à surveiller; on l'appelait le Scheunenviertel.

Je poursuis ma route par la Volhowstrasse pour atteindre la Grosse Franckfurter Allee, qui correspond à peu près au boulevard de la Chapelle. La circulation est normale. C'est un dimanche; un dimanche un peu moins animé que les autres, un dimanche sans alcool.

La triste gare de Silésie, au bout de cette très large avenue, ne révèle dans ses ombres que quelques filles de bas-étage et quelques fantômes irrésolus.

Il est 9 heures.

Je reviens vers le bureau de la presse étrangère qui est installé à l'hôtel de la Cour de Russie. Les résultats arrivent par « *Tehesef* », comme dit Georges Duhamel, entre deux airs de danse. Le maréchal Hindenburg est en tête. Enfin, les résultats sont annoncés. Il manque 168 450 voix au maréchal Hindenburg pour être élu; c'est le ballottage, bien qu'il

ait groupé sur son nom près de 8 millions de voix de plus qu'Hitler. Celui-ci n'est pas à Berlin.

Quelle signification provisoire pourrait-on donner à la journée de demain ? Les mêmes qui annonçaient des troubles assez sérieux, sont les premiers à prédire le calme. Dans tout cela, il ne me paraît pas que l'Allemagne ait résolu une question sociale importante. Mais cela est une autre chose.

LES MATINS ET LES NUITS
DE LA POLICE

Berlin, 19 mars. — Comme conclusion, je ne dirai pas à cette étude sur la misère de Berlin, mais à ce petit film rapidement déroulé, il me reste encore à décrire la route que j'ai suivie entre deux « Kriminalbezirkssekretär » dont la taille était véritablement athlétique. Je marchais entre eux deux. Il ne me manquait qu'une paire de menottes pour avoir l'air de quelqu'un dans ce milieu, naturellement un « quelqu'un » qui aurait eu des malheurs. La veille au soir, j'avais visité l'asile de nuit de la Froebelstrasse : un immense bâtiment en briques, d'une tristesse légale. Il n'y a rien à dire sur ce genre d'institution. On entre, on est timbré, bouilli, revêtu pour une nuit d'un pyjama en toile à voile, couché et « vidé » comme une quantité négligeable au matin. L'asile de la Froebelstrasse est parfaitement compris. Mais il est sous la surveillance de la police et pour cette raison, bien qu'il puisse contenir deux mille réfugiés, il en héberge à peu près 800. Beaucoup parmi les sans-abris préfèrent, à cause de la police, avoir recours à l'initiative privée. Il existe de nombreux asiles où l'on peut dormir pour quelques sous, dans un dortoir, sur une paillasse. Tout ceci n'est pas

très différent de ce que l'on peut visiter à Paris. Et, à ce propos, je crois bien qu'un journaliste allemand qui aurait visité un Paris situé dans la zone sociale du Berlin que j'ai visitée, eût été plus troublé par l'affreux pittoresque du spectacle. Car la misère à Paris, à cause des anciennes rues, à cause d'une certaine et naturelle négligence d'origine latine, est plus « décorative » que la misère berlinoise. Mais, à Berlin, elle est plus absolue. Le ciel qui couvre les quartiers misérables de Berlin est un ciel opaque dont aucune prière ne peut franchir la sinistre coupole. Les intermédiaires les plus vivants, si l'on peut dire, de la misère populaire qui, par nécessité d'habitation, s'acoquine dans tous les pays avec les classes dangereuses, sont précisément ses personnages, d'un romantisme renouvelé, qui vivent de la fille et du bourgeois, et qui filent comme des loups dans un paysage singulièrement peuplé de policiers plus ou moins bien dissimulés.

La Mulackstrasse, à deux pas de l'Alexanderplatz, est une rue où la misère domine comme une chanson à la mode. Celles qui en sont les annonciatrices sont les lugubres filles libres qui attendent un client dont la seule évocation est un mystère terrifiant. Quel peut être l'homme qui vient ici demander un simulacre de plaisir à des femmes dont l'haleine sent la faim ? C'est là que l'on peut le situer dans sa vraie coloration le romantisme criminel allemand.

A la fin de la guerre, c'est dans une de ces rues, qui vont de l'Alexanderplatz jusqu'à la Dantzigers et du Humboldtthain jusqu'à la gare de Silésie, qu'un criminel d'inspiration monstrueuse sema l'horreur dans Berlin. Il habitait une chambre souterraine, dont l'unique fenêtre apparaissait comme un mauvais

œil à la hauteur du trottoir. Il attirait chez lui les filles soumises. Il les tuait, les dépeçait, les mettait en conserve qu'il mangeait. Cette histoire est vraie. Tous les journaux en ont parlé à l'époque. Elle est indiscutable et montre simplement ce que l'on peut faire de la légende de Saint-Nicolas et des trois enfants, salés, mais cette fois dans un paysage de l'Île de France.

Il existe à Berlin un aspect romantique de la misère, à l'insu des misérables, bien entendu, comme il existe un romantisme pour les classes dangereuses qui se rapproche assez bien du nôtre avant l'influence de l'élégance sportive et bourgeoise sur les malfaiteurs.

Les policiers qui me pilotaient dans ce quartier sans personnalité, où toutes les maisons se ressemblent, où toutes les rues sont aussi larges et aussi longues, étaient de très braves gens. Ils étaient émus par ce qu'ils voyaient. Il y avait de quoi. Dans la Mulackstrasse, au fond d'une cour, nous aperçûmes une triste baraque en plâtre et en bois. Elle avait deux étages et se divisait en quatre logements habités par des chômeurs.

Dans le premier, composé d'une chambre meublée d'une table ronde, d'un éventail en papier, des singes en peluche, de deux chromos, de trois ou quatre casseroles, d'une armoire, d'un divan râpé et d'un lit, il y avait une femme malade dans le lit, une femme brune au visage maigre. L'homme, assis sur le divan (un petit rouquin au visage vert) haussait les épaules. Rien à manger. On attendait le médecin et, probablement, étant donné le visage de la femme, le représentant de l'institution de ceux qui se chargent

d'enterrer les misérables. La chambre à côté offrait le même tableau. Cependant la mère n'était pas malade, c'était, au contraire, une forte brune, qui nous montra ses quatre enfants dont un était malade. Un peu de lait traînait dans une soucoupe, le mari était parti depuis le matin pour trouver du travail, et aussi parce qu'il était affolé par les cris des petits enfants qui voulaient manger. Nous nous engageâmes dans un escalier raide et puant qui conduisait à une porte en toile montée sur un châssis. On nous ouvrit, une petite main se montra pour ouvrir la porte.

— *Polizei!*

Nous entrâmes : la chambre était grande comme une cabane à lapins, directement sous le toit. Sa propriétaire était une toute jeune femme, dix-neuf ans, une petite Juive aux yeux doux. Elle était jolie, mais ça ne se voyait pas tout de suite, à cause de son visage livide marqué par la faim et une maternité prochaine. Je ne saurai vous dire de quoi elle était vêtue. Et pourtant, je l'ai bien regardée. En dehors des affreuses nippes qu'elle portait sur elle, il n'y avait pas un autre vêtement dans la chambre. Sur le lit, se remuait doucement un petit bébé de quinze mois qui suçait, en ronronnant le goulot d'un biberon vide. C'était une petite fille. Et la jeune mère eut encore le courage de sourire en nous disant, elle s'appelle : « Mietze... minet ». Jamais cette femme ne pourra savoir à quel point elle fut belle en ce moment. Je n'ai pas souvent aperçu dans ma vie le voile d'une telle lumière divine sur un visage. C'était une chômeuse.

— Au revoir, petite, lui dit le policier en secouant la tête.

» Nous pouvons aller voir autre chose, me dit-il en mâchant sa courte moustache... parce que je pense que vous n'aurez pas assez d'argent dans votre poche pour continuer cette promenade. »

Nous nous dirigeâmes sans parler vers l'Invalidenstrasse où nous visitâmes un enfer — maison de passe — hôtel, dont les taudis étaient indescriptibles. Un garçon goguenard nous précédait. On ouvrait des portes : des filles, des hommes, surpris à six heures du matin dans leur sommeil, s'effaraien, écarquillaient des yeux de condamnés à mort sur nos silhouettes encadrées dans l'ouverture de la porte. J'en eus vite assez. « Ah ! laissons-les dormir, bon Dieu ! Laissons-les dormir. Ils ont payé assez cher pour cela ! »

Nous allâmes encore visiter une Waermehalle, au commencement de l'Ackerstrasse, au 2. Ici, la résignation ne semblait pas régner. Nous ne montâmes pas dans les chambres. Nous nous contentâmes de faire quelques pas dans le restaurant en murmurant un « *n'tag* » familier. Des gens, qui se faisaient rares dans une manière de salon de coiffure aux murs dénudés, nous observèrent effrontément et ricanèrent entre eux. Nous ne prolongeâmes pas notre visite.

— Ici, me dit mon compagnon, vous n'auriez jamais pu mettre les pieds avec un autre policier. J'ai la réputation d'être juste. Les gens me craignent mais me respectent à leur manière. Oui, dans cette maison, si l'on avait su que vous étiez Français, on ne vous aurait pas laissé entrer. Cette « maison de repos » peut contenir huit cents clients. Il y a des jours où cela va mal. Nous cernons la boîte avec dix inspecteurs de la Sûreté et cinquante schupos. Ils

détestent particulièrement les schupos en uniforme. Il y a quelques mois, un journaliste hollandais a été assassiné dans ce coin-là. Il eut le tort de suivre deux « tippelschikse », deux « petites vagabondes ». On n'a pas encore retrouvé les assassins. On pense qu'il a été tué par les femmes elles-mêmes. C'est ici le royaume des « schwergewicht », « les poids lourds » comme ils se nomment. »

Je ne sais pas exactement quel est le rapport de ce « Kaschemme », de ce bouge, avec ceux de Paris. Cette fois, je ne trouve pas bien que la vie nocturne de la pègre berlinoise ne soit pas très différente de celle de la pègre parisienne, comme la nôtre était en 1914, par exemple.

C'est ainsi que l'auberge des « Petits Lions » n'est pas très différente du « Clair de Lune » et que le « Mexico » de la Prenslauerstrasse peut se comparer à certains restaurants et bars de la rue Pigalle et de la rue de Douai. Pour en saisir la différence essentielle, il faut y vivre et y vivre « sans se raidir ».

Dans tout ce quartier, les « souricières » abondent. La police est bien renseignée.

Nous primes le dernier verre, un cognac, devant le comptoir du « Burgerich Kaffee », le Café Bourgeois. Je laissai mon verre plein sur le comptoir. Une fille, sur un clin d'œil de la patronne — qui ressemblait à une souris à lunettes — se dirigea vers ce but. Elle prit mon verre et l'avala. Un peu de rouge vint fleurir son visage qui était celui d'une de ces jeunes femmes définitivement matées par les exigences de sa profession.

Dans le fond de la pièce, devant le phono à pick-

up, trois hommes buvaient de la bière, le regard ironique et hostile. Ils s'appelaient probablement, Rheinold, Karl et Monsieur Pums. Moi, je me sentais rajeuni de vingt-cinq ans.

ENTRE DEUX DÉCORS

Avant de reprendre le « Nord Express » qui me ramènera sans transition dans un petit village français, je suis allé rôder autour de la gare de la Frédéricstrasse.

C'est dans les gares que l'on peut se charger d'une mélancolie féconde. Il y a des appareils automatiques qui distribuent la mélancolie, comme d'autres, en échange d'une pièce de dix pfennigs, donnent du chocolat ou un petit morceau de savon.

Pourtant, quand vient l'été, je pense que Berlin doit être une ville gaie et naturelle, une ville sans contrainte. Les environs de Berlin sont jolis et confortables. L'agriculture cède la place aux sports et la betterave avisée vend le terrain aux divers clubs de football, de course à pied et de gymnastique. Le sport a vaincu les encyclopédiques et, petit à petit, les droits de l'homme et du citoyen. C'est par le sport que l'humanité change non seulement sa morale, mais les causes de sa sentimentalité. Le monde sera conquis par les clubs de football et de gymnastique qui, déjà, mobilisent toute la jeunesse et les vieux dirigeants en temps de paix. Mais je ne donnerais pas un sou de la situation des vieux dirigeants.

Il y a quelques jours, je suis allé, invité par des amis, dans un petit cinéma de l'ouest où l'on donnait en réunion privée — nous n'étions qu'une vingtaine de spectateurs — un film d'inspiration communiste mais de pittoresque franchement allemand. Ce film se déroula dans sa version première, qui devait être censurée, sans aucun doute. Cela les auteurs le prévoyaient, non pas tant à cause de son rayonnement sentimental et social, parfaitement conforme aux désirs de l'ouvrier allemand, que pour son pittoresque nudiste qui, à la vérité, ne m'a pas choqué.

Le nu, tel que nous en subissons les diverses forces, n'existe et ne rayonne que sous l'influence du décor. C'est le décor qui fait tout. Une jeune fille nue assise sur les banquettes d'un compartiment du métro est incomparable à la même jeune fille nue qui tire sur les avirons d'un « quatre » ou d'un « huit ». C'est le cas pour les jeunes sportives chastes qui nagent et font du canot à Kühle-Wampe. C'est le nom du film et c'est aussi le nom d'un club communiste aux environs de Berlin.

Ce film très jeune et très pur, qui réunit les noms de quelques jeunes hommes comme Bert Brecht et Ernst Ottwald qui en écrivirent le texte, Hans Eisler qui en composa la musique et G. Th. Dudow, le metteur en scène, est joué dans l'ensemble par des ouvriers et des ouvrières. Le rôle principal : celui de la petite employée sans place, est tenu par Hertha Thiele qui a composé une délicieuse silhouette de petite jeune fille du Wedding.

C'est, en somme, un documentaire sur le chômage qui règne à Berlin.

Le film prolonge toutefois l'impression personnelle

des spectateurs en essayant d'indiquer discrètement les horizons d'une vie, sinon spontanément meilleure, mais capable de le devenir en empruntant une autre route.

La route qui conduit à Kühle-Wampe est une route cernée par la faim, l'avortement nécessaire et le suicide. Sous les frondaisons, au bord de la rivière, qui n'est pas bordée de bungalows bourgeois, on peut croire, pendant un beau dimanche d'été, à la réalité d'un paradis terrestre.

Si je cite ce film, c'est qu'il est excellent et qu'il montre à merveille la situation physique et sentimentale des ouvriers et des ouvrières de Berlin. L'influence russe ne se fait pas sentir dans la trame littéraire, lyrique et documentaire de l'œuvre ; elle se fait plutôt reconnaître dans sa plastique et dans les images animées qui reproduisent la vie sous les ombrages de Kühle-Wamp. Je ne connais rien, parmi les films, même d'inspiration communiste, qui furent donnés chez nous, qui puisse se comparer avec celui-ci dont la partie sentimentale doit être énorme sur une foule qui a intérêt à s'émouvoir.

Les plus riches images que peut offrir un peuple sont celles qui naissent du peuple. Elles comportent tous les mystères des forces inconnues ou inemployées. Ce sont des images de l'aube, quand il s'agit du travail et des images de la nuit quand il s'agit des déchets que le travail abandonne. Ces déchets sont d'ailleurs actifs et rusés.

Ils rongent, sous de faux visages, les bois qui maintiennent l'édifice. Ils sont nés des lumières de la nuit, et des pensées secrètes, des pensées inavouées de toutes les classes sociales. D'un côté, ils soutien-

nent l'ordre qui les fait vivre et de l'autre ils tendent la main pour saisir la révolte au passage. Filles et ruffians nourris de néon, d'alcool, d'humiliations et de cambriolages, attendent, au bord de la nuit, des « combinaisons » nouvelles qui puissent les faire vivre.

Car, à Berlin comme à Paris, ils vivent mal, car, à Berlin comme à Paris, la nuit crapuleuse ne nourrit pas et ne divertit pas son homme. Tout ce que j'ai vu entre minuit et trois heures du matin, à l'heure des confidences de la rue, autour de l'Alexanderplatz, n'est pas différent de ce que j'ai vu à Paris. Si Berlin n'a guère de point de contact avec Paris, il offre, cependant, un « je ne sais quoi », un « flebile nescio quid » qui réunit assez bien ses deux pègres. Marlous, filles, pédérastes, tout cela se retrouve également dans les rues de Paris entre la place de la Bastille, la place Pigalle et Montparnasse. On a décrit parfaitement et copieusement la vie du plaisir dans les nuits de Berlin. Tout ce que j'ai lu sur ce sujet me paraît exact, mais pas du tout exceptionnel par rapport à un Paris nocturne singulièrement peuplé de fainéants anormaux et de jeunes combinars à tête de mouton pervers.

J'ai passé huit nuits dans les mauvaises rues de Berlin, huit nuits à contempler des murs quelconques derrière lesquels il se passait quelque chose. Parfois le rideau s'entrouvrait et je pouvais voir quoi ? Ma foi, ce que je connaissais bien avant d'avoir attrapé un bon rhume dans la Prezlauerstrasse et dans la Skalizerstrasse pour en avoir subi chez nous la terrifiante médiocrité.

Berlin ne diffère point beaucoup de Paris par le fantastique social de ses nuits. Tout au plus peut-on

reconnaître plus de candeur dans la présentation de certaines pensées secrètes des hommes enchaînés à cette vie, comme « sujets » et comme clients.

Mais ce n'est pas en nous appuyant sur la connaissance de la pègre que nous devons trouver les éléments d'une sympathie réciproque. La différence entre le Français et l'Allemand est moléculaire, strictement matérielle. Cependant, le malheur commun permet de comprendre bien des choses. Les lois du malheur sont des lois parfaitement internationales.

Deutsche Erstausgabe

Pierre Pica Oriant Fotoband *Berlin* gestattet auch fast ein Jahrhundert später eine immer noch faszinierend überraschende Reise in eine Stadt im Umbruch, in der die Verbindung von (preußischen) Traditionen und NS-Modernisierung ein zunehmend bedrohliches Unheimliches sichtbar und lesbar werden lässt. Das ist nicht ohne aktuelle Bezüge, die Lektüre der Vergangenheit verweist immer wieder in unsere Gegenwart.

Der Herausgeber dieser Wiederentdeckung, Wolfgang Asholt, Honorarprofessor am Institut für Romanistik der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaftler, widmet sich u. a. den europäischen Avantgarden, ihren Projekten und ihrem literarisch-künstlerischen Umfeld sowie der Reiseliteratur (zwischen Paris–Berlin–Moskau) der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Herausgeber und Verlag folgen in ihrer Edition der französischen Erstausgabe in Layout und Nichtpaginierung.

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Pierre Mac Orlan

BERLIN

Herausgegeben und mit einem Nachwort
von Wolfgang Asholt

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&

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B E R L I N

Berlin ist eine Stadt ohne Alter: Manchmal ist sie eine recht junge Frau, nie eine alte Dame. Tiefe Gefühlsverwirrungen hinterlassen bei ihr höchstens kaum sichtbare Falten. Ihr ungeschminktes Gesicht blüht beim Klang der widersprüchlichsten Fanfaren auf: Es ist eine Stadt, die den stolzen Lärm liebt und die sich gegen Selbstzweifel mit großen kollektiven und, natürlich, historischen Emotionen schützt.

So wie sie ist, geht von ihr für den Fremden eine unleugbare Anziehung aus, deren Ursprung eher literarisch als plastisch ist. Zwischen den Rittern der Vereinigung der Panckgrafen, die wie die Soldaten von Montecuculli [eigentlich Montecuccoli] gekleidet sind, und jenen, die Sprüche des Simplicius Simplicissimus und der Vagabundin Mutter Courage gehört hatten, beschränkt sich der Unterschied auf einige Details einer rein internationalen Mechanik. Wenn die Elektrizität und der Rest den Schein des menschlichen Lebens in Berlin wie anderswo und insbesondere in Paris verändert haben, so ist das verborgene und populäre Gesicht der Stadt den Traditionen der Rasse treu geblieben. Aus diesem Grund ist es eine höfliche und rüde, eine komplizierte und einfache Stadt. Es ist schwierig, den zugleich unveränderlichen und wechselhaften Charakter dieser Stadt zu erfassen. Berlin ist weit mehr der Kopf Deutschlands als sein Herz. Wenn der eine befiehlt, spielt das andere die Rolle des Rebellen. Das gestattet es dem Land, den Film einer häufig phantastischen Logik abzuspulen. Die literarischen und sozialen Bilder dieses Films bieten einen nahezu perfekten Aspekt dessen, was die soziale Phantastik dieser Zeit bildet. Das ist kein Chaos, sondern das Leben mitten in einer geheimnisvollen Krise. Die Stadt Berlin hat mehrere Herzen: Das eine läßt die Arterien pochen, die am Alexanderplatz, dieser kalten Place Clichy, zusammenströmen, das andere ist das Nachtleben des Kurfürstendamms. Es gibt andere Herzen, die ein geheimnisvolleres, weniger pittoreskes Berliner Leben animieren. Das Berliner Pittoreske ist ziemlich verborgen. Je nach der Uhrzeit ist es zart oder tragisch.

Wenn eine gefühlvolle Zartheit Berlin ergreift, ist es eine Stadt, der man nachtrauert und deren elegantes und graziöses Bild nicht erlischt. Die Stadt kann ihre Eigentümlichkeiten nicht sortieren: Die sportlichen Ophelias des Sonntags, die anständigsten und liebenswertesten jungen Frauen, geraten ungeschminkt mit dem dunklen Dämon ihrer Rasse in Kontakt, der in manchen Nächten, deren soziale Bedeutsamkeit offensichtlich ist, am Tor des Henkers stöhnt, dieses schwarz gekleideten Holzfällers mit seidenweißen Handschuhen. Der moderne Romantismus, der eigenartigerweise die seltsamsten Erfindungen der Imagination übertrifft, findet in diesen Straßen, die sich ausnahmslos ähneln, die seltensten Besonderheiten der Werke auf, die er inspiriert.

Von den eleganten Rasenflächen des Thiergarten bis zu den großen Elendshäusern in der Acker- und der Mulackstraße organisiert die gleiche Person, das heißt der literarische Dämon von Berlin, in dieser Weise die Spektakel des inneren Lebens der Stadt. Diese Inszenierungen sind nur für diejenigen sichtbar, die sie dank ihres Talents aus dem Schatten auf die weiße Leinwand eines Tages ohne Leidenschaft projizieren können. Für alle, die von den Dingen des Lebens nicht mehr erwarten als ein zudem noch mittelmäßiges Almosen, sind die Mauern hier wie alle Mauern einer Großstadt: Ihre Geschichte ist in einen beliebigen Stadtführer oder -plan eingeschlossen, der den gewöhnlichen Worten nicht ihre wirklich ergreifende Bedeutung zu geben vermag.

Unabhängig davon, um welche Enthüllungen man sie bittet, ist Berlin eine geheimnisvolle Stadt, wie London, wie Amsterdam, wie Hamburg, wie alle Städte, die der nordischen Romantik ausgeliefert sind. Alle Bilder dieses Albums, das Lust darauf erweckt, Berlin kennenzulernen, verweisen auf ihren Ursprung in einer belesenen Melancholie.

Diese Melancholie, jene der Erinnerung, verleiht der Kunst des Reisens eine Bedeutung, die selbst von den besten Reiseführern nicht immer enthüllt werden kann und deren Lehren ein jeder von uns mit den Bildern seiner eigenen Erfahrung vervollständigen muß.

Paris/Berlin 1935

Pierre Mac Orlan



... den Vogel von Tempelhof, des berühmten Berliner Flughafens. Die Überlegenheit des Flugzeugs gegenüber dem Vogel besteht darin, dass man es nicht essen kann. Vielleicht verachtet der Mann mit dem Mauser-Karabiner und dem Tirolerhut deshalb die Erscheinung seiner ausgemergelten Gewalt.

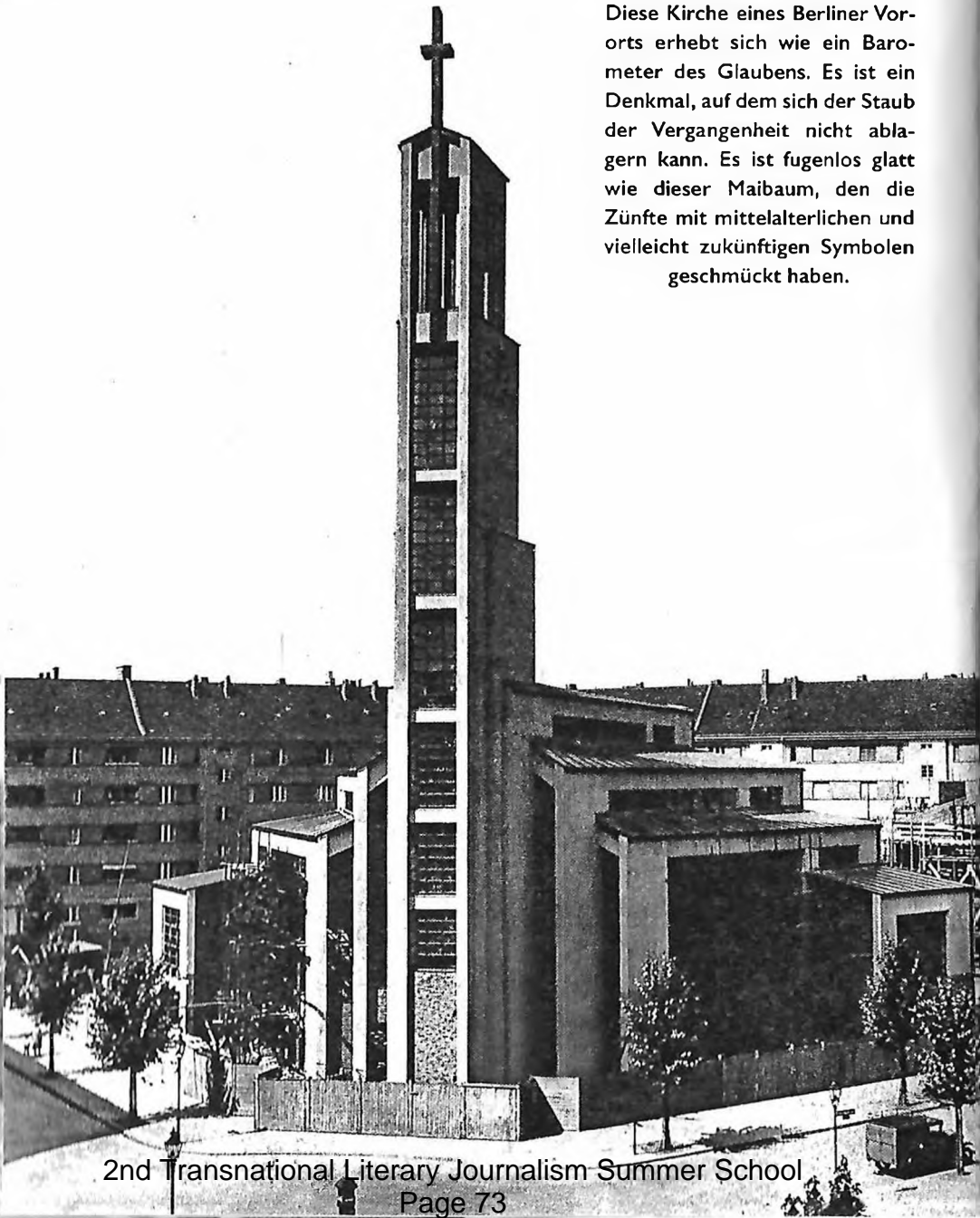
Welche Pläne verbergen
sich hinter der sorgen-
vollen Stirn Hermann
Görings, dem rechten
Arms des Führers.

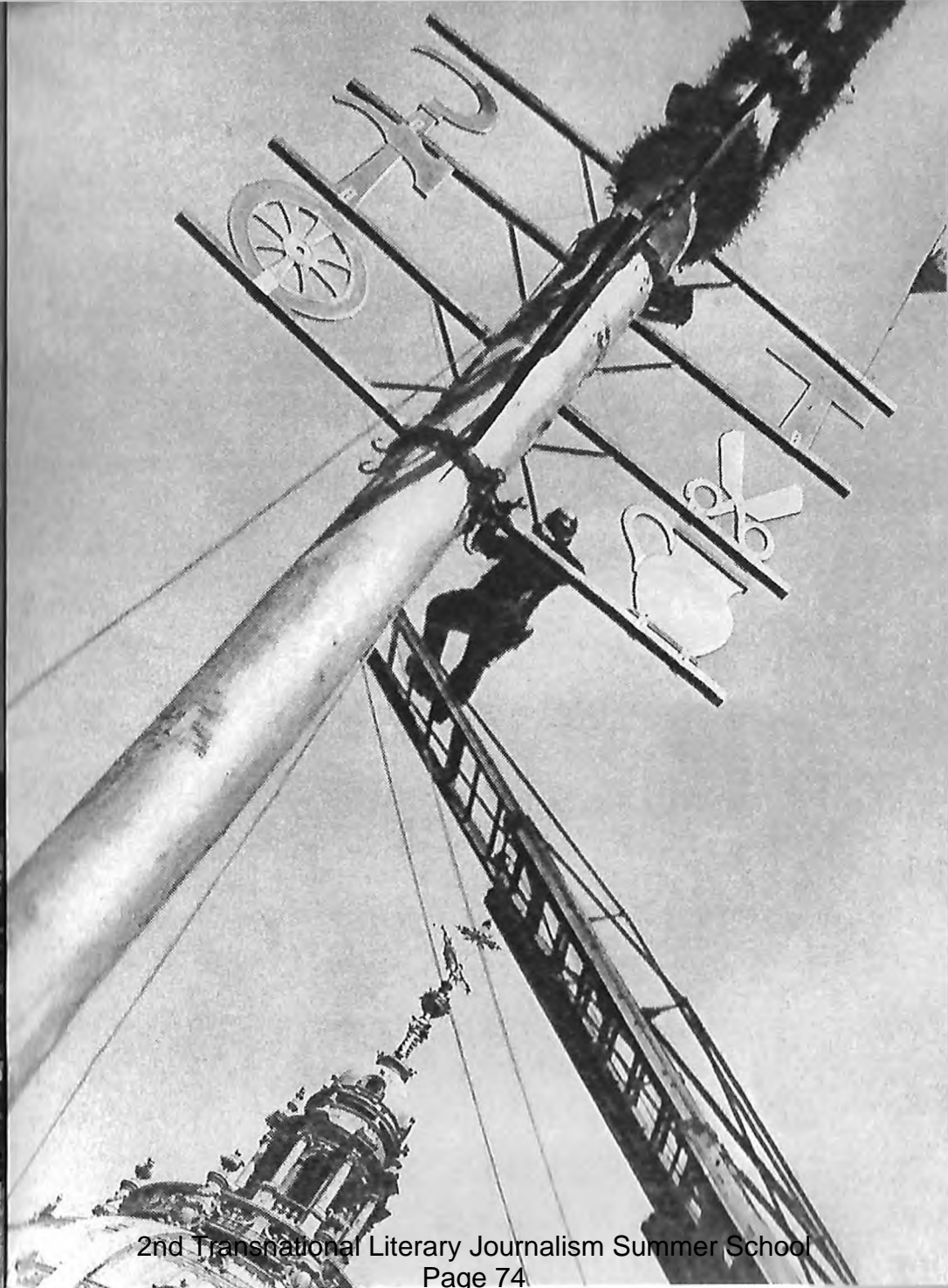


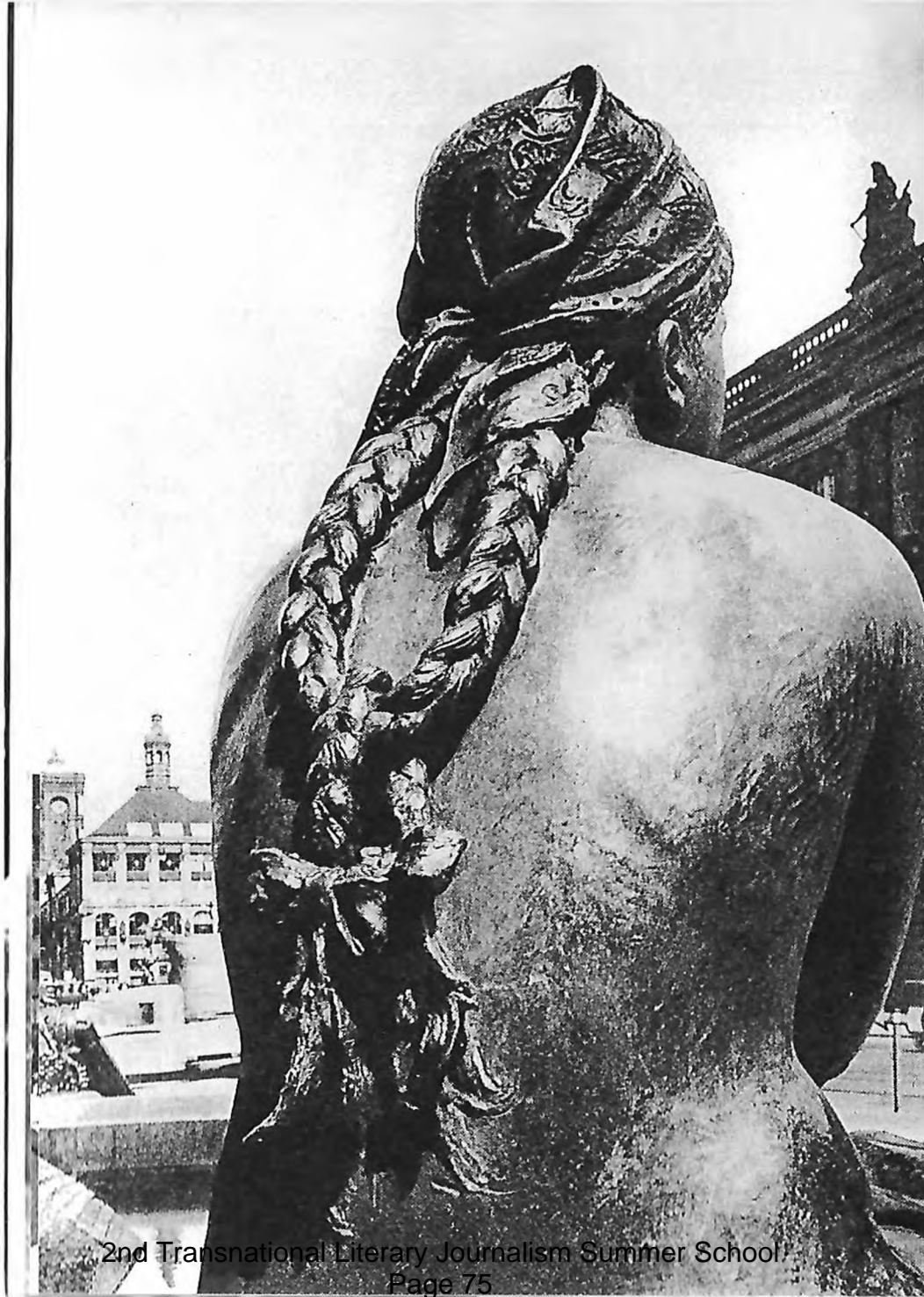
Träumt er vom Frieden oder vom Krieg, und deuten diese Übungen der „Passiven Verteidigung“ nur auf den Wunsch hin, den Gefahren einer Aggression vorzubeugen?



Diese Kirche eines Berliner Vororts erhebt sich wie ein Barometer des Glaubens. Es ist ein Denkmal, auf dem sich der Staub der Vergangenheit nicht ablagern kann. Es ist fugenlos glatt wie dieser Maibaum, den die Zünfte mit mittelalterlichen und vielleicht zukünftigen Symbolen geschmückt haben.









Vor dem Rathaus überwacht die Germania von Begas für die menschliche Ewigkeit das Schicksal derer ihrer Rasse. Das ist die Vergangenheit und die Zukunft, so wie das populäre Gesicht von Marlene Dietrich [sic] eine junge deutsche Frau im Dekor unserer Zeit evoziert.



Und auf das Bild der jungen Frau des
Hordens, so wie das Kino es prokla-
miert, richten die korrekten und auf-
opferungsvollen Polizisten ihre zivilen
und militärischen Gedanken.





Am Ausgang der U-Bahn, wo alle Klassen der Gesellschaft ineinander aufgehen, wird eine alte Frau, die das Elend blind macht, mit den Schritten des Dr. Schacht nicht ihre Chance kommen sehen. So ist das Leben.



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Hier der Mann der Straße und sein kleines friedliches Handwerk. Er wartet darauf, dass die Rosenkönigin, begleitet von den Lohengrinen, die aus den Vorstadtgärten gekommen sind, von ihrem Umzugswagen herabsteigt und ihm einen unvergeßlichen romantischen Kuß gibt.

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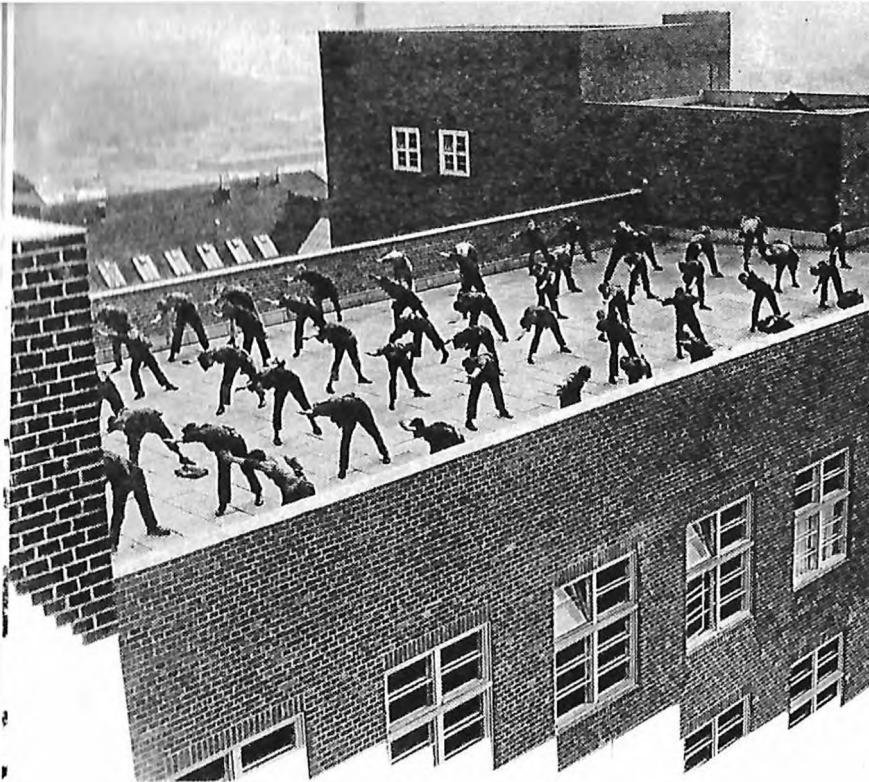


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Die Arbeitslosen sind hier wie anderswo, das heißt sie ähneln den internationalen Massen des Jahres 1935. Die Landschaft, die die Siemensfabriken bieten, zeigt die Berliner Straße, und zweifelsohne die Vorteile der einstweilig bezahlten Arbeit.





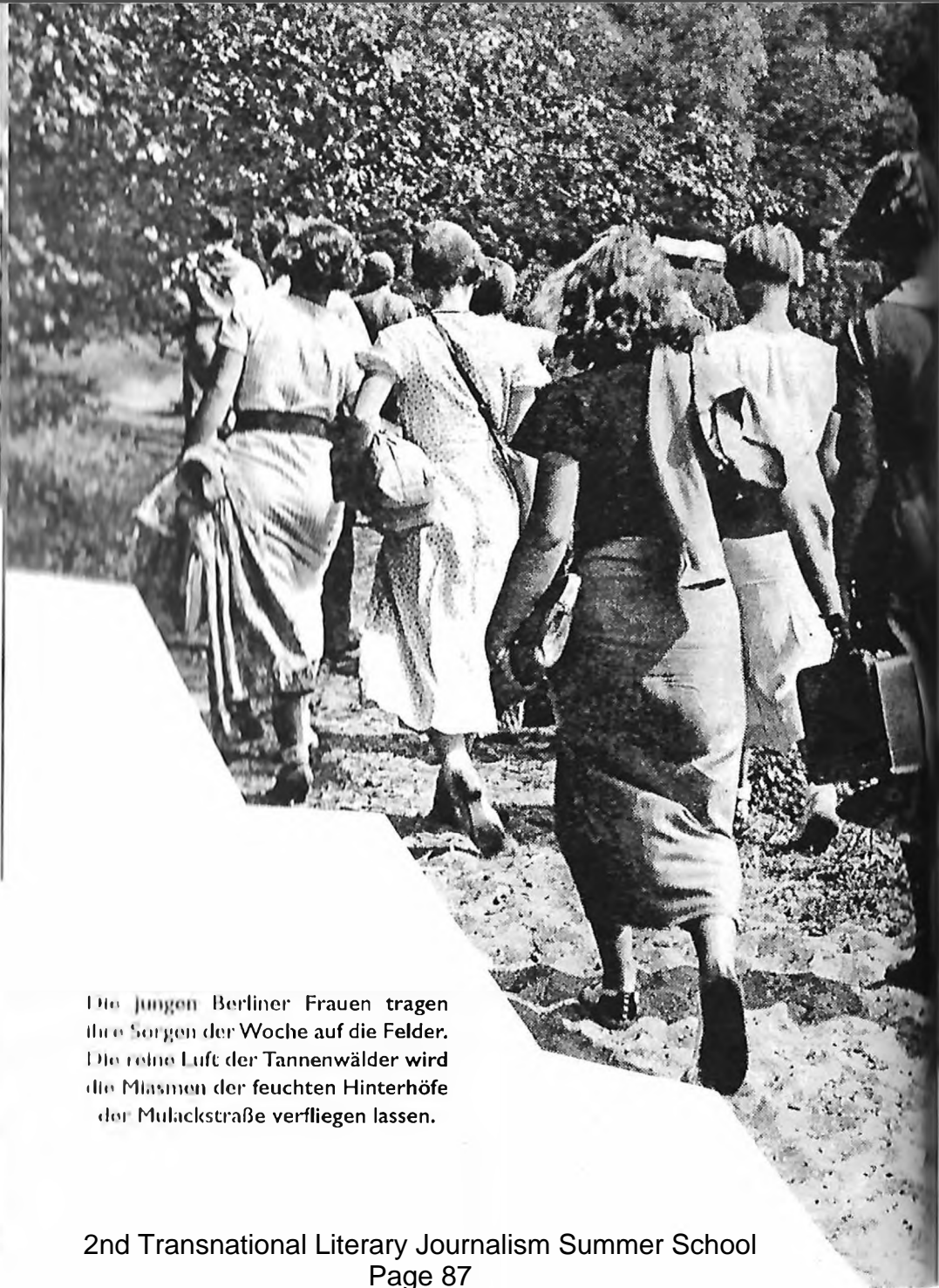
Über den Dächern wird die Disziplin geübt. Das ist eine neue Weise, um dem legendären Flötenspieler Hans Gehör zu schenken, der die Ratten zu Zielen (ver)führt, die die Zukunft der Menschheit mysteriös erscheinen läßt.



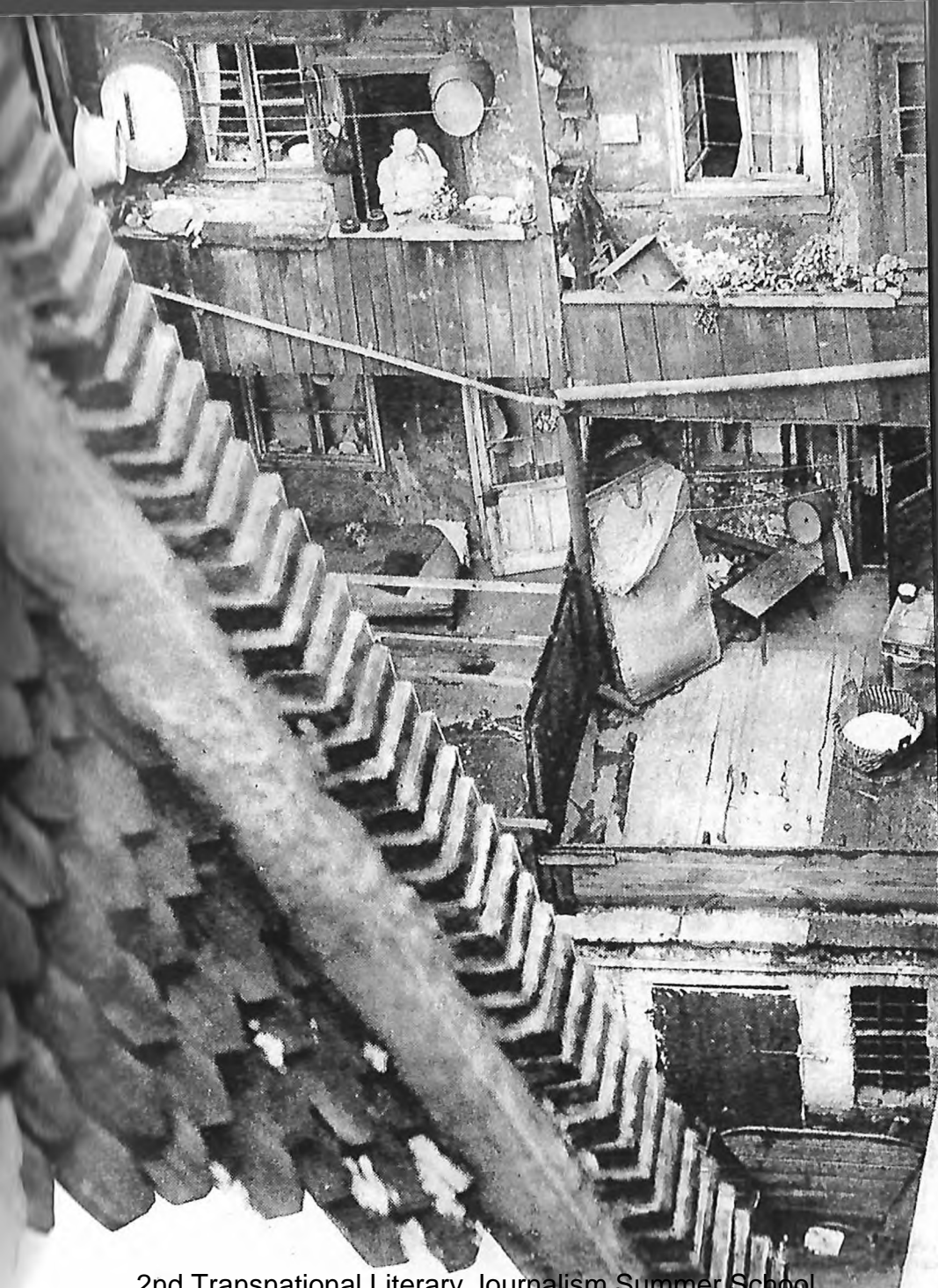


Hier mischt sich der Prinz Wilhelm unter die Leute der Straße. Die Gelegenheit, etwas zu geben ist wichtiger als das, was man gibt, und der Regierungschef bietet den schönen, fröhlich beblumten Bäuerinnen das Almosen einer Erinnerung, die nie verwelken wird.





Die jungen Berliner Frauen tragen
ihre Sorgen der Woche auf die Felder.
Die reine Luft der Tannenwälder wird
die Miasmen der feuchten Hinterhöfe
der Mulackstraße verfliegen lassen.





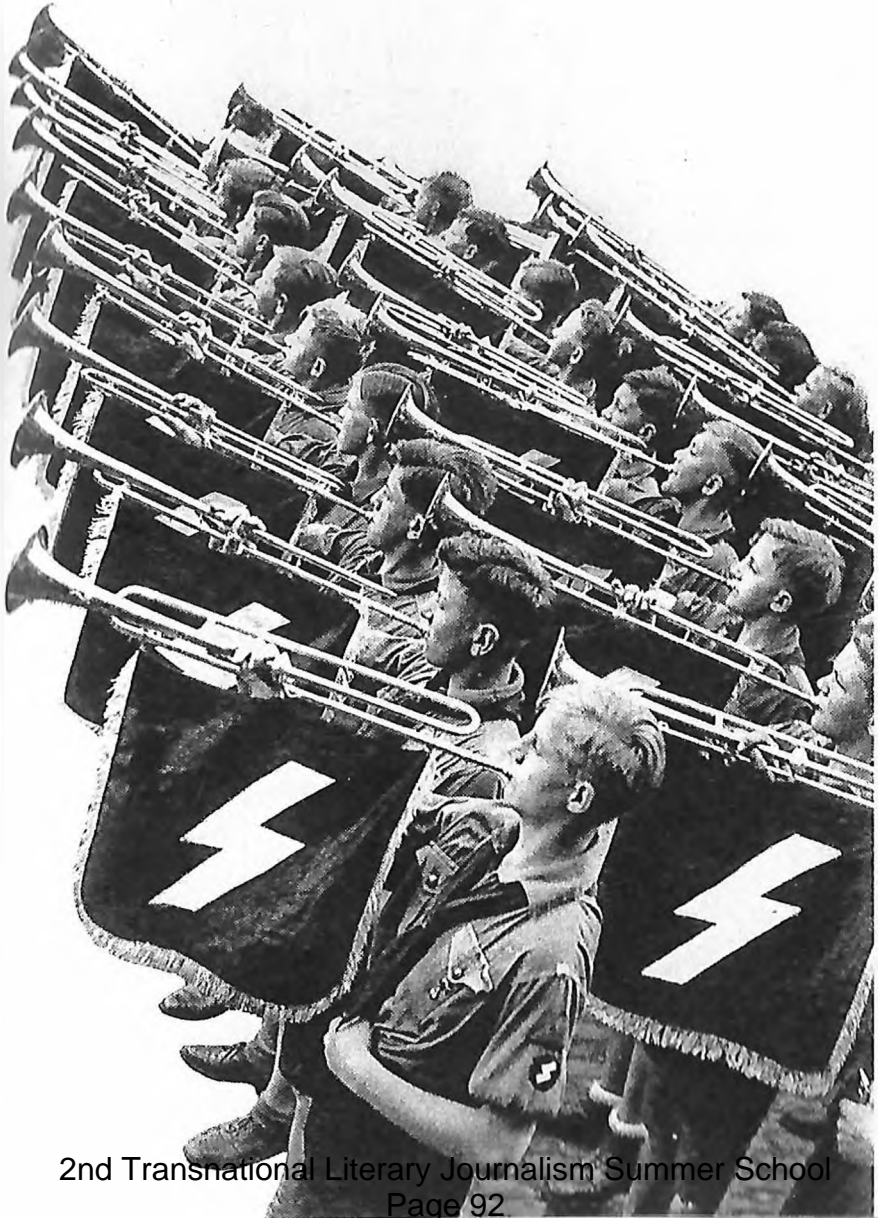
Mädchen, die wie die Meerese Göttin Amphitrite angezogen sind,
Siegerinnen, die an den Ufern der schönen städtischen Seen aus
den Wogen steigen. Sie scheinen mit guter Laune die graziösen
Bäuerinnen zu begrüßen, die noch die alte Tracht der unschuldigen
Feste tragen.

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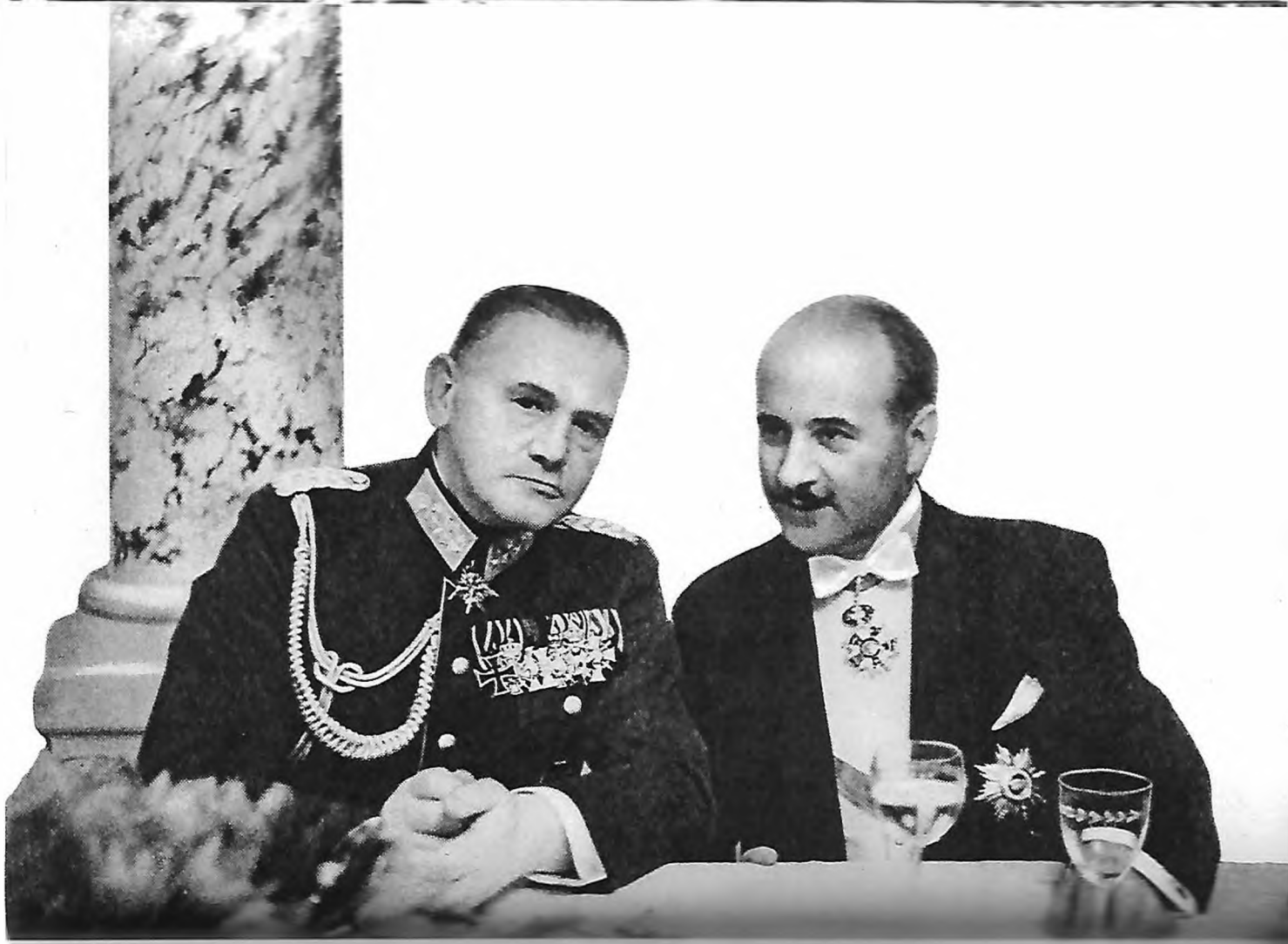
Das Ausflugsschiff, das die Hoffnungen einer ganzen Arbeitswoche geladen hat, führt den jungen Mann aus der Frederikstraße [Friedrichstraße] und das frivole Mädchen aus dem Wedding spazieren. Begrüßen die „Pfadfinder“ diesen Aufbruch mit den alten Traditionen der Kavallerie-Trompeten?





Ein gleicher Geist besetzt die Paraden der nationalen Existenz unter den lateinischen und klassischen Zeichen der auf ewig verbundenen Venus und Mars.



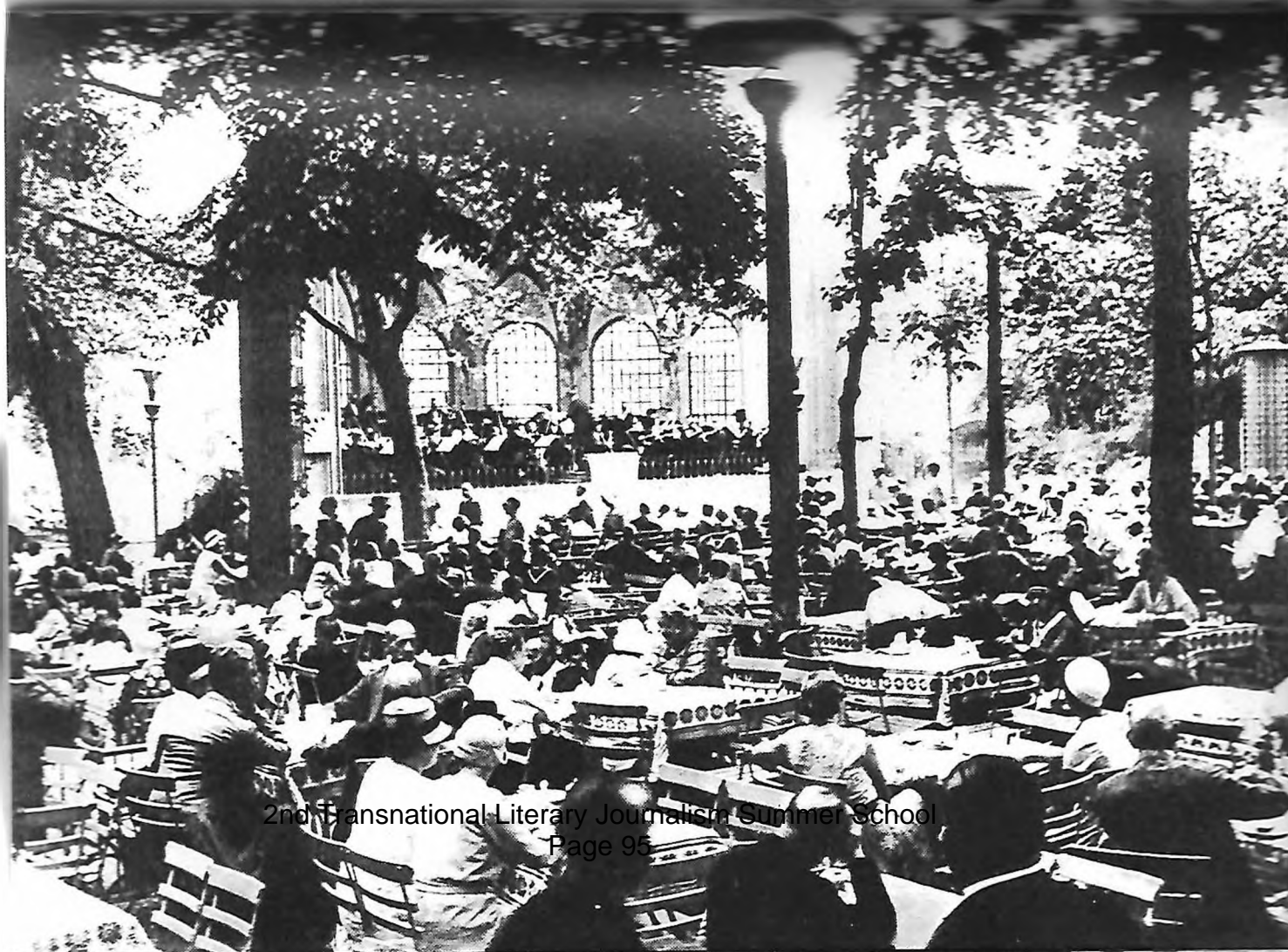


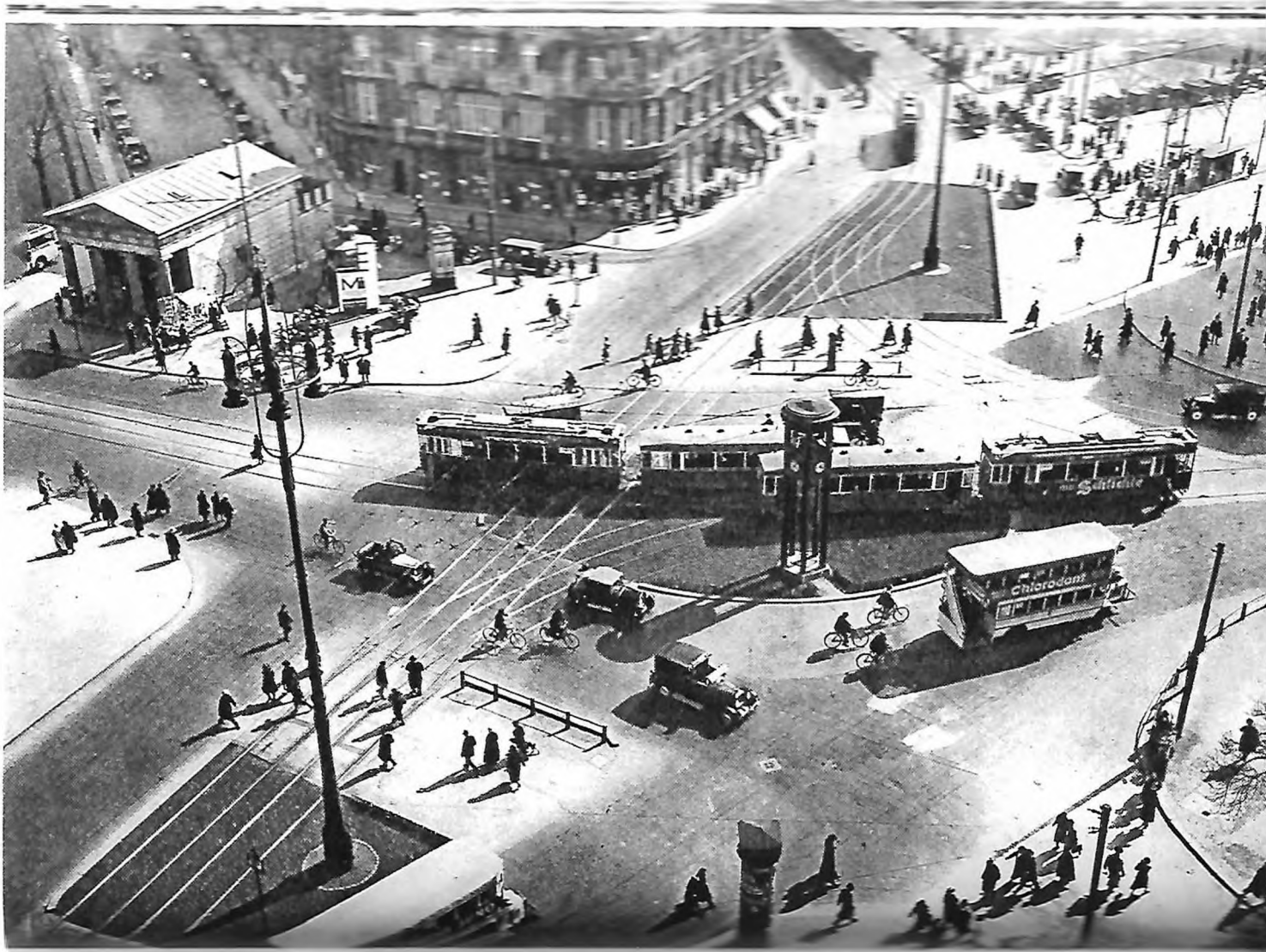
Der Repräsentant Frankreichs und der General von Blomberg bezu-
gen die Zeit dieses Albums, wohingegen die Weißen Russen, die von
einem Popen in prächtigem Kostüm und mit einem Hakenkreuz-Banner
gesegnet werden, das Album in der feierlichen Umgebung eines stillen
städtischen Parks situieren.



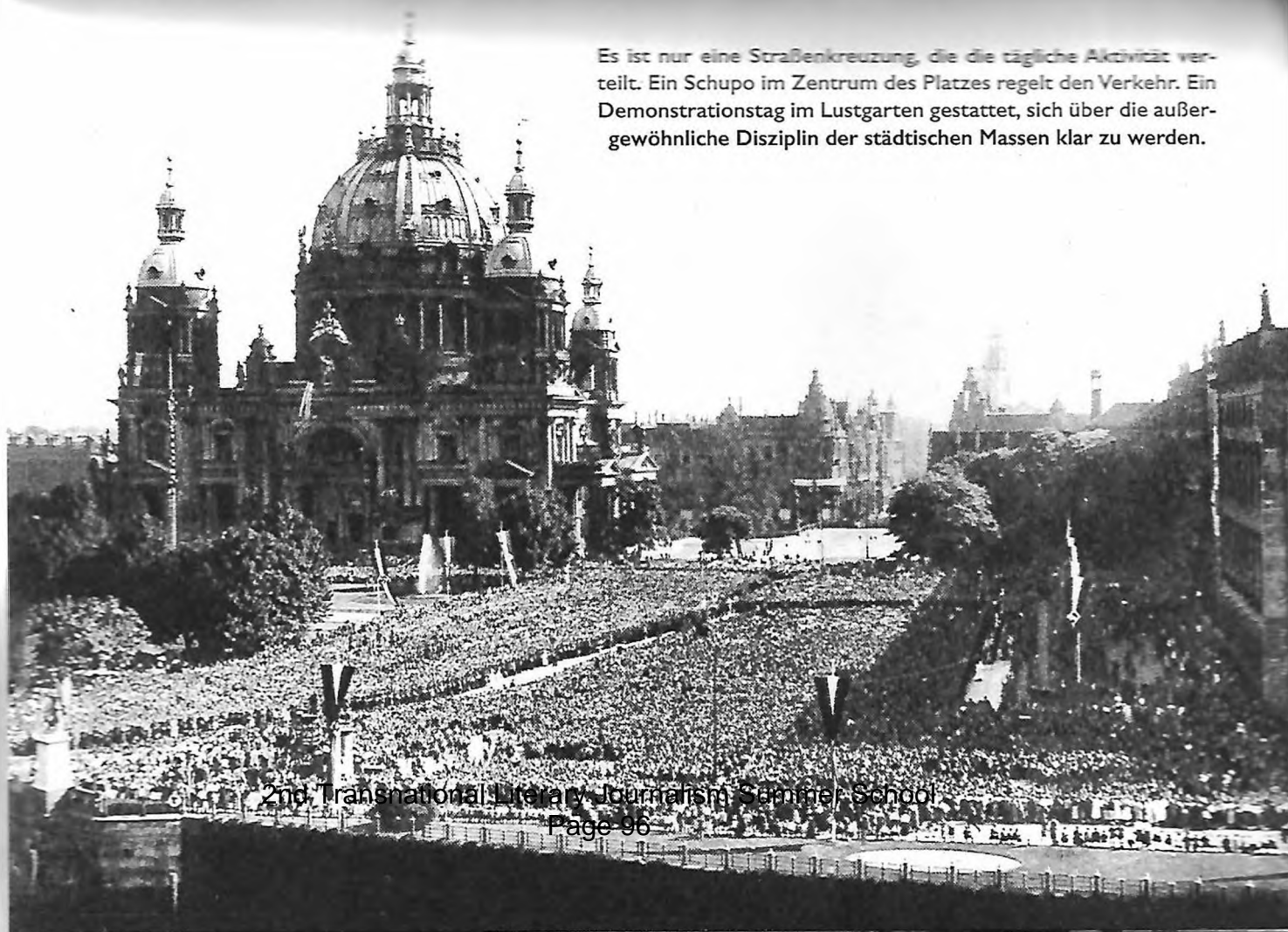


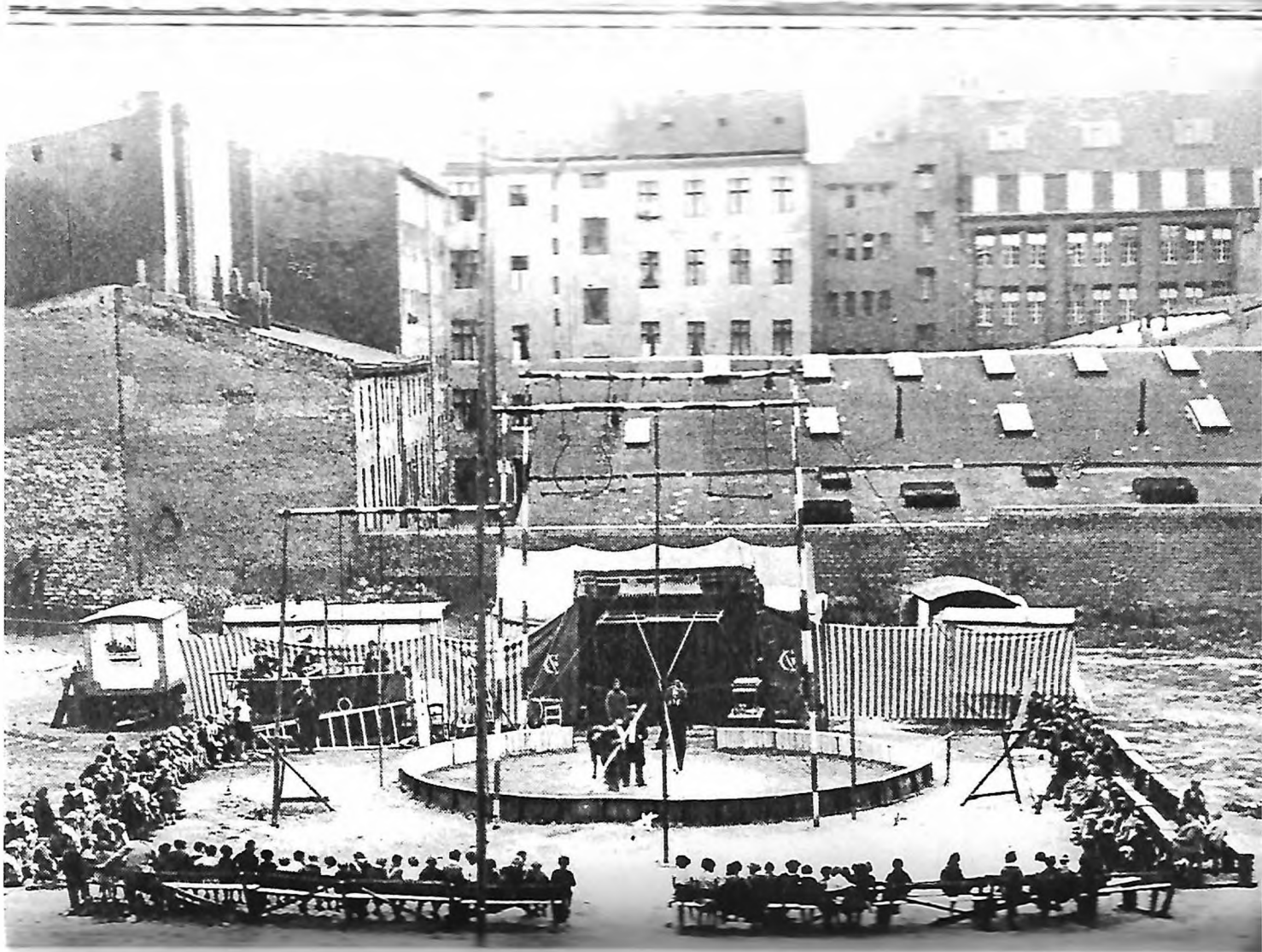
Um die Stadt herum kommt es zur merkwürdigen Blüte von Häuschen, in denen das Glück nicht wohnt. Das Glück hat sich zumindest für den Augenblick an den kleinen Tischen niedergelassen, um ein exzellentes Orchester in dem berühmten Restaurant des Zoos zu hören.





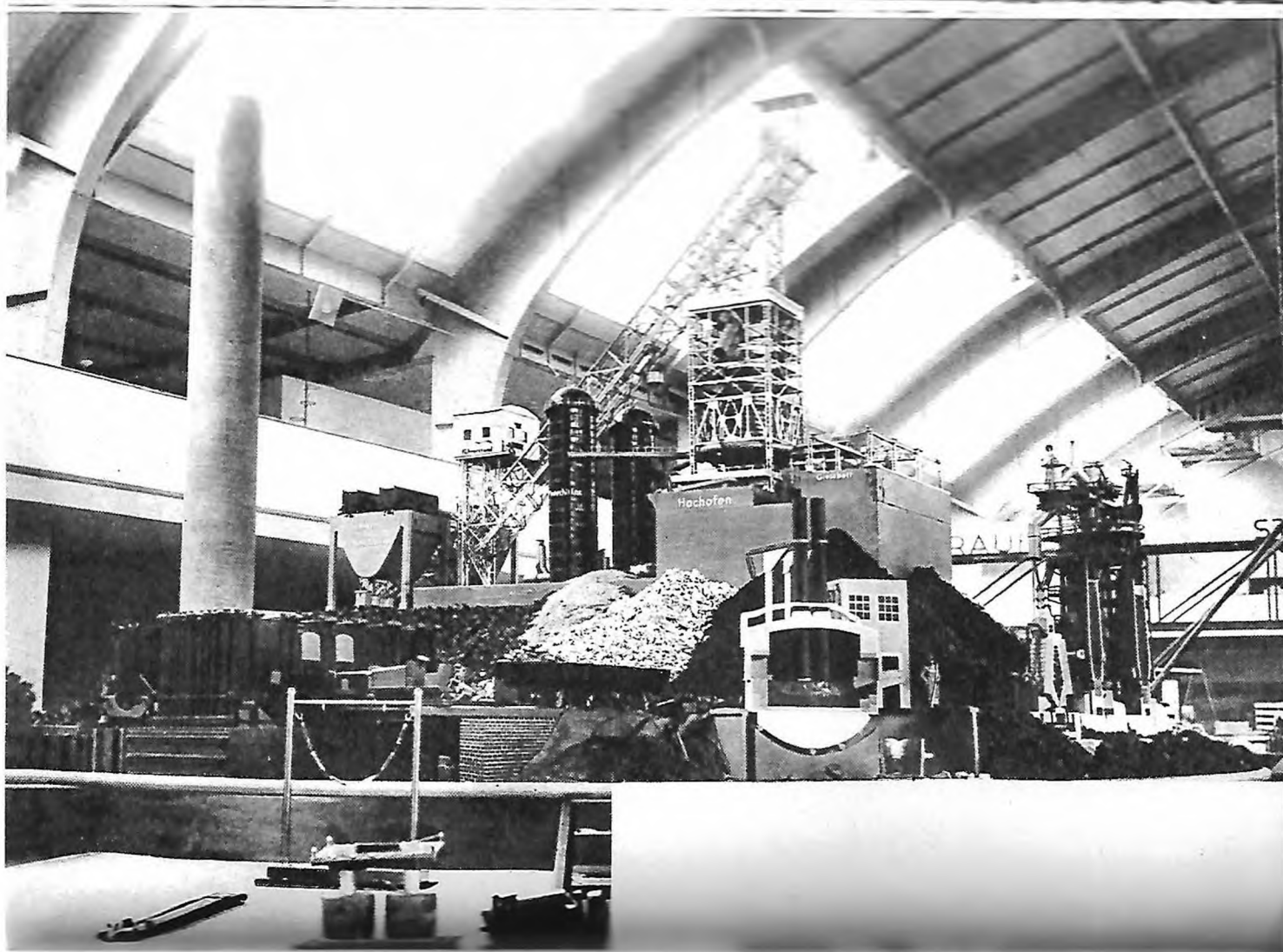
Es ist nur eine Straßenkreuzung, die die tägliche Aktivität verteilt. Ein Schupo im Zentrum des Platzes regelt den Verkehr. Ein Demonstrationstag im Lustgarten gestattet, sich über die außergewöhnliche Disziplin der städtischen Massen klar zu werden.



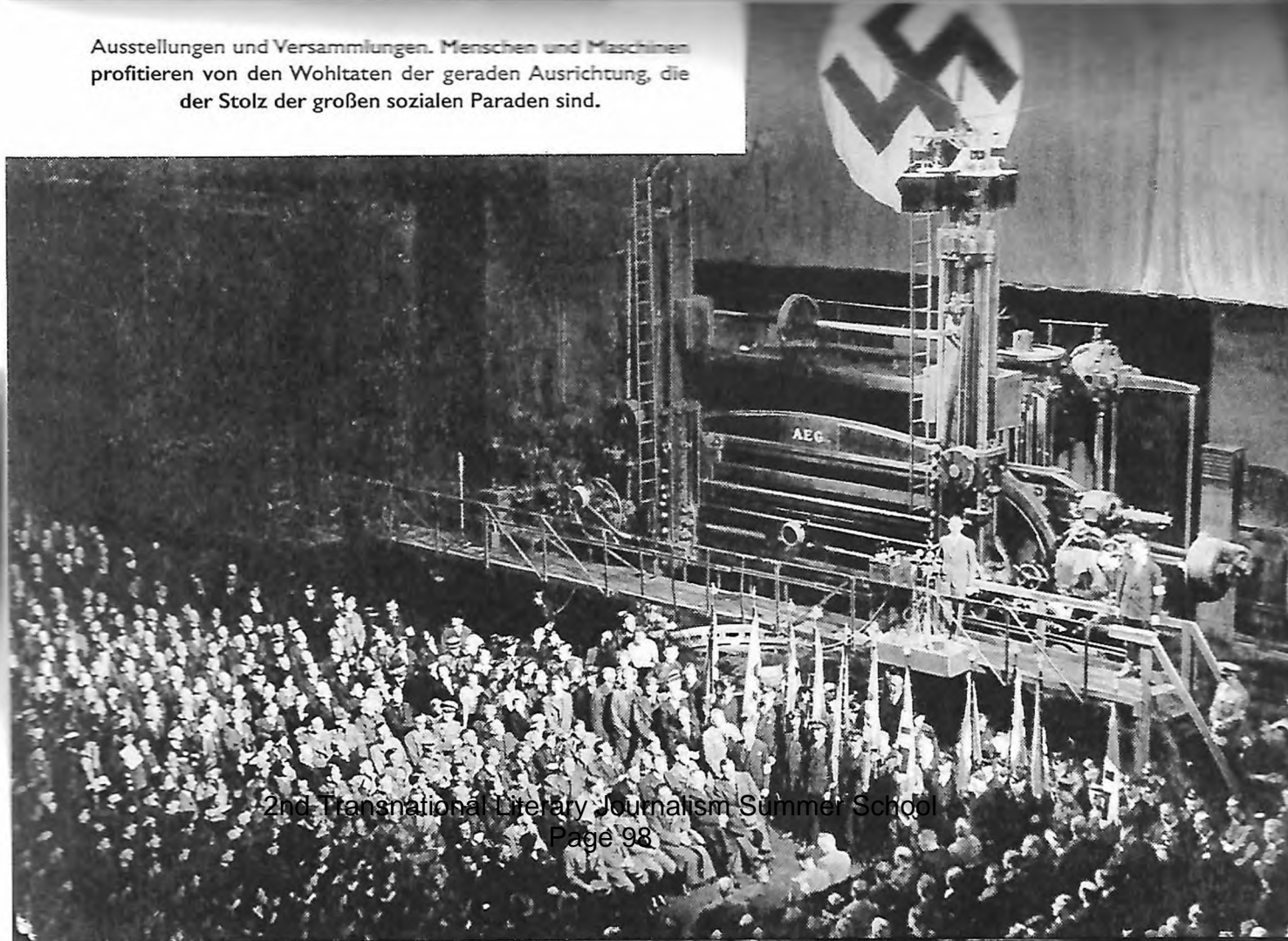


Das ist kein Bild aus einem Roman Döblins, sondern der Anfang eines Films über Berlin, den jeder einfühlsame Reisende für sich selbst drehen kann. Das kann am Schluß zu den unterkühlten Glückseligkeiten eines aseptischen Komforts führen: dem der „Weißen Stadt“ im Norden Berlins.



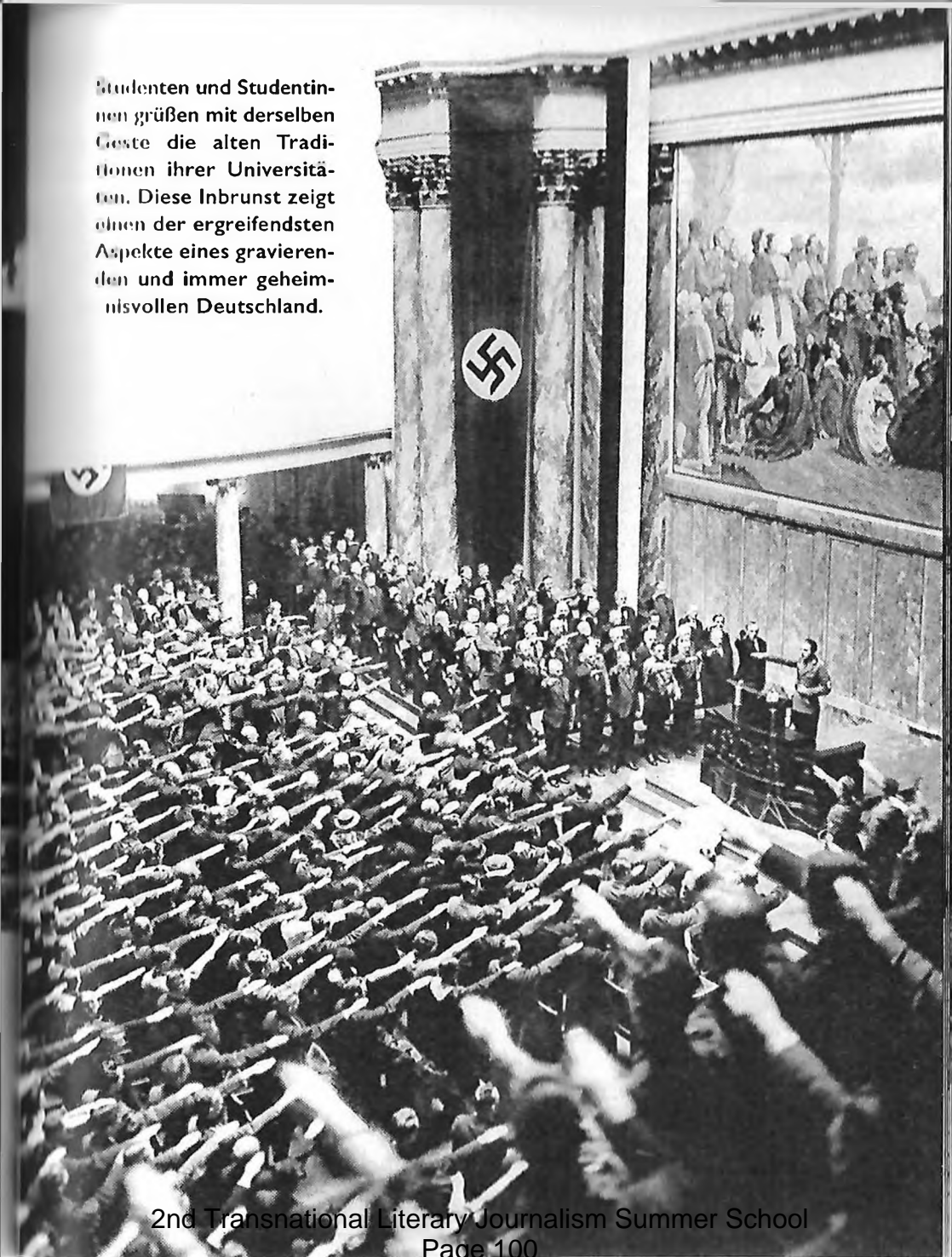


Ausstellungen und Versammlungen. Menschen und Maschinen profitieren von den Wohltaten der geraden Ausrichtung, die der Stolz der großen sozialen Paraden sind.





Studenten und Studentinnen grüßen mit derselben Geste die alten Traditionen ihrer Universitäten. Diese Inbrunst zeigt einen der ergreifendsten Aspekte eines gravierenden und immer geheimnisvollen Deutschland.



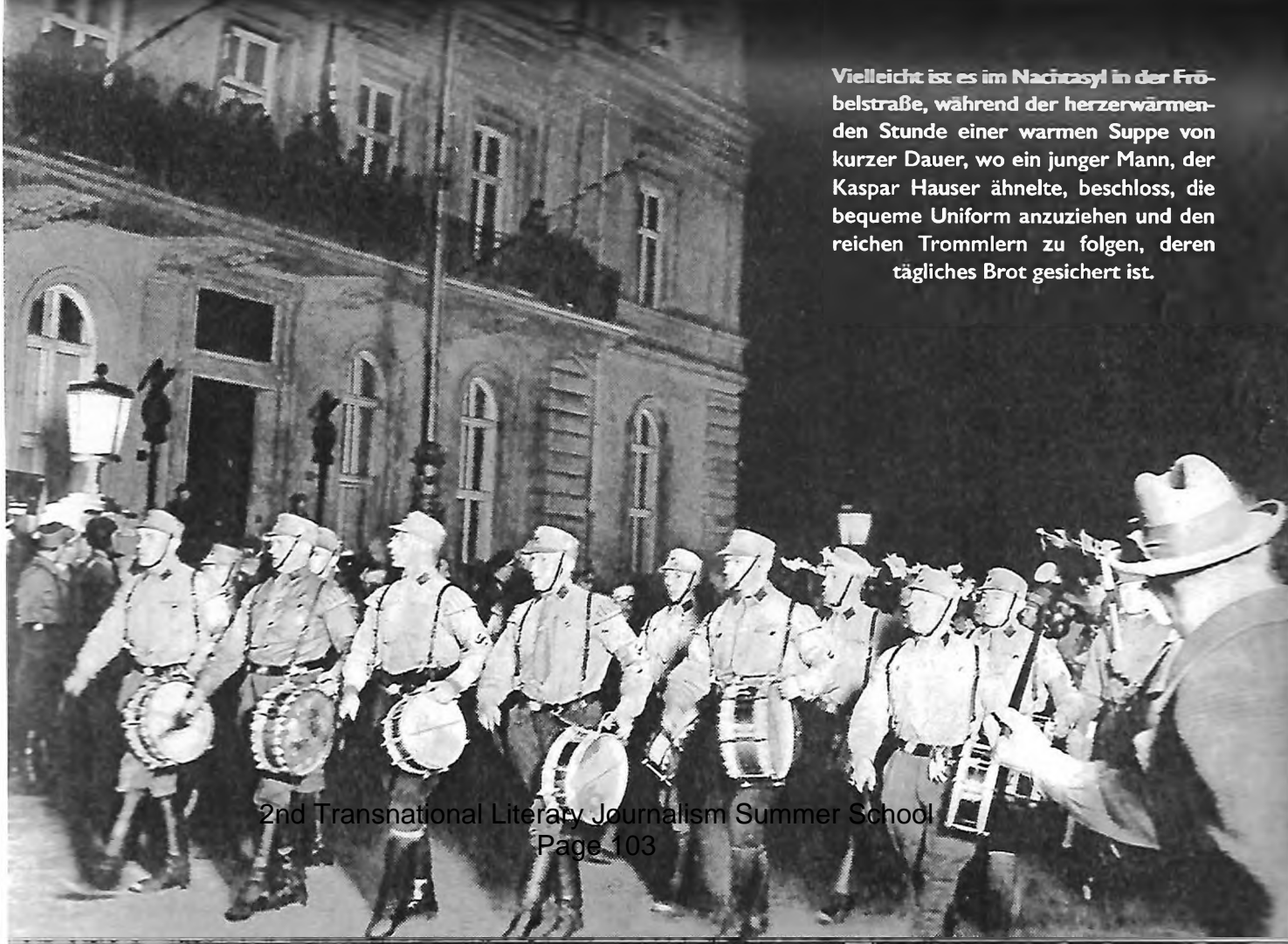




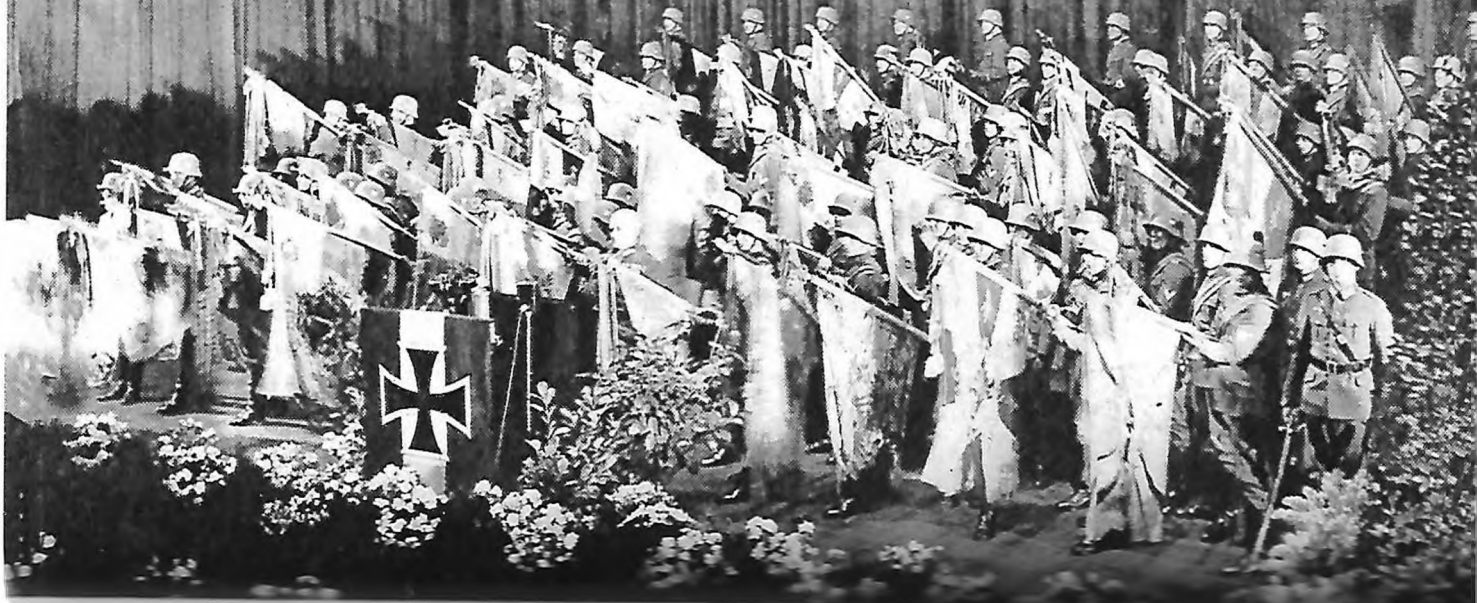
Dieser, der hinter dem traditionellen Humpen verborgen ist, ist fast schon eine Figur der Vergangenheit. Im Gesicht trägt er die zur Ehre seiner Universität und seines Klubs erworbenen Blessuren. In den Ateliers, in die die Kunsthändler noch nicht vordringen, träumt man vom nun unerreichbaren Glanz von Montparnasse.



Vielleicht ist es im Nacitzyl in der Fröbelstraße, während der herzerwärmenden Stunde einer warmen Suppe von kurzer Dauer, wo ein junger Mann, der Kaspar Hauser ähnelte, beschloss, die bequeme Uniform anzuziehen und den reichen Trommlern zu folgen, deren tägliches Brot gesichert ist.



Während junge Soldaten in der Oper die Kriegstoten ehren, ...



... protestiert die Menge mit entblößtem Haupt vor dem Grabmal des Unbekannten Soldaten gegen die Erfahrungen ihrer Älteren. Jedem sein Teil vom Unheil.







In allen großen Städten der Welt gib es ein Gesicht der Nacht und ein Gesicht des Tages. In Berlin wie anderswo ignorieren sie sich. Hier hat die Mitternachtszivilisation die Männer in Frauen verwandelt: Il était une fois... Es war (einmal)

in einem dieser „Eldorados“, die gerade verschwunden sind.
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Nicht weit vom Alexanderplatz in der Mulackstraße: zwei Straßenmädchen, die den alltäglichen Zufall erwarten. Das ist einer der tragischsten Aspekte des Elends, den die besinnliche Atmosphäre eines Sebastian Bach spielenden Quartetts nicht zerstreuen kann.

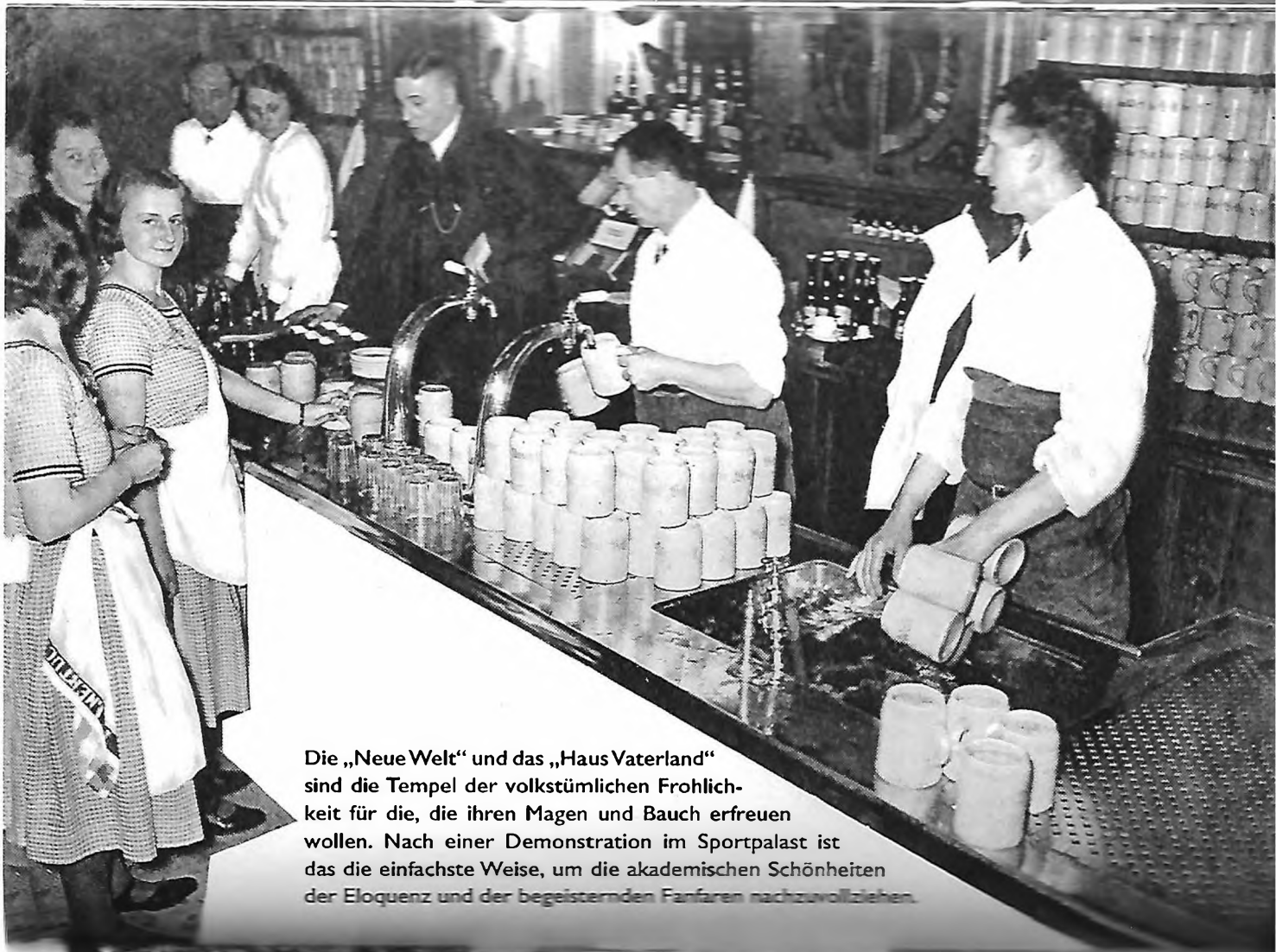




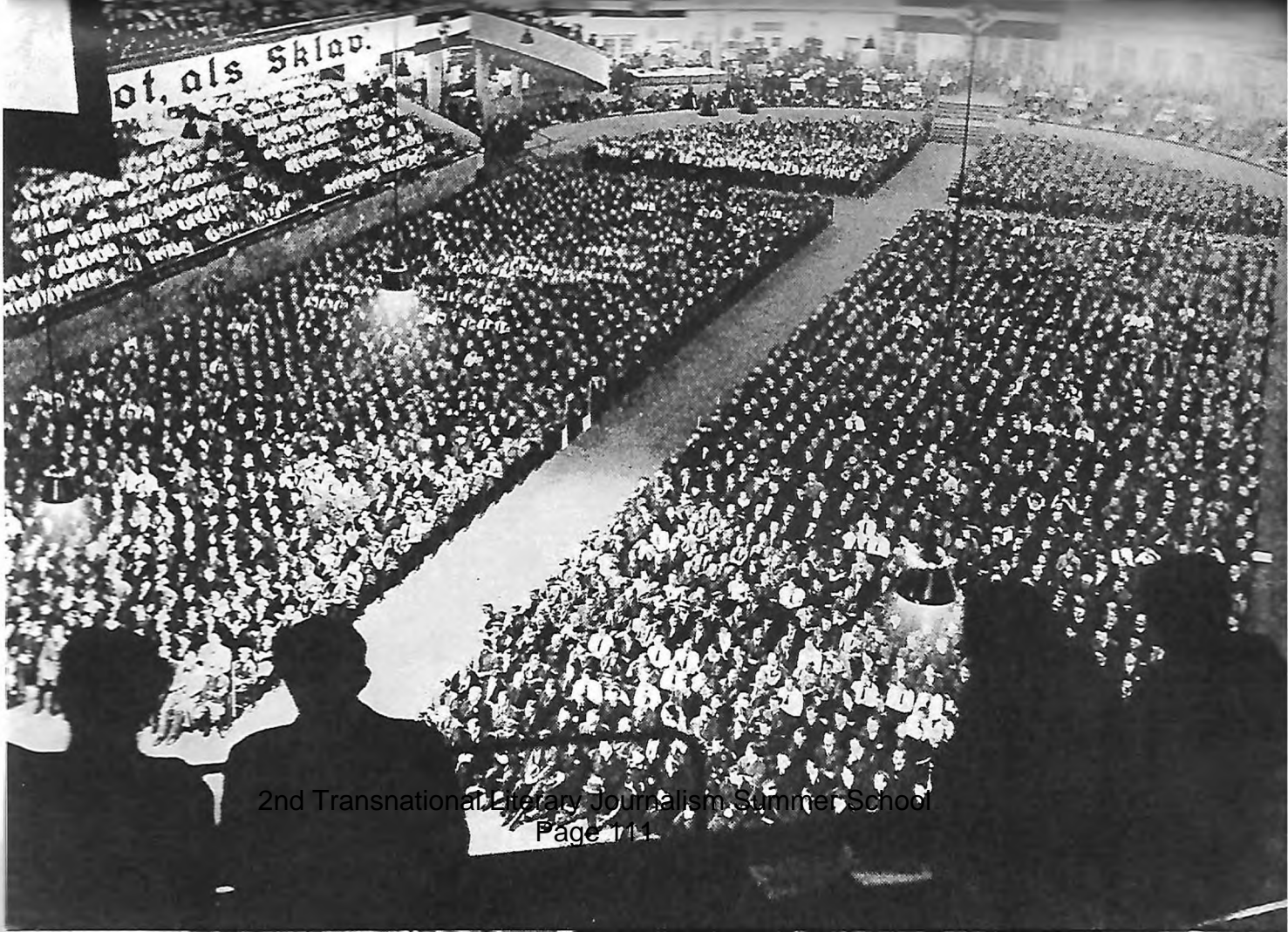
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Die Modeschöpfer der Haute Couture präsentieren im Rioll's die eleganten Mannequins einer Stadt, die reich an schönen Mädchen ist. Aber das „Lido“, in dem entkleidete Mädchen ihre elementaren Reize anbieten, zelebriert die Schönheit der Frauen und das fröhliche Licht des Bacharacher Weins.



Die „Neue Welt“ und das „Haus Vaterland“ sind die Tempel der volkstümlichen Frohlichkeit für die, die ihren Magen und Bauch erfreuen wollen. Nach einer Demonstration im Sportpalast ist das die einfachste Weise, um die akademischen Schönheiten der Eloquenz und der begeisternden Fanfaren nachzuvollziehen.





Die Grenadiere
Deutschland
mehreren
aufgerollt
Uniformen
und verwirren
kleinen Jungen
die Stimme der
seine flammenden
auf die Massen

ins alten
sind seit
Jahrhundert
sie tragen die
der Geschichte
ins Herz der
ebenso tief wie
Volkstrubens, der
reden wie Bomben
wirft.





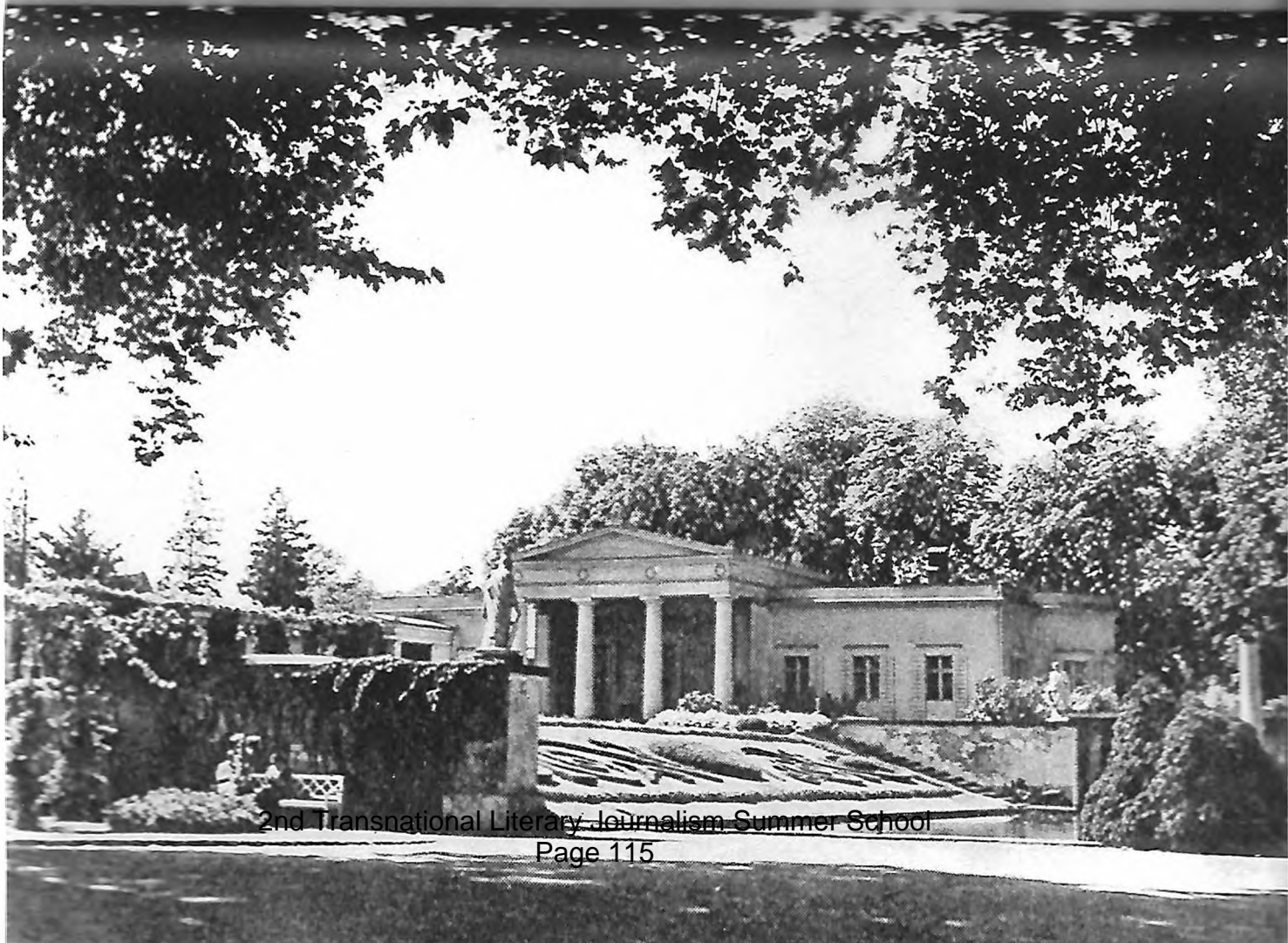
Diese nächtliche Runde ist nicht der Anfang eines Gedichts von Heinrich Heine, es ist ein Kontrollgang von Kanalisationsarbeitern, mit Stiefeln wie Kürassiere in alten Zeiten und die ...

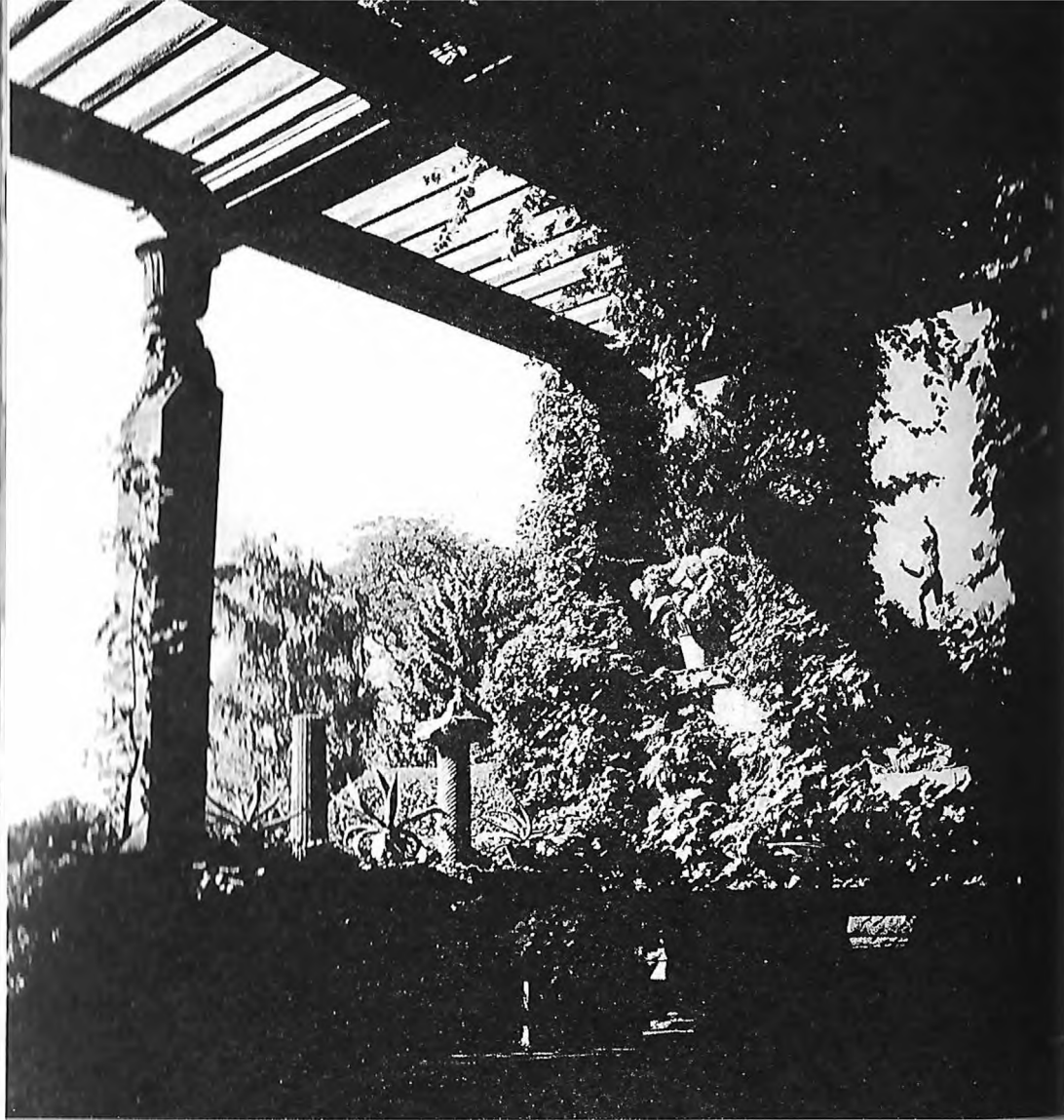


... in den Abfällen der eingeschlafenen Stadt die Geheimnisse des Tages suchen. So muss ein kriminelles Abenteuer beginnen.



Und auf diese Weise taucht die Zukunft zwischen der Autorennbahn der Avus und den schwindelerregenden Rekorden auf: Man nennt das provisorisch Aerodynamik. Es ist nur ein Detail, das zu bewegt ist, um die berührenden und graziösen Bilder von „Sans-Souci“ in den Schatten zu stellen. Möge die bukolische Flöte des Königs und Freundes Voltaires den Ruf der militärischen Fanfaren überzönen.





Dort [Fortsetzung von Charlottenhof] zwischen den zerbrochenen Säulen, in dem zarten Dekor einer gepuderten und blühenden Vergangenheit, kann man sich noch die Silhouette Werthers und der romantischen Heldinnen mit aufgelösten Haaren vorstellen, die an Verzweiflung am Leben sterben ...

Nachwort

Der „Dämon von Berlin“

Der Berliner Bilderbogen eines schillernden Erfolgsautors
der Zwischenkriegszeit

1935 in Frankreich einen Fotoband über Berlin zu veröffentlichen, ist ohne ein politisches Engagement seitens des Verlages und des Autors nicht möglich. Seit Mitte der 1920er Jahre wird Berlin als eine faszinierend moderne Metropole wahrgenommen, als ein „deutsches“ New York und als Gegenmodell zur Hauptstadt des 19. Jahrhunderts. Seit Beginn der 1930er Jahre und insbesondere 1933 verbindet sich damit das Bild einer unheimlich-gefährlichen Stadt. In diesem Bild vereinen sich eine (zu) perfekte technisch-industrielle Modernisierung mit dem traditionellen deutschen Bedrohungspotenzial von Nationalismus, völkischer Identität und politischer Aggressivität. Mit der Wiederbewaffnung und der Aufkündigung des Versailler Vertrages repräsentiert das Berlin des Fotobandes eine nicht länger latente, sondern manifeste Gefahr. Diese Gefahr macht er in klarer und eindrucksvoller Weise sichtbar: nicht nur mit Fotografien, sondern durch Beziehungen zwischen ihnen und Verweisen zwischen den Bildern und ihren Legenden. Diese Beziehungskonstellation lässt ein Unheimliches sichtbar werden, in dem nicht selten Ähnlichkeiten zu heutigen Entwicklungen aufscheinen. Das Foto eines Truppendefiles in der Leipziger Straße auf dem Rückendeckel resümiert die Realität der Bedrohung, die nun sichtbar und spürbar von Berlin ausgeht.

Pierre Mac Orlan (eigentlich Pierre Dumarchey, 1882–1970) wird in Péronne (Somme) geboren, dem Ort, vor dem er 1916 verwundet wird. Seit Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts schlägt er sich als Maler, Drucker, Chansonnier und

ALFRED DÖBLIN
KLEINE SCHRIFTEN
II

WALTER-VERLAG
OLTEN UND FREIBURG IM BREISGAU

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Theaterzettel nach! Wenn Sie einen Kopf abhacken wollen, nehmen sie doch den Autor.» Das Stück hat neun, meist kurze Bilder, die im ersten Teil scharf politisch-satirisch sind, im zweiten Teil schwächer, tragisch, oder vorwiegend tragisch. Die Satire – auf den Staatsanwalt, der den komplizierten Fall ablehnt, weil er nur einfache Fälle annimmt, die er kompliziert macht, auf den Minister, der «Öle und Fette» auf dem Bild sucht, eigentlich Volkswirtschaftler ist (aber schließlich ist Ministerstuhl Ministerstuhl) – ist meistens famos. Man muß prinzipiell Bravo dazu sagen, daß einer so die Realität anpackt, Zynismen wagt und sich nicht anklägerisch infantil verbrüllt. Angesichts dieses prinzipiellen Jasagens fühle ich mich fast gedrängt, einiges Negative zu verschweigen. Bemerke nur nebenbei, daß das Menschliche und Tragische bei Philipp nicht recht herauskommt; er hätte es bei der Satire bewenden lassen sollen. Lieber Philipp, es ist ja viel schwerer und seltener, zynisch und überlegen zu sein als tragisch. Tragik ist so häufig wie Rachitis. (Die Kinderheilkunde rechnet die Tragödie unter die Milchnährschäden.) Also nächstes Mal ganz unmenschlich. Ich reiche ihnen meine Linke Poot. (Man spielte unter Krehans Regie und vor Krehans Bildern mäßig bewegt mit reichlichem dramatischem Donner und Niederschlägen. Hans Hermann, der Maler, schleppte noch die Zwerghaltung aus dem Kreisler. Man lachte oft, aber es ist leichter zu lachen, als die Satire zu verstehen.)

ÖSTLICH UM DEN ALEXANDERPLATZ

Von Linke Poot

(29.9.1923)

Ein sonniger Vormittag; ich mache mich auf zu einer Umzingelung des Alexanderplatzes. Der verlockt mich sonst, menschenstrudelnd, wie er ist, geradewegs auf ihn zuzustoßen; ich will

einmal die Peripherie dieses mächtigen Wesens abtasten. Breite, oft boulevardartige Straßen führen in ihn ein; ich trippele von der Lichtenberger Seite an. In der Frankfurter Allee hat man die grünen Rasenstreifen in der Mitte eingehen lassen: die Straße ist ganz sachlich geworden. Es gibt Warenhäuser; schematische Aufmachung für Ärmere, auch viel Plunder. Aus einem Hausflur kommt Gesang; man sucht; ich gehe hinein. Da agiert auf dem Hof mit drolliger Theatralik ein schäbiger jüngerer Mann herum und singt – singt, ja was? Heil dir im Siegerkranz. Mit allen Strophen; ich höre es zum ersten Male seit 1918 und glaube es nicht. Die Leute kichern, einige sind betreten; der brüllt weiter. Und hat sich nicht verspekuliert mit diesem Appell an die Sentimentalität. Wie er herauskommt, entschuldigt er sich rechts und links, ist plötzlich gar nicht verdreht: «Regt euch bloß nicht auf. Ich muß mein Geschäft machen wie jeder andere. Der Arbeiter gibt mir nichts; der hat nichts.» Eine blutrote Plakathand an vielen Häusern: «Du! Bist du schon ein Kämpfer in deiner Sache?» Kleine Zettel mit einem Rettungsring auf dem Meere preisen eine Arbeiterpartei. Die Beklebung der Häuser ist ein Barometer für die politische Erregung: man sieht hier einigemaßen Farben. Ich stecke den Kopf in zahlreiche Kneipen: schwacher Besuch. Ein Wirt sagt mir, was ich schon weiß: die hohen Preise, und eine Brauerei hätte schon einen Teil ihrer Pferde verkauft und stelle sich auf Nahrungsmittel um. Was kein Schade ist: Brot ist besser als Bier. Am Strausberger Platz vor einer Zeitungsfiliale eine Menschenansammlung; in der Mitte ein langhaariger kleiner Jüngling mit Schillerkragen debattiert mit einem ruhigen älteren Arbeiter. Der Ältere sagt: «Ihr schützt die Juden.» Der heftige Kleine, unter Assistenz anderer: «Nein, wir stellen uns nicht vor die Juden. Aber wir wissen, daß der Kapitalismus in der Klasse und nicht in der Rasse steckt.» Es ist die erste Straßendebatte unter Arbeitern, die ich höre, die sich mit Antisemitismus befaßt. Aber er wurde nicht angenommen; die Leute sind geschult. Drollig ein Zeitungshändler; er hat an seinem Stand ein Schild: «Zeitung einsehen 50 Prozent des Kauf-

preiscs.» An einem Gartengitter drängen sich Menschen, ich denke: ein Unglück oder (was dasselbe ist) eine politische Ansprache. Aber es sind illustrierte Kriminalzeitungen: man betrachtet die Mutter, «von einem Bären zerfleischt», und eine «italienische Liebestragödie».

Nun biege ich in die Weberstraße ein, eine enge Straße. Viele niedrige Häuser, alle verwahrlost; Mörtel fällt von den Fronten. Der linke Straßendamm ist weit hinauf mit Wagen kleiner Händler besetzt; eine Masse ärmlicher Frauen bewegt sich mit Kindern und Handgepäck davor; es gibt Blumenkohl, Fettteringe, Käse in Kästen, Fische auf Eis, prima Dauerbollen. Drüben ist ein «Zentrallogierhaus»; Händler erhalten Extrapreise, man verkauft und kauft im Haus Stampfpapier. Zahlreiche Produktenkeller mit Preistafeln vor der Tür, mit Kreide geschrieben, ein «Einkaufsbureau für Edelmetalle» (welcher Stolz). In einem Schaufenster sitzt ein Schneider und näht: eine «Expreßschneiderei». Alles handelt und kauft noch etwas anderes; überall besteht Nachfrage nach Säcken, Bindfäden. In einem «Kommissionshaus» stehen aus: Bierseidel, abgeschnittene Telephonhörer, eine Staffelei, ein Rauchservice, Militärstiefel. Eine Leihbibliothek; ein ganzes Schaufenster mit buntem Schund: «Die Warenhausdiebe», «Sittlichkeitsdelikte in der Großstadt», Serie «Wildtöter», «Winoga, der letzte Mohikaner». Die Titelbilder tragen Unterschriften: «Ein Blitz, ein Knall, der Oberhäuptling sank zu Boden», «Da hast du deinen Lohn, Verräter». Eine ernste Arbeiterbuchhandlung; die eine Ladenflanke ist bemalt mit einer Hand, die auf einem offenen Buch liegt, mit einer Ähre und Sichel; darunter: «Um mehr zu produzieren, mußt du mehr wissen.»

Ich überschreite die Landsberger Straße. An der Ecke sitzt ein nettes Fräulein bei einem Gummiabsatzhändler; sie sitzt in bloßen Strümpfen, völlig ernst; er wetzt sein Messer, schneidet ihre Stiefelhacken zurecht; hämmert. Die Gollnowstraße. Die Straße ist noch finsterner und teilweise bröcklicher als die Weberstraße. Proletarier und Lumpenproletarier. Wieder Produktenkeller,

«Sortieranstalten». Ein Kaffeelokal trägt hetzerische Bilder: «Der Wannsee verschoben». Ein Schild ruft: «Sie haben einen Schatz und wissen es nicht»; es ist ein Briefmarkenladen. Der Schatz sind alte Briefe auf dem Boden. Galizische Typen treten auf; jenseits der Neuen Königstraße, in der Linienstraße, werden es mehr. Es gibt Häuser von abenteuerlichem Schmutz und phantastischer Gebrechlichkeit. Trotzdem verheißt ein Barbier in einem ganz unglaublich kümmerlichen Haus: «Kein Warten! Gute, saubere Bedienung.» Weißbärtige, elende Männer im zerrissenen Kaftan gehen vorbei. Lebensmittelverkauf in Hausfluren. Vor Möbelgeschäften, Altkleiderhandlungen stehen die Besitzer und blicken unter die Passanten.

Der Bülowplatz trägt die pompöse «Volksbühne»; umringt ist er von wüsten Lagerplätzen für Alteisen, Schienen. Sehr lebhafter Wagenverkehr; es wimmelt von Menschen. Und immer «Gelegenheitskäufe», Tuchläden, Uhrmachergeschäfte, Stiefel. – Links die Grenadierstraße. Hier scheint ein Dauerauflauf zu sein. Der Damm ist von Menschen besetzt; sie kommen und gehen aus den winkligen, uralten Häusern. Das ist ein ganz östliches Quartier, das gutturale Jiddisch dominiert. Die nicht zahlreichen Läden tragen hebräische Inschriften: ich treffe Vornamen: Schaja, Uscher, Chanaine. In Schaufenstern zeigt ein jüdisches Theater an: «Jüdele der Blinde, fünf Akte von Joseph Lat[t]einer.» Jüdische Fleischereien, Handwerkerstuben, Buchläden. Das bewegt sich in unaufhörlicher Unruhe, blickt aus den Fenstern, ruft, bildet Gruppen und tuschelt in finsternen Hausfluren. An einer Ecke steht alles um einen gut berlinischen Ausrufer, einen Eulenspiegel: eine weiße Maus läuft ihm über die Mütze, er zeigt Kunststücke mit falschen Millionenscheinen, um dann Seife zu verkaufen: «Klares Wasser, das ist der beste Beweis, meine Herrschaften.»

Ich mache mir Platz. Schlängele mich durch zur Münzstraße. Passiere die Kinos, die am hellen Tage dauernd spielen, mit Jahrmarktsorgeln, die über die Straße toben; sie locken zu «Marko, der Mann der Kraft» und «Das Schicksal einer anstän-

digen Frau». Ein Menschenstrom, Wagenstrom; der Alexanderplatz ist nahe. Zwischen zahlreichen sehr billigen Damen, unter den hastenden Leuten suchend, wandern sonderbare langsame Menschen, die sich offenbar kennen, erkennen, beiseite treten, Kleiderköffcherchen tragen. Ein Hinundherlungern. Viele unbeschäftigte Burschen mit kessen Mützen. Die Alexanderkaserne mit Schupo kommt, der endlos lange Bau des Warenhauses Tietz; er setzt eine neue, etwas puppige Ecke an. Dann die breite Öffnung, grüner Rasen, der Alexanderplatz, die Gulaschkanone der Heilsarmee, umlagert von Neugierigen und Ketten Armer und Alter, das finstere rote Polizeipräsidium.

DAS KOPFLOSE PFERD OHNE BEINE

Von Linke Poot

[Ende September 1923 (?)]

Man muß Nachsicht haben mit einem Pferd, das kopf- und beinlos läuft und nicht recht von der Stelle kommt. Da hilft kein Zureden und Schlagen. Das Tier selbst, schwächlich wie es ist, sinnt in seinem Inneren: «Was ist da zu machen? Wie regeneriere ich mich?» Und staunt, ängstlich zitternd, noch, wie es bei abwesendem Kopfe, barhäuptig, hauptbar, diesen Gedanken fassen kann.

*

Ein Fettfleck fiel eines Mittags vom Dache. Auf den Kragen eines älteren Herrn. Da macht er seiner Natur folgend einen Fettfleck. In Benzin gebracht, löste sich ein Teil von ihm ölig auf. Der andere, mit dem Daumen von dem hungrigen Herrn abgkratzt, abgelutscht, geriet in die finstere Darmhöhle. Wo er der Galle, der Bauchspeicheldrüse begegnete, zu Fettsäure, Seife wurde, sich mit anderen Stoffen verband. Ein merklicher Unterschied zeigt sich hier vom Schicksal des Pferdes, das, gesetzt

den Fall, vom Dache fällt und in dieser aufsehenerregenden Situation nichts weiter kann, als den Geist aufgeben. An dem ohnehin nichts gelegen war. Ohne Möglichkeit weiterer Entwicklung und Verwicklung den Geist aufgeben.

★

Man hatte in Europa das langweilige Bombardieren, Schießen, Gasblasen über, womit man sich seit einiger Zeit dezimierte. Man sah einen abwechslungsreichen Weg, sich wenigstens teilweise zu zentimieren. Man reichte sich die Hände, teilweise, machte einen Bogen um einen Mitinhaber des bisherigen Schießgeschäfts, umringte ihn, und er war zentimiert, erledigt. Der Kopf fiel ihm kurzerhand ab; es war verblüffend, wie er abfiel – als wäre er nur angeklebt. Die Beine gerieten, konsterniert über die Vorfälle, in derartiges Schlottern und Stottern, daß sie sich durcheinander bewegten, gegeneinander stießen, schließlich Hals über Kopf das Weite suchten. Das seiner Unterlagen beraubte Wesen lag dann auf dem Bauch. Man stellte sich erfreut herum, hob seine Kehrseite, die man in der Dunkelheit dieser Vorgänge für den Kopf hielt, und fragte. Es kamen unverständliche und beleidigende Antworten. Im Bauch des unvollständigen Lebewesens aber schlug man sich, machte sich autonom. Es war ein erbärmliches Wühlen und Grimmen und Wüten. Man war aktiv wie der Fettfleck auf seinem Lebenswege. Das Wesen warf sich, stöhnte: «Wie werde ich energisch?» Oben pickte und zottelte man. Das betrübte Geschöpf stellte sich zuletzt die Frage: «Habe ich noch einen Geist, um ihn aufzugeben und der ganzen, wie mir scheint, verfahrenen Sache einen anderen Dreh zu geben?» – Es plante nach Amerika auszuwandern, ahnte aber, daß es nur sein Fell rüberbringen würde.

★

Ich lese gerne Zeitungen. Man erfährt wenigstens nichts Politisches aus ihnen.

★

EGON ERWIN KISCH

Läuse auf dem Markt

Vermischte Prosa



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DIE VERARMUNG UND BEREICHERUNG DER BERLINER STRASSEN

Die elektrischen Uhren, System Urania, die an den U-Bahn-Stationen und den Straßenecken leuchtend hingen, entsprachen allenfalls dem Tempo und dem Charakter des Vorkriegsberlins: Carpe horam! Jetzt werden sie heruntergeholt; die Kohlennot, der Stromverbrauch und die Unterhaltskosten sind der Grund dafür. Schade!

Auch die „Rotunden“ werden allmählich geschlossen, die Häuschen jener Stiftung, zu der vor hundertsiebzig Jahren der originelle und tapfere Journalist Sebastian Mercier in Paris zum allgemeinen Ärgernis und Ergötzen mit seinem flammenden Aufsatz in den „Tableaux de Paris“ den Anstoß gab. Aber was für Paris ein notwendiges Übel gewesen war, das war für das Vorkriegsberlin eine in die tägliche Stundeneinteilung einbezogene Institution. Der Berliner, der sich nicht Zeit zum Essen läßt und keinerlei Sinn für Liebe, Kaffeehaus, Konditorei, also für irgendeinen Genuß, hat, hatte auch keine Zeit und keinen Sinn für etwas anderes als für seine Geschäfte. Und unter Geschäft verstand er nur das, was ihm etwas einbrachte. Für andere Geschäfte bediente er sich der Rotunde, die ihm auf dem Wege vom Mittagessen zur Werkstatt am nächsten lag. So hatte zwar jede Rotunde ihre Stammgäste, aber von Stammgästen, denen die Liebe abgeht, läßt sich auch bei bescheidensten Ansprüchen nicht leben.

Der hochpolitische Redakteur Theodor Wolff schlug in einem grundschriftigen Leitartikel die Stilllegung der Berliner Straßenbahnen vor, indem er auf die Riesensummen hinwies, die die Schienen und die Weichen und die Waggons verschlingen, alles Kosten, die bei Autobussen nicht erforderlich sind. Jetzt wird sein Antrag ernstlich erwogen, neue Autobusstrecken sind bereits in Betrieb, und vielleicht wird Berlin bald die erste Großstadt der Welt ohne elektrische Straßenbahn sein.

Zu vielen anderen Einschränkungen des Straßenverkehrs gehört auch, daß der Hundes letztes Stündlein geschlagen hat. Sie

haben zuviel gegessen, und so werden sie jetzt selbst gegessen, die Zeiten sind hundsmiserabel. Die Bautätigkeit, die, zumindest was das Aufsetzen von Stockwerken betrifft, ziemlich rege war, setzte völlig aus seit der Besetzung des Ruhrgebietes im vorigen Monat und seitdem die Mark und die Preise so stark gestiegen sind, daß man auch für Kronen nichts Anständiges mehr kaufen kann.

Und doch verzeichnet der Berliner Straßenverkehr eine Bereicherung, und doch wird noch was gebaut: An allen Ecken und Enden entstehen „Dollarhäuschen“, Häuschen aus Glas mitten auf der Straße, wo fremde Währung gewechselt werden kann. An lebhaften Kreuzungen, Ecke Leipziger und Friedrichstraße beispielsweise, Ecke Nürnberger und Kleiststraße, stehen sie mitten auf dem Fahrdamm. Sogar auf der heiligen Straße Unter den Linden, die die Elektrische nur unter der Erde kreuzen darf, wurde eine ähnliche Dollarbude errichtet, am sogenannten Kranzler-Eck vor dem Café Bauer, wo sich vor dem Krieg der teuerste Bauplatz der Welt befand. Auch in den entlegensten Vororten wurden diese Wechselstuben in den Weg gestellt. Sie sind ständig voller Leute, und weil darin wenig Platz ist, drängen sich auch draußen viele. Sie sind Ersatz für die „Rotunden“, sie sind die modernen Bedürfnisanstalten, zu deren Errichtung kein Aufruf eines Sebastian Mercier nötig war. Sie sind aber auch ein Ersatz für die verschwindenden elektrischen Normaluhren. Hier erhältst du die modernen Zeitangaben, sie werden direkt von der modernen Sternwarte aus eingestellt, die Börse gibt ununterbrochen die Kurse durch . . . Hier werden Lei, Peseten, Pfunde, Tschechokronen, polnische Mark und Wiener Kronen, Dollar und Yen gewechselt, hier wird die Nietzschesche „Umwertung aller Werte“ vollzogen, deren Tempel sie sind. Daneben steht eine dem Untergange geweihte „Rotunde“, die Tür „Für Herren“ ist geschlossen, die Tür „Für Damen“ ist geschlossen, und nicht einmal ein Hund hebt an ihrer Wand das Bein. Es gibt keine Hunde mehr, und gäbe es welche, so würden sie zum Dollarhäuschen laufen . . .

Eine weitere, ebenso bedeutende Neuerung des Berliner Straßenlebens ist die Flut der Bettler, die geradezu ins Maßlose

ansteigt. Wenn du bei Krziwanek, bei Berg oder bei Krátký oder in einem anderen jener Restaurants sitzt, die zwar gut, aber doch nicht so vornehm sind, um einen Portier zu beschäftigen, so passiert es dir fast regelmäßig, daß du dich zwischen Suppe und Mehlspeise von mehr als einem Dutzend Bettlern, Müttern mit Säuglingen, zitternden Kriegsinvaliden, Greisen, Kindern, Streichholz- und Ansichtskartenverkäufern loskaufen mußt, die alle ihren hungrigen Blick in dein Gulasch bohren. Wenn du dann abends das Kino oder das Theater in der Königgrätzer Straße verläßt, wo Čapeks „Aus dem Leben der Insekten“ immer noch als die einzige Sensation Berlins gespielt wird, strecken sich dir halbe Arme und halbe Beine wie Querhölzer eines Tourniquets entgegen . . . In der Tauentzienstraße geht plötzlich Seite an Seite mit dir ein junger Mann, er versucht zu sprechen, was ihm nicht gelingt, doch plötzlich bringt er das Wort „Hunger“ heraus. Sie schenken ihm etwas, worauf er selig dankt. „Ich bin arbeitsloser Schauspieler, Sie haben Ihr Geld nicht für einen Betrüger hinausgeworfen. Ich habe Wedekind und Strindberg gespielt – wenn Sie wollen, so trage ich Ihnen jede beliebige Wedekindsche Rolle vor, damit Sie wissen, daß ich kein Lügner bin . . .“ Er kommt jedoch nicht mehr dazu, denn von der anderen Seite nähert sich ein etwa zwölfjähriges Mädchen: „Schenken Sie mir etwas, Mutti hat Hunger.“ Nachdem sie einen Schein erhalten hat, sagt sie mit einem tiefen Seufzer: „Haben Sie zu Hause etwas zu essen? Ich würde mit Ihnen gehen . . .“

So ist es nicht nur zu einer Verarmung, sondern auch zu einer Bereicherung des Berliner Straßenlebens gekommen.

DIE SIEGESALLEE

Kaiser Wilhelm II. war doch nur ein Emporkömmling. Nirgends trat es so klar zutage wie in der Siegesallee, über die sich alle Leute mit Geschmack lustig machten, ohne sich diese riesenhafte Kitschsammlung, diese Orgie der Geschmacklosigkeit, irgendwie erklären zu können. Man stand vor einem Rätsel, dessen Lösung das Majestätsbeleidigungsgesetz verbot.

DIE UNTERGRUNDBAHN

Sie ist wohl ein wesentliches Kennzeichen der Großstadt: Oben auf der Straße ist kein Platz mehr für die Menschen. Noch weniger für jagende Wagen, für elektrisch angetriebene Züge. Und so fahren sie unter der Erde durch einen einzigen Tunnel, der die ganze Stadt unterhöhlt, sie fahren (ohne durch im Wege stehende Häuser, in entgegengesetzter Richtung rasende Automobile, den Weg kreuzende Wagen, spielende Kinder, sich liebende Hunde, unvernünftig ausweichende Frauen, die Hände hebende Verkehrspolizisten, durch Fußgänger, Geländer, Omnibusse und Feuerwehrmänner, Verkehrsvorschriften und andere Verkehrshindernisse aufgehalten zu werden), sie fahren, mag geschehen, was da will, immer weiter, geradenwegs und im gleichen Abstand. Ihre Parole lautet: Überspringe nicht, übersteige nicht, sondern krieche unten durch!

Die Stadt jagt dir über dem Kopf davon, du siehst nichts von ihrer Hast, kein Schaufenster lockt dich, kein Bekannter ruft dich, nichts hält dich auf. Du liest deine Zeitung, und es ist, als wärest du in München in den Schlafwagen eingestiegen und solltest in Venedig aussteigen . . . Ich höre Sie sagen: „Na, na, nur nicht übertreiben!“ Aber der Kontrast ist fast so, wenn man die Erdoberfläche inmitten der schönen Villen des Schöneberger Stadtparkes verläßt und erst wieder draußen in Rummelsburg um sich blickt, umringt von Proletarierkasernen, verrauchten Fabriken und erschreckend kleinen Kindergestalten. Natürlich mußt du während deiner Fahrt eifrig die Zeitung gelesen haben, sonst hättest du längst den Übergang aus der Friedenswelt des Wohlstands in die Kriegswelt des Jammers bemerkt. Denn nur wenige Leute fahren die ganze Strecke. So absolviert man den Weg vom Reichtum zur Armut und vice versa nicht in einem Zuge und kommt vom Berliner Westen nicht unmittelbar in den Berliner Osten. Die meisten fahren durchschnittlich fünf bis sechs Stationen: Von seiner Villa im Westen fährt der Chef ins Geschäft in die City, vom Geschäft in der City fahren die Kontoristinnen, die Verkäufer und Lehrlinge in ihre Wohnungen am Alexanderplatz, und aus den Lagerräumen, Geschäftshäusern, Schlupfwinkeln und Polizeige-

bäuden am Alexanderplatz fahren die übrigen Leute in die östlichen Vororte.

Viele Jahre gab es nur eine Umsteigestation, und zwar Gleisdreieck. Auch heute noch ist es einer der wichtigsten Begriffe der Berliner Umgangssprache: Wir treffen uns Gleisdreieck, man fährt über Gleisdreieck, man steigt Gleisdreieck um. Aber Gleisdreieck wird nicht ausgestiegen. Denn die Haltestelle schwebt in der Luft. Unten sind keine Menschenhäuser, unten bewegen sich lediglich Maschinen. Unten liegt ein großes Areal von Güterbahnhöfen, ein Meer von Schienen, in der Dämmerung von kleinen Leuchttürmen beleuchtet, durchquert von Tausenden von Schiffen auf Rädern, die durch Bojen, hier Weichen oder Semaphore genannt, geregelt werden – ein Meer von Festland. Der Potsdamer Bahnhof mündet hier und unser Anhalter Bahnhof und der Vorstadtbahnhof, Züge aus Hamburg, Köln, Aachen, Straßburg und Paris, Züge aus Halle, Frankfurt, Basel, Leipzig, Dresden, Prag und Wien fahren hier ein und aus, drehen um und rangieren. Hier unten befindet sich sozusagen der Makrokosmos des Verkehrs, während das Gleisdreieck dem Mikrokosmos der Untergrundbahn vorbehalten ist. Oben ist nur Alltäglichkeit, unten aber ist die Welt. Auch hier gibt es keinen jähen Übergang. Man kann nicht auf der U-Bahn-Station Gleisdreieck aussteigen und aufs Dach des vorbeifahrenden Orientexpresses springen, wie es die Kinohelden tun. Entweder – oder. Du mußt dich entscheiden: urbi aut orbi.

Nur einmal vollzog sich ein ungeahnter Übergang aus der kleinen Welt des Stadtverkehrs in die große Stadt des Weltverkehrs: am 26. September 1908 um drei Viertel zwei nachmittags. Datum und Stunde sollen exakt sein, weil sie in der Geschichte der U-Bahnen eine lehrreiche Rolle spielen. Bis zu diesem Tage kam dem Gleisdreieck keine besondere Bedeutung zu, weder als Haltestelle noch als Umsteigestation, das Publikum kümmerte sich nicht darum, sondern nur die Ingenieure, die es erbauten, und die Beamten, die den Verkehr regelten. Es war ein sphärisches Dreieck, in dem die aus drei Richtungen kommenden Züge der U-Bahn in verschiedene Richtungen gelenkt wurden. Aber an jenem verhängnisvollen

Tage stießen durch das Verschulden eines Führers, die Verspätung eines Zuges und das gleichzeitige rätselhafte Versagen einer Weiche zwei Züge zusammen, und ein Waggon stürzte in die Tiefe, in das Reich des Fernverkehrs, wobei achtzehn Personen ums Leben kamen. Seit diesem verhängnisvollen Zusammenstoß gibt es keinen direkten Verkehr mehr, sondern nur Umsteigen aus verschiedenen Stockwerken und nur Schienen auf verschiedenen Viadukten. Und es gibt auch kein Unglück mehr.

Aber Sie sehen, gleichzeitig mit diesen vorbeugenden Reformen fand auch die Alleinherrschaft der Untergrundbahn ihr Ende. Der Passagier wünscht keine Vorsicht, er wünscht nur Hast. Das Berliner Tempo verträgt keine Rücksichtnahme auf die Möglichkeit eines Unfalls. Man will sich in den Zug setzen, die Zeitung oder die Akten durchstudieren und, ist man damit fertig, an Ort und Stelle sein. Umsteigen – das ist nichts für Berlin. Gerade wurde eine neue Strecke der U-Bahn eröffnet, die vertikal zur alten führt, also von Norden nach Süden. Doch sie ist wenig frequentiert, weil man nahe der Leipziger Straße zwei Minuten durch einen Tunnel laufen muß, bevor man zur Bahn mit der nächsten Verbindung gelangt. Leute, denen es bereits zuviel ist, am Nollendorf- oder Wittenbergplatz beim Umsteigen über Treppen zu gehen, wollen nicht zwei Minuten zu Fuß laufen. Die Untergrundbahn ist ein wesentliches Kennzeichen der Großstadt, aber dieses Kennzeichen ist in Berlin immer weniger kenntlich. Man fährt lieber im Autobus, der zwar sich, aber nicht die Leute aufhält, die in ihm sitzen. Berlin hat keine Zeit: keine Vergangenheit und keine Zukunft. Und hat nur eine Gegenwart, die trübe ist, weil niemand umsteigen will.

MEERES- UND TEUERUNGSWELLEN

Herzlichen Gruß von der Ostseeküste! Warum sind Sie denn, liebe Leser, in diesem Jahr nicht wieder hergekommen? Ihre alten Bekannten vermissen Sie hier sehr: die Mücken nämlich, die mich, während ich diesen Gruß schreibe, in alle möglichen

**Module 2: Journalism as Space of Appearance: Documentary Aesthetics
in the Inter-War Years | Journalismus als Erscheinungsraum:
Dokumentarische Ästhetiken in der Zwischenkriegszeit**

Director: Soenke Zehle (Languages: English, Deutsch)

- 1. Go to this page for the readings: <https://www.xmlab.org/projects/projects-details/raummaschinen>.**

Module 3: War Chronicles Written by Women: American Reporters from the Western Front | Crónicas de guerra escritas por mujeres: Reporteras norteamericanas desde el Frente Occidental

Director: Sara Prieto (Languages: English, Español)

1. Mary Boyle O'Reilly, "The Death Song of Brussels" (19-08-1914).
2. Maude Radford Warren, "Booked through the Empire" (14-11-14), "Nancy, The Invincible" (1918), "Front-Line Trenches" (1918).
3. Edith Wharton, "The Look of Paris" (1915), "In Lorraine and the Vosges" (1915).
4. Mary Roberts Rinehart, "The Night Raid on Dunkirk," "Night in the Trenches" (1915).
5. Dubbs, Chris. "Introduction." *An Unladylike Profession: American Women War Correspondents in World War I*. Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2020.
6. Prieto, Sara. "'Without methods': three female authors visiting the Western Front." *First World War Studies*, 6:2 (2015): 171–85.
DOI: 10.1080/19475020.2015.1038842.
7. Seul, Stephanie. "Women War Reporters." In *1914-1918 Online: International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, edited by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson/ Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 2019.
DOI: 10.15463/ie1418.11385.

Suggested Further Reading:

8. Dubbs, Chris. *An Unladylike Profession: American Women War Correspondents in World War I*. Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2020.
9. Prieto, Sara. *Reporting the First World War in the Liminal Zone: British and American Eyewitness Accounts from the Western Front*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Mary Boyle O'Reilly

'The Death Song of Brussels' – 19-08-1914

THE DEATH SONG OF BRUSSELS—PATHETIC STORY OF ABANDONMENT OF CAPITAL

BY MARY BOYLE O'REILLY.

Brussels, Belgium, Aug. 19, 1914.—

Editor Day Book: This note goes to you by a friend, who will post it in France. There are no longer any mails. The Prussians are closing in. Today all the journalists left except a few Americans and the staff of the London Times.

Sunday the war council of the allies decided the fate of Brussels.



Grand
Whitlock

American Minister of Belgium Who
Stuck to His Post.

About 3 o'clock I was walking in the deserted Boulevard de Grand Trion when a low-hung racing car slid slowly past. In it stood the king, King Albert, one knee against the seat, looking absorbedly east and west down the wide parklike avenues.

He made a gesture that his majesty's way to camp lay through the American camp. But the soldier king brooded

over his capital as if trying to fix a loved picture on his brain.

Then he sat, and the motor rolled away.

Beside me an old gentleman with white head still uncovered spoke from a full heart. "Is it possible they think to abandon our city?"

That was Sunday about three. At eight o'clock I dined at the American legation. It was midnight when our minister, Grand Whitlock of Toledo, saw me to a motor. The streets of shuttered houses were deserted. Only down the great road to Antwerp sped a company of cyclist riflemen. Their muskets were strapped to their backs. The moonlight shone on their bayonets.

In their midst moved three motor vans laden with state papers from the palace of government. The ministers of state, of finance and of war were transferring archives.

The American minister (who refuses to desert his post) watched the escort out of sight. "They plan to abandon Brussels to the German army," he said sadly.

Twelve hours later I went by appointment to a relief station, from which the queen's ladies-in-waiting direct assistance for war refugees. Presently her majesty appeared, silent and sad, dressed for traveling. In her open motor car sat the three royal children; the little Princes Marie Joseph (who is a big girl now), quite absorbed in holding on a new cartwheel hat; the ten-year-old Count of Flanders and the grave lad who will one day be King of Belgium.

"I must go, leaving our stricken poor and the new hospital," said the queen; "it is the wish of the ministers that I take the children to our fortress at Antwerp."

They went on their way to Antwerp, and those who saw it pass said each other: "The war lords have abandoned Brussels to the enemy."

Maude Radford Warren¹

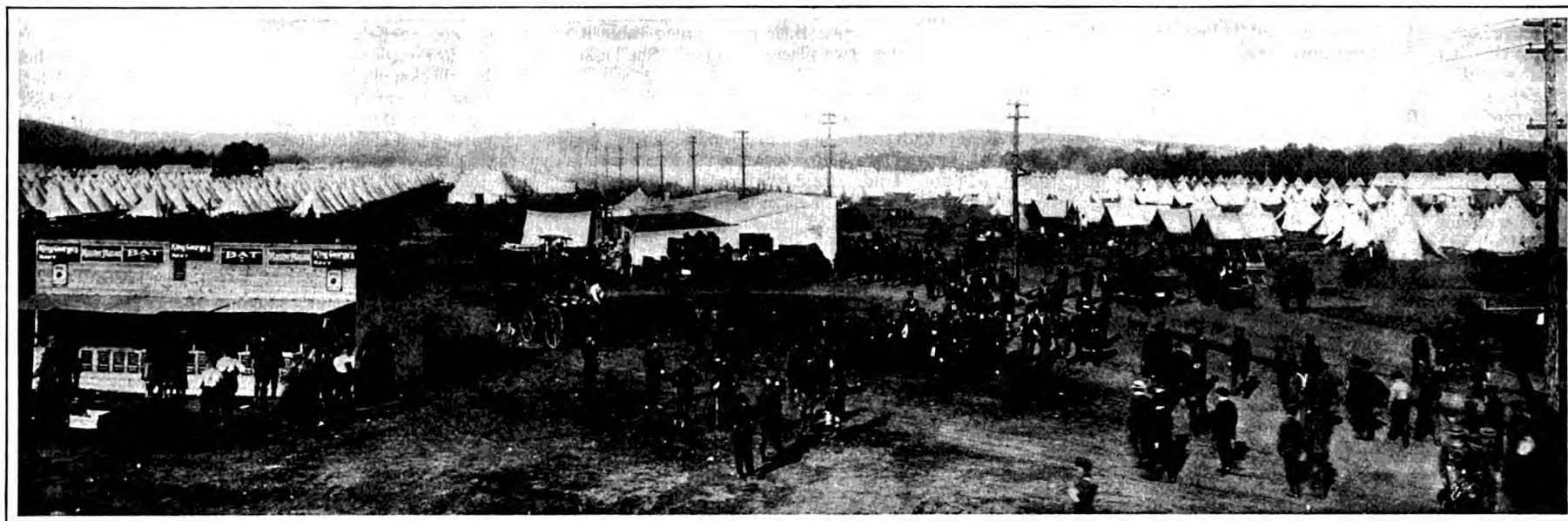
‘Booked through the Empire’ – 14-11-14

‘Nancy, The Invincible’ - 1918

‘Front-Line Trenches’ – 1918

¹ Originally published in *The Saturday Evening Post*

Booked Through for the Empire



View of Valcartier Camp

IN THE United States the imaginative grasp upon what many predict will be the last war of the world is lacking in reality, and the most tragic slaughter of the ages becomes a huge nightmare melodrama where sensitive flesh and blood somehow turns into statistics, and grief and loss have no symbols which speak their real meaning.

Our tourist friends who come back "safe from the war zone" and sometimes possibly in a sour-grapes mood—it seems easier to count those who went to Europe in the summer of 1914 than those who stayed at home—these very friends are an assistance in devitalizing the sense of reality. For their stories, however interesting, have chiefly to do with facts of personal inconvenience which would be outrageous in times of peace but which are to be expected in times of war. The tales are indeed rendered dramatic here and there by glimpses of spies haled out of trains to be shot, and wounded soldiers coming back for the aftermath, equally costly, of victory or of defeat. Such stories are well worth hearing, and it is also agreeable to reflect that friends dear to us can dine out on them all winter. But they don't connote the war. Besides, we are three or four thousand miles away and, after a fashion, merely spectators. It is not our men who march away and die alone in a strange land. How can the war seem real to us!

The Canadians, side by side with us, are not three or four thousand miles away from the battlefields, nor are they in any sense numb to any phase of the war. Spiritually they are in England, for no children of the Empire are more loyal than the Canadians. They take the war not with jingoistic talk and cheering, not with swagger or threats, because they feel it too deeply to admit of any cheap or surface emotion. In city and country both, in places like Quebec and Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto, or little villages like Puce and St. Jean Baptiste, there is to be found the same deep and solemn loyalty, quiet instead of ebullient, not only because restraint is characteristic of the Canadian temperament but because the national understanding of what this war means is perfect.

Watching the Men March Away

IN QUEBEC a tensely interested, silent crowd surges toward the Terrace, for down the hill is marching a little company of red-coated boys, young grenadiers, soon doubtless to be clad in khaki and sent in a transport, perhaps to be destroyed crossing the Atlantic by a German battleship, perhaps to be saved for German shells, or perhaps to come back home. Lads they are, raw and unschooled, a few of them vainly pleased with the notice they are attracting; but not one face is without the real spark—the love for the Empire, the loyal urge that makes even a cheap soul worth while and that books their bodies through to the end, whatever it be, so it be for the good of the Empire. On the sidewalks, people who three months ago would scarcely have turned their heads to look at a soldier now stand still with their faces toward these boys. There are none of the indulgent smiles which so often in the past were accorded wearers of the militia or non-regular uniforms. There is only a gaze which shows respect and sympathy, perhaps sorrow, and perhaps a bewildered wonder that in the twentieth century young flesh and should change into weltering targets for guns.

By Maude Radford Warren

Down the shady road that leads from the armory in Ottawa marches a band of Highland pipers, men for the most part close to forty, a boy drummer in their midst. They walk with long, strong strides, their kilts waving, their tall caps straight and steady, their heads thrown well back, their eyes intent. The people beside the road stand still, always with grave faces. A kind of electric psychology seems to pass from spectator to spectator; they are realizing just how magnificent the music of the pipes would sound on a field of battle. One knows that these pipers would march straight toward the enemy, mutely closing ranks as they left their dead behind them. Again those flashes of crowd psychology; surely it means that for a purifying moment the critical faculty of the narrow, fallible human mind is held in abeyance; one forgets frailties, such as love of drink or tendency to brutality, coarseness, self-seeking and pettiness; one sees only precious, glorious men, giving their lives to the Empire.

An old woman has been marching beside the pipers for several paces. She sits on a bench and wipes away the thin, reluctant tears of the aged.

"It's not that I have any Scotch blood in me, for I'm of Irish descent," she explains. "It's just that the men are going. It seems to me now that that's been my whole life—watching men march away. For when I was a little girl in Kingston I saw my father go to the Crimea and I had no more sense than to laugh and clap at the music and the flags. He never came back, and the comfort they offered my mother was that there never would be another war. My husband went with Gordon to Khartum when I was a young bride, and though he came back to me he was never a well man. When I had to do his work and mine—not that I wasn't willing, but it's hard when a woman has children—the comfort he gave me was that the world was too wise now to have any more wars, except maybe in savage places. My youngest son went to South Africa, but I wouldn't go to see him off; he never came back, and they said then that one proof that war was dying out was that England was so ill-prepared to carry through that one. Now my eldest son's only son has gone with the artillery—the only one that could carry on our name. He is sailing down the St. Lawrence now, and maybe it's true this time that this will be the last war, and maybe it's not."

"You didn't try to hold them back?" one ventures.

"No, though I'd never have asked them to go. If a man sees his duty to his country in that way it's a woman's place to do her share for the country too. I'm glad I'm a British subject, but there is surely no harm in saying that any woman is lucky who belongs to a country that doesn't ask her for the lives of her men."

The Canadians know what war means, as few Americans can know. It is the current generation always whose experience gives the emotional cast to the reception of news or facts. And the current generation is always only partially experienced, because of its youth; it is, as a rule, likely to offer an immature or incomplete reaction. We hear stories of the Civil War—but they mean little to us, because we personally did not experience the direct results of that war. Our Spanish War, by its very nature, could not be brought deeply home to us. But the current Canadian generation is old enough to remember the South African war.

Many Canadians are the children of men who fought in the East Indian campaigns and grandchildren of men who went to the Crimean war. But the important point is

that they saw their relatives and friends go to South Africa. They sent their men off then with wild cheers and fatuous, ignorant hope; they whirled about in waves and shoals of patriotism. And then their men were killed, or they came back sick and mutilated and seared to the soul—the young ones even made old. These South African soldiers were not less loyal or less proud of the Empire, but war had so disillusioned them that love and care could never bring back a certain health of the spirit that is the right of every normal man.

Thus, before war was declared the Canadians were ready to offer full allegiance, generous help, up to the very limit of their resources, though it was with a complete understanding of the price they would have to pay. During those days when the declaration of war was expected, in all the large cities of Canada men and women stood day and night before the bulletin boards of the newspaper offices waiting for the news. When at last the statement was made that England would go to war there was for the most part no movement, no cheering. After the first realization the crowds stood in a deep and grave silence, much like that which America preserved during those solemn five minutes of reflection in honor of the funeral of President McKinley. They grasped the meaning of the war to Canada, imaginatively and concretely; and, knowing what they had to pay and would pay willingly, they could only meet the situation in silence.

Equipping Princess Pat's Pets

EVEN before the declaration of war Canada had begun to take precautionary measures, such as strengthening the fort at Beaumont, which commands the St. Lawrence. From the moment war was declared she made the cause of England her own. She offered, not as one admitting a right but as one asking a privilege, her money, her stores and the lives of her men. She did this fully and efficiently, but also gravely and quietly, and she is still doing it gravely and quietly.

Unofficially and officially the preparations for war went on. Canada poured gifts upon England. She sent the Motherland everything—from flour to chocolate, from oats to machine guns. Millionaires presented money: J. K. L. Ross gave the Canadian Government half a million; Hamilton Gault gave the money which has equipped the crack regiment of the overseas soldiers, the Princess Patricia Light Infantry Regiment. These men have all seen active service, and over five hundred of them have D. S. or D. C. medals for gallant work in actual warfare. Their nickname is Princess Pat's Pets, and the Princess, who worked every stitch of their colors herself, is inordinately proud of them. A number of rich men of Ottawa and Montreal gave the automobile rapid-firing machine-gun battery. Every one offered what he could, from Mr. Ross, with his half million, to a little Toronto newsboy, who gave a street-car ticket worth four and one-sixth cents, which was afterward sold for a thousand dollars.

The women were as patriotic as the men. They began collecting at once for a hospital ship fund, and when the Toronto Business Women's Club refused to contribute, as a protest against war, a storm of indignant reproaches and

letters came from women who were seeing their husbands and sons enlist. When the methods of helping became better organized the women began collecting money for the Red Cross Fund and helping the men collect for the Patriotic Relief Fund. This last, designed to provide for those dependent on soldiers at the front, shows how generously the Canadians have responded to the call for money. In Ottawa alone the sum reached three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars, though all the city had counted on was three hundred and fifty thousand; in Toronto it was just short of a million. Young women began to train as nurses, and old and young women began to sew and knit for the men at the front.

Officially the preparations were equally prompt and impressive. First of all, Sir Robert Borden, the Premier, offered an army division of from twenty thousand to twenty-five thousand men. Canada has a permanent force of some five thousand or six thousand men and a militia of perhaps one hundred thousand. But the Minister of Militia, Colonel the Honorable Sam Hughes, believes that the militia figures can be multiplied from two and a half to five times. The colonel has a remarkable personality, resembling somewhat our own Colonel Roosevelt. There are Canadians who do not admire him; but he is an extraordinary man, of undoubted force, zeal and bravery, who has done an extraordinary work in mobilizing the Canadian troops. He is not a regular, though he is a splendid soldier. When the troops were sent to South Africa he was left out. So he sent himself to South Africa, where he was accepted, and there he did brilliant clean-up work for Kitchener, especially in suppressing guerrilla warfare. Sir Robert Borden, when the new party got in, made him Minister of Militia. When war was declared, instead of getting a number of professional officers about him to help train the recruits, he undertook to do the whole work himself. Moreover, it became clear that the regulars were to be concentrated for guard duty, chiefly in Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Vancouver and Victoria, while the volunteers were to be sent to the front. To an outsider almost any criticism against the minister can be answered by pointing to what he did in the camp at Valcartier.

The Colonel Roosevelt of Canada

FROM the beginning men crowded to the recruiting stations to enlist. Only twenty thousand or twenty-five thousand were asked for, but at least forty thousand presented themselves. They came mostly from the cities, Montreal alone sending four thousand or five thousand men. The first lot was rigidly weeded—men being rejected because of defective teeth or crooked toes. From all over Canada recruits responded to the call. Then, group by group, from Victoria to Quebec, they were put on trains and sent to Colonel Hughes' camp at Valcartier. No one who saw their departure on the trains can speak of it without emotion. Remembering, as has been said, the unthinking enthusiasm of the speeding to South Africa, this time those who remained behind were quiet. The women wore fresh dresses, and sometimes flowers, and tried to be brave.

"Father," said the mother of a grenadier to her husband, "can't you put a little cheer into your face? You don't want the boy to be thinking how bad you feel, do you?"

"You needn't scold me; you look as if you were going to cry yourself," said father.

"I'm coming back, mumsie," a boy would whisper; "don't you make any mistake about that."

"Are we downhearted?" the recruits, leaning out of the car windows, would ask themselves. "No."

"Should we worry? No."

"Take care of yourself," a stay-at-home brother would call. "Take care of yourself—and some Germans!"

Then came the cry of all aboard. Friend wished friend good luck and a safe return—quietly, as if the departure were for some ordinary journey. Sons and parents and lovers clung in a last still embrace, careless of onlookers. All over Canada train after train moved away to the sob of the Scotch song:

Will you nae come back again?

Better loved you canna be,

Will you nae come back again?

They went to Valcartier for Colonel Hughes to make soldiers of them. This plain of Valcartier, sixteen miles north-east of Quebec, of an area of seven by four and a half miles, had been selected before the war. It is said to be almost equal to Salisbury Plains. The Jacques Cartier River runs through it, and all about are the Laurentian hills. On one day the plain was little more than a swampy sward, across which drove sometimes the rigs of the French-Canadian farmers; on the next day motor lorries and transport wagons took the place of the rigs, and Valcartier became, as if by magic, a military city. The soldiers trooped into it, from three or three thousand miles away, at all hours of the day and night. Some were ex-service men, but the majority were raw recruits. They came in all kinds of uniforms—kilties, red coats, black tunics with white trimming, khaki, and ordinary civilian clothes. Two weeks later they were all clad in khaki, except, of course, the Highlanders. They, by the way, cannot be deprived of their kilts; it was tried in South Africa, but vainly. They regard the kilts as a mark of nationality. They do wear a khaki coat and helmet, and in battle they have consented to wear over their kilts a khaki apron, so as not to make the kilts a mark for the enemy.

And presently round these men rose a city which looked as if it had been there a long time. There were twenty-five miles of siding alone, three huge ordnance sheds, army and service corps buildings, temporary shops, a water-works station with a pumping capacity of a million and a half gallons, miles of roads, seventeen hundred targets stretching over three and a half miles, four thousand acres on the side of Pinkney's Mountain for target practice, and thousands of tents on both sides of the river, across which a pontoon bridge was built. Colonel Hughes spared neither himself nor his men. He fed them well, and he worked them hard at heavy drilling, marching and musketry. Nearly forty thousand raw men came into the camp. At the end of eight weeks thirty-three thousand remained, trained soldiers, perfected in rifle shooting and skirmishing—about half as many again as England had offered to take. It was a splendid achievement. The five thousand or six thousand regulars could have been got to the front in three weeks; it was a bigger feat to get over thirty thousand ready in eight weeks.

Hard work for everybody, restraint and complete unity—that was the Canadian slogan. When war was declared all internal dissensions were forgotten. There was a tacit compact to pull together. Nothing was to be said or done to shake the ultra loyalty of the people.

All the fever went out of the Home Rule for Ireland issue, the suffragette movement, the defense policy for Canada. The opposition newspapers have buried their hammers and have bought horns.

Even the verbal speech about the Germans is restrained. Here and there one comes upon a man who talks of "the Hun" and "the Potsdam Butcher" and the "monster of inflated leather and blood," but in general the attitude seems to be that—whatever may be said of the emperor—the German soldiers are dying for an ideal. The feeling is that England entered reluctantly into a righteous war. The Canadians don't want to shout "My country, right or wrong"; they only feel their country must be right. Therefore they can afford tolerance for the Germans.

German Spies in Petticoats

ONE phase of the Canadian restraint is silence about important military matters. That, indeed, is the present rule of the Empire, but in no place could it be more rigidly observed than in Canada. If England believes in locking the stable before the horse is gone Canada believes in locking it both before and after—because the colt is left, to say nothing of horse clothing. One realized this rule as soon as one reached Canada. One met on the train to Quebec a blue-eyed Red Cross sergeant, and one questioned him as to the numbers of the great Canadian Overseas Expedition—the very name is reserved. His reply was so discreet that one might have gathered the impression that there were no troops in Canada going anywhere at all, and that perhaps there was not even a war. So one showed him a clipping, putting the figures at thirty-three thousand. He looked distressed, till he was told that it was from an American paper. Conversation did not cease, because one knew by his speech that he had come to Canada from the south of Ireland, and finding out his county one talked to him about its beauty. Then he said:

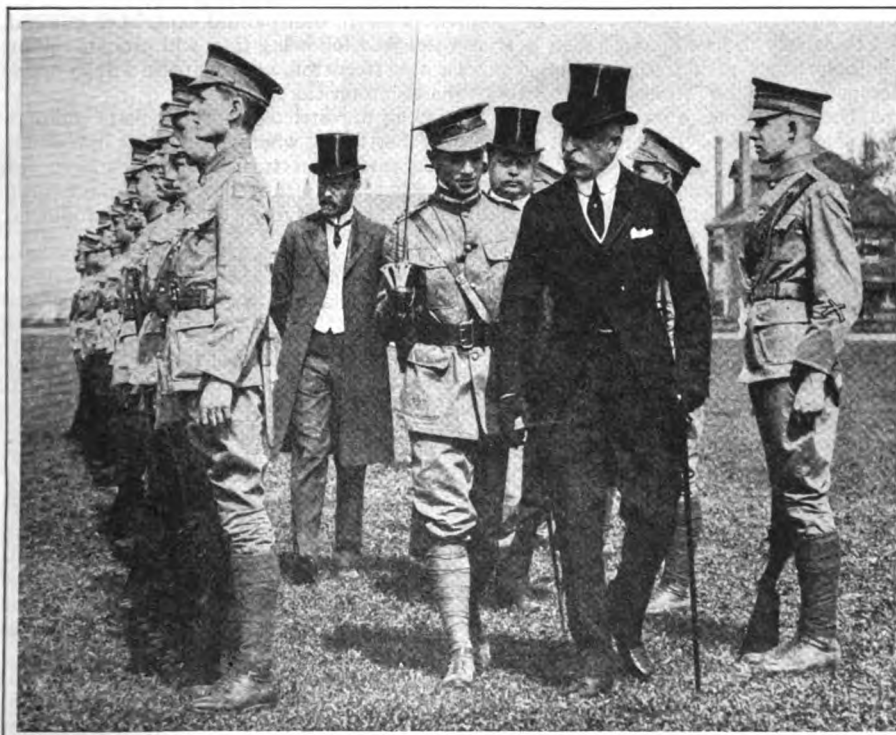
"You see we're not allowed to talk, and the place has been thick with spies. I'll tell you one story very few know: At Fort Henry, near Kingston, is kept a lot of German suspects. No one lets a newspaper in to them, so they know nothing. It's little they care, the way they think the Germans are winning. So one of them took some French and Belgian coins out of his pocket, and he gave them to a guard who had been good to him. 'Take these,' says he, 'and spend them at once,' he says; 'for by the time I'm out of this,' he says, 'all the coins in the world will be reminted, and on them will be the head of the German emperor.'"

The sergeant seemed to cling to the subject of spies. "There's been two lady spies taken in Valcartier camp," he said. "One was a young person from an American newspaper who was deported from Montreal as an undesirable citizen, but the other was a lady, though a German, and she's in jail now."

Sometime later a friendly conductor of Scotch descent spoke freely of such details of the war in Canada as had become a dead letter and the knowledge of which could not aid the Germans. Then he said mysteriously:

"I'll tell you something that not five people besides myself have knowledge of. It makes you almost feel sorry for the enemy. There's a German in a place I can't mention, and he said to a person I can't mention: 'I have here

(Continued on Page 49)



The Duke of Connaught Reviewing Cadets



PHOTO. BY ARTHUR A. GLEASON, TORONTO, CANADA

The 48th Highlanders Leaving Toronto for Valcartier Camp

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BOOKED THROUGH FOR THE EMPIRE

(Continued from Page 23)

some foreign coins.' I can't mention to what nation the coins belonged. He said to this person—it might have been another man—'You take these coins and get drunk with them as soon as you can; treat all your friends, too, for by the time you're sober all the coins in the whole world will be re-stamped, and the head on them will be the head of William the Great.'

One was not surprised when presently the conductor became eloquent on the subject of spies. "I feel sorry for anyone who is not really a lady spy but who might be suspected," he said.

Then it seemed to occur to him that after all there might be something agreeable and worth talking of to other passengers about his association with an innocent lady suspected of being a German spy.

So he added: "The men in the immigration sheds have had everything to do with the transports that go down the St. Lawrence. I'm afraid if you asked them questions they'd think it was queer and telephone up to the military headquarters. Not that anyone would harm a lady who was not really a spy; they would just detain her till they had made sure—and maybe they'd shadow her a little after that."

It seemed more considerate to all concerned to get whatever information one wanted first and go to military headquarters afterward. So one visited Valcartier camp and the Exhibition Grounds. Then one went to the Quebec military headquarters, a place where the business of war is being carried on most intensely. An officer of the regulars who looked competent listened to one's questions.

"I don't believe I could find anyone just now," he said, "who would tell you what you want to know. Could you put the questions in writing?"

The impossibility of that was pointed out. "Perhaps," one suggested, "you could give me a pass to Valcartier camp and to the Exhibition Grounds."

"I'm afraid I couldn't do that. You see, at Valcartier there's not much to see, and at the Exhibition Grounds there are just twelve hundred horses and a few rough men, and some officers to take care of the men."

This officer made no attempt to tell one the story of the German prisoner and the coins. One smiled at the thought—and those three smiles over the coins were the only smiles one had in Canada. There are tears, and there is a serious and noble sort of exhilaration, but deep down in the heart there can be no smiles.

One means to obey the Canadian rule of silence, though one has learned some facts and many rumors about Canada's future preparations that a German spy would be glad to know. Sympathy is a better gleaner of facts than enmity. At best too much information seeps the way of the spies. Yet the attitude of the Canadians is admirable—not only their willingness not to tell but, what is more, their willingness not to know.

Facts the Papers Must Not Print

The newspapers set a good example. All along the censorship has been rigid enough, but during the past few weeks it has been more than severe, and no Canadian war news of importance has been printed. This withholding is the more admirable because the papers have not been commanded not to print; they have merely been asked not to do so. The duties of the Canadian press in time of war, as pointed out to them from the highest powers, are to suppress telegraphic dispatches that seem contrary to public interest; to conceal all movements of troops, except when local contingents of troops leave their own centers for service; to be silent when troops pass through a town; not to mention purchases and shipments of horses, hay, oats, clothes, munitions, and so on; not to refer to any unusual activity in arsenals; to say nothing about fixed defenses, ignoring their very existence; not to refer to aircraft or to the movements of British warships. If temporary technical difficulties appear the press is not to refer to them; if prices of staple articles rise the press is to be cautious about announcing the fact. It must be cautious about publishing letters from soldiers serving at the front. It must say nothing of temporary difficulties in enrollment, training, movement

and dispatch of troops. In general it is supposed to confine itself to the emotional and patriotic side of military affairs.

The best test of the silence of both press and people exhibited itself in the sailing forth of the Canadian Overseas Expedition, trained in Valcartier camp—that magnificent picked body of thirty-three thousand men, including nineteen infantry battalions, two cavalry regiments, three field-artillery brigades, and the various units of engineers, army service corps and army medical corps, the last-named including two hundred Canadian nurses. The soldiers themselves did not know when they were going, nor did the press correspondents.

During the fourth week in September the soldiers suspected that they must soon move, because they were ordered to begin testing out live shells in practice, and the camp thundered with incessant cannonading. Then, too, the soldiers were urged to take their final inoculations against typhoid fever. Yet not a word was put in the papers. Presently troops of soldiers began to march into Quebec, two or three hundred at a time, by day and by night. No man on the street was sure whence they came or where they were going. One large contingent marched during a heavy rain from midnight till past dawn. All these men went to the wharves and breakwaters, and disappeared. And one by one transports left the shore and moved down the river to an anchorage previously agreed on. Some troops were moved from camp by train, but even that invitation to publicity did not raise the voices of the newspapers or of the people in the streets. For eight days they moved—men and guns, eight thousand horses, artillery and transport wagons—leaving a ruined road behind them.

A People Kept in the Dark

There was a strict military guard about the wharves; no one could reach them without a pass, and passes were given only for military reasons. By ones and twos the transports went to anchorage. Then one afternoon there was a great crowd of people on the terrace. They were looking down at the water, in plain enough sight of eight ships pulling up anchor. The band of the Royal Canadian Garrison Artillery came out in their service uniforms, and played on the terrace Tipperary, O Canada, and Auld Lang Syne. Most of the people accepted the tunes as a pleasant attention. But there were a few tearful women and men—wives, sweethearts, daughters and old parents—who knew that this music, like their own tears, was a farewell to the troops. They were too far away to distress the men on the ships, who sailed off in good spirits to join the transports farther along in the channel. So they went—thirty-one vessels of men and guns, horses and supplies, escorted by a fleet of eleven war vessels. It was the largest and most important movement ever effected on the Atlantic; yet the ships went away without cheers, with no advertisement whatever, and with no comment from the people or the press.

The next day a newspaper correspondent saw the fleet in full war rig at Rimouski, the last port of call in the St. Lawrence. He wrote an account of it, guarded enough, which appeared in one newspaper. Others refused to print it, and a good deal of disapproval was felt that any paper should have permitted its appearance, though once the expedition was well under way some of the spies must have seen it and sent word to their masters.

When the personnel of the Canadian Overseas Expedition is analyzed various facts appear that on the surface are striking. For example, about seventy-five per cent of the soldiers were born in the British Isles. That fact, however, does not show any lack of loyalty on the part of the Canadian-born; it means merely that there has been such a surprising amount of immigration to Canada from the Motherland in the last few years that a large percentage of the eight million population is English-born.

Naturally, the English would first hurry to the call of England's war. Another fact is that the French-Canadians have not responded to the call so rapidly as it was hoped they would. In the South African war most of the people in the Province of

MEMORIES

When I'm smokin' in th' twilight
All th' world just fades away,
While Time goes turnin' backward
To th' scenes of yesterday;
An' I lis'en to th' voices
Of the fren's I uster know
Till I hear one voice a-callin'—
Sof'ly callin', "Little Joe."

Oh, thar's golden dreams aplenty
Of those days that uster be,
In th' fragrant smoke of Velvet,
But the sweetest one to me
Is to see my mother smilin'
Like she uster long ago,
At a round cheeked little rascal
That she called her "Little Joe."



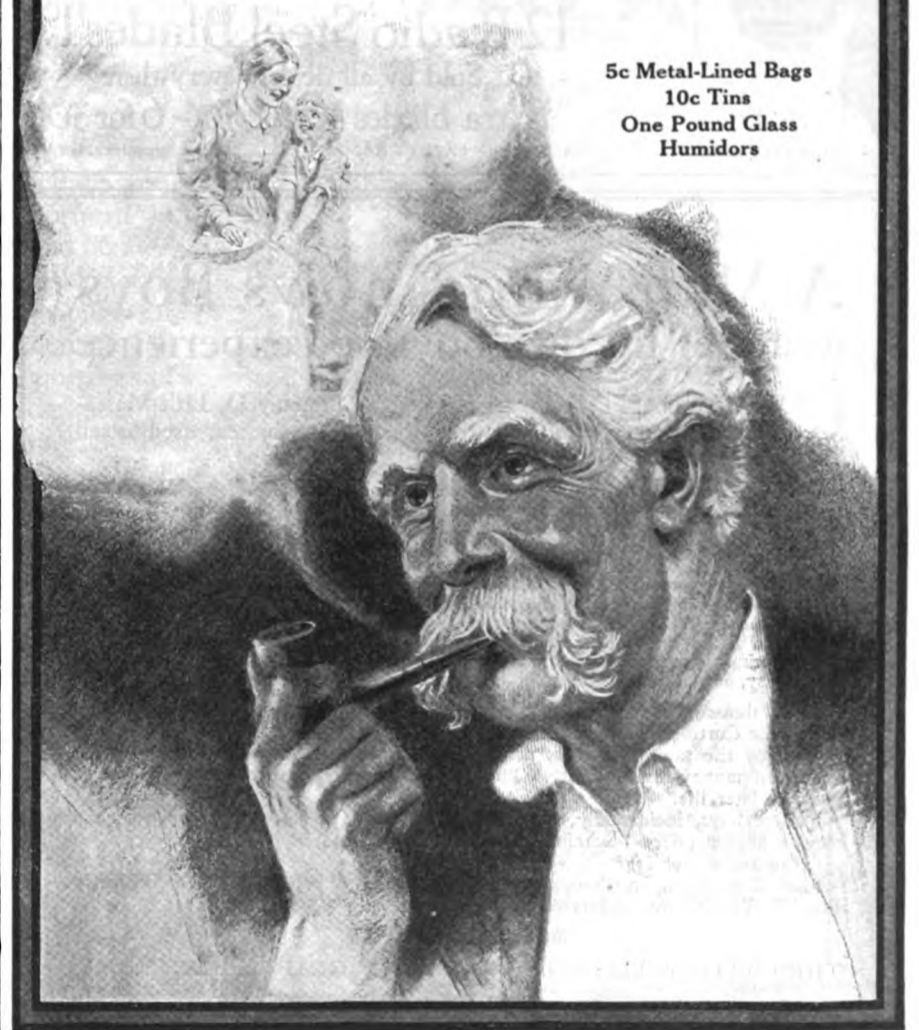
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A Man Who Knows Boys writes of his own boyhood experience

COMMANDANT F. P. KEHEW of Company D, 11th Massachusetts Infantry, United Boys' Brigade of America, used to sell *The Saturday Evening Post*. In a recent letter he says:

"Although selling *The Saturday Evening Post* was great fun for me, and I considered myself quite a business man, now I realize it was really an education in business for me. This was my first experience in handling other people's money. I had to get used to the feeling of carrying around with me money that I could not spend because it wasn't mine, and for this reason I soon found that I could carry my own money around with the same safety. I know of boys today who have bank accounts larger than some business men because they, too, have learned this lesson in the same school. In my judgment, parents do well in urging their boys to take up the work of selling the Curtis publications for these reasons, and because it is easy, out-of-doors work, profitable according to the effort expended."

Fifty thousand American boys, largely the sons of well-to-do parents, are now selling the Curtis publications. These boys go to school, but in their leisure hours they enjoy the same "business play" that taught Commandant Kehew his first lessons of money-responsibility. The experience will be of inestimable value to them in later life.

These boys, incidentally, earn over a million dollars in cash every year and receive 80,000 prizes—watches, cameras, bicycles, and so on.

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THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, PENNA.

Quebec and in Eastern Ontario were opposed to Canada's sending soldiers and spending money. A good many more are favorable to this war on account of France being involved and because many of them are half Belgian. Again, some of the French-Canadians have felt that their best men and officers have been ignored. But now a French-Canadian unit is being drilled and made ready for the front. It will be commanded by its own officers. Its men are to be the flower of the French-Canadians, and they are ready to show that the soldiers of Montcalm and of Lévis have not degenerated. It is a saying in Canada that the farther west you go the more loyal the Canadians are. Perhaps the fairest way to state it is to say that all Canadians love the Empire, but some love it more than others.

It is said by some frank people that the rapid enlistment of the soldiers in the Canadian Overseas Expedition was due to the fact that times have been bad in Canada, and that a Canadian soldier's pay is good. It is more than an English soldier's pay, being about a dollar a day. Besides, a married soldier goes away, sure that his wife and children will be, at least in a measure, provided for. The government pays a man's wife or mother twenty dollars a month. It may be that the man's late employer will see that the wife gets something, but if he does not, or if the man was out of work at the time of enlisting, the Canadian Patriotic Fund will be called on to aid the woman. Suppose she has three children; then she will receive, including the government allowance, forty-five dollars a month. It may be true that some men went to war more for the sake of their families than for the sake of the Empire, but a man big enough to pay such a price for the one ideal would also have the other in his heart.

Acts Speak Louder Than Songs

Another contingent must go over, as even the German spies know, and so the enlisting goes on steadily but surely. Writers in the newspapers are urging the Canadian-born to enlist, and there is no doubt they will; they will not have to be conscripted. As a writer in one Canadian newspaper pointed out, war is something that comes to the Continental Europeans, but it is something the Canadians go to. The Canadians constitutionally incapable of fighting stay home; while the poor Europeans, unnerved—not necessarily unwilling but mentally and physically unfitted—must fight. Even croakers know that Canada can and will send enough fit soldiers—a quarter of a million men if need be. But these latent soldiers are not being allowed to forget what is expected of them, and press and people remind them.

"Have you enlisted?" asked a clergyman of a young man who was emotionally caroling that Britons never would be slaves. "No, sir."

"Well, then, leave the singing to those who have. If you don't intend to do your duty by your country you'd better not be showing any hypocritical patriotism."

Not that the Canadians are in need of being reminded, for the war spirit is alive and growing everywhere. Even people who could not possibly fight are practicing rifle shooting. Veterans, and men prevented by age and by other reasons from joining the army, are forming themselves into a guard for home defense. The other day the Duke of Connaught reviewed the battalion at McGill University which will be ready for the front if it is called on. Here, side by side, were drilling callow students and noted men like the pathologist, Dr. J. G. Adami, and Doctor Ludlow. More than one seventeen-year-old boy, who yet hopes to go to the front, has this verse pinned to the big Union Jack in his bedroom:

*It's only an old piece of bunting,
It's only an old colored rag,
But thousands have died for its honor,
And shed their best blood for the flag.*

The Canadians do not talk much about the English flag, either in mediocre verse or well-chosen prose periods, but they love it. Some symbols are meager and bodiless, others melodramatic and sentimental; a few are adapted to the ideals they stand for, and are suggestive and alive. Such is the Union Jack. To Canadians it stands for ideals of liberty and fair play which they respect and even revere, and for which, when the Empire calls, men and women both are ready to pay, whether the price be life or youth, health or hope or happiness.

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CHAPTER VIII

NANCY, THE INVINCIBLE

I BEGGED very hard for that trip to Nancy. If I could get as far as that it would be possible to get a bit farther, and see the trenches beyond the city; or it would be possible to go through the stretch of Lorraine devastated by the Germans. But, above all, I wanted to see Nancy because the city had always touched my imagination. It is so flavored with the spirit of its people. Year by year through the sweeping centuries, back almost for a thousand years, they have made magnificent history for Nancy, — laity and clergy, workmen and soldiers, captains and kings, and the crown of them were the great dukes of Lorraine. They passed along the streets to hold court or to go to the hunt or to go to their devotions in their chapels, — and at last to go to their eternal rest with lofty funeral pomp. They were not afraid of death, those high and puissant lords; they liked to face it, and they wished to surround it with pomp and circumstance. Nor were they afraid of being forgotten by Nancy or by France, for in their shadowy, still chapel is blazoned this inscription: “You who pass, stop and wonder at these tombs; among these dukes of Lorraine are so many heroes, among their

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duchesses so many great women, among their children so many princes born for the throne worthier still of heaven." And the reading on each tomb begins, "To the immortal memory of ——"

But particularly I wanted to go to Nancy because of her present history. For if ever the soul of a nation can be expressed in stone, then Nancy, the beautiful, is the soul of France. As she stands against the Germans, so stands all France.

"You shall not have us," the people of Nancy say, "and all those murderous shells you cast upon us shall find us unmoved."

The Germans have always wanted Nancy as a predatory long-plotting man may covet a woman whom some jealous nerve warns him is not for him. Centuries ago, when she was nothing but a castle, they wanted her. Their desire grew with the centuries. The Franco-Prussian War, and their eager hands came close. They punished the Nancy they dared not take with heavy tributes. They would crush if they could not conquer. Their love for her took on a tinge of hate, — a tinge that should disappear once they possessed her. Nancy's manufactures must die if her nationality did not. And then, once more, the imperturbable city triumphed over her enemies. For when almost half of the Alsatians in conquered Alsace refused German nationality thousands of them migrated from Strasbourg to Nancy and revived the industries. So Nancy had taken what

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belonged to Germany! One more reason for bringing Nancy to her knees. The tinge of hate grew deeper. Nancy was a frontier city, and what frontier but may be changed? Just a few years of waiting, — just till The Day.

The Day has come, but Nancy is still untaken. And when bombs fall from the Taubes upon her, when shells come roaring in from the great three-hundred-and-eighties, when buildings are wrecked, and little children are killed or mangled, Nancy says,

“We shall carry on as usual.”

That brave city was like a heroine to me and I wanted to see her. At last permission was granted, and once more I set out in the deep-blue dawn for the Gare du Nord. And then my day began dramatically, for I met Ninette. Long ago, when I was a student in Paris, I had known Ninette in a casual way. I lived in a street on the edge of the Latin Quarter, in the middle of which was a little laundry. Whenever I entered I would see the beautiful ten-year-old Ninette, staring from behind the counter with eyes too eager.

I would see her peering from behind the skirts of her shrewish step-mother at the young men of the studios as they passed by with their *filettes* on their arms. And I am afraid that Ninette's eyes were too knowing. The *concierge* of the building where I lived, who sat always in the doorway, or at the window, scrutinizing and estimating the life that went by her, said of Ninette,

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“ She will become a *fille de joie*, that one. But what can you expect, with such a stepmother! Clean clothes, that woman makes, but her heart is a coal! ”

A few months before the war, when I was back in Paris and was visiting my old stamping-grounds, I sought the *concierge* to find out what had become of everybody. She gave me a systematic history of the street, from the restaurant at one end to the *patisserie* at the other. Half way down she spoke of Ninette.

“ She became a model early, that young one,” said the *concierge*. “ Her face and figure, — ah, well, one need not be a painter to admire them. She did well enough. If she had been wise, madame, she could have made money, and in the end married some decent workman and set up a little shop. But no, two years ago she must throw herself away on a worthless gamin. She gives her very skin to that one, madame. He eats her money up, he drinks, he beats her, but she will not leave him. This will show you how worthless he is, madame. He is called Ninette’s *ami*. People do not trouble themselves to remember his name. She is finished, is Ninette, madame.”

The next time I saw the *concierge* was a few days before I took the trip to Nancy. A tall, beautiful girl was with her — Ninette. Her eyes were sad, and yet proud; her hands were roughened, and she was, for a Parisian, rather carelessly dressed. I found out afterwards that

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she worked in the kitchen of a hotel. After greetings were over the *concierge* said,

“Tell madame about your René. Tell her; for you have reason to be proud, my girl. He is Ninette’s *ami*, that madame knows of,” she added to me.

Ninette glowed and spoke and then faltered. René was wonderful; so brave. He had gone into the terrible trenches and had never flinched, had laughed and sung, had done inconceivably brave things. He had won the *croix de guerre*; more than that, an honor almost unheard of for a private, he had won a commission. He was a man to rule men was René.

Just one of the common instances of a useless creature being made over into a man by the war.

“It was Ninette,” said the *concierge* proudly, “who gave this man to France. He is coming back on his *permission*, — the first he has had in two years. All his friends in the Quarter will praise him, but there are some of us who will praise Ninette more.”

Ninette flushed, paled, seemed to quail, and soon withdrew.

“Poor child,” said the *concierge*, “she has known of other cases of men who were killed just before their *permissions*. She is afraid.”

I wondered if it were that. And when I met her that morning in the blue dawn at the Gare du Nord I knew the *concierge* had been wrong. All night long Ninette had sat there, waiting for

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René's train. Her face was haggard, her eyes heavily shadowed. As I had over an hour to wait for my train I took her to a café for coffee. It was hard to make her go, for René's train was expected at any moment.

"You 'll look prettier if you are fed," I argued.

Ninette yielded, drank the coffee, raced me back into the station, and then said, her rich voice breaking,

"Ah, madame, it does not matter whether I am pretty or not, for I do not mean that he shall see me. I am only going to see him pass by. I shall not meet him. I am afraid, afraid."

"But, Ninette," I began; and then paused. Of what use to remind her of all she had done for him. Benefits can be forgot, and even gratitude cannot warm a love that has chilled.

"Do — do you mean he has n't answered your letters?" I asked.

"He never wrote; except to tell me of his decoration or to ask for a parcel. But that was like him. No, madame, it is not that. But he is a great man, now, and I — I am only Ninette. I am getting old; I am twenty-six. René, — he is twenty-five, that is young. There are so many pretty girls in the Quarter, and men so scarce now, and René a hero — ah, he will not turn to me. And who will blame him? I — I have not the courage; I will just look at him and go away!"

A surge of men in blue came through from a platform, and Ninette clutched my arm and fled

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behind a pillar. I fled, too, — towards the train for Nancy. I shared her cowardice. Who would know, better than this girl, who loved him, the man's weakness or baseness? She might fear from a bitter knowledge, or from the timidity of her own love. I had said to Eleanor that in the war zone I was always getting the beginnings of stories or the middles, but not often the beginning, the middle, and the end. Here was the end ready to my hand, — and I ran away.

While I was standing before the gate leading to the platform where my train stood I did let my eye flicker over to that other platform. And I *think* I saw Ninette walking away with a blue arm encircling her waist. I *think* so, but I shall never know, because of my inability to bear a sad ending. If René failed her, if some young pretty hero-worshipper took him away and Ninette sat, like Ida, hearing

“. . . their shrill, happy laughter;”

if the Latin Quarter only saw the hero in René and forgave, as the world does, the disloyal heart, — then I don't want to know it. I shall try to think of Ninette in what must have been her proudest moment — the day the first news came from the trenches about his bravery, and she could boast to her friends; the day her man stopped being “Ninette's *ami*” and became “René.”

In the train to Nancy I found a comforting con-

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trast to the episode of Ninette. Here was the happy middle of a story. An officer and his young bride shared the compartment with me. They looked disappointed when I entered, and I would have withdrawn if there had been another seat on the train. However, by determinedly looking out of the window I showed them that I would try not to be there. The little bride could not have been more than sixteen; her hair hung over her shoulders in curls. The officer was old enough to be her father. How they melted to each other, those two, murmuring and clinging. With what tenderness he put on and off her coat, drawing it closely about her white childish neck. Probably they had married on his brief leave, and an indulgent superior officer was giving them all possible time together. As soon as breakfast was announced I left them, lingering over it as long as I could; after that I stood in the passage between two tall officers bound for Toul, and watched the Marne valley unfold itself.

Soft hills, red roofs, Epernay, Châlons-sur-Marne; Bar-le-Duc; Gondrecourt, where the officer and his wife descended for their last few hours together; Toul; and twilight beginning. Then a deep-green stream, edged by tall, slim, evenly set trees. A barge drawn by horses was passing down, the bargee leaning out to watch the train or to gaze up lazily at the deep blue tent of the sky.

Nancy; a descent in the darkness, amid a surge

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of blue soldiers home for *permission*; the little office of the inspector of police, who scanned my permit and me keenly and questioned me closely. For, at the moment, I was not personally conducted and Nancy must beware of spies. The hotel then, and the *patron* opening wide eyes at the sight of me.

“Pardon, madame,” he said, “but it is hard for the stranger to enter Nancy now; in that it is like the kingdom of Heaven.”

He began at once to tell about the advantage of his cellar, and I gathered that the traveller in Nancy now does not ask for a bedroom and bath but for a bedroom and cellar. I found, later, that nearly all the houses in Nancy bear, painted in red beside the doorways, the double cross of Lorraine, to announce that they have good cellars where passersby may take refuge during a daylight bombardment.

I had tea and some of the famous Nancy macaroons in a little *patisserie*, and I remarked to madame, the proprietor, that the moon looked very lovely coming up over the silent square. Madame pursed her lips and arched two delicate black brows.

“We are not quite so pleased to see the moon here in Nancy as we used to be,” she replied, shrugging a shoulder in the direction of Germany. “Me, I do not mind the shells in the daytime, but at night it is disagreeable.”

“Disagreeable” struck me as a restrained word.

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“ My little Pierre,” madame continued, “ that one, he sleeps — oh, but like a little pig or a Boche. The siren never wakes him, and he is so heavy to carry down two flights of stairs to the cellar. It is not a treat, that, to carry a heavy child so far. But it is better than if he cried and stayed awake the rest of the night. Now I have moved our beds to the ground floor.”

I condoled with her, and then she said with a touch of superiority,

“ Madame, then, has never assisted in a bombardment of the three-hundred-and-eighties? ”

“ No, but I have assisted in a bombardment of the seventy-sevens. Also I have assisted in machine gun and rifle firing.”

We boasted gently, she trying to prove that the suspense induced by three-hundred-and-eighties was infinitely greater than that induced by the seventy-sevens, allowing no advantages to the fact of a view from front-line trenches. I described the sound of the seventy-sevens and the look of the black smoke; she, standing dramatically behind her fruit tarts and macaroons, described the bursting of the great shells.

“ If you are in a village outside Nancy and have good ears,” she said, “ you can hear the faint whistle of the shell as it travels; then it bursts with a short dull roar. But if you are two hundred yards away from where the shell falls, you do not hear it coming. You hear a great report with a roar afterwards, and then you hear the houses

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crumbling. It is a dull sound, that crumbling, but it does not last long. Glass breaks everywhere; there is a bad smoke and then dust everywhere. It is not agreeable.”

She spoke almost indifferently, as if she would not give the enemy the poor satisfaction even of resentment. Suddenly she began to laugh.

“It is of my first bombardment that I think,” she said; “my Pierre was with his grandmother, so I had not that on my mind. Me, I was staying with my friend whose husband is the *patron* of a hotel here. Of a sudden what a sound, — all the electric bells in the hotel ringing, all the telephones. The shells! The Boche! Quick, the cellar! There were two officers staying in the hotel who did not trouble themselves to rise. But everyone else ran to the cellar.

“Ah, madame, it was to laugh! Ladies so meagre in their dressing-gowns, and so strange with no rouge and without hair. And the men so thin, too, in their night-clothes. All pushing, with never a pardon! When we got down to the cellar — but it was cold! We sat on the coal and leaned against the hogsheads of wine, and the women remembered their difficulties and lowered their heads, and the men said ‘Pardon!’ and sat on their slippers to warm and to hide their ankles. It was very amusing that. The commercial travelers chattered their teeth with the cold and said they were not afraid, and told us what they would do to the Germans if they were not civilians.

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They were not people of Nancy," added madame, with the faintest touch of contempt. "For us, it is nothing, these bombardments!"

I could scarcely believe in the bombardments that night. I was the only person apparently in the streets, and I wandered under the moon in the beautiful, still squares where the fountains sounded so loud and the stars seemed so far away. But next day the effect of the German warfare in Nancy was brought sharply home to me. I was walking in the beautiful gardens of the city hospital, and I found myself running in the direction of a ground-floor ward whence issued a baby's terrible screams, — running because these were cries too dreadful to bear. It seemed as if all the world should stop to help that little one. This was not at all like the fretful crying we are used to when a little stomach is in temporary pain or is in haste for milk. This was tortured screaming; it sounded like the cry I once heard of an animal that was burning to death.

I dashed open the ward door and came upon little six-months-old Jeanne Beçanson having her wounds dressed, — wounds made by the latest German bombardment of Nancy. One sister-nurse was holding the little martyred body; two others were dressing it; still another was putting milk to the baby's lips. That little mutilated body, deep in its waxen surface dull red wounds, ragged, ghastly; the little tortured face; the glassy eyes searching frantically (and in vain) for her mother.

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The shell that wounded Jeanne wrecked the lives of four people. Her father was one of Nancy's soldiers. He fought bravely, which means that he fought like a Frenchman, and was so badly wounded that it was impossible to send him back to the trenches. After a time work was found for him; his wife earned a little money, too, by working at home, and, believing in fresh air and exercise, she used, in her leisure time, to walk the streets of Nancy with her two little boys. One day she was going home with the children to get luncheon when the siren sounded, announcing the approach of a German three-hundred-and-eighty. She was near her own door in ancient Grand Rue; she ran, but the great shell ground out the lives of her and of her two little sons.

There were other wounded people in that ward: little René Blaison, whose mother and sister were killed; she has had forty pieces of shell taken from her body and she is paralyzed. But she smiles — except when Jeanne's wounds are dressed. Across the ward I saw a woman wounded six months before; the flesh was stripped from her arms and legs, and the bones themselves fearfully broken and crumbled, — like the house she lived in. She moans constantly with pain, but softly, so as not to disturb the others. There were other women with broken arms or legs; they smiled, too, except when the baby screamed. French people never complain in these days.

So little Jeanne's wounds were dressed, and she

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lay too spent even to drink her milk. After a time she took it feebly. But she would not smile even when I made wonderful baby gurgles in my throat; she imitated them, tentatively, but she kept looking beyond me for a face she will never see again. Jeanne sees no reason for smiling. When she is older she will learn that France always smiles.

Ruins, — in one way they do not matter. To stare at buildings with the faces ripped off so that one sees all the interior as if one opened the front of a doll's house; to see walls pock-marked with shrapnel, and heaps of meaningless rubbish where once were order and meaning — all this is only too common a sight in France. But commonness cannot destroy the poignancy nor the sense that this hacking of homes and women and children, this attrition of a non-fighting city, is something worse than killing soldiers.

Nancy carries her wounded babies to the hospital, picks out of the ruins any furniture that is still useful, puts fresh panes of glass into whatever houses have suffered lightly (marking with yellow strips of paper the panes that have survived), and begins to clear away the débris with a view to rebuilding. Ever since the bombardment began this has been her way. By their attitude the Nancy people say to Germany,

“ You can neither take our Nancy nor drive us out of her. Not in any sense shall she be under your power.”

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The Germans have a more or less definite system of shelling and bombarding Nancy. It rather makes one think of the processes of a nagging woman or man (for men naggers are not unknown, though rarely mentioned). Such a person has a devilish way of finding a raw spot and, with rigid finger, coming back at uncertain intervals to prod it, or, worse still, to hover over it. Irritation, nervous attrition, feverish waste, is the sole accomplishment.

For their attacks they choose a bright day so that Taubes may indicate the range, or a bright moonlight night. Sometimes shelling will be followed by bombing from Taubes. Generally they send two in an afternoon or two or three at night; they seem to prefer a series of three. According to Rule One of the code of nagging, they wish to induce as much unpleasant uncertainty as possible. The people of Nancy go to bed with their cellar doors ajar. Close to their beds they put wraps and slippers. When the great shell is fired from the German lines a French sentry hears the report, telephones with lightning speed to Nancy, and then the siren sounds. The siren is like a great foghorn. When we are awakened at sea by a foghorn we have a curious sense half of safety, half of danger. But when the siren of Nancy sounds there is nothing but the connotation of danger in that loud, long, sinister monotone.

After the siren begins there is a full minute before the shell falls. A good sprinter, travelling

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alone, could reach the shelter of his cellar about the time the shell found its goal. A mother with two or three little children to care for might get down one story, but scarcely two. During a recent bombardment, when a little ancient nunnery was destroyed, the seven nuns were in the second story. They managed to get to the first story, where they were entombed. The rooms in which they had been were shredded into dust. They were dug out safely, for excavating parties go at once after a bombardment to search for people who may be buried in the cellars.

The Nancy cellars are by no means warm rooms next the furnace where one keeps the lawn-mower, the rakes, a few spare trunks, and an old bicycle. They are very cold, rather damp, dark, and narrow, with vaulted roofs; they spell romance, if you like, but also gloom and rheumatism. I went to a school that had an excellent cellar, and saw the children happily at play.

“What do you do in the cellar, little one?” I asked a pretty little girl.

“We sing,” she said gaily, “we are not afraid.”

“They are droll — these Boches,” said another with a funny air of mature criticism.

But it was not droll in the cellar where there were no chairs, nothing but a dim lantern that scarcely made the darkness visible. The children not only sing, but learn poetry and are told stories. The first time they were taken into the cellar some

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of them were afraid. They did not cry but they grew white and trembled.

“ My little children,” the principal said to them, “ you must be brave. You must remember that you are all the children of soldiers who are fighting for France. Perhaps your fathers will not come home again. If that happens you must bear it. You must bear anything that will help France. If you are brave and make nothing of these bombardments you will be helping France; you will be worthy to be the children of soldiers.”

That is the way the people of Nancy and of all France face facts. They face facts, but if they do not like a fact such as a bombardment they efface it as quickly as possible. The best way Nancy has known of effacing facts and ignoring them and getting the best of her enemies has been to carry on her business as usual.

I found in the munition works a further symbol of the spirit of Nancy. It was night. Our military car tore through the darkness but the munition factory was flaming defiantly with light. No German Taube cares to attack it for fear of being brought down by the perfect markmanship of the French anti-air-craft guns. The two vast buildings of the factory stand high, like steady, keenly-defined beacons. Inside there was a sense of crimson light, of dignified beautiful movement. It was more poetry than any idealized picture of industry could be — because here the ideal was real; the spirit of these workers, their

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passion for France had to express itself in beauty.

There was no confusion. In one place men poured the crimson molten steel into the moulds of the two-hundred-and-forty shells, in another place into the moulds of the three-hundred-and-twenties. Here great rows of red-topped moulds were cooling for two or three hours; here again men were beating the red-pointed shapes out of their moulds, and others were rolling them, glowing, into a pile to cool for another twenty hours. There girls were filling moulds with sand, quick, intent. Overhead moved with slow, heavy grace great cranes holding pots of liquid fire. At one side girls formed the bodies of sand that were to make the hollows of the shells. At the end of the immense room the industry seemed for a moment to concentrate itself where forty girls pushed an unbelievably large wagon loaded with moulds into the drying-oven.

The grace and power of those straining young figures in their men's clothes and caps; the absorbed look of the alert, serious faces! There was in that whole factory no sense of wasted effort, no unnecessary noise, no hint of frivolity or lightness. Everywhere was a sense of harmony and beauty. It was in the great shop where the shells were being made; it was in the other great shop where they were turned and riveted and polished and tested and otherwise advanced in the processes of making. The oldest man and the

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strong boy of sixteen who beat a copper band upon a shell struck their hammers, each after each, in a perfect rhythm. The dark woman who bent and swayed over a turning-machine was in key with their movements. If there were dirt and beads of sweat and weariness they were not apparent; the spirit of the work soared above anything sordid or ugly in the process. Those deep-eyed girls and gaunt men were beautiful with the concentrated passion, the "*union sacrée*" of the nation, the pure love of France. What they were doing was great, but they were greater still.

Nancy is perhaps unusually fortunate in her administration. Her broad-minded prefect, M. Mireman, her mayor, M. Simon, and her Bishop, Turinaz, work perfectly together, though they are men divergent in views and in experience. The citizens have perfect confidence in them. So has, for that matter, all Lorraine; one proof is that the paper money of Nancy is accepted in neighboring towns as if it were Bank of France money. Whatever these authorities propose or do the inhabitants accept. All the people are united by the desire to keep Nancy at her full stature. Great and small are afire with public spirit. There is a rich tanner in Nancy who, since the bombardment, has had his family constantly in the city. At Christmas he writes a personal letter to all of his employees at the front, and the "godsons" of his wife and daughter always spend their *permissions* with the family. There is a

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banker who owns large lodging-houses in which he receives free of charge refugees whose homes are in ruins and who are too old or too ill to work. In his garden he plants potatoes instead of flowers for needy people. On his fortnightly journeys to Paris he carries for distribution to the poor there trunks full of potatoes and coal. Nancy first — but all France too. And these men are but two. The tally is long of people who are giving all they can to their city and to their country.

Many pictures I shall carry away from Nancy — the memory of the canteen where ladies, once of the Salon type, served the soldiers back on *permissions*; the great *vestiaire* where other women gave clothes to the refugees; a picture of a woman four of whose sons had died for France, as I saw her holding the miniature of her fifth and last son and looking, looking, as if her brave, passionate eyes could keep him safe; the memory of another woman, old, not strong, sitting in a fireless room because some day France might need coal more than she did. These Lorraine faces are not easily forgotten, fine, high of resolve, confident, infinitely kind. And always I shall think of little Jeanne and her wounds.

I wish I could have made little Jeanne smile, but I like to think that she will smile. One day, when the war is well over and her broken father is at rest beside her mother and little brothers, she will walk the beautiful squares of Nancy with her lover. She will look at the moon that used to

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mean bombardments for Nancy, and she will be happy. All these red griefs will be no more real to her than the griefs of our Civil War are to us. Each generation, perhaps mercifully, must forge its own imagination of evil and sorrow; each generation, wastefully, cannot learn deeply enough the lessons of the wars of the last generation. But the bitter lore of this world-war has surely told. Perhaps there will be no more wars to wound babies and hearts and to sear consciences. Little Jeanne will smile. Meanwhile brave Nancy smiles, stands steady, with her back towards the thwarted Germans, is serene, triumphant, can never yield to fear. For Nancy is not just Nancy; she is the immortal spirit of all France.

CHAPTER XV

IN THE FRONT-LINE TRENCHES

AH, but madame," they said to me, at the Maison de la Presse, "we dare not send you into the front-line trenches before Rheims except on a day when there is no bombardment. One must wait."

So one waited; at first with confidence, later, when one discovered that the bombardments of Rheims averaged about two in three days, one felt a degree of uncertainty. But when I learned that Eleanor had at last gained permission to come, my confidence returned. For I knew that Eleanor's sunshine luck would hold.

Permission at last! Madame St. Marie-Perrin and I were already at Châlons. We drove down to Epernay to spend the night with Madame G——, a member of a family that for decades has been one of the chief wine-growers of the champagne country. We made our way along a coal-black street to a château looming darkly against the blue-black sky. Before us was a tall iron fence. Madame Perrin found the bell and rang. A silence, and then echoing steps in the courtyard. The tall gate slowly drew back, and an old withered *concierge* admitted us. We felt our way in the darkness. Suddenly a great oblong

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of orange light signified to us that the door of the château had opened. We entered into a marble hall, twenty feet high. Statues stood in niches between tall windows. At the left was a wide marble staircase. Our hostess met us in a white and crimson drawing-room. The windows were at least fifteen feet high, draped in crimson velvet lambrequins. Many mirrors and rare old furniture were a fit setting to the charming French hospitality we received.

Madame G—— and her husband, a son home on leave, and his wife were our hosts. We talked of the hospital for which Madame G—— is doing so much work; of the rumors of a new offensive to be launched at Verdun; of madame's little grandchildren; of the wine-cellars, of the rue du Commerce, where the wine-houses are, of the great age of Epernay, which was given to the church of Rheims in the time of Clovis. Very peaceful and charming and domestic it all was, and it was strange to wake in the night and to hear, far off, the sound of a bombardment.

Next morning Madame Perrin and I went to the station to meet the Paris train. It was late, which distressed us, because we knew that every minute we delayed in Epernay shortened by just so much our stay in the front-line trenches. Inside the station were a very few people who had permits to leave Epernay, — women in black, little boys in long pinafores and cloaks. There were soldiers in blue, standing with their families, wait-

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ing for the train that was to take them back to Verdun. To the enormous pack each carried had been added fresh-baked loaves of bread and a shining cup or basin, little final gifts from home. On a wall of the station was pasted the poster which has found so much favor in America, representing a poilu charging towards the enemy, shouting, "We'll get them!" Under the words some satirist had written "cold feet!"

The two military motors arrived which were to take us to Rheims, and a small crowd of boys surrounded them, saluting, respectfully, the captain who was to have us in charge. A dark, radiant, handsome man he was, gallant, brilliant. He had served on many sectors, and had suffered greatly at Verdun, where, with a platoon of his men, he had been forced to lie for days in a shell-hole, wounded, without food or water, and seeing his soldiers shot, one after another. Almost at the same moment the train from Paris drew in, and among a surge of officers out stepped Eleanor, and the Spanish journalists who were to make up our party.

Eleanor and I drove together, a non-commissioned officer sitting beside our corporal-chauffeur. When we came to the outskirts of Epernay we saw why we needed the officer. A sentry stepped out of his tricolor box and stopped us with flashing bayonet. Eleanor looked impressed. Wishing to impress her further, I said, as one experienced in the war zone,

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“He’s a territorial. They always put on more airs than a regular poilu.”

The officer bent over and whispered the password. We listened shamelessly then, and each time a sentry stopped us on our way through a village, but we were never able to catch the word.

As we drew near Rheims we came to a stretch of road in full sight of the forts the Germans hold. On the east the road was screened to a height of twenty feet. Some of the screening was of burlap in the natural color; the rest of it was of saplings, tied together with barbed wire. The saplings had faded to a light brown. It made a good *camouflage*. Nevertheless, the chauffeur bowled very quickly along that stretch.

There were the towers of the Cathedral. At the distance of a mile the city looked quite unchanged. Inside, some streets seemed much as they were. Old men and women were seated in the doorways; children played on the sidewalks. But other streets were closed, and still others were long canyons of ruin.

The shell of the Cathedral rises from a ruined square. The Hotel of the Lion d’Or, opposite the Cathedral, shows a cream-colored façade, battered and pock-marked with shells. We were told that the shells fell first in the road, and then their fragments bounced up against the walls. The archbishop’s palace, with its wonderful fifteenth-century chimney and its great salon where the coronation banquets were held, is now only a heap

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of featureless wreckage. The little equestrian figure of Joan of Arc, before the western entrance of the Cathedral, is quite unhurt. The German shells seem unable to reach it. Now the figure carries in her hand a French flag, and the *poilus* have decorated it around the plinth with various tributes. They take it as a good omen that their saint is untouched.

Hundreds and hundreds of times the Germans have sent shells in the direction of the Cathedral. It has been their scapegoat. Whenever the French or British have gained notable success the Germans have punished Rheims. It is as if they wanted to make true the words Rudolf Herzog wrote in the *Berlin Lokalanzeiger*, January 1, 1915: "The bells sound no more in the double-towered dome. Finished is the benediction. We have closed with lead, O Rheims, thy house of idolatry." But those words can never be true. The Cathedral is indeed closed. In other bombarded towns the inhabitants may, if they choose, run to their church for sanctuary. Not so there. Yet this closing is not forever; the bells are silent, but they will speak on the final day of victory.

Sandbags are used to protect the Cathedral as much as possible, but great damage has been done. The wonderful figures on the façade have been broken. On the south side high holes have been torn in the walls. On the north side several gargoyles have been broken, and the little green enclosure beneath is full of fragments. Worst

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of all, five of the flying buttresses have been seriously damaged; if three or four more should suffer equally, the Cathedral would fall into ruins. It is impossible for masons to repair them, for as soon as the Germans see them they begin to send over shells, accusing the men of being there for observation purposes.

The custodian unlocked for us a little door on the right-hand side of the west entrance, and we entered this great church, the coronation place of kings, once so rich in color, in subdued light, in warm incense. When we entered it was into a gray, desolate, lonely interior. No one may enter now (unless by special permission) except the archbishop, for whom a space has been reserved behind the high altar, where he may go to pray for his people. The vast silent interior is the home of doves. Their feathers lie thick on the floor, among the fallen stones and plaster. As we advanced, the soft creatures flew up in a fast cloud to the roof. Our captain looked up anxiously. Whenever the Germans see a flock of doves rising from the Cathedral it is the custom to send over a shell. But, apparently, this time they were not looking our way.

We turned to the famous stained-glass window, that great circle of rose and sapphire blue that was the wonder of the ages. A large part of it is fallen; the rest resisted so bravely, because it was set so long ago in the stout lead. The fallen glass is travelling over the world as souvenirs,

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most of it set in the aluminum rings which the soldiers make in the trenches. We looked back at the high altar. It was covered, what was left of it, with a cloth. It looked strangely nondescript, shorn of its crucifix and candles and rich decorations. It was hard to believe that Clovis had been baptized here, the great Charlemagne crowned before the altar.

The walls seem curiously bare. Gone are the famous tapestries, safely hidden; gone the shrines and crucifixes, the stations of the cross, and the pictures. The ceiling with its blue ground, the silver fleur-de-lis, seems faded and stained; it is full of great holes. The light is leaden. There is no color, except the burnt blood on the stone pavement where the wounded Germans who had been carried in for safety were killed by their own incendiary bombs. It is said that the French do not mean to remove that stain.

Our captain guided us, speaking with passion of the desecrations. We went with him up and down the dark aisles, sharing his feelings. Presently the custodian began to tell us the history of the bombardments. He seemed to know the exact date and weight of every shell. Then he began to describe in detail his narrow escapes from various shells, leaping back realistically to show how he dodged them. I am by way of being a writer of fiction myself at times, and so I know it when I hear it. I went away by myself, and walked up and down the sounding nave.

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And slowly my sense of gray desolation vanished. I felt as if the Cathedral were sentient. It was like some great soul that had suffered so much that all the grave joy it had known had turned to majestic endurance, stern resignation. Lofty, immobile, the spiritual symbol of the white flame of the French soul, — Rheims Cathedral is all that. And it cannot pass. Rudolf Herzog and the Germans are wrong. They may shatter it stone by stone, and still it will live. It is as deathless as the spirit of France.

Eleanor, good, thoughtful friend, came hurrying up to me.

“Come along!” she cried. “The custodian is giving us bits of the glass. Make haste, or all the blue will be gone!”

It was gone, but, having faith, I asked for more, and got it. The custodian gave it, with intent face. He stared at me a moment; then he gave me a piece of a shell. I took it; he knitted his brow. Then he gave me a piece of a gargoyle. I saw Eleanor fumbling in her purse, and old tourist associations rushed upon me. Of course: custodian, church, tips. I opened my purse. But I think if I had hesitated a little longer maybe the custodian would have given me a section of the roof.

We went out at last, and as we walked around the back of the Cathedral, on our way to the motor and luncheon, an old man and woman put their heads out of a window exactly like two

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Jacks-in-a-box. They were so obviously eager to be spoken to that, in spite of our hunger, we questioned them. They had a happy five minutes, telling us of how often their house had been hit, and how, after sleeping uncomfortably in their cellar for days, they would decide to risk sleeping upstairs again, and then another shell would smash in their roof. Those old people certainly enjoyed their adventures. When Rheims is once more open to the world, with what immortal gusto will they tell their tales!

Our gallant captain entertained us at luncheon, and then took us to meet General Gouraud, famous for his exploits in Africa. He complimented Eleanor and me upon our bravery in going to the trenches. We smiled, modestly, with a flickering glance at each other; right well we knew that if he had thought a bombardment imminent he would have sent us flying in the motors back to Epernay.

At last we got again into the motors and rode northward. Eleanor and I hardly dared breathe for fear something would stop us. For, after all, Eleanor's luck did not invariably hold at its highest. We bowled along the wide road, overtaking motor-lorries and forage wagons. We passed one pedestrian, — a woman with a baby in her arms, and her gas mask hanging from her left hand. I wonder what she'd have done about the baby's little face in case of a gas attack. As we drew nearer the trenches the road became lonelier. To

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the right it was screened. On our left we passed trenches with barbed wire in front of them; they had been abandoned for many months.

At last the cars stopped abruptly by a great flat field. In it, far to the left, we saw a rough mound, or tall parapet, with a shed or two in front of it, and in front of them a number of soldiers. There was our objective. To reach it we had to go along a road thick with mud. The men were practicing throwing hand-grenades, but without releasing the pin that makes the mechanism explode. They threw them as cricketers do, swinging back until the right hand almost touched the ground, and then letting go in a beautiful long curve. A grenade is about as large as a turkey's egg, or a big lemon, brownish, with grooves down the sides. It feels harmless as one holds it, — that is, if one keeps one's imagination in leash.

There they were, those grenade throwers, grave, absorbed, not looking at us, intent on their practice of death. To the right of where they worked was a little soldier's graveyard, with its white crosses, all too new. For all we or they knew, a few hours later these soldiers might be throwing those same grenades into the German trenches. The methods of death seem so commonplace; it is the results that are so awful, of physical pain and spiritual grief. Poor little human race! Capable of contriving all these wonders of destruction, but not yet great enough in moral force to control them for all the world.

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We turned from the men and looked at the long mound of earth. High up on it, perhaps twenty feet above the ground, and facing towards the German lines, was a little shed which was an observation house. A few feet below it, to the right, and connected with it, was a large bell, to be rung in case of danger of any sort, — chiefly a gas attack. To the right of that again, and lower down, was the headquarters of the chief officer. Here we entered. It was a tiny place for the conduct of the affairs of that little sector. Part of it had an iron roof, and under this was the officer's bed, a little table on which stood the telephoning apparatus and two stands made out of biscuit boxes, presumably for official papers. The rest of the room had an earthen roof, and under it were, on one side, a cheap toilet table, a chair, a set of shelves, and on the other side a little stove and a chair. That chilly little place contrasted forcibly with the magnificent château which I had left only a few hours before, similar to the home from which the officer had come.

This commanding officer had served, like our own captain guide, at Verdun, and like him had suffered at Verdun. Like him, too, and indeed like most of the French soldiers, he had seen service in several other sectors. They told us that these particular trenches were held by twenty officers and eight hundred men. The first of these we saw were in the first aid station, to the left of the officers' quarters, and underground. A murky

A FRENCH WOUNDED SOLDIER WAITING TO BE SENT DOWN FROM THE AID-POST



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brown place it was; in front of one wall, half a dozen bunks; in front of another an operating table; in front of the third a bench and a broken chair or two, where slightly wounded men sat, while they waited their turn for the surgeon's attention. Against the front wall stood gas masks and pulmotors. Doubtless a wounded man is glad enough to reach this point after a long uneven journey on a stretcher, but he must be glad to leave it for the ambulance at the entrance and the cheerful hospital in Rheims.

The kitchens were near by, but we were not shown them. Heavily escorted now, with captains, sergeants, and corporals, we set out for our walk through the trenches. At a point opposite the officers' quarters we descended a row of earthen steps into the third-line trenches. The trenches! These open graves of slaughter! I knew what they meant, and yet my practical senses told me that I was simply in a chalk-clay ditch, about eight feet high and four and a half feet wide, over the top of which hung weeds and brownish grass.

Two other trenches ran, for a time, parallel with the one along which we walked. Once through a boyau, or connecting trench, we saw little brown donkeys, wooden receptacles on their backs, in which was the soup for the soldiers' supper. Underfoot there was a little mud, but it was not deep; where it grew deeper trench-mats were set. The trenches twisted and turned,

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slightly, so as to deflect shells. They were excellently drained by little side ditches.

After walking for perhaps half an hour we entered a narrow communication trench. It was marked by a board painted white and red, and lettered in black. Every boyau was marked, and, indeed, before we had gone very far, we realized that these indications were necessary. A man would have to live some time in a trench system before he became thoroughly familiar with the maze of intersections. When a soldier moves from one sector to another it is just the same as if he went to a new city.

The boyau twisted and turned, and we proceeded with some difficulty. How hard it must be for stretcher-bearers and wounded men, making their way along that narrow groove! It was a relief to get into the second-line trenches. They were rather more firmly supported than the third-line trenches, being occasionally lined with small boughs in a sort of wattle work. Now we began to pass soldiers carrying square logs and boards for trench repair work. Their faces were unshaven, their clothes muddy. They leaned back against the walls to let us pass, and looked at us smilingly.

Perhaps if Eleanor and I had been men correspondents or staff officers or civilians with a platonic connection with the war, they might not have smiled. But we were women, and a woman in the trenches is as rare as a century plant or a

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dodo. We spoke to them, and they responded eagerly, telling us their names and where they lived, and that they remained in the trenches fifteen days on end, getting then six days off in billets near by. When I asked one of them if he had been wounded, he replied,

“Not yet.”

Many and many a time I have heard the French soldiers make that reply. There is a quiet fatalism in the words. Death will probably come, they think; at the best, wounds!

When we reached at last the front-line trenches we came upon increasing signs of the business of war. Here and there was an observation post, always named. The Post of the Cock was the one I found most attractive,—a black cock painted on a red ground. There were several first aid posts, with the Red Cross men standing at the entrances. There were the square holes that led to the underground sleeping places some forty steps down. Dank and dark and uncomfortable they were, for all that they are better than almost any others on the French line. The men sleep in their clothes, lying wrapped up in blankets on benches or on the ground.

One great underground place we entered, a narrow room with another running at right angles to it. Here hundreds of men could congregate in case of a fierce bombardment, or could be massed in preparation for an attack on the German lines. This high cave is also the seat of other

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military uses which I am not at liberty to state. Near by, after we had climbed by another entrance into the trench, we saw machine-gun emplacements, with cunning *camouflage* screens.

The parapet of the front-line trench was firmly built. Below it was the firing step, a wide plank, elevated some two feet. Here and there in the parapet were holes through which a man, kneeling on the firing-step, could fire a rifle. To stand on the firing-step would bring the head and shoulders above the parapet. On this quiet sector it was considered safe for the sentries to stand to observation. Now the sector is no longer quiet.

We reached a point finally when we were allowed to crouch on the firing-step and peer over the parapet. Vividly, after the chalk and mud of the trenches, there swung before my eyes a picture in green and brown and black. Directly in front of us, extending forward perhaps forty feet, were entanglements of barbed wire to a height of three feet. They were fastened to rusty sharp-pointed iron stakes. Secret lanes were arranged among them, which a clip or two of a pair of shears would reveal to the French soldiers, in case of attack. Here and there, just in front of the barbed wire, well screened, sat a man in blue at a listening post. A bell hung on the wire at hand, so that he could signal in case the Germans were coming to attack, or sending over gas.

In front of the sentries lay No-Man's Land, lumpy and brown in places, but in other places

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healed with nature's green. And beyond, a very few hundred yards from us, lay the German trenches. We were told that they were a bit higher than the French, but they seemed rather lower. There they were, just three lines of earth. The heaped-up parapet of the first line looked very black; the two lines beyond were lighter in color. About a half a mile behind these trenches lay the little white village of Cernay.

"You see those little figures over there, walking?" said the stout sergeant whom I had chosen for my special guide. "Those are our own people, those are the French civilian prisoners."

It was easy to guess with what longing those captured French must look over the green hollow of No-Man's Land to unoccupied France, from which their deliverance shall come. Were there some there who were waiting their chance to step across to freedom? Were there others who were growing used to the German rule, gentle enough in those parts?

"Sometimes," the sergeant said, "the French-women come down very, very close to the German lines. We see them out there, gathering herbs for their rabbits. We do not shoot at those times, I can tell you. Me, I have often had my supper in the old days with two of those women over there."

A curious feeling of unreality it gave, to look over at those three heaps of earth upon which the sun was shining. If not friendly, at least they

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seemed harmless. I could hear the rattling movement of the German donkeys carrying down supper to our enemies. I even fancied I heard a guttural voice. I had a sudden sense of the grotesque absurdity of war. Wicked but absurd, too, to kill one another from behind heaps of earth.

“I suppose I’ve killed a good many Germans,” the sergeant said, reflectively; “but I never saw one of them. I never could follow my shots. I’ve seen Germans other men have killed,—buried them; but I’ve never seen a live German.”

We looked back over the green peace of No-Man’s Land. No, this war could not be real. Then suddenly the sergeant uttered an exclamation and glanced up. Over our heads, towards the German lines, were flying two French aeroplanes. Under the sunlight, they looked like silver. They reached the German lines and soared above them. Immediately the German guns sent up shell after shell. They made a deep, barking sound, followed by a curious aftermath of whistling. A shell hurtled over our trench. The officers hastily shepherded us to a place of safety. But my sergeant let me look for a moment through the rifle holes.

Shell after shell drove up at the aeroplanes, and in the air dark fungus-like growths of cloud appeared,—unnatural bulbous shapes against the blue. The air was so still that they kept their fatness, not breaking at the edges, just gradually thinning. More shells, more black blobs, and

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above and below, and among them, the aeroplanes sailed, impervious, moving with a sort of superior, even insolent serenity. Then from both sides came the plap-plap-plap of machine-gun fire, a continuous, hard, strong, brief, snapping sound. Followed the sound of rifle firing. The air was full of deep booming and baying, of shrill, snarling whistling, of the clap and slap of bullets.

Not real; more like the feeling produced by moving pictures, — melodramatic, nothing more. Not real, even when we looked at the fixed faces of the soldiers. I understood, then, what soldiers mean when they say that they cannot feel that they are really fighting, except when they are under bombardment, or making an attack. The old conception of war as a face-to-face and hand-to-hand struggle dies hard in us. I have met other soldiers like my sergeant guide, men who have been in the trenches for years, who have seen their friends killed, have been wounded themselves, and have never seen a German. No, this had the effect of a play; it was not significant of death.

Then I thought of the first aid station, of women in black, and I knew what it is that makes war real: women shuddering in fear at the sight of a telegram; mothers struggling alone under the burden of being bread winner, as well as sole guardian of their children; little ones asking, "When will papa come?"; girls sobbing at twilight in lonely paths where once they walked with

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their lovers; men and women parting in the railway stations; wounded men, white against their bloody bandages, their feet and hands swaying helpless with the movement of the stretcher bearers.

It was dark when we left the third-line trenches, stumbled over the muddy road, and got into our motors. Eleanor and I were silent as we drove over the quiet pitch-black road, past the broken line of Rheims, where the two towers were lost in the dark sky, and got at last into the road leading to Epernay. We were safe now from shells, but neither of us was thinking of safety. We were making silent prayers of thankfulness for all men who could still be at home, for all women and children, the world over, who were still safe from the heaviest loss.

Edith Wharton

'The Look of Paris'² (AUGUST, 1914—FEBRUARY, 1915)

I AUGUST

On the 30th of July, 1914, motoring north from Poitiers, we had lunched somewhere by the roadside under apple-trees on the edge of a field. Other fields stretched away on our right and left to a border of woodland and a village steeple. All around was noontide quiet, and the sober disciplined landscape which the traveller's memory is apt to evoke as distinctively French. Sometimes, even to accustomed eyes, these ruled-off fields and compact grey villages seem merely flat and tame; at other moments the sensitive imagination sees in every thrifty sod and even furrow the ceaseless vigilant attachment of generations faithful to the soil. The particular bit of landscape before us spoke in all its lines of that attachment. The air seemed full of the long murmur of human effort, the rhythm of oft-repeated tasks, the serenity of the scene smiled away the war rumours which had hung on us since morning.

All day the sky had been banked with thunder-clouds, but by the time we reached Chartres, toward four o'clock, they had rolled away under the horizon, and the town was so saturated with sunlight that to pass into the cathedral was like entering the dense obscurity of a church in Spain. At first all detail was imperceptible; we were in a hollow night. Then, as the shadows gradually thinned and gathered themselves up into pier and vault and ribbing, there burst out of them great sheets and showers of colour. Framed by such depths of darkness, and steeped in a blaze of mid-summer sun, the familiar windows seemed singularly remote and yet overpoweringly vivid. Now they widened into dark-shored pools splashed with sunset, now glittered and menaced like the shields of fighting angels. Some were cataracts of sapphires, others roses dropped from a saint's tunic, others great carven platters strewn with heavenly regalia, others the sails of galleons bound for the Purple Islands; and in the western wall the scattered fires of the rose-window hung like a constellation in an African night. When one dropped one's eyes from these ethereal harmonies, the dark masses of masonry below them, all veiled and muffled in a mist pricked by a few altar lights, seemed to symbolize the life on earth, with its shadows, its heavy distances and its little islands of illusion. All that a great cathedral can be, all the meanings it can express, all the tranquilizing power it can breathe upon the soul, all the richness of detail it can fuse into a large utterance of strength and beauty, the cathedral of Chartres gave us in that perfect hour.

It was sunset when we reached the gates of Paris. Under the heights of St. Cloud and Suresnes the reaches of the Seine trembled with the blue-pink lustre of an early Monet. The Bois lay about us in the stillness of a holiday evening, and the lawns of Bagatelle were as fresh as June. Below the Arc de Triomphe, the Champs Elysees sloped downward in a sun-powdered haze to the mist of fountains and the ethereal obelisk; and the currents of summer life ebbed and flowed with a normal beat under the trees of the radiating

² Originally published in *Scribner's Magazine*. Retrieved from *Fighting France: From Dunkerque to Belfort* (1915)

avenues. The great city, so made for peace and art and all humanest graces, seemed to lie by her river-side like a princess guarded by the watchful giant of the Eiffel Tower.

The next day the air was thundery with rumours. Nobody believed them, everybody repeated them. War? Of course there couldn't be war! The Cabinets, like naughty children, were again dangling their feet over the edge; but the whole incalculable weight of things-as-they-were, of the daily necessary business of living, continued calmly and convincingly to assert itself against the bandying of diplomatic words. Paris went on steadily about her mid-summer business of feeding, dressing, and amusing the great army of tourists who were the only invaders she had seen for nearly half a century.

All the while, every one knew that other work was going on also. The whole fabric of the country's seemingly undisturbed routine was threaded with noiseless invisible currents of preparation, the sense of them was in the calm air as the sense of changing weather is in the balminess of a perfect afternoon. Paris counted the minutes till the evening papers came.

They said little or nothing except what every one was already declaring all over the country. "We don't want war—*mais il faut que cela finisse!*" "This kind of thing has got to stop": that was the only phrase one heard. If diplomacy could still arrest the war, so much the better: no one in France wanted it. All who spent the first days of August in Paris will testify to the agreement of feeling on that point. But if war had to come, the country, and every heart in it, was ready.

At the dressmaker's, the next morning, the tired fitters were preparing to leave for their usual holiday. They looked pale and anxious—decidedly, there was a new weight of apprehension in the air. And in the rue Royale, at the corner of the Place de la Concorde, a few people had stopped to look at a little strip of white paper against the wall of the *Ministere de la Marine*. "General mobilization" they read—and an armed nation knows what that means. But the group about the paper was small and quiet. Passers by read the notice and went on. There were no cheers, no gesticulations: the dramatic sense of the race had already told them that the event was too great to be dramatized. Like a monstrous landslide it had fallen across the path of an orderly laborious nation, disrupting its routine, annihilating its industries, rending families apart, and burying under a heap of senseless ruin the patiently and painfully wrought machinery of civilization...

That evening, in a restaurant of the rue Royale, we sat at a table in one of the open windows, abreast with the street, and saw the strange new crowds stream by. In an instant we were being shown what mobilization was—a huge break in the normal flow of traffic, like the sudden rupture of a dyke. The street was flooded by the torrent of people sweeping past us to the various railway stations. All were on foot, and carrying their luggage; for since dawn every cab and taxi and motor—omnibus had disappeared. The War Office had thrown out its drag-net and caught them all in. The crowd that passed our window was chiefly composed of conscripts, the *mobilisables* of the first day, who were on the way to the station accompanied by their families and friends; but among them were little clusters of bewildered tourists, labouring along with bags and bundles, and watching their luggage pushed before them on hand-carts—puzzled inarticulate waifs caught in the cross-tides racing to a maelstrom.

In the restaurant, the befrogged and red-coated band poured out patriotic music, and the intervals between the courses that so few waiters were left to serve were broken by the ever-recurring obligation to stand up for the Marseillaise, to stand up for God Save the King, to stand up for the Russian National Anthem, to stand up again for the Marseillaise. "*Et dire que ce sont des Hongrois qui jouent tout cela!*" a humourist remarked from the pavement.

As the evening wore on and the crowd about our window thickened, the loiterers outside began to join in the war-songs. "*Allons, debout!*"—and the loyal round begins again. "*La chanson du depart*" is a frequent demand; and the chorus of spectators chimes in roundly. A sort of quiet humour was the note of the street. Down the rue Royale, toward the Madeleine, the bands of other restaurants were attracting other throngs, and martial refrains were strung along the Boulevard like its garlands of arc-lights. It was a night of singing and acclamations, not boisterous, but gallant and determined. It was Paris *badauderie* at its best.

Meanwhile, beyond the fringe of idlers the steady stream of conscripts still poured along. Wives and families trudged beside them, carrying all kinds of odd improvised bags and bundles. The impression disengaging itself from all this superficial confusion was that of a cheerful steadiness of spirit. The faces ceaselessly streaming by were serious but not sad; nor was there any air of bewilderment—the stare of driven cattle. All these lads and young men seemed to know what they were about and why they were about it. The youngest of them looked suddenly grown up and responsible; they understood their stake in the job, and accepted it.

The next day the army of midsummer travel was immobilized to let the other army move. No more wild rushes to the station, no more bribing of concierges, vain quests for invisible cabs, haggard hours of waiting in the queue at Cook's. No train stirred except to carry soldiers, and the civilians who had not bribed and jammed their way into a cranny of the thronged carriages leaving the first night could only creep back through the hot streets to their hotel and wait. Back they went, disappointed yet half-relieved, to the resounding emptiness of porterless halls, waiterless restaurants, motionless lifts: to the queer disjointed life of fashionable hotels suddenly reduced to the intimacies and makeshift of a Latin Quarter *pension*. Meanwhile it was strange to watch the gradual paralysis of the city. As the motors, taxis, cabs and vans had vanished from the streets, so the lively little steamers had left the Seine. The canal-boats too were gone, or lay motionless: loading and unloading had ceased. Every great architectural opening framed an emptiness; all the endless avenues stretched away to desert distances. In the parks and gardens no one raked the paths or trimmed the borders. The fountains slept in their basins, the worried sparrows fluttered unfed, and vague dogs, shaken out of their daily habits, roamed unquietly, looking for familiar eyes. Paris, so intensely conscious yet so strangely entranced, seemed to have had *curare* injected into all her veins.

The next day—the 2nd of August—from the terrace of the Hotel de Crillon one looked down on a first faint stir of returning life. Now and then a taxi-cab or a private motor crossed the Place de la Concorde, carrying soldiers to the stations. Other conscripts, in detachments, tramped by on foot with bags and banners. One detachment stopped before the black-veiled statue of Strasbourg and laid a garland at her feet. In ordinary times this demonstration would at once have attracted a crowd; but at the very moment when it might have been expected to provoke a patriotic outburst it excited no more attention than if one of the soldiers had turned aside to give a penny to a beggar. The people crossing the square did not even stop to look. The meaning of this apparent indifference was obvious. When an armed nation mobilizes, everybody is busy, and busy in a definite and pressing way. It is not only the fighters that mobilize: those who stay behind must do the same. For each French household, for each individual man or woman in France, war means a complete reorganization of life. The detachment of conscripts, unnoticed, paid their tribute to the Cause and passed on...

Looked back on from these sterner months those early days in Paris, in their setting of grave architecture and summer skies, wear the light of the ideal and the abstract. The sudden flaming up of national life, the abeyance of every small and mean preoccupation,

cleared the moral air as the streets had been cleared, and made the spectator feel as though he were reading a great poem on War rather than facing its realities.

Something of this sense of exaltation seemed to penetrate the throngs who streamed up and down the Boulevards till late into the night. All wheeled traffic had ceased, except that of the rare taxi-cabs impressed to carry conscripts to the stations; and the middle of the Boulevards was as thronged with foot-passengers as an Italian market-place on a Sunday morning. The vast tide swayed up and down at a slow pace, breaking now and then to make room for one of the volunteer "legions" which were forming at every corner: Italian, Roumanian, South American, North American, each headed by its national flag and hailed with cheering as it passed. But even the cheers were sober: Paris was not to be shaken out of her self-imposed serenity. One felt something nobly conscious and voluntary in the mood of this quiet multitude. Yet it was a mixed throng, made up of every class, from the scum of the Exterior Boulevards to the cream of the fashionable restaurants. These people, only two days ago, had been leading a thousand different lives, in indifference or in antagonism to each other, as alien as enemies across a frontier: now workers and idlers, thieves, beggars, saints, poets, drabs and sharpers, genuine people and showy shams, were all bumping up against each other in an instinctive community of emotion. The "people," luckily, predominated; the faces of workers look best in such a crowd, and there were thousands of them, each illuminated and singled out by its magnesium-flash of passion.

I remember especially the steady-browed faces of the women; and also the small but significant fact that every one of them had remembered to bring her dog. The biggest of these amiable companions had to take their chance of seeing what they could through the forest of human legs; but every one that was portable was snugly lodged in the bend of an elbow, and from this safe perch scores and scores of small serious muzzles, blunt or sharp, smooth or woolly, brown or grey or white or black or brindled, looked out on the scene with the quiet awareness of the Paris dog. It was certainly a good sign that they had not been forgotten that night.

II

WE had been shown, impressively, what it was to live through a mobilization; now we were to learn that mobilization is only one of the concomitants of martial law, and that martial law is not comfortable to live under—at least till one gets used to it.

At first its main purpose, to the neutral civilian, seemed certainly to be the wayward pleasure of complicating his life; and in that line it excelled in the last refinements of ingenuity. Instructions began to shower on us after the lull of the first days: instructions as to what to do, and what not to do, in order to make our presence tolerable and our persons secure. In the first place, foreigners could not remain in France without satisfying the authorities as to their nationality and antecedents; and to do this necessitated repeated ineffective visits to chanceries, consulates and police stations, each too densely thronged with flustered applicants to permit the entrance of one more. Between these vain pilgrimages, the traveller impatient to leave had to toil on foot to distant railway stations, from which he returned baffled by vague answers and disheartened by the declaration that tickets, when achievable, must also be *vises* by the police. There was a moment when it seemed that ones inmost thoughts had to have that unobtainable *visa*—to obtain which, more fruitless hours must be lived on grimy stairways between perspiring layers of fellow-alien. Meanwhile one's money was probable running short, and one must cable or telegraph for more. Ah—but cables and telegrams must be *vises* too—and even when they were, one got no guarantee that they would be sent! Then one could not use code

addresses, and the ridiculous number of words contained in a New York address seemed to multiply as the francs in one's pockets diminished. And when the cable was finally dispatched it was either lost on the way, or reached its destination only to call forth, after anxious days, the disheartening response: "Impossible at present. Making every effort." It is fair to add that, tedious and even irritating as many of these transactions were, they were greatly eased by the sudden uniform good-nature of the French functionary, who, for the first time, probably, in the long tradition of his line, broke through its fundamental rule and was kind.

Luckily, too, these incessant comings and goings involved much walking of the beautiful idle summer streets, which grew idler and more beautiful each day. Never had such blue-grey softness of afternoon brooded over Paris, such sunsets turned the heights of the Trocadero into Dido's Carthage, never, above all, so rich a moon ripened through such perfect evenings. The Seine itself had no small share in this mysterious increase of the city's beauty. Released from all traffic, its hurried ripples smoothed themselves into long silken reaches in which quays and monuments at last saw their unbroken images. At night the fire-fly lights of the boats had vanished, and the reflections of the street lamps were lengthened into streamers of red and gold and purple that slept on the calm current like fluted water-weeds. Then the moon rose and took possession of the city, purifying it of all accidents, calming and enlarging it and giving it back its ideal lines of strength and repose. There was something strangely moving in this new Paris of the August evenings, so exposed yet so serene, as though her very beauty shielded her.

So, gradually, we fell into the habit of living under martial law. After the first days of flustered adjustment the personal inconveniences were so few that one felt almost ashamed of their not being more, of not being called on to contribute some greater sacrifice of comfort to the Cause. Within the first week over two thirds of the shops had closed—the greater number bearing on their shuttered windows the notice "Pour cause de mobilisation," which showed that the "patron" and staff were at the front. But enough remained open to satisfy every ordinary want, and the closing of the others served to prove how much one could do without. Provisions were as cheap and plentiful as ever, though for a while it was easier to buy food than to have it cooked. The restaurants were closing rapidly, and one often had to wander a long way for a meal, and wait a longer time to get it. A few hotels still carried on a halting life, galvanized by an occasional inrush of travel from Belgium and Germany; but most of them had closed or were being hastily transformed into hospitals.

The signs over these hotel doors first disturbed the dreaming harmony of Paris. In a night, as it seemed, the whole city was hung with Red Crosses. Every other building showed the red and white band across its front, with "Ouvroir" or "Hopital" beneath; there was something sinister in these preparations for horrors in which one could not yet believe, in the making of bandages for limbs yet sound and whole, the spreading of pillows for heads yet carried high. But insist as they would on the woe to come, these warning signs did not deeply stir the trance of Paris. The first days of the war were full of a kind of unrealizing confidence, not boastful or fatuous, yet as different as possible from the clear-headed tenacity of purpose that the experience of the next few months was to develop. It is hard to evoke, without seeming to exaggerate it, that the mood of early August: the assurance, the balance, the kind of smiling fatalism with which Paris moved to her task. It is not impossible that the beauty of the season and the silence of the city may have helped to produce this mood. War, the shrieking fury, had announced herself by a great wave of stillness. Never was desert hush more complete: the silence of a street is always so much deeper than the silence of wood or field.

The heaviness of the August air intensified this impression of suspended life. The days were dumb enough; but at night the hush became acute. In the quarter I inhabit, always deserted in summer, the shuttered streets were mute as catacombs, and the faintest pin-prick of noise seemed to tear a rent in a black pall of silence. I could hear the tired tap of a lame hoof half a mile away, and the tread of the policeman guarding the Embassy across the street beat against the pavement like a series of detonations. Even the variegated noises of the city's waking-up had ceased. If any sweepers, scavengers or rag-pickers still plied their trades they did it as secretly as ghosts. I remember one morning being roused out of a deep sleep by a sudden explosion of noise in my room. I sat up with a start, and found I had been waked by a low-voiced exchange of "Bonjours" in the street...

Another fact that kept the reality of war from Paris was the curious absence of troops in the streets. After the first rush of conscripts hurrying to their military bases it might have been imagined that the reign of peace had set in. While smaller cities were swarming with soldiers no glitter of arms was reflected in the empty avenues of the capital, no military music sounded through them. Paris scorned all show of war, and fed the patriotism of her children on the mere sight of her beauty. It was enough.

Even when the news of the first ephemeral successes in Alsace began to come in, the Parisians did not swerve from their even gait. The newsboys did all the shouting—and even theirs was presently silenced by decree. It seemed as though it had been unanimously, instinctively decided that the Paris of 1914 should in no respect resemble the Paris of 1870, and as though this resolution had passed at birth into the blood of millions born since that fatal date, and ignorant of its bitter lesson. The unanimity of self-restraint was the notable characteristic of this people suddenly plunged into an unsought and unexpected war. At first their steadiness of spirit might have passed for the bewilderment of a generation born and bred in peace, which did not yet understand what war implied. But it is precisely on such a mood that easy triumphs might have been supposed to have the most disturbing effect. It was the crowd in the street that shouted "A Berlin!" in 1870; now the crowd in the street continued to mind its own business, in spite of showers of extras and too-sanguine bulletins.

I remember the morning when our butcher's boy brought the news that the first German flag had been hung out on the balcony of the Ministry of War. Now I thought, the Latin will boil over! And I wanted to be there to see. I hurried down the quiet rue de Martignac, turned the corner of the Place Sainte Clotilde, and came on an orderly crowd filling the street before the Ministry of War. The crowd was so orderly that the few pacific gestures of the police easily cleared a way for passing cabs, and for the military motors perpetually dashing up. It was composed of all classes, and there were many family groups, with little boys straddling their mothers' shoulders, or lifted up by the policemen when they were too heavy for their mothers. It is safe to say that there was hardly a man or woman of that crowd who had not a soldier at the front; and there before them hung the enemy's first flag—a splendid silk flag, white and black and crimson, and embroidered in gold. It was the flag of an Alsatian regiment—a regiment of Prussianized Alsace. It symbolized all they most abhorred in the whole abhorrent job that lay ahead of them; it symbolized also their finest ardour and their noblest hate, and the reason why, if every other reason failed, France could never lay down arms till the last of such flags was low. And there they stood and looked at it, not dully or uncomprehendingly, but consciously, advisedly, and in silence; as if already foreseeing all it would cost to keep that flag and add to it others like it; forseeing the cost and accepting it. There seemed to be men's hearts even in the children of that crowd, and in the mothers whose weak arms held them up. So they gazed and went on, and made way for others like them, who gazed in their turn and went on too. All day the crowd renewed itself, and it was always the same crowd, intent

and understanding and silent, who looked steadily at the flag, and knew what its being there meant. That, in August, was the look of Paris.

III FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY dusk on the Seine. The boats are plying again, but they stop at nightfall, and the river is inky-smooth, with the same long weed-like reflections as in August. Only the reflections are fewer and paler; bright lights are muffled everywhere. The line of the quays is scarcely discernible, and the heights of the Trocadero are lost in the blur of night, which presently effaces even the firm tower-tops of Notre-Dame. Down the damp pavements only a few street lamps throw their watery zigzags. The shops are shut, and the windows above them thickly curtained. The faces of the houses are all blind.

In the narrow streets of the Rive Gauche the darkness is even deeper, and the few scattered lights in courts or "cites" create effects of Piranesi-like mystery. The gleam of the chestnut-roaster's brazier at a street corner deepens the sense of an old adventurous Italy, and the darkness beyond seems full of cloaks and conspiracies. I turn, on my way home, into an empty street between high garden walls, with a single light showing far off at its farther end. Not a soul is in sight between me and that light: my steps echo endlessly in the silence. Presently a dim figure comes around the corner ahead of me. Man or woman? Impossible to tell till I overtake it. The February fog deepens the darkness, and the faces one passes are indistinguishable. As for the numbers of the houses, no one thinks of looking for them. If you know the quarter you count doors from the corner, or try to puzzle out the familiar outline of a balcony or a pediment; if you are in a strange street, you must ask at the nearest tobacconist's—for, as for finding a policeman, a yard off you couldn't tell him from your grandmother!

Such, after six months of war, are the nights of Paris; the days are less remarkable and less romantic.

Almost all the early flush and shiver of romance is gone; or so at least it seems to those who have watched the gradual revival of life. It may appear otherwise to observers from other countries, even from those involved in the war. After London, with all her theaters open, and her machinery of amusement almost unimpaired, Paris no doubt seems like a city on whom great issues weigh. But to those who lived through that first sunlit silent month the streets to-day show an almost normal activity. The vanishing of all the motorbuses, and of the huge lumbering commercial vans, leaves many a forgotten perspective open and reveals many a lost grace of architecture; but the taxi-cabs and private motors are almost as abundant as in peace-time, and the peril of pedestrianism is kept at its normal pitch by the incessant dashing to and fro of those unrivalled engines of destruction, the hospital and War Office motors. Many shops have reopened, a few theatres are tentatively producing patriotic drama or mixed programmes seasonal with sentiment and mirth, and the cinema again unrolls its eventful kilometres.

For a while, in September and October, the streets were made picturesque by the coming and going of English soldiery, and the aggressive flourish of British military motors. Then the fresh faces and smart uniforms disappeared, and now the nearest approach to "militarism" which Paris offers to the casual sight-seer is the occasional drilling of a handful of *piou-pious* on the muddy reaches of the Place des Invalides. But there is another army in Paris. Its first detachments came months ago, in the dark September days—lamentable rear-guard of the Allies' retreat on Paris. Since then its numbers have grown and grown, its dingy streams have percolated through all the currents of Paris life, so that wherever one goes, in every quarter and at every hour, among the busy confident strongly-stepping Parisians one sees these other people, dazed and

slowly moving—men and women with sordid bundles on their backs, shuffling along hesitatingly in their tattered shoes, children dragging at their hands and tired-out babies pressed against their shoulders: the great army of the Refugees. Their faces are unmistakable and unforgettable. No one who has ever caught that stare of dumb bewilderment—or that other look of concentrated horror, full of the reflection of flames and ruins—can shake off the obsession of the Refugees. The look in their eyes is part of the look of Paris. It is the dark shadow on the brightness of the face she turns to the enemy. These poor people cannot look across the borders to eventual triumph. They belong mostly to a class whose knowledge of the world's affairs is measured by the shadow of their village steeple. They are no more curious of the laws of causation than the thousands overwhelmed at Avezzano. They were ploughing and sowing, spinning and weaving and minding their business, when suddenly a great darkness full of fire and blood came down on them. And now they are here, in a strange country, among unfamiliar faces and new ways, with nothing left to them in the world but the memory of burning homes and massacred children and young men dragged to slavery, of infants torn from their mothers, old men trampled by drunken heels and priests slain while they prayed beside the dying. These are the people who stand in hundreds every day outside the doors of the shelters improvised to rescue them, and who receive, in return for the loss of everything that makes life sweet, or intelligible, or at least endurable, a cot in a dormitory, a meal-ticket—and perhaps, on lucky days, a pair of shoes...

What are the Parisians doing meanwhile? For one thing—and the sign is a good one—they are refilling the shops, and especially, of course, the great "department stores." In the early war days there was no stranger sight than those deserted palaces, where one strayed between miles of unpurchased wares in quest of vanished salesmen. A few clerks, of course, were left: enough, one would have thought, for the rare purchasers who disturbed their meditations. But the few there were did not care to be disturbed: they lurked behind their walls of sheeting, their bastions of flannelette, as if ashamed to be discovered. And when one had coaxed them out they went through the necessary gestures automatically, as if mournfully wondering that any one should care to buy. I remember once, at the Louvre, seeing the whole force of a "department," including the salesman I was trying to cajole into showing me some medicated gauze, desert their posts simultaneously to gather about a motor-cyclist in a muddy uniform who had dropped in to see his pals with tales from the front. But after six months the pressure of normal appetites has begun to reassert itself—and to shop is one of the normal appetites of woman. I say "shop" instead of buy, to distinguish between the dull purchase of necessities and the voluptuousness of acquiring things one might do without. It is evident that many of the thousands now fighting their way into the great shops must be indulging in the latter delight. At a moment when real wants are reduced to a minimum, how else account for the congestion of the department store? Even allowing for the immense, the perpetual buying of supplies for hospitals and work-rooms, the incessant stoking-up of the innumerable centres of charitable production, there is no explanation of the crowding of the other departments except the fact that woman, however valiant, however tried, however suffering and however self-denying, must eventually, in the long run, and at whatever cost to her pocket and her ideals, begin to shop again. She has renounced the theatre, she denies herself the tea-rooms, she goes apologetically and furtively (and economically) to concerts—but the swinging doors of the department stores suck her irresistibly into their quicksand of remnants and reductions.

No one, in this respect, would wish the look of Paris to be changed. It is a good sign to see the crowds pouring into the shops again, even though the sight is less interesting than that of the other crowds streaming daily—and on Sunday in immensely augmented

numbers—across the Pont Alexandre III to the great court of the Invalides where the German trophies are displayed. Here the heart of France beats with a richer blood, and something of its glow passes into foreign veins as one watches the perpetually renewed throngs face to face with the long triple row of German guns. There are few in those throngs to whom one of the deadly pack has not dealt a blow; there are personal losses, lacerating memories, bound up with the sight of all those evil engines. But personal sorrow is the sentiment least visible in the look of Paris. It is not fanciful to say that the Parisian face, after six months of trial, has acquired a new character. The change seems to have affected the very stuff it is moulded of, as though the long ordeal had hardened the poor human clay into some dense commemorative substance. I often pass in the street women whose faces look like memorial medals—idealized images of what they were in the flesh. And the masks of some of the men—those queer tormented Gallic masks, crushed-in and squat and a little satyr-like—look like the bronzes of the Naples Museum, burnt and twisted from their baptism of fire. But none of these faces reveals a personal preoccupation: they are looking, one and all, at France erect on her borders. Even the women who are comparing different widths of Valenciennes at the lace-counter all have something of that vision in their eyes—or else one does not see the ones who haven't.

It is still true of Paris that she has not the air of a capital in arms. There are as few troops to be seen as ever, and but for the coming and going of the orderlies attached to the War Office and the Military Government, and the sprinkling of uniforms about the doors of barracks, there would be no sign of war in the streets—no sign, that is, except the presence of the wounded. It is only lately that they have begun to appear, for in the early months of the war they were not sent to Paris, and the splendidly appointed hospitals of the capital stood almost empty, while others, all over the country, were overcrowded. The motives for the disposal of the wounded have been much speculated upon and variously explained: one of its results may have been the maintaining in Paris of the extraordinary moral health which has given its tone to the whole country, and which is now sound and strong enough to face the sight of any misery.

And miseries enough it has to face. Day by day the limping figures grow more numerous on the pavement, the pale bandaged heads more frequent in passing carriages. In the stalls at the theatres and concerts there are many uniforms; and their wearers usually have to wait till the hall is emptied before they hobble out on a supporting arm. Most of them are very young, and it is the expression of their faces which I should like to picture and interpret as being the very essence of what I have called the look of Paris. They are grave, these young faces: one hears a great deal of the gaiety in the trenches, but the wounded are not gay. Neither are they sad, however. They are calm, meditative, strangely purified and matured. It is as though their great experience had purged them of pettiness, meanness and frivolity, burning them down to the bare bones of character, the fundamental substance of the soul, and shaping that substance into something so strong and finely tempered that for a long time to come Paris will not care to wear any look unworthy of the look on their faces.

'In Lorraine and the Vosges'³

NANCY, May 13th, 1915

Beside me, on my writing-table, stands a bunch of peonies, the jolly round-faced pink peonies of the village garden. They were picked this afternoon in the garden of a ruined house at Gerbeviller—a house so calcined and convulsed that, for epithets dire enough to fit it, one would have to borrow from a Hebrew prophet gloating over the fall of a city of idolaters.

Since leaving Paris yesterday we have passed through streets and streets of such murdered houses, through town after town spread out in its last writhings; and before the black holes that were homes, along the edge of the chasms that were streets, everywhere we have seen flowers and vegetables springing up in freshly raked and watered gardens. My pink peonies were not introduced to point the stale allegory of unconscious Nature veiling Man's havoc: they are put on my first page as a symbol of conscious human energy coming back to replant and rebuild the wilderness...

Last March, in the Argonne, the towns we passed through seemed quite dead; but yesterday new life was budding everywhere. We were following another track of the invasion, one of the huge tiger-scratches that the Beast flung over the land last September, between Vitry-le-Francois and Bar-le-Duc. Etrepy, Pargny, Sermaize-les-Bains, Andernay, are the names of this group of victims: Sermaize a pretty watering-place along wooded slopes, the others large villages fringed with farms, and all now mere scrofulous blotches on the soft spring scene. But in many we heard the sound of hammers, and saw brick-layers and masons at work. Even in the most mortally stricken there were signs of returning life: children playing among the stone heaps, and now and then a cautious older face peering out of a shed propped against the ruins. In one place an ancient tram-car had been converted into a cafe and labelled: "Au Restaurant des Ruines"; and everywhere between the calcined walls the carefully combed gardens aligned their radishes and lettuce-tops.

From Bar-le-Duc we turned northeast, and as we entered the forest of Commercy we began to hear again the Voice of the Front. It was the warmest and stillest of May days, and in the clearing where we stopped for luncheon the familiar boom broke with a magnified loudness on the noonday hush. In the intervals between the crashes there was not a sound but the gnats' hum in the moist sunshine and the dryad-call of the cuckoo from greener depths. At the end of the lane a few cavalymen rode by in shabby blue, their horses' flanks glinting like ripe chestnuts. They stopped to chat and accept some cigarettes, and when they had trotted off again the gnat, the cuckoo and the cannon took up their trio...

The town of Commercy looked so undisturbed that the cannonade rocking it might have been some unheeded echo of the hills. These frontier towns inured to the clash of war go about their business with what one might call stolidity if there were not finer, and truer, names for it. In Commercy, to be sure, there is little business to go about just now save that connected with the military occupation; but the peaceful look of the sunny sleepy streets made one doubt if the fighting line was really less than five miles away... Yet the French, with an odd perversion of race-vanity, still persist in speaking of themselves as a "nervous and impressionable" people!

³ Originally published in *Scribner's Magazine*. Retrieved from *Fighting France: From Dunkerque to Belfort* (1915)

This afternoon, on the road to Gerbeviller, we were again in the track of the September invasion. Over all the slopes now cool with spring foliage the battle rocked backward and forward during those burning autumn days; and every mile of the struggle has left its ghastly traces. The fields are full of wooden crosses which the ploughshare makes a circuit to avoid; many of the villages have been partly wrecked, and here and there an isolated ruin marks the nucleus of a fiercer struggle. But the landscape, in its first sweet leafiness, is so alive with ploughing and sowing and all the natural tasks of spring, that the war scars seem like traces of a long-past woe; and it was not till a bend of the road brought us in sight of Gerbeviller that we breathed again the choking air of present horror.

Gerbeviller, stretched out at ease on its slopes above the Meurthe, must have been a happy place to live in. The streets slanted up between scattered houses in gardens to the great Louis XIV chateau above the town and the church that balanced it. So much one can reconstruct from the first glimpse across the valley; but when one enters the town all perspective is lost in chaos. Gerbeviller has taken to herself the title of "the martyr town"; an honour to which many sister victims might dispute her claim! But as a sensational image of havoc it seems improbable that any can surpass her. Her ruins seem to have been simultaneously vomited up from the depths and hurled down from the skies, as though she had perished in some monstrous clash of earthquake and tornado; and it fills one with a cold despair to know that this double destruction was no accident of nature but a piously planned and methodically executed human deed. From the opposite heights the poor little garden-girt town was shelled like a steel fortress; then, when the Germans entered, a fire was built in every house, and at the nicely-timed right moment one of the explosive tabloids which the fearless Teuton carries about for his land-*Lusitanias* was tossed on each hearth. It was all so well done that one wonders—almost apologetically for German thoroughness—that any of the human rats escaped from their holes; but some did, and were neatly spitted on lurking bayonets.

One old woman, hearing her son's deathcry, rashly looked out of her door. A bullet instantly laid her low among her phloxes and lilies; and there, in her little garden, her dead body was dishonoured. It seemed singularly appropriate, in such a scene, to read above a blackened doorway the sign: "Monuments Funebres," and to observe that the house the doorway once belonged to had formed the angle of a lane called "La Ruelle des Orphelines."

At one end of the main street of Gerbeviller there once stood a charming house, of the sober old Lorraine pattern, with low door, deep roof and ample gables: it was in the garden of this house that my pink peonies were picked for me by its owner, Mr. Liegeay, a former Mayor of Gerbeviller, who witnessed all the horrors of the invasion.

Mr. Liegeay is now living in a neighbour's cellar, his own being fully occupied by the debris of his charming house. He told us the story of the three days of the German occupation; how he and his wife and niece, and the niece's babies, took to their cellar while the Germans set the house on fire, and how, peering through a door into the stable-yard, they saw that the soldiers suspected they were within and were trying to get at them. Luckily the incendiaries had heaped wood and straw all round the outside of the house, and the blaze was so hot that they could not reach the door. Between the arch of the doorway and the door itself was a half-moon opening; and Mr. Liegeay and his family, during three days and three nights, broke up all the barrels in the cellar and threw the bits out through the opening to feed the fire in the yard.

Finally, on the third day, when they began to be afraid that the ruins of the house would fall in on them, they made a dash for safety. The house was on the edge of the town, and the women and children managed to get away into the country; but Mr. Liegeay

was surprised in his garden by a German soldier. He made a rush for the high wall of the adjoining cemetery, and scrambling over it slipped down between the wall and a big granite cross. The cross was covered with the hideous wire and glass wreaths dear to French mourners; and with these opportune mementoes Mr. Liegeay roofed himself in, lying wedged in his narrow hiding-place from three in the afternoon till night, and listening to the voices of the soldiers who were hunting for him among the grave-stones. Luckily it was their last day at Gerbeviller, and the German retreat saved his life.

Even in Gerbeviller we saw no worse scene of destruction than the particular spot in which the ex-mayor stood while he told his story. He looked about him at the heaps of blackened brick and contorted iron. "This was my dining-room," he said. "There were some good old paneling on the walls, and some fine prints that had been a wedding-present to my grand-father." He led us into another black pit. "This was our sitting-room: you see what a view we had." He sighed, and added philosophically: "I suppose we were too well off. I even had an electric light out there on the terrace, to read my paper by on summer evenings. Yes, we were too well off..." That was all.

Meanwhile all the town had been red with horror—flame and shot and tortures unnameable; and at the other end of the long street, a woman, a Sister of Charity, had held her own like Soeur Gabrielle at Clermont-en-Argonne, gathering her flock of old men and children about her and interposing her short stout figure between them and the fury of the Germans. We found her in her Hospice, a ruddy, indomitable woman who related with a quiet indignation more thrilling than invective the hideous details of the bloody three days; but that already belongs to the past, and at present she is much more concerned with the task of clothing and feeding Gerbeviller. For two thirds of the population have already "come home"—that is what they call the return to this desert! "You see," Soeur Julie explained, "there are the crops to sow, the gardens to tend. They had to come back. The government is building wooden shelters for them; and people will surely send us beds and linen." (Of course they would, one felt as one listened!) "Heavy boots, too—boots for field-labourers. We want them for women as well as men—like these." Soeur Julie, smiling, turned up a hob-nailed sole. "I have directed all the work on our Hospice farm myself. All the women are working in the fields—we must take the place of the men." And I seemed to see my pink peonies flowering in the very prints of her sturdy boots!

May 14th.

Nancy, the most beautiful town in France, has never been as beautiful as now. Coming back to it last evening from a round of ruins one felt as if the humbler Sisters sacrificed to spare it were pleading with one not to forget them in the contemplation of its dearly-bought perfection.

The last time I looked out on the great architectural setting of the Place Stanislas was on a hot July evening, the evening of the National Fete. The square and the avenues leading to it swarmed with people, and as darkness fell the balanced lines of arches and palaces sprang out in many coloured light. Garlands of lamps looped the arcades leading into the Place de la Carriere, peacock-coloured fires flared from the Arch of Triumph, long curves of radiance beat like wings over the thickets of the park, the sculptures of the fountains, the brown-and-gold foliage of Jean Damour's great gates; and under this roofing of light was the murmur of a happy crowd carelessly celebrating the tradition of half-forgotten victories.

Now, at sunset, all life ceases in Nancy and veil after veil of silence comes down on the deserted Place and its empty perspectives. Last night by nine the few lingering lights in the streets had been put out, every window was blind, and the moonless night lay over

the city like a canopy of velvet. Then, from some remote point, the arc of a search-light swept the sky, laid a fugitive pallor on darkened palace-fronts, a gleam of gold on invisible gates, trembled across the black vault and vanished, leaving it still blacker. When we came out of the darkened restaurant on the corner of the square, and the iron curtain of the entrance had been hastily dropped on us, we stood in such complete night that it took a waiter's friendly hand to guide us to the curbstone. Then, as we grew used to the darkness, we saw it lying still more densely under the colonnade of the Place de la Carriere and the clipped trees beyond. The ordered masses of architecture became august, the spaces between them immense, and the black sky faintly strewn with stars seemed to overarch an enchanted city. Not a footstep sounded, not a leaf rustled, not a breath of air drew under the arches. And suddenly, through the dumb night, the sound of the cannon began.

May 14th.

Luncheon with the General Staff in an old bourgeois house of a little town as sleepy as "Cranford." In the warm walled gardens everything was blooming at once: laburnums, lilacs, red hawthorn, Banksia roses and all the pleasant border plants that go with box and lavender. Never before did the flowers answer the spring roll-call with such a rush! Upstairs, in the Empire bedroom which the General has turned into his study, it was amusingly incongruous to see the sturdy provincial furniture littered with war-maps, trench-plans, aeroplane photographs and all the documentation of modern war. Through the windows bees hummed, the garden rustled, and one felt, close by, behind the walls of other gardens, the untroubled continuance of a placid and orderly bourgeois life.

We started early for Mousson on the Moselle, the ruined hill-fortress that gives its name to the better-known town at its foot. Our road ran below the long range of the "Grand Couronne," the line of hills curving southeast from Pont-a-Mousson to St. Nicolas du Port. All through this pleasant broken country the battle shook and swayed last autumn; but few signs of those days are left except the wooden crosses in the fields. No troops are visible, and the pictures of war that made the Argonne so tragic last March are replaced by peaceful rustic scenes. On the way to Mousson the road is overhung by an Italian-looking village clustered about a hill-top. It marks the exact spot at which, last August, the German invasion was finally checked and flung back; and the Muse of History points out that on this very hill has long stood a memorial shaft inscribed: *Here, in the year 362, Jovinus defeated the Teutonic hordes.*

A little way up the ascent to Mousson we left the motor behind a bit of rising ground. The road is raked by the German lines, and stray pedestrians (unless in a group) are less liable than a motor to have a shell spent on them. We climbed under a driving grey sky which swept gusts of rain across our road. In the lee of the castle we stopped to look down at the valley of the Moselle, the slate roofs of Pont-a-Mousson and the broken bridge which once linked together the two sides of the town. Nothing but the wreck of the bridge showed that we were on the edge of war. The wind was too high for firing, and we saw no reason for believing that the wood just behind the Hospice roof at our feet was seamed with German trenches and bristling with guns, or that from every slope across the valley the eye of the cannon sleeplessly glared. But there the Germans were, drawing an iron ring about three sides of the watch-tower; and as one peered through an embrasure of the ancient walls one gradually found one's self re-living the sensations of the little mediaeval burgh as it looked out on some earlier circle of besiegers. The longer one looked, the more oppressive and menacing the invisibility of the foe became. "*There they are—and there—and there.*" We strained our eyes obediently, but saw only calm hillsides, dozing farms. It was as if the earth itself were the enemy, as if the hordes of evil were in the clods and

grass-blades. Only one conical hill close by showed an odd artificial patterning, like the work of huge ants who had scarred it with criss-cross ridges. We were told that these were French trenches, but they looked much more like the harmless traces of a prehistoric camp.

Suddenly an officer, pointing to the west of the trenched hill said: "Do you see that farm?" It lay just below, near the river, and so close that good eyes could easily have discerned people or animals in the farm-yard, if there had been any; but the whole place seemed to be sleeping the sleep of bucolic peace. "*They are there*," the officer said; and the innocent vignette framed by my field-glass suddenly glared back at me like a human mask of hate. The loudest cannonade had not made "them" seem as real as that!...

At this point the military lines and the old political frontier everywhere overlap, and in a cleft of the wooded hills that conceal the German batteries we saw a dark grey blur on the grey horizon. It was Metz, the Promised City, lying there with its fair steeples and towers, like the mystic banner that Constantine saw upon the sky...

Through wet vineyards and orchards we scrambled down the hill to the river and entered Pont-a-Mousson. It was by mere meteorological good luck that we got there, for if the winds had been asleep the guns would have been awake, and when they wake poor Pont-a-Mousson is not at home to visitors. One understood why as one stood in the riverside garden of the great Premonstratensian Monastery which is now the hospital and the general asylum of the town. Between the clipped limes and formal borders the German shells had scooped out three or four "dreadful hollows," in one of which, only last week, a little girl found her death; and the facade of the building is pock-marked by shot and disfigured with gaping holes. Yet in this precarious shelter Sister Theresia, of the same indomitable breed as the Sisters of Clermont and Gerbeviller, has gathered a miscellaneous flock of soldiers wounded in the trenches, civilians shattered by the bombardment, eclopes, old women and children: all the human wreckage of this storm-beaten point of the front. Sister Theresia seems in no wise disconcerted by the fact that the shells continually play over her roof. The building is immense and spreading, and when one wing is damaged she picks up her proteges and trots them off, bed and baggage, to another. "*Je promene mes malades*," she said calmly, as if boasting of the varied accommodation of an ultra-modern hospital, as she led us through vaulted and stuccoed galleries where caryatid-saints look down in plaster pomp on the rows of brown-blanketed pallets and the long tables at which haggard eclopes were enjoying their evening soup.

May 15th.

I have seen the happiest being on earth: a man who has found his job.

This afternoon we motored southwest of Nancy to a little place called Menil-sur-Belvitte. The name is not yet intimately known to history, but there are reasons why it deserves to be, and in one man's mind it already is. Menil-sur-Belvitte is a village on the edge of the Vosges. It is badly battered, for awful fighting took place there in the first month of the war. The houses lie in a hollow, and just beyond it the ground rises and spreads into a plateau waving with wheat and backed by wooded slopes—the ideal "battleground" of the history-books. And here a real above-ground battle of the old obsolete kind took place, and the French, driving the Germans back victoriously, fell by thousands in the trampled wheat.

The church of Menil is a ruin, but the parsonage still stands—a plain little house at the end of the street; and here the cure received us, and led us into a room which he has turned into a chapel. The chapel is also a war museum, and everything in it has something to do with the battle that took place among the wheat-fields. The candelabra on the altar are made of "Seventy-five" shells, the Virgin's halo is composed of radiating bayonets,

the walls are intricately adorned with German trophies and French relics, and on the ceiling the cure has had painted a kind of zodiacal chart of the whole region, in which Menil-sur-Belvitte's handful of houses figures as the central orb of the system, and Verdun, Nancy, Metz, and Belfort as its humble satellites. But the chapel-museum is only a surplus expression of the cure's impassioned dedication to the dead. His real work has been done on the battle-field, where row after row of graves, marked and listed as soon as the struggle was over, have been fenced about, symmetrically disposed, planted with flowers and young firs, and marked by the names and death-dates of the fallen. As he led us from one of these enclosures to another his face was lit with the flame of a gratified vocation. This particular man was made to do this particular thing: he is a born collector, classifier, and hero-worshipper. In the hall of the "presbytere" hangs a case of carefully-mounted butterflies, the result, no doubt, of an earlier passion for collecting. His "specimens" have changed, that is all: he has passed from butterflies to men, from the actual to the visionary Psyche.

On the way to Menil we stopped at the village of Crevic. The Germans were there in August, but the place is untouched—except for one house. That house, a large one, standing in a park at one end of the village, was the birth-place and home of General Lyautey, one of France's best soldiers, and Germany's worst enemy in Africa. It is no exaggeration to say that last August General Lyautey, by his promptness and audacity, saved Morocco for France. The Germans know it, and hate him; and as soon as the first soldiers reached Crevic—so obscure and imperceptible a spot that even German omniscience might have missed it—the officer in command asked for General Lyautey's house, went straight to it, had all the papers, portraits, furniture and family relics piled in a bonfire in the court, and then burnt down the house. As we sat in the neglected park with the plaintive ruin before us we heard from the gardener this typical tale of German thoroughness and German chivalry. It is corroborated by the fact that not another house in Crevic was destroyed.

May 16th.

About two miles from the German frontier (*frontier* just here as well as front) an isolated hill rises out of the Lorraine meadows. East of it, a ribbon of river winds among poplars, and that ribbon is the boundary between Empire and Republic. On such a clear day as this the view from the hill is extraordinarily interesting. From its grassy top a little aeroplane cannon stares to heaven, watching the east for the danger speck; and the circumference of the hill is furrowed by a deep trench—a "bowel," rather—winding invisibly from one subterranean observation post to another. In each of these earthly warrens (ingeniously wattled, roofed and iron-sheeted) stand two or three artillery officers with keen quiet faces, directing by telephone the fire of batteries nestling somewhere in the woods four or five miles away. Interesting as the place was, the men who lived there interested me far more. They obviously belonged to different classes, and had received a different social education; but their mental and moral fraternity was complete. They were all fairly young, and their faces had the look that war has given to French faces: a look of sharpened intelligence, strengthened will and sobered judgment, as if every faculty, trebly vivified, were so bent on the one end that personal problems had been pushed back to the vanishing point of the great perspective.

From this vigilant height—one of the intentest eyes open on the frontier—we went a short distance down the hillside to a village out of range of the guns, where the commanding officer gave us tea in a charming old house with a terraced garden full of flowers and puppies. Below the terrace, lost Lorraine stretched away to her blue heights, a vision of summer peace: and just above us the unsleeping hill kept watch, its signal-

wires trembling night and day. It was one of the intervals of rest and sweetness when the whole horrible black business seems to press most intolerably on the nerves.

Below the village the road wound down to a forest that had formed a dark blur in our bird's-eye view of the plain. We passed into the forest and halted on the edge of a colony of queer exotic huts. On all sides they peeped through the branches, themselves so branched and sodded and leafy that they seemed like some transition form between tree and house. We were in one of the so-called "villages negres" of the second-line trenches, the jolly little settlements to which the troops retire after doing their shift under fire. This particular colony has been developed to an extreme degree of comfort and safety. The houses are partly underground, connected by deep winding "bowels" over which light rustic bridges have been thrown, and so profoundly roofed with sods that as much of them as shows above ground is shell-proof. Yet they are real houses, with real doors and windows under their grass-eaves, real furniture inside, and real beds of daisies and pansies at their doors. In the Colonel's bungalow a big bunch of spring flowers bloomed on the table, and everywhere we saw the same neatness and order, the same amused pride in the look of things. The men were dining at long trestle-tables under the trees; tired, unshaven men in shabby uniforms of all cuts and almost every colour. They were off duty, relaxed, in a good humour; but every face had the look of the faces watching on the hill-top. Wherever I go among these men of the front I have the same impression: the impression that the absorbing undivided thought of the Defense of France lives in the heart and brain of each soldier as intensely as in the heart and brain of their chief.

We walked a dozen yards down the road and came to the edge of the forest. A wattled palisade bounded it, and through a gap in the palisade we looked out across a field to the roofs of a quiet village a mile away. I went out a few steps into the field and was abruptly pulled back. "Take care—those are the trenches!" What looked like a ridge thrown up by a plough was the enemy's line; and in the quiet village French cannon watched. Suddenly, as we stood there, they woke, and at the same moment we heard the unmistakable Gr-r-r of an aeroplane and saw a Bird of Evil high up against the blue. Snap, snap, snap barked the mitrailleuse on the hill, the soldiers jumped from their wine and strained their eyes through the trees, and the Taube, finding itself the centre of so much attention, turned grey tail and swished away to the concealing clouds.

May 17th.

Today we started with an intenser sense of adventure. Hitherto we had always been told beforehand where we were going and how much we were to be allowed to see; but now we were being launched into the unknown. Beyond a certain point all was conjecture—we knew only that what happened after that would depend on the good-will of a Colonel of Chasseurs-a-pied whom we were to go a long way to find, up into the folds of the mountains on our southeast horizon.

We picked up a staff-officer at Head-quarters and flew on to a battered town on the edge of the hills. From there we wound up through a narrowing valley, under wooded cliffs, to a little settlement where the Colonel of the Brigade was to be found. There was a short conference between the Colonel and our staff-officer, and then we annexed a Captain of Chasseurs and spun away again. Our road lay through a town so exposed that our companion from Head-quarters suggested the advisability of avoiding it; but our guide hadn't the heart to inflict such a disappointment on his new acquaintances. "Oh, we won't stop the motor—we'll just dash through," he said indulgently; and in the excess of his indulgence he even permitted us to dash slowly.

Oh, that poor town—when we reached it, along a road ploughed with fresh obus-holes, I didn't want to stop the motor; I wanted to hurry on and blot the picture from my memory! It was doubly sad to look at because of the fact that it wasn't *quite dead*; faint spasms of life still quivered through it. A few children played in the ravaged streets; a few pale mothers watched them from cellar doorways. "They oughtn't to be here," our guide explained; "but about a hundred and fifty begged so hard to stay that the General gave them leave. The officer in command has an eye on them, and whenever he gives the signal they dive down into their burrows. He says they are perfectly obedient. It was he who asked that they might stay..."

Up and up into the hills. The vision of human pain and ruin was lost in beauty. We were among the firs, and the air was full of balm. The mossy banks gave out a scent of rain, and little water-falls from the heights set the branches trembling over secret pools. At each turn of the road, forest, and always more forest, climbing with us as we climbed, and dropped away from us to narrow valleys that converged on slate-blue distances. At one of these turns we overtook a company of soldiers, spade on shoulder and bags of tools across their backs—"trench-workers" swinging up to the heights to which we were bound. Life must be a better thing in this crystal air than in the mud-welter of the Argonne and the fogs of the North; and these men's faces were fresh with wind and weather.

Higher still ... and presently a halt on a ridge, in another "black village," this time almost a town! The soldiers gathered round us as the motor stopped—throng of chasseurs-a-pied in faded, trench-stained uniforms—for few visitors climb to this point, and their pleasure at the sight of new faces was presently expressed in a large "*Vive l'Amerique!*" scrawled on the door of the car. *L'Amerique* was glad and proud to be there, and instantly conscious of breathing an air saturated with courage and the dogged determination to endure. The men were all reservists: that is to say, mostly married, and all beyond the first fighting age. For many months there has not been much active work along this front, no great adventure to rouse the blood and wing the imagination: it has just been month after month of monotonous watching and holding on. And the soldiers' faces showed it: there was no light of heady enterprise in their eyes, but the look of men who knew their job, had thought it over, and were there to hold their bit of France till the day of victory or extermination.

Meanwhile, they had made the best of the situation and turned their quarters into a forest colony that would enchant any normal boy. Their village architecture was more elaborate than any we had yet seen. In the Colonel's "dugout" a long table decked with lilacs and tulips was spread for tea. In other cheery catacombs we found neat rows of bunks, mess-tables, sizzling sauce-pans over kitchen-fires. Everywhere were endless ingenuities in the way of camp-furniture and household decoration. Farther down the road a path between fir-boughs led to a hidden hospital, a marvel of underground compactness. While we chatted with the surgeon a soldier came in from the trenches: an elderly, bearded man, with a good average civilian face—the kind that one runs against by hundreds in any French crowd. He had a scalp-wound which had just been dressed, and was very pale. The Colonel stopped to ask a few questions, and then, turning to him, said: "Feeling rather better now?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good. In a day or two you'll be thinking about going back to the trenches, eh?"

"*I'm going now, sir.*" It was said quite simply, and received in the same way. "Oh, all right," the Colonel merely rejoined; but he laid his hand on the man's shoulder as we went out.

Our next visit was to a sod-thatched hut, "At the sign of the Ambulant Artisans," where two or three soldiers were modelling and chiselling all kinds of trinkets from the

aluminum of enemy shells. One of the ambulant artisans was just finishing a ring with beautifully modelled fauns' heads, another offered me a "Pickelhaube" small enough for Mustard-seed's wear, but complete in every detail, and inlaid with the bronze eagle from an Imperial pfennig. There are many such ringsmiths among the privates at the front, and the severe, somewhat archaic design of their rings is a proof of the sureness of French taste; but the two we visited happened to be Paris jewellers, for whom "artisan" was really too modest a pseudonym. Officers and men were evidently proud of their work, and as they stood hammering away in their cramped smithy, a red gleam lighting up the intentness of their faces, they seemed to be beating out the cheerful rhythm of "I too will something make, and joy in the making."...

Up the hillside, in deeper shadow, was another little structure; a wooden shed with an open gable sheltering an altar with candles and flowers. Here mass is said by one of the conscript priests of the regiment, while his congregation kneel between the fir-trunks, giving life to the old metaphor of the cathedral-forest. Near by was the grave-yard, where day by day these quiet elderly men lay their comrades, the *peres de famille* who don't go back. The care of this woodland cemetery is left entirely to the soldiers, and they have spent treasures of piety on the inscriptions and decorations of the graves. Fresh flowers are brought up from the valleys to cover them, and when some favourite comrade goes, the men scorning ephemeral tributes, club together to buy a monstrous indestructible wreath with emblazoned streamers. It was near the end of the afternoon, and many soldiers were strolling along the paths between the graves. "It's their favourite walk at this hour," the Colonel said. He stopped to look down on a grave smothered in beady tokens, the grave of the last pal to fall. "He was mentioned in the Order of the Day," the Colonel explained; and the group of soldiers standing near looked at us proudly, as if sharing their comrade's honour, and wanting to be sure that we understood the reason of their pride...

"And now," said our Captain of Chasseurs, "that you've seen the second-line trenches, what do you say to taking a look at the first?"

We followed him to a point higher up the hill, where we plunged into a deep ditch of red earth—the "bowel" leading to the first lines. It climbed still higher, under the wet firs, and then, turning, dipped over the edge and began to wind in sharp loops down the other side of the ridge. Down we scrambled, single file, our chins on a level with the top of the passage, the close green covert above us. The "bowel" went twisting down more and more sharply into a deep ravine; and presently, at a bend, we came to a fir-thatched outlook, where a soldier stood with his back to us, his eye glued to a peep-hole in the wattled wall. Another turn, and another outlook; but here it was the iron-rimmed eye of the mitrailleuse that stared across the ravine. By this time we were within a hundred yards or so of the German lines, hidden, like ours, on the other side of the narrowing hollow; and as we stole down and down, the hush and secrecy of the scene, and the sense of that imminent lurking hatred only a few branch-lengths away, seemed to fill the silence with mysterious pulsations. Suddenly a sharp noise broke on them: the rap of a rifle-shot against a tree-trunk a few yards ahead.

"Ah, the sharp-shooter," said our guide. "No more talking, please—he's over there, in a tree somewhere, and whenever he hears voices he fires. Some day we shall spot his tree."

We went on in silence to a point where a few soldiers were sitting on a ledge of rock in a widening of the "bowel." They looked as quiet as if they had been waiting for their bocks before a Boulevard cafe.

"Not beyond, please," said the officer, holding me back; and I stopped.

Here we were, then, actually and literally in the first lines! The knowledge made one's heart tick a little; but, except for another shot or two from our arboreal listener, and

the motionless intentness of the soldier's back at the peep-hole, there was nothing to show that we were not a dozen miles away.

Perhaps the thought occurred to our Captain of Chasseurs; for just as I was turning back he said with his friendliest twinkle: "Do you want awfully to go a little farther? Well, then, come on."

We went past the soldiers sitting on the ledge and stole down and down, to where the trees ended at the bottom of the ravine. The sharp-shooter had stopped firing, and nothing disturbed the leafy silence but an intermittent drip of rain. We were at the end of the burrow, and the Captain signed to me that I might take a cautious peep round its corner. I looked out and saw a strip of intensely green meadow just under me, and a wooded cliff rising abruptly on its other side. That was all. The wooded cliff swarmed with "them," and a few steps would have carried us across the interval; yet all about us was silence, and the peace of the forest. Again, for a minute, I had the sense of an all-pervading, invisible power of evil, a saturation of the whole landscape with some hidden vitriol of hate. Then the reaction of the unbelief set in, and I felt myself in a harmless ordinary glen, like a million others on an untroubled earth. We turned and began to climb again, loop by loop, up the "bowel"—we passed the lolling soldiers, the silent mitrailleuse, we came again to the watcher at his peep-hole. He heard us, let the officer pass, and turned his head with a little sign of understanding.

"Do you want to look down?"

He moved a step away from his window. The look-out projected over the ravine, raking its depths; and here, with one's eye to the leaf-lashed hole, one saw at last ... saw, at the bottom of the harmless glen, half way between cliff and cliff, a grey uniform huddled in a dead heap. "He's been there for days: they can't fetch him away," said the watcher, regluing his eye to the hole; and it was almost a relief to find it was after all a tangible enemy hidden over there across the meadow...

The sun had set when we got back to our starting-point in the underground village. The chasseurs-a-pied were lounging along the roadside and standing in gossiping groups about the motor. It was long since they had seen faces from the other life, the life they had left nearly a year earlier and had not been allowed to go back to for a day; and under all their jokes and good-humour their farewell had a tinge of wistfulness. But one felt that this fugitive reminder of a world they had put behind them would pass like a dream, and their minds revert without effort to the one reality: the business of holding their bit of France.

It is hard to say why this sense of the French soldier's single-mindedness is so strong in all who have had even a glimpse of the front; perhaps it is gathered less from what the men say than from the look in their eyes. Even while they are accepting cigarettes and exchanging trench-jokes, the look is there; and when one comes on them unaware it is there also. In the dusk of the forest that look followed us down the mountain; and as we skirted the edge of the ravine between the armies, we felt that on the far side of that dividing line were the men who had made the war, and on the near side the men who had been made by it.

Mary Roberts Rinehart

‘The Night Raid on Dunkirk’⁴

I found that a room had been engaged for me at the Hotel des Arcades. It was a very large room looking out over the public square and the statue of Jean Bart. It was really a princely room. No wonder they showed it to me proudly, and charged it to me royally. It was an upholstered room. Even the doors were upholstered. And because it was upholstered and expensive and regal, it enjoyed the isolation of greatness. The other people in the hotel slept above or underneath.

There were times when I longed for neighbours, when I yearned for some one to occupy the other royal apartment next door. But except for a Russian prince who stayed two days, and who snored in Russian and kept two *valets de chambre* up all night in the hall outside my door polishing his boots and cleaning his uniform, I was always alone in that part of the hotel.

At my London hotel I had been lodged on the top floor, and twice in the night the hall porter had telephoned me to say that German Zeppelins were on their way to London. So I took care to find that in the Hotel des Arcades there were two stories and two layers of Belgian and French officers overhead.

I felt very comfortable—until the air raid. The two stories seemed absurd, inadequate. I would not have felt safe in the subcellar of the Woolworth Building.

There were no women in the hotel at that time, with the exception of a hysterical lady manager, who sat in a boxlike office on the lower floor, and two chambermaids. A boy made my bed and brought me hot water. For several weeks at intervals he knocked at the door twice a day and said: "Et wat." I always thought it was Flemish for "May I come in?" At last I discovered that he considered this the English for "hot water." The waiters in the café were too old to be sent to war, but I think the cook had gone. There was no cook. Some one put the food on the fire, but he was not a cook.

Dunkirk had been bombarded several times, I learned.

"They come in the morning," said my informant. "Every one is ordered off the streets. But they do little damage. One or two machines come and drop a bomb or two. That is all. Very few are killed."

I protested. I felt rather bitter about it. I expected trouble along the lines, I explained. I knew I would be quite calm when I was actually at the front, and when I had my nervous system prepared for trouble. But in Dunkirk I expected to rest and relax. I needed sleep after La Panne. I thought something should be done about it.

My informant shrugged his shoulders. He was English, and entirely fair.

"Dunkirk is a fortified town," he explained. "It is quite legitimate. But you may sleep to-night. The raids are always daylight ones."

So I commenced dinner calmly. I do not remember anything about that dinner. The memory of it has gone. I do recall looking about the dining room, and feeling a little odd and lonely, being the only woman. Then a gun boomed somewhere outside, and an alarm bell commenced to ring rapidly almost overhead. Instantly the officers in the room were on their feet, and every light went out.

The *maitre d'hôtel*, Emil, groped his way to my table and struck a match.

"Aëroplanes!" he said.

⁴ Originally published in *The Saturday Evening Post*; retrieved from *Kings, Queens and Pawns: An American Woman at the Front* (1915).

There was much laughing and talking as the officers moved to the door. The heavy velvet curtains were drawn. Some one near the door lighted a candle.

"Where shall I go?" I asked.

Emil, unlike the officers, was evidently nervous.

"Madame is as safe here as anywhere," he said. "But if she wishes to join the others in the cellar—"

I wanted to go to the cellar or to crawl into the office safe. But I felt that, as the only woman and the only American about, I held the reputation of America and of my sex in my hands. The waiters had gone to the cellar. The officers had flocked to the café on the ground floor underneath. The alarm bell was still ringing. Over the candle, stuck in a saucer, Emil's face looked white and drawn.

"I shall stay here," I said. "And I shall have coffee."

The coffee was not bravado. I needed something hot.

The gun, which had ceased, began to fire again. And then suddenly, not far away, a bomb exploded. Even through the closed and curtained windows the noise was terrific. Emil placed my coffee before me with shaking hands, and disappeared.

Another crash, and another, both very close!

There is nothing that I know of more hideous than an aerial bombardment. It requires an entire mental readjustment. The sky, which has always symbolised peace, suddenly spells death. Bombardment by the big guns of an advancing army is not unexpected. There is time for flight, a chance, too, for a reprisal. But against these raiders of the sky there is nothing. One sits and waits. And no town is safe. One moment there is a peaceful village with war twenty, fifty miles away. The next minute hell breaks loose. Houses are destroyed. Sleeping children die in their cradles. The streets echo and reëcho with the din of destruction. The reply of the anti-aircraft guns is feeble, and at night futile. There is no bustle of escape. The streets are empty and dead, and in each house people, family groups, noncombatants, folk who ask only the right to work and love and live, sit and wait with blanched faces.

More explosions, nearer still. They were trying for the *Mairie*, which was round the corner.

In the corridor outside the dining room a candle was lighted, and the English officer who had reassured me earlier in the evening came in.

"You need not be alarmed," he said cheerfully. "It is really nothing. But out in the corridor it is quite safe and not so lonely."

I went out. Two or three Belgian officers were there, gathered round a table on which was a candle stuck in a glass. They were having their after-dinner liqueurs and talking of many things. No one spoke of what was happening outside. I was given a corner, as being out of the draft.

The explosion were incessant now. With each one the landlady downstairs screamed. As they came closer, cries and French adjectives came up the staircase beside me in a nerve-destroying staccato of terror.

At nine-thirty, when the aeroplanes had been overhead for three-quarters of an hour, there came a period of silence. There were no more explosions.

"It is over," said one of the Belgian officers, smiling. "It is over, and madame lives!"

But it was not over.

I took advantage of the respite to do the forbidden thing and look out through one of the windows. The moon had come up and the square was flooded with light. All around were silent houses. No ray of light filtered through their closed and shuttered windows. The street lamps were out. Not an automobile was to be seen, not a hurrying human figure, not a dog. No night prowler disturbed that ghastly silence. The town lay dead under the

clear and peaceful light of the moon. The white paving stones of the square gleamed, and in the centre, saturnine and defiant, stood uninjured the statue of Jean Bart, privateer and private of Dunkirk.

Crash again! It was not over. The attack commenced with redoubled fury. If sound were destructive the little town of Dunkirk would be off the map of Northern France today. Sixty-seven bombs were dropped in the hour or so that the Germans were overhead.

The bombardment continued. My feet were very cold, my head hot. The lady manager was silent; perhaps she had fainted. But Emil reappeared for a moment, his round white face protruding above the staircase well, to say that a Zeppelin was reported on the way.

Then at last silence, broken soon by the rumble of ambulances as they started on their quest for the dead and the wounded. And Emil was wrong. There was no Zeppelin. The night raid on Dunkirk was history.

The lights did not come on again. From that time on for several weeks Dunkirk lay at night in darkness. Houses showing a light were fined by the police. Automobiles were forbidden the use of lamps. One crept along the streets and the roads surrounding the town in a mysterious and nerve-racking blackness broken only by the shaded lanterns of the sentries as they stepped out with their sharp command to stop.

The result of the raid? It was largely moral, a part of that campaign of terrorisation which is so strangely a part of the German system, which has set its army to burning cities, to bombarding the unfortified coast towns of England, to shooting civilians in conquered Belgium, and which now sinks the pitiful vessels of small traders and fishermen in the submarine-infested waters of the British Channel. It gained no military advantage, was intended to gain no military advantage. Not a soldier died. The great stores of military supplies were not wrecked. The victims were, as usual, women and children. The houses destroyed were the small and peaceful houses of noncombatants. Only two men were killed. They were in a side street when the first bomb dropped, and they tried to find an unlocked door, an open house, anything for shelter. It was impossible. Built like all French towns, without arcades or sheltering archways, the flat façades of the closed and barricaded houses refused them sanctuary. The second bomb killed them both.

Through all that night after the bombardment I could hear each hour the call of the trumpet from the great overhanging tower, a double note at once thin and musical, that reported no enemy in sight in the sky and all well. From far away, at the gate in the wall, came the reply of the distant watchman's horn softened by distance.

"All well here also," it said.

Following the trumpets the soft-toned chimes of the church rang out a hymn that has chimed from the old tower every hour for generations, extolling and praising the Man of Peace.

The ambulances had finished their work. The dead lay with folded hands, surrounded by candles, the lights of faith. And under the fading moon the old city rested and watched.

‘Night in the Trenches’⁵

When I had been thawed out they took me into the trenches. Because of the inundation directly in front, they are rather shallow, and at this point were built against the railroad embankment with earth, boards, and here and there a steel rail from the track. Some of them were covered, too, but not with bombproof material. The tops were merely shelters from the rain and biting wind.

The men lay or sat in them—it was impossible to stand. Some of them were like tiny houses into which the men crawled from the rear, and by placing a board, which served as a door, managed to keep out at least a part of the bitter wind.

In the first trench I was presented to a bearded major. He was lying flat and apologised for not being able to rise. There was a machine gun beside him. He told me with some pride that it was an American gun, and that it never jammed. When a machine gun jams the man in charge of it dies and his comrades die, and things happen with great rapidity. On the other side of him was a cat, curled up and sound asleep. There was a telephone instrument there. It was necessary to step over the wire that was stretched along the ground.

All night long he lies there with his gun, watching for the first movement in the trenches across. For here, at the House of the Barrier, has taken place some of the most furious fighting of this part of the line.

In the next division of the trench were three men. They were cleaning and oiling their rifles round a candle.

The surprise of all of these men at seeing a woman was almost absurd. Word went down the trenches that a woman was visiting. Heads popped out and cautious comments were made. It was concluded that I was visiting royalty, but the excitement died when it was discovered that I was not the Queen. Now and then, when a trench looked clean and dry, I was invited in. It was necessary to get down and crawl in on hands and knees.

Here was a man warming his hands over a tiny fire kindled in a tin pail. He had bored holes in the bottom of the pail for air, and was shielding the glow carefully with his overcoat.

Many people have written about the trenches—the mud, the odours, the inhumanity of compelling men to live under such foul conditions. Nothing that they have said can be too strong. Under the best conditions the life is ghastly, horrible, impossible.

That night, when from a semi-shielded position I could look across to the German line, the contrast between the condition of the men in the trenches and the beauty of the scenery was appalling. In each direction, as far as one could see, lay a gleaming lagoon of water. The moon made a silver path across it, and here and there on its borders were broken and twisted winter trees.

"It is beautiful," said Captain F——, beside me, in a low voice. "But it is full of the dead. They are taken out whenever it is possible; but it is not often possible."

"And when there is an attack the attacking side must go through the water?"

"Not always, but in many places."

"What will happen if it freezes over?"

He explained that it was salt water, and would not freeze easily. And the cold of that part of the country is not the cold of America in the same latitude. It is not a cold of low temperature; it is a damp, penetrating cold that goes through garments of every weight and seems to chill the very blood in a man's body.

⁵ Originally published in *The Saturday Evening Post*; retrieved from *Kings, Queens and Pawns: An American Woman at the Front* (1915).

"How deep is the water?" I asked.

"It varies—from two to eight feet. Here it is shallow."

"I should think they would come over."

"The water is full of barbed wire," he said grimly. "And some, a great many, have tried—and failed."

As of the trenches, many have written of the stench of this war. But the odour of that beautiful lagoon was horrible. I do not care to emphasize it. It is one of the things best forgotten. But any lingering belief I may have had in the grandeur and glory of war died that night beside that silver lake—died of an odour, and will never live again.

And now came a discussion.

The road crossing the railroad embankment turned sharply to the left and proceeded in front of the trenches. There was no shelter on that side of the embankment. The inundation bordered the road, and just beyond the inundation were the German trenches.

There were no trees, no shrubbery, no houses; just a flat road, paved with Belgian blocks, that gleamed in the moonlight.

At last the decision was made. We would go along the road, provided I realised from the first that it was dangerous. One or two could walk there with a good chance for safety, but not more. The little group had been augmented. It must break up; two might walk together, and then two a safe distance behind. Four would certainly be fired on.

I wanted to go. It was not a matter of courage. I had simply, parrot-fashion, mimicked the attitude of mind of the officers. One after another I had seen men go into danger with a shrug of the shoulders.

"If it comes it comes!" they said, and went on. So I, too, had become a fatalist. If I was to be shot it would happen, if I had to buy a rifle and try to clean it myself to fulfil my destiny.

So they let me go. I went farther than they expected, as it turned out. There was a great deal of indignation and relief when it was over. But that is later on.

A very tall Belgian officer took me in charge. It was necessary to work through a barbed-wire barricade, twisting and turning through its mazes. The moonlight helped. It was at once a comfort and an anxiety, for it seemed to me that my khaki-coloured suit gleamed in it. The Belgian officers in their dark blue were less conspicuous. I thought they had an unfair advantage of me, and that it was idiotic of the British to wear and advocate anything so absurd as khaki. My cape ballooned like a sail in the wind. I felt at least double my ordinary size, and that even a sniper with a squint could hardly miss me. And, by way of comfort, I had one last instruction before I started:

"If a *fusée* goes up, stand perfectly still. If you move they will fire."

The entire safety of the excursion depended on a sort of tacit agreement that, in part at least, obtains as to sentries.

This is a new warfare, one of artillery, supported by infantry in trenches. And it has been necessary to make new laws for it. One of the most curious is a sort of *modus vivendi* by which each side protects its own sentries by leaving the enemy's sentries unmolested so long as there is no active fighting. They are always in plain view before the trenches. In case of a charge they are the first to be shot, of course. But long nights and days have gone by along certain parts of the front where the hostile trenches are close together, and the sentries, keeping their monotonous lookout, have been undisturbed.

No doubt by this time the situation has changed to a certain extent; there has been more active fighting, larger bodies of men are involved. The spring floods south of the inundation will have dried up. No Man's Land will have ceased to be a swamp and the deadlock may be broken.

But on that February night I put my faith in this agreement, and it held.

The tall Belgian officer asked me if I was frightened. I said I was not. This was not exactly the truth; but it was no time for the truth.

"They are not shooting," I said. "It looks perfectly safe."

He shrugged his shoulders and glanced toward the German trenches.

"They have been sleeping during the rain," he said briefly. "But when one of them wakes up, look out!"

After that there was little conversation, and what there was was in whispers.

As we proceeded the stench from the beautiful moonlit water grew overpowering. The officer told me the reason.

A little farther along a path of fascines had been built out over the inundation to an outpost halfway to the German trenches. The building of this narrow roadway had cost many lives.

Half a mile along the road we were sharply challenged by a sentry. When he had received the password he stood back and let us pass. Alone, in that bleak and exposed position in front of the trenches, always in full view as he paced back and forward, carbine on shoulder, with not even a tree trunk or a hedge for shelter, the first to go at the whim of some German sniper or at any indication of an attack, he was a pathetic, almost a tragic, figure. He looked very young too. I stopped and asked him in a whisper how old he was.

He said he was nineteen!

He may have been. I know something about boys, and I think he was seventeen at the most. There are plenty of boys of that age doing just what that lad was doing.

Afterward I learned that it was no part of the original plan to take a woman over the fascine path to the outpost; that Captain F—— ground his teeth in impotent rage when he saw where I was being taken. But it was not possible to call or even to come up to us. So, blithely and unconsciously the tall Belgian officer and I turned to the right, and I was innocently on my way to the German trenches.

After a little I realised that this was rather more war than I had expected. The fascines were slippery; the path only four or five feet wide. On each side was the water, hideous with many secrets.

I stopped, a third of the way out, and looked back. It looked about as dangerous in one direction as another. So we went on. Once I slipped and fell. And now, looming out of the moonlight, I could see the outpost which was the object of our visit.

I have always been grateful to that Belgian lieutenant for his mistake. Just how grateful I might have been had anything untoward happened, I cannot say. But the excursion was worth all the risk, and more.

On a bit of high ground stands what was once the tiny hamlet of Oudstuyvenskerke—the ruins of two small white houses and the tower of the destroyed church—hardly a tower any more, for only three sides of it are standing and they are riddled with great shell holes.

Six hundred feet beyond this tower were the German trenches. The little island was hardly a hundred feet in its greatest dimension.

I wish I could make those people who think that war is good for a country see that Belgian outpost as I saw it that night under the moonlight. Perhaps we were under suspicion; I do not know. Suddenly the *fusées*, which had ceased for a time, began again, and with their white light added to that of the moon the desolate picture of that tiny island was a picture of the war. There was nothing lacking. There was the beauty of the moonlit waters, there was the tragedy of the destroyed houses and the church, and there was the horror of unburied bodies.

There was heroism, too, of the kind that will make Belgium live in history. For in the top of that church tower for months a Capuchin monk has held his position alone and

unrelieved. He has a telephone, and he gains access to his position in the tower by means of a rope ladder which he draws up after him.

Furious fighting has taken place again and again round the base of the tower. The German shells assail it constantly. But when I left Belgium the Capuchin monk, who has become a soldier, was still on duty; still telephoning the ranges of the gun; still notifying headquarters of German preparations for a charge.

Some day the church tower will fall and he will go with it, or it will be captured; one or the other is inevitable. Perhaps it has already happened; for not long ago I saw in the newspapers that furious fighting was taking place at this very spot.

He came down and I talked to him—a little man, regarding his situation as quite ordinary, and looking quaintly unpriestlike in his uniform of a Belgian officer with its tasselled cap. Some day a great story will be written of these priests of Belgium who have left their churches to fight.

We spoke in whispers. There was after all very little to say. It would have embarrassed him horribly had any one told him that he was a heroic figure. And the ordinary small talk is not currency in such a situation.

We shook hands and I think I wished him luck. Then he went back again to the long hours and days of waiting.

I passed under his telephone wires. Some day he will telephone that a charge is coming. He will give all the particulars calmly, concisely. Then the message will break off abruptly. He will have sent his last warning. For that is the way these men at the advance posts die.

As we started again I was no longer frightened. Something of his courage had communicated itself to me, his courage and his philosophy, perhaps his faith.

The priest had become a soldier; but he was still a priest in his heart. For he had buried the German dead in one great grave before the church, and over them had put the cross of his belief.

It was rather absurd on the way back over the path of death to be escorted by a cat. It led the way over the fascines, treading daintily and cautiously. Perhaps one of the destroyed houses at the outpost had been its home, and with a cat's fondness for places it remained there, though everything it knew had gone; though battle and sudden death had usurped the place of its peaceful fireside, though that very fireside was become a heap of stone and plaster, open to winds and rain.

Again and again in destroyed towns I have seen these forlorn cats stalking about, trying vainly to adjust themselves to new conditions, cold and hungry and homeless.

We were challenged repeatedly on the way back. Coming from the direction we did we were open to suspicion. It was necessary each time to halt some forty feet from the sentry, who stood with his rifle pointed at us. Then the officer advanced with the word.

Back again, then, along the road, past the youthful sentry, past other sentries, winding through the barbed-wire barricade, and at last, quite whole, to the House of the Barrier again. We had walked three miles in front of the Belgian advanced trenches, in full view of the Germans. There had been no protecting hedge or bank or tree between us and that ominous line two hundred yards across. And nothing whatever had happened.

Captain F—— was indignant. The officers in the House of the Barrier held up their hands. For men such a risk was legitimate, necessary. In a woman it was foolhardy. Nevertheless, now that it was safely over, they were keenly interested and rather amused. But I have learned that the gallant captain and the officer with him had arranged, in case shooting began, to jump into the water, and by splashing about draw the fire in their direction!

We went back to the automobile, a long walk over the shell-eaten roads in the teeth of a biting wind. But a glow of exultation kept me warm. I had been to the front. I had been far beyond the front, indeed, and I had seen such a picture of war and its desolation there in the centre of No Man's Land as perhaps no one not connected with an army had seen before; such a picture as would live in my mind forever.

I visited other advanced trenches that night as we followed the Belgian lines slowly northward toward Nieuport.

Save the varying conditions of discomfort, they were all similar. Always they were behind the railroad embankment. Always they were dirty and cold. Frequently they were full of mud and water. To reach them one waded through swamps and pools. Just beyond them there was always the moonlit stretch of water, now narrow, now wide.

I was to see other trenches later on, French and English. But only along the inundation was there that curious combination of beauty and hideousness, of rippling water with the moonlight across it in a silver path, and in that water things that had been men.

In one place a cow and a pig were standing on ground a little bit raised. They had been there for weeks between the two armies. Neither side would shoot them, in the hope of some time obtaining them for food.

They looked peaceful, rather absurd.

Now so near that one felt like whispering, and now a quarter of a mile away, were the German trenches. We moved under their *fusées*, passing destroyed towns where shell holes have become vast graves.

One such town was most impressive. It had been a very beautiful town, rather larger than the others. At the foot of the main street ran the railroad embankment and the line of trenches. There was not a house left.

It had been, but a day or two before, the scene of a street fight, when the Germans, swarming across the inundation, had captured the trenches at the railroad and got into the town itself.

At the intersection of two streets, in a shell hole, twenty bodies had been thrown for burial. But that was not novel or new. Shell-hole graves and destroyed houses were nothing. The thing I shall never forget is the cemetery round the great church.

Continental cemeteries are always crowded. They are old, and graves almost touch one another. The crosses which mark them stand like rows of men in close formation.

This cemetery had been shelled. There was not a cross in place; they lay flung about in every grotesque position. The quiet God's Acre had become a hell. Graves were uncovered; the dust of centuries exposed. In one the cross had been lifted up by an explosion and had settled back again upside down, so that the Christ was inverted.

It was curious to stand in that chaos of destruction, that ribald havoc, that desecration of all we think of as sacred, and see, stretched from one broken tombstone to another, the telephone wires that connect the trenches at the foot of the street with headquarters and with the "château."

Ninety-six German soldiers had been buried in one shell hole in that cemetery. Close beside it there was another, a great gaping wound in the earth, half full of water from the evening's rain.

An officer beside me looked down into it.

"See," he said, "they dig their own graves!"

It was almost morning. The automobile left the pathetic ruin of the town and turned back toward the "château." There was no talking; a sort of heaviness of spirit lay on us all. The officers were seeing again the destruction of their country through my shocked eyes. We were tired and cold, and I was heartsick.

A long drive through the dawn, and then the "château."

The officers were still up, waiting. They had prepared, against our arrival, sandwiches and hot drinks.

The American typewriters in the next room clicked and rattled. At the telephone board messages were coming in from the very places we had just left—from the instrument at the major's elbow as he lay in his trench beside the House of the Barrier; from the priest who had left his cell and become a soldier; from that desecrated and ruined graveyard with its gaping shell holes that waited, open-mouthed, for—what?

When we had eaten, Captain F—— rose and made a little speech. It was simply done, in the words of a soldier and a patriot speaking out of a full heart.

"You have seen to-night a part of what is happening to our country," he said. "You have seen what the invading hosts of Germany have made us suffer. But you have seen more than that. You have seen that the Belgian Army still exists; that it is still fighting and will continue to fight. The men in those trenches fought at Liège, at Louvain, at Antwerp, at the Yser. They will fight as long as there is a drop of Belgian blood to shed.

"Beyond the enemy's trenches lies our country, devastated; our national life destroyed; our people under the iron heel of Germany. But Belgium lives. Tell America, tell the world, that destroyed, injured as she is, Belgium lives and will rise again, greater than before!"

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For be it known unto you that the gods who preside over the destinies of Women and War have decided that these two shall not meet . . . great generals brushed me away as though I were an impertinent fly.

—KATHLEEN BLAKE COLEMAN,
Toronto Mail and Empire, June 20, 1898

In the opening days of World War I, London-based journalist Mary Boyle O'Reilly hurried to Belgium and delivered some of the earliest reporting on the German invasion. The *Saturday Evening Post*, the largest-circulation magazine in the United States, rushed two women, Corra Harris and Mary Roberts Rinehart, to the war zone. Harris highlighted the surprisingly large role women played in the war, and Rinehart became the first journalist to visit the frontline trenches. Throughout the four years of the conflict, dozens of other American women followed in their footsteps. They battled official restrictions and entrenched prejudice to gain access to the news and in the process helped to redefine how wars were reported.

The very idea of a female war correspondent required a mental adjustment to the way one thought about war reporting, women journalists, and indeed women. Reporting war had traditionally been the province of only the most adventurous of male correspondents. Women were still novelties on most American newspapers, often relegated to writing about society, fashion, and

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domestic topics for the Women's Page. In the decades straddling the start of the twentieth century, they had begun to report on the broader topics of suffrage, crime, and social ills, sometimes as undercover "stunt girls" or muckrakers.

When a few newspapers and magazines thought that it would be a good idea to send women to cover the war in Europe, it was with the notion that they would provide a woman's perspective on things. They would not cover the fighting war or such serious topics as politics or economics but rather would give their impressions of life on the home front. They would capture the "little stories," the human interest element.

More so than their male counterparts, women war correspondents defined the Great War in terms of its impact on individual lives. But they also covered the war in the more traditional, war correspondent role. Women reported from all the belligerent countries, from the trenches and frontline hospitals. They traveled on official war tours, took assignments in the most difficult and dangerous locales, repeatedly crossed the U-boat-infested Atlantic, mingled with revolutionary fighters in Russia, interviewed generals, and smuggled forbidden writings out of warring countries. They came under aerial bombing attacks, sniper fire, and artillery shelling; were wounded and held prisoner; got lice infestations; suffered from influenza and pneumonia; and were arrested as spies. In other words, they embraced the role and endured everything it was the misfortune of war correspondents to suffer.

Their assignment to cover the "woman's angle" proved to be one of the most impactful stories of the war. In the early months of the conflict, the *Saturday Evening Post's* Corra Harris redefined the image of women in the war, from passive victims to fully engaged participants, with their own burdens and heroic sacrifice. In a time so focused on women's suffrage and the expanding public role for women, American publications, especially women's magazines, found inspiration in the experience of women in the warring countries.

2nd Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School

By the time Mabel Potter Daggett traveled to warring Europe in

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1916, for the women's magazine *Pictorial Review*, she discovered a revolution in women's empowerment. Before the war women had been forced to push their way into virtually every business, industry, and profession; now they were actively invited in, to replace the men sent to fight. An army of women worked in the munitions factories, on the farms, and in war charities. For the first time many universities graduated women in the sciences and engineering. Professional societies and trade unions accepted their first women members. In the war zone women drove ambulances and staffed hospitals as nurses, orderlies, and physicians.

If readers failed to grasp the seismic implications of women's role in the war, Daggett spelled it out: "Nothing that anybody ever said about women before August, 1914 . . . goes to-day. . . . Everything they said she wasn't and she couldn't and she didn't, she now is and she can and she does." Daggett and other women journalists from the neutral United States brought these profound changes to public attention.

The focus of war reporting took a major shift when the United States entered the war in April 1917. American readers wanted most to know everything about their boys. How did they get on with their allies? What was their life like in the training camps? How did they fare in combat? The American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) credentialed a very limited number of journalists to be attached to the army. Mostly from the large urban newspapers and the syndicated news organizations, they donned the uniform of officers and got privileged access to AEF activities. None of them were women. Likewise, civil and military authorities in England and France were often reluctant to assist women correspondents, especially those from smaller-circulation newspapers and women's magazines. Did the French military really need to waste time escorting to the front lines a writer from *Good Housekeeping* magazine?

In the face of such roadblocks, women journalists adopted a strategy that gained them access to the troops and to frontline locations rich in news stories—they volunteered with aid organizations. Charitable organizations such as the Red Cross, YMCA,

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and Salvation Army conducted extensive activities to support U.S. troops. Working as a volunteer Red Cross nurse gave journalist Elizabeth Frazer access to hospitals near the front. When military police stopped even the AEF-credentialed reporters from reaching the battle line, they waved through the YMCA canteen unit, with reporter Elizabeth Radford Warren, taking food to men in the trenches. The stratagem proved so effective that the majority of women war correspondents employed it at some point.

At this stage of the war, women journalists offered a distinctive tone in their reporting, in part because soldiers responded differently to women reporters, more readily sharing their thoughts and emotions. Then, too, women often placed themselves in supportive, nurturing positions that were more conducive to personal disclosures. They translated menus for doughboys in Paris cafés. They rode with them in ambulances and nursed them in hospitals. They helped wounded soldiers write letters to mothers and sweethearts. They served hot chocolate in the trenches. Reporter Rheta Childe Dorr had a son serving in the AEF. In a series of syndicated newspaper articles titled "A Soldier's Mother in France," she offered herself as a mother reporting for other mothers about the things that most concerned them. This intimate connection with the experience of the soldiers is a vein of reporting largely missing from the work of male correspondents.

From the opening days of the Great War through the post-armistice chaos, women journalists carved out a distinctive role for themselves. By insisting on adding their voices to the story of the war, they put a feminine stamp on what had always been seen as the masculine pursuit of war correspondence. This book collects the stories of these courageous and determined women to preserve their important contribution to our record of World War I and their role in challenging the restrictions against women in journalism. It is dedicated to their memory.



'Without methods': three female authors visiting the Western Front

Sara Prieto

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‘Without methods’: three female authors visiting the Western Front

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This essay focuses on May Sinclair’s *A Journal of Impressions of Belgium* (1915, London: MacMillan), Mary Roberts Rinehart’s *Kings, Queens and Pawns: An American Woman at the Front* (1915, New York: George Doran Company) and Edith Wharton’s *Fighting France: From Dunkerque to Belfort* (2010, London: Hesperus Press Limited), and examines how these writers reflected and negotiated in their writing their status as eyewitnesses to the First World War. In a male-dominated world, the presence of women writers at the front was unusual. These three authors wrote about their condition as ‘other’ in a world that had been traditionally secluded for them, and had to negotiate the strategies they would resort in order to portray the conflict.

Keywords: eyewitness accounts; literary journalism; war reportage; May Sinclair; Edith Wharton; Mary R. Rinehart, First World War literature

In the early months of the Great War, numerous journalists and writers visited the Western Front and the surrounding areas to later on publish their eyewitness accounts on the conflict. This period was marked by a fierce censorship that forced journalists to compete with each other to get scoops on life in the war zone. Among the travellers who visited the Western Front in 1914 and 1915, we can find men and women of different and varied backgrounds: free-lance and adventurous young men from neutral nations, British men of letters too old to fight but still willing to contribute to the war effort, well-known American correspondents who had achieved the status of celebrities in previous conflicts, and daring women who, challenging the conventions of the period, embarked on an individual adventure and broke into traditionally forbidden territories for them.

Although the presence of women writers at the front was unusual, several women authors managed to access the ‘forbidden zone’ to later publish their war reports in well-known publications of the period. Traditional criticism on First World War literature has focused on the texts produced by male writers, particularly on the literature created by those who fought in the conflict. This perspective has been attributed to the fact that women’s writing was ‘inevitably less significant as an expression of the experience of war since only men had actually fought.’¹ This argument has been constantly challenged since Sandra Gilbert published in 1983, ‘Soldier’s Heart: Literary Men, Literary Women and the Great War.’ Several studies that followed Gilbert’s essay have given considerable evidence that women – both at the Home Front and out of their experiences near the firing line – also wrote widely on the war.²

These studies have mainly focused on women’s fictional responses to the war. Yet, several women journalists or well-known literary writers wrote first-hand accounts from

the war zone. These have been rendered rather invisible, not only in literary criticism but also in studies related to journalism during the First World War. The studies on war journalism such as Philip Knightley's influential *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to Vietnam, the War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist and Myth Maker* (1975) and Mary Mander's *Pen and Sword: American War Correspondents 1898–1975* (2010) have focused on the history of war male correspondents, overlooking women's accounts. Similarly, those studies exclusively devoted to the journalism produced during the First World War, such as Emmet Crozier's *American Reporters on the Western Front* (1959) or Martin Farrar's *News from the Front: War Correspondents on the Western Front 1914–18* (1998), have likewise ignored women's contributions to this field.

Those women who became direct witnesses of the war moved beyond a purely propagandistic perspective and their presence in the territories of war gave them literary legitimacy and a valid point of observation that is worth considering. During their time in the war zone, women were aware of the exceptionality of their presence in a quintessentially male space. Some men – war reporters who might have felt disturbed by the presence of women in a historical 'male' preserve – questioned and often ridiculed the women they encountered. The American war correspondent Alexander Powell was one of them. In the first chapter of his book *Fighting in Flanders* (1914), he was highly critical, even disdainful, towards the role of the woman reporter. Among the different correspondents that he encountered, he describes 'a young and slender and very beautiful English girl whose name, as a novelist and playwright, is known on both sides of the Atlantic.'³ Powell's focus is on the physical attributes of the woman correspondent, highlighting her most lady-like attributes: her youth, her figure and her beauty. Furthermore, instead of showing amazement at her presence, his tone adopts a patronizing and mocking attitude:

She had arrived in Belgium wearing a London tailor's idea of what constituted a suitable costume for a war correspondent . . . She explained that she brought the sleeping-bag because she understood that war correspondents always slept in the field. As most of the fields in that part of Flanders were just then under several inches of water as a result of the autumn rains, a folding canoe would have been more useful.⁴

Powell observed F. Tennyson Jesse's inadequate war correspondent kit, giving evidence of one of the difficulties that these pioneer women had to face: they did not know how to properly dress in the war zones.⁵

Women travelling to the war zone and writing about their experiences were forced to cope not only with psychological and artistic limitations of having to encroach upon a rhetorical territory that has historically been a male preserve; finding an appropriate form of expression would become a challenging task. As Dorothy Goldman, Judith Hattaway and Jane Gledhill have explained in *Women Writers and the Great War* (1995), women's war experience was 'novel, challenging, and more varied than that of men. Without methods, they often did not know the appropriate response to their new circumstance.'⁶ In this article, I will explore how three of these women authors wrote about their condition as 'other' in a world that had been traditionally out of bounds for them. I will examine May Sinclair's *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium* (1915), Mary Roberts Rinehart's *Kings, Queens and Pawns: An American Woman at the Front* (1931 [1948]) and Edith Wharton's *Fighting France: From Dunkerque to Belfort* (1915), showing how these writers reflected and negotiated in their writing their status as eyewitnesses of the war and looking at some of the means they resorted to in order to portray this exceptional experience.

The importance of being an eyewitness

In order to understand the presence and attitudes of these women in the territories of war one must consider how journalism perceived exceptional reports written by women in the period. By the second half of the nineteenth-century newspapers started to become less politically and started to focus on striking or exceptional events.⁷ People were interested in what is known today as ‘human interest stories . . . amusing, moving, or unusual episodes, incidents or experiences in ordinary people’s lives.’⁸ This reorientation of priorities greatly facilitated women’s entrance into the field of journalism: if an astonishing feat caused sensation when performed by a man, it was twice as interesting to the public when the same deed was carried out by a woman.

Sinclair, Wharton and Rinehart benefited from this interest in women’s adventure stories. The three were among the few civilian women who entered the war zone without being involved in nursing duties, but they became eyewitnesses of the war for dissimilar reasons. The American writer Edith Wharton (1862–1937) supported the Allied cause from the very beginning. Wharton, a well-known figure celebrated on both sides of the Atlantic when the war broke out, had established her permanent residence in France in 1907, and when the war started she made the French cause her own. Alan Price summarizes in ‘Wharton Mobilizes Artists to Aid the War Homeless’ (2003) Wharton’s attitude towards the conflict:

No other artist did so much to alleviate the suffering among the refugees from Belgium and the occupied provinces of northern France or was able to enlist such a variety of fellow artists in such a broad range of projects to raise money for the war homeless.⁹

Wharton created an American committee in France to raise funds to help the Belgian refugees and she also founded the ‘Edith Wharton Committees’ in the USA that organized fund-raising campaigns to subsidize her major war charities. These charities would provide food, employment, medical attention and classes for children in France. By the end of 1914, she had raised nearly 100 dollars; and by the end of the first year of the war, her American hostels had assisted more than 9000 refugees, served 23,500 meals, given nearly 5000 garments and provided medical attention to 8000 people.¹⁰

Wharton considered her war writing as a tool in the service of the Allied cause. Hermione Lee has remarked that ‘she decided from the start that her war writing (poetry and fiction included) should become part of her war-work.’¹¹ In early 1915, the French Red Cross asked Wharton to ‘report on the needs of some military hospitals near the front.’¹² Sponsored by this institution and helped by her influential connections in the French government, she became one of the very few foreigners to be allowed into ‘the forbidden zone’, an exceptional circumstance that Wharton used to inform her American readers of the desperate condition of hospitals and second-line ambulances near the battlefield. She then suggested the French diplomat Jules Cambon and her own American editor, Charles Scribner, ‘to make other trips to the front, and recount [her] experiences in a series of magazine articles.’¹³ Edith Wharton, who had always been a passionate traveller, embarked on this adventure in February 1915. She toured the Western Front in her own car in five expensive trips between February and August. Out of this experience, she published four serialized articles for *Scribner’s Magazine*, similar to other travelogues she produced, such as *A Motor-flight through France* (1908) or *In Morocco* (1920). These articles, together with two additional essays, ‘The Look of Paris’ and ‘The Tone of France,’ would later be gathered into *Fighting France: From Dunkerque to Belfort*.

Her American compatriot, Mary Roberts Rinehart (1879–1958), was a well-known author in America during her time, primarily for her works of crime fiction such as

The Circular Staircase (1908). However, it was thanks to her war reports that she achieved the status of national celebrity. As opposed to Wharton, Rinehart did not get involved in the war as a consequence of her political or emotional implication; she was simply an American who wanted to take the opportunity to witness a unique event in world history. Rinehart was one of the major contributors to *The Saturday Evening Post*, a newspaper that sold around 2 million copies per week in 1913 and which had an audience of around 10 million readers.¹⁴ The author had been a curious woman with a developed sense of adventure since she was very young, and she often regretted not being able to see the things that were happening in the world.¹⁵ For this reason, when the conflict in Europe broke out, she knew from the very beginning that she ‘wanted to go to the war.’¹⁶

Rinehart spent some time trying to convince her editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*, George Lorimer, to send her to Europe. Although reluctant at first, he soon realized the potential interest that the unusual story of an American woman at the front would have for American readers.¹⁷ Rinehart was not the first woman that Lorimer had sent to cover the conflict: at the end of 1914 he had asked Corra Harris to spend a few weeks in London covering the war from a woman’s perspective. Harris also went to France and tried to visit Soissons, ‘within the range of the enemy cannon,’¹⁸ but did not succeed in her attempt. Rinehart, on her part, convinced Lorimer that she would succeed in entering the theatres of war and, after promising him that her reports would be exclusively written for the *Post*, finally left for Europe in January 1915, on board the *Arabic*, which was ‘later sunk by a German submarine.’¹⁹ The American journalist was therefore aware that she ‘had to put herself in a position to accomplish things women had not previously accomplished.’²⁰ Her trip aroused the interest of the American press, with photographers gathered around her house in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, on the day of her departure.

A few months before Rinehart’s trip to Europe, May Sinclair (1863–1946) visited Belgium as a member of an ambulance unit. Sinclair was one of the most well-known British women writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. She had published a number of successful novels, as well as essays on avant-garde poetry, philosophical works based on German idealism, poetry, political pamphlets, translation and journalism. She was also notable for her involvement in the suffragist campaign as a member of the Woman’s Freedom League, and was an enthusiastic supporter of the war, as shown in her signing of the Author’s Manifesto in September 1914.²¹

In September 1914, she crossed the English Channel with the Flying Ambulance Corps. A middle-aged woman writer, with no medical or driving skills to offer, Sinclair was an unlikely presence in an ambulance unit. But Dr Munro had invited her to join them on account of her fame as a writer and of her generous donations to the corps. Despite her feelings of apprehension lest she would not make any active contribution to the corps, Sinclair (aged 51) saw the war ‘as her last chance for adventure.’²² Sinclair spent two weeks and a half in Belgium acting as a sort of secretary and reporter for the unit. Her main role was to write reports for the press which might help raise funds for the corps and support the war effort in Britain and other countries. But her ‘adventure’ in the war zone would not last long. After some painful attempts on her part to be rendered useful, she was requested to return to Britain. Her exclusion shocked and humiliated her, and in *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium*, published almost a year after her trip to Belgium, she revisited her disheartening experience with Munro’s Ambulance Corps.

According to Suzanne Raitt, Sinclair felt that ‘the war had irreparably altered both her own consciousness and the world in which she lived.’²³ Despite this transformation, Sinclair’s strong support of the British cause continued throughout the whole conflict. In addition to her literary work, Sinclair was also a journalist. Her journalism was set in

the war zone or in which the conflict is part of the plot. Her commitment to the war effort would also make her reject pacifism. In 1917 she told the Irish poet Katharine Hinkson that she had remained a war supporter because, in her own words, pacifism was ‘the worst conceivable treachery to the men who’ve fought & died since 1914 & to their wives & mothers & children.’²⁴

The authors were well aware of the appeal that their presence in the theatre of war would have for newspaper readers back home. Prior to the beginning of her French war experience, Wharton had highlighted to her editor at *Scribner’s Magazine* that she was going to visit areas that no other civilians had been permitted to visit,²⁵ and she does not ever let the reader lose sight of this fact. On her first expedition to the front she inspected a number of makeshift hospitals in and around Verdun, from where the civilian population had been evacuated. In *Fighting France* she explains that the object of her journey was to get to some of the ‘second-line ambulances beyond the town,’ and she is quick to point out that there were no women nurses in any of these dressing stations.²⁶ Thus, Wharton stresses the significance of her presence there.

In May 1915, Wharton was offered a unique opportunity to visit the trenches and observation posts in Lorraine and the Vosges. While she was touring the battlefields near Nancy, the author found herself one morning ‘launched into the unknown’ (57). After a long ride into the wooded hills the author arrived at a ‘black village’ (58), one of the camps to which the soldiers retired to rest after completing their shifts in the frontline trenches. The soldiers gathered around her car and they are surprised and pleased to see her there, ‘for few visitors climb to this point’ (ibid.). The soldiers’ ‘pleasure at the sight of new faces was presently expressed in a large “Vive l’Amerique!”’ (ibid.). Her reference to the soldiers’ pleasant faces, added to the manner in which she claims they looked at her, obliquely hints at the unusualness of her presence at this remote point.

Mary Roberts Rinehart also follows a similar strategy. In *Kings, Queens and Pawns*, she highlights the implications of her presence in the war territories. The title is already an indication of how the author advertises the singularity of the account that follows. She acknowledges being the only woman in the war zone on many occasions in her narrative. Although she includes a chapter called ‘The Women at the Front,’ references to other women are scarce. Rinehart starts her story by describing the journey that took her from England to France. At this early point in her story, she already announces that ‘there were no other women on board’ (8). She writes that she was surrounded by officers of the British Army and some Indian soldiers, but not a single female figure appears on the scene. She singles herself as the other, the exotic element among a crowd of men.

On another occasion, this time in Dunkirk, during one of her first real contacts with the war, she describes another situation in which she stands out as the only woman. While she was having dinner with some officers, an unexpected night raid took place and the author was about to lose her nerves. But in spite of her rising panic, Rinehart determined to stay in her place. As she explains in her narrative,

I wanted to go to the cellar or to crawl into the office safe. But I felt that, as the only woman and as the only American about, I held the reputation of America and of my sex in my hands. (52)

Indeed, she was the only woman and the only American at the scene and she felt that she needed to come out of this ordeal with her self-esteem intact. The author uses the night raid as yet another opportunity to stress the singularity of her presence in the war zone. She seems to be the only American and the only woman to witness the recorded event. Further on, in Chapter X, Rinehart parallels Wharton when she is about to penetrate the Belgian lines around L²⁷; she makes clear that she ‘was the only woman who had been so near the

women finally convinced an Army Medical Officer to allow them to go in and assist the wounded, Sinclair included. However, when the British author attempted to get in the ambulance she was violently pushed out of the ambulance by Knocker, who Sinclair recalls saying to her: ‘You can’t come. You’ll take the place of a wounded man’ (214). From Knocker’s point of view, being no nurse, Sinclair’s presence in the field made no sense.

The humiliated British writer defines this event as ‘the most revolting thing that had happened to me in a life filled with incidents that I have no desire to repeat’ (ibid.). Her initial emotion and her gratitude towards that Belgian Medical Officer suddenly vanish after being shamefully deprived of the opportunity of going in the ambulance that would rescue the German soldiers. Three days after this episode, Sinclair was subtly excluded from the corps with the excuse that she had to go back to England to raise more funds for the ambulance unit. She did not manage to acquire the experiences she had expected to attain in the war zone and she felt that she had been incapable of proving her worth. On the contrary, being ‘so near the action and yet so useless turns her into a pathetic and pitiful figure.’³⁴ Sinclair turned into a frustrated visitor to the war zone who nourished a personal or patriotic desire to play a more active role in the conflict, and was incapable of doing so.

Negotiating with the visual experience

As I anticipated at the beginning of this essay, women who wrote about the war often lacked methods to describe their war experience. These women had crossed the threshold of their familiar world and had entered the ‘symbolic and spatial area of transition.’³⁵ Therefore, the assurance of having seen with one’s own eyes played a key role in the portrayal of their experience in that unknown world and also in their attempt to endow their texts with a stamp of authenticity.

Rinehart makes very frequent use of the words ‘I have seen’ in *Kings, Queens and Pawns*. The formula is repeated more than 20 times in the course of her narrative, and she always uses it in a distinctly martial context. Thus, she claims to have seen ‘British regiments at ease’ (106), ‘various artillery duels’ (116), the ‘flat and muddy battlefield’ (118) in which the men had fought during the Battle of Ypres, or ‘a number of anti-aircraft stations at the front’ (129) which, she insists, she has seen ‘in action’ (ibid.). Rinehart seeks rhetorically and visually to enter a territory that had traditionally been restricted to those who had experienced or witnessed actual combat. The author, in spite of being a non-combatant and a woman, is nonetheless able to *see* aspects of the Great War that the overwhelming majority of civilians – let alone women – would never get to see for themselves.

The importance of the women’s visual experience is also stressed by the members of the military that she encountered. One morning, after having visited the trenches in Belgium, Rinehart was having lunch with some of the combatants when Captain F.³⁶ asked her to inform America of what she had seen:

You have seen to-night a part of what is happening to our country . . . You have seen what the invading hosts of Germany have made us suffer. But you have seen more than that. You have seen that the Belgian Army still exists; that it is still fighting and will continue to fight . . . Tell America, tell the world, that destroyed, injured as she is, Belgium lives and will rise again, greater than before! (79)

The emphasis on the act of seeing brings out the fact that the author had been granted the opportunity of observing things that no other reporters had been allowed to see. She was

invited to explain her American audience what her eyes had seen. The Captain insists that she should take advantage of her unique position in order to promote the Belgian cause, presenting it as an invaded but still fighting and resisting nation. He begs her to inform the world about the things that she has witnessed and to denounce the Belgian plight. But he also wants her to paint a particular portrait of the Belgian people.

The three authors had nothing but their own individual experiences and their own literary resources to fall back on in their endeavour to write about the war. The trips the three female authors took to the war zone may be interpreted as a *bildungs* experience that triggered in them conflicting emotions. Edith Wharton and Mary Roberts Rinehart travelled through different war zones and give evidence in their narratives of the havoc that the conflict had wreaked among the civilian population: the ruined and deserted villages and towns, the empty convents or the depopulated landscapes. They also came across images of the wreckage left by the battles: the sinister fields covered with crosses, and the hospitals crowded with wounded and maimed combatants. However, the most significant fact is that the two women got a visual impression of the war in a way very few other civilians had done: both of them visited the first-line trenches, had the opportunity of getting a fleeting glimpse of the German enemy, and had the chance of experiencing the disturbing emotions produced by the labyrinths of the trenches. Both of them had to deal with the challenges of representing this war which Edith Wharton qualified as ‘the greatest of paradoxes’ (24).

In ‘War is the Greatest of Paradoxes: May Sinclair and Edith Wharton at the Front’ (2008), Geneviève Brassard reflects on the conflicting emotions that are depicted in *Fighting France*. She argues that the themes of Wharton’s text focus on the author’s ‘key perceptions such as horrors at the devastation wrought by war, and excitement at traveling to the front.’³⁷ Wharton’s overall perception, Brassard contends, ‘can be described as a view that finds war paradoxical in its uncanny juxtaposition of exhilaration and horror.’³⁸ This idea has also been discussed by Julie Olin-Ammentorp, who maintains that it is precisely in the juxtaposition between the ‘unremittingly realistic and horrible on the one hand, the reassuringly romantic, on the other’ where the central tension of *Fighting France* resides.³⁹ Wharton’s expressions of the horror of the war are particularly vivid in her descriptions of the destroyed towns she encountered everywhere on her journey. Teresa Gómez Reus and Peter Lauber have explored the manner in which the American author conveyed her impressions of the havoc that the war was causing through anthropomorphized images of ‘murdered houses’ and decapitated churches, which, according to these critics, are the true protagonists of her narrative.⁴⁰ In Gerbéviller, which had become ‘the martyr town’⁴¹ after the brief German occupation in August 1914, she was appalled by the sight of the ravaged houses and gardens, and she fell back on biblical images⁴² to do justice to the scene: ‘Her ruins seem to have been simultaneously vomited up from the depths and hurled down from the skies, as though she had perished in some monstrous clash of earthquake and tornado’.⁴³

However, besides Wharton’s descriptions of the destruction the war was causing in French architecture and ways of life, feelings of genuine excitement are also found in her narrative. On 15 August 1915, during her visit to the reconquered territories of Alsace, she acknowledges how being granted access to a corner of the front which had ‘hitherto been inaccessible, even to highly placed French officials,’ aroused in her ‘a special sense of excitement’ (87). During her first day at the trenches, on 17 May 1915, Wharton had the opportunity of catching a glimpse of the otherwise undetectable German enemy. At first the indiscernible opponent awoke in her an acute feeling of the uncanny. The American author felt

of the whole landscape with some hidden vitriol of hate' (62). This eerie sense of peril was relieved when she finally managed to catch sight of a dead German. Wharton was given the opportunity to look through a peephole and she 'at last' (ibid.) saw the hitherto invisible German enemy: 'It was almost a relief to find it was after all a tangible enemy hidden over there across the meadow' (ibid.). Seeing the dead body of the German opponent mitigated her uncanny sensations.

Wharton occasionally manifests in her text a feeling of bewilderment as a result of the disorientation she suffered in the war zone. William Merrill Decker has pointed out in 'Americans in Europe from Henry James to the Present' (2009) that for a traveller so familiar with the European continent, Wharton's visit to the front 'articulates moments of profound disorientation.'⁴⁴ On her first trip to Argonne, the author and her companion, Walter Berry, travelled on a route that 'lay exactly in the track of the August [1914] invasion'.⁴⁵ They found it impossible to find their way 'for the names and distances on the milestones have all been effaced, the sign-posts thrown down and the enamelled *plaques* on the houses at the entrance to the villages removed' (38). The author experienced a feeling of dislocation; despite the fact of being 'within sixty or seventy miles of Paris' (ibid.) there was no landmark that could help her guess at her whereabouts (ibid.). She tried to find her way by asking the soldiers they encountered, but the answer was always the same: 'We don't know – we don't belong here' (ibid.). Wharton thus experienced a strangely paradoxical sensation: she was only a few dozen miles east of the French metropolis, yet the war had completely turned this familiar land into an unfamiliar and mystifying region.

Of particular poignancy is the sense of dislocation she experienced in her descent to the trenches during her visit to Alsace in August 1915. Wharton was led through a dark and very narrow tunnel in almost 'pitch blackness' (99) and her response to this event mixes pure factual reporting and the author's subjective attitude towards this experience. Wharton initially sets the scene to situate her readers: 'The spot where we stood was raked on all sides by the enemy's lines and the nearest trenches were only a few yards away' (100) and thereupon brings in her sense of bewilderment within the maze of the trenches: 'But of all this nothing was really perceptible or comprehensible to me' (ibid.). When Wharton finally comes out of the trenches, she acknowledges that she 'only knew [she] had come out of a black labyrinth' but she does not 'understand where [they] were, or what it was all about' (ibid.). In contrast with many other war correspondents who reflected ruefully on their limited vision in areas surrounding the battlefield, Wharton was allowed to visit the frontline trenches. She therefore could experience the confusion and eerie tensions provoked by the severely restricted field of vision in a particularly dangerous spot. She entered the same zone as the combatants and experienced a similar uncanny dislocation as the one experienced by soldiers who, as Modris Eksteins has explained, easily became disoriented in the mazes of the trenches.⁴⁶ Wharton had triumphantly entered spaces which had traditionally been out of bounds to women (just as they were to most civilian men during the First World War) and her ambivalent response to these experiences gives evidence of the ambivalent, confusing and misleading sensations that her war journeys caused in her.

Mary Roberts Rinehart's response to her war experience in *Kings, Queens and Pawns* similarly results in the representation of war as a great paradox. Just like Wharton, Rinehart was granted access to the first-line trenches, and exultantly reflects on the exceptionality of her achievement. Rinehart's enthusiastic response, however, contrasts noticeably with the feelings of revulsion that accompany her observations of the horrific conditions of the front and the war was recorded

her visit to the Third Division Headquarters of the Belgian Army. Upon her arrival at the Belgian Headquarters, she acknowledges that although she had travelled a long distance 'to do the thing [she] was doing,' her 'enthusiasm for it had died' (101). At this point in her journey, Rinehart had already seen much of the destruction that the war had caused among the civilian population; she consequently could not continue writing in the same naïve and enthusiastic tone she had employed at the beginning of her trip. Notwithstanding this loss of enthusiasm, her narrative shows how the closer she got to the first firing line, the more she recovered her initial curiosity and sense of adventure. As they approached this zone, 'for quite ten minutes,' she claims, 'my heart raced madly' (110).

As Rinehart advances in the narrative towards the lines of fire, she welds together images of beauty and horror in her endeavour to depict the conditions under which the conflict was being fought out. She describes the magnesium flares the Germans were using to light up No Man's land bursting in the night sky as 'miraculously beautiful, silent and horrible' (107). Furthermore, when she finally reaches the first-line trenches and sees the conditions under which the Belgian soldiers are living, Rinehart introduces attributes that have since acquired canonical status in the writings about the First World War:

Many people have written about the trenches – the mud, the odours, the inhumanity of compelling men to live under such foul conditions. Nothing they have said can be too strong. Under the best conditions the life is ghastly, horrible, impossible [. . .]. The contrast between the condition of the men in the trenches and the beauty of the scenery was appalling. (123)

The idyllic picture of the inundated fields in the Yser valley she contemplated that night from a semi-shielded position stands in violent opposition to the excruciating conditions of life in the trenches, the unbearable odours, the mud, the damp and the coldness of the night. The beauty is turned into something 'appalling,' and Rinehart acknowledges that 'any lingering belief I may have had in the grandeur and glory of war died that night beside that silver lake – died of an odour, and will never live again' (124). Rinehart anticipates in this passage the loss of idealism that pervades the classical texts of the post-war period.

Despite all these excruciating episodes, Rinehart remained unfaltering in her quest to get as close to the lines of fire as they would allow her. The American journalist was granted permission to enter No Man's Land along an exposed passageway that jutted into the flooded land that separated the German and the Belgian armies. As a result of a misunderstanding, the author was taken to an outpost located halfway to the German trenches.⁴⁷ This event allowed her to go further and see more of the war than most civilians had done up to that point – and even 'rather more war' than she initially had expected (127). Her recollections of this episode once again contain a juxtaposition of clashing images: 'There was nothing lacking. There was the beauty of the moonlit waters, there was the tragedy of the destroyed houses and the church, and there was the horror of unburied bodies. [. . .] There was heroism, too' (128). The beautiful, the tragic, the horrific and the heroic coalesce in Rinehart's narrative to help her give shape to an experience that was very hard to take in, and even harder to transmit to others.

Nonetheless, Rinehart seems elated by her unexpected achievement. Although the author recalls being frightened, she considers that 'the excursion was worth all the risk, and more' (ibid.). Rinehart triumphantly came out of this cold night with a 'glow of exultation' (131): she had not only been in the first-line trenches, but she had also entered the forbidden – and highly dangerous – No Man's Land; she had seen and sensed the tragic human dimension of this war and, although the images of desolation had made her feel 'heartsick' (133), she felt that her trip had been worthwhile. Furthermore, the journalist felt that that night's experience had produced a profound change in her. Modris Eksteins reflects in *Rites*

of *Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (1989) how the frontline soldier was convinced that he had been transformed in a very fundamental way after experiencing battle.⁴⁸ Rinehart seems to feel that she had undergone an analogous transformation. On her way back to the headquarters, after such an eventful night, she describes how ‘the officers were seeing again the destruction of their own country through [her] shocked eyes’ (133). The author creates the impression in this concluding episode that her eyes reflected the experience she had undergone in a manner that only those who have been close to the perils of death in the first firing line – namely soldiers – could truly appreciate. Rinehart thus positions herself as an insider in the war experience, one of the few ‘elected’ people who had seen and therefore could understand the horrific dimensions of this inscrutable war.

Rinehart was not the only woman who was transformed by the war. Although the British author May Sinclair never underwent a transformation resulting from direct contact with the firing line, *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium* also reflects conflicting and life-changing emotions, but of a very different kind to those of Wharton and Rinehart. Marginalized, humiliated and unable to have her longed for war experience, May Sinclair was compelled to give a fresh orientation to her personal war narrative. Since *A Journal of Impressions* was published, Sinclair’s text has been considered a very unusual and unique form of war writing. In a review that appeared in *The North American Review* as early as November 1915, *A Journal of Impressions* is declared ‘the most genuine and vital piece of writing that has come from the war area.’⁴⁹ Its genuineness resides in the psychological, subjective and highly personal tone that Sinclair adopts in her narrative.⁵⁰

Sinclair was constantly kept well away from the line of fire, and was therefore unable to write factual reports on what actual combat looked like. The author constantly questions her own authorial position and even her role as a journalist reporting on life behind the lines, because, as she herself acknowledges, she was not ‘a journalist any more than she was a trained nurse’ (15). Consequently, she turned to expressing her inner psyche⁵¹ and to focus on the ‘psychology of war.’⁵² This was not new to Sinclair, who before the war had already been experimenting with modernist techniques of narration concerned with the inner lives of her characters before the war.⁵³ The title of her book, *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium*, is self-explanatory, but in case there was any doubt she makes it perfectly clear in the opening lines of her introduction to the book: ‘This is a “Journal of Impressions,” and it is nothing more’ (i). According to Geneviève Brassard the whole introductory passage ‘suggests not only the self-deprecation of a woman who felt out of place yet irresistibly drawn to the theatre of war, but also the personal and subjective nature of the text’.⁵⁴

Sinclair’s shift away from events in the combat zone and towards the psychological effects that her very limited war experience was having upon herself has led Samuel Hynes to classify the text as a pioneer of the literature of war writing. You can observe in it many formal features found, later on, in the literature of combatants:

The first is its prose style, which is bare, direct, exact, and unmetaphorical. [...] The second is its structure, which is the formal expression of the same point: there is no order in war except chronology, event followed by event without evident reason. These are both points of exclusion; they will turn up again and again, as men try to describe the Battle of the Somme, or the 1918 retreat. It is interesting that the first writer to achieve that style and structure should have been a woman.⁵⁵

Evidently, Sinclair’s text portrays a different experience to that of other women writers, let alone of combatants. As opposed to the accounts written by Rinehart and Wharton, the content of *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium* was not empowering; this was not only due to Sinclair’s limited war experience but also to a consequence of the marginalization that

Sinclair suffered from the other women in the corps. As Laurel Forster has explained, she felt displaced not only as a result of her own position as a non-combatant, but also to the ‘strangeness of being a [mature] woman at war, amongst an ambulance crew unusually made up of a large number of [young] women.’⁵⁶ Thus, *A Journal of Impressions* became, as Rebecca West characterized it, ‘a record of humiliations.’⁵⁷

Together with *Fighting France* and *Kings, Queens and Pawns*, Sinclair’s journal gives evidence of the inner tensions of an exceptional era in which three women dealt with the rare chance of becoming eyewitnesses of a cataclysmic world event. The First World War represented for them the opportunity of a life-time, and each of them resorted to her own singular style and methods to convey their experience. Wharton and Rinehart enthusiastically wrote about their successful experience in the war zone but they also came to terms with the loss of innocence that a direct confrontation with the crude realities of war brought along. Sinclair, on the other hand, channelled her feelings and expectations into a journal that initially gave expression to her excitement, and later on to her sense of frustration. The three texts show the unusual experience on the margin of three women that inspired unusual and non-canonical styles of war writing. It is precisely in the undetermined nature of their writing that the richness of these narratives resides: the three authors moved away from the pre-established literary conventions that many of their male colleagues were still adhering to during the first years of the First World War.

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Notes

1. Barlow, *Great War British Literature*, 26.
2. Cardinal, *Women’s Writing on the First World War*; Gallagher, *World Wars through the Female Gaze*; Higonnet, *Behind the Lines*; Higonnet, *Lines of Fire*; Marlow, *Virago Book of Women*; Tate, *Women, Men and the Great War*; Tylee, *Great War and Women’s Consciousness*; and Smith, *Second Battlefield*.
3. Powell, *Fighting in Flanders*, 4. F. Tennyson Jesse describes a similar event to the one described by Alexander Powell in an article at *Collier’s Magazine* published in November 1914, what leads us to conclude that the British woman he describes is Jesse herself (source: http://www.greatwardifferent.com/Great_War/Antwerp_Colliers/Antwerp2.htm accessed January 2011).
4. Powell, *Fighting in Flanders*, 4.
5. Sinclair and Rinehart also portray their own difficulties to find a suitable outfit to move around the war zone (Rinehart, *Kings, Queens and Pawns*, 151; and Sinclair, *Journal of Impressions in Belgium*, 17). Philip Gibbs, makes a similar observation about the women’s clothes when he joins Dr Munro’s ambulance corps. At that point, the women have already solved their uniforms, appearing ‘very practically dressed in khaki coats and breeches’ (Gibbs, *Soul of the War*, 176). Further discussion on these negotiations on how to dress up for war and its consequences has been carried out in Usandizaga and Monnickendam’s *Dressing Up for War*. As Susan R. Grayzel argues in ‘Women, Uniforms and National Service,’ the adopting of khaki by several women was a controverted issue that divided the Home Front (146–149).
6. Goldman, Hattaway, and Gledhill, *Women Writers and the Great War*, 17.
7. Chaudhry, *Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School*

8. Chalaby, *Invention of Journalism*, 101.
9. Price, 'Wharton Mobilizes,' 219.
10. Price, 'Wharton Mobilizes,' 223–225.
11. Lee, *Edith Wharton*, 457.
12. Wharton, *Backward Glance*, 352.
13. Ibid.
14. Cohn, *Improbable Fiction*, 67.
15. Rinehart, *My Story*, 80.
16. Rinehart, *My Story*, 146.
17. Cohn, *Improbable Fiction*, 78.
18. Talmadge, *Corra Harris*, 76.
19. Rinehart, *Kings, Queens, and Pawns*, 20.
20. Rinehart, *Kings, Queens, and Pawns*, 80.
21. The author's manifesto was signed by 54 well-known British writers in order to support the British effort in the war. Authors such as Sir James M. Barrie, Arnold Bennett, G. K. Chesterton, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, John Galsworthy, Thomas Hardy and John Masefield signed the document, which was published in *The Times* and the *New York Tribune* on 18 September 1914.
22. Raitt, 'May Sinclair and the First World War.'
23. Ibid.
24. Sinclair in Raitt, 'May Sinclair and the First World War.' Terry Phillips has widely discussed in 'The Self in Conflict: May Sinclair and the Great War,' Sinclair's enthusiastic support of the war and the way it influenced her writing.
25. Wharton, *Backward Glance*, 352.
26. Wharton, *Fighting France*, 35.
27. The names of many of the locations have been censored by Rinehart.
28. Forster, 'Women and War Zones,' 231.
29. The first unit of Dr Munro's Flying Ambulance Corps was composed by Bert Bloxham, Marie Chisholm, Dorothe Feilding, Helen Gleason, Elsie Knocker, Dr Reese, Dr Shaw, May Sinclair, Rev. Fremlin Streatfeild, Robert Streatfeild and Tom Worsfold (*Atkinson, Elsie and Mairi Go to War*, 39).
30. Sinclair, *Journal of Impressions in Belgium*, 89.
31. Brassard, 'War is the Greatest . . .,' 10.
32. Gómez Reus, 'Racing to the Front . . .,' 115.
33. Gómez Reus, 'Racing to the Front . . .,' 114–115.
34. Brassard, 'War is the Greatest . . .,' 11.
35. Van Gennepe, *Rites of Passage*, 14.
36. Most names have been censored in Rinehart's account.
37. Brassard, 'War is the Greatest . . .,' 12.
38. Brassard, 'War is the Greatest . . .,' 13.
39. Olin-Ammentorp, *Edith Wharton's Writings*, 31.
40. Gómez Reus and Lauber, 'In a Literary No Man's Land,' 207–210.
41. Wharton, *Fighting France*, 45.
42. Bird Wright, *Edith Wharton's Travel Writing*, 92.
43. See note 41 above.
44. Decker, 'Americans in Europe,' 132.
45. Wharton, *Fighting France*, 37.
46. Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 150.
47. Rinehart discovered after her visit to the frontline trenches that it had never been part of the original plan to take her that far and that the Belgian officer that had given the order had made a blunder.
48. Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 212.
49. Raitt, 'A Journal of Impressions.'
50. Tylee, *Great War and Women's Consciousness*, 30, 131–132; Hynes, *War Imagined*, 92–94; Buck, 'British Women's Writing of the Great War,' 101; and Forster, 'Women and War Zones,' 231–234.
51. Wilson, 'She in Her "Armour",' 188.
52. Buck, 'British Women's Writing of the Great War,' 101.

53. Wilson, 'She in Her "Armour",' 188.
54. Brassard, 2008, 7.
55. Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 95
56. Forster, 'Women and War Zones,' 234–235.
57. West in Brassard, 'War is the Greatest . . .,' 10.

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Women War Reporters

By [Stephanie Seul](#)

Female war reporters from belligerent and neutral countries were present in the major war theatres in Europe and the Middle East throughout 1914 to 1918. While admission of journalists to the war zones was severely restricted by the Allies and Central Powers, a considerable number of women managed to access the frontlines or their vicinities and to publish their eyewitness accounts and photographs in well-known newspapers and magazines. Still, studies of female war reporters are rare and women are conspicuously absent from the leading surveys of war correspondents. This article outlines the diversity of female war reporting during the First World War from a comparative and transnational perspective.

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Introduction

In February 1998, the *Irish Times* published an obituary of the [novelist](#) and [journalist](#) [Martha Gellhorn \(1908-1998\)](#) under the headline "First Female War Reporter Dies". Gellhorn had covered all major conflicts of the 20th century, from the Spanish Civil War to the Vietnam and Arab-Israeli wars.^[1] The obituary implied that female [war reporting](#) only took off in the late 1930s. However, [women](#) had reported war as early as the mid-19th century – the American journalists [Jane Cazneau \(1807-1878\)](#), reporting on the Mexican-American conflict in 1846, and [Margaret Fuller \(1810-1850\)](#), covering the First Italian War of Independence during 1848-49, are cases in point.^[2] Since then, the title "first woman war correspondent" has been given by journalists, newspaper editors, scholars and biographers to dozens of women.^[3]

[Tim Luckhurst](#) has argued that the First World War "was reported from an almost exclusively male perspective" and that woman war reporters "were immensely rare exceptions".^[4] This article sets out to challenge this view. During 1914-1918, a considerable number of women from belligerent and [neutral](#) countries gained access to the war theatres and published their accounts and [photographs](#) in newspapers and magazines. However, academic studies are scarce. Women are conspicuously absent from [Phillip Knightley's \(1929-2016\)](#) seminal account of war correspondents and from Martin Farrar's study of war reporters on the [Western Front](#).^[5] Likewise, histories of women journalists largely ignore female war reporters during 1914-1918 or mention them only in passing.^[6] A recent study of Americans in wartime Europe has chapters on women and war reporters, but does not focus on *female* war reporters.^[7] The few studies that do exist tend to focus on American war journalists.^[8] As a result, we know much less about women from other nations. An obstacle to any comparative study is language skills – most sources on female war reporters from non-English-speaking countries are available only in their original languages.

How can we approach the study of female war reporting from a comparative and transnational perspective? In the digital age, a vast amount of biographical information is available online; many websites contain useful references to primary sources, biographies, and secondary literature. Likewise, the digitisation of historical newspapers allows us to retrieve the articles written by women with a few clicks through a full-text search. The majority of the women published their writings in newspapers and magazines under their own names, thus enabling us to trace their activities. Important digital newspaper archives offering full-text search are ANNO (Österreichische

Nationalbibliothek),^[9] Gallica (Bibliothèque Nationale de France),^[10] Chronicling America (Library of Congress),^[11] the British Newspaper Archive (British Library),^[12] Papers Past (National Library of New Zealand),^[13] Trove (National Library of Australia),^[14] Gale Historical Newspapers, UKPressOnline and ProQuest Historical Newspapers (British, American and international press).^[15] This list is not exhaustive. Other important sources for biographical information are online publications such as local history projects, biographical dictionaries, biographies, and the secondary literature. Many women published war books based on their press articles or memoirs. Once a source difficult to access, because personal stories published during the war soon went out of print, many of these accounts are now available online (e.g. Internet Archive, HathiTrust). Some women also left private papers or collections of their photographic work, e.g. Alice Schalek (1874-1956), Noëlle Roger (1874-1953), Peggy Hull (1889-1967), Mary Boyle O'Reilly (1873-1939), Helen Johns Kirtland (1890-1979), and Alice Rohe (1876-1957).

This article outlines how women from various European countries, the British Dominions and the [United States](#) managed to access the frontlines or their vicinities and to report from different war theatres in Europe and [the Middle East](#) (so far, no female war journalists reporting from the Asian, [Pacific](#) or African [war theatres](#) could be identified). It sketches out their professional biographies and outlines the manifold roles they assumed during the war. It argues that the first [total war](#) was not exclusively told from a [male point of view](#), but that women journalists provided an alternative, multifaceted female perspective on the war. This article is not exhaustive in terms of individuals, nationalities, war theatres, or publications, but seeks to point out the diversity of female war reporting during 1914 to 1918.

Typology of Female War Reporters

According to the *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, "war correspondents provide first-hand accounts of military conflict for dissemination to the public."^[16] However, as Kevin Williams has pointed out, "who counts as a war correspondent is far from straightforward", as many different types of reporters were involved in the war's coverage. While some were present on the battlefields, others were not able to get near the scenes of fighting but still reported on the war actions.^[17] Professional journalists accredited by major newspapers were joined by casual writers and freelance reporters with little experience of war reporting and weak links with news organisations. Moreover, a significant number of novelists went to report war and whose writing substantially shaped the way in which war was written about.^[18] This holds particularly true of women war reporters of the First World War, the majority of whom had a literary background. Likewise, "war correspondent" was not yet a defined profession. Freelance journalists whose stories touched upon the war were often labelled "war correspondents" by newspapers in order to promote their articles.^[19] Carolyn Edy wrote with regard to the United States:

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The majority of articles billed as women's war correspondence throughout World War I

were travelogues and personal essays that rarely mentioned military operations... While many authors of these works did not fit the military's definition of a war correspondent, they each wrote articles for publications which billed them as "woman war correspondent" ...^[20]

During the First World War, few women were accredited by the military. They reported war news from wherever they lived, worked and travelled. Some were allowed to visit the frontlines with an official permit. Others stayed away from the actual war scenes, but still witnessed the fighting. Nurses in field hospitals wrote about their experiences. Still others were focusing on the home front and the war's impact on civilians. War news by women was not only published in the press, but could also take the form of travelogues, (photo) essays or autobiographic books. While Dorothy and Carl Schneider distinguish between "amateur and chance observers" and "qualified women journalists",^[21] thus suggesting that one type was more qualified to write about the war than the other, this article proposes six types of women war reporters. The typology focuses less on the formal qualification of the women as journalists than on the environments and conditions they were working in, and it will be illustrated by means of six biographical case studies.

War Correspondents Accredited by the Military – Alice Schalek

Austria-Hungary was unique in offering official accreditation to female war reporters. During the war, seven women were accredited alongside 271 male journalists by the War Press Office (*Kriegspressequartier*), the central propaganda organisation of the military forces.^[22] Most prominent among them was the internationally acclaimed journalist, travel writer, photographer and lecturer Alice Schalek.^[23] Born into a liberal and wealthy Jewish family in Vienna, Schalek had published her first novels in the early 1900s and travelled extensively prior to the war, visiting places such as North Africa, India, Japan, Australia, Samoa, and the United States. From 1903 until 1935, she published her travelogues in the feature pages of the prestigious Viennese daily *Neue Freie Presse*. The outbreak of war threatened to interrupt her career, as international travelling had become impossible. Hoping to be able to continue her journalistic work, and with the help of personal connections, Schalek applied to the War Press Office and was accredited in July 1915. In the following two years she travelled to the Italian front, to Galicia and Serbia, where she interviewed soldiers and officers and took photographs. She published dozens of war reports in the *Neue Freie Presse* as well as photo stories in the German mass-circulation weekly *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*. Moreover, she wrote two books based on her war articles (*Tirol in Waffen, Am Isonzo*)^[24] and drew a total audience of 40,000 to her illustrated war lectures.^[25]

While in South Tyrol in 1915, Schalek visited the frontline together with a group of war correspondents and staff from the War Press Office, but it is doubtful that she witnessed any real fighting. However, while on the Isonzo River in the spring and summer of 1916, she experienced real shelling and witnessed the suffering of the soldiers. She was allowed to move around free of control and reached the forward positions of a hard-fought section of the front. Unlike many of her male

colleagues in the War Press Office, Schalek actually visited the war zones she was writing about, taking personal risks and exposing herself to shooting and shelling. While her initial war reports had depicted the war as a great and harmless adventure, her experience on the Isonzo led her to report much more critically. She portrayed the war's destructive impact on soldiers, civilians, and [landscape](#) in the battle zones and exposed the horrors of [modern warfare](#). The War Press Office disapproved of her honest and critical reporting, which had the potential to demoralise the public, and dismissed her in September 1917. Still, during the war Schalek was a popular public figure. She was praised for her writings, photographs and lectures, although she was also confronted with hostile misogynistic criticism. In February 1917 she was awarded a medal for bravery by the Viennese government.^[26] In sharp contrast to her popularity in Austria during and after the First World War, she fell into oblivion after her escape from Nazi persecution to the United States in 1939.

Schalek's most ferocious critic was the influential Austrian writer, journalist and satirist [Karl Kraus](#) (1874-1936). With the creation of the character "Die Schalek" ("The Schalek Woman") he made her a negative monument in his famous war drama [Die letzten Tage der Menschheit](#) ("The Last Days of Mankind", written 1915-1922). Moreover, from May 1916 onwards he poured scorn on her in his journal [Die Fackel](#) ("The Torch"), calling her the worst example of a warmongering journalist with a naive and feminist lust for sensationalism. The central part of the play is a harsh critique of the mass media and its role in prolonging the war by agitating and manipulating public opinion. Schalek appears under her own name and in as many as eleven scenes. Kraus' scathing critique dominated Schalek's historical reputation for decades.^[27]

War Correspondents Sent Out by Newspapers – Sofia Casanova

Many women journalists were sent out by their newspapers to cover the conflict. They did not receive official military accreditation, but were nevertheless granted access to areas near the frontline and reported on the fighting and its impact on soldiers and civilians. A prominent case was [Sofia Casanova](#) (1861-1958), who was commissioned by the Madrid quality paper [ABC](#) to cover the [Eastern Front](#). Casanova was a highly acclaimed Galician-Spanish expatriate novelist, [poet](#), playwright, travel writer, journalist and social campaigner, who published regularly in [Spain](#) despite living in [Poland](#) after her marriage to a Polish philosopher. In 1915 she was invited by [ABC](#) to become the paper's Eastern European correspondent, a position she held until 1936. [ABC](#) was at that time the most widely read daily in neutral Spain, with a conservative and pro-German stance, and Casanova was one of a number of star columnists in [ABC](#). During the war, she posted her articles from all over Poland and, after her family's evacuation during the invasion of Warsaw in 1915, from Minsk, Moscow and Saint Petersburg. In Saint Petersburg she experienced first-hand the horrors of the [Russian Revolution](#). Casanova published more than 220 articles in [ABC](#) that chronicled the war on the Eastern Front and sought to publicise Poland's predicament and to raise awareness and sympathy for it in Spain, which, as a neutral country, had little interest in this part of Europe. As a committed [pacifist](#), she also publicly criticised the [militarism](#) and [imperialism](#) resulting from the war.^[28] Casanova gathered her wartime press articles in three books.^[29]

Nurses Reporting War – Noëlle Roger

A large body of war news was produced by nurses working in hospitals and field ambulances. To a significant number of women, nursing was the closest to a soldier's war experience they could get, as Christine Hallett wrote:

...nurses were the most immediate witnesses to the consequences of industrial warfare. Standing between the front lines and the "home front", and dealing daily with the worst injuries produced by war, they were ideally placed to witness the results of early-twentieth-century modes of combat.^[30]

Many nurses published their experiences in newspapers and books. The focus of their reporting was usually on the care of their patients and the heroism and the desire of the wounded soldiers to return to the battlefield.^[31] A famous example was the Swiss novelist, playwright, travel writer and journalist Noëlle Roger, who was widely known in francophone [Switzerland](#) and [France](#). Roger, trained as a nurse in London prior to her literary career, published serial novels and articles in the feature pages and on the front pages of the *Journal de Genève* from the beginning of the 1900s until the 1940s.^[32] Her articles also appeared in the *Gazette de Lausanne* and in [French newspapers](#) and magazines, and she wrote numerous novels and travelogues. During the war, Roger worked as a nurse in a French hospital near Lyon. In the spring and summer of 1915 she published a series of articles in the *Journal de Genève* and the renowned periodical *Semaine littéraire* under the title *Les Carnets d'une Infirmière*. They were gathered and published as a highly acclaimed book in the same year.^[33] Roger claimed to publish the memoirs of an anonymous nurse who had recently died but it is not clear whether it was the outcome of her own observations or her imagination.^[34] The six reports evoke the noble suffering of the soldiers and praise the nurses' skill and empathy in easing their suffering. They recount the soldiers' battles, the moments they were wounded, the treatment they received for their injuries, but also the family lives the soldiers had left behind for the war. French newspapers reprinted excerpts from the reports, adding laudatory comments, and they became widely known in France. The *Revue des deux mondes* called *Les Carnets* Roger's "best book" which, despite describing all the pain and suffering, conveyed "a parfum of heroism".^[35] Roger also received voluminous correspondence about *Les Carnets*.^[36]

Roger published several other war writings that bear witness to her continued [humanitarian](#) engagement as a citizen of [neutral Switzerland](#) and her empathy towards the civilian victims of the war.^[37] Most of these texts were published in the *Journal de Genève*, and *Revue des deux mondes* before appearing as books. The two-volume *Le Passage des Évacués à travers la Suisse*^[38] recounts the transit through Switzerland of [Belgian war refugees](#) and civil internees evacuated from territory occupied by the Germans; *Le Train des Grands Blessés*^[39] describes the exchange of [French and German wounded soldiers on neutral Swiss territory](#); *Soldats Internés en Suisse*^[40] depicts the internment of German soldiers in Switzerland and *Le Cortège des Victimes*^[41] relates

the repatriation of German refugees from 1914 to 1916. After visiting the devastated combat zones of Verdun in 1917, Roger published several journal articles, which were re-published in 1919 under the title *Terres Dévastées et Cités Mortes*.^[42] A review stated: "The author is a newspaper woman who seems to have had some exceptionally favorable opportunities to make early visits to the destroyed regions."^[43]

Reporting the Home Front – Matilde Serao

Apart from covering the battlefield and the war's impact on civilians near the frontlines, female war reporters were particularly interested in the role of women on the home front. Due to the absence of men, women were driven to broaden their activities at home and take over jobs in the war economy. In Italy, the well-known writer and journalist Matilde Serao (1856-1927) stands out as a chronicler of the war's impact on them. Born of a Greek mother and a Neapolitan father, Serao was brought up in Naples and became a professional journalist and writer. She founded and edited her own newspaper, *Il Giorno*, for which she wrote a daily column.^[44] During the war, Serao took a neutral and pacifist stance; her journalism focussed on the contribution of Italian women to the war on the home front and the war's impact on women. Her articles, published between May 1915 and March 1916 in *Il Giorno*, were gathered in 1916 in *Parla una donna*. The book is dedicated to her three sons serving at the front and addressed to Italy's women ("*mie sorelle di pena*" – "my sisters in sorrow"). It offers them comfort by constantly celebrating the feminine virtues of mothers, brides and sisters who sacrificed themselves silently. It pays tribute to the heroism of the Italian women who replaced men in all fields of the economy and whose lives were fundamentally transformed by the war.^[45] To give one example, the chapter "Contadine" is dedicated to the country women, recounting how they constantly added male labour to their already heavy daily burden of childcare, housework and animal care, because their husbands, sons and fathers had departed for the war: "And thus the Italian country women in summer and autumn have doubled, tripled their daily work: the heaviest, the hardest, the most extenuating work of men... Who will sing your pure and humble glories, Italian country women?"^[46] Serao's journalism is important not only because of its focus on the impact of the war on women, but also because she addressed it specifically to a female, middle-class audience that shared her feelings and observations.^[47]

Entering the War Zone in Disguise – Mary Boyle O'Reilly

On the Western Front, the Allies sought to prevent war correspondents, and in particular female journalists, from accessing the fighting areas. Some women, however, managed to enter the war zones in disguise. Thus, the American journalist, writer and social activist Mary Boyle O'Reilly passed through German lines in Belgium disguised as a peasant refugee, while Dorothy Lawrence (section 2.6) accessed the frontlines in male disguise.

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O'Reilly, born in Massachusetts as the daughter of the famous Irish nationalist, poet and journalist

John Boyle O'Reilly (1844-1890), became a foreign correspondent of the *Newspaper Enterprise Association* in 1913 and, after assignments to Mexico and [Russia](#), was placed in charge of its London office. When war broke out, O'Reilly was sent to Belgium to write about the human side of the war. She entered occupied Louvain disguised as a peasant refugee and was the first American journalist to witness the city's burning by the Germans – two days ahead of her male colleagues. Still in disguise, she walked around Belgium, passing through German lines and writing her notes on her white blouse. Eventually, she and three male colleagues were arrested and imprisoned by the Germans for [spying](#), but soon released to [Holland](#). While the three men went back to London, O'Reilly returned to Belgium, again disguised.^[48] Her report was introduced with the following statement:

Mary Boyle O'Reilly, after having been deported from Belgium by the Germans because she was a newspaper woman, managed cleverly to get back inside their lines from Holland by means of a German consul's pass. As a newspaper woman she would have been stopped in a mile, so she became a simple Belgian refugee, and she walked laboriously and footsore for days through the Prussian army. It was indeed a pilgrimage of horror!^[49]

After five weeks in Belgium, O'Reilly returned to London; in the following months and years she travelled to France, and via [Norway](#) and [Sweden](#) to Russia (Saint Petersburg, Moscow), [Lithuania](#) and Poland (Warsaw), reporting the war on the Eastern Front.^[50] During her travels in Europe, O'Reilly's war reports appeared in various American newspapers such as the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, *Boston Daily Globe*, *Boston Pilot*, *Boston Herald*, *Seattle Star* and *The Day Book*. In February 1917 she returned to the United States on the last ship home before the American entry into the war. Subsequently she continued to publish and lecture about the war and her experiences.^[51]

A Failed Career – Dorothy Lawrence

So far, this typology has presented women who succeeded in one way or another as war correspondents. However, at least one woman failed in her attempt to become a freelance war reporter. In 1915 Dorothy Lawrence (ca. 1896-1964), a nineteen-year-old English girl, secretly posed as a male soldier in order to reach the Western Front but was discovered, ordered home and forbidden to publish about her adventure.

Lawrence, who had contributed some light entertainment stories to the *Pall Mall Magazine* and the London *Times* prior to 1914 (without her own by-line, however), desperately wanted to make her name as a war correspondent, but was ridiculed and rejected by [Fleet Street](#) newspapers and the British War Office. Longing for a scoop, in the summer of 1915 she travelled to France, hoping to enter the war zone in the French sector as a freelance war correspondent, but was arrested by French police and ordered to leave. Hence, she concluded that only disguised as a man could she reach the front. With the help of British soldiers she acquired a khaki uniform and forged identity

papers and entered the British sector. In Albert on the Somme she found work with a specialist mine-laying company. However, due to poor health and for fear of being identified as a woman, Lawrence presented herself after ten days to the commanding sergeant and was arrested. After interrogations by military authorities in France, who suspected her of being a spy, Lawrence was ordered to sign an affidavit prohibiting her to sell her story to the press. Then she was sent back to London, where she faced homelessness, unemployment, and illness. Lawrence wrote a war book, but had to scrap the first draft on the instructions of the War Office. In 1919, when the war was over, she finally published her book, but it was heavily censored by the War Office, received mediocre reviews in British papers^[52] and did not become a commercial success. With no income and no credibility as a journalist, and with her mental health deteriorating, Lawrence was declared insane in 1925 and admitted to a psychiatric institution where she remained until her death in 1964.^[53] Although Lawrence never achieved the journalistic success she had hoped for, she demonstrated what women were capable of doing – much to the embarrassment of the War Office.^[54] In her book she wrote enthusiastically:

I'll see what an ordinary English girl, without credentials or money, can accomplish. If war-correspondents cannot get out there, I'll see whether I cannot go one better than these big men with their cars, credentials, and money. I'll see what I can manage as a war correspondent!^[55]

Yet, Lawrence failed in building a journalistic career despite her adventures on the Western Front. When we compare her case with that of Schalek, Casanova, Roger, Serao and O'Reilly, it becomes apparent that in order to become a successful war reporter it was essential for women to have an established journalistic or literary career and a high social standing already prior to the war. Unlike the British press, however, American papers admired Lawrence's adventures. The *Yorkville Enquirer* called her book

one of the oddest documents to come out of the war and the story it reveals has lifted the diminutive figure of Miss Lawrence, an English newspaper woman, to the proportions of a national hero... For a British woman to enter the combatant ranks of the British army is a thing until now unheard of.^[56]

War Theatres

The Allies on the Western Front

Access to the war theatres and reporting conditions for women differed considerably. The most restrictive regime was that set up by the Allies on the Western Front. On the outbreak of war, French and British military authorities banned all correspondents from the frontlines. After heavy complaints by journalists and the public, in the spring of 1915 the Allies introduced a system of accredited war correspondents working under close military supervision.^[57] Despite the limitations imposed on journalists in the fighting zone, a number of reporters, including women, managed to access the

frontlines during the early stages of the war and publish their eyewitness accounts.^[58] In August 1914, the English writer, poet, playwright and criminologist F. Tennyson Jesse (1888-1958) was sent by the *Daily Mail* to Belgium to report on the German invasion. She travelled to Ghent, Termonde, to the frontline and to Antwerp, but was forced out of the city by the [German occupation](#). She published a series of six articles for the *Daily Mail* between 7 September and 9 October 1914. Visits to France followed, from where she reported about [Red Cross](#) hospitals. Later, the British Ministry of Information asked her to write about the Women's Army, that is, organisations such as the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) or Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD).^[59] She published her observations in the *Daily Mail* in December 1915 and in the book *The Sword of Deborah* in 1919.^[60] Stories about her experiences as a woman war reporter also appeared in *Collier's Weekly*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, and *Vogue*.^[61] The Australian novelist and poet Louise Mack (1870-1935) also reported for British newspapers (*The Daily Mail*, *Evening News*, *The Sphere*) on the German invasion of Belgium. She travelled through German lines and was in Brussels and Antwerp during the German occupation. According to her own account, she left Antwerp on a false passport and disguised as a peasant (section 2.5).^[62] Other women served as nurses on the Western Front and published their war experiences in press articles and books (section 2.3). Olive Dent (1884-1930), a British VAD nurse in a military hospital in Rouen in France during 1915 to 1917, is a case in point. She wrote articles for the *Daily Mail*, *The Lady*, *The War Illustrated*, *Yorkshire Evening Post*, and *Evening News*, and in 1917 published a book about her experiences.^[63]

When the first American troops landed in France in the summer of 1917, the American military not only imposed a system of strict control and censorship over the war correspondents,^[64] but also refused to offer accreditation to woman. It was only in November 1918, when the war in Europe had ended, that Peggy Hull was officially credentialed as a war correspondent – the only American woman to achieve this status. Subsequently, she continued to report on the Russian Revolution and [American troops in Siberia](#). In 1917 she had been denied accreditation and went to France on her own expenses, publishing her accounts in the Paris army edition of the *Chicago Tribune*, in the *El Paso Morning Times*, and for the *Newspaper Enterprise Association*.^[65] As Edy wrote, no journalist could travel within or near the combat zones without official permission or accreditation by the US military. Hence, the American military forces granted news-gathering facilities and accommodation to a large number of unaccredited war correspondents. They were allowed greater freedom to work and travel by avoiding censors and military officials. Military records reveal that up to seventeen women were given the status of visiting war correspondent with the American forces.^[66] Other American women worked from assignments to the Red Cross or similar voluntary organisations, such as Rheta Childe Dorr (1866-1948),^[67] Sophie Treadwell (1885-1970)^[68] and Mary Boyle O'Reilly (section 2.5).^[69] The American novelist and trained nurse Mary Roberts Rinehart (1876-1958) was attached to the Belgian Red Cross and visited the Belgian and French sectors as well as British lines on the Western Front in 1915. She was able to visit [Ghent](#), [Belgium](#) and [no man's land](#). Her reports appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Boston Globe* and *The Sphere* and

were gathered in her book *Kings, Queens and Pawns*.^[70]

The Allies on the Eastern Front

In contrast to the Western Front, the Allies on the Eastern Front in Russia and Serbia tolerated women journalists from neutral and allied nations, yet little is known about their working conditions, or the attitude of the military towards them. Apart from Sofía Casanova from neutral Spain, who reported from Poland and Russia throughout the war (section 2.2), several [Canadian](#) and American women covered the Eastern Front, and in particular the Russian Revolution of February 1917 and the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917. Among them were the Canadian journalist [Florence Macleod Harper \(1886-1946\)](#) of *Leslie's Weekly*, who worked as a volunteer nurse in an American field hospital in Russia and published three books,^[71] the Americans Rheta Childe Dorr of the *New York Evening Mail* (section 3.1), [Bessie Beatty \(1886-1947\)](#)^[72] of the *San Francisco Bulletin*, [Louise Bryant \(1885-1936\)](#)^[73] of the *Bell Syndicate*, and [Madeleine Zabriskie Doty \(1877-1963\)](#),^[74] writing for the *New York Tribune*, among others. They witnessed the horrors of the revolutions and their impact on civilians, but also chronicled the daily wartime life of the Russian people. Moreover, they were particularly interested in the work of the [Russian women soldiers](#) in the Women's Battalion of Death and their leader, [Maria Bochkareva \(1889-1920\)](#), the first Russian woman to command a military unit. In July 1917 the journalists accompanied the battalion to the front, living for one week with the women and witnessing them going into battle.^[75]

On the Eastern Front in Serbia, the lecturer, religious writer and Catholic suffragist [Annie Christitch \(1885-1977\)](#) reported for British papers during 1915 to 1918. Christitch, a Serbian national with an Irish mother, who had been educated and was mainly living in the United Kingdom, was sent to Serbia as a staff correspondent of the *Daily Express*. In Valjevo she established a relief centre and was in charge of eight hospitals during the [occupation of Serbia](#) by German and Austrian forces. Due to her Serbian nationality, she was allowed to stay in Serbia when all foreigners were expelled. Her articles on the plight of the Serbian war victims appeared in the *Daily Express* and other British publications and were reprinted in newspapers in [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#) and [China](#). Moreover, the British and foreign press reported extensively about her relief work in Serbia.^[76]

The Allies on the Italian Front

On the Italian front, the Italian High Command accredited several Italian women, among them the journalist and novelist [Flavia Steno \(1877-1946\)](#); the writer, founder and editor of the monthly *La Madre Italiana*, [Stefania Türr \(1885-1940\)](#); the women's activist and editor of the magazine *La Donna*, [Ester Danesi Traversari \(1878-1965\)](#); the novelist, poet, playwright and theatre artist [Annie Vivanti \(1868-1942\)](#); and the writer, translator, school teacher and university professor of German language and literature, [Barbara Allason \(1877-1968\)](#). Steno was permitted to visit military hospitals on the Mount Krn as close as four kilometres to the front line and published her accounts in *Il Secolo*

XIX.^[77] Barbara Allason, publishing in *La Donna*, *La Lettura*, and *Gazzetta del Popolo*, visited the Italian defence lines, where she met and befriended the Anglo-Italian journalist Annie Vivanti, a war correspondent for several British publications (e.g. *The Times*, *Westminster Gazette*, *The Nineteenth Century and After*). Both women were granted access to advanced Italian border posts, the headquarters of the Italian High Command in Udine, and to field hospitals.^[78] Stefania Türr visited large sections of the Italian front including the trenches. She published her observations of the frontlines, the surrounding areas devastated by the conflict, and the vast organisation of military supplies in *La Madre Italiana* and in her book *Alle trincee d'Italia*. It contained numerous photographs of soldiers and the war landscape, similar to the books of Alice Schalek (section 2.1).^[79]

The Italian High Command also granted frontline access to women from neutral and Allied countries. In the summer of 1915, the suffragist, lawyer and socialist reformer Inez Milholland (1886-1916), writing for the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, *Washington Post*, *New York Tribune*, *McClure's* and *Harper's*, took part in a guided tour of correspondents to the Italian front. However, the Italian authorities disliked her anti-war articles and at the end of September 1915 she was ordered to leave the country. *The New York Times* reported that the Italian government thought it "not politic to have war presented from a pacifist point of view".^[80] In 1914, Alice Rohe, a journalist, photographer and feminist, became the first female overseas bureau chief for United Press in Rome, a post she held until 1919. Unlike many of her foreign colleagues who waited for Italians to tell them what was happening, Rohe went into the countryside to gather news directly. She wrote stories, illustrated with her own photographs, about the war's impact on civilians for the *New York World*, *Denver Times*, *Washington Post*, *Leslie's Weekly* and *National Geographic Magazine*.^[81] Finally, Helen Johns Kirtland, a photojournalist for *Leslie's Weekly*, was allowed by the Italian High Command to the frontline after the retreat at Caporetto in 1917, where 275,000 Italian troops had been captured. In the autumn of 1918, when the Austro-Hungarian and the Italian armies again confronted each other, Kirtland was granted special access to the front and allowed to photograph Italian soldiers in the trenches.^[82]

The Central Powers

Among the Central Powers, working conditions for female war reporters also varied. On the outbreak of war, the Austro-Hungarian military sought to keep all war correspondents away from the frontlines. A short time afterwards, however, the War Press Office announced that correspondents from Austria-Hungary, Germany and neutral countries would be accredited, and it began to organise guided tours to the frontlines, though not to the actual combat zones.^[83] Austria-Hungary was also rather generous in granting accreditation to female journalists, among them Alice Schalek (section 2.1), Hede von Trapp (1877-1947)^[84] and Maria Magda Rumbold (1868-?)^[85] from Austria, and Margit Vészi (1885-1961)^[86] and Olga Fehér (1881-1947)^[87] from Hungary. They were allowed, often as part of a larger group of accredited war correspondents and under the guidance of officers of

the War Press Office, to visit sections of the front in the Alps, Galicia, and Serbia (section 2.1).^[88]

In contrast, little is known about German women reporters. At the beginning of the war, the German Empire imposed a severe and effective system of military censorship; no war reporter was allowed to visit the front.^[89] However, the novelist and journalist Thea von Puttkamer (1882-1952), based in Constantinople and a member of the German ambulance corps in Turkey, was attached to the Turkish forces and published her articles in German, Hungarian and Turkish newspapers (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Die Woche*, *Pester Lloyd*, *Vakit*).^[90] Several articles also appeared in the German-American paper *Tägliche Cincinnatier Volksblatt*, among them a report on the Gallipoli campaign. Von Puttkamer recounted her visit to the foremost frontline positions of the Central Powers and to the enemy lines evacuated by the defeated British and Australian forces and praised the heroism of the Ottoman soldiers.^[91] In August 1917, the South Carolina *Union Times* reported that von Puttkamer, "attached to the Turkish forces operating in Mesopotamia, is the only woman war correspondent officially recognized by the German government".^[92] Yet there is no mention of her in the official (if incomplete) German list of war correspondents.^[93] A curious case was the novelist and journalist Friedel Merzenich (1879-1956) who, from the spring of 1915 until October 1918, worked in the editorial office of the *Liller Kriegszeitung*, a German soldiers' journal published in northern France.^[94] Apart from her editorial work, Merzenich also published articles in the *Liller Kriegszeitung* and other German war journals, in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Magdeburger Zeitung*, *Illustrierte Zeitung* and *Die Woche*. In 1918, a large number of her articles for the *Liller Kriegszeitung* were published as a book.^[95]

The Central Powers also granted women from neutral countries permission to visit Germany and Austria-Hungary. After attending the Women's Peace Congress in The Hague in 1915, the American lawyer, women's activist and pacifist Madeleine Zabriskie Doty travelled through Germany, reporting for the *New York Tribune*, the *Chicago Tribune* and *Good Housekeeping*.^[96] She observed how life on the German home front was affected by the war, especially in Berlin and Hamburg. In her book *Short Rations* she wrote: "There are but two topics of conversation – war and food shortage... Life has become mere existence – a prison existence. Mind and bodies are shrinking from a shortage of intellectual and physical nourishment."^[97] In 1916, the Swedish author and journalist Annie Åkerhielm (1869-1956), a campaigner against women's suffrage and democracy and later an admirer of Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) and Nazism, was invited to Berlin together with her husband Baron Dan Åkerhielm (1863-1931), a newspaper man. Åkerhielm, whose war journalism appeared in *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* and *Stockholm Dagblatt*, published a book about her war journey entitled *Från Berlin till Brüssel*.^[98] Moreover, she published a long article about conditions in wartime Germany in the Leipzig *Illustrierte Zeitung*. It depicted Berlin as calm and focussed on the war, while the social and cultural life was continuing as in peacetime. A special praise was given to Germany's allegedly modest and socially committed upper-class women.^[99]

The renowned Spanish journalist, novelist and women's rights activist Carmen de Burgos y Segui (1867-1932) also travelled through Germany in August 1914, publishing her war essays under the pseudonym "Colombine" in *El Heraldo de Madrid*; later they were gathered in her book *Mis viajes por Europa*.^[100] In Austria-Hungary, the famous American author and world traveller Nellie Bly (1864-1922) was accredited by the War Press Office together with other foreign (male) war correspondents. In the autumn of 1914 she spent several weeks on the Eastern Front in Poland, Galicia and Serbia, publishing her accounts in various American papers. Between December 1914 and February 1915 twenty-one articles appeared in the *New York Evening Journal* under the headline "Nellie Bly on the Firing Line". Bly also published a report in *Die Zeit*. This, however, was severely cut by the censor, and thereafter Bly refused to write further articles for the German paper.^[101] Her articles painted a grim picture of the cruelty of modern warfare; one article described scenes witnessed in a Red Cross hospital and concluded:

Travel the roads from the scene of battle; search the trains; wounded, frozen, starved, thousands are dying in agonizing torture – not hundreds, but thousands. And as they die thousands are being rushed into their pest-filled trenches to be slaughtered in the same way.^[102]

A Female Perspective on the War?

As Milly Buonanno has pointed out, the issue of whether female war reporting differs from its male counterpart and whether women war reporters "are willing and able to create their own gender-based agenda and express their own point of view" is controversial and has barely been studied.^[103] Women's war reporting provided a wide variety of perspectives on the war, ranging from military combat, [weaponry](#), troops and military strategy to the side effects of warfare, e.g. women's work in the munitions factories; women taking over the work of conscripted men in factories, agriculture, and in the home; the impact of the war on civilians; the work of the Red Cross; the care and [feeding](#) of soldiers; or the personal experiences of women in an environment dominated by men.^[104] Many newspapers and magazines explicitly sent out their female journalists to write about the war from a female perspective, called the "woman's angle". Rheta Childe Dorr and Gertrude Atherton (1857-1948)^[105] are cases in point. Atherton, a writer and feminist who spent three months in France in 1916, published a series of reports in *The New York Times* and *The Delineator* on the war work of French and American [women in France](#), e.g. caring for refugees and nursing of soldiers and civilians. The purpose of reports from the woman's perspective for the newspaper publishers as well as for the women journalists was often commercial; it attracted more female readers and offered new possibilities for advertising.^[106] George Lorimer (1867-1937), the editor of the *Saturday Evening Post* who sent out four women to cover the war in Europe, stated in 1915:

The big story of the war is never at the front... It is in the hospitals and in the homes... War is largely a woman's affair and women, I think, best understand the little things that go to make up the big story.^[107]

However, many female journalists resented their war writing being reduced to the "woman's angle" as they felt degraded to reporting the war's periphery.^[108] When women "dared" to report about men's warfare, they were often criticised and ridiculed. Peggy Hull, who in 1917 successfully published a series of articles in the Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune*, met with fierce hostility by her male colleagues, who resented her presence near the front and her popularity with the troops.^[109] Alice Schalek, who initially published glorifying and highly controversial accounts of the war, was challenged by male journalists and military figures about her qualifications for writing about war.^[110] In the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* of 26 November 1915 she rebutted the criticism that women could not be war correspondents because they knew too little about the business of warfare and the psyche of the male warrior, arguing that being a woman, and writing from a female perspective, provided the best qualifications for a war reporter:

I think it is not un-womanly, indeed it is the right of women, to trace the inner metamorphoses in the psyche of their brothers, fathers, husbands, and sons. For many months during their fighting actions they have excluded every thought of their beloved ones, thus totally transforming their inner life. The reporting of male war reporters usually excludes this aspect of the war. I myself, however, wish to bring to the attention of newspaper readers the fact that our own army as well as that of the enemy, consists of human beings... I am trying to write about the souls of the soldiers.^[111]

Conclusion

During 1914 to 1918, women journalists reported from all major war theatres in Europe and the Middle East. However, whether they were admitted to the war zones as accredited war correspondents, on more informal assignments by their newspapers, or were working as nurses, depended on the policies of the Allies and the Central Powers. As diverse as the opportunities for women to access the war zones was also their reporting. Depending on their location, access to the frontlines, assignments by their newspapers, and professional and personal interests, women were focusing on military combat, the war's impact on soldiers and civilians, relief work, or the home front. Taking personal risks, they visited the war zones under shelling and shooting. They published their eyewitness accounts in well-known newspapers and magazines, generally under their own names.

Female war reporters not only published their accounts in newspapers of their country of origin, but also in the press of foreign countries, thus adding a transnational dimension to their work: Alice Schalek published in Austrian and German papers, Margit Vészi wrote for Hungarian, Austrian and German publications; Florence MacLeod Harper from Canada worked for the American magazine *Leslie's Weekly*, and Thea von Puttkamer published in the German, Hungarian, Turkish and German-American press. Moreover, women reporters communicated through a wide range of media such as quality and mass circulation papers, illustrated magazines, photographs, and books.

Frequently they also lectured about the war after returning home (Alice Schalek, Louise Mack, Mary Boyle O'Reilly). In this way, they reached a vast and heterogeneous audience beyond social and

national borders.

Who were those women war reporters? With the exception of nineteen-year-old Dorothy Lawrence, they generally belonged to the higher social classes, were educated above the norm, were financially independent, and had established professional careers in journalism, literature, travel writing and photography. Often they were politically active as [suffragists](#), [pacifists](#) and social reformers. They belonged to all age groups ranging from early twenties to fifties and sixties. They often broke with the social conventions of their times, when women were expected to become housewives and raise children, and opened up hitherto male-dominated professions to women, such as travelling, lecturing, journalism, photography, and war reporting. Hence, the success or failure of female war reporters depended largely on their social background and pre-war professional standing; they were recruited because of their journalistic reputation and personal connections. After the war they continued to publish for their newspapers, often for several decades. In contrast, the case of Dorothy Lawrence shows that a newcomer to the field of journalism with no connections was likely to fail despite her war adventures.

Notably, women did not limit their war reporting to the "woman's angle". Even though entry for women to the fighting zones was often severely restricted, women were determined to cover all aspects of the war, from the fighting on the fronts, the suffering of the (wounded) soldiers, the destruction of cities, villages and landscapes to the war's impact on civilians, especially women and [children](#). Female war reporters covered the First World War from many different perspectives, thus complementing and widening the war images provided by their male counterparts.

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Module 4: Das Tage-Buch und Die Weltbühne: Rundschauzeitschriften in der Weimarer Republik und im Exil | Das Tage-Buch and Die Weltbühne: Highbrow Weeklies in the Weimar Republic and in Exile

Director: Hendrik Michael (Languages: Deutsch, English)

- 1. “Hitler-Prozeß” by Leo Lania, *Weltbühne*, 1924**
- 2. “Zwei Granatsplitter” by Axel Eggebrecht, *Weltbühne*, 1933**
- 3. “Rettungsgürtel an einer kleinen Brücke” by Egon Erwin Kisch, *Weltbühne*, 1928**
- 4. “An der Ruhr-Front” by Leo Lania, *Weltbühne*, 1923**
- 5. “Bad Wiessee” by Maria Leitner, *Pariser Tageszeitung*, 1936**
- 6. “Die letzten Tage von Paris” by Walter Mehring, 1940**

Sabina Becker

Neue Sachlichkeit

Band 2:
Quellen und Dokumente



2000

BÖHLAU VERLAG KÖLN WEIMAR WIEN
2nd Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School
Page 260

Ernst Weiss:

1. Von jeher haben Zeitungen als Materialsammlungen außerordentlichen Wert als Stoffquellen gehabt, denn Zeitgeschichte ist aktuelle Weltgeschichte. Formal können aber Zeitungen nicht als unbedingte Muster der Sachlichkeit gelten; der Reporter eines französischen Blattes reportiert anders als ein reaktionärer. Als Muster der Sachlichkeit sind immer noch unübertroffen alte Reisebeschreibungen, z.B. *Cookes* Beschreibungen seiner Weltumsegelungen, ferner die meisten wissenschaftlichen Abhandlungen über physikalische oder naturwissenschaftliche Themen. Meisterhaft und für mich persönlich die einzige Schule waren die wissenschaftlich medizinischen Krankenbeschreibungen und Schilderungen abnormer Körpervorgänge durch meinen verehrten Lehrer, den Chirurgen Theodor *Kocher* in Bern. Dadurch, daß er sich nur an die Sache hielt, aber das letzte aus der Sache zu ergründen suchte, nämlich den lebendig wirkenden Grund für die in möglichst einfachen Worten zu fassenden Tatsachen, Farben, Konturen, Bewegungsrhythmen, Gerüche, Tastempfindungen etc. – dadurch, daß er Wahrheit, Treue und Einfachheit am höchsten schätzte, konnte er ein Meister und ein Lehrer sein mehr als der Reporter. Er sah und schilderte nur kranke und gesunde Körper. Aber durch ihn lernte ich, soweit man lernen kann, sehen und schildern überhaupt, und Erkennen, sei es nun Körper und Seele, Ruhe oder Bewegung.

Zusammenfassend: Zeitungen sind unschätzbar als Material für einen Schriftsteller mit viel Phantasie und großer Produktionskraft. Andere Naturen werden durch die ungeordneten Tatsachen erdrückt, überwältigt, banalisiert. Formal sind Zeitungen kein Muster.

2. Wer aktuell bleiben und eine große Wirkung auf seine Zeit ausüben will, kann heute die Zeitung, das stärkste, universalste Mittel menschlicher Verständigung nicht entbehren. Die dauernden und vielleicht auch die edleren Wirkungen gehen aber vom Buche aus.

Leo Lania: Reportage als soziale Funktion. In: Die Literarische Welt 2 (1926), Nr. 26, S. 5.

Reportage – noch vor kurzem in Deutschland ein nur den Männern vom Bau geläufiger Fachausdruck – ward plötzlich zum Schlagwort, dessen weite Verbreitung durch die *2nd International Literary Journalism Summer School*

einen präzisen Sinn zu verbinden. Der Reporter, augenblicklich große Mode, hat seine literarische Ehrenrettung erlebt, der Journalismus ist auch in Deutschland literaturfähig geworden. *Egon Erwin Kisch* hat der Reportage durch ein Gestrüpp von Vorurteilen, durch ein Dickicht zünftlerischer Überhebung und laienhafter Unkenntnis in einer prachtvollen Attacke die breite Bresche geritten: Da man jetzt den Namen für die »moderne Richtung« hatte, brauchte man sich über ihr Wesen und ihre Voraussetzungen gottlob keine weiteren Gedanken zu machen. Kisch bekam fein säuberlich eine Etikette angeheftet, das Schema war gefunden, die neue Rubrik abgesteckt – nun konnte man nach Herzenslust drauflos katalogisieren.

Als dann Kisch dem »Rasenden Reporter« seine »Hetzjagd durch die Zeit« folgen ließ, war er bereits so abgestempelt, daß das zweite Buch als bloße Fortsetzung des ersten gewertet wurde: Wo doch gerade dieses die Persönlichkeit Kischs in einem neuen Lichte zeigt und über den Autor hinaus wichtige Erkenntnisse zu den jetzt in den Brennpunkt der literarischen Diskussion gerückten Kapiteln »Reportage« und »Neue Sachlichkeit« vermittelt.

Kischs Erfolg wäre nicht so durchschlagend, das Echo, das er weckte, nicht so laut gewesen, hätte er nicht eine der wichtigsten Saiten der Zeit zum Schwingen gebracht. Gewiß, noch ist bei uns die Anschauung vorherrschend, der schaffende Künstler gehöre nicht in das Kampfgetümmel der Parteien und müsse aller Politik und jedem Tageslärm entrückt, gewissermaßen auf erhabenem Piedestal thronen; aber die psychologische Geheimniskrämerei, die Ausbreitung der Seelennöte interessanter Helden hat ihren Zauber verloren. Die durchdringende Stimme dieser Gegenwart ist nicht zu übertönen, sie scheucht den sanftesten Träumer aus den letzten Winkeln in das unbarmherzige Licht des Tages. [...]

[...]

Kischs Verzicht auf jede Symbolik und Metapher, sein Fanatismus der Sachlichkeit läßt die Dinge des Alltags klar und scharf aus dem Nebel treten, dessen Verschleierung man in Deutschland so gerne als »groben Materialismus« in Verruf zu bringen sucht. Eine Fabrik, ein Heringsfang, das Sechstagerennen – Kisch ist das nicht bloßer und billiger Anlaß zu Reflexionen, nicht seine subjektiven Gefühle, sondern die objektive Wahrheit in der Darstellung ist ihm das Wesentliche – eine Seltenheit in Deutschland, wo jedes Baby eine »besondere Individualität« attestiert bekommt und jedermann von dem Ehrgeiz gejagt wird, seine »Persönlichkeit« in das Licht der allgemeinen Aufmerksamkeit zu stellen – auch wenn dieser Persönlichkeit durchaus nichts Persönliches anhaftet. Kisch fühlt sich nur als Knecht des darzustellenden Objekts. Er handhabt die Reportage meisterhaft, sein Auge ist scharf, seine Beweglichkeit ebenso groß wie die Gründlichkeit, mit der er die Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School unter die Reporter einzureihen. Page 262

Es ist nicht Äußerlichkeit, das Haften am Faktum, wodurch sich der Reporter vom Dichter unterscheidet. Mag sich dieser noch so als Diener des Worts, einer Idee, des Menschen oder des leblosen Dings fühlen – entscheidend ist, daß ihm die Gestaltung, der künstlerische Prozeß der Nachschöpfung wichtiger ist als der Vorwand selbst. *Der Reporter steht auf grundsätzlich anderer Ebene: Das Objekt ist ihm nur so weit wichtig, als es – allgemein wichtig ist.* Und so nimmt er zum Objekt seiner Darstellung, mag es sich nun um ein Gefängnis, ein Irrenhaus, ein Bergwerk, eine Fabrik handeln, nicht die Stellung des – überlegenen oder unterwürfigen – Betrachters ein, sondern des Spions – er beschreibt nicht, er enthüllt – er zeigt nicht die Dinge wie sie sind, sondern wie sie waren und was aus ihnen werden wird: so legt er die Epidermis seines Modells bloß, tastet das Gefäßer entlang, seziiert Fleisch, experimentiert mit Blut und Bakterien. Der Reporter soll ja nicht bloß Internist sein, sondern er ist auch erbarmungsloser Chirurg, er muß schneiden, um den Aufbau des Organismus zu zeigen, oder die lächerliche Eiterblase, die alle Funktionen stört. Kein ästhetisches Gewerbe: »Schmutzaufwirbler« ist die ehrenvolle Bezeichnung, die Amerika für diese reinste und eigentliche Form der Reportage gefunden hat. Ihr moderner Begründer war *George Kennan*, ihre Meister *Upton Sinclair* und *Albert Londres*.

Es ist kein Zufall, daß die Heimat der Reportage Amerika ist und daß sie in Europa nur in Frankreich Vertreter in größerer Anzahl gefunden hat. Die Voraussetzung der »Enthüllung des Kerns« ist die Kenntnis der Oberfläche der Dinge und Institutionen. In Amerika sind es wirtschaftliche, in Frankreich gesellschaftliche Gründe, die enge Beziehungen zwischen dem Einzelnen und allen Erscheinungen des öffentlichen Lebens verbürgen. Der Reporter knüpft daher an allgemein Bekanntes an, wenn er seine Streifzüge aufnimmt. In Deutschland, wo Aktien, Kohlenwirtschaft, Technik und Politik Spezialfragen für besonders »Eingeweihte« sind, wo der Begriff des Staates noch immer ganz abstrakt gefaßt wird und die übergroße Mehrheit des Volkes mit politischen und sozialen Fragen keinen lebendigen Sinn verbindet, ist für die »große Reportage« der Boden noch nicht bereitet. Und doch muß er bestellt werden: beim Aufbau eines neuen Deutschland sind die Reporter unerläßliche Helfer. Daß ihre Zeit gekommen ist, zeigt das starke Interesse, das auf allen Gebieten der Kunst der sachlichen Gestaltung aktuellen Stoffes entgegengebracht wird, die Abkehr von aller Artistik und Romantik. Diese Abkehr gefördert, das Interesse an sachlichen 2nd International Literary Journalism Summer School
allgemeiner Geringschätzung zur ersten Wertung emporgehoben zu haben – darin sehe ich die größte Bedeutung der Bücher von Egon Erwin Kisch.

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Der Münchener Hochverratsprozess.

Die Angeklagten.

Von Dr. Ernst Feder.

Vom ersten Tag des Münchener Prozesses an suchten die Angeklagten den Schwerpunkt der Verhandlung zu verschieben. Von sich auf die Herren Kahr, Lössow und Seiwert. Sie haben die Broschüre Professor Rothendörfers gegen studiert, der den dringenden Verzicht gegen Kahr so überzeugend nachwies, dass der Herr Generalstaatskommissar sich keinen anderen Rat wusch als das schleimige Verbot der ausgezeichneten Schrift. Jetzt erheben sich seine früheren Vorläufer, einer nach dem anderen, und rufen, auf Rothendörfers Argumente gestützt, Kahr's Mitschuld in alle Welt. Der zum Schutz von Sicherheit und Ordnung eingesetzte Staatskommissar müsse zum B. r. g. e. r. g. Die nationalsozialistische Gefahr, die das offizielle Motiv für den bayrischen Ausnahmezustand, für den Generalstaatskommissar abgeben musste, war die Kutise. Dahinter stand die nationale Reichsdiiktur in München, stand der Marsch nach Berlin. Pöchner als Zivilgouverneur für Thüringen und Sachsen. Gewalttätige Absetzung der preussischen Regierung. Mit nachrückenden Kandidaten wird schon verhandelt. In Mittelwäld, im Angesicht des Karwendel, wo Kahling so gern weil, haben Weher und Piltzinger muntert nach vorher auch mit dem bayrischen Ministerpräsidenten die nationale Reichsdiiktur besprochen. Im Militäratol wird Erhardt, den der Oberreichsanwalt Scherzmaier gewiss auch zum Marxist, wegen Meinids steckbrieflich verpönt, aus Oesterreich nach München geholt. Er leitet den Aufmarsch der irregulären, der sich an der bayrisch-schweizerischen Grenze vollzieht. Wir haben seinerzeit über diese Vorgänge berichtet.

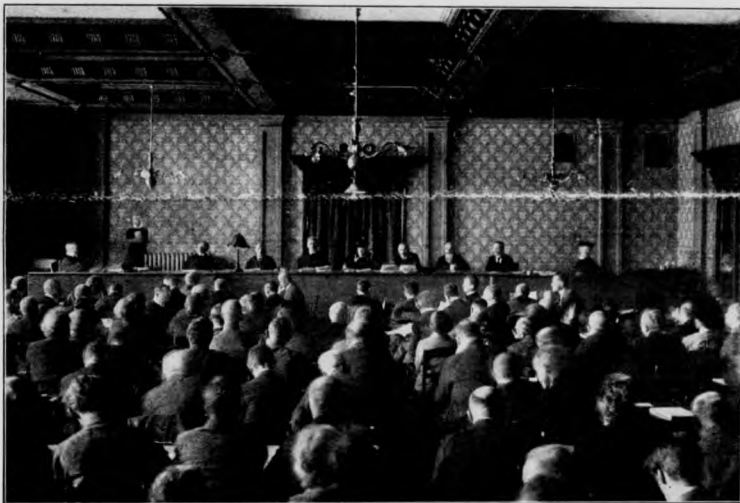
Interessant wie die sachlichen Enthüllungen, sind auch die persönlichen Indiskretionen über die Manner des hohen Staatsstriches. Sie werden vor der ganzen Öffentlichkeit nackt ausgezogen und dieser Anschauungsunterricht kommt lehrreich sein. Kahr, der Herr des Vaterlandes, auch von der deutschen nationalen Presse in Nürnberg bis zum 9. November ungeliebt, ist „ein Umfallecharakter“, ist „kleinwüchsig“, ist „der Mann der offenen Hinterthüren“. Und General Lössow, „Kasseler“ und zugleich, ist ein Offizier, der sich in ein Fahrenhaken nur dann einlässt, wenn ihm einmündigzig Propagandagarantie für den Erfolg gewährt sind. Alle diese Enthüllungen kommen etwas spät. Nicht zu spät. Man muss immerhin bedenken: General v. Lössow liecht noch immer eine hohe Pension von der deutschen Republik, General Seiwert noch immer die bayrische Politik und Herr v. Kahr ist noch immer Regierungspräsident von Oberbayern und fñt als Staatskommissar die vollziehende Gewalt des Ausnahmezustandes aus. Gewiss, Sie sind nicht überführt. Aber sie sind angeklagt. Sind höchst verdächtig. Hat die Staatsanwaltschaft, hat die Regierung etwas gegen sie unternommen? Sind sie suspendiert? Sind Sie verhaftet? fahren gegen sie eingeleitet?

Wir müssen den Angeklagten dankbar sein, dass sie auch den bisher noch Ungläubigen reinen Wein eingeschenkt haben über die Absichten und die Taten des sogenannten Generalstaatskommissars. Denn diese Verteidigung ihrer Entlastung rechtlich oder moralisch? Sind sie weniger strafbar, weil andere mitverschuldet haben? Geht der Einbrecher straffrei aus, weil der Polizeibeamte oder selber mitläuft? Und der Einbruch in den deutschen Reichsfrieden und die deutsche Entwicklung, der hier schuld war, gerade in dem Moment, da von allen Parteien die härteste Anstrengung geleistet wurde, um den Sturz in den Abgrund zu verhindern, kann an Gewissenlosigkeit und Verantwortungslosigkeit schwerlich überboten werden. Und moralisch? Die Helden, die uns jetzt von den Angeklagten als Jammerklappen geschleudert werden und deren Charakter sie ja schon langem kennen sind doch dieselben, die diese betrogenen Betrüger dem Volk als Deutschlands Befreier hingestellt haben.

Und sie selber? Die Männer auf der Anklagebank? Sprich, damit ich dich sehe! Sie haben gesprochen. Auch Ludendorff. Und beschämt müssen auch die Anhänger bekennen: Nein, so sehen Deutschlands Erneuerer nicht aus. Mit einer Handvoll Pöchner, sämtlich vornehmten Charakters, sehen sie sich und ihr immer anspruchsvoller werdendes Publikum über die gemeinliche gestrige Oede hinwegzulaufen. Nach Hitler ist der Marxismus an allem schuld und Deutschland erst dann gerettet, wenn der letzte Marxist bekehrt ist. Natürlich, hat der nationalsozialistische Handlung ein einen Blick in die Gedankenwelt von Karl Marx getan. Pöchner, der nach seinem Geständnis sich fünf Jahre das Geschäft des Hochverrats treibt und im Nebenberuf erst Polizeipräsident, dann aber noch heute hat beim bayrischen obersten Landgericht ist, macht die internationalen Freimaurerei verantwortlich. Ludendorff endlich erhebt eine grosse Anklage gegen die Zeitgenossen und bayrische Volkspartei, weil ihnen Zerströmungspolitik gegen das deutsche Kaiserthum vor und macht sie in jener sorglosen Geschichtsklitterung, die uns aus seinen Memoiren vertraut ist, für den Verlust Oberschlesiens verantwortlich. Den ganzen Hass gegen die Partei, von der er sich trennen hat und zu

Fall gebracht glaubt, gegen den katholischen Klerus bis zum Kardinal Faulhaber und bis zum Papst, hat er in seiner gestrigen dreistündigen Propagandarede zum Ausdruck gebracht. Neben Ueberhebungen und Unrichtigkeiten findet er treffende Worte gegen den reichsgefährdenden bayrischen Föderalismus, gegen den Verfallensbruch der bayrischen Regierung, gegen Lössows Meuterei, gegen die separatistischen Pläne gewisser finanzieller und schwerindustrieller Kreise am Rhein, und er wird geradezu ein Verteidiger der Weimarer Verfassung, wenn er auf die gefährlichen Konsequenzen des Mitschuldens der Hochverrats und der Meuterei, macht sich hier alle jene Argumente zu eigen, die besonders die demokratische Presse aus Sorge um Rechtsstaatlichkeit und Rechtsstaatlichkeit gegen die bayrischen Denkschrift und die gefährlichen Konsequenzen Ludendorffs angegriffen worden ist. Einen besonderen Angriff unternimmt er noch auf General von Seeckt mit der Behauptung, Seeckt habe den Münchener Putsch zu einem parallelen Vorgehen in Berlin ausüben wollen. Vermuthlich wird ihm Herr v. Seeckt die Antwort darauf nicht schuldig bleiben. Schuld Ludendorff befragt wird, befallt ihm jene Gedankenschwäche und Unsicherheit, die er bisher vor Gericht jedesmal bewiesen hat.

Neben Marxisten, Freimaurern und Klerikalen wenden sich alle Angeklagten in entzündeter Melodie gegen das „internationale Judentum“, und man wundert sich nur, dass General Ludendorff sich nicht auf das kaudliche Pamphlet der „Weisen von Zion“ beruft, das er in seinem Werke der deutschen Geschichtsbuchung als erste historische Quelle empfohlen hat. Denn das ist ja das Erschütternde an diesem Dingen: diese Leute glauben das wirklich, so muß sich in ihren Köpfen wirklich die Welt, und da muss ihnen die eine Tatsache besonders schmerzhaft sein,



Der Münchener Hochverratsprozess. Szene im Gerichtssaal unmittelbar nach Eröffnung der Sitzung. Vor dem Richtertisch links (vom Beschauer aus) die Angeklagten.

Ist ein Ermittlungsverfahren...

dass nach der gestrigen Bekundung des Oberreichsanwalts Krieger gerade in dem Münchener Vaterländischen Verbanden die Juden so zahlreich vertreten waren, dass ihre Ausschliessung von der Versammlung des 8. November undenkbar erschien.

Also gegen Marxisten und Juden. Aber in dem Kabinett Stressemann, das Hitler durch seinen Pistolenschuss im Bürgerbräuerei für „abgesetzt“ erklärte, waren diese beiden Kategorien von Delinquenten ohnesorgig vertreten, wie unter den Ministern der Regierung Kahling, die er verhaften und abführen liess. Vergleichlich sucht man in den stunde langen Reden der Angeklagten nach einem einzigen positiven Gedanken, Vorbehalt oder Plan, soweit nicht Ludendorff die hier der Weimarer Verfassung vertritt. Hitler beschimpft die Buchhändler und schmäht die des Marxismus einermüssen unverdächtige Heeresangehörige, die den nationalen Widerstand zum bezahlten Generalstreik dezerniert haben. Sein Nachbar schilt die Dentenkbank, die nach von ihm verkündeten Weisheit den Rest des deutschen Nationalvermögens der internationalen Finanz ausleihen. Aber was dem nun geschieden sollte, wie dem dem deutschen Volk geholfen werden könnte, sagt uns auch ihre Offenherzigkeit nicht. Denn in der einen Bemerkung, dass man die schwarzweisse Fahne über den Rhein tragen wollte, ist ein realpolitischer Gedanke nicht erkennbar. Demnach der Bürgerkrieg, der Verlust von Rhein und Ruhr die Verheerung der Heeresmacht, selbst ein Mann, der Kahr, der mit-schuldig ist, mit, erangene ist, muss zwölf Stunden vorher über diesen Trug und Wortbruch ehrgeiziger Gesellen, bekennen: Ein Gelimes des uns und zehntausend Unsterblichen hätte Deutschland samt Bayern in den Abgrund gestossen.

Welch ein Prozess! Die Staatsanwaltschaft behauptet hoch und heilig, sie habe nie daran gedacht, den wegen Meinids steckbrieflich verfolgten Ehrhardt zu verhaften, sie habe seine Wohnung gar nicht gewusst und muss den Heilm einstecken, dass ihr vom Verleumdungsbericht in München jedem Bekannte Adresse zugehen wird. Das Publikum spielt annehmend mit. Der Vorsitzende wehrt sich sehr energisch gegen die Staatsanwaltschaft, die in sein Gericht eingreift. Aber er hat nichts dagegen einzuwenden, dass dem Staatsanwalt vorgeworfen wird,

er erfülle nur eine Pflicht, die ihm selber sehr lästig sei, und er hat auch offenbar nichts gegen jene Elemente des ansehend merkwürdig gesichteten Publikums, das mit Bravo und mit Entzerrungsrufen wieder und wieder demonstriert. Wir stehen erst im Anfang dieses Prozesses. Man wird enghelliger Urteile zurückhalten müssen. Aber man kann eins schon heute sagen, wirkt dieser Prozess endlich aufdringlich, bringt er endlich Erkenntnis und Bekenntnis der schweren Unterlassungssünden, mit denen die Republik und ihre Vertreter beladen sind, dann ist selbst dieses tonere Lobgedicht, das sich selbst die umgehenden Stimmen noch unbekanntem Ursprungs, die für alle diese militärischen und zivilen Wahnwitzprojekte in der Zeit grössten deutschen Elends verschwendet worden sind, nicht umsonst verlan.

Minister Stressemann zur aussenpolitischen Lage.

Die Reparationsfrage — Die Sachverständigen. — Der Völkerbund — Amerika und England.

Von Erich Dombrowski.

Zu Beginn der Reichstagsitzung vom 28. Februar erstattete Dr. Stressemann das aussenpolitische Referat. Klar und nüchtern. Ohne jeden Ueberschwang. Er hielt sich an das Wort Lassalle's: auszusprechen, was ist. Er hatte Bildung zu dem Wort Lassalle's, auch auf das andere Ufer, am liebsten schaffend, wo weiten die aussenpolitische Entwicklung der letzten Monate zu werten. Zu rosigem Optimismus liegt gewiss kein Anlass vor. Zu verzweifelnem Pessimismus aber noch weniger. Alles ist heute mehr dem ja, noch im Flusse. „Wer wie die Deutschmannen von vorn herein über die Aussichtslosigkeit aller deutschen Verständigungsversuche in der Reparationsfrage höhl, möge sagen was er an ihre Stelle setzen will. Damit, dass wir von unserer Seite aus den Versailler Vertrag als zerrissen erklären, können wir in der Hauptpolitik nicht weiter.“ Richtig das ist, unter den vorerwähnten Umständen, in der Tat die einzige mögliche aussenpolitische Einstellung, auch wenn man, erkennend Angese, lange ein schwebende Sympathie besitzt. Einmal werden wir entscheiden, die Deutschlands Horizont bedecken, doch teilen und neue, bessere Perspektiven eröffnen. Ist dieser Augenblick schon gekommen?

Manche Anzeichen sprechen dafür. Mit Amerika ist ein Handelsvertrag zustande gekommen. England hat die auf den deutschen Import lastende Reparationsabgabe von 26 auf 5 Prozent herabgesetzt und, darüber hinaus, gewisse Erleichterungen für den Verkehr mit kleineren Warensendungen zugesagt. Der internationale Seehandel wird sich ausbreiten, der die deutsche Leistungsfähigkeit für Reparationszwecke zu prüfen hat, steht vor dem Abschluss seiner Arbeiten. Fast in der ganzen Welt regt sich wieder der Gedanke der Menschlichkeit um der deutschen Not durch wirkliche Hilfe zu stehen. Kurz, die internationale Atmosphäre beginnt, von uns aus gesehen, wieder heller zu werden.

Trotzdem sind vorläufig weigerrische Hoffnungen noch nicht angebracht. Denn die eigentlichen Entscheidungen über die Wiederherstellung der Mark besitzend, und über die Rhein- und Ruhrfrage. Wie stellt sich der Ausseminister dazu? Vor allem ist eine baldige Lösung erwünscht. Voraussetzung dafür ist die Ordnung der inneren Verhältnisse. Dem Weg dazu haben wir durch die Stabilisierung der Mark besitzend, Auslands-Kredite brauchen wir, um diesen Prozess zu festigen, das heisst, um die Kreditrolle der Industrie und der Landwirtschaft zu beheben und unsere stagnierende Produktion wieder zu heben. Voraussetzung ist ferner ein Moralforum für die Reparationsbestimmungen und die richtige Einschätzung unserer Leistungsfähigkeit. Lange können wir zum Beispiel nicht mehr die Besatzungskosten aufbringen. Auch der augenblickliche Notetat, der durch die geradezu brutale Beschränkung der Ausgaben unser Kulturniveau unerträglich herabdrückt, können wir nicht zur dauernden Grundlage unserer Finanzverhältnisse machen. Voraussetzung ist endlich die Wiederherstellung der in Westdeutschland unterbrochenen Wirtschaft, Steuer- und Verkehrsverbindungen. Eine Lösung mit den Gegnern kann dem auch nicht nach der Richtung hin erfolgen, dass eine besondere deutsche Reparationsprovinz geschaffen wird.

Damit hat Dr. Stressemann, unweitend, den Bahnen gezeichnet, in dem sich die kommenden Verhandlungen abspielen müssen, wenn sie für Deutschland zu einem annehmbaren Ergebnis führen sollen. „Wir sind“, sagte der Minister, „zur Diskussion der Reparationsfrage bereit, wollen aber die augenblicklichen Verhandlungen der Sachverständigenausschüsse nicht stören.“ Allerdings, können wir keinen Sonderfrieden mit Frankreich schliessen, denn wir sind als Schuldner den Vereinigten Völkern verpflichtet.“ Deutlicher konnte Deutschlands Verständigungswille nicht von amtlicher Stelle ausgesprochen werden als durch den Mund des Ausseministers. Auch sonst denken wir nicht daran, uns, mit bösem Blick, in einen föhlig negativen Schraubengang zurückzuziehen. Sind wir bereit, in den Völkerverbund einzutreten, hat der sozialdemokratische

Werbenummer für die Leipzig-Messe (IV) und Breslauer Messe (II).

Zur Zeitgeschichte.

Abgeordnete Müller-Franken in der Debatte die Regierung gegen...

Die Reichstagsdebatte haben, ob sie nun zu dem nicht gerade wünschenswerten...

Resultat ist nicht einmal zu verwundern. Ein neuer Geist und neue Männer in Downing Street...

Nach den Minister kamen wieder die Parteien zum Wort. Der demokratische Abgeordnete...

Die Zerschneidung der administrativen, wirtschaftlichen, politischen Einheit...

Es wird erzählt, dass Herr Poincaré seinen „Schrittfolge“ für die Abkündigung...

Die neue Einwanderungsvorlage. Besserung für Deutschland und England.

Von unserem Korrespondenten Lynkeu.

Die neue Vorlage, die gleichzeitig für den Senat von republikanischer Seite...

Kann man aber etwa die Aussichten auf Entschlüsse, die der langwierigen Gesetzgebung...

Man wird sich heute sagen dürfen, dass in Belgien so und so anders...

Folgt die voraussichtliche Wirkung der neuen Quotenbestimmung auf die Grundlage...

nach sorgfältiger Prüfung der Zulassungsfähigkeit, jedes einzelnen und der Quotenüberschuss...

Im Grunde genommen hatte die Medizin in der schon so langen fähigen Hochfrequenz...

Table with 2 columns: Country and Quota. Includes entries for Deutschland, Danzig, Österreich, Tschechoslowakei, Dänemark, Polen, Ungarn, Niederlande, Grossbritannien, Schweden, Norwegen, Schweiz, Jugoslawien, Italien, Russland, Estland, Lettland, Litauen, Rumänien.

Der Heilfunk.

Die Küstenstationen in Göteborg und Bergen unterhalten seit einiger Zeit...

Ein wissenschaftliches Interesse haben die interessierten Versuche...

Die Tabelle zeigt deutlich die Verschiebung zugunsten von Deutschland...

Die Johnson-Vorlage sieht weiter Erleichterung der Einwanderung...

Mit einem solchen drahtlosen Gesundheitsdienst sind aber die Verwendungsmöglichkeiten...

Volksoffertale. Zur Linderung der Not im besetzten Gebiet. Notgeldmünzen.

Amerika und die Schuldfrage.

Reichsminister a. D. Dr. Bernhard Dernburg.

Vor mir liegt das amtliche Protokoll der Congressional Record, über eine Rede, die im Dezember der Senator von Oklahoma, Robert L. Owen, im Senat der Vereinigten Staaten in Washington gehalten hat. Es trägt die folgenden Überschriften: „Wie die europäische Diplomatie sich um das Wohlwollen Amerikas kümmert.“ Es gibt keine grundlagende irgendwelcher Art, die Schulden an Amerika zu streichen, Amerikanische Preise und Steuern. Die Zahlung einer Beihilfe von die amerikanischen Kriegsteilnehmern, ersthaft befristet durch die Ungerechtfertigkeit in Europa, eine Folge der europäischen Geheimplomatie.“

Oklahoma ist einer der neueren Staaten der Union, er ist aus einer Indianerreservation entstanden, und bis zu seiner Eröffnung für weiße Besiedlung vor etwa 30 Jahren ging er unter dem Namen „Niemandes Land“ Söldnern hat er sich, unterstützt durch überseeische Bodenschätze an Petroleum, Erz, Baumwoll-ländereien, schnell zu einem der wohlhabendsten und fortschrittlichsten Staaten der Union entwickelt. Herr Owen entwirft die Ueberzeugung, er ist indianisches Blut, wie man darüber sagt, ein „Mittelpräzident“, frei von europäischer Tradition und vom Vorwurf, dass er sich aus irgendwelchen Gründen der Propaganda für irgendeines der fernen kriegführenden Länder zur Verfügung stellen könnte.

Nach 10 Jahre sind seit Kriegsausbruch verlossen, nahezu zehn-lange hat die feindliche Propaganda es verstanden, uns als die Alleinschuldigen an dem Weltunglück darzustellen. Am längsten hält diese Psychose selbstverständlich in den Ländern an, die von europäischen Geschlossen am weitesten entfernt sind, und die wie die Vereinigten Staaten mit dem Ergebnis ihres Eingetretens wenig zufrieden die Dinge auf Grund der einmal gefundenen Formel von dem deutschen Ueberfall auf harmlose und ungerüstete Nachbarn als ein für allemal entgegengenommen betrachten sehen möchten. „Res judicata“ wie Lloyd George im März 1921 in London sagte. Wenn einem eine Diskussion unbehaglich ist, so sieht man am liebsten nichts mehr über den Gegenstand, und alle die unzulänglichen dokumentarischen Ent-füllungen darüber, wo denn die Kriegsschuld eigentlich gewesen haben, sind in der amerikanischen Öffentlichkeit ohne nach-haltigen Eindruck geblieben.

So kann dem Herr Owen seiner Rede den sensationellen Inhaltteil gehen: „Die inneren Geheimmisse der europäischen Diplomatie zu dem ersten Male dem amerikanischen Publi-kum enthüllt.“ Die Rede hat denn auch einen sehr starken und nachhaltigen Eindruck gemacht. Denn der amerikanische Senat ist nach der Konstitution der Regulator der auswärtigen Politik, und sein Ansehen bei seinem Volke übertrifft bei weitem das irgendjemandes zweites Oberhauses der Erde. Die amerikanische Öffentlichkeit, dass auch nicht unendlich vorgetragen Teile einer schriftlich ausgearbeiteten Rede dem stenographischen Protokoll einverleibt worden, hat es überdies ermöglicht, überdies alle Beweisstücke anzuhäufen, auf die der Redner seine Behauptungen stützt. Und so finden wir die lange Auszüge aus dem „Starbuck'schen Buche“, aus dem „Livre Noir“, aus der Korrespondenz Dswaldskis, auf die zuerst an dieser Stelle aufmerksam gemacht werden konnte, wüthliche Abdrucke der verschiedenen „Allianz- und Bandenverträge“, der Fälschungen des russischen Rotbuches, und die be-stehenden Bekanntheits aus dem alligen Bündnissen, so dass jede Angabe des Redners sofort ihren Beleg findet. Damit ist diese Rede ein Anknüpfen ersten Hanges gegen alle Kriegs-schuldler geworden. Ein weit Verheißung war ihr sicher, denn der Redner darf seine Ausführungen mit Anlagen beliebig oft auf Staatskasernen ablesen lassen, und die für Kongress-papiere die Portofreiheit genossen, auch überall hin in den Ver-einigten Staaten verschicken. So haben auf diesem, unermüht nicht gewöhnlichen Wege die die „Kriegsschuldfrage“ zerstören den Geheimdokumenten nicht nur ihren Weg in die öffentlichen Akten des amerikanischen Parlaments gefunden, sondern sie sind auch weit in das Publikum gedrungen.

Die Ausführungen haben einen maßvollen Grundton. Sie wollen auf den Weg von Wahrheit und Klarheit zu Gerechtigkeit und Versöhnung leiten. Schuldig seien nicht die Völker, sondern die Geheimdiplomatie der führenden Claqueen, es sei ein Unrecht, diese Schuld an zur Zeit des Kriegsausbruches Un-gehorchen oder Unverschämten, an Fremden und Feinden heim-zuschreiben. Dann aber ein Hauptsatz: Frankreich hat und Russ-land den Krieg von langer Hand vorbereitet, es hat ge-nenne Feldzugspläne in Jahre hindurch geführten Verhandlungen vorbereitet, es hat allen Versuchen, das Unheil abzuwenden, seinen festen Kriegszwecken entgegengegriffen und so Deutschland in den Krieg gezwungen.

Wer hat die verhandlungsreifen Verträge abgeschlossen? Wer hat zum Kriege geführt, wer hat die Presse korumpiert? Frankreich gilt in Amerika für eine Demokratie. Das hilft nur in beschränktem Ausmass zu. Denn allein der Präsident (Bourgeois) vertritt die Nation in auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, bei ihm sind die Vertreter fremder Mächte akkreditiert, er führt die Verhandlungen, seine Unterschrift bindet die Nation in



Was vom Kühltai in Tirol noch zu sehen ist. Der Schauplatz des Lawineneingriffs in den Tiroler Bergen.

internationalen Verträgen, nicht von Owen aus dem Munde des französischen Staatsrechtlers J. Barthélemy. Ferner ver-handelt und ratifiziert der Präsident alle Verträge auf seine alleinige Verantwortung (ebenda, Seite 105). Bei dieser Ge-legenheit macht Owen auch der Legende von der un-erwandelbaren Freundschaft Frankreichs zu Amerika ein Ende. „Als wir in dem grossen Bürgerkriege verstrickt waren, beteiligte sich Frankreich an der Absendung

Bestalt ist es Owens Voraussetzung, dass die Russen und Franzosen den Krieg betreiben haben. Die deutschen mi-litarischen Herrscher wollten den Krieg nicht, sie suchten ihn zu vermeiden und sie schritten zum Kriege nur aus der Ueberzeugung, dass die dänischen Mobilisierungen von Frankreich und Russland deren Entschlossenheit zum Krieg bestärkten und heimlich als eine Kriegserklärung Frankreichs und Russlands gegen Deutschland gedeutet waren. Die Do-kumente zeigen, dass die russischen und französischen Führer zum Kriege entschlossen waren und dass die Mobilis-ierungen der Beginn eines Krieges sein sollten, der seit vielen Jahren überlegt vorbereitet und ausgearbeitet war in vollständigen Feldzugsplänen, durch jährliche, militärische Konferenzen. Ähnliche, nicht ganz so klare Vorwürfe werden der engli-schen Diplomatie gemacht. Deutschland wird militärisch-geheimlich, das Schließen der Haager Konferenzen und der Faust auf den Tag“ vorgeworfen.

Der Versailler Friede entspricht nach Owen nicht den Versprechungen, die man dem deutschen Volke gemacht hat. Sie sind sämtlich missachtet. Deutschland ist ausgeraubt worden, die Reparationen die Tausende an neuen Milliarden Dollars geschätzt hat, sind auf die wahnwitzige Höhe von 32 Milliarden hinausgeschraubt worden. Deutschland ist rechtlich und moralisch verurteilt, die von ihm, von der deutschen Republik an-genommene Entschädigung der Zivilbevölkerung der alliierten Länder für den ihm durch die deutschen Tuppen zu Lande zu See und durch die Luft zugefügten Schaden zu leisten. „Aber dieser muss ehrenhaft und gerecht durch unpartei-sche Richter und Experten und nicht durch die Begünstigten oder Vertreter der alten Prinzipien europäischer Diplomatie, die direkt zu diesem Krieg geführt haben, erfolgen.“

Die Bedingungen, die von Präsident Wilson für den Waffenstillstand festgelegt, von den Alliierten und dann von Deutschland angenommen wurden, können ungestraft nicht flagrant missachtet werden. Eine so gesatte Unbilligkeit bringt eine Erneute des Hasses und kommende Kriege. Es ist noch nicht zu spät, die aggressive Unterwerfung der deutschen Völker zu korrigieren.“

Die Rede ist unter allen Umständen ein Tat grosser Auf-richtigkeit und Entschlossenheit. Ich habe keinen Zweifel, dass Senator Owen sie auch unter weit ungünstigeren Umständen ge-nannt hätte; aber dass sie so weit Verheißung und so geringen Widerspruch gefunden hat, ist das Bedeutende. Es zeigt, wie weit der Pomarsismus des von den Amerikanern verhasstele Frankreich in den Augen Amerikas herabgedrückt hat. Frank-reich hat den Krieg gewollt; man kann es davon nicht frei-sprechen. Frankreich hat die Vereinigten Staaten betrogen, es verdient keine Mitleid, Frankreich bleibt der alte Imperialist und Militarist, es ist kein Grund vorhanden, auch nur ein Teilchen von den Forderungen abzulassen.

So wird es auch im Westen nicht und nach gesehen werden. Aber was geht in England vor? Morel fragt seinen Freund aus der Union of Democratic Control und Milibank aus dem „Foreign Affairs“, Arthur Ponsonby, der jetzt in den Gemein-schaft auf der Regierungsbank als Untersekretär des Auswärtigen Amtes sitzt: „Wird England seine Vorkriegsdokumente ver-öffentlichen, wie das Deutschland getan hat?“ „Die Regierung erwägt die Wege, wie das geschehen könnte“, ist die offizielle Antwort.

Mit dem aufgezwungenen Bekenntnis der Alliierten Schuld im Artikel 231 ist es zu Ende. Auch wenn Lloyd George die Dis-kussion mit dem advokatorisch heppigen Diktum von der „cause jugée“ abtun will. Und das ist für uns eine Gewissens-beruhigung besonders deshalb, weil auf der von uns unendlich anerkannten Reparationsverpflichtung dieser Artikel nicht zu-sammenhängt. Aber es ist weiter die Frage, ob Frankreich wohl daran getan, das moralische Erwachen der Welt abzu-warten, anstatt sich vorher schon zu einem Einlenken in der Reparationsfrage zu bequemen. „Wird die deutsche Alliierten Schuld am Kriege verurteilt, so hat der ganze Versailler Vertrag seine Grundlage verloren“ (Lloyd George als Premierminister, 3. März 1921). Die Fortführung der Diskussion kann leicht dazu führen, dass nicht mehr nur die Reparationsfrage, sondern manches andere zur Diskussion gestellt wird, und hoffentlich ein für die ganze Welt ehrenvolleres, friedlicheres, und aufrechteres Dik-tament den Versailler Schandfrieden ersetzen wird.

Deutsche Gelehrte im Auslande. Professor Fritz Haber, der Direktor des Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institutes für physikalische Chemie und Elektrochemie in Berlin-Dahlem, ist in Buenos Aires eingetroffen. Der Gelehrte hat auf der Ueberfahrt Untersuchungen der chemischen Bestandteile des Meerwassers ausgeführt. Professor Dr. Rudolf Knaus war 1913 zur Lei-tung des im Han befindlichen staatlich-argentinischen bakteri-ologischen Institutes nach Buenos Aires berufen worden. Er hat sein Institut in drei Jahren fertigstellen und 1916 eröffnen können. In der Folgezeit hat Knaus das Institut zu einer der grössten bakteriologischen und serologischen Anstalten ausgebaut und sich besonders auch durch Bearbeitung von Heister, Kalkman, argentinischen Wasseruntersuchungen neu wissenschaftliche Verdienste um die Heilung des Gesundheitswesens in Argentinien erworben. Die wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten seines Institutes werden jetzt in einer eigenen Zeitschrift veröffentlicht. Der Hatten- und Giessereiingenieur E. A. Schott, der sich etwa vier Jahre als berater Ingenieur für Berg- und Hüttenwesen in Kanada aufgehalten hat, wurde von der Regierung dieses Landes in An-erkennung seiner Verdienste zum ordentlichen Professor an der Universität Popayan ernannt. Professor Schott hat sich durch Veröffentlichungen auf dem Gebiete des Giesseiwesens in Fachkreisen einen guten Namen gemacht.



Bergwerkbesitzer Emil Sauer, hervorragender Sachverständiger der deutschen Kaliindustrie, starb im 71. Lebensjahr.

und Unterstützung des Kaisers Maximilian von Mexiko, und er musste erst von den U. S. mit Androhung bewaffneter Ge-walt gezwungen werden, sich zurückziehen. Also ein schwerer Verlust gegen die Monroe Doctin. Solange das gewöhnliche Volk, das die Steuern zahlt und sein Leben auf dem Schlaraffenfeld aufbaut, auf seine Führer in der Regierung keinen grösseren Ein-fluss hat, existiert keine wahre Demokratie.“



Schweres Eisenbahnunglück bei Ludwigstadt. Der abgestürzte Güterzug München-Berlin.

Das Memelland und seine Zukunft.

Die Ankunft der Memelkommission

Von unserem Sonderberichterstatter

Fritz Engel.

Die vom Völkerbund ernannte Memelkommission ist hier eingetroffen. Man hat sie von der Grenze her mit allen Ehren empfangen und mit Mühe überführt, wöhlend die Gäste, die nur mit den friedliebenden Absichten ausgerüstet sind, ein wenig erstaunt waren. Es scheint auch, als ob die zurecht im Memelland regierenden Litauer die Gäste unter Verschluss halten und ihnen die völlige Bewegungsfreiheit verkörtern wollten — aber die Energie der Herren brach sofort durch. Sie wählten sich als Beratern und Empfangsraum nicht das von litauischer Seite vorgeschlagene Lokal, sondern den Saal im Rathaus, in dem die Ernennungen an Preussens Not aber auch an seinen Aufstiege, aus den Bildern und Hüfen an der Wand eine lehrreiche Sprache reden. Und was hier im deutschen Publikum, also in der mit Russerei Mehrheit überwiegenden Masse der Bevölkerung mit besonderem Blick aufgenommen wurde: der Präsident der Kom. ist Herr Norman Davis, liess sofort mitteilen, dass er für jedermann zu sprechen sein werde.

Mister Norman Davis ist von dem Mitglied des Niederländischen Wirtschaftszentrums Krollner und von dem Mitglied der schwedischen Akademie der technischen Wissenschaften Jernström, die er mit sich führt. Der Amerikaner Norman Davis selbst ist Finanzfachmann und in der politischen Welt seit langem bekannt. Er gehörte der amerikanischen Delegation auf der Friedenskonferenz von 1919 an und war später Unterstaatssekretär. Er stand dem verstorbenen Wilson nahe. Während der Durchreise in Berlin wurde ihm von dem dortigen Memelland eine Zeitung überreicht, die ihm über die Zustände im Memelland aufklären sollte. Das war sehr loblich — aber mit geringem Takt übersah man dabei, dass das Blatt gleichzeitig einen bitteren Angriff auf den Präsidenten Wilson enthielt.

Die drei Herren haben den Auftrag, die noch immer ungewisse Lage des Memellandes zu studieren und darüber dem Völkerbunde zu berichten, der am 10. März die endgültige Entscheidung treffen wird. Dann endlich ist zu erwarten, dass hier ein Zustand eintritt, der am Körper des Deutschen Reiches und Preussens immer eine schmerzende Narbe bleiben, der aber doch eine gewisse Beruhigung und die Möglichkeit ungestörter litauischer Arbeit bringen wird. Diese Stadt Memel und die ganze kleine Memelland schenken sich nach festen Verhältnissen, nachdem sie seit Abschluss des Krieges ein Spielball der hohen Politik gewesen, die von den unünftigeren oder unwissenden Siegern in Versailles und auf der anderen Seite von den expansionstierigen Litauern betrieben wurde und von diesen Osten her immer noch getrieben wird. Man erinnert sich, dass die Memelland der Reich losgehört wurde, und dass dann gegen alles Erwarten die englischen Truppen sollen bereits auf dem Wege gewesen sein ein französisches Kontingent versehen und das Land okkupierte. Die Franzosen versuchten hier die Methode der „moralischen Erziehung“. Sie vertriehen auf die besondere Art des Lorbessers, wie er im Ballehspiel so leicht gegen eine unbesetzte Bevölkerung gewonnen wurde, und unterliessen jeden härteren Eingriff. Daran erinnern sich die Memeler nicht ohne Anerkennung, aber auch der Glaube an die politische Seite nicht zur Naehgichtigkeit bringen können. Die Franzosen sahen auch ein, dass hier nichts zu machen war. Als sie im Januar 1920 den Ruhrland einnahm und als unmittelbar danach die Litauer die gleiche Bandstillerentournee zeigten und ins Memelland einfielen, wurde von den Franzosen die Tricolore rasch zusammengepackt und die weisse Fahne aufgezogen. In Warschau war man nicht entzückt. Dort hat man die grosse Liebe für die Ostsee entdeckt, die Polen schwärmen umgibt für den Duft nordischer Hüfen, und da sie mit Litauern noch immer offiziell im Kriegszustand leben, wenn auch nicht im Kriege, war es ihnen peinlich, dass der litauische Botschafter, General Dr. Krieger, eben preussischer Gerichtssekretär, sich des Memellandes bemächtigte, gelten nach dem Beispiel ihres eigenen Helden Heligowski, der den Litauern die wichtige Stadt Wilna bei Nacht und Nebel weggeschmuggelt hatte.

Man muss diese Vorgänge streifen, um zu verstehen, um welche berechtigten Grundsätze die Memelländer einen Schlusspunkt für den jetzigen Zustand legen. Der Völkerbund arbeitet ja langsam, wenn zwischen die Alliierten ein „Statut“ ausgehandelt halten, so setzt Litauen ein eigenes Statut auf, angelehnt an den Statut der Alliierten im vorigen Jahr bei einem scheinbar denkbarhohen Akt mit der Präferenz dem Memellande die Autonomie versprochen hatten, so fügten sie doch hinzu, dass die Stunde dazu noch nicht gekommen sei. Inzwischen sind vier wichtige Lebensquellen des Landes, Post, Eisenbahn, Zoll und Häfen von der litauischen Zentrale Kowno aus in Verwaltung genommen worden. Bei der Eisenbahn gab es dabei einen Konflikt mit Deutschland, Litauen hatte sich die Eisenbahnmaterialien bemächtigt, Deutschland sperkte die Verbindung zwischen Tilsit und der neuen litauischen Grenzstation Puzegien, die jetzt schon hier litauische Puzegien heisst, und seit dem Tage, zu dem ich hier bin, schlaffen die Reisenden auf die Fremde einer Omnibusfahrt bei 45 Grad Kalte vorüber und die Grenze mit der Bahn erreichen, um dann in andere Waggonen überzusiedeln, die ihren deutschen Ursprung auch noch hinter den litauischen Schiffen erkennen lassen.

Litauen will dem Memellande nunmehr einen monatlichen Zuschuss von 200.000 Lit gleich 20.000 Mark, hat aber des Völkerbundes aus den vorkriegs-gemachten Quellen herausgezogen. Die Liebe der Litauer zum Memellande ist die Liebe der Bayern zur Mittelalt. Darüber hinaus wird natürlich in „Völkerverziehung“ gemacht. Die litauische Sprache, übrigens kein schlechter, fast griechisch-romanischer Klang, mit reichlichen Vokalen und Biphthongen ist das stärkste Mittel, nachdem sie früher von Preussens als Sprachdonkmal gepflegt und erhalten worden, dient sie nun zur Agitation. Sie wird in den Schulen lehrhaft und der Jugend eingebracht — ein erkennen auf die Zukunft gerichteter Willen, der aber auf Grund schlössen wird. Es werden auch höhere Hebel versucht, sehr peinliche Ausweisungen gegen deutscher Männer sind erfolgt, und dem Oberbürgermeister Dr. Grabow, der mit scharfer Belohnung an der Spitze der deutschen Bewegung steht, ist eben die Ehre eines Verweises zuteil geworden. Alle Anordnungen gehen von dem fünfköpfigen Litauendirektorium aus, dem noch der von Kowno abgeordnete Oberkommissar Budrys zur Seite steht, Präsident des Direktoriums ist Herr Gajanus. Er und Budrys

scheinen relativ gemässigt zu sein, aber immer wieder höre ich, dass Simonitis, der nach einer vielfach gewonnenen Vergangenheit jenen Erhebungsputsch geleitet hat und dann offiziell abgesetzt wurde, noch heute der Lenker der Dinge ist.

Das Trübliche und Aufrechtende gegenüber diesen Erscheinungen ist, dass sie ganz vergeblich sein werden, soweit es sich um den Plan der Litauisierung handelt. Das Volk war deutsch, ist deutsch, bleibt deutsch — deutsch mit dem Kernhalt preussisch. Selbst das von alters her litauisch sprechende Land, das im grossen Teil deutsch gesinnt. Eine mehrheitliche Volksabstimmung würde bis zu fünf Sechsteln eine deutsche Mehrheit ergeben. Wer die Strassen und das Hafengebiet durchwandert, sieht ganz wenig litauische und schon mehr hebraische Frimmschneider. Die Masse ist deutsch, die Verkehrs- und deshalb auch die Justizsprache ist deutsch, die Menschen sind typisch ostpreussisch, diese grossen, schwerhändigen, äusserlich stillen Leute. Innerlich sind sie alle stark bewegt; man fühlt es, wenn man ihnen irgendwo die Zunge lockert, wenn man hört, wie sie seelisch und wirtschaftlich leiden, wie sie zu Liquidationsverhältnissen gezwungen sind, und unter der litauischen Währung, diesen leichten, verschuldeten und nicht einmal in genügendem Masse vorhandenen, bereits unentgeltlich gewordenen Papierwerten, mit gutem Grunde stöhnen.

Meiner Taste muss endlich gemacht werden. Alles ruff nach dem Höchstmasse des Errichtens, nach der Autonomie. Die Grösstköpfe, die zum Teil vor dem Vorkrieg sich einer anderen Lösung zugehen waren, die 100 Geschäftstreibenden, die unter dem Präsidium des Herrn Kraus in der Memeler Handelskammer vereinigt sind, die Arbeiter der grossen Zedlhoferfabrik, die Schöfflerfabrik und der zehn Sägewerke, die alleamt mit der Erhaltung des eigentümlich Memeler Artikels, des Holzhandels, aufrechtgekauft sind, die gesamte Bürgerschaft kennend ihren Wunsch und einen Begriff Autonomie! Auch die im Verein litauischer Kaufleute gesammelten, meist kleineren Unternehmen erheben den Ruf. Vielleicht geht daraus hervor, dass unter Autonomie Verschiedenes gedacht und verstanden werden kann. Aber es ist kein Zweifel, dass die überwältigend, also die deutsche Mehrheit mit einiger Zufriedenheit nur einen vollen alle Auswegungskünste erhaltene Völkerautonomie annehmen kann. Die Tatsache, dass das Ländchen deutsch ist und sich auf dieser Basis selbst regieren soll, muss ohne Nebensanktionen und Hinterfür ausgesprochen und verfassungsmässig festgelegt werden.

Die Breslauer Frühjahrsmesse.

Von unserem Korrespondenten

Marlin Darge.

Das nach während der Kriegsjahre begründete Breslauer Messenunternehmen hat von Jahr zu Jahr über die Grenzen der Provinz hinaus im Reich und im Ausland steigende Beachtung gefunden. Heute ist die Breslauer Messe auf das Dreifache ihres Umfangs von 1918 erweitert. Von der Hofburg wurde sie schon 1922 als Reichsmesse anerkannt. Für die vom 9. bis 11. März stattfindende Frühjahrsmesse, die bereits am 14. ist, sind wiederum die Anmeldungen von Ausstellern und Einkäufern äusserst zahlreich eingelaufen. Leider gestattet der nur recht begrenzt zur Verfügung stehende Raum immer noch nicht eine vollständige Beröcksichtigung aller Interessenten. Es ist daher üblich geworden, auch ausserhalb des Messengeländes in privaten Räumen und Hotels in der Stadt Musiklager aufzuschlagen. Aus Raumangel muss ferner anzusetzen die allgemeine Musterreise der um umfangreichen Teilschen Messe getrennt werden, die für den 8. bis 11. Mai vorgesehene ist. Doch plant die Messgesellschaft noch für dieses Jahr die Errichtung weiterer grosserer Ausstellungsbauten.

So eröffnet sich die Messstadt Breslau als Zentrale des deutschen Bodenschützens und Industrie reichens Schlesiens und als günstiger Verkehrspunkt nicht nur für den Osten, sondern auch für den Südosten und Süden steigender Beliebtheit. Breslau soll nicht als Konkurrenzstadt mit Berlin an erster Stelle Schlesiens stehen, sondern in Westfalen und Sachsen das wichtigste deutsche Industriegebiet und hat gegenüber dem beiden genannten Ländern noch den Vorteil, dass es viel weniger an einzelnen Industriezweige spezialisiert ist, sondern fast alle für das Ländchen wichtige, für den Auslandsverkehr wichtigen Industrieanlagen besitzt. Einer der wichtigsten Zweige, der Maschinenbau, hat sich schon seit Jahrzehnten eine jährlich stattfindende Technische Messe tragfähig erwiesen, die seit jeher stark von Ausland, besonders von Russland und Polen, besucht wird. Daneben arbeitet die keramische und die Textilindustrie hauptsächlich für die Ausfuhr, so dass die schlesische Wirtschaft ausgedehnten Exportcharakter trägt. Die günstige geographische Lage in unmittelbarer Berührung mit den für Ostdeutschland wichtigsten Absatzmärkten erleichtert die Ausfuhr. Die Nachteile der ungenügenden Entfernungen von den Seehäfen sind durch immer weiter Fortschritte in der Schiffbauindustrie der Oder, durch die zum Beispiel während des Krieges die Eisenbahnen eingerichtet werden konnten, wiewohl weniger fähig geworden. Die internationalen Eisenbahnverbindungen von Norden und Nordosten nach dem Oberrhein und Südosten werden in offenkundiger Erfüllung nach den Unterbrechungen des Krieges, und der ersten Nachkriegszeit wieder aufgehoben.

Aus der starken industriellen Entwicklung Schlesiens erklärt sich die grosse Zahl schlesischer Firmen als Aussteller. Daneben ist aber schon die ersten Messen die Aufmerksamkeit der Kaufleute aus dem ganzen Reich festliegen, so dass im März etwa 60.000 Besucher aus allen Teilen des Reiches an der Aussteller Nichtschlesier zu werden.

Als Abnehmer kommen für Breslau aus dem Auslandskunden vor allem die Ostländer, besonders Polen, in Betracht und der Südosten: die Tschechoslowaken, Ungarn, Jugoslawien und Bulgaren. Mit der jugoslawischen Wirtschaft verknüpfen sich die wichtigsten Beziehungen, die ihren Ausdruck in der schon vor längerer Zeit erfolgten Gründung eines deutsch-jugoslawischen Handelsvertrages in Breslau fanden. Insbesondere in Breslau vor allem seien die aus der Textilindustrie, Papier, Druckereiverbindungen und maschinischen Schmied- und Bijouterie einzubeziehen. Rumänien kauft stark Textilwaren, Bulgarien dessen Entwicklung aus einem kontinuierlichen Aufwärt in einem Industriegebiet in Flusse ist hat grosse Bedarf an Fabrikerichtungen, insbesondere in Zuckere- und Mühlenfabriken, danach Glas- und Eisenwaren und Bekleidungsgegenstände.

Wie überhaupt die schlesische Wirtschaftorganisation, so hat vor allem die Breslauer Messe nationale wichtige Aufgabe, auch weiterhin den von der Grenzrichtung eng mit Breslau verknüpfte ober-schlesische Markt zu pflegen und damit die engen Zusammenhänge der ost-schlesischen Wirtschaft mit der gesamtdeutschen nicht verloren gehen zu lassen. In diesem Zusammenhang darf viel beachtet darauf hingewiesen werden, dass weite Kreise in der deutschen Ostprovinzen recht empfindlich immer noch den Fehlen eines regulären deutsch-polnischen Handelskommissariats anmerken. Und es kann gewünscht werden, dass auch in Polens grosse, klar denkende Wirtschaftskreise wenigstens von der starken handelspolitischen Abhängigkeit Polens von Frankreich entzückt sind, dergewiss bis jetzt noch jedes Gegenüber fehlt.

Es ist auch in letzter Zeit häufig darauf hingewiesen worden, dass die Verlehandlungen von Messerveranstaltungen in der verschiedenen Gegenden dem deutschen Wirtschaftswesen schädlich sein könnten. Gewiss ist es als verfehlt zu bezeichnen, wenn Interessentenkreise und Städte ohne die notwendigen geschäftlichen und wirtschaftlichen Vorbedingungen ihren Wünschen nachteilig in einem Industriegebiet in Flusse ist hat grosse Bedarf an Fabrikerichtungen von Messen. Das Bedürfnis der Wirtschaft nicht florierender, muss doch gesagt werden, dass gerade die Aufleben des Messedankens in dezentralisierter Form und dem Kriege für die Schaffung gesunder Stabilität und Ordnung massig in der deutschen Wirtschaftssystem durch die möglichen umfassenden Vorführungen der Produktion und Anreizung der vollen Handel viel Güter geleistet hat, ermöglicht es jedoch Käufer durch zeitlich und örtlich verschiebende Ausstellungen sich intensiv und umfassend über die Marktlage zu informieren und dem Aussteller, der verschiedene Messen besuchend, manchen Punkten entgegenkommender Bedingungen zu sein während er auf der einen Messe genügend wäre, sich den sonst Interessen vielleicht nicht immer entsprechenden Ländern weniger umfangreicher Firmen anzupassen.

Deutsche Kunst in Brasilien. Die Baukunst der Stadt São Paulo in Brasilien hat von Professor Bernhard Bonn die Münchener Architekt, eine neue Klosterkirche erhalten. Der Münchener Bildhauer Heinrich Waldner hat die Brunnenschalen am Salzburger Mozarum zusammen gearbeitet. Die schneide die Triumphbögen der neuen Kirche mit einer modernen Konstruktionsgruppe aus Lindenholz. Die Mittelaltliche schlichte Figur des Gekreuzigten ein alter deutscher Holz. Maria und Johannes werden im Gange ein hinstimmend in seinen Seiten. In den Arken kneht das erste Menschengebäude. Stühnen Christi hat Adam und Eva ihre ursprüngliche Jugendschönheit wiedergewonnen.



Vom Südamerika-Dienst des Norddeutschen Lloyd. Gesellschaftszimmer 1. Klasse des Dampfers „Ventana“.

Zwei Punkte sind es, die im Rahmen des Autonomiegedankens vor anderen hervortreten. Der eine ist, dass Landesdirektorium nicht mehr unparlamentarisch und auf Witke von Kowno hin regieren darf. Man fordert, eine neuveränderte Volksvertretung, die aus allgemeinen Wahlen nach dem Muster der deutschen Reichstagswahlen hervorgeht und dreiseitig die ausführenden Organe wählt. So soll neben dem litauischen Sejm in Kowno der selbständige Litauische Sejm des Memellandes entstehen.

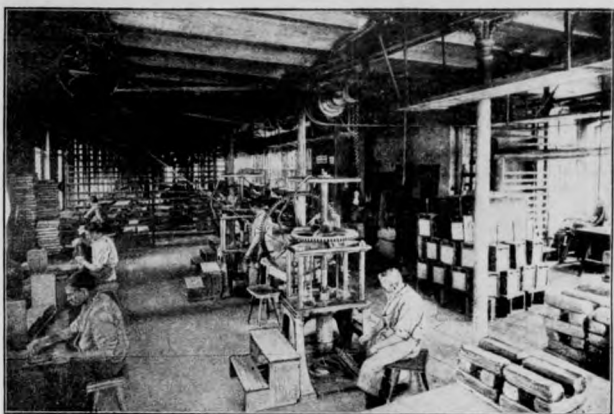
Der andere gewichtige Punkt ist die Hafenfrage. Memels Häfen ist Memels Gedulde oder Missgedulde. Schon jetzt ist es der früheren genauen Ordnung und Brauchbarkeit entgegen; man will ihn unter keinen Umständen in den Händen der Litauer wissen, deren Verwaltungstalent noch immer von den allen russischen Gewohnheiten bestimmt wird. Hier spielt aber auch der Ehr- und Landesgert des Polens mit, die sich im Hafengebiet am liebsten in einem Pachthandeln ansiedeln und damit zum Mißtrauen des Landes machen möchten. Dieser Wunsch wird un erfüllt bleiben, gleich den Deutschen würden sich auch die Litauer bis aufs äusserste dagegen sträuben, dass ihr unbeschnittener Nachbar sich ihnen auch hier von der Nase setzt. Es wird wahrscheinlich schließlich sein in Dazuge zu einer mehrköpfigen Hafenkommmission kommen, die dann dem Völkerbunde untersteht. An einer Vertretung in der Kommission hätten die Anliegerstaaten des Memellandes ein Interesse, denn dieser Sejm in seinem weiteren Lauf ist der Zulassung für den Hafen. Neben dem Memelland selbst, neben der Stadt und ihrer Kaufmannschaft, gehen Polen und Russland und vor allem das Deutsche Reich zu diesen Interessen. Tilsit ist aufs engste mit der Memel verbunden und rechnet mit Bestimmtheit darauf, dass im Verlaufe seiner Handelskammer in diese Hafenkommmission berufen wird.

Während ich diese Zeilen schreibe, ist die Memelkommission fleissig und ununterbrochen bei der Unternehmung. Im Privatgespräch haben die Herren gemässigt, dass sie die deutsche Kultur sich leisten werden. Das ist schon und hoffnungsvoll, wenn auch das, was man in engen Sinne Kultur nennt, sich hier sicher schützen kann und wird, weil es auf der litauischen Seite keine ebenbürtigen Gegen hat. Aber Kultur im weiteren Sinne, freies Wort, Selbstbestimmung, Erhaltung der angeborenen Rechte, Ordnung im Verkehr, dies ist ein Gut, dem der Schutz von aussen zugewandt werden muss.

Der Kongress für Kunst und allgemeine Kulturbeschäftigung, der in diesem Frühjahr stattfinden soll, wird mit Blick auf die noch immer unsichere wirtschaftliche Lage auf den Herbst dieses Jahres verschieben. Es besteht dann aber die Hoffnung, dass das Programm in seinem ganzen Umfang aufrecht erhalten werden kann.



Leimzettel.



Bleipressen.

Streifzüge durch die deutsche Grossindustrie.

Der deutsche Bleistift.

(Hierzu die Bilder auf dieser Seite.)

Die Bleistiftindustrie zählt zu den ältesten Industriezweigen Deutschlands und besitzt in der heutigen Zeit als Exportindustrie eine Bedeutung, die daran zu erkennen ist, dass etwa 50 bis 75 Prozent der gesamten Erzeugnisse ausgeführt werden.

Die Anfänge der heutigen hochentwickelten deutschen Bleistiftindustrie reichen bis auf die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts zurück, wiewohl natürlich zu jenem Zeitpunkt von einer Industrie im eigentlichen Sinne nicht gesprochen werden kann.

In Nürnberg und Umgebung — auch heute noch der Hauptsitz der Bleistiftindustrie — betrieben schon um 1730 „Bleistiftmacher“ im engen Werkstattdenken die Herstellung der „Bleistiftweisslagen“, wie damals die Vorläufer der heutigen Bleistifte genannt wurden. Die zum Schreiben dienende Einlage dieser Bleistiftweisslagen bestand aus einem Schmelzprodukt des Graphits mit Schwefel, Tragant, Spiesglasur oder ähnlichem und konnte nur geringen Ansprüchen gerecht werden. Gegen die am Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts durch neuartige und beständig bessere Herstellungsverfahren überlegene Konkurrenz Englands und Frankreichs konnte die deutsche Bleistiftfabrikation kaum mehr aufkommen, zumal auch in Deutschland ungünstige politische Verhältnisse, ein jede freie Entwicklung hinderndes Zwitwergen und der Mangel eines geordneten Handelsverkehrs überall mehr oder weniger hemmend im Wege standen. Erst zu Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts ist ein Aufschwung der damaligen deutschen Bleistiftindustrie zu verzeichnen, und es muss als industriegeschichtliches Moment erwähnt werden, dass als Vorkämpferin für diesen Aufschwung die 1761 in Stein bei Nürnberg gegründete Firma A. W. Faber unter der genialen Leitung Ludwigs v. Faber führend und bahnbrechend gewirkt hat. Lohb v. Faber erstellte zugleich mit der Herstellung hochwertiger Fabrikate vor allem eine sehr notwendige Gesundung der damaligen einschlägigen Handelsverhältnisse und bewies durch das Emporblühen seines Unternehmens, dass man der ausländischen Konkurrenz, die damals die deutsche Bleistiftindustrie zu erdrücken drohte, nur durch beste Erzeugnisse erfolgreich begegnen könne, nicht — wie es damals zum eigenen Verderben Brauch war — durch Unterangebot mit minderwertigen Fabrikaten. In diese neuen Bahnen gelenkt, entwickelte sich die Bleistiftindustrie zu der industriellen und wirtschaftlichen Bedeutung, die sie heute besitzt.

Das Haupterzeugnis dieser Industrie, der Bleistift, wird von der heutigen Welt mit einer Selbstverständlichkeit in Gebrauch genommen, dass bei der einfachen Zweckform des Bleistiftes kaum seine unentbehrliche Wichtigkeit gewürdigt wird und nicht so leicht wie oft bei viel unwichtigeren Gebrauchsgegenständen wird die Frage aufgeworfen: Wie entsteht wohl so ein Bleistift? Es wird sich deshalb sowohl für die Wertschätzung des Bleistiftes als auch für das allgemeine Interesse die Mühe verdienen den Werdegang des Bleistiftes unter Betrachtung der vielen notwendigen Arbeitsvorgänge zu verfolgen.

Die zwei Hauptbestandteile des Bleistiftes, die Bleimine und die diese Bleimine umschliessende Holzfülle, machen bei der Bleistiftfabrikation zwei Hauptarbeitsvorgänge notwendig. Erstens die Herstellung der Bleimine, zweitens die Umkleidung derselben mit Holz und die damit zusammenhängende Holzbehandlung bzw. Fertigmachung des Bleistiftes.

Die Rohmaterialie für die Herstellung der Bleimine — kurzweg „Mine“ genannt — sind Graphit und Ton. Der Graphit eine besondere kristallinisch oder amorph vorkommende Form des Kohlenstoffes, wird in Bergwerken (Bayern, Böhmen, England, Sibirien, Amerika) mit unterschiedlicher Qualität gefunden

Der Ton, ein Verwitterungsprodukt aluminiumhaltiger Silikate, ist in der Hauptsache wasserhaltige kieselsäure Tonerde mit verschiedenen Beimengungen. Obwohl sein Vorkommen in der Natur nicht selten ist, so ist für die Bleistiftfabrikation doch nur ein Ton mit bestimmten Eigenschaften verwendungsfähig.

Vor der eigentlichen Verarbeitung wird der Ton durch Schlämmen, der Graphit durch Schlämmen und besondere chemische Behandlung einer gründlichen Reinigung unterzogen. Die so gereinigten Substanzen, Graphit und Ton, werden nun mit Wasser zu einem dünnen Brei angerührt und in „Bleimühlen“ bis zur Erhaltung des gewünschten Feinheitsgrades „längere“ oder kürzere Zeit gemahlen. Je feiner die Mischung für die Bleiminen ist, um so weniger „schreibt“ sich der daraus her-

gemacht und auf die erforderliche Länge abgesehen wird. Hierauf werden die Bleistiftchen in Trockenanlagen vollends getrocknet und kommen dann in die Brennöfen. Durch das Brennen erhalten die Bleiminen die notwendige Härte und Widerstandsfähigkeit und werden zu diesem Zwecke nacheinander in luftdicht abgeschlossene Graphit- oder Schamottekasten geschickt und in einem Brennofen je nach Bedarf längere oder kürzere Zeit einer mitunter bis zur Weissglut gesteigerten Hitze ausgesetzt. Nach dem beendigten Brennen werden die Kästen geöffnet und die Bleiminen kommen als Abschluss in ein Tauchbad verschiedener Wachse und Fette. Nach Abtrocknen mit Sägespänen ist die Bleimine — die „Sedle“ des Bleistiftes — endgültig verarbeitungs-fähig für die Herstellung des eigentlichen Bleistiftes. Hierzu ist die Aufbereitung des Holzkörpers als Hölle für die Bleimine notwendig und erfordert wiederum eine Anzahl Arbeitsvorgänge, die in der Hauptsache durch technisch hochentwickelte Maschinen besorgt werden. Als bestes Holzmaterial kommt das amerikanische Zedernholz zu, das neben seinem aromatischen Geruch eine wunderbare elastische Weichheit besitzt. Deutscher Eichenholzgeist hat es jedoch schon so weit gebracht, in einigen inländischen Holzarten, wie Erlen- und Lindenhölz, durch besondere Behandlung — Beizen, Dämpfen usw. — für die Bleistiftfabrikation ein dem Zedernholz sehr nahe kommendes Ersatzmaterial zu schaffen und dadurch die Herstellung billiger und doch noch guter Bleistiftsorten zu ermöglichen. Alles für die Bleistiftfabrikation verwendete Holz wird durch Zersägen mittels Band- oder Kreisägen in Bretchen zerschitten, die in der Breite etwa 2 bis 6 nebeneinander liegenden Bleistiftchen gleichkommen und ungefähr auch die Länge eines ganzen und die Stärke eines halben Bleistiftes haben. Nach einer bereits erwähnten Vorbehandlung — Beizen, Dämpfen usw. — werden die Bretchen in Trockenräumen getrocknet. Hierauf werden diese Bretchen auf „Nutenstossmaschinen“ mit durchschnittlich 2 bis 8 Nuten oder „Nuten“ versehen. Diese mit Nuten versehenen Bretchen — kurzweg „Nuten“ genannt — kommen dann in die Leimerei, wo in die eine Nute die mit Leim beschriebenen Mienen einglegt werden, während eine andere Nute, mit Leim beschriebenen, auf die erste Nute gedrückt wird, so dass die Mienen vollkommen von Holz umschlossen sind. In grossen eisernen Pressen werden alsdann die verleimten Bretchen getrocknet, hierauf auf Schleifmaschinen von Unsauberkeit befreit und auf die richtige Länge abgeschliffen. Um die gewünschte runde oder rechte Form der Bleistifte zu erhalten, durchlaufen die zusammengeschnittenen Bretchen hierauf automatisch arbeitende Hobel- und Schleifmaschinen, um als Stift in der vorgeschriebenen Form herauszukommen. Auf einer weiteren Maschine — „Schachtelmaschine“ — wird alsdann die rauhe Oberfläche der Stifte zur Verschönerung und für die nachher folgende Politur vollkommen glatt geschliffen. Als Politur kommt Schellacklösung und in neuerer Zeit Zelluloseacetat mit entsprechenden Farbzusätzen zur Verwendung. Das Polieren selbst geschieht auf maschinellen Wege in der Weise, dass die Stifte durch die Politurlösung rasch hindurchgeföhren werden, ein endloses, mehrere Meter langes Transporthand findet die aus der Politurlösung kommenden Stifte auf und leitet dieselben zur gleichzeitigen Trocknung der Politur langsam in einen Sammelkasten weiter. Um eine kräftige Politur in Farbe und Glanz zu erhalten, müssen die Stifte oft mehrmals die Poliermaschine durchlaufen. Für die Bleistifte bildet diese Politur nicht nur ein gefälliges Kleid, sondern auch gleichzeitig eine schützende Hülle gegen Witterungseinflüsse. Auf weichen des Leimes usw. In der weiteren Bearbeitung werden die Bleistifte an den durch Politur beschmutzten Enden durch den scharfen Schnitt eines rotierenden Messers sauber beschliffen und wenn nötig auf Spitzmaschinen verschiedener Systeme mit einer tadelloser Spitze versehen.

Der bereits einzugs erwähnte starke Export der deutschen Bleistiftindustrie ist ein Beweis für die Güte der Fabrikate und für die Leistungsfähigkeit dieses Industriezweiges, der auch weiterhin dazu beitragen wird, den Ruf deutscher Qualitätsarbeit im In- und Auslande zu fördern und zu festigen.



Filterpressen-Abteilung.

gestellte Bleistift ab, um so weniger wird er kratzen oder abhökeln. Nach genügender Feinmahlung wird die schlammartige Bleimasse in Bottichen gesammelt und dann in Filterpressen ihres hauptsächlich Wasserhaltigkeit beraubt und gleichzeitig in grosse kuchenartige Platten gepresst. In Trockenräumen werden diese Platten bis zu einem gewissen Feuchtigkeitsgrade getrocknet, um dann der weiteren Verarbeitung für die Minenfabrikation entgegen zu gehen. Hierzu werden die erwähnten Bleikuchen zunächst zerklüftet und gewahrt und dann in die Bleipressen gestampft. Diese Bleipressen haben die Form eiserner Zylinder, in deren Bodenfläche eine kleine mit einer Edelsteinmatrix versehene Öffnung sich befindet, durch die die Bleimasse gepresst wird und als lange, hindelähnliche Schnüre herauskommt, die aufgefalten auf Massbrettern aufgelegt, gerade



Maschinen-Pollersaal.



Brennöfen.

Dies und das.

Der österreichische Sozialistenführer Dr. Otto Bauer wurde auf der Rückreise vom luxemburger sozialdemokratischen Parteitag im besetzten Gebiet von der französischen Polizei verhaftet und erst nach einjähriger Unterbrechung seiner Reise auf freien Fuß gesetzt. Er soll politische Gespräche geführt haben, die so angelegt wurden, als ob er in Frankreich Spionage treiben wollte.

Um zu verhindern, dass die angeblich in Australien wütende Rinderpest nach Deutschland eingeschleppt wird, hat der Hamburger Senat die Einfuhr und Durchfuhr von frischem und gefrorenem Fleisch aus Australien verboten.

Eine Hangesellschaft in Cambrai und ein Anblick der bedrückten Gebiete hinter den Schanzen, der ihnen durch die Zerstörung zweier Schlösser entstanden war, auf 9 Millionen Franzosen messen. Es hat sich jetzt herausgestellt, dass die Gesellschaft die Schlösser für 750 000 Francs gekauft hatte.

In der nächsten Zeit werden mit Bewilligung der tschechoslowakischen Regierung monatlich 4500 tschechoslowakische Kinder zur Erholung in die Tschechoslowakei kommen. 500 dieser Kinder werden allein in Pressburg untergebracht werden.

Die Unzufriedenheiten haben auch einer Mitteilung von katholischer Seite erheblich zuwiderkommen. Die Gesamtzahl der Klagen gegen die Regierung in Süddeutschland zur Klageperiode betrug 75.

Venezianer gab die formale Erklärung ab, dass er es ablehnen werde, selbst die Präsidentschaft der Republik zu übernehmen, da mit nicht der Anschein erweckt werde, die Republik stelle ein Regime dar, das nur von einer einzigen Partei getragen sei. Er werde für die Präsidentschaft Zaimis in Vorschlag bringen.

Das Athenäum von Neapel wird anfänglich seiner Jahrestagung mehrere Vertreter der deutschen Universitäten zu den Festlichkeiten einladen, um so zu bekunden, dass die Universität

Straszel seit ihrer Gründung auf die Mitarbeit von 20 deutschen Professoren, hauptsächlich der medizinischen Fakultät, mit Stolz blicken darf.

Der Präsident des Reichslandtags, Reichstagsabgeordneter Dr. Hoecker, ist an den Folgen eines Schlaganfalls, den er auf der Reise nach Breslau zur Reichslandtagung erlitten hat, gestorben.

Im Weimarer Landgerichtsgefängnis befinden sich seit dem 19. Februar sechs Schutzhaftgefangene im Hungerstreik. Sie fordern sofortige Haftentlassung, zumindest Befristung der Schutzhaft und unbeschränkte Gesundheitsfürsorge. Der Hungerstreik wurde erklärt, nachdem diese Forderungen unantwortet geblieben sind.

In Crockett, Ohio wurde die 23 Jahre alte Tochter Hedwig des Gastwirts Bohm auf der Dorfstraße am Arm ihrer Mutter von ihrem früheren Liebhaber, dem 32 Jahre alten Max Hühn, erschossen. Der Täter ergiff darauf die Flucht und erschoss sich aber von einem Gradamen verhaftet werden sollte.

Das Linienschiff „Braunschweig“ hat mehr als acht deutsche und einen englischen Dampfer aus dem Eise befreit.

Zu dem großen Bilderdiebstahl in der Azenburg bei Eilsen (Schaumburg-Lippe) wird jetzt gemeldet, dass sämtliche Gemälde, etwa 36 Stück, darunter sehr wertvolle Meisterwerke aus der Schule von Rembrandt, wieder herbeigeführt worden sind.

Der Staatssekretär im preussischen Ministerium des Innern, Freundt, ist an einem schweren Darmleiden gestorben. Im Staatsministerium geübte Ministerpräsident Braun in Worten höchster Anerkennung der Verdienste Freundts um Staat und Volk.

Der geheime Legationsrat Extraord., der von 1891 bis 1915 Mitarbeiter Otto Hamanns in der Presse-Abteilung des auswärtigen Amtes war, ist im Alter von 60 Jahren gestorben.

Der sächsische Schriftsteller Gansselt, der gegen den Reichspräsidenten wegen angeblicher Begünstigung des Muni-

zionsarbeiterstreiks im Jahre 1919 den Versuch des Landesgerichts erhoben, gegen den Reichspräsidenten aber nach voller Aufklärung des Tatbestandes den Straf Antrag zurückgezogen hatte, hat jetzt in einem offenen Brief den Vorwurf wiederholt. Darauf hat der Reichspräsident bei der Berliner Staatsanwaltschaft gegen Gansselt Straf Antrag wegen verurteilender Begünstigung gestellt.

Vor Kurzem legten in Warschau die deutsch-polnischen Verhandlungen über Optionen und Rechtsbeihilfe unter dem Vorsitz des Ministers der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, v. Sierakowski, gleichzeitig tagten in Berlin die Unterkommissionen zur Regelung der Frage der Pensionen und der Teilung der Akten und Archive.

Das amerikanische Generalkonsulat in Hamburg teilt mit, dass die deutsche Einwanderungsquote schon im Dezember erschöpft gewesen ist. Es besteht aber nach Meinung des Generalkonsulats die Möglichkeit, dass die Einwanderung schon im April d. J. wieder freigegeben werden kann.

Der Ober Georg Krüger in Magdeburg fahle 5-Mil.-Fahrscheine, indem er aus dem M ein B machte. Beim Versuch, einen dieser Scheine durch den Kartonschneider Joseph Böhl, einen Freund des Krüger, in Zahlung zu geben, wurde die Fälschung erkannt. Beide wurden verhaftet.

Die schwarzen Pocken treten in Polnisch-Oberschlesien so bedrohlich auf, dass beispielsweise in Neolau eine Straßensperre zum Verkehr abgesetzt werden musste und dass in Kattowitz und Königsbrunn viele Kinder aus Besorgnis vor Ansteckung nicht mehr in die Schule geschickt werden.

Die Strafkammer in Gießen verurteilte den Landarbeiter Shorn wegen Mordes zum Tode. Shorn hatte in Lux (Kreis Trebnitz) aus Rache aus einem Hinterhalt auf seinen Dienstherrn Krüger mehrere Schüsse abgefeuert, die jedoch den Begleiter, den Ober-

leutnant Hermann, trafen und töteten.

Ein in rascher Fahrt von Weimar nach Erfurt befindliches Automobil, in dem das Ehepaar Machelt eine Probefahrt unternahm, rammte in voller Fahrt einen Lastwagen mit voller Wucht gegen einen Baum. Der Inhaber der Firma Köhler (Erfurt) war sofort tot, während Frau Machelt schwere innere Verletzungen und einen Beinbruch davontrug. Herr Machelt erlitt einen Armbruch.

Professor Steinbach veröffentlichte eine Erklärung in der er unter Hinweis auf den in Wien zum ersten Male zur Vorführung gelangten Berliner Film „Steinach-Operation an Menschen“ dagegen protestiert, dass sein Name zu geschäftlichen Zwecken misbraucht wird.

Der Unterstaatssekretär im englischen Auswärtigen, Poinsett, erklärte auf eine Anfrage des Abg. Morel, die englische Regierung erwäge, in welcher Form die englischen Dokumente über die Verjährung veröffentlicht werden könnten.

Zum Präsidenten des Reichsverwaltungsamtes hat der Reichsrat einstimmig den württembergischen Ministerdirektor Schäffer vorgeschlagen.

Im Preussischen Landtag wurde über Fragen des Beamtenabbaus und der Beamtengehälter beraten. Sämtliche Redner traten für eine Aufbesserung der ungenügenden Beamtgehälter ein.

Im Ammoniakwerk Merseburg infolge Materialfehlers eine Flasche an einem Kompressor. Dabei wurde ein Arbeiter schwer, vier wurden leicht verletzt. Der Betrieb läuft ungestört weiter.

Tibetanische Weisheit.

Von (Nachdruck verboten) Wilhelm Möller (Hermendorf).

1. Suche Freunde, wenn dein Beutel leer ist; findest du keine, so bist du keine Verdienst.
2. Wenn du eine Rose bist, erlaube deinem Freund, dass er ein Olivenbaum sein darf.
3. Man kann viele Freunde haben, aber nur eine Seele.
4. Wenn du wissen willst, in welchem Geruch du stichst, mach nicht deine eigene Nase fragen.
5. Wer mit dem Adler Freundschaft hält, erwartet nicht, ihn die Spalten loben.
6. Wenn du ein Hammer bist, kannst du nicht Freundschaft mit Nusselchalen halten.
7. Es kommt nicht darauf an, wie viele Feinde du hast, sondern wie viele du dafür hältst.
8. Das Beste, was du Gott geben kannst, sind deine Gedanken.
9. Wer es mit grossen Fischen aufnehmen will, der muss für noch grossere Schiffe sorgen.
10. Ein Land, über dem es nicht dominiert, kennt auch keine Fruchtbarkeit.
11. Wärme deinen Feind nicht mit Worten.
12. Schlachten gewinnt der Held; wie sie gewonnen werden müssen, weiss auch der Narr.
13. Wer seinen Mut verloren hat, der sollte seinen Mund hinterher werfen.
14. Höle dich, und du bist der reichste Hute.
15. Lass dich selber achten, und es wird dich schätzen werden, dich wieder zu finden, als einen entflohenen Vogel.
16. Des Löwen Brüllen fürchte nicht. Die Schlange bricht nicht, die dich sticht.
17. Ehe Gott jemand untergehen lassen will, schickt er ihm ein Meer von Lügen.
18. Der Oelbaum bringt keinen Krug mit auf die Welt.
19. Man ärgert sich nicht über die Höcker eines Kamels, solange man darauf reitet.
20. Wenn Gott eine Krone zugeordnet hat, dem liest der Teufel Frieden an.
21. Sie niemals Kümmer, wenn du Datteln ernten willst.

BEVORZUGTER FRÜHJAHRSAUFENTHALT IN **BADENWEILER** (SÜDL. BAD. SCHWARZWALD) **Thermalbad und klimatischer Kurort** Strecke Frankfurt-Basel Schnellzugstation Mühlheim-Badenweiler Unbesetztes Gebiet Auskunft und Prospekt durch die Kurverwaltung A.B.

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Die Ehrenrettung des gebildeten Mannes.

Das Ideal der heiratenden Frau.
Von Erich Wulf.

Andreas Heuser, der ausgezeichnete Vertreter der nordischen Psychologie und einer von den vielen Gelehrten, die der Berliner Universität den Hörsaal gekostet haben, las einmal, in einem Kreis, aus einem Hefchen vor, das damals — lange vor Hasenpfevers dramatischer Anklage gegen den Egoismus und Übermaß der Väter — eben in die Öffentlichkeit gedrungen war. Der Verfasser (dessen Name meinem Gedächtnis inzwischen entschwunden ist) hatte aus den frühesten Zeiten der Weltliteratur bis zur Gegenwart Zeugnisse gesammelt für die immer noch wiederholende Forderung der Väter, dass die Jugend nichts mehr lerne. Als sie jung waren, ständen sie im Widerstreit mit ihren Vätern, behielten indes, nach zurückgekehrten Ausstellungen, nebeneinander das sogenannte Recht der Jugend für sich, in Anspruch und glauben alles besser zu verstehen und alles besser machen zu können. Und wenn sie in die Jahre gekommen und selbst Väter geworden waren, klagten sie über den Niedergang des mehrwachsenen Geschlechts. Waren diese Klagen objektiv begründet gewesen, hätten Kultur, menschliche Gesellschaft und ähnliche Dinge schon vor Jahrtausenden aufhören müssen zu bestehen. Auch in allen Beziehungen des menschlichen Lebens, die von der Liebe ausgehen und auf sie zurückgehen, wiederholt sich ein ewiger Kreislauf, und nichts Neues scheint mehr möglich zu sein. Nur die Jungen und Mädchen, die zum erstenmal den Zauberarten der Liebe bestreben, neigen zu dem Glauben, dass so etwas noch nicht da gewesen sei.

Herr Heiland, der Weltreisende, der jetzt zu einer Expedition nach Sumatra sich rüstet, berichtet vor einigen Tagen über eine Reise nach Indien, von der er unlängst zurückgekehrt ist. Seine Erzählungen illustrierte er durch Lichtbilder, und in einem von diesen führt er einen indischen Tempel vor, der aller als ein Jahrtausend und von einer unendlichen Fülle feiner Monumentalbauwerke der Formen war. Der Weltreisende ent-

schuldigte sich, dass er die Säulen am Eingang des Tempels nicht von vorn, sondern im gehörigen Abstand, von der Seite aufgenommen habe. „Die plastischen Figuren dieser Säulen“, sagte er, „sind so unglücklich abstrahiert, dass sogar Berliner Herren vor Scham darüber erröten würden.“ Wie die indische, allzu irdische Liebe, so kann auch die himmlische, zu einer harmonischen Ehe führende Liebe kaum noch Überraschungen bieten. Blickt man herab auf das wimmelnde Getriebe, aus dem Eben sich bilden sollen, könnte man Gutheißes egleisches Aussehen wiederholen, den er im Vernein beim Anblick des geschäftlichen Lebens tat: „Warum freut sich das Volk so und schreit? Es will sich ernähren, Kinder zeugen und die nähren, so gut es vermag. Merke dir, Heiland, das und tue zu Hause desgleichen. Weiter bringt es kein Mensch, stell er sich, wie er auch will.“

Nur unter dem Gesichtswinkel kleinster Zeitnüsse — Monate und Jahre — betrachtet, sind auf dem Gebiet der Eheschließungen wichtige Veränderungen, zum Teil recht wichtiger Art, feststellbar. Weil das einzelne menschliche Leben nur eine niedrige Summe kleinster Zeiteinheiten ist, deshalb nur können diese Veränderungen aus interessieren. Von denjenigen, die große Teile des Heiratsmarktes kontrollieren, wird dieser Situationsbericht gegeben.

Das mit Recht so beliebte Heiraten steht, trotz der kalten Witterung, in voller Blüte, so dass es schwer zu sagen ist, ob auch der Mai, vor alle Knospen sprüngen, ein den Liebesskriegen besonders förderliches Monat ist. Erbsener noch als die Zahl der tatsächlich vollzogenen Verlobungen und Eheschließungen ist das anhaltende Interesse, das von beiden Parteien diesem Gegenstande entgegengebracht wird. Zur Erklärung wird von den in der Verhältnisse tiefer Eingeweihten angeführt, dass die Lebensform des Jungesellens im gegenwärtigen Zeitalter außerordentlich unbedeutend ist, aber als Einziger durch das Leben tragende oder zupropfernde Mann fand früher einen gewissen Ersatz für das entbehrt Familienleben in einem leichten, angenehmen und leicht erreichbaren geselligen Verkehr und in der prallen Fülle des öffentlichen Lebens, zu dem auch die Verpflegungs- und Vergnügungstätten in beschränkter Sinne gerechnet werden können. Beide Quellen der Jungesellen-

freunden sind noch immer verschüttelt. Einen geselligen Verkehr, der sich auch nur leise messen könnte mit der Zeit von zehn Jahren, gibt es noch immer nicht und wird es wohl auch nicht in der Zukunft nicht geben. Die wenigen die überhaupt in der Lage sind, Geselligkeit zu pflegen, beschränken diese auf ein Mass, das für Jungesellen nicht viel abfallen lässt. Und alle Anstalten und Einrichtungen, die früher dem Jungesellen das fehlende Heim und die fehlende Gattin zu ersetzen sich anbeischig machten, sind unfroh und sehr kostspielig geworden. Diese und andere Umstände haben die idealen Tugenden, die in dem Jungesellen selbstverständlich schon immer schimmerten, zu einer heiligen Flamme entfacht, und diese heilige Flamme sucht Nahrung.

Beiderseitige Gesundheit und gesicherte wirtschaftliche Verhältnisse bilden nächst der innerlichen Zueignung und der Harmonie der Charaktere das Fundament einer glücklichen Ehe. Da der Staat den Zwang zum frühlichen Zeugnis noch nicht eingeführt hat, beschränken sie es allgemein heisst, in zunehmendem Masse die heiratslustigen Paare freiwillig diesen Weg. Man hat, dank Erfahrungen gezwung, die Wichtigkeit konstitutioneller Gesundheit erkannt und geneigt sich nicht mehr, wechselseitig Klarheit darüber zu verschaffen. Die Forderung erscheint immer selbstverständlicher, dass der Mann bei dem Vertragsart der Frau und die Frau bei dem Vertragsart des Mannes sich untersuchen lässt. Die wirtschaftliche Fundierung einer Ehe hängt nach wie vor in zahlreichen Fällen von der Milgüt der Frau ab. Und Milgüt gibt es. Dass die Ansteuer der Frau hinsichtlich der Güte und des Umfangs einigermassen den früheren Sitten entspricht, gilt in den Kreisen, die Anspruchsstellen können als selbstverständlich. Die sonstige Milgüt wird — eine Folge der vergangenen Inflationsjahre — oft weniger in Form baren Geldes als in Form von Sachwerten verschiedener Art gewährt. Eine typische Erscheinung der Gegenwart ist die Einheirat, Schwiegervätern, die ein Handelsgeschäft oder ein Industrieunternehmen besitzen, wird es in der jüngeren Wirtschaftslage oft sehr schwer oder gar unmöglich, etwa 200.000 Goldmark aus dem Betrieb herauszunehmen und dem Schwiegersohn zu übergeben. Diese Schwiegerväter nehmen deshalb ihren Schwiegersohn gern in das Unternehmen auf, wenn dem Schwiegersohn es beliebt. Das ist beliebt, wie es heißt, sehr vielen Herren aus ganz andern Gesellschaften, in ein Unternehmen einzuhäuten. Manche Heiratverträge haben auf diese

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Hitler-Prozeß von L. Lania

Der erste Eindruck, wenn man den Prozeß-Saal betritt: Hier wird kein hochnotpeinliches Gericht gehalten — eine geschlossene Versammlung diskutiert nur ein paar ernste und interessante politische Fragen. Es geht dabei sehr gesittet, sehr akademisch zu. Jede unnötige Schärfe wird vermieden. Man ist Mann von Welt und Rang, also bestrebt, dem Gegner — auch wenn man durchaus nicht seiner Meinung ist — Recht und Gerechtigkeit widerfahren zu lassen, und wahrte peinlich die Formen des gesellschaftlichen Umgangs. Mäuschenstille. Die Angeklagten sitzen ganz zwanglos an kleinen Tischen. Knapp dahinter sind die Bänke für die Zeugen, die Plätze für die Pressevertreter, ein paar Bankreihen für die Zuhörer. Man ist ganz unter sich. Es fehlen die Schranken, die in dem Angeklagten das bittere Gefühl erwecken könnten, hier nicht für voll genommen, als ein Bemakelter angesehen zu werden. Und die braune Täfelung des Saales gibt dem Raum etwas Heimliches, Warmes, das sehr wohltuend von der kalt-nüchternen Atmosphäre deutscher Gerichtssäle absticht. Gerichtsverhandlung? Nein, eher Seminar über Hochverrat.

*

Als Seine Exzellenz Ludendorff in einem Privatauto vor der Infanterieschule — dem Gerichtsgebäude — vorfuhr, stand die Wache stramm. Das wiederholt sich nun täglich: wenn die hohen Angeklagten den Saal betreten oder ihn verlassen, hallt das Zusammenschlagen der Hacken durch die Korridore. Die Reichswehr-Offiziere auf den Zeugenbänken und im Zuhörerraum wissen eben, was sie den „Hochverrättern“ schuldig sind. Ludendorff ist übrigens sehr gnädig und leutselig, nein, wirklich gar nicht stolz und abweisend. Und auf seinem harten, brutalen Gesicht liegt jetzt immerfort ein selbstzufriedenes, wohlwollendes Lächeln.

Hitler ist vielleicht der Einzige, der in den ersten Tagen eine gewisse Nervosität und Unruhe verriet. Deutlich bei ihm das Bestreben, „Haltung zu zeigen“.

Da ist der Oberlandesgerichtsrat Poehner, der ehemalige Polizeipräsident und Intimus des Herrn v. Kahr, aus ganz anderm Holz geschnitzt. Die beste Figur unter den Angeklagten. Der kluge Kopf könnte einem Jesuitenpater gehören. Schlaue Augen hinter scharfen Brillengläsern, glattrasiertes Diplomaten-gesicht, ein ewig zynisches Lächeln um den Mund.

Oberleutnant Weber, der Führer des „Bunds Oberland“: ein schwächlicher, blasser Junge, der wenig Militärisches an sich hat.

Hauptmann Röhm, der Kommandant der „Reichsflagge“: Typus des preußischen Leutnants, nasale schnoddrige Stimme, trägt den Zivilanzug wie eine Uniform, sieben Zentimeter hoher Stiefkragen.

Oberstleutnant Kriebel, der militärische Führer des Hitler-schen Kampfbundes, hat eine mehr süddeutsche Note: jovial, behäbig.

Der Rest junge Burschen mit nichtssagenden, glatten Gesichtern.

*

Von den Verteidigern fallen drei besonders auf. Rechtsanwalt Lütgebrune aus Göttingen, der Verteidiger Ludendorffs, wie aus einem Bild von George Grosz herausgetreten. Neben ihm Justizrat Kohl, ein Bauernschädel mit herabhängendem Schnauzbart — man möchte schwören, daß er aus Miesbach kommt; aber er ist aus München. Dr. Hemmeter, der Verteidiger Poehners, der jüngste von ihnen, ein völkischer Draufgänger.

Landesgerichtsrat Neidhardt führt den Vorsitz. Ein sympathischer älterer Herr — ich habe noch bei keinem Kommunistenprozeß solch einen Präsidenten gesehen. Leider.

Der Staatsanwalt? Er hat wenig Gelegenheit, einzugreifen. Wenn er spricht, ist er unverständlich, so leise und ausdruckslos ist seine Stimme.

*

Als Hitler sich zu seiner großen Rede erhob, horchte Alles auf. Im ersten Augenblick ist man enttäuscht. Man versteht nicht gleich, woher seine Wirkung als Redner stammt. Er spricht gewandt, die Stimme beherrscht mühelos den Saal und hat einen angenehmen Klang. Sparsame Gesten. Aber die Rede ist ungliedert, nicht gesteigert, und man wundert sich, das bei Versammlungsrednern übliche Pathos zu vermissen.

Hitler sprach vier Stunden. In diesen vier Stunden sagte er wenig, eigentlich gar nichts Neues. Die Enthüllungen erwartet, die geglaubt hatten, Hitler werde eine große politische Rede halten, seine politischen Ziele, sein Programm erläutern, kamen nicht auf ihre Rechnung. Und dennoch folgte man schließlich, ohne zu ermüden, Hitlers Rede. Die innere Wärme, der Schwung, die Plastik der Bilder und Vergleiche nimmt nach und nach für den Redner ein, und man versteht, daß grade die breiten Massen einer solchen flachen, primitiven Argumentation und einer Demagogie, die ihre Stärke darin hat, daß sie von keines Gedankens Blässe angekränkt ist, ein williges Ohr leihen.

Ein deutschnationales Blatt hat Hitler einen Besessenen, den von einer Idee Besessenen genannt. Zweifellos: Hitler macht den Eindruck eines unbedingt ehrlichen Menschen. Aber seine Besessenheit, sein Fanatismus rührt nicht von dem Glauben an eine Idee her, sondern von dem Glauben an seine persönliche Größe. Er ist maßlos eitel. Grade die Art, wie er seine Bescheidenheit zur Schau stellt, zeigt das. Vier Stunden lang — während der ganzen Rede — stand Hitler in Habt-acht-Stellung, den Gehrock bis hoch hinauf geschlossen. Unwillkürlich denkt man an einen Unteroffizier, der seinem Vorgesetzten Bericht erstattet: stramm, militärisch — subaltern. In der höchsten Erregung verißt er nicht die Titel. Kahr ist sein Todfeind — aber für ihn ist er die Exzellenz v. Kahr. Und wenn er das Wort Exzellenz sagt, es durch den Saal schmettert, merkt man, mit welchem Stolz ihn erfüllt, so tönende Titel in seine Rede einflechten zu können.

War Hitlers Rede ganz auf die persönliche Note gestimmt, stellten er und der Führer des „Bunds Oberland“, der Oberleutnant Weber, die „Abrechnung mit den treulosen Verrätern Kahr, Lossow und Seisser“ in den Vordergrund ihrer Verteidigung: so brachte die Rede des Oberlandesgerichtsrats Poehner die erste Wendung in dem Prozeß. Mit einem Ruck war die Verhandlung auf das politische Niveau gehoben, und nicht Herr v. Kahr, nicht der General v. Lossow oder der Polizeioberst Seisser waren mehr die Objekte des Angriffs: die bayrische Regierung mit allen ihren Institutionen, mit Staatsanwaltschaft und Gerichtshof war zum Angriffsziel geworden.

*

Hitler hatte es sich verhältnismäßig leicht gemacht. „Ist Das, was ich getan habe, Hochverrat, so haben Kahr, Lossow und Seisser ebenfalls Hochverrat getrieben.“ Die Logik ist zwingend. Aber diese Argumentation erweckte den Anschein, als wollte Hitler nur dagegen protestieren, daß mit ungleichem Maß gemessen wird, als sei das einzig bewegende Moment in seiner Verteidigung der Groll über den „perfiden Verrat Kahrs“.

Als Poehner sprach, trat dagegen der politische Kern dieses Prozesses ganz klar und scharf zutage. Poehner ist kein guter Redner. Er spricht stockend, mit leiser Stimme, die sich in der Erregung überschlägt. Aber vom ersten Augenblick an hatte man den Eindruck: Hier spricht der Politiker, nicht der Agitator. Das ist der Mann, der hinter den Kulissen gestanden hat — er und nicht Hitler hat die Fäden der völkischen Politik in Bayern in den Händen gehalten.

Jedes Wort vorsichtig auf die Wagschale legend, schildert Poehner seine Besprechungen, seine Verhandlungen mit Herrn v. Kahr. Er vermeidet jede polemische Färbung, und es liegt eine ganz raffinierte Bosheit darin, wie er offensichtlich bemüht ist, Herrn Kahr zu „schonen“. „Wenn Herr Kahr es so darstellen will, daß er Komödie gespielt habe, so muß ich ihn, den ich aus jahrelanger intimer Mitarbeit kenne, gegen ihn selbst in Schutz nehmen. Er ist ein anständiger Mensch und kein Schuft.“

Hier wird nun der Schlachtplan der Verteidigung offenbar: Nicht darum handelt sichs ihr, Kahr zu kompromittieren, nachzuweisen, daß er im November am Hochverrat beteiligt war, sondern durch die Aufrollung der „bayrischen Frage“ der Staatsanwaltschaft die Gefahr vor Augen zu führen, die sie läuft, wenn sie die Angeklagten zwingt, „einmal tüchtig auszupacken“. Man soll in Bayern nicht über Hochverrat zu Gericht sitzen, weil in Bayern seit Jahr und Tag von allen führenden Politikern nur Hochverrat getrieben worden ist.

Die Verteidigung führt ihre Offensive — das muß man ihr lassen — sehr geschickt. Sie legt es gradezu darauf an, immer wieder zu zeigen, wie loyal, wie rücksichtsvoll sie ist. Poehner selbst unterbricht sich alle paar Minuten, um bestimmt zu sagen, ob er diese und jene Frage lieber unter Ausschluß der Öffentlichkeit beantworten sollte. Ein Märtyrer seiner Anständigkeit. Die Verteidiger müssen fast gegen Poehners Willen

auf Behandlung der Fragen in voller Öffentlichkeit bestehen. Aber als der Staatsanwalt protestiert, geben sie gleich nach. Vorderhand genügt ihnen — zu drohen. Es wird Sache der Staatsanwaltschaft sein, sich dieses Entgegenkommens würdig zu zeigen. Denn sonst . . . Poehner ist nicht der Einzige, der manches erzählen kann.

*

Oberstleutnant Kriebel, der militärische Führer des Putsches, ist der zweite „Eingeweihte“. Bei seinen Ausführungen schloß das Gericht, durch die ewigen versteckten Drohungen reichlich nervös gemacht, die Öffentlichkeit aus. Der Prozeß hatte seinen ersten Höhepunkt überschritten.

*

Der Hitler-Prozeß hat noch einen großen „Unbekannten“: Ehrhardt. Es war der entscheidende Vorstoß der Verteidigung, als sie so ganz von ungefähr die Ladung des „Consuls“ als Zeugen forderte. Der Antrag kam völlig improvisiert, nachdem Poehner wie unabsichtlich die Bemerkung hatte fallen lassen, der beste Zeuge für die Vorbereitungen des Hitler-Putsches und die Rolle, die Herr Kahr dabei gespielt habe, sei Ehrhardt selbst. Ein dramatischer Augenblick. Der Staatsanwalt sucht abzulenken, meint, diese Fragen seien nicht wesentlich, übrigens könnte Ehrhardt nicht geladen werden, weil das Gericht seinen Aufenthalt nicht kenne. Und widerspricht sich sofort durch die Bemerkung, über diese Dinge dürfte in öffentlicher Sitzung nicht verhandelt werden.

Die Verteidigung nimmt die Blöße des Staatsanwalts sehr geschickt wahr. Die bis dahin versteckten Drohungen werden jetzt ganz offenbar. Darf man vielleicht von den Plänen des Herrn v. Kahr erzählen, in Sachsen und Thüringen „Ordnung“ zu schaffen? Darf man erzählen, daß er bereits Poehner zum Zivilgouverneur von Sachsen ernannt hatte? Darf man sagen, daß Kahr darüber mit der Reichsregierung verhandelt hatte? Der Staatsanwalt springt erregt in die Höhe. Man darf es nicht. Und was den Aufenthalt Ehrhardts betrifft — nun, die Verteidiger sind nicht gewillt, Komödie zu spielen. Weiß der Staatsanwalt, daß Ehrhardt vor wenigen Wochen auf einem Kommers in München gesprochen hat? Der Staatsanwalt möge sich von dem Verdacht reinigen, Ehrhardt verhaften zu wollen, wenn er als Zeuge erscheint, und man wird ihm Ehrhardts Adresse mitteilen. Der Staatsanwalt verwahrt sich dagegen, daß er solche schnöde Absichten gegen den biedern Kapitänleutnant hegt — daß dieser wegen Hochverrats von der Reichsregierung, wegen Meineids von der bayrischen Regierung gesucht wird, ist so nebensächlich, daß darüber kein Wort verloren wird —: und die Verteidigung zögert nicht, Ehrhardts Adresse mitzuteilen.

Und das ist der letzte Trumpf, den die Verteidiger, den die Angeklagten unter ihren Stichen haben: die Karten offen auf den Tisch zu legen. Aus dem Spiel kann noch Ernst werden. Eine Frage könnte lauten: Will der Staatsanwalt leugnen, daß auf jenem Kommers des ‚Waffenrings deutscher Art‘ neben Kapitänleutnant Ehrhardt der Staatsanwalt selbst zugegen war?

R₄

AUSNAHMEZUSTAND

Eine Anthologie aus
»Weltbühne« und »Tagebuch«

Herausgegeben von
WOLFGANG WEYRAUCH

Axel Eggebrecht

ZWEI GRANATSPLITTER

Die englische Granate Kaliber 7,62, Modell 03, verbessert 1916, war eine kleine Präzisionsmaschine von gefälliger Form. Den graulasier-

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ten, gußeisernen Zylinderkörper umgab der kupferne Führungsring, wie die Binde den Bauch des Gendarmen. Im aufgeschraubten, stählernen Kopf saß das komplizierte Gehirn, der Zünder, durch eine von 400 bis 6.800 Yard verstellbare Skala zu regeln. Beim Zerspringen des 5,78 kg schweren Geschosses war mit 80 bis 140 Sprengstücken zu rechnen.

Hersteller: eine kleine, auf Kriegsbedarf umgestellte Messerklingenfabrik in Huddersfield, Grafschaft York. Im Januar 1918 betrug die Arbeitszeit in diesem Werk elfeinhalb Stunden. Hierfür wurde der außerordentliche Lohn von siebeneinhalb bis zehneinhalb Shilling gezahlt. Der Herstellungspreis einer Granate 7,62 betrug, einschließlich Kartusche mit Melinitladung und Bahntransport bis Materiallager Leeds, neuneinhalb Shilling. Der Staat zahlte siebzehn Shilling.

Im März wurde die Granate, von der hier berichtet wird, mit Bahn und Schiff über London, Hastings, Boulogne, St. Omer bis Hazebrouck geschafft, lagerte dort bis Anfang April und kam am 9., dem zweiten Tag der deutschen Armentières-Offensive, an die 3. Batterie des Suffolkregiments zur Ausgabe. Am 12., abends gegen halb sechs Uhr, bei beginnender Dämmerung, feuerten die beiden ersten Geschütze auf eine eben aufgefahrene deutsche Feldbatterie, direkt, Entfernung 2 400. Erster Schuß Volltreffer, starke Wirkung beobachtet.

Fähnrich E. wurde von zwei Splintern getroffen. Der kleinere durchschlug den rechten Fuß von oben nach unten und blieb unterhalb der Sohle sechs Zentimeter tief im Boden stecken. Der größere ritzte das Dickfleisch des rechten Oberschenkels, drang dicht hinter den Hoden in den linken, wurde erst durch den starken Mittelknochen aufgehalten.

Fleisch und Knochen:

Im fortdauernden feindlichen Feuer, bei sieben Toten, elf Schwerverletzten, ist wenig Gelegenheit zur gründlichen Untersuchung. Unterarzt L. schneidet E.'s Uniform und Stiefel weg, umwickelt und schient flüchtig den rechten Fuß, klebt einen großen Wattebausch auf die Schenkelwunde. In eine Zeltbahn geknüpft, wird E. von kanadischen Gefangenen nach rückwärts getragen. Aufenthalt in einer stark vergasteten Senke. Acht Uhr Verbandplatz. Sondieren der Wunden, Verbände, Tetanusspritze. Nachts ins Feldlazarett Estaires. Zwei Tage ohne Behandlung. Dann Autotransport nach Lille. Die Stadt ist von Verwundeten überfüllt. Massenlager in der Markthalle. Stroh. Keine Ärzte. Kleine Mädchen bringen Malzkaffee und Suppe. Am vierten

Abend auf den Bahnhof. Lazarettzug nach Essen ist schon überbelegt. Im ratternden Straßenbahnwagen auf der Bahre weiter nach Tourcoing. Hohes Fieber. Ein Geschlechtskrankheitenlazarett ist eben für die Verwundeten geräumt worden. Wäsche zum Wechseln nicht vorhanden. Nachts Abnahme des vereiterten Verbandes, sofortige Operation: Öffnung des Fußes. Zerlegen der Sohle. Das rechte Bein wird in einer Schlinge hochgehängt, um den Blutandrang erträglich zu halten.

Zwei Wochen später im Lazarettzug nach Deutschland. Der Schenkelschuß, als leichte Fleischwunde erklärt, ist im Abheilen. Lazarett Offenbach ist soeben aus einem Seuchenkrankenhaus in ein chirurgisches Spital umgewandelt worden. Gleich nach der Einlieferung wird E. mit seinen Verbänden in ein heißes Bad gelegt. Die Schwestern sind das von ihren Typhösen her so gewohnt, der Läuse wegen. Das Blut schießt ins Wasser. E. verliert die Besinnung. Drei Ärzte kämpfen stundenlang gegen die Verblutung. Kochsalzspritzen stellen nachts das Bewußtsein wieder her.

Befund drei Wochen später: rechtes Bein bis zum Knie vereitert. Behandlung beschränkt sich im wesentlichen auf Verbandwechsel. Fieber in stetigem Ansteigen. Der Zufall, daß E.'s Vater Arzt ist, ermöglicht Überführung in eine andre Stadt. In den nächsten Monaten mehrere Operationen. Äußerst schmerzhafteste Behandlung. Beim täglichen Austamponieren der zerlegten Sohle müssen zwei Leute das Bein festhalten.

Im Juli ist der Fuß gerettet. August: erste Gehversuche. Ende September: E. meldet sich in seiner Garnison zum Dienst. Am Stock humpelnd, bildet er Rekruten aus. Mitte 1919 ist der Fuß durch dauerndes Training wieder fast voll verwendungsfähig. Nur zwei Zehen bleiben steif, die vierte steht, als sogenannte Hammerzehe, winklig in die Höhe.

Acht Jahre später: starke Schmerzen im linken Oberschenkel. Behandlung auf Rheuma, dann auf Ischias, Bäder Massage, Einreibungen. Als das Fieber auf vierzig steigt, wird ein Chirurg zugezogen. Operation fördert zwei Liter Eiter und einen zackigen Splitter von der Größe eines halben eisernen Kreuzes zutage, der dicht am Oberschenkelknochen verkapselt saß. Urteil des Operateurs: vierundzwanzig Stunden später wäre zur Lebensrettung die Abnahme des ganzen Beines notwendig gewesen. So kommt E. mit zwei Monaten Liegen und einer langen Narbe davon. Von den über tausend Mark betragenden Unkosten ersetzt der Staat schließlich 173,40 Mark.

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Eindrücke:

Der Fähnrich E. ist am Nachmittag des 12. April 1918 ein eben neunzehnjähriger Mensch, vergnügt über das Abenteuer des Krieges, stolz auf seine Tressen und sein Portepée, sicher, daß ihm alles gut gerät, daß ihm in diesem Kriege nichts passieren wird, daß diese Offensive die englische Front durchbrechen, daß er in spätestens zwei Monaten Leutnant sein wird. Die Granate heult heran, aus dem Klang kann man kurz vor dem Einschlag genau hören: das gibt einen Treffer. Fünf Sekunden später hockt E. auf dem Boden, maßlos erstaut, daß es ihn erwischt hat. Er betastet sich. Seine Hände fassen in eine Pfütze. Das Feuchte ist sein eigenes Blut. Erstaunlich. Keine Schmerzen. Das Herunterschneiden des Stiefels tut weh. Beim Abtransport hält E. Krampfhaft seinen Felsstecher und die Gasmaskenbüchse in der Hand. Als ihn die Kanadier in der vergasten Mulde liegen lassen, brüllt er laut: Schweinerei! Bandel! Schmeckt dann das Süßliche, stüßt die Maske über. Später am Verbandplatz wüste Schmerzen. Die Sonde wühlt im Fuß, wie ein Messer in der Butterdose. Die Tetanusspritze stößt hinten ins Fleisch, stumpf wie ein Bleistiftstummel. In Estaires liegt er, fieberbenommen, von den Verbänden gefesselt, durchs Fenster sieht er benachbarte Häuser im Artilleriefeuer zusammenstürzen. Dann tagelang nur noch die wirbelnde, verwirrende Fahrt auf dem Fiebermeer. Manchmal dringt ein Schrei, ein sinnloses Bild bis zum Bewußtsein durch. Nachts nach der Operation sitzt ein junger katholischer Geistlicher an E.'s Bett, tröstet ihn: man kann auch mit einem Fuß ganz gut weiterleben. Das ist dem Durstigen ganz gleichgültig, er will Mineralwasser. Und der Pater soll über alles reden, nur nicht über Religion. Der ist klug genug, so zu tun. (Monate später die evangelischen Lazarettpfarrer sind aufdringlicher.) In Offenbach, als zu gleich mit seinem Blut das Bewußtsein von ihm wegströmt, denkt er ganz zuletzt: der olle Seneca hat doch recht: verbluten im heißen Bad ist der schönste Tod.

Nachher im Sommer macht er sich zum erstmal im Leben Gedanken, ob das alles einen Sinn hat. Patriotismus ist schließlich nur ein Teil der Schulbildung gewesen. Aber das Abenteuer, das war doch wirklich? Und jetzt ist er das, was in den lateinischen Übungsbüchern ein Held hieß. Immerhin, er ist noch nicht Leutnant. Deshalb säuft er im Herbst jeden Abend mit dem Stabsarzt, damit der ihn, trotz dem lahmen Fuß, k. v. schreibt. Anfang November hat er's geschafft, am 10. soll er einen Rekrutentransport nach Frankreich bringen. Aber am 8. ist die Revolte, die alle Pläne zerschlägt.

Erkenntnisse:

Es ist erklärlich, daß Fähnrich E. mit der plötzlichen Beendigung seiner Heldenlaufbahn unzufrieden war. Fieber, Schmerzen, jammervolle Nächte, die höllische Tortur einer zerrissenen Sohle, das alles hat ihn nicht ein einziges Mal an der Berechtigung des Krieges zweifeln lassen. So fest saß die bürgerliche Erziehung. Manchmal betrachtete er seinen verkrüppelten Fuß, dies fremde, gläserne Fleisch, er lächelte, daß er nun noch dreißig, vierzig Jahre als Zweihundert leben würde. So heiter und unbeschwert blieb der höhere Schüler, der Fähnrich und Student E. Er war noch immer nicht imstande, seine Erlebnisse zu deuten. Es dauerte noch Jahre voller Zweifel und Erfahrungen, bis er erkannte, was er erlebt hatte.

Wenn Sie ihm heute etwas von Aufrufen gegen den Krieg, von liebevollen Phrasen erzählen, wird er nur grinsen. Er hat ja am eigenen Leibe erfahren, daß an der menschlichen Dummheit sich nicht einmal dann etwas ändert, wenn man die Menschen langsam in Stücke fetzt. Morgen werden sie sich also genau so kindisch dem Gas an den Weg stellen, wie neulich den Granaten und einst den Lanzetten. Nun sagen zwar schon Millionen: man darf es gar nicht so weit kommen lassen. Aber noch haben diese Millionen nicht die Macht. Die Macht sitzt woanders. Sie lauert und bewahrt sich vorläufig und ist schwer angreifbar.

Aber wenn nun, bald oder später, das neue große Geschäft gemacht werden soll, dann muß die Macht ja hervortreten und sich einsetzen. Deshalb hält E. den sinnlosen Krieg für unvermeidlich und höchst sinnvoll. Das ist kein innerer Widerspruch; sondern die Folge davon, daß E. endlich kapiert hat, was ihm damals widerfahren ist. Man lernt nicht durch Schmerzen: man muß vorher wissen, wofür man sie erleidet. Noch einmal also wird die Rüstungsindustrie Gelegenheit haben, an unsern Körpern zu verdienen. Aber das soll ihre letzte Chance sein. Diesmal geht es auch um ihre Existenz und nicht nur um unsre.

Die lauten Barden des blinden Heldentums haben ganz recht, es erst jenseits eines Stromes von Blut liegt die Zukunft. Aber nicht zu werden es sein, die darin ertrinken.

RETTUNGSGÜRTEL AN EINER KLEINEN BRÜCKE

Über die Brüstung der Lichtensteinbrücke, einer kleinen Brücke, die vom hintern Eingang des Zoologischen Gartens zum Tiergarten führt, ist ein Rettungsring gehängt. Ein Seil, das sich nicht verfitzen kann, ermöglicht es, den tragfähigen Gürtel weithin in den Landwehrkanal zu schleudern, zu einer Stelle, wo jemand gegen den Ertrinkungstod kämpft. Die Gegend ist, man kann es nicht anders sagen, idyllisch. Der Kandelaber, der den Rettungsanker darbietet, hält gleichzeitig eine Papptafel mit illustrierten Anweisungen zur Wiederbelebung Er-trinkender. Ferner verkündet ein Schild, daß sich die nächste Rettungs-stelle im Hause Nr. 9 der Budapester Straße befindet. Bedenkt man, daß die Lebensmüden sich für einen ernstgemeinten Selbstmord eine Stunde aussuchen, da niemand in der Nähe ist, und daß sie nicht um Hilfe rufen, bedenkt man, daß die Aussicht, hier unversehens ins Wasser zu fallen, selbst für einen Bezechten gering, und die Aussicht, sich von selbst wieder ans Land zu paddeln, durchaus günstig ist, bedenkt man ferner, daß nächtlicherweile in Berlin, in der Tiergartengegend, die freiwilligen Samariter besonders dünn gesät sind, auch im Falle einer Hilfsbereitschaft sich kaum jemand des Rettungs-gürtels erinnert, und daß der Ertrinkende während der Loslö-sungs- und Wurfvorbereitungen bereits entkräftet ist, und einen in

seine Nähe geschleuderten Gegenstand nicht mehr zu erreichen vermag — — —

Bedenkt man also all das, so wird man annehmen können, daß der Gürtel des stillen Brückleins am Lichtensteinportal des Zoo noch keinem das Leben gerettet hat.

Aber da immerhin die Möglichkeit besteht, daß jemand im Kanal umkommt, so besteht auch hier die Möglichkeit, daß einmal in Jahrzehnten der Gürtel einen Menschen dem Wasser entreißen kann, der Wiederbelebungsversuch laut Anweisungen auf dem Pappkarton Erfolg hat, die Rettungsstelle Budapester Straße Nr. 9 rechtzeitig benachrichtigt wird und rechtzeitig an Ort und Stelle ist. Für Staat und Gesellschaft Grund genug zu einer Maßnahme öffentlicher Fürsorge. Ein Menschenleben kann nicht hoch genug bewertet werden.

Von dem Rettungsgürtel auf Wurfweite entfernt ist die Stelle, wo uniformierte Männer einen Frauenkörper ins Wasser warfen.

Irgendwelche Bürger von der Einwohnerwehr hatten sich Rosa Luxemburg in dem Hause bemächtigt, in dem sie wohnte, und aus irgendwelchen Gründen grade ins Edenhotel gebracht, wo der Stab der Gardekavallerie-Schützendivision hauste, forsche Herren, monokelnd und näselnd, die nun kurzerhand übereinkamen, »die Galizierin« um die Ecke zu bringen.

Um die Ecke zu bringen — sie machten die sprachliche Wendung wahr.

Das Haus muß rein bleiben, das ist der Grundsatz jedes biedereren Ehemanns, etwas anders ist es draußen, das Haus muß rein bleiben, jedoch in der Sekunde, da Rosa Luxemburg, vom herbeigeholten Mordkommando begleitet, den Fuß aus dem Hotelportal setzte, zertrümmerten ihr die Helden mit Gewehrkolben von hinten das Schädeldach und legten sie aufs Auto. Herr Leutnant Vogel fuhr mit, er saß verkehrt neben dem Führersitz, preßte seines Revolvers Mündung auf die Stirn der halbtoten Rosa und drückte ab. Der Schuß versagte, denn die Waffe war nicht entschert, nun, so entscherte er sie eben, preßte von neuem seines Revolvers Mündung auf die Stirn der halbtoten Rosa und drückte von neuem ab.

Das Auto fuhr inzwischen die Straße gradeaus, die damals noch Alter Kurfürstendamm hieß und jetzt Budapester Straße heißt, während statt dessen die Budapester Straße nach Friedrich Ebert genannt wird, so daß sowohl Horthys Budapest wie Deutschlands Ebert die ihrer würdige Ehrung haben. Aber es fuhr nicht gradeaus über die Corne-

liusbrücke, sondern bog links ein – man hatte ja Rosa Luxemburg um die Ecke zu bringen.

Um die Ecke zu bringen – an der ersten Ecke, links vom Alten Kurfürstendamm ist die Gegend finster. Auf der einen Seite die Wirtschaftsgebäude vom Zoo, auf der andern Seite der Landwehrkanal. Nahe der Lichtensteinbrücke wächst sogar noch Gebüsch zwischen Weg und Wasser, hier hält das Auto. Kein Mensch kommt zu so später Stunde hier her, es ist auch heute keiner da, wohl aber Gardeoffiziere mit Maschinengewehren; sie bewachen die Brücke, auf der der Rettungsring hängt. »Halt, wer da?« – – »Um Gottes willen, nicht schießen!« – – Oberleutnant Vogel (zum herankommenden Offizier): »Bitte, veranlassen Sie nichts! Ich habe die Leiche der Luxemburg.« Der Offizier: »Gott sei Dank!«

Dann wurde Rosa Luxemburg ins Wasser geworfen. Da der Körper, tot oder halbtot, auf der Oberfläche schwamm, soll er (gewiß weiß man es nicht, denn die des Meuchelmords angeklagte Garde-Division stellte selbst den Gerichtshof) wieder herausgefischt worden sein, mit Draht unwickelt und mit Steinen beschwert.

Woher nahm man so eilig den Draht? Wahrscheinlich vom Rettungsgürtel.

Vorsitzender! Erinnern Sie sich nicht, daß Leutnant Röpke, die Hand an die Mütze legend, Ihnen gemeldet hat: »Die Leiche Rosa Luxemburgs ist soeben ins Wasser geworfen worden, wenn Herr Hauptmann sie sehen will, dort schwimmt sie!«?

Hauptmann Weller: »Als ich auf der Brücke stand, sah ich einen dunklen Gegenstand im Wasser treiben. Da kann vielleicht jemand gesagt haben: ›Da schwimmt sie.««

Er stand auf der Brücke neben dem Rettungsgürtel. Etwas treibt im Wasser. Ein dunkler Gegenstand.

Dieser dunkle Gegenstand ist Rosa Luxemburg. Ist die große Gelehrte, Verfasserin soziologischer Werke, eine wunderbare deutsche Stilistin, eine Frau, unsagbar gütig gegen Mensch und Tier, zeit ihres Lebens eine persönlich tapfere Kämpferin für eine bessere Zukunft.

Dort schwimmt sie, ein dunkler Gegenstand. Die lichten Helden, die sie um die Ecke gebracht haben, fahren um die Ecke zurück, rühmen (zueinander) ihre Tat, zahlen Belohnungen aus, lassen Wein auffahren, sich im Gruppenbild aufnehmen, der Jäger Runge, der den ersten Kolbenhieb drosch, darf mit den Herren Offizieren auf dasselbe Photo. Großer Sieg.

Ein Menschenleben kann nicht hoch genug bewertet werden.

Auf der einen Seite der kleinen Brücke, auf der fürsorglich der Rettungsgürtel hängt, ist das Lichtensteinportal des Zoologischen Gartens, auf der andern Seite beginnt der Neue See. Dort haben zwölf Minuten früher die Kameraden des Oberleutnants Vogel den Kameraden Rosa Luxemburgs um die Ecke gebracht.

Um die nächste Ecke, erst im Tiergarten, wo vor hundert Jahren die hohen Herren das Wild zu erlegen geruhten. An der ersten Stelle, die dunkel war, ein Seitenweg zweigte ab, zerrte man den beim Ausgang des Eden-Hotels gleichfalls halberschlagenen Karl Liebknecht aus dem Auto und forderte ihn auf, zu Fuß zu gehen. Nach links, trotzdem man angeblich nach Moabit wollte, also schnurstracks gradeaus. Man mußte ihn eben um die Ecke bringen.

Sechs Offiziere, Kapitänleutnant Horst von Pflugk-Hartung, Leutnant Stiege, Leutnant von Ritzen, Leutnant z. S. Schulze, Hauptmann Heinz von Pflugk-Hartung und der Leutnant i. d. R. Liepmann, cand. phil., Sohn eines charlottenburger Justizrates, ein Judensöhnchen, das sich von keinem Gardeoffizier einen Mangel an schneidiger Bestaltität nachsagen lassen wollte, sowie der Jäger zu Pferd Clemens Friedrich führten oder schlepten Karl Liebknecht, den Abgeordneten, der als Einziger während des ganzen Krieges laut den Frieden gewollt, nützlich für die Rettung von Hunderttausenden von Deutschen eingetreten war. Kapitänleutnant Horst von Pflugk-Hartung feuerte von hinten den ersten Schuß ab, Signal zu dem Bombardement auf Liebknecht. Als dieser tot zusammenbrach, todsicher tot, konnte er auf die Unfallstation gebracht werden, deren Adresse neben dem Rettungsgürtel auf der kleinen Brücke angegeben ist.

Es sei ein »unbekannter Spartakist« sagten sie, wollten zunächst beide Meuchelmorde verheimlichen, gaben dann eine Erklärung heraus, Herr Doktor Liebknecht sei von der vor dem Hotel angesammelten Menschenmenge schwer verletzt worden, habe im Tiergarten flüchten wollen, auf mehrfaches Anrufen nicht Halt gemacht und einem Verfolger einen Messersich versetzt, worauf man ihn nachschob. Wo Frau Doktor Luxemburg sei, wisse man nicht, verlaubtarten ihre Mörder amtlich; eine spartakistische Menge habe sie mit dem Ruf »Das ist die Rosa« an der Corneliusbrücke (also nicht um die Ecke, versteht Ihr!) vom Wagen geholt und sei mit ihr in der Dunkelheit verschwunden.

All diese Behauptungen wurden selbst vor dem Kameradschaftsgerichtshof nicht mehr aufrecht erhalten, sie hatten sich längst als Lügen herausgestellt, vor dem Hotel waren weder Zivilisten, die Karl Liebk-

knecht aus antisparkistischen Gründen tödlich verwundet hatten, noch Zivilisten, die aus spartakistischen Gründen Rosa Luxemburg bei der Corneliusbrücke in die Dunkelheit retteten, kein Zivilist wußte von der Festnahme und gar vom Abtransport der beiden, kein Zivilist war dem Auto begegnet.

Obwohl die Gardekavallerie-Schützendivision aus dem Edenhotel das Divisionsgericht stellte, also keinem der Herren Mörder etwas passieren konnte, muß anerkannt werden: alle verleugneten tapfer ihre Mannespflicht, drückten sich, verlangten keinerlei öffentliche Anerkennung von ihrem Chef Noske und ihrem Oberchef Ebert dafür, daß sie, sieben Mann, Liebknecht überwältigt hatten, und verzichteten auf alle Orden und Ehren, damit im Interesse von Staat und Gesellschaft die Wahrheit über seinen Tod verschwiegen werde. Ein Menschenleben kann nicht hoch genug bewertet werden.

Das alles fällt einem so ein, wenn man auf dem idyllischen Hücklein steht, auf dem fürsorglich ein Rettungsgürtel hängt.

WELTBÜHNE, 1928

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Aus Teutschland Deutschland machen

Ein politisches Lesebuch zur »Weltbühne«

Herausgegeben von Friedhelm Greis und Stefanie Oswald

Mit einem Vorwort von Heribert Prantl

Lukas Verlag

Korridor eines Werks. Kein Fleckchen Grün – wohin man sich wendet, trifft der Blick auf hohe Mauern, bis er hoffnungslos in diesem düstern, grauen Einerlei ertrinkt.

Und nun ist diese einzige, riesige Werkstätte – Kriegsschauplatz. Selbst im letzten und schrecklichsten aller Kriege hat man die Schlachten nicht in Fabrikhöfen und Maschinenhallen geschlagen – außer, wo man von vorn herein sich deren Vernichtung und Zerstörung zum Ziel gesetzt hatte. Raymond Poincaré aber will die Hämmer und Dynamos in schnelleren Gang bringen – durch Bajonnette und militärische Kommandos. Als die französischen Truppen mit Stahlhelmen und Gasmasken, mit Kavallerie und Panzerautos und Sanitätskolonnen in Essen einrückten, da war das erste, das unmittelbare Gefühl bei »Siegern« und »Besiegten«: Wie lächerlich, wie unsagbar lächerlich ist das Alles! Eine Farce! Die Deutschen lächelten: die Arbeiter mit überlegenem Spott, mit verhaltenem Grimin die Kleinbürger: Die französischen Soldaten, linksch, sichtbar betretend bemühten sich, stramm und ungerührt gerade vor sich hin in die Luft zu starren – wie Kinder, die sich von Erwachsenen beobachtet fühlen. Die Offiziere – erwinmelt von Offizieren bei den französischen Besatzungstruppen – lächelten nicht und dachten nichts: sie hatten ja ihre Befehle. Ihr Auftreten: schneidend arrogant – tadellos! Kein preußischer Leutnant hätte das besser getroffen. Die Generäle aber blickten finster, mit böse verkniffenen Lippen voll Verachtung nach rechts und links auf das Zivilistenpack. Wie alle Generäle aller Völker blickten, ob sie nun in ihrer Heimat oder im Feindesland, die schofein Fußgänger mDreck bespritzend, für die Ehre ihres Vaterlands und den ersehnten Orden bis ans bittere Ende – der Andern – durchhalten.

Die vorherrschende Stimmung war vor dem Einmarsch der Franzosen: Solen sie nur kommen! Was können sie uns denn eigentlich noch tun? Und die alten Zeitungsvorkäuferin am Hauptplatz sagte ganz laut: »Vielleicht wird es sogar mehr Lebensmittel geben.«

In den nächsten Tagen wuchs die Erbitterung der breiten Massen zusehend. Diese herausfordernde Soldatenspielerai ist es, was insbesondere die Arbeiter am meisten reizt, nicht der nationale Gegensatz. Und trotzdem darf man sich nicht darüber täuschen: daß eine müde Hoffnungslosigkeit, eine tiefe Apathie schwer auf der Arbeiterschaft lastet: die ewige Not und die Sorgen der letzten Jahre haben Männer und Frauen vor der Zeit zermüht und den Glauben an die eigene Kraft erstickt. Man muß die Arbeiter sehen, wenn sie aus der Grube kommen: diese blassen, eingefallenen Gesichter, die der Hunger gezeichnet. Und die Frauen: verhärrt, frühzeitig gealtert. Dann weiß man, was es mit der »glänzenden« Entlohnung der Bergarbeiter auf sich hat. »Die letzten Jahre waren zu schwer!«, sagte mir einer der Steiger. »Nicht genug zum Sattessen und dazu

Im Streit um Reparationszahlungen besetzten französische und belgische Truppen im Januar 1923 das Ruhrgebiet, um Kohlenlieferungen zu garantieren. Die Reichsregierung rief einen passiven Widerstand aus.

An der Ruhr-Front von Leo Lania 25. Januar 1923

Ein phantastisches Bild: wie riesige Wächterfeuer züngeln ringsum rote Flammen aus der Finsternis, und drüben im Westen ist der schwarze Nachthimmel in einen grellen, blutigen Schein getaucht; der breitet sich aus, verblaßt dann wieder, schon glaubt man, das ferne tiefe Rollen schwerer Geschütze zu hören – da flammt wieder der Himmel auf, und aus dunkeln Rauchwolken recken sich drohend Schlotte, Krane, gigantische Gerippe von Eisen und Glas, huschen wie lebendig gewordene Ungetüme an den Fenstern des Schnellzugs vorbei und verschwinden wieder in der Finsternis. Die scheint wach und voll von Rätselfeln. Bis die langen, verschlungenen Lichterketten der Signallaternen, die Bogenlampen eines Bahnhofs einen hellen Kreis in die Nacht schneiden: ein Gewirr von Hebeln, Stangen, Traversen wird sichtbar – nein, es ist nicht der Krieg, es ist die Arbeit, die hier ihr nächtliches Fest begeht. Noch nicht der Krieg.

Und doch: wenn man den grotesken Irrsinn des französischen Einmarschs in seiner ganzen Größe empfinden will, darf man nicht bei Nacht und im Eisenbahnzug, da muß man zu Fuß auf der Landstraße von Essen gegen Bochum oder Gelsenkirchen wandern. Fabrik an Fabrik, Zeche an Zeche – wo ein Ort endet, beginnt der nächste; es ist, als ginge man immerfort durch den endlos langen

noch die Sorgen um Frau und Kinder und – da unten arbeiten müssen ...!« Er machte eine müde Handbewegung und spuckte grimmig aus.

Grade aus solcher Stimmung erwachsen nur allzu leicht die sogenannten »unüberlegten«, die so zwecklosen und so verständlichen Taten der Verzweiflung, deren Folgen kein Poincaré voraussehen und kein General Degoutte verhindern kann. Grade solche Stimmung schafft jene Atmosphäre, in der jeder klare Gedanke getrübt wird und die furchtbarsten Giftpflanzen über Nacht aus dem Boden schießen. Wir haben das Alles vor langer, langer Zeit – vor neun Jahren erlebt. Grund genug in Deutschland, diese tragische Komödie noch einmal aufzuführen; zumal jede Rollenumbesetzung überflüssig ist und auch die Regie seit damals nichts verlernt hat. So spielte sich denn der erste Akt dieser Narrenposse wie folgt ab: Nachdem die Regierung Cuno – Meisterin wie nur ihre glorreiche Vorgängerin von 1914 in der Kunst, durch grundfalsche Psychologie alle Gegenspieler in eine geschlossene Front gegen sich zu bringen – den Franzosen den gewiß ersehnten Vorwand zum Einmarsch gegeben hatte, trat sie bescheiden in den Hintergrund und ließ die Kohlenbarone und Großindustriellen ihre Sache selbst vertreten, wie die es für gut finden würden. Worauf die zuerst mal die Unangreifbaren münzten – und gleichzeitig nach Hamburg ausrückten. Erste Lösung: Passive Resistenz. Hierauf Anbiederung an die Franzosen und die Erklärung, die Verlegung des Syndikats nach Hamburg habe nicht die mindeste Bedeutung, nichts läge der Industrieferner, als die Lage zu verschärfen. Zweite Lösung: Verhandeln als Kaufmann zu Kaufmann. Darauf kriegerisches Auftrumpfen, Verweigerung aller Kohlenlieferungen, auch gegen Bezahlung und Vorschuß. Dritte Lösung: Offener Kampf. Und das Alles ohne jeden Übergang, ohne daß man auch nur eine Gegenmaßnahme des Gegners abwartete. So konnte der erstrebte Effekt nicht ausbleiben: Vollkommene Ziel- und Planlosigkeit und ein allgemeines Chaos. Und mit stolzeschweller Brust verkündete dann der Regierungspräsident von Düsseldorf dem französischen Oberkommandanten: weder er noch die andern deutschen Regierungsstellen hätten eine gesetzliche Handhabe, den Kohlenindustriellen über die Förderung und Verteilung der Kohle Befehle zu erteilen. Am Abend war dieser Befehl schon da: Keine Lieferungen an Frankreich!

Wie bekannt doch der Text zu dieser Melodie ist! Provokationen – zurückzukommen – abermals auftrumpfen – und doch nie wissen, wie weit man eigentlich gehen, und was man erreichen will: die Regierung Franz Josefs des Ersten hat das aus dem ff verstanden. Man läßt den Dingen eben mal ihren Lauf. Vernunft ist Plage – die Parole lautet: Siegreich wollen wir Frankreich schlagen!

Es gibt jetzt nur eine Rettung für die breiten arbeitenden Massen: Nicht nach Paris oder London oder New York schauen, sondern nach Berlin und München. Nicht die Politik des »kleinern Übels« vertreten (siehe: Verteidigungskrieg!), sondern gegen die Lüge, die Phrase, die Korruption, die planmäßige Verhetzung kämpfen ohne Rücksicht darauf, wer »angefangen« hat. »Die Sozialdemokraten, die Gewerkschaften appellieren an unsre Hilfe«, sagte mir ein französischer Gewerkschaftler, »– in Wahrheit brauchen wir ihre Unterstützung beinahe noch dringender als sie unsre. Der Umschwung, das große Erwachen der breiten Massen in Frankreich wird erst dann kommen, wenn die sehen werden, daß das Hakenkreuzler- und Junkertum, womit Poincaré sie immer wieder in Schrecken und Verwirrung jagt, tatsächlich tot ist. Vorläufig ist es leider noch sehr lebendig.« [...]

Waffenschieber von L. Lania

An den Reichsminister des Innern ist der folgende Brief gelangt:

Berlin, den 22. März 1924

Den Herren Johannes Häußler, Berlin, Kronprinzen-Ufer 29, und Erich Albrecht, Berlin, Luisen-Straße 60 bei Radau, sowie ihren politischen Freunden ist es nach langer, mühevoller Arbeit gelungen, einwandfrei Folgendes festzustellen:

Wie in Berlin, so treiben sich auch in fast allen größeren Städten des Reiches Elemente herum, die ihren Beruf darin finden, Waffen und Kriegsgerät aller Art zu verschieben. Es hätte keinen Sinn, alle diese Leute den Behörden auszuliefern, denn wohlweislich halten sich die großen Schieber, welche über beträchtliche Geldmittel verfügen, deren Herkunft nicht zweifelhaft ist, im Hintergrunde. Nur durch ganz intensive und systematische Arbeit ist es möglich, die Fäden zu durchschneiden, die diese Leute an die Wurzeln dieses Schmutzgeschäftes führen. Es muß ein gut lohnendes, wenn auch gefährliches Geschäft sein, dem sich die Schieber mit Eifer hingeben, denn es besteht nach Aussage eines der Beteiligten sogar ein Schutzverband, der durch rege Spitzeltätigkeit alle organisierten Waffenschieber zu schützen

sich bemüht. Wir haben Grund zu der Annahme, daß die Führer dieser Organisation bis in die Abteilung Ia des Polizeipräsidiums reichen. Daß diese Geheimorganisation gegebenenfalls mit allen Mitteln arbeitet, ist nach den eignen Aussprüchen einiger Schieber nicht in Zweifel zu ziehen.

Wir offerierten folgendes fingierte Waffenlager: 1780 Gewehre, 1800 Seitengewehre, 47 800 Schuß Munition, 18 schwere Maschinengewehre, 18 leichte Maschinengewehre, 6800 Stielhandgranaten, 6800 Eierhandgranaten, 2 leichte Minenwerfer, 80 Minen, 1 Geschütz, Kaliber 7,7 cm mit 50 Granaten, 2 Geschütze, Kaliber 10,5 cm mit 100 Granaten, 1 Feldküche. Auf diese Offerte schnappten wunschgemäß eine große Menge Schieber ein; gegen einzelne von ihnen konnten wir ziemlich geschlossenes Beweismaterial, wie schriftliche Kaufverträge auf Waffen lautend sowie Briefe, zusammenbringen. Wir haben dieses Material teils an das Reichsministerium des Innern, zu Händen des Herrn Oberregierungsrat Mühleisen, teils an das Berliner Polizeipräsidium Abteilung Ia, zu Händen des Herrn Kriminalkommissars Weitzel, abgeführt.

Eine der ersten sich für unsere Offerte interessierenden Firmen war die „Allgemeine Bedarfsgesellschaft“, Wilmersdorf, Holsteinische Straße, welche auf ihren Briefköpfen ganz offiziell die Bezeichnung: Abteilung Heeresausrüstung trägt. Wir verhandelten mit Herrn Thormann, welcher uns durch die Herren Leuschner und Seiwerth zugeführt wurde. Mit welcher Dreistigkeit diese Firma arbeitet, zeigen die an uns gerichteten Briefe. Es geht aus diesen sowie dem Kaufvertrag einwandfrei hervor, daß die „Allgemeine Bedarfsgesellschaft“ ihre Waffenaufkäufe für das Ausland tätigt. Die Käufer des Thormann sind nach unserer Ueberzeugung dieselben wie die des Herrn Hirsch. Die Waffen gehen, wie uns Thormann sagte, nach Adrianopol, werden aber nach dem Freihafen Stettin verschoben, um dort für einen Kommunistenputsch jederzeit bereit zu liegen. Thormann war es auch, der uns die Existenz eines Schutzverbandes ganz unumwunden zugab. Die Spediteure der „Allgemeinen Bedarfsgesellschaft“ sind Cohrs & Ammé.

Als zweite Käufergruppe nennen wir die Herren Kirsch und Döbler, welche uns ebenfalls durch Leuschner und Seiwerth zugeführt wurden. Kirsch ist nach seiner eignen Aussage unabhängiger Landtagsabgeordneter in Hessen, er ist aber zweifellos noch linksradikaler orientiert. Der Spediteur der Herren Kirsch und Döbler ist Prüfer Nachf., Anklamer Straße, eine Filiale der Spediteure Cohrs & Ammé.

Mit einer dritten Käufergruppe, den Herren Seiwerth und Schmied, stehen wir noch in Verhandlungen, doch hat auch diese Gruppe bereits das zum Kauf erforderliche Geld flüssig gemacht und schriftliche Kaufverträge aus den Händen gegeben, die wir an das Reichsministerium des Innern abführten. Die Hinterleute dieser Gruppe sind ebenso wie ihre Spediteure noch nicht bekannt.

Aber auch die vom Feindbund eingesetzte Kontrollkommission bringt den Waffenschiebern das größte Interesse entgegen. Ende 1922 wurde Albrecht bekannt, daß die französische Kontrollkommission ihr Mitglied Major d'Andria mit dem Aufkauf von Waffen betraut hatte, um diese zu gegebener Zeit „beschlagnahmen“ zu können. Tatsächlich hatten sich auch unter den Schiebern Lumpen gefunden, die dieses landesverräterische Treiben unterstützten. Um den Behörden einwandfreies Material zu liefern, vermittelte Albrecht den Waffenschiebern vorgeschobene Leute, die im grade angebotenes Waffenlager und ließ alle Beteiligten verhaften. Nur durch diese Machination war der Beweis zu erbringen, daß seitens der Waffenschieberorganisation tatsächlich Beziehungen zur Kontrollkommission bestehen. Aus Dank für seine im Interesse des Reiches geleistete

wertvolle Arbeit wurde Albrecht zusammen mit seinem Freunde Ulf Weiß-Südende wochenlang in Untersuchungshaft gehalten und steht noch heute unter Anklage wegen Verstoßes gegen das Gesetz zum Schutze der Republik, da er das ihm bekannte Waffenlager nicht sofort der Polizei, zu der er nicht unbegründetes Mißtrauen hat, meldete. Wir fügen zur Bekräftigung die Abschrift einer eidesstattlichen Erklärung bei, deren Original Albrecht zu treuen Händen hat.

Aus allem bisher Gesagten ist klar ersichtlich, daß wir mit unsern politischen Freunden schon lange, teils sogar unter recht großen persönlichen Opfern, tätig sind, um das Waffenschieberunwesen mit Stumpf und Stiel auszurotten, da es eine riesige Gefahr für das Reich darstellt. Es dürfte wohl kaum Privatpersonen geben, die ein so umfangreiches Material gesammelt und so genaue Kenntnis von dem Treiben der Waffenschieber haben. Die Behörden stehen, da sie ja nur streng nach den Buchstaben des Gesetzes gehen können, diesen ihnen nicht unbekanntem Geschehnissen vollkommen machtlos gegenüber. Uns aber ist es sowohl aus finanziellen Gründen, weiterhin aber auch wegen der Unzulänglichkeit der bestehenden Gesetze unmöglich, all das wertvolle Material, das wir im Laufe der Zeit sammeln konnten, zu verwerten und alle Beteiligten dahin zu bringen, wohin sie gehören. Wir brauchen wohl nicht besonders zu betonen, daß diese Waffenschieberungen, welche sich in aller Öffentlichkeit abspielen, die größten innen- und außenpolitischen Gefahren in sich bergen. Es muß daher im Interesse der öffentlichen Sicherheit und Ordnung unbedingt sofort Abhilfe geschaffen werden.

Wir machen folgende Vorschläge:

I. Die Regierung stellt uns etwa folgendes Waffenlager zur Verfügung: 200 Gewehre, 20—40 000 Schuß Munition, einige Maschinenpistolen, optisches Gerät, 200 Seitengewehre, 3—5 leichte Maschinengewehre, 3—5 schwere Maschinengewehre, nach Möglichkeit ein Geschütz mit Munition. Dieses Lager wird von der Reichswehr kontrolliert und instandgehalten. Es wird den Schiebern einzeln regulär verkauft. Erfolg: 1. das Reich beschlagnahmt sämtliche Gelder, 2. Verhaftung der überführten Schieber, Vermittler und Spediteure.

II. Das Reich stellt uns oder einem den Schiebern bekannten Beamten Geldmittel zur Verfügung zum Ankauf von Waffen. Bei Angeboten geht man auf das Geschäft ein und kommt so an den Aufbewahrungsort, was nur möglich ist, wenn man vorher das Vorhandensein des zum Kauf erforderlichen Geldes nachweisen kann. Jetzt erfolgt die Beschlagnahme oder; wenn dies nicht möglich, tatsächlicher Kauf.

III. Das Reich gibt sämtlichen Einzelstaaten und Reichswehrinstanzen Anweisung, ihre Waffenaufkäufe einzustellen, damit diese große Aktion des Reiches nicht gefährdet und gehemmt wird.

Wir haben Grund zu der Annahme, die ja leider der der Behörden widerspricht, daß in Deutschland noch eine riesige Menge von Kriegsgeräten aller Art sich in den Händen staatsgefährlicher Elemente befindet.

Wir stellen es der Regierung vollkommen anheim, auf unsre Vorschläge einzugehen, betonen aber, daß sofortige Abhilfe im Interesse der öffentlichen Sicherheit und Ordnung dringend geboten ist.

Diese Eingabe an den Reichsinnenminister Jarres zeigt deutlich, wie sehr ein Ding nicht ist, kein Zweifel. Da Herren, schon, „das Kind zu schauen“. In der Republik Deutschland sind die gleichen Methoden im Schwau, die das zaristische Rußland, allerdings ebensowenig erfolgreich, anwandte, bis es schließlich so weit

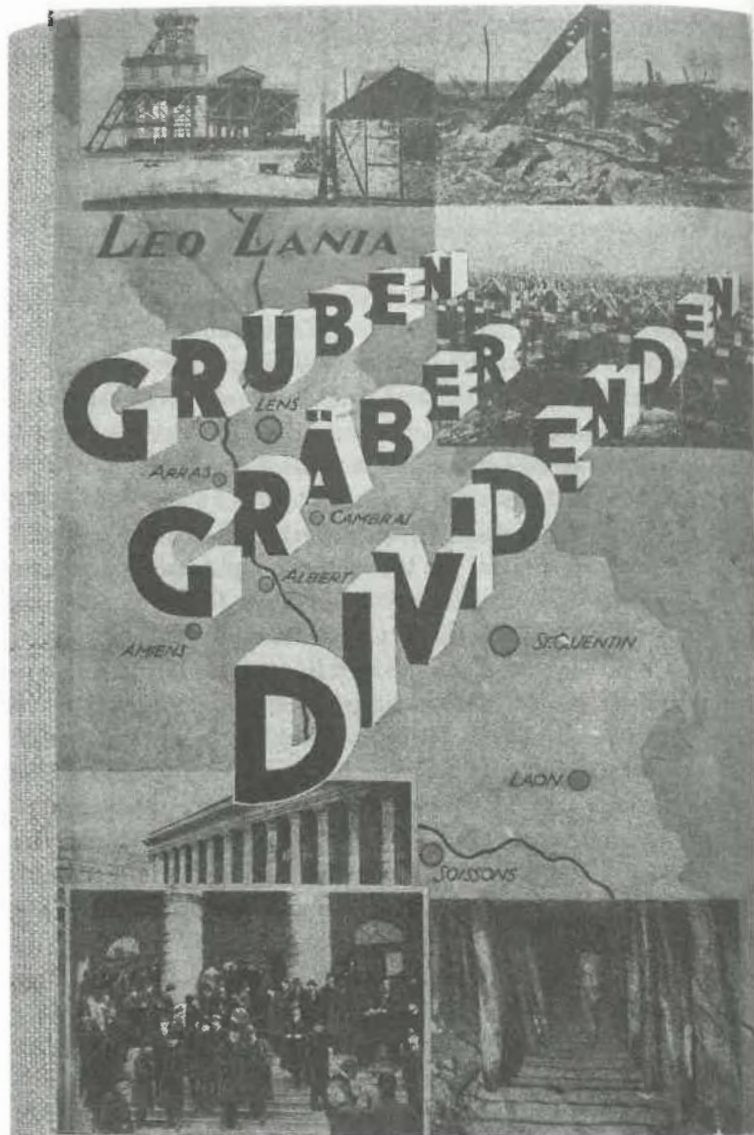
kam, daß kein Spitzel mehr sicher davor war, von einem noch fleißigern Spitzel verhaftet zu werden, und die agents provocateurs selbst nicht mehr ein noch aus wußten. Man muß gestehen: die Herren haben es auch in Deutschland nicht leicht.

Jedenfalls enthüllt diese Eingabe in schätzenswerter Weise nicht nur die üblichen Methoden, sondern gibt auch einen Fingerzeig, wie die grade in letzter Zeit so oft von der Presse verbreiteten Meldungen über alle möglichen Enthüllungen, Entlarvungen und so erfolgreich durchgeführten Aufdeckungen kommunistischer Waffenlager, Attentatspläne und Mordversuche zu werten sind. Man kann den Herren, die im Schweiß ihres Angesichts ihren Lebensunterhalt als Spitzel bestreiten müssen, gewiß nicht verdenken, daß sie ihre Unentbehrlichkeit stets von neuem und immer eindringlicher „höhernorts“ demonstrieren wollen. Wie man sieht, haben sie bei diesem löblichen Tun schöne Erfolge zu buchen.

Mein Gewährsmann bemerkt dazu:

Nach der Auflösung des Entwaffnungskommissariats beauftragte die Reichsregierung die Erfassungsabteilung des Reichsschatzministeriums mit der Sicherstellung von Waffen im Privatbesitz. Die Erfassungsabteilung ging hierbei wie folgt vor: Sie ließ sich durch Mittelpersonen Offerte machen, leistete teilweise auch Anzahlungen, besichtigte die Muster und griff dann auf dem Wege der polizeilichen Beschlagnahme zu. Um das zu können, mußte sie natürlich Leute haben, die sich zu einer solchen Spitzeltätigkeit hergaben. Es ist gewiß nicht verwunderlich, wenn diese Herrschaften recht bald zu der Erkenntnis gelangten, daß es trotz alledem für sie noch immer finanziell vorteilhafter ist, ihre Beziehungen zu amtlichen Stellen auf eigne Rechnung auszunützen, als sich nur streng an die Aufgaben ihrer Auftraggeber zu halten. Man brauchte ja nur selbst sich Offerte machen zu lassen, das Geschäft allein durchzuführen und das Geld in die eigne Tasche zu stecken. Ging eine Sache schief, so konnte sie immer als Spitzelaktion dargestellt werden, glückte sie oder war man im Verlauf der Unternehmung mit einigen Unterbeamten, die gewisse Befugnisse hatten, in nähere Fühlung getreten, so konnte man das Geschäft noch rentabler gestalten, indem man die Waffen tatsächlich beschlagnahmte — also überhaupt nichts bezahlte —, dann einen Bruchteil davon ablieferte und für den Rest die Gesamtkaufsumme einstrich. Die Erfassungsabteilung beschäftigt eine ganze Reihe von Personen in diesem Handwerk. Wenn auch jeder einzelne nur gewisse Teilausschnitte aus dem „großen Geschäft“ zu sehen bekommt, so war doch auf die Dauer nicht zu vermeiden, daß die einzelnen Leute sich gegenseitig kennen lernten, ihre Erfahrungen austauschten, um sich schließlich zu gemeinsamen Aktionen zu vereinigen, bis sie dann zu einer geschlossenen, durch ihr Wissen um so viele Dinge gefährlichen Macht wurden. Beamte, die einmal in dieses Netz geraten waren, fürchteten ein Bekanntwerden ihrer kleinen Durchstechereien, und so mußten sie, freiwillig oder unfreiwillig, auf dem einmal eingeschlagenen Wege weitergehen.

So weit mein Gewährsmann. Der in diesen Dingen genau Bescheid wissen muß. Denn er hat fast ein ganzes Jahr lang im Auftrag seiner Organisation „Oberland“ für die Bewaffnung bayrischer Geheimbünde in Berlin gewirkt und dabei unter anderem schon so diesem patriotischen Tun von gewissen Reichsbehörden empfing (und rückhaltlos anerkennt), einen genauen Einblick in den unentwirrbaren Rattenkönig von Schiebung, Korruption und Spitzeltum gewonnen.



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Abb. 10: Umschlag zu »Gruben, Gräber, Dividenden«, Montage von John
Heartfield, Malik-Verlag 1925 © THE HEARTFIELD COMMUNITY OF
HEIRS/ BILDRECHT, WIEN, 2017

EINEN BLICK HINTER DIE KULISSEN DER REPUBLIK

BEFÜHRT DAS BUCH

LEO LANIA:

GEWEHRE AUF REISEN

BILDER AUS DEUTSCHER GEGENWART



BRÜSCHERT 1.- OBL.
HALBL. 2.- OBL.

MALIK-VERLAG GES. M. B. H. WIEN I

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Abb. 8: Verlagswerbung für »Gewehre auf Reisen«

DEUTSCHLAND IST...

Deutschland ist jetzt zehn Jahre Republik, und diese neue Staatsform hat das Land aus seiner größten Katastrophe gerettet und vor Zerstümmerung bewahrt. Ein von der Dynastie unterzeichneter Friede hätte wahrscheinlich dazu geführt, daß sich die süddeutschen Potentaten, ihre Unschuld am Kriege sanft betuernd, nach irgendwo hin verfügt hätten, so wie es Bayern auch als angeblicher Volksstaat versucht hatte. Der Verband des Reiches wäre auf alle Fälle gesprengt worden. Die Republik hat den denkbar günstigsten unter allen möglichen Frieden geschlossen.

Deutschland ist unter allen Ländern des Krieges das einzige, das mit Fug sagen kann, der Friedensvertrag habe ihm Nutzen gebracht. Es hat zwar Gebiete verloren, es muß schwere Reparationen leisten, und noch ist ein Stück Rheinufer besetzt. Dafür aber ist es aus der Sphäre des Imperialismus heraus, und es hat kein Deutschland über See zu verteidigen. Es kann ruhig schlafen, wenn in China oder Marokko die Gewehre losgehn. Es ist von der Qual der Wehrpflicht befreit, gemessen an den militärpolitischen Sorgen der andern sind die seinen für die Katz. Die Sieger werden ihrer Eroberungen nicht froh, ihr Budget kommt durch Rüstungsaufwendungen aus der Balance, und in den jungen Staaten balgen sich die Nationalitäten. Deutschland ist wieder angesehen und thront im Rat der Großen, ohne deren Beängstigungen zu teilen.

Deutschland ist undankbar. Es hat sich sehr schnell erholt und wäre ohne das Ruhrverbrechen des Herrn Cuno schon vor einigen Jahren so weit gewesen. Die Ketten von Versailles waren immer nur papierne. Zugegeben, daß Clemenceau keine karitativen Absichten dabei gehabt hat, jedenfalls ist er Deutschland ebenso wenig zum Verderben geworden wie Napoleon, der den König von Preußen bis nach Tilsit gejagt und ein Bündel vermotteter Staaten so rücksichtslos durchgelüftet hat, wie das deutsche Pietät niemals zuwege gebracht hätte. Was wäre eigentlich, wenn wir gesiegt hätten, wenn die Vaterlandspartei der Ludendorffe ihre großen Eroberungsabsichten verwirklicht hätte? Dann wäre bis heute noch kein Frieden in der Welt gewesen, jeder erwachsene Deutsche, einerlei welchen Geschlechts, würde draußen in der Welt günstigenfalls Etappendienst machen und aufpassen, ob die

von den Alldutschen geschmiedeten Ketten auch richtig sitzen; alle Deutschen wären nach zehn Jahren noch immer unterwegs, und im Land wäre nichts als – die Zentrale für Heimatdienst. Zur Abwicklung.

Deutschland ist das einzige Land, das nicht imstande ist, eine Verbesserung zu begreifen. In Frankreich hoben sich mit der Stabilisierung offensichtlich die Lebensgeister, und auch in England ist man wieder heiterer. Weil die Auseinandersetzung mit Moskau einstweilen ver- tagt ist. In Deutschland dagegen hat sich seit 1920 die Sprache seiner Politiker kaum verändert. Noch immer das alte Elendslied, die Ver- wünschung des Gewaltfriedens. Kein Politiker irgend einer Partei verschmäht, von der Verarmung und Verelendung zu sprechen, und zwar nicht von der durch die eignen Kapitalisten bewirkte, sondern von der Pauperisierung durch Versailles und Dawes, und niemand spricht mehr von der Inflation, diesem gigantischen Raubzug der Schwerindustrie durch die Ersparnisse der kleinen Leute. Es gibt kein Bankett mit Kapaun und Rotspon, wo nicht irgend ein Schmerbauch feierlich versichert, daß wir nunmehr ein armes Volk sind. In diesem Punkte wird es zwischen Rechts und Links, zwischen Hörsing und Seldte, kaum eine Unstimmigkeit geben, von dieser kümmerlichen Phrase leben alle. Herr Duesterberg hat neulich phantasiert: »Nicht Auswanderung, Geburtenbeschränkung und Internationalisierung können uns retten, sondern nur Änderung des deutschen Gesamtschicksals, vor allem Sprengung der Grenzen, die uns einengen. Das deut- sche Schicksal ist eine Raumfrage«. Das deutsche Schicksal ist keine Raumfrage. Aus der Philosophie von Herrn Hans Grimm in die Poli- tik überführt, gewinnt das Wörtchen Raum überhaupt eine höchst fatale Wolkigkeit. Wenn wir heute das Land um Vogesen oder Weich- sel wiederbekämen, so bedeutete das für den Einzelnen keineswegs mehr »Raum«. Es kommt nicht darauf an, wieviel Platz ein Volk un- ter der Sonne einnimmt, sondern wie die Güter darauf verteilt sind. Wenn die herrschende Klasse über die Niederlage lamentiert und sich nicht beruhigen kann, weil es ihr versagt ist, Siegesmale zu errichten, so muß ihr gröblich klar gemacht werden, daß ihre schönen Häuser, ihre Vergnügungsstätten, die glanzvollen Fassaden ihrer Industriepa- läste die Monumente eines viel beweiskräftigeren Sieges sind: des Sie- ges über das eigne Volk.

Deutschland ist das einzige Land, wo Mangel an politischer Befähig- ung den Weg zu den höchsten Ehrenämtern sichert. So wie gewisse

Naturvölker Schwachsinnigen göttliche Ehren entgegenbringen, so verehren die Deutschen den politischen Schwachsinn und holen sich von dorther ihre Führer. Darin überbieten sie ohne Zweifel die wilden Völker, die sich auf die Adoration beschränken und die scheue Bewunderung, aber sonst mit ihren Dorfketins weder in den Krieg ziehen noch in den Frieden.

Deutschland ist infolgedessen auch das einzige Land, das ohne Erhebung an seine Revolution zurückdenkt. Im Grund weiß man durchschnittlich von ihr nicht mehr, als daß sie unsern gloriosen Heerführern freventlich in den zum letzten Schlag erhobenen Arm gefallen ist. In keiner Schule wird gelehrt, daß sie lange veraltete Einrichtungen beseitigt, viel Schutt und Moder fortgefegt hat. Die Leute, die sie emporgetragen hat, heißen Novemberbrecher, und daran sind sie selbst schuld, denn sie zitterten vor der Macht, die ihnen plötzlich zufiel. Sie waren stolz darauf, möglichst viel unversehrt gelassen zu haben. So lebt die Revolution kaum mehr als Erinnerung, und einzelne Episoden daraus wirken heute schon unglaubwürdig und wie aus einer Fabelwelt. Wo sind die Bemühungen, den 9. November zu feiern? Verlautet irgend etwas von einer Kundgebung der Regierung? Dieses gegenwärtige Kabinett ist hervorgegangen aus den Parteien, denen der Umsturz den Weg zur Herrschaft freigemacht, den sie aus eigener Kraft niemals gefunden hätten. Vielleicht würde es doch große Revolutionsfeiern geben, wenn die Sozialdemokratie nicht in der Regierung wäre, sondern noch in der Opposition stünde. Aber heute als Regierung ... pst, pst ... Der 9. November ist der schwarze Tag, der Tag, von dem man nicht spricht. Unbekannte Matrosen haben der wackelnden Despotie den letzten Tritt gegeben; den Dank der Republik hat der Leutnant Marloh in einem Hof in der Französischen Straße abgestattet.

Deutschland ist jetzt zehn Jahre Republik, und es hat mindestens fünf davon gedauert, ehe sich Republikaner in größerer Anzahl meldeten. Den Wendepunkt bildete der Hitlerputsch von 1923, bei dem sich zeigte, wie wenig zum gewaltsamen Umsturz bereite Gegner die Republik hatte, und was für Narren dabei die Oberhand hatten. Daß die bürgerliche Republik durchgehalten hat, verdankt sie viel weniger der Entschlossenheit ihrer Führer als vielmehr der Deroute auf der andern Seite und bestimmten außerpolitischen Rücksichtnahmen. Im allgemeinen hat man erkannt, daß auch in der neuen Form der Geist der Kaiserei weiterexistieren kann. Deutsche Revolution – ein kurzes

pathetisches Emporrecken, und dann ein Niedersinken in die Alltäglichkeit. Massengräber in Berlin. Massengräber in München, an der Saale, am Rhein, an der Ruhr. Ein tiefes Vergessen liegt über diesen Gräbern, ein trauriges Umsonst. Ein verlorener Krieg kann schnell verwunden werden. Eine verspielte Revolution, das wissen wir, ist die Niederlage eines Jahrhunderts. So brechen wir auf ins zweite nachrevolutionäre Jahrzehnt.

WELTBÜHNE, 1928

S

Das Verbot von Publikationen betraf nach Überzeugung der „Weltbühne“ vor allem linke Medien. Es sei kaum nachzuvollziehen, wie diese Verbote begründet wurden.

Wer weiter liest, wird erschossen! von Axel Eggebrecht

12. Januar 1932

Noch kurze Zeit Geduld: Wer dann in Deutschland noch von geistiger Freiheit spricht, der hält Leichenreden. Denn schon liegt er kläglich im Sterben, der viel-geliebte Held, der freie Geist. Eigentlich gibt es ihn schon gar nicht mehr – machen wir uns doch nichts vor. Und bei allem gerührten Gedenken an den nahezu Verbliebenen müssen wir zugeben, daß er selber an seinem Ende schuld ist. Er wartet in Frieden ab, ob er an Entkräftung eingehen oder ob man seinen Kopf auf legale Weise rollen lassen wird.

Wir wissen, daß die Notverordnung jede Maßnahme jeder Regierung gegen alle Art von geistiger Arbeit erlaubt. Wir wissen, daß alle Schreibenden, Redakteure, Setzer, Drucker und Botenjungen unter verschärfte Aufsicht gestellt sind. Wir wissen, was die Filmzensur treibt. Wir wissen, daß am Rundfunk seit Monaten die seltsame Operation der sukzessiven Kastration vollzogen wird. Wir wissen von ungezählten Fällen der Bedrückung, der Vergewaltigung, der Einschüchternung. Ach – wir wissen ja überhaupt alles, nicht wahr?

Entschuldigen Sie die Pedanterie. Das eben ist es ja. Darum handelt sichs. Wir sind dabei, uns selber aufzugeben. Es gibt fast keinen gemeinsamen Lebenswillen der Geistigen mehr. Wir sind gelangweilt durch das – wie man nun schon überall hört und liest – veraltete, liberalistische Ideal der geistigen Freiheit. Unsrer Verbände quälen sich selbst bei bösarigsten Vorkommnissen kaum noch mal eine lendenlahme Erklärung ab, wie das Beispiel des Schriftsteller-Schutzverbandes zeigt. Es ist vorbei. Man legt die Hände in den Schoß und wartet auf Hitler.

Das Verrückte, das Perverse dabei ist, daß immer noch, bei allem muntern Gerede über die Diktatur, die Wenigsten sehen, wie sehr sie schon Wirklichkeit

geworden ist. Immer davon reden – nie drauf achten, wie sie eigentlich gemacht wird. Deshalb erlaube ich mir als Musterbeispiel darzubieten: Verbot und Beschlagnahme des »Illustrierten Arbeiterkalenders«.

Dieser Abreißkalender erscheint seit neun Jahren jeden Herbst im kommunistischen Verlag Carl Hoyrn Nachfolger. Und alle Jahre wieder folgt, ein paar Tage nach dem Erscheinen, das Verbot. Nur zwei Jahrgänge hat der Verlag freigekommen können, darunter den vorletzten. Der hatte dann freilich eine Auflage von 100.000.

In jeder Buchhandlung kann man volksische, militärische, nationale, religiöse, naturschwärmerische und was weiß ich sonst noch für Kalender bekommen. Die sind natürlich alle ohne Interesse für Staatsanwälte und Amtsrichter. So was haben sie selber zu Hause hängen. Aber dieser verdammte Kommunismus, den man jeden Tag im Jahre aufrischen, von der Wand ablesen kann – nein, das geht zu weit. Da wird eingegriffen. Nun ist es in früheren Jahren, bis zur Einführung der segensreichen Notverordnungen, garnichtsoleicht gewesen, triftige Gründe für diese Verbote auszuknobeln. Dieser Kalender ist nämlich alles andre als eine platte Parteimache, als ein bloßes Propagandastückchen. Natürlich verleugnet er auf keiner Seite seinen Zweck: In der Stube, in der Wohnküche des kommunistischen Arbeiters zu hängen, damit er an ihm die Tage abzähle, die ihn der Erfüllung seiner Hoffnungen näher bringen. Im Übrigen handelt es sich um ein ungemein sorgfältig gearbeitetes, lebendiges, mit großen Kenntnissen zusammengestelltes Werk. Jeder dieser Kalender ist eigentlich ein kleines Kompendium des revolutionären Sozialismus. Die Bilder sind vortrefflich ausgewählt.

Peter Panter hat an dieser Stelle vor etwa einem Jahr einen dieser Kalender besprochen. Und wie dieser, so sind sie alle: Wirkungsvoll und inhaltreich.

Viele Monate Schufferei. Druck, Korrektur. Die ersten Exemplare gehen hinaus. Drei, vier fünf Tage vergehen. Dann kommt so ein Brief:

»128 G. 2609/31.

Beschluß!

In dem Verfahren gegen die unbekanntenen Verbreiter der Druckschrift, illustrierter Arbeiterkalender 1932»

wegen Vorbereitung zum Hochverrat

wird die Druckschrift: illustrierter Arbeiterkalender 1932: – verantwortlich für den Inhalt: August Creutzburg, Berlin; Gesamtedaktion: Grau; Verlag: Carl Hoyrn Nachf., Hamburg-Berlin; Drucker: R. Boll, Buchdruckerei G. m. b. H., Berlin NW, gemäß §§41, 73, 81 Ziffer 2, 86 StGB., 4 Ziffer 1 Reichsgesetzes zum Schutze der Republik vom 25. März 1930 RGBl. I, S. 91, – 27 Reichsgesetzes über die Presse vom 7. Mai 1874 RGBl. S. 65, 94ff. StPO. beschlagnahmt, weil sie der Einziehung unterliegt. Der Verdacht einer strafbaren Handlung ergibt sich aus Seite 26, 54, 55 (Bild) 95 (Bild mit Text), 104, 177 (Bild mit Text), 205 (Bild mit Text), 206, 216, 237 (Bild mit Text), 242.

Berlin NW 40, den 22.10.1931. Alt-Moabit 11.

Das Amtsgericht Berlin-Mitte, Abt. 128, gez. von Noel, Amtsger.-Rat.«

Der biedere Laie wird sich zunächst wundern über die freilich unwiderlegliche Begründung: Der Kalender wird beschlagnahmt, weil er der Einziehung unterliegt. Auch die Anziehung eines 57 Jahre alten Pressegesetzes zum Verbot eines Abreißkalenders wird ihn befremden.

Das sind aber nur kleine Schönheitsfehler. Die ganze Zauberkraft dieses Dokuments kann man nämlich nur verstehen, wenn man jede einzelne angeführte Seite und jedes beanstandete Bild nachprüft. Und das eben ist ja durch die flinke Beschlagnahme (aus Gründen der Einziehung) vorläufig unmöglich.

Als anstößig sind da zunächst einmal alle Stellen angeführt, die Ausdrücke wie »Zerschlagung der Staatsmaschine, Eroberung der Macht, bewaffneter Aufstand« enthalten. Es handelt sich dabei um Zitate aus Marx und Lenin. Offenbar sind unsre Gerichte zurzeit mit einer durchgreifenden Reinigung marxistischer Schriften beschäftigt.

Das sind natürlich keine juristischen Begründungen mehr. Das ist simple Willkür. Eigentlich sollte es noch sozialdemokratische Funktionäre und vielleicht sogar Zeitungen geben, die sich schamerfüllt an die freihetlichen wilhelminischen Zeiten erinnern, in denen dergleichen alle Tage gedruckt werden durfte ...

Das alles ist aber noch harmlos gegen die Gründe, die für die Beanstandungen von Bildern in diesem Kalender aufgeführt werden. Zeichnungen, die Figuren des hamburger Aufstandes von 1923 oder auch der pariser Kommune zum Gegenstand haben, sind nicht erlaubt. Auch eine Aufnahme bewaffneter, offenbar russischer Arbeiter in Marschkolonne ist staatsgefährdend – wobei zu bemerken ist, daß dergleichen in den verschiedensten Publikationen bürgerlicher Verlage fortwährend ungestört verbreitet wird. In einer kürzlich erschienenen Biographie Hitlers in Photos wird die Nazi-Bewaffnung vor dem münchener Putsch in allen Einzelheiten gezeigt. Das ist natürlich ganz was anderes.

Aber keine noch so ausschweifende Phantasie wird erraten können, worum es sich bei den beiden verbotenen Bildern auf den Seiten 95 und 237 handelt: Um die Reproduktion einer Kälthe-Kollwitz-Radierung; und um das Photo eines lesenden Knaben.

Die Werke der Käthe Kollwitz hängen in staatlichen Sammlungen. Den berühmten Zyklus »Bauernkrieg« kann jeder Mensch in jeder Buch- oder Kunsthandlung erwerben. Hier aber ist das wunderbare Bild des Verzwelfungszuges, über dem Hände, Fahnen und Sensen gegen den fahlen Himmel geschwenkt werden, verboten. Vielleicht wegen der Unterschrift: »Ausgebeutete Bauern, kämpft unter der Fahne der Revolution«. Aber die sagt ja doch nur in düren Worten, was jeder Betrachter sowieso aufs stärkste empfindet. Ein deutscher Richter braucht freilich nicht zu wissen, daß Aussprechen manchmal auch Abschwächen bedeutet.

Das letzte der verbotenen Bilder aber, diese Seite 237, sie könnte einmal klassisch werden in einer Geschichte der geistigen Bevormundung. Da sitzt ein Proletarierjunge im Wollswater und liest, mit einem Finger folgt er den Zeilen eines dicken Buches, das vor ihm liegt. Das sieht ganz brav und harmlos aus. Wahrscheinlich ein Band Heldensagen oder ein Abenteuerromän? Nein, die Unterschrift des Bildes verrät den Verworfenen: »Ohne revolutionäre Theorie keine revolutionäre Praxis«. Der Lausjunge liest offenbar ein verbotenes Buch. Die Abbildung einer derartigen Handlung ist selbstverständlich ebenfalls zu verbieten.

Wahrscheinlich hat sich der Herr Amtsgerichtsrat für einen Augenblick ins bereits perfekte Dritte Reich geträumt. Dort wird ja die hitlersche Parole gelten: Grübeln und denken ist jüdisch, der Deutsche glaubt und handelt. Der Führer selbst hat in der Vorrede seiner vorhin erwähnten Bildbiographie das Lesen als unerheblich bezeichnet.

Wir nähern uns offenbar der Zeit, in der die gute alte Arbeiterparole: Wissen ist Macht an sich den Tatbestand des Hochverrats bilden wird. Zu lange haben wir gezögert. Zu gleichgültig haben wir zugehört. Nun ist es zu spät. Der Geist wird verboten. Wer weiter liest, wird erschossen!

Chronologie 1905–1933

7. September 1905 Die erste Ausgabe der »Schaubühne« erscheint. Redaktionssitz: Hollmannstraße 10 in Berlin-Kreuzberg.

Januar 1906 Übernahme der »Schaubühne« durch den Verlag Willi Oesterheld & Co.

1. Februar 1906 Redaktionssitz: Lietzenburger Straße 60 in Charlottenburg.

November 1908 Die »Schaubühne« fusioniert mit Lion Feuchtwangers »Spiegel«.

Januar 1909 Der Verlag Erich Reiß übernimmt die Zeitschrift.

Sommer 1909 Mit Ausnahme der Kriegsjahre leitet Jacobsohn während der Sommermonate das Blatt von Sylt aus.

1. Oktober 1912 Die Zeitschrift erscheint im Verlag der Schaubühne. Redaktionssitz: Dernburgstraße 25 in Charlottenburg.

Januar 1913 Der Titelzusatz »Wochenschrift für die gesamten Interessen des Theaters« entfällt.

9. Januar 1913 Der erste Beitrag Kurt Tucholskys erscheint.

20. März 1913 Erste »Antworten« erscheinen.

25. September 1913 Jacobsohn begründet, warum zukünftig auch wirtschaftliche und politische Themen behandelt werden.

27. August 1914 Von Jacobsohns »Kriegstagebuch« werden zahlreiche Passagen zensiert.

Dezember 1914 Beschlagnahme der »Schaubühne« vom 17. Dezember 1914 wegen des Textes »Die Bestie« von Arnold Zweig.

April 1915 Kurt Tucholsky wird als Soldat eingezogen.

11. November 1915 Robert Breuer alias Cunctator wird der erste regelmäßige Leitartikler der »Schaubühne«.

Dezember 1915 Die »Schaubühne« wird wegen eines Artikels von Cunctator verboten. Jacobsohn akzeptiert die Vorzensur.

März 1916 Jacobsohn wird kurzfristig eingezogen. Die Redaktion betreut er weiter.

Februar 1917 Ausgabe 8 wird die Ausfuhrerlaubnis entzogen. Das kommt einer Warnung gleich.

4. April 1918 Die »Schaubühne« ändert ihren Namen in »Die Weltbühne« um.

21. November 1918 Das Programm des Rates geistiger Arbeiter wird veröffentlicht.

5. Dezember 1918 Jacobsohn trennt sich von seinem Leitartikler Robert Breuer.

9. Januar 1919 In einer mehrteiligen »Militaria«-Serie rechnet Tucholsky mit dem preußischen Offizierskorps ab.

März 1919 bis Oktober 1920 Der USPD-Politiker Heinrich Ströbel verfasst die Leitartikel.

2. Oktober 1919 Tucholsky und Carl von Ossietzky gehören zu den Mitbegründern des Friedensbundes der Kriegsteilnehmer.

Januar 1920 Die Drucktype wechselt von Fraktur zu Antiqua.

Februar 1921 Die Redaktion zieht in den Königsweg 33 in Charlottenburg. Jacobsohn tritt als Theaterkritiker zugunsten des Redakteurs in den Hintergrund.

- Frühjahr 1922** Verhandlung mit Maximilian Harden, gemeinsam ein Vertriebsbüro zu eröffnen.
- Juli 1922** Gründung einer Betriebsgesellschaft der Weltbühne mbH.
- 21. Juni 1923** Ein Heft der »Weltbühne« kostet 1000 Mark.
- 6. Dezember 1923** Ein Heft der »Weltbühne« kostet 350 Milliarden Mark.
- 15. Februar 1924** Mitarbeitervertrag mit Tucholsky: Er tritt in die Redaktion und in den Verlag der Weltbühne ein.
- April 1924** Tucholsky geht als Korrespondent nach Paris.
- Januar 1925** Hedwig Hünecke übernimmt das Redaktionsekretariat.
- 18. August 1925** Die Artikelserie von Carl Mertens über die Vaterländischen Verbände beginnt.
- April 1926** Der erste Leitartikel Ossietzky's erscheint.
- 26. Juli 1926** Strafantrag gegen Jacobsohn wegen des Artikels »Die neue Rangliste« von Berthold Jacob.
- 3. Dezember 1926** Siegfried Jacobsohn stirbt.
- Dezember 1926 bis Mai 1927** Kurt Tucholsky übernimmt die Leitung der Zeitschrift.
- 11. Oktober 1927** Ossietzky wird auf dem Titel offiziell als Leiter der »Weltbühne« genannt, »unter der Mitarbeit von Kurt Tucholsky«.
- 16. April 1928** In zweiter Instanz werden Ossietzky und Berthold Jacob wegen des Artikels »Plaidoyer für Schulz« zu einer Geldstrafe wegen öffentlicher Beleidigung verurteilt.
- 13. Dezember 1928** Tucholsky wird wegen des Artikels »Verneigte Kinder – ohnmächtige Republik« zu einer Geldstrafe verurteilt.
- 12. März 1929** Der Artikel »Windiges aus der deutschen Luftfahrt« von Walter Kreisele erscheint.
- Juni 1929** Ossietzky tritt dem Ausschuss zur Untersuchung der Vorgänge vom Blumhof bei.
- 1. August 1929** Wegen des Luftfahrt-Artikels wird Strafantrag gestellt.
- 7. Februar 1930** Tucholsky zieht dauerhaft nach Schweden um.
- 27. Oktober 1930** Ossietzky erkundet in Kopenhagen ein mögliches Ausweichquartier für die Zeitschrift.
- März 1931** Tucholsky und Ossietzky bewegen in Lübeck über die Zukunft der »Weltbühne« und die Strategie im »Weltbühne«-Prozess.
- August 1931** Der Tucholsky-Text »Der bewachte Kriegsschauplatz« mit der Aussage »Soldaten sind Mörder« erscheint.

- 21. April 1932** Ein Gnadengesuch Ossietzkys wird abgelehnt.
- 10. Mai 1932** Ossietzky tritt seine Haftstrafe im Gefängnis Berlin-Tegel an. Hellmut von Gerlach übernimmt die politische Leitung. Walther Karsch wird verantwortlicher Redakteur.
- 1. Juli 1932** Ossietzky wird wegen des Tucholsky-Satzes »Soldaten sind Mörder« freigesprochen.
- 29. September 1932** Die erste Ausgabe der »Wiener Weltbühne« erscheint.
- 22. Dezember 1932** Ossietzky wird aufgrund einer Weihnachtssamstagsvorzeitig aus der Haft entlassen.
- 28. Februar 1933** Ossietzky, Heinz Pol und Erich Mühsam werden nach dem Reichstagsbrand verhaftet. Kurt Hiller und Axel Eggebrecht kurze Zeit später. Andere Mitarbeiter der »Weltbühne« können fliehen.
- 7. März 1933** Die »Weltbühne« erscheint zum letzten Mal.
- 13. März 1933** Versiegelung der Büroräume in der Kanstraße 152. Seither ist das Redaktionsarchiv verschwunden.
- 10. Mai 1933** Bei der Bücherverbrennung werden Werke zahlreicher »Weltbühne«-Autoren verbrannt. Neun Autoren werden in den »Flammensprüchen« genannt.

Kurzbiografien

Die in das Buch aufgenommenen Texte sind unter dem Verfasser beziehungsweise dem jeweiligen Pseudonym in chronologischer Reihenfolge aufgeführt. Die »Antworten« wurden in der Regel von den Herausgebern Siegfried Jacobsohn, Kurt Tucholsky und Carl von Ossietzky verfasst und werden nicht eigens erwähnt.

Julius Bab

• 11.12.1880 in Berlin; † 12.2.1955 in Roslyn Heights, New York.

Schriftsteller, Theaterkritiker, 1902–04

Mitarbeiter »Der arme Teufel« Berlin,

1905–26 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und

»Weltbühne« (366 Beiträge), 1919–23

»Welt am Montag«, »Berliner Volkszeitung«,

1923–32 Herausgeber »Dramaturgische

Blätter des Verbandes der Deutschen

Volksbühnenvereine« Berlin, 1933–38

Herausgeber »Monatsblätter des Jüdischen

Kulturbundes«, 1939 Emigration Frank-

reich, 1940 USA, ausgebürgert am

29.8.1940.

Pseudonym: Fero.

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Hans Bauer

• 6.5.1894 in Altenberg; † 1.1.1982 in

Leipzig.

Schriftsteller, Feuilletonist, 1916–32

Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne«

(34 Beiträge), 1921–25 Herausgeber

»Der Drache«, Leipzig, ab 1925 Mitarbeiter

u. a. »Vorwärts«, nach 1945 Mitarbeiter

presseamt, 1933 Emigration Spanien, 1936

Österreich, 1938 Italien, 1939 Frankreich,

1941 USA.

Die Juden 420

Oscar Blum

• 1886; † unbekannt.

(eigentlich: Nikolai Rachmetow), russischer

Schriftsteller, Philosoph, Menschewik,

angeblich Geheimagent des zaristischen

Sicherheitsdienstes, vor 1917 Aufenthalt

Schweiz, 1917 Rückkehr nach Russland

1922 künstlerischer Leiter im Studio-Theater

»Scholem-Alejchem« in Moskau, 1922

Emigration, 1923–27 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne«

(13 Beiträge).

Zehn Tage Stadtvogel 298

Rudolf Braune

• 16.2.1907 in Dresden; † 12.6.1932 im

Exil bei Düsseldorf.

Buchhändler, Journalist, Schriftsteller,

KPD-Mitglied, 1925 Redakteur »MOB«

Dresden, 1927 Volontär »Freiheit«,

Düsseldorf, 1927–32 Mitarbeiter »Welt-

bühne« (7 Beiträge).

Reportage an der Bürgerkriegsfront.

1. Ruitkumpel 257

friedens, 1919 stellv. Pressechef der Reichsregierung und der Reichskanzlei, 1920–25 Direktor des Verlages für Sozialwissenschaft, 1925–32 Abteilungsleiter Reichszentrale für Heimatdienst, 1933 Emigration CSR, Frankreich, ausgebürgert am 14. 7. 1938, 1940 Martinique.
Pseudonyme: Cunctator, Germanicus.
© Eric Bourne, Großbritanmen

Erich Dombrowski

• 23. 12. 1882 in Danzig; † 29. 10. 1972 in Wiesbaden.
Schriftsteller, Journalist, 1916–26 Leitartikler und leitender innenpolitischer Redakteur »Berliner Tageblatt«, 1918–26 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (128 Beiträge), 1926–36 Chefredakteur »Frankfurter Generalanzeiger«, 1946 Gründer »Mainzer Allgemeine Zeitung«, 1949 Mitbegründer »Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung«,
Pseudonym: Johannes Fischart.

Ossip Dymow

• 16. 2. 1878 in Bialystock, Russland;
† 1. 2. 1959 in New York.
Schriftsteller, Drehbuchautor, Schauspieler, Regisseur, lebte in Berlin und USA, 1929–31 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (9 Beiträge).
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Axel Eggebrecht

• 10. 1. 1899 in Leipzig; † 14. 7. 1991 in Hamburg.
Schriftsteller, Publizist, Filmdramaturg, Kritiker, Drehbuchautor, 1920–25 KPDMitglied, 1925–33 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (49 Beiträge), 1933 KZ Hainewalde, 1945 Mitbegründer des Nordwestdeutschen Rundfunks (NWDR), freier Hörfunkjournalist.

Bühne«, 1928–33 Redakteur »Vossische Zeitung«, 1933 »Jüdische Rundschau«.
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Max Epstein

• 9. 3. 1874 in Königshütte (Oberschlesien); † 9. 5. 1948 in London.
Dr. jur., Rechtsanwalt, Schriftsteller, Universitätsprofessor, Eigentümer des Deutschen Künstlertheaters in Berlin, 1911–22 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne«, 1919–21 und 1925–30 Herausgeber »Das Blaue Heft/Freie Deutsche Bühne« Berlin, 1935 Enteignung und Emigration nach Großbritanmen.
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1926 Mitarbeiterin »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag);
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Felix Fechenbach

• 28. 1. 1894 in Bad Mergentheim; † 7. 8. 1933 zwischen Detmold und Warburg »auf der Flucht erschossen«.
Schriftsteller, Publizist, 1918–19 Sekretär Kurt Eisners, 1919–26 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (5 Beiträge), 1922–24 inbaltiert, 1925 Redakteur Dietz-Verlag, Berlin, 1926–33 Redakteur »Volksblatt«, Detmold.
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Lion Feuchtwanger

• 7. 7. 1884 in München; † 21. 12. 1958 in Los Angeles.
Schriftsteller, 1908–31 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne«.

Otto Flake

• 29.10.1880 in Metz; † 10.11.1963 in Baden-Baden.

Schriftsteller, Journalist, 1902 Mitherausgeber »Der Stürmer«, 1903 Mitherausgeber »Der Merker«, 1906 Feuilletonchef »Leipziger Tagblatt«, 1907–26 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne« (44 Beiträge), 1917 Theaterzensor in Brüssel, 1918 Redakteur »Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung«, Korrespondent in Zürich und Kontakt mit Dada-Kreis, 1926–27 Südtirol, ab 1928 Schriftsteller in Baden-Baden.

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Sebastian Franck

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F.Frank

1931 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag).

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Bruno Frei

• 11.6.1897 in Preßburg, Slowakei;
† 21.5.1988 in Klosterneuburg, Niederösterreich.

(eigentlich: Benedikt Freistadt) Dr. phil., Schriftsteller, Journalist, 1917 Mitarbeiter

»Der Abend«, Wien, 1923–25 Berliner Korrespondent »Der Abend«, 1923–33 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (41 Beiträge), 1929–33 Chefredakteur »Berlin am Morgen«, 1933 Emigration CSR, 1936 Frankreich, 1941 Mexiko, 1947 Rückkehr nach Wien,

Herausgeber »Österreichisches Tageblatt«.

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Martha Maria Gehrke

• 1.9.1904 in Frankfurt am Main;
† 1986 in München.

Journalistin, Lektorin, 1919–33 Mitarbeiterin »Weltbühne« (89 Beiträge), nach 1945 Journalistin in München.
Pseudonyme: Hans Glenke, Madrei.

Wolfgang Geise

1924 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (4 Beiträge),
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Manfred Georg

• 22.10.1893 in Berlin; † 30.12.1965 in New York.

(eigentlich: Manfred Georg Cohn, auch Manfred Georgel, Dr. iur., Journalist, Publizist, 1915–32 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne« (35 Beiträge), 1918–20, 1928–33 Mitarbeiter bei Ullstein-Zeitungen, 1923–28 Mitarbeiter bei Mosse-Zeitungen, 1924 Mitbegründer der Republikanischen Partei, 1933 Emigration CSR, 1938 USA, ausgebürgert am 5.8.1938, ab 1939 Chefredakteur »Aufbau« New York.

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Helmut von Gerlach

• 2.2.1886 in Monchnochsheim, Schlesien;
† 1.8.1935 in Paris.

Politiker, Publizist und Pazifist, Chefredakteur »Welt am Montag«, 1903–07 Mitglied des Reichstages, 1908 Mitbegründer der Demokratischen Vereinigung, 1919–33 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (124 Beiträge),

Mitbegründer der DDP (1918) und Radikaldemokratischen Partei (1930), ab 1926 Vor-

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Ernst Glaeser
• 29. 7. 1902 in Butzbach; † 8. 2. 1963 in Mainz.
Schriftsteller, Journalist, 1926 Dramaturg
Neues Theater Frankfurt/Main, 1927–30
Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (8 Beiträge),
1928–30 Leiter Literaturabteilung Südwest-
deutscher Rundfunk, 1930–33 Lektor
Propyläen-Verlag, Mitarbeiter »Frankfurter
Zeitung«, »Vossische Zeitung«, 1933 Emigra-
tion Schweiz, 1939 Rückkehr nach Deutsch-
land, Mitarbeiter »Frankfurter Zeitung«,
»Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung«, 1940 Mit-
arbeiter bei Frontzeitungen der Luftwaffe.
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Hans Glenk Siehe: Martha Maria Gehrke.
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L. Goldberg
1926 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag).
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Alfons Goldschmidt
• 28. 11. 1879 in Gelsenkirchen; † 20. 1. 1940 in
Cuernavaca, Mexiko.

Dr. rer. pol., Nationalökonom, Schriftsteller,
1909–11 leitender Handelsredakteur im
Ullstein-Verlag, 1917–32 Mitarbeiter »Scha-
bühne« und »Weltbühne« (139 Beiträge),
1919–20 Herausgeber »Räte-Zeitung«,
1922 Dozent in Argentinien, 1923–24 Heraus-
geber »Das Ziel« (Jahrbuch für geistige
in Mexiko, 1933 Emigration über CSR und

1923 Dozent Heidelberg, 1925–26 Mit-
arbeiter am Marx-Engels-Institut Moskau,
1930–32 Professor in Heidelberg, 1932–33
Gasprofessor am Institut Henri Poincaré
Paris, 1933 Emigration Frankreich, ausge-
bürgert am 23. 8. 1933, 1940 USA, ab 1952

Adjunct Professor an der Columbia Universi-
tät, New York, Gasprofessor an der Freien
Universität Berlin.
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Willy Handl
• 12. 2. 1872 in Wien; † 1920 in Berlin.
(eigenlich Sigmund Handl) Schriftsteller,
Journalist in Wien, Prag, Berlin, Redakteur
»Bohemia« Prag, Mitarbeiter »Berliner
Lokal-Anzeiger«, 1905–16 Mitarbeiter
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Rudolf Hildebrand
• 4. 7. 1891 in Hamburg; † unbekannt.
Schriftsteller, Geistlicher, Journalist in USA,
China, Japan, Schweiz, 1932–33 Mitarbeiter
»Weltbühne« (3 Beiträge).
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Kurt Hiller
• 17. 8. 1885 in Berlin; † 1. 10. 1972 in Hamburg.
Dr. iur., Schriftsteller, Publizist, Pazifist,
1915–33 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und
»Weltbühne« (167 Beiträge), 1916–24 Heraus-
geber »Das Ziel« (Jahrbuch für geistige

Italo

1928 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag).
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Edith Jacobson

• 26.10.1891 in Berlin; † 31.12.1935 in
England.

Verlegerin (Williams & Co., Verlag der
Weltbühne), Ehefrau von Siegfried Jacobson,
1923–32 Mitarbeiterin »Weltbühne«
(7 Beiträge).
Pseudonym: E. L. Schiffer.

Siegfried Jacobson

• 28.1.1881 in Berlin; † 3.12.1926 in
Berlin.

Theaterkritiker und Publizist, 1901–04
Mitarbeiter und Redakteur »Welt am
Montag«, 1905–26 Herausgeber »Schau-
bühne« und »Weltbühne« (1798 Beiträge).
Pseudonym: Dr. Baldwin.
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Henry Jacoby

• 3.8.1905 in Berlin; † 17.6.1986 in
Genf.

Schriftsteller, Mitarbeiter beim Aufbau
des Antikriegsmuseums, bis 1927 Leiter
des dazugehörigen Verleges, Ausbildung
zum Sozialarbeiter, KPD-Mitglied,
1931 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (2 Beiträge),
1934 Verhaftung, 1936 Emigration CSR,
1937 Frankreich, Großbritannien, 1941 USA,
nach 1945 bis 1968 Angestellter der FAO

in Washington, Rom und Genf, danach als
freier Schriftsteller und für Amnesty
International tätig.

Pseudonym: Sebastian Franck

am Main, 1928–33 Journalist in Berlin,
1933 Emigration Frankreich, 1940 Portugal,
1941 Argentinien, ausgebürgert am
13.6.1941.

Pseudonym: Max Tann.
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Walther Karsch

• 11.10.1906 in Dresden; † 16.10.1975 in
Berlin.

Journalist, Theaterkritiker, Verleger, 1929–29
Mitarbeiter »Die Weltbühne«, 1929 Leiter
»Der Schulkampf« Berlin, 1930–33 Mit-
arbeiter, Redaktionsassistent und verant-
wortlicher Redakteur »Weltbühne« (95 Beiträge),
1933–45 Schreibverbot, 1945–75 Herausgeber
»Der Tagesspiegel« Berlin.
Pseudonym: Quietus.
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Fritz Karsen

• 11.11.1885 in Breslau; † 25.8.1951 in
Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Schulreformer, Hochschullehrer, 1920 Leiter
der Staatlichen Bildungsanstalt Berlin-
Lichterfelde, 1921 Oberstudiendirektor
Kaiser-Friedrich-Realgymnasium (ab 1930
Karl-Marx-Schule), 1928 Plannungen für ein
Gesamtschulmodell, 1929 Mitarbeiter
»Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag), 1933 Emigration
Schweiz, 1934 Frankreich, 1936 Kolumbien,
1938 USA, 1942–46 Dozent am City College
New York, 1951 im Auftrag der UNESCO
in Ecuador.
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Erich Kastner

• 23.2.1899 in Dresden; † 29.7.1974 in
München.

Dr. phil. Journalist, Schriftsteller, Lyriker

Elisabeth von Keller
1920 Mitarbeiterin »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag).
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Robert M. W. Kemper

• 17.10.1899 in Freiburg im Breisgau;
† 15.8.1993 in Königstein im Taunus.
Dr. iur., Rechtsanwalt, Jurist, 1920–21 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (2 Beiträge), 1928–33 Justiziar und Regierungsrat im preußischen Innenministerium, Dozent an der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik, 1935 Emigration Italien, 1938 Frankreich, 1939 USA, ausgebürgert am 21.10.1938, 1945–48 stellvertretender Hauptankläger bei Nürnberger Prozessen, ab 1951 Rechtsanwalt in Frankfurt am Main.
Pseudonym: Procurator.
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Kurt Kerl
1929 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag).
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Kurt Kersten

• 19.4.1891 in Kassel; † 18.5.1962 in New York.
Dr. phil., Publizist, Journalist, Pazifist, 1919–33 Mitarbeiter »Die Aktion«, »A. I. Z.«, »Die Linkskurve«, »Die Rote Fahne«, »Prager Tageblatt«, 1923–33 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (28 Beiträge), 1934 Emigration Schweiz und CSR, 1937 Frankreich, ausgebürgert am 14.4.1937, 1940 Martinique, 1946 USA, Mitarbeiter »Aufbau« New York.
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Franz Krey

• 4.1.1904 in Essen; † unbekannt.
Publizist, Schriftsteller, Mitglied der KPD, Feuilletonchef »Ruhr-Echo«, 1932 Mitarbeiter

Leo Lania

• 13.8.1896 in Charkow, Russland;
† 9.11.1961 in München.

(eigentlich: Lazar Herman), Schriftsteller, Journalist, ab 1915 Mitarbeiter »Arbeiter-Zeitung« Wien, 1919 Mitglied KPÖ und Redakteur »Rote Fahne«, 1922–26 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (24 Beiträge), 1923 Auslands-korrespondent »Chicago Daily News«, 1926 Lokalredakteur »Berliner Börsen-Courier«, Mitarbeiter »Das Tagebuch«, 1927–29 Redakteur »Die neue Bucherschau« München, Drehbuch zu Film »Dreigroschenoper«, 1932 Emigration Österreich, 1933 Frankreich, 1940 Portugal und USA, ab 1946 Redakteur »United World Magazine«, Mitte 1950er Rückkehr nach Deutschland (BRD).

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Alfred Lemm

• 6.12.1889 in Berlin; † 16.10.1918 in Berlin.
(eigentlich: Alfred Lehmann) Schriftsteller, 1911–17 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« (7 Beiträge), Mitarbeiter »Neue Rundschau« und »Vossische Zeitung«.
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Franz Leschnitzer

• 12.2.1905 in Posen; † 16.5.1967 in Berlin.
Publizist, Journalist, Lyriker, Pazifist, ab 1924 Mitarbeiter bei kommunistischen Zeitungen, 1925–28 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (39 Beiträge), Gründungsmitglied der Gruppe Revolutionärer Pazifisten, 1933 Emigration über CSR in die UdSSR, ausgebürgert am 4.11.1939, 1959 Rückkehr nach Deutschland (DDR).

ausgebürgert am 18. 11. 1938, 1940 Brasilien, Gründung eines Instituts für Konjunkturforschung, 1947 Gründung Wirtschaftszeitschrift »Cunjuratura Economica«, 1952 Rückkehr nach Paris.
Pseudonym: Morus.

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Bruno Mannel

• 11. 9. 1892 in Berlin; † unbekannt
Schriftsteller, Redakteur in Berlin, 1921–30 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (48 Beiträge), nach 1945 Journalist in Stuttgart.
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Walter Mehning

• 29. 4. 1896 in Berlin; † 3. 10. 1981 in Zürich.
Schriftsteller, Satiriker, 1920 Gründer des »Politischen Cabarets«, 1920–33 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (90 Beiträge), 1929 Revue »Der Kaufmann von Berlin«, 1930–34 Mitarbeiter »Aufruf«, Prag, Emigration: 1933 Emigration Frankreich, Österreich, ausgebürgert am 11. 6. 1935, 1938 Frankreich, 1941 USA, 1950er Jahre Rückkehr nach Deutschland (BRD).
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Adolf Meinberg

• 3. 10. 1893 in Dortmund-Wickede; † 11. 4. 1955.

Carl Mertens

• 9. 3. 1902 in Kassel; † 17. 10. 1932 bei Paris.
Offizier, Journalist, Pazifist, 1919 Mitglied von Einwohnerwehrgenossenschaft, 1921 Bund Oberland in Oberschlesien, 1922 Polizeischule Brandenburg, 1923 Sabotageaktionen im Ruhrkampf, Schwarze Reichswehr, ab 1925 pazifistischer Schriftsteller, 1925–28 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (42 Beiträge), 1926 Anklage wegen Landesverrats, Exil in Österreich, Schweiz, Frankreich.
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Wilhelm Michel

• 9. 8. 1877 in Metz; † 16. 4. 1942 in Darmstadt.
Schriftsteller, 1906–1930 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne« (25 Beiträge), 1925 Büchner-Preis.
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Erich Mühsam

• 6. 4. 1878 in Berlin; † 10. 7. 1934 im KZ Oranienburg ermordet

Apotheker, Politiker, Schriftsteller, Theater-

kritiker, 1902–03 Redakteur »Der arme

Teufel« Berlin, 1903–07 Mitarbeiter »Der

Anarchist« Berlin, 1908–32 Mitarbeiter

1924–26 Redakteur »Das Tage-Buch«, 1926–33 Mitarbeiter und Chefredakteur »Weltbühne« (695 Beiträge), 1931 Verurteilung wegen Spionage, 1933–36 KZ Sonnenburg und Esterwegen, 1936 Friedensnobelpreis für 1935.

Pseudonyme: Celsus, Thomas Murner, Lucius Schierling

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Karl Pax

1932 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag).

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Felix Pinner

* 22. 2. 1880 in Birnbaum, Provinz Posen; † 3. 5. 1942 in New York (Selbstmord).

Dr., Wirtschaftsjournalist, Schriftsteller, 1914–25 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne« (39 Beiträge), 1924–33 Leiter des Handelsteils des »Berliner Tageblatts«, Mitarbeiter »Neue Zürcher Zeitung«.

»Der Semplicus«, 1934 Teilhaber Verlag der Weltbühne, 1936 Frankreich, ausgebürgert am 3. 3. 1936, 1940 USA, Mitarbeiter »Nation«, »New York Times«, ab 1949 USA-Korrespondent »Frankfurter Rundschau« und »Neue Ruhr Zeitung«.

Pseudonym: Jakob Links.

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Alfred Polgar

* 17. 10. 1873 in Wien; † 24. 4. 1955 in Zürich (eigentlich Alfred Polak), Schriftsteller, Theaterkritiker, Übersetzer, 1895 Redakteur »Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung«, 1905–33 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne« (742 Beiträge), ab 1918 »Der Friede«, »Der neue Tag« Berlin, ab 1925 »Das Tagebuch«, »Berliner Tageblatt«, 1921–25 Mitherausgeber »Böse Biben Journal« Berlin, 1933 Emigranten nach Österreich, 1938 Frankreich, 1940 USA, ab 1949 Schweiz.

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Max Pottitzer

1927 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag).

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Emil Rabold

* 25. 6. 1886 in Wurzbach/Thüringen;

Ulrich Rauscher

• 24. 6. 1884 in Stuttgart; † 18. 12. 1930 in St. Blasien.

Jurist, Redakteur, Politiker, Schriftsteller, 1911–18 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne« (20 Beiträge), 1918 Sekretär von Philipp Scheidemann, bis 1921 Pressechef der Reichsregierung, 1921 Gesandter in Georgien, 1922–30 Gesandter in Polen.

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Fritziot Rúde

• 19. 7. 1905 in Penig; † 28. 2. 1970 in Leipzig.

Schauspieler, Regisseur, Sohn eines Justizrates, seit den zwanziger Jahren an Bühnen unter anderem in Gotha und Berlin, 1932 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (1 Beitrag), in den 1940er Jahren Filmrollen unter dem Pseudonym Ferdinand Terpe, nach dem Krieg an Bühnen in Halle, Gera, Meiningen, 1955–69 in Leipzig.

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Bruno Schoenlank jr.

• 31. 7. 1891 in Berlin; † 1. 4. 1965 in Zürich. Schriftsteller, 1915 Mitarbeiter »Schaubühne« (1 Beitrag), nach 1918 Mitarbeiter bei SPD-Zeitungen, Sprechchorleiter und Initiator Sprechchorbewegung, 1933 Emigration Schweiz.

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Dr. phil., Journalist, Schriftsteller, Übersetzer,

1921–25 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (17 Beiträge), 1926–39 Korrespondent »Frankfurter Zeitung« in Paris und London, ab 1939 im Auswärtigen Dienst, 1942 Rückkehr nach Deutschland, 1945–48 Publikationsverbot, ab 1956 Mitarbeiter »Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung«.

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Fritz Sternberg

• 11. 6. 1895 in Breslau; † 18. 10. 1963 in München.

Promovierter Wirtschaftswissenschaftler, ab 1924 freier Publizist, 1930–33 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (78 Beiträge), 1933 Emigration, CSR, Österreich, Schweiz, 1936 Frankfurter Zeitung, 1939 USA, ausgebürgert am 21. 7. 1939, 1954 Rückkehr als US-Bürger nach Europa, Pseudonyme: K. L. Gerstorff, Thomas Tava, © Helga Grebing, Göttingen

Heinrich Strobel

• 7. 6. 1869 in Bad Nauheim; † 11. 1. 1944 Zürich.

Publizist, Parteifunktionär, ab 1908 Mitglied des preussischen Landtags, 1910–16 politischer Redakteur »Vorwärts«, ab 1918 Mitglied des preussischen Landtages (SPD), 1918 Vorsitzender der preussischen Revolutionsregierung, 1919–20 Leitartikler der »Weltbühne« (87 Beiträge), 1924–32 Mitglied des Reichstages (SPD), 1931 Co-Vorsitzender der SAPD, Mitherausgeber »Der Klassenkampf-Marxistische Blätter«, Mitarbeiter »Das Andere Deutschland«, 1933 Emigration Schweiz.

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Lothar Engelbert Schücking

Pseudonyme: Christian Thomasius, Thomasius.

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Ernst Toller

• 1.12. 1893 in Samotschin, Provinz Posen; † 22. 5. 1939 in New York (Selbstmord).

Schriftsteller, Politiker, 1919 Führer der Münchner Räterepublik, 1919–24 Festungshäft, 1920–32 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (50 Beiträge), 1933 Emigration Schweiz, ausbürgert am 23. 8. 1933, 1935 Großbritannien, 1936 USA.

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Kurt Tucholsky

• 9. 1. 1890 in Berlin; † 21. 12. 1935 in Göteborg, Schweden.

Dr. iur., Journalist und Schriftsteller, ab 1913 Mitarbeiter der »Schaubühne« und »Weltbühne« (1629 Beiträge), 1918–20 Chefredakteur des »UlK«, 1923 Bankvolontariat, ab 1924 Korrespondent der »Weltbühne« und der »Vossischen Zeitung« in Paris, 1927 Herausgeber der »Weltbühne«, ab 1930 wohnhaft in Schweden, ausbürgert am 23. 8. 1933.

Pseudonyme: Paulus Bünzly, Kaspar Hauser, Theobald Körner, Peter Panter, Theobald

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Hilde Walter

• 4. 3. 1895 in Berlin; † 22. 1. 1976 in Berlin.

Journalistin, bis 1918 Sozialarbeiterin, Mitarbeiterin »Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung«, 1928–33 Mitarbeiterin »Weltbühne« (33 Beiträge), 1929–33 Mitarbeiterin »Berliner Tageblatt«, Gewerkschaftspresse, 1933 Emigration Frankreich, Mitarbeit im Freundeskreis »Carl von Ossietzky«, 1941 USA, 1952 Rückkehr nach West-Berlin, Mitglied des P. E. N.-Clubs.
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Robert Weltsch

• 20. 6. 1891 in Prag; † 22. 12. 1982 in Jerusalem.

Dr., Journalist, Schriftsteller, 1918–Mitarbeiter »Wiener Morgenzeitung«, 1919–38 Redakteur und Chefredakteur »Jüdische Rundschau« Berlin, 1926 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (2 Beiträge), 1927–30 Redakteur des »Jüdischen Lexikons«, 1928 Herausgeber »Der Jude« Berlin, 1938 Emigration nach Palästina, ab 1946 Korrespondent »Harez« in London.
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Jonathan Wild

1930–33 Mitarbeiter »Weltbühne« (9 Beiträge)
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Richard Witing

• 19. 10. 1856 in Berlin; † 22. 12. 1923 in Berlin. (eigentlich: Witkowski) Jurist, Verwaltungsbeamter, Bankdirektor, Bruder von Maximilian Harden, Schwiegervater von Hans Paasche, 1891–1902 Oberbürgermeister von Posen.

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Akademie der Künste der DDR, 1957 Präsi-
dent Deutsches P.E.N.-Zentrum Ost und West.

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(Texte gekürzt)

L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Pariser Tageszeitung
EINZELVERKAUFSPREIS IN PARIS 50 CENTIMES
JOURNAL QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS
REDAKTION, ADMINISTRATION UND INSRERATIONENAMME: 16, Rue de la Grande-Batelliere, Paris (8^e)

Montag, 29. Juni 1936
Lundi 29 Juin 1936
Nr. 18
PREMIERE ANNEE
ERSTER JAHRGANG

RUECKBLICK
Von GEORG BERNHARD

„Es ist eine alte Geschichte, doch bleibt sie neu.“ Seit Jahrzehnten...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Es war mein Blatt. Freilich, rechtlich und geschichtlich gehörte es einem Herrn...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Darauf und nicht auf juristische Formalitäten und Besitzverhältnisse kommt es in der ganzen Angelegenheit an...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Herr Poljakow hat eine eiserne Stirn. Er hat der Presse gegenüber behauptet...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Der Brief ist vom 2. Juni datiert — also genau vier Tage nach meiner Abreise aus Paris...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Bevor ich den Kündigungsbrief erhielt, traf mich überraschend ein Kabel meiner Redaktionskollegen...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Diner
Eden-Léon Blum

Ganz, 28. Juni.
Das Ereignis des heutigen Sonntags war in Genf das Diner, das der englische Außenminister Anthony Eden dem französischen Ministerpräsidenten Léon Blum und Außenminister Victor Delbos gegeben hat...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Ribbentrop
gezogenemessen

Hilfers aussenpolitischer Vortragsmann hat Botschafter von Ribbentrop...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Nun kommt es Intelligenzgedrückt: Deutschland wünscht den Frieden...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Doppelzünge
Aussenpolitik

Moskau, 28. Juni.
Die „Pravda“ nimmt zu der Rede Stellung, die des Sonderbotschafters von Ribbentrop in München zu deutschen Aussenpolitik gehalten hat...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Nachwahl für den Senat in Calvados

Am Sonntag fand im Département Calvados eine Nachwahl zum Senat statt...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Zionistische Anklage gegen die Mandatsregierung
Die Lage in Palästina

Jerusalem, 28. Juni.
Der Streik hat Meutereibanden geschaffen, die Blut und Feuersbrunst säen...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Morgans Rolle während des Krieges
DER BERICHT DER MUNITIONSKOMMISSION DES AMERIKANISCHEN SENATS

Washington, 28. Juni.
Die Munitionskommission des amerikanischen Senats, die über zwei Jahre lang getagt hat, legt jetzt ihren Bericht vor...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Volksliube statt Gummkippel?

Koblenz, 28. Juni.
Der Reichsinnenminister Fric hat heute in Koblenz vor 3000 Nationalsozialisten gesprochen...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Görings Abwesenheit bei den Empfängen für General Valle

Berlin, 28. Juni.
Der italienische Unterstaatssekretär General Valle und sein Gefolge haben heute Berlin verlassen...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Bad Wiessee
Auch ein Gedenkblatt zum 30. Juni

München, Ende Juni.
Das beliebteste neue Ausflugsziel Münchens ist Wiessee...
L'unique journal de combat contre l'hittlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme paraisant en langue allemande

Werben Sie neue Leser für die „Pariser Tageszeitung“

Wie ist die Legende des Helden... im Dritten Reich? Jeder kann sie hören...

Sie haben den Hitler ganz zufällig beim Morgenrausch nach der Helden... erblickt. Die bescheidenen Einheimischen...

Einen Keller, der dem totenbeladenen Führer eine Tasse Kaffee gebracht...

„Es ist doch traurig“, sagt die Dame an Arndt. „Wie meinen Sie das?“ fragt die Dame...

„Nicht der Freund ist wichtig, sondern die Nation“, ruft der erfolgreiche Geschäftsmann...

„Vor aller Augen entsteht Lohengrin. Ein Lohengrin mit etwas Blauspuren am Trenchcoat.“

„Aber schon sind wir an der zweiten Etappe unseres Ausfluges: Vor dem „Bräustübchen“ am Logeplatz.“

„Ein paar echt bayerische Bauern wandeln zwischen den Tischen.“

„Sagen Sie, so echte, wirkliche Gemütlichkeit, die finden Sie nur in Deutschland“, sagte der erfolgreiche Geschäftsmann...

Abonnieren Sie die „PARISER TAGESZEITUNG“

Ein Rassenkrieg der Gleichschaltung

Der Weg des „Vortrupp“-Führers Hans Joachim Schoeps

Als am 30. Januar 1933, mit dem „Erlass“ des Reichstags, die schwarze „Leidenschaft des deutschen Judentums begann...“

„Das Wort „Gleichschaltung“ spricht er nicht aus — aber Leoar dürfte es sich auf die Lippen...“

Neben rein religiösen, theologischen Punkten enthält dieses Programm auch Forderungen zur „organisatorischen Erneuerung“ des deutschen Judentums...

„Seine Studieninteressen, zuerst allgemein philosophischer Art, konzentrierte sich immer mehr auf die abstrakte Philosophie und die Theologie...“

Generalstab der Luftwaffe?

Göring stößt auf Widerstand

Berlin, Ende Juni. In verschiedenen amtlichen Kundgebungen aus Anlass des tödlichen Absturzes des General Wever bei Dresden...

„Der Ersatzmann für Wever, Generalmajor Kesselring, Chef des Luftwaffen-Verwaltungsamts im Ministerium, ist dem auch bloss dem Chef des Luftwaffen-Kommando-Amts ernannt worden.“

„Die Dienststelle eines Chefs des Generalstabs der Luftwaffe besteht trotz Görings vielfachen Bemühungen zur Aufstellung einer solchen Behörde noch nicht.“

„Es hat hier nämlich Widerstände gegeben, die sowohl vom Oberkommando des Heeres (Generaloberst Frick) als vom Chef des Generalstabs des Heeres (General der Artillerie Beck) ausgingen.“

Deutsche Waffen Kurznachrichten

für China

Nach Meldungen aus Schanghai ist im Monat Mai in Berlin ein Vertrag zwischen der Reichsregierung und der chinesischen Regierung über Waffenlieferungen in Höhe von 75 Millionen Reichsmark abgeschlossen worden.

„Die Session des polnischen Parlaments, in der Landtag und Senat der Regierung Skladkowski für die Dauer der „Parlamentarischen Wahlen“ beschlossen haben, finden Abschluß. Beide Häuser werden zu ihrer ordentlichen Tagung im Oktober oder November wieder zusammenkommen.“

„In Turin starb im Alter von 40 Jahren der bekannte Pianist Federico Bualetti, der lange Zeit Direktor des Turiner Konservatoriums war.“

„Der italienische Ausseminister Graf Ciano unterzeichnete mehrere Handelsverträge mit Deutschland. Der österreichische Botschafter von Hassel beziehungsweise von dem österreichischen Generalen von Berger-Waldeneck gegengezeichnet.“

„Sir Austen Chamberlain hat seinen Austritt aus dem Exekutivkomitee der englischen Völkerbundvereinigung und aus der Vereinigung selbst erklärt. Dieser Schritt erfolgt wegen der Differenzen, die zwischen Sir Austen und dem Komitee in der Frage der Sanktionen bestehen.“

SEXUELLE AUFLÄHRUNG in Mädchenschulen

Berlin, 28. Juni. Seit mehreren Monaten sind die weiblichen Lehrkräfte an den deutschen höheren Schulen angeweisen worden, eine systematische sexuelle Aufklärung der Mädchen im Alter von 10 bis 14 Jahren durchzuführen.

„Die Gründe der Ehelosigkeit des Führers sind nicht zu übersehen. Er fehlt dabei auch nicht an unehelichen Kindern, gegen das Zölibat der katholischen Priester und das Gelübde der Keuschheit der Nonnen...“

Lasse sie betteln gehn...

Die Wochenschrift „Deutsche Zukunft“ ist, wie von uns schon gemeldet, kürzlich ein Heftchen über den „Mord an den nationalistischen Journalisten Fritz Klein“...

FRANKREICH IST STARK

„Die „Prager Presse“ gibt einen Überblick über die demographische Lage in Frankreich, wie sie sich nach der Auflösung der Liga darstellt.“

OPTIMISMUS IN GENÈVE

„In Genève überschneiden sich die Delegationen der internationalen Konferenz der Jüdischen Delegierten und der Dardanellenkonferenz und der...“

STREITEN GEGEN DIE WILDEN IANTRARISCHEN MÄCHTE DES DIBES, APHRODITE, DIE GÖTTIN DER LIEBE, APOLLON, DER GOTT DES LICHTES UND DER KUNSTEN...

„Der 22.000 Mitglieder des „Bundes deutscher Mädchen“ wurden 70 Mädchen ausgewählt, um als Führerinnen der diversen Unterabteilungen der weiblichen Hitler-Armee förmlich vereidigt zu werden.“

Links und rechts der Seine

Pariser Gespräche

Schüler der Banlieue

Die Schulverhältnisse in Frankreich werden von der neuen Regierung mit besonderer Sorgfalt betrachtet. Ein elfjähriger Junge aus Levallois, den ich fragte, was er in der Schule lernt, sagte mir: „Geschichte, und dann ... Geographie.“ Der Junge war ein einziges Mal in Paris gewesen. Den Arc de Triomphe hat er nie gesehen, den Eiffelturm von ferne. Er kannte kein Land außer Frankreich, und in Frankreich ist seine Stadt ausser Levallois und Paris. Seine Geschichtekenntnisse waren bescheiden: „Wir lernen ... Karl den Großen, und ... und Chlodwig, und ... alles“.

Diesen Karl den Großen setzte mir auch ein anderer Schüler vor, das war ein erwachsener, kohlenabwäsender Neger aus Guadeloupe, ein intelligenter Mensch, den ich nach den Schulverhältnissen auf den Antillen fragte. „Ich habe in der Geschichte gelernt“, sagte er mir, „unsere Vorfahren waren die Gallier, sie hatten blonde Haare, blaue Augen und waren tapfer; unsere großen Könige waren Karl der Große und Chlodwig. Erst als ich nach Frankreich gekommen bin“, fügte er hinzu, „habe ich gemerkt, dass diese germanischen Wahrheiten, die wir hier in Frankreich vorgeschrieben Lehrbuch aufgenommen, für Guadeloupe vielleicht nicht gelten“.

Eine besonders eindringliche Szene erlebte ich mit Kindern von Jahrmärkten, sogenannten forains. Das war auf einer Wiese zwischen St. Denis und Pierrefitte. Eine ganze Kolonie von Wohnwagen stand dort, und die Kinder, die halb nackt auf der Wiese spielten, waren besonders schön und sahen besonders intelligent aus. Ich war dort mit einem Schullehrer, der mir diese seltsame Kolonie zeigte, der mir fragte die Kinder heraufsteigend ohne sich etwas besonders zu denken: „Gehst du in die Schule?“ Die Kinder stimmten

Die Arbeit des „Freien Deutschen Volkschors“

Der „Freie Deutsche Volkschor“ teilt mit:

„Unsere Proben finden nunmehr je den Montag, 21 Uhr, 67/69, rue Douai (Studio Wacker), Métro: Place Pigalle, statt.“

Der Chor hat bereits die ersten Proben hinter sich und fordert von neuem alle Sangesfreunde zur Mitarbeit auf. Der Chor soll zu einem nachvollzogenen Ausdrucksmittel der deutschen Emigration werden. Alle deutschen Emigranten, gleichgültig welcher politischen Richtung, sind beim Aufbau dieses Kulturwerkes willkommen.

Der Chor unter der Leitung eines Fachmusikers. Sein Repertoire wird von den Mitgliedern des Chors in Verbindung mit einer Repertoirekommission in Paris lebenden deutschen emigrierten Musiker festgesetzt.

Sobald die notwendige Anzahl Mitglieder geworben ist, werden kostenlos Kurse über Musikgeschichte, Musiktheorie und Notensetzen abgehalten werden.

Der Chor will in der kommenden Saison zum ersten Male an die Öffentlichkeit treten.

Die Aufgabe, die wir uns gestellt haben, ist schwer zu lösen und nur mit der Unterstützung aller Kreise der deutschen Emigration werden wir unser Ziel erreichen können.“

Louvre-Säle weiter abends geöffnet

Die Offenhaltung der neu hergerichteten Säle des Louvre-Museums in den Abenden ist beim Publikum von großem Ansehen gefunden, dass diese Säle, die Sammlungen griechischer und ägyptischer Skulpturen, auch im Juli Mittwochs und Sonnabends von 21 bis 23 Uhr geöffnet bleiben. Der Eintrittspreis beträgt 3 Francs.

Zwei neue Parteien

Seit der Auflösung der Liga und Verände ist davon die Rede gewesen, dass führende Persönlichkeiten dieser Organisation neue Parteien ins Leben rufen würden. Diese Ankündigungen sind schnell in die Wirklichkeit umgesetzt worden. So hat der Führer der ehemaligen „Craie du Feu“ der Oberst de la Rocque, die „Parti Social Français“ gegründet. Dieser Partei-Neugründung auf der Rechten steht ein ähnlicher Vorgang auf der Linken gegenüber, der Abgeordnete Jacques Duclos, Bürgermeister von Saint-Denis, der aus der kommunistischen Bewegung hervorgegangen ist, hat die „Parti Populaire Français“ gegründet. In jedem sportlichen Wettkampfe steckt ein Stück ursprünglicher Brutalität der menschlichen Natur. Der Sieger hat alles, dem Unterlegenen bleibt nichts. Es ist ein Naturgesetz, das anerkannt werden muss, das aber gleichzeitig gewissen Prinzipien moderner Lebensgestaltung nicht mehr ganz entspricht. Wenn die Ungleichheit entgegengetreten wollen, dürfen nicht blindlings die primitiven Lebensformen anerkennen, die so häufig vom Zufall geformt sind. Auch der Besieger kann im sportlichen Wettkampfe um sein Leben unterliegen, auch der Würdige kann vom Misserfolg begleitet sein. Der Sport ist weniger „wetter“ der Mentalität „Erfolg ist alles“ erhebt Bedeutung. Erfolg — das ist Geld, soziale Stellung, Platz an der Sonne. Erfolg geht recht, das Bescheidende ist also unbedingt richtig. Diese konservative Anschauung widerspricht sich dem Fortschritt und der Umgestaltung der sozialen Ordnung.

Die Spielfelder von Eton, Oxford und Cambridge — wo immer sie sind — schalten jedes revolutionäre Gefühl aus. Eine englische Revolution wird die letzte von allen sein. Sie erfordert ja auch viel mehr Mut und Selbständigkeit als in den Ländern, wo der Mensch weniger stark am Besonderen festhält.

Eine Sommernacht in den Tuileries

Das Fest des Weines

Der Obelisk, von mattem Gold überflossen, liess seine Hitzestrahlen immer deutlicher werden. Neben ihm rauschte in silbernem Fall die Fontäne. In den Bäumen der Tuileries sass warmes, grünes Licht.

Nach schraubten sich die Schwalben in den Himmel, der sich weichen und kühlend gegen die Erde pressen wollte. Die Tauben gurrten ein letztes Mal. Eine jubelnde Fanfare ertönte plötzlich.

Überall entlang die Büden, in denen Frankreichs Weine glühten und perlten, der schwere Burgunder, der weiße Bordeaux, die würzigen Rhone- und Jura-Weine, der blonde Wein des Beauvilliers und der milde Anjou.

Es schien alles geschaffen wie für einen Sommernachtsraum. Die Menschen strömten herbei, um zu der Musik einer Jazz-Band zu tanzen. Aber kaum war der erste Tango verloschen, da ertönte eine Monotonie, Di Mazzo von der Opéra-Comique sang heisse, südländische Lieder der Liebe, und sie kamen schön, hochheilige, schöne Mädchen, die virtuose Truppe des Bal Tabarin, und tanzten mit einer Nerve und Virtuosität, die Befallstürme entsetzten, den „French Cancan“. Sie beschworen Toulouse-Lautrec und die Impressionisten herauf. Ihnen folgte das spanische Ballet Maritane von der Grossen Opéra, tanzte zuckende, puppenhafte Tänze, eine spanische Jota und Orientalisches. An Goya dachte man und an Velasquez, als unter der Mantilla der prassende, trockene, peitschende Rhythmus der Katsengetriebe jäh zerbrach und erlosch.

Athleten folgten ihnen, dann erschien eine Diana, eine englische Nackttänzerin, mehr Akrobatin zwar, mehr Schlangendame als Tänzerin, — ein Praxelles hätte an ihr seine Freude gehabt.

Louis Charcot sang Arien und Lieder. Tamarina, eine kleine Tänzerin, liess sich von ihren „Gentlemen“ zu den sportlichen Randbemerkungen der Saxophone wie einen Spielball hin- und herwerfen und zeigte dennoch deutlich, dass die Gentlemen die Spielbälle waren.

Was gab es noch alles? Ballets, Tänzer, Sänger und endlich die Schule der Lot-Füller, Mädchen, die von Jacozetti mit immer wechselndem vielbarigen Licht überzogen, sich in Salamandern, Nixen, exotische Schlangen, Fauns, Löwe, Tulpen und Mädchen-Orchideen verwandelten.

Zuletzt entdeckten wir in tiefer Nacht eine belebte Russen-Balalaika-Kapelle, die es so machte wie die Deutschen, wenn sie glauben glücklich zu sein. Sie sang, ins Russische transportiert: „Ich weiss, was soll es bedeuten, dass

450 Hotels an der Côte d'Azur geschlossen

Die Streikbewegung in der Provinz ist noch nicht zu Ende. Es ist zwar gelungen, eine Reihe von Konflikten beizulegen, so wurde durch Schiedsspruch ein Streik der Hoteliers in Bordeaux beendet — an anderen Orten ist es jedoch zu neuen Arbeitsstellen gekommen. An der Côte d'Azur haben auf Anregung der Hoteliers-Verbands am gestrigen Sonntag 450 Hotels geschlossen. Sie begründen ihren Schritt sowohl mit der Besetzung einiger Hotels in Cannes durch Streikposten, als in der Stadt — Nizza, Menton, Antibes, Grasse usw. — ist es in Höhe jeder Stadt angeordnet, dort ein Reisender länger als eine Nacht dort verweilen.

RENNEN

MIEUXCE GEWINNT DEN „GRAND PRIX DE PARIS“

Ganz Paris — und zwar nicht nur das „haut Paris“, sondern auch die „masses“ — sind gespannt auf die Rennen, um den größten Rennerpreis der Saison, den „Grand Prix de Paris“ in Longchamp beim Ausbruch der Präsidenten der Republik zu beobachten. In diesem Rennen, das durch die Organisation des Sweepstakes mit einer Million Francs dotiert ist, beizuwohnen. Mieuxce, der schon den Preis des Jockey Clubs gewinnen konnte, gilt als erster Favorit und wird mit einer Vermutung von Sind und Aiali. Den vierten Platz nahm Valador vor Port de Reine. Die Herren Masarel, Canning und die Belgier, Besitzer, Trainer und Jockey des Siegers — konnten begeisterte Glückwünsche für ihren Triumphe entgegennehmen.

Tod des ehemaligen Ministers Charles de Lasteyrie

In seiner Pariser Wohnung in der Avenue Montaigne starb der Abgeordnete Charles de Lasteyrie. De Lasteyrie, Spross einer alten französischen Adelsfamilie, wurde 1877 in Paris geboren und trat, nachdem er die Ecoles des Chartes absolviert hatte, in die Generalinspektion der Finanzen ein. Im Kriege war er Kapitän des 6. Bataillon der Gendarmen und war Sachverständiger auf der Friedenskonferenz. 1919 zum ersten Male in die Kammer gewählt, wurde er 1922 von Poincaré in den Finanzministerien berufen. Die damals beginnende Krise des Staatshaushalts und des Frankens fand in De Lasteyrie ihren energischen Bekämpfer. 1928, 1932 und 1936 wurde er in den Reihen der Pariser Wähler in die Kammer entsandt, wo er sich der Fédération Republicaine anschloss.

HEUTE IN AUTEUIL

Prix Palambole. — Velina, Jacoly. Prix Lyonnais. — Senti Ton, Marchisio. Prix Bigoletto. — Colindres II, Trombon. Prix Auguste du Bos. — Ess II, Aprils. Prix Neuville. — Coup de Mer, Chancy. Prix Jupiter. — Le Clair de Lune, Saint-Germer. J.A.D.

WETTER für Paris und Umgebung

Bewölkt; Himmel; später Aufklärung; leichte Regenfälle; steigende Temperatur.

WIRTSCHAFTSCHRONIK

Einstellung des Zinsendienstes für polnische Auslandsschulden

Die polnische Finanzdelegation, die sich gegenwärtig in New York aufhält, teilte den Fiskalagenten der polnischen Aussenbehörde mit, dass in Anbetracht der gegenwärtigen finanziellen Lage Polens, der Zinsdienst für die polnischen Auslandsschulden vorübergehend ausgesetzt wird. Die Einzahlungen werden in Sperr-Zinsen gemacht und bei der Bank von Polen auf Rechnung der Fiskalagenten deponiert. Gleichzeitig ist in Warschau offiziell bekanntgegeben worden, dass auch für Ausländer die polnischen Staatsanleihen in den letzten Jahren eingezogen wurden. Das offizielle Consensus teilte mit, dass Polen mit den Gläubigern in den Verhandlungen darüber einverstanden ist.

Von dieser ersten Massnahme der Warschauer Regierung werden in erster Linie die Vereinigten Staaten und Frankreich betroffen. Vor einiger Zeit bemühte sich der frühere Präsident der Bank von Polen, Oberst Koc, in London eine Anleihe für Polen zu bekommen, doch hatten diese Verhandlungen zu keinem Ergebnis geführt. In City-Kreisen hatte man damals schon die finanzielle Lage Polens nicht günstig beurteilt.

Die Einstellung des Zinsendienstes für polnische Auslandsschulden steht im Zusammenhang mit dem Ausbruch der polnischen Regierung zum Schutz des Zinsdienstes in letzter Zeit getroffen hatte. Der Gold- und Devisenbestand der Bank von Polen war stark zurückgegangen, und angesichts der Devisenschwierigkeiten glaubte die polnische Regierung zum Schutz ihrer Währung vorläufig die Transferierung des Zinsendienstes nach dem Auslande einzustellen zu müssen. Innerhalb ist es aber notwendig, zur Beurteilung der Lage der polnischen Finanzen darauf hinzuweisen, dass es der polnischen Regierung gelungen ist, für dieses Jahr das Gleichgewicht im Staatshaushalt zu erreichen.

INSCHRÄNKUNG DES BAUMWOLLGARN-VERBRAUCHS IN DEUTSCHLAND

Nach einer Änderung der Verbrauchsregeln für die Textilindustrie ist eine neue Kontingenterstellung für die Verarbeitung von Baumwollgarnen für die Bank, Gummi- und Tüllweberei, sowie für die Herstellung von Posamenten, Gardinen und maschinengeknüpften Spitzen festgesetzt. Mit dieser Änderung soll in Zukunft die Verarbeitung von Baumwollgarnen eingeschränkt werden, wobei anstelle von Baumwolle die Garne für die betreffenden Industrien durch Kunstseide und Zellwolle ersetzt werden sollen.

Diese Anordnung der Überwachungsstelle, die seit dem 1. April 1936 in Kraft trat, zeigt, dass infolge der Einschränkung der Einfuhr von Rohbaumwolle die deutsche Textilindustrie, weitere Massnahmen zur Verringerung des Baumwollverbrauchs zu treffen.

Das Geschäft der Canadian Eagle besteht in erster Linie in der Übernahme aller Aktien der Schwefelergänzungsindustrie für den Export verfügbaren Erzeugnisse. Die Mexican Eagle konnte im abgelaufenen Jahr sowohl ihre Gelddarlehne als auch die Verluste steigern. Letztere erhöhten sich auf 22,7 auf 25,6 Millionen Barrels. Die Verwaltung erklärt ausdrücklich, dass trotz der günstigen Entwicklung vor allem allzu grossen Optimismus gewarnt werden müsse, da die Überproduktion von Rohöl und die Ausammlung zu grosser Vorräte die künftige Entwicklung beeinträchtigen.

HANDELSKRIEG ZWISCHEN JAPAN UND AUSTRALIEN

Das australische Bundesparlament hat vor einiger Zeit die bestehenden Zolltarife erhöht. Dadurch ist vor allem der japanische Rohwoll-Export nach Australien auf Scharf betroffen. Die japanische Regierung versuchte, die Bundesregierung Australiens dazu zu bewegen, die beschlossene Zolltariferhöhung rückgängig zu machen. Die Verhandlungen haben jedoch zu keinem Erfolg geführt. Nunmehr hat sich Japan zu Vergeltungsmassnahmen entschlossen.

Die japanische Regierung hat mit Wirkung vom 21. Juni angeordnet, dass für die Einfuhr von Wolle und Wolzen Genuhungen von der japanischen Regierung anzuordnen seien und dass auf Fleisch, Butter, kondensierte Milch usw. ein 50 Prozent Zolltarif erhoben wird. Da Japan nach England der grösste Bezugsnehmer von australischen Waren, insbesondere von Wolle, ist, so wird die Massnahme der Zolltariferhöhung ihrerseits Australien schwer treffen.

Vu belien Länder von einem Handelskrieg ausgenommen werden, so ist anzunehmen, dass in einiger Zeit Verhandlungen zur Beilegung des jetzigen Missstandes aufgenommen werden. Innerhalb ist dieser Handelskrieg bezeichnend für die Schwankungen in der handelspolitischen Politik Australiens, selbst in überseeischen Ländern, die sich langsam von der Krise zu erholen beginnen.

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WIR MÜSSEN WEITER

Fragmente aus dem Exil

2nd Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School

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Die letzten Tage von Paris

DIE EXILKOMMODE

Abseits in der beengten, hügeligen Rue Monsieur Le Prince des Quartier Latin verwitterte eingeklemmt eine bucklige Fremdgaststätte, eine Exilkommode, die noch immer das ominöse Schild

L'UNIVERS

an der Fassade trug. Vollgestopft vom Mansardenloch bis zum Luftschutz-Kohlenkeller mit Souvenirs an Heimaten, an Herzens- und Geldnöte, an Verfolgungen und Haussuchungen.

»Ouvrez! La Police!« – Gestern hatte sie zwei in anderen Vaterländern Militärpflichtige – Karli aus der Tchéchoslovaquie und Graf Karolyi, weiland Postminister der kommunistischen Zwischenregierung Ungarns – aus den Betten geholt, während die übrigen Hotelinsassen noch alptraumten: vom Doppelselbstmordversuch eines paßlosen Lie-

bespaares (er wurde gerettet), von einer Abtreibung (die ›femme de chambre‹ hatte es herumgetratscht: »verübt an einer nicht mal angemeldeten ›étrangère‹ von einer russischen, unerlaubt praktizierenden Kinderärztin!« – Ich hatte die Ärztin geholt, hatte das Ungeborene beseitigt, beigesetzt in der Gossenabdunkelung – angegraut bei dem Gedanken, was wäre, wenn das meiner Freundin zustoßen würde . . .)

FERMATE I

Der Montparnasse hatte zugemacht. Nach dem Blackout der Cafés ›Le Dôme‹, ›La Rotonde‹, ›Le Sélect‹ und ›La Coupole‹ waren die *Montparnassiens*, Bohemiens und Genies abgewandert zum Boulevard Saint Germain, wo sie sich im licht- und schalldicht aufgepolsterten ›Café Flore‹ um die Abendtafel des Pablo Picasso und seiner Stiljünger gruppieren und im Flüsterton disputierten – futuristisch, apollinairisch, marxistisch, surrealistisch exaltiert bis ans *Ende der Nacht*.

Draußen, um die Dorfkirche Saint-Germain des Près, ging die Wache um, die – »Les Flics! Ah, les Vaches!« – jeden Verspäteten auf Verdacht hin arretierte.

Und drei Stammgäste des Prix-fixes-Restaurants ›Au Petit Nègre‹ waren bei einer wilden Schießerei am Montparnasse gefallen.

Nur um die Tabac du Dôme-Ecke gespensterte der schwächliche Pamphletist La Lumière, der – ein Sammler von Grammophonplatten mit der Stimme Adolf Hitlers – im Keller einen deutschen Rotspanienkämpfer beherbergte, der dort eine Schuster- und Besohlwerkstatt etabliert hatte.

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 Aus der Parknacht des Jardin du Luxembourg feuerte eine
 Flugabwehrbatterie vom Becken der Großen Fontäne aus

auf astrale Feindjäger, die in der Allée de l'Observatoire zweiunddreißig Schulkinder erlegt hatten.

In der blauschwarzen Nacht der ägyptischen Verdunkelung uhute im Jardin der Totenvogel . . . sein monotones Gekauz ertönte bald nah, bald fern, wenn ich mich an dem Parkgitter entlangtastete, unsicheren Schrittes auf offener Straße nach meiner Réfugié-Lagerhaft. Wie zaghaft klang der dumpfe Uhu-Ruf für das Ohr, das das Radio-Gebelfer der Propaganda, das Aufheulen der Alarm-Sirenen gewohnt war . . .

Ich schlich auf Zehenspitzen, aus Besorgnis, den kranken Schlaf von Paris zu stören, und mehr noch aus Furcht, die Beamten der Fremdenkontrolle aus ihrem Hinterhalt zu locken.

Eine quiekende Ratte, von einer anderen verfolgt, jagte aus einer Hauskulisse, vorbei an dem staubigen Prospekt perspektivisch angepinselter Straßenzüge unter einem hängenden Soffitten-Kuppelhorizont. Die Schraffierungen der abgedichteten Fensterläden, die um die Denkmäler aufgestapelten Sandsäcke, die aufgewühlten Erdschanzen gespensterten wie der glanzlose Plunder einer Bühne nach Schluß einer Gala-Oper . . .

DIE MARSELLAISE BLÄST ZUR FLUCHT

Unser dörfliches ›Hôtel de l'Univers‹ schütterte und klirrte im Kriegs-Unwetter, während das Schicksal von Paris in der Schwebung hing.

Es stand mehr auf dem Spiel als die Ehre der großen Nation: es ging um das mondäne Monasterium Lutetia, wo Orient und Okzident die geistigen Weihen empfangen, es ging um die zisterziensische Abtei (mit der strengsten, schwerst erfüllbaren Ordensregel: *Fais ce que voudras*) mit

ihren Bazaren aller Stilformen, mit ihren Bistros, wo die Adepten aller politischen Sekten diskutierten.

Die Unschuld des erotischen Übermutes von Paris war dahin; die Medizin-Studenten des Boulevard St. Michel, auf ihren monomes eng umschlungen mit ihren Liebchen, sangen nicht mehr ihre schlüpfrigen Chansons, sondern plärrten:

»Il nous faut un Führer . . .«

Der schmachlockige Maquereau der ›Bal Musette‹ verknuppelte, ausgehalten von den Brüdern des Bankhauses Lazard, *la gueuse*, die dritte Republik; die Jeunesse dorée tanzte nicht auf dem ›Bal des Quat-z-Arts‹ im Adam-und-Eva-Kostüm, sondern marschierte mit der Cagoule. Unter den Laternen verschwiegener Ecken flüsterten nicht mehr seidig rauschende ›Percipaticiennes‹:

»Tu viens, mon petit choucou . . .?«,
sondern schnauzbärtige Kriminalbeamte:

»Vos papiers! . . . Suivez-moi . . .«

»Paris wird bis zum Letzten verteidigt werden . . .«, teilte uns vertraulich ein spanischer Ex-Minister mit, ein ehemaliger Gast des ›Hôtel de l'Univers‹; seit Kriegsbeginn in einem Spanienlager interniert, war er nun von der französischen Regierung als Experte herangezogen worden, um auf den Ausfallstraßen die Ein-Mann-Bunker zu konstruieren, mit denen Madrid verteidigt worden war.

»Wir werden Paris bis zum Letzten verteidigen . . .«, erklärte ein anderer Hotelgast, ein junger Ingenieur; er kam gerade als Leutnant von der Front, und jeder bestürmte ihn und fragte ihn aus; er brach zusammen und schluchzte wie ein Jüngling in seinem ersten Liebeskummer:

»Wir sind verraten. Wir sollten die Bombe haben, um jeden Preis. Und sie haben mich zurückgeschickt, in Urlaub –

ich hatte keinen Urlaub verlangt und lief ins Dorf, um beim Stab zu protestieren. Aber der Stab und das ganze Dorf waren schon telefonisch beordert, das Feld zu räumen. Immerfort kamen die telefonischen Gegenbefehle. Es ist, als ob die ganze Armee unter dem telefonischen Kommando des Feindes arbeitet . . .«

Vom Ministerium wurde mir telefoniert: »Die Gendarmerie ist angewiesen, Ihnen einen Laisser-passer zum Verlassen der Stadt auszuhändigen – Paris ist zur Festung erklärt worden und wird verteidigt.«

Als ich, um mich abzumelden, unter den ausgestorbenen Kolonnaden der Rue de Rivoli zum Ministère de l'Information vordrang, für dessen Schwarzsender ich ein paar flammende Aufrufe an eine imaginäre Opposition des deutschen Volkes verfaßt hatte, stand nur noch das leere Gebäude da.

Das Hauptquartier der Gendarmerie in Neuilly war so umlagert, daß mir nichts übrig blieb, als durch eine Tür mit der Aufschrift »Entrée strictement défendue« in den Bau einzudringen – in dem ein großes Aufgebot schreiender, stempelnder Beamten aus Leibeskräften daran arbeitete, jedes Gesuch einzeln zu refüsieren.

Die Confusion wurde noch durch meinen Sonderfall erhöht, weil auf Anordnung der Regierung der rosa Papierbogen des Laisser-passer nach dem Ausfüllen, mit sechs Photographien und vier Unterschriften versehen, auch noch den Vermerk »Bewilligt« tragen mußte. Der Souchef der Gendarmerie Nationale persönlich fertigte mich ab. Das rosa Dokument in Händen, schaute er mich durchdringend an:

»Sie wollen«, sagte er, »Paris verlassen. Aus welchem Grunde . . .«

Ohne auf die Kriegslage hinzuweisen, begann ich:

»Monsieur de Margerie hat . . .«

»Connais pas . . .«, sagte er. »Wohin verreisen Sie?«

»In südlicher Richtung«, sagte ich.

»Aha«, sagte er, ging an einen Schrank, blätterte in Akten und erklärte, indem er das Formular blau durchstrich und sorgfältig zerriß:

»Sie werden sich in den nächsten 24 Stunden nicht von Ihrem Wohnsitz fortrühren, bis über Sie anderweitig verfügt werden wird!«

Zwölf Stunden später war die ganze Gendarmerie Nationale auf Reisen . . .

Den Boulevard St. Michel entlang standen die Möbelwagen bis zum Kriegsministerium. Die bankrotte Regierung zog um nach Bordeaux. Auf dem Innenhof lief Roland de Margerie umher zwischen der in Kisten verpackten Dritten Republik. Dieser zierliche Botschafters-Sohn hatte sich stets mehr in Künstler- und Schriftstellerkreisen umgetan als in seiner diplomatischen Karriere. In den guten alten Zeiten des Frieden-Intermezzos zwischen den zwei Weltkriegen pflegte er sich formlos auf allen Atelier-Festen zu vergnügen.

Als ich ihm nun die Ablehnung des Laisser-passer vortrug, blickte er mich aus geröteten Augen an und sagte ins Leere:

»C'est fini . . .«

Meine Wiener Freundin betrachtete es als großes Glück, daß ich dieses Laisser-passer nicht hatte. »In solchen Zeiten«, meinte sie, »ist ein amtlicher Ausweis geradezu lebensgefährlich.«

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KANONENDONNER VOR PARIS

Während sich die Front mit schon vernehmlichen Kanonengrollen und zuckenden Theaterblitzen näher und näher an die Capitale heranschob, verharrte die Regierung in Anordnungen, die zwangsläufig unter der Regie des Eroberers standen. So hatte sie erneut die Réfugiés zusammenfangen lassen, hatte die Männer im ›Stade Buffalo‹, dem Stadion der Radrennen, eingehürdet, die Frauen auf den Rängen des mondänen ›Val d'Hiver‹ eingehegt, wo sie ungepflegt, unwohl, manche schwanger, herumzigeunerten, bis sie in die Sümpfe des Lagers von Gurs (im Midi de La France) verfrachtet wurden.

Daß ich dieses Mal verschont blieb, dankte ich einer unvorhergesehenen Protektion durch meine Bekanntschaft mit Monsieur Roland de Margerie, der gerade zum Kabinettschef des amtierenden Ministerpräsidenten ernannt worden war.

Nun, als ich von dem Huissier in sein goldverschnörkeltes ›Cabinet du Ministère de la Guerre‹ vorgelassen wurde, raffte er müde seine Höflichkeit zusammen; knabenhaft linkisch in seiner Felduniform, überreizt von dem Frontgetümmel, aus dem er auf diesen hohen, verlorenen Posten befördert worden war, murmelte er geniert: »Ich habe Sie auf die Liste der Befreiten gesetzt . . .« und drückte mir stumm die Hand wie bei einer Beerdigung.

Und wirklich, dank dieser Protektion wurde ich zwar am Morgen darauf von wütenden Polizisten aus dem Bett geholt, in einem ›Panier à Salade‹ im ›Stade Buffalo‹ eingeliefert, aber nach einigen Stunden Verhör und erneuten Interventionen unter dem Hagel eines Flug-Angriffes wieder

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Die Freundin aus Page 333 Monsieur de Margerie be-

nachrichtigt hatte, wartete besorgt auf mich in dem kleinen Hotel der Rue Monsieur le Prince.

Wir hatten uns beide dort wieder eingefunden: ich, nachdem ich im Kerker auf Stroh meine Frivolität an der nachtragenden Heiligen der Normandie abgebußt hatte; die Freundin, nachdem sie sich mit einem Prager Herrn verlobt und mit ihm im blühenden Département der Lot et Garonne angesiedelt hatte. Als sie der Krieg überraschte, als ihr Verlobter sich zur tschechischen Armee meldete, machte der fescheste Bursche des Ortes der Verlassenen den Hof. Und da der schmeichelnden, von Pollen parfümierten Luft keine Frau widerstehen kann, zumal an der Seite des begehrtesten Lieblings der ganzen Umgegend, so konnte es nicht ausbleiben, daß das Getratsch eifersüchtiger Weiber, die aus dem Gebüsch die Kahnfahrten des Paares auf mond-spiegelndem Gewässer belauerten, die fremde Verführerin als Spionin anschwärzte. Das Einschreiten der Obrigkeit setzte Ophelias pastoraler Idylle ein Ende und nötigte sie, nach Paris zu verschwinden.

Sie bezog ihr ehemaliges Hofzimmer in diesem ländlichen Gasthof des Quartier Latin, dem 'Hôtel de l'Univers', auf dessen Efeu-Rondell sich läufige Katzen balgten. Schräg gegenüber hing als einziger Flaggenschmuck die Unterwäsche zweier 'poules de luxe'.

Im Vorderhaus, im Zimmer von Horvath, wohnte nach dessen tödlichem Unfall Miriam, eine amerikanische Studentin, Tochter eines Hudson-Captains und Braut eines jugoslawischen Diplomatensohnes, von dem sie der Krieg getrennt hatte. Über ihr eine Emigrantin, deren Freund bei den Polen diente, und die ein Kind von einem Franzosen trug. Im ersten Stock hatte sich eine Matrone der Wiener Gesellschaft Transnational, Literary Journalism Summer School gerettet. Habseligkeiten, blass und einem Spiritus-Ko-

cher, auf dem sie trotz der Lebensmittelnot erstaunliche Mahlzeiten für uns alle und ihren Sohn kochte. Der Sohn, ein Chemiker, der im militärischen Laboratorium der Sorbonne bei einem Experiment fast erblindet war und seitdem allen Frauen nachstellte, war mein Nachbar im Dachgeschoß.

In meiner Mansarde, von einer blau angestrichenen Luke belichtet, schrieb und schrieb ich – deutsch die in Wien begonnene unzeitgemäße Gedichtfolge in Briefen («Briefe aus der Mitternacht») an die verwirrend nahe, allzu entfremdete Geliebte, französisch über den marternden Wachtraum der umnachteten, blutschwitzenden Umwelt; ein Alptraum, der mir noch heute bei jeder Niederschrift weiter diktiert . . .

Zweimal tags pausierte ich, wenn die gute Mama über die Stiege ihren Sohn zum Essen rief (und das galt für alle), und mehrmals nachts, wenn der obszöne Chor der Fliegeralarm sirenen einsetzte. Dann hallte das verdunkelte Treppenhaus vom Getrappel bis hinunter in den Keller, durch dessen Röhren-Anlagen das Gepolter der Geschütze eindrang. Die Milchfrau, die aus einem Seitenstollen des Nebenhauses herauskroch, und die Mama aus Wien, stets mit zwei Koffern und Vorräten für eine ganze Woche, waren meist die ersten. Unsere brave Wirtin, Madame Boucher, setzte sich mit Brille und Rosenkranz gottergeben auf die Wassertonne, um sofort wieder aufzuspringen und ihren Mann zu holen, der stets während eines Fliegerangriffes im offenen Hofe an einer Regentraufe herumreparierte, von Funken seiner Pfeife umstoben. Die «poules de luxe», in klaffenden Schlafröcken, kicherten in ihre Taschentücher, weil der Chemiker wieder nach ihren Parfüms schnuffelte.

Und ich spürte die Freundin, die mir beim Schreiben unerreichbar schien – zumal, wenn ich über den Hof ihr helles,

unbekümmertes Lachen (ganz vereinzelt in der Bedrücktheit) hörte – wieder nahe an meiner Schulter. Wir waren es seit Wien gewohnt, bei Untergängen vereint zu sein.

Die Amerikanerin Miriam war unterwegs nach Jugoslawien, mitten in den Balkan-Brand hinein, um ihren Bräutigam herauszuholen. Die Schwangere traute sich nicht aus dem Zimmer, die Drohung des Konzentrationslagers war schlimmer als alle Bombengefahr; und es war in einer solchen Alarmstunde, daß sie, nicht ein noch aus wissend, sich ihrer halbfranzösischen Leibesfrucht entledigte.

Denn die neue Ordnung vernichtete, noch bevor sie zuschlug . . .

PARIS, 13. JUNI 1940

Es ist Juni-Morgen, der 13. – aha? – nein, nichts Abergläubisches ist dabei – ein historisches Datum aus den Annalen des 2. Weltkrieges.

Es will nicht Tag werden, es ist auch nicht Nacht. »Die Sonne ist nicht zu sehen!« flüstert Ophelia abergläubisch und wischt sich über die dünnen Lippen; sie hat kein Rouge aufgelegt, hat Ruß an den Fingern.

»Deine Stirn ist ganz rußig!« sagt sie stirnrunzelnd.

– Nein, auch das war keine Einbildung. Eine kolossale Kohlenstaubwolke, abgeblasen vom II. Deutschen Armeekorps, um den Vormarsch durch das Seinetal zu tamen, flockte auf das Gegiebel der Rue Monsieur Le Prince und den schmutzigen Hinterhof unserer Absteige und lüftete sich erst, als die pralle Junisonne im Zenit stand, zur Stunde des PAN – als dessen Schreckstarre Quartier um Quartier befiel und in die Metrotunnels kroch, in die ein Großalarm die

Passanten gescheucht hatte.
Die Nacht vorher war total gewesen, schlaf- und traum-

los wie die Alpnacht einer psycho-politischen Torschlußpanik, ein ganz reales, reguläres Tohuwabohu – wie in Berlin beim Ausbruch des Tausendjährigen Heil-Mythos, wie in Wien beim ›Anschluß‹, wie immer, wenn wieder einmal *endgültig* Schluß war.

Madame Boucher hantierte bereits in der Küche, verweint – so schämte sie sich, die Brave, für ihr Frankreich . . . Sie steckte uns ein paar fromage-et-jambon-sandwiches als Proviant zu. Zum Abschiedfeiern blieb keine Zeit.

»Sieh' dich um! *Wir müssen weiter!*«

In der Ancienne Rue Fossée Monsieur Le Prince biesterten ein paar Polizeiratten herum, um von den Mauern die Papierfetzen des ›Rappel Immédiat‹, der sofortigen Einberufung, und die letzten Frontberichte der »uneinnehmbaren Ligne Maginot« abzukratzen.

Wieder begann der Fluchttraum. Öd waren die Marktgasen, kahl die anheimelnden Plätze. Über den Boulevard St. Michel, an den abgeräumten Caféhausterrassen und Bücherauslagen der Antiquare vorbei, gespensterte in Limousinen, Lastautos, mit Gemüsekarren und Kinderwagen, zu Fuß, zu Rad, mit Pferdegespannen, der Exodus.

Über den Rundplatz des Theatertempelchens Odéon trippelte gebückt und zahnlückig schmunzelnd der russische Schriftsteller Ilya Ehrenbourg, und er und ich taten, als hätten wir uns nicht gesehen. Lange Zeit waren wir unzertrennlich gewesen, als er, ein verlorener Sohn des sowjetischen Mütterchens Rußland, in der Bar ›La Coupole‹ residiert hatte. Von Heimweh und Ehrgeiz zerrüttet, war er reuevoll in den Schoß der UdSSR zurückgekehrt und, gnädig wieder aufgenommen, sah er nun als immunes Mitglied der

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 Frankreich marxistisch abgeklärt mit an.
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Die Furcht, kontrolliert, visitiert, arretiert und – die ärgste – getrennt zu werden, waren wir vorläufig erst einmal los, und damit auch die Hüter einer nicht mehr herrschenden Ordnung.

Denn wir folgten von da ab den Gesetzen des Dschungels, folgten immer der Nase nach der Losung und Witterung aller bodenständigen Lebewesen, die an der Seine – rive droite et rive gauche – ihre Wohn- und Brutstätten hatten: von der Butte Montmartre bis zum Montparnasse, von Montrouge bis zum Mont Saint-Valerien; folgten, von der Werwolfheit des weltmachthungrigen Hunnenpacks mitvertrieben, mitgetrieben, einem auf $2\frac{1}{2}$ Millionen bibelhaft angeschwollenen Exodus, der sich durch die Porte d'Orléans über die faubourgs und die Bannmeile ergoß; folgten einem seit gallischen Zeiten ungelüfteten, holterdipolter zusammengerafften Haus-Unrat: Matratzen, Kochgeschirr, Bidets, Braut- und Hochzeitspräsente, Vogelkäfige, Schoßhündchen; huckepack oder auf bicyclettes, motocyclettes und Leiterwagen Kind und Kegel.

Gendarmerie hetzte kopflos umher, als die ersten Warnschüsse knallten: »En avant!« –

Vornweg – Quartier um Quartier, Gemeinde um Gemeinde, Dorf um Dorf – das Stallvieh, die Honoratioren, die segnende Geistlichkeit, dahinter Kriegsinvaliden, Greise, Waisenhauskinder, schwangere Frauen (auf Stroh gebettet, in Särgen):

die *Diaspora des Exils*, verlumpt wie ich, wie meine Gedichte; eine Fronleichnamsprozession der Habenichtse, eine Fronleichnamsprozession der $2\frac{1}{2}$ -Millionen-Ausbürgerung aus der verdunkelten Lichtstadt *Lutetia Parisiorum*, eine Vertreibung, aus der das Abendland so, wie es gewesen

Media Culture of the Weimar Republic: A Historical Overview

The media of the Weimar Republic have been praised, even glorified, in retrospect. Such voices were heard after the Second World War, when editors and publishers, resuming economic and professional traditions, tried to portray the preceding period as brighter than the dark experience of Nazi control and censorship.

Historical fact, however, was that the first German Republic and its media were born to trouble from the very beginning. Political confrontations, economic disorganization and recessions, and social disturbances were the landmarks of a country on its way, for the first time in history, to modern democratic government. Although freedom of expression was guaranteed in Article 118 of the Weimar Constitution of 1919 that gave its name to the Republic, and although censorship was prohibited, freedom of press and of motion pictures was not mentioned explicitly in this Article. A special Motion Picture Law of 1920 established a Central Censorship Board which had to license every meter of film produced or imported. When broadcasting entered the scene it was already firmly under government control, even before the Reichstag, the German parliament, took official notice of the new medium in 1926. The infamous Article 48 of the Constitution permitted temporary suspension of fundamental rights by President (Reichspräsident) in the interest of public safety and social order by way of *Notverordnungen* (Emergency Orders). Many times the weak and compliant President was persuaded by various politicians to apply Article 48, causing an astonishing number of publications from left to right to stop their presses for several days.

Newspapers

At the inception of the Weimar Republic the basic pattern of the German press system was traditional. The daily press was decentralized. Local newspapers with strong group or party affiliations published by family-owned companies served many small publics in a single city or town. Newspaper density in Germany was impressive compared with France or even Great Britain. The low-circulation, strongly partisan, middle-town daily with its publisher and editors often personally interwoven—politically and socially—with the local establishment was given the cozy sounding name *Heimatzeitung*.

Only a small number of metropolitan newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the *Kölnische Zeitung* or the *Magdeburgische Zeitung*, together with

several Berlin dailies circulated national editions, special Reichsausgaben. Group ownership and cross-ownership was the answer to the new low and middle-class audience, the famous "New Reader." Just before the turn of the century the Founding Fathers of the Berlin press, Rudolf Mosse, Leopold Ullstein, and August Scherl had set up their family enterprises. Very soon each was publishing a socially stratified sample of newspapers and magazines. The serious political morning paper was supplemented by a light and loud evening paper plus an illustrated weekly magazine. The houses of Mosse, Ullstein, and Scherl were the first publishing enterprises in Germany to become press institutions of the industrial order. Accordingly, their publications adopted all significant features of popular media: standardization, stereotypes, and conservatism, in spite of substantial political diversity. Mosse was liberal Left, Ullstein liberal Right, and Scherl stood for the extreme or national Right.

This picture of the Weimar daily press is made complete with a short description of a highly successful type of newspaper that appeared under the name of *Generalanzeiger* (literally: General Advertiser) which could be traced back to the American and British penny papers. *Generalanzeiger* were founded all over the country in the eighties of the last century. The idea was a combination of journalistic and commercial ventures: general appeal to the common men and women, with classified and local small business advertising. Three provincial publishers, Wilhelm Girardet, August Huck, and Gottlieb Paul Leonhardt established or bought *Generalanzeiger* in different cities, building the first newspaper chains in Germany. In the capital, August Scherl brought out the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* in 1883, a prototype of the lower middle-class daily; inexpensive, emphasizing local news (not forgetting the Imperial Court), in faraway corners of the world. In addition, serialized novels were meant to be entertaining and edifying at the same time, dealing with upper-class people of nobility or military rank. The colorful picture of homey (*Heimatzeitungen*) and popular (*Generalanzeiger*) was fallacious. Most often they were entirely dependent on news and feature services.

During the First World War, in 1916, a business group, the *Hugenberg-Konzern* (Hugenberg Trust), was set up incorporating a news agency, several feature syndicates, an advertising agency, several metropolitan and provincial newspapers and magazines (having absorbed Scherl's company), a small motion picture company as well as banks and finance companies. (Ten years later the ailing Universum Film AG (Ufa) was also taken over by this group which became the first multimedia corporation in German communication history.) The organizing genius behind this trust was Alfred Hugenberg, general manager of Friedrich Krupp AG, the Essen iron and steel enterprise. Hugenberg became a member of the Reichstag in 1920, and party leader of the strong right-wing Deutschnationale Volkspartei (DNVP) in 1928.

Although Hugenberg's enormous influence through his various news, press, and movie outlets was an open secret, it was hardly known at that time that his expedient feature syndicates sold a broad variety of material to those small local dailies that frequently could afford but one or two editors. These newspapers had to use cheap syndicated material, ranging from political and economic columns, to articles for the women's or children's pages, to serialized fiction, poetry for weekend or holiday editions, health, gardening, animal care, crossword puzzle, humor, and cartoons. The whole package came edited and ready for publication upon delivery. Text features were supplied in mimeographed form, in type galley proofs and very frequently already in mat form; critics called this *Maternunwesen* (mat nuisance). Hugenberg's feature syndicates served

approximately 1000 papers or about 35 percent of the local daily press in 1924. His advertising agency also sold prefabricated advertising copy on a tie-in basis with space discounts to the subscribers of editorial features. In 1925 the mat system was elaborated so that one service was sold especially to party papers and another one to non-partisan or non-political newspapers.

The Weimar Republic saw the arrival of a new party press representing the political spectrum of the National Assembly of 1919 and subsequent General Elections for the Reichstag. The party newspaper was a characteristic trait of German media culture. Real party organs, owned and operated by a political party, were published only by the Social Democrats, the Communists, and by the National Socialists. Nevertheless, these papers were outnumbered by *Parteirichtungszeitungen* (party-oriented newspapers) with more or less intimate affiliations, personally or ideologically, with liberal, center, or right parties. Papers proclaiming political neutrality or non-partisanship in their mastheads were almost by definition devoted to nationalism or conservatism. It should be noted that this very popular type of newspaper was to fall easy prey to the Nazis, either by eagerly conforming to the party line or simply by seizure.

In 1932 some 4650 newspapers with a total circulation of about 20 million were published in Germany. At the same time, in a mail survey carried out by the Deutsches Institut für Zeitungskunde, German publishers were asked to identify the political orientation of their own newspapers. The results make it possible to draw a simple political profile of the German press during the agonizing year of the Weimar Republic.

Right bloc	63.8 percent
Center bloc	12.8
Left bloc	8.7
No answer	14.7

More than 70 percent of the German dailies had a circulation of less than 5000. Only Ullstein's *Berliner Morgenpost* had a circulation of over half a million; three other Berlin dailies and the *Dortmunder Generalanzeiger* exceeded 200,000. Four other papers sold 100,000. Vorwärts, the central organ of the Social Democratic Party, circulated 80,000, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* 86,000, and the *Kölnische Zeitung* 60,000. With low circulation figures every third daily was practically forced to depend on feature syndicates such as Hugenberg's.

Magazines

Writing magazine history proves to be an extremely difficult task because so many variations exist among this genre of the print medium. Trying to group them into categories for study often becomes something of a nightmare, for inevitably there will be overlap, and a few magazines defy classification. Research problems aside, magazines are strong indicators for the media culture of a society. Confining the overview to political and literary journals would unduly narrow the perspective. A considerable number of magazines established during the last quarter of the nineteenth century survived the First World War, and continued through the Weimar Republic. Although some managed to evade Nazi purges, they had to shut down towards the end of the Second World War—only to be licensed by Allied Information Control or to be re-established in the 1950s.

In 1875, approximately 2000 periodicals were published in Germany. In 1900, the number was 5000, and when the war broke out in 1914, the number had mounted to 6500. Some 2500 titles vanished during the war. The number grew from 4000 in 1919, to 5000 in 1924, to 6000 in 1928, to 7500 in 1932. To

read those statistics correctly, a small note on classification will be necessary. The major part of these publications was made up of group or specialized periodicals (e.g., business, trade, professional journals, house organs together with party, union, and church publications), having relatively small but intense readership. The minor part was composed of general interest magazines (e.g., illustrated weeklies, women's and fashion magazines, sports and humor magazines, political weeklies, cultural and literary monthly reviews). In 1932, only 950 or approximately 12.7 percent can be classified as general-interest magazines. Eighty-seven percent, or 6550, can be classified as specialized or group magazines.

Once more the political spectrum may serve as a sampling device: On the right and conservative side there were Gottfried Traub's *Eiserne Blätter*, the *Alldeutsche Blätter* of Heinrich Class and Hermann Ullmann's *Politische Wochenschrift für Volkstum und Staat*. The National Socialists published the *Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte* and, since 1926, the weekly *IB-Illustrierter Beobachter*.

The Catholic party bore the name of *Zentrumspartei* (Center Party) and so reflected its position. Above all, this party was able to derive great benefit from the manifold Catholic church press with target-group publications for men, women, and children with a total circulation of more than 100,000. Other Center Party publications included an illustrated weekly, *Der Feuerreiter* appearing since 1925, cultural reviews like Karl Muth's *Hochland*, Friedrich Muckermann's *Der Gral* and *Stimmen der Zeit*. Their Protestant counterparts were the monthly reviews *Die Furche*, *Eckart* and *Zeitungswende*. The weekly *Das Evangelische Deutschland*, edited by August Hinderer, gained national reputation along with some 500 popular, regional journals established by church press associations between 1924 and 1926.

Leftist group journals were practically identical with Socialist and Communist party publications. Monthly reviews of the Social Democrats, called *Theoretical Organs*, had already been founded before the turn of the century. The *Neue Zeit* of Karl Kautsky ceased publication in 1923 and was continued by Rudolf Hilferding's *Neue Gesellschaft* in 1924. The *Sozialistische Monatshefte* of Eduard Bernstein's revisionist faction, published since 1895, remained influential during the Weimar period. Numerous central and regional journals, target publications for status groups (e.g., three magazines for women), political or professional sub-organizations and leisure groups (e.g., radio amateurs and listeners) were brought out by Socialist enterprises in the Mid-Twenties.

The Communist press in the Weimar Republic became double-headed. First there was the *official* press under direct control of the party administration, structurally very similar to the Socialist press with status and organizational group journals, political, and educational publications. A literary review, the *Linkskurve* was edited by a committee headed by Johannes Rudolf Becher from 1929 to 1932. The unofficial Communist publishing enterprise grew from a promotional sideshow for the Internationale Arbeiter-Hilfe (IAH) into a multimedia company under the direction of Willi Münzenberg, Communist member of the Reichstag. His organizational and commercial activities, which earned him the name of *Roter Hugenberg* occasionally met with angry reactions from party officials. His idea was that people needed political news and opinion with social relevance and cultural significance instead of the usual agitation and propaganda fare.

A devoted amateur photographer, Münzenberg founded *Der Arbeiter-Fotograf* in 1926, *Film und Volk* in 1928, a satirical journal *Eulenspiegel* in

1928, and in 1929, *Roter Aufbau*, a monthly review corresponding to the Socialist *Neue Gesellschaft*. In 1931, *Der Weg der Frau* was launched, a magazine for women edited by Marianne Gundermann.

Although the number of general interest magazines was smaller than that of the specialized or group publications, their variety makes them difficult to describe and to understand. Serious research on this field of German press history remains scarce.

Low-priced popular magazines of national circulation emerged in the late nineteenth century when the German Reich had already turned from an agrarian to an industrial economy. But since German capitalism was industrial rather than commercial in its origins, progress in consumer goods production and distribution was slow. Consequently the total volume of national advertising was rarely encouraging enough to provide publishers with a solid basis for prosperous magazine ventures. Nevertheless, when new printing and engraving technologies allowed tolerably profitable production and distribution of large circulations, some Berlin and very few metropolitan publishers in Leipzig and Munich, Cologne and Hamburg, making use of the services of two or three advertising agencies, took their chances. Let me draw a brief sketch of the situation at the beginning of the Weimar Republic.

The Ullstein company already published the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* and two women's magazines, *Blatt der Hausfrau* and *Die Dame*, when its post-war policy launched a children's magazine (1921); two cultural monthly magazines (*Uhu* and *Der Querschnitt* (1924); a popular science weekly (*Koralle* (1925); a Sunday paper, *Die Grüne Post* (1927), and a radio magazine *Sieben Tage* (1931).

The Scherl company, a division of the Hugenberg Trust, entered the Weimar period with three family magazines, among them was the prototype *Die Gartenlaube*, a sports magazine and the illustrated weekly *Die Woche*. In 1924, a cultural monthly magazine was added to compete with Ullstein's *Uhu* of the same year; its name eventually was *Scherl's Magazin*. In 1929, a movie and a radio magazine were launched; a second radio magazine was bought in 1932.

Two other Berlin publishers specialized in women's and fashion magazines. But Leipzig, the capital of German book publishing, was also an important center of specialized and general interest periodicals.

The Otto Beyer Verlag and the Verlag W. Vobach, both published women's magazines together with pattern, sewing, and needlework publications. They modernized their 20-year-old publications or established a number of new magazines with sections for housewives and working women, homemaking and decorating, style and beauty, health and food, and occasionally gardening.

This overview would be incomplete without mentioning two monthly magazines that shared credit for public taste and popular culture in Germany for roughly a hundred years. These are *Westermanns Monatshefte*, born in 1856, which died—though not quietly—only two years ago, and *Velhagen & Klasings Monatshefte*, which appeared from 1886 to 1953. Both magazines probably had British and American ancestors—*Harper's Monthly* (1850) and *Atlantic Monthly* (1857)—with their nineteenth century rational entertainment format of the Useful Knowledge Movement. Changing it to German Neo-Romanticism when the Kaiserreich needed interpretations of the arts and literature, cultural issues and events in national perspectives, both magazines carefully adopted the social and cultural standards of the republic, which necessarily were those of the conservative and mildly intellectual majority called *Bildungsbürgertum* (the educated bourgeoisie). In order to keep this audience and their advertisers the publishers of

these magazines invested in extra paper, printing, and reproduction quality. Many subscribers collected every single issue to establish a personal library.

The traditional review-type of magazine in Germany can be recognized by the word *Rundschau* in its title. Probably it had French parents. Reviews combined literary and theatre criticism with articles and essays on philosophy, arts, and sciences. Political bias was obvious. Nevertheless it would be misleading to call the reviews political or literary magazines, as some historians and bibliographers still do. *Kulturzeitschriften*—cultural reviews—are excellent sources of German cultural history, and by no means were they elite or upper-class publications. Like the cultural magazines mentioned earlier, the reviews were aimed at the educated middle-class reader, eventually forming loose intellectual circles.

This description has to be extremely selective. Exclusion should not be interpreted unfavorably. The *Deutsche Rundschau*, edited by Rudolf Pechel, the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, and Maximilian Harden's weekly *Die Zukunft*, Friedrich Naumann's *Die Hilfe* and Paul Nikolaus Cossmann's *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, all having ample experience with the monarchy, were struggling to get an idea of what their reviews would be under the Republic. Harden's *Zukunft* ultimately failed, whereas Siegfried Jacobsohn changed the title and policy of his *Schaubühne*, established it under the name of *Weltbühne*, the house organ of "Weimar Germany's Left-Wing Intellectuals," to quote Istvan Deak (1968). The right-wing versions were Eugen Diederich's *Die Tat* (1912), and Wilhelm Stapel's *Deutsches Volkstum*. In 1921, Samuel Fischer, famous book publisher of German Naturalism and Realism called in Rudolf Kayser to guide his *Neue Rundschau* through the provocative years of the Republic. Ernst Rowohlt, the young liberal book publisher, started two weeklies: *Das Tage-Buch* with Stefan Grossmann and Leopold Schwarzschild in 1920, and the innovative *Die Literarische Welt* with Willy Haas in 1925. In 1918 and 1919, publications comparable with the little magazines in the United States appeared—even in many small cities. Those journals of literary experimentation and criticism, some of them illustrated with Expressionist graphic art, counted a few hundred readers and disappeared after one or two years of irregular publication.

Magazine satire and humor should have the last word. Oddly enough, two venerable Berlin Fortyeighters had survived the restorative sixties, the Kaiserreich, even wartime censorship: The *Fliegende Blätter* born in 1845 and *Kladderadatsch* (onomatopoeically for "crash") born in 1848. Together with the *Lustige Blätter* (1886) and the Munich *Simplicissimus* (1896) with its trademark, a menacing red bulldog. Those journals once carried cartoons, illustrations, and verbal satire of high graphic and literary standards. However, waking up in the morning of the Democratic Republic, the journals had lost much of their bite and journalistic orientation. Without exception they drifted into nationalistic waters, eventually assuming an outright antidemocratic attitude.

In 1933, when the Nazi Reichspressekammer implemented measures decimating the press, group magazines took the hardest blows. In 1934 nearly 1000 magazines, roughly 14 percent, were ordered to shut down.

News Agencies

The oldest wire service, "W.T.B." for "Wolff's Telegraphisches Bureau," established as early as 1849, was under financial and political control of the German government. Although labelled "semi-official," its various services—international, national, regional news and features—were on the news-desks of practically every German daily newspaper. Challenging this monopoly the second agency, *T.U. for Telegraphen-Union*, was established in 1913 by industrial interests. Becoming a division of the Hugenberg media group in 1919,

it sold its highly diversified news and feature services to some 48 percent of German newspapers. In late 1933 these two agencies were forced by the Propaganda Ministry to form a joint company under the name of *Deutsches Nachrichten-Büro* (D.N.B.).

Cinema

A German film industry was established during World War I following an embargo on all foreign motion pictures by an official order of January 16, 1917. A group of industrialists (Hugenberg-Gruppe) at that time trying to organize a conglomerate of news and advertising agencies, newspapers, and magazines, created the Deutsche Lichtbild-Gesellschaft (DLG, later: Deulig-Film), on November 16, 1916. Military officials also got interested in films for the purpose of publicizing German war aims. On November 1, 1916, the Military Film and Photo Institute as a subdivision of the Supreme General Staff started its production of news film and short war films. The institute was renamed Bild-und Filmamt, or BuFa (Photo and Film Office), in January 1917. General Erich Ludendorff took the initiative in bringing together three leading film companies, electrical companies, shipping lines, steel, and mining companies under the financial directorate of the Deutsche Bank with the German Government joining as minority shareholder to form the Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft, better known under its diamond-shaped logo Ufa, on December 18, 1917. In 1918, other major film companies were established: the Aafa (Ambos-Althoff-Film AG), and the National Film AG. In 1919 the Emelka (Münchener Lichtspielkunst AG—MLK), was reorganized to become—together with Ufa—market leaders as integrated production-distribution-exhibition companies during the Weimar Republic. Screenwriters, directors, and performers created their own small production companies: Richard Eichberg, together with Henny Porten and Carl Froelich in 1921, Georg Jacoby in 1924, Gerhard Lamprecht, Richard Oswald, Georg Wilhelm Pabst in 1925, Carl Boese, Manfred Noa, Reinhold Schünzel in 1926, Fritz Lang in 1927, Erich Engels and Karl Grune in 1929.

During the period of *Filmexpressionismus*—from 1919 to 1924—German silent motion pictures become internationally known. As a consequence directors and actors obtained contracts from foreign film companies, especially from Hollywood. Already in 1922, Ernst Lubitsch and Dimitri Buchowetzki set off to the United States. In 1925 and 1926, directors like Ewald André Dupont, Paul Leni, Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau and Lupu Pick, actors like Emil Jannings and Conrad Weidt crossed the Atlantic. In fact they were by no means called because of their personal achievements as directors or performers, but rather they were hired by the American movie companies to help market their productions in Europe, especially in Germany, and to put the star system on an international basis. Lubitsch's early films in Germany were produced by the original Messter-Film GmbH and the Projektions-AG Union (Pagu); both companies were taken over by Ufa. The motion pictures of the German Filmexpressionismus—roughly two dozen feature films written by Carl Mayer, Hans Janowitz or Thea von Harbou—were produced by the Decla (short for: Deutsche Eclair)—Filmgesellschaft Holz & Co. under its chairmen Erich Pommer. He stayed in office after Decla had merged with Deutsche Bioskop AG in March 1920 to form Decla-Bioskop AG, which in turn was bought up by Ufa in November 1921. Pommer was given a new contract by the Ufa as production manager. Robert Wiene and Fritz Lang mostly worked for the Decla studio. Murnau on the other hand changed his studios several times. Two of his pictures were produced by the Uco-Film GmbH (Uco: Ullstein & Co.), a joint venture company formed in 1920 by the Berlin publishing house Ullstein and the Decla to utilize sequel novels of

the Ullstein illustrated weekly *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung (BIZ)* for screenplays. *Schloss Vogelöd* (1921); *BIZ* novel by Rudolf Stratz, screenplay by Carl Mayer), and *Phantom* (1922; *BIZ* novel by Gerhart Hauptmann, screenplay by Thea von Harbou), were Uco pictures by Murnau. Lang's *Dr. Mabuse der Spieler* (1922; *BIZ* novel by Norbert Jacques, screenplay by Thea von Harbou), also was a Uco production.

Cinema history as communication history has two main aspects: the story of the development of film as art and the story of the expansion, nationally and internationally, as an industry or mass communication medium. Communication history of cinema will have to explain the economic structures and functions of the motion picture medium and the social effects arising from the medium affecting both the movie makers and their audiences. Understanding the cinema medium makes it necessary to examine basic sources, e.g., personal data or institutional statistics. Reliable statistics on German film production are first available for the year 1921. In that year, a total of 646 shorts and feature-length pictures were released. Most film historians find only half a dozen of these films to be noteworthy: Leopold Jessner's *Hintertreppe*, Lang's *Der müde Tod*, Lubitsch's *Die Bergkatze*, Murnau's *Schloss Vogelöd* or Pick's *Scherben*. Historiography of the cinema must not overlook the movies of Joe May (Otto Mandl) or Richard Oswald, serials of Otto Rippert, the *Fridericus Rex* films (on Frederick the Great, King of Prussia), of Arzèn von Cserépy. Undoubtedly, many of these films were cheap, lurid, and melodramatic. But in fact those movies conditioned new audiences to a new medium of public entertainment and collective daydreaming.

Production figures went down drastically in the following year, 1922, with only 474 releases. In 1921, some 500 companies were actively producing motion pictures. One year later the number was down to 351. Murnau's *Nosferatu* was released in March 1922. Four weeks later his studio, Prana-Film GmbH, went bankrupt.

German Motion Picture Production 1920-1929

Year	Shorts	Feature-Length	Total
1923	94	253	347
1924	51	220	271
1925	16	212	228
1926	4	185	189
1927	3	242	245
1928	8	224	232
1929	5	183	188

Professionalization in the film industry started immediately after World War I. From 1926 to 1929 an annual average of 208 feature films were produced in Germany. The screenplays came from 125 writers, they were staged by 109 directors, the sets were built by 68 film architects and they were shot by 89 cameramen.

Professions in the German Motion Picture Production 1926-1929

	Men	Women	Total
Screenwriters	282	24	306
Directors	217	6	223
Cameramen	162	—	162
Set designers	121	—	121

Until the end of the silent era (1929) some 1000 actors and actresses had performed in German motion pictures. But in 1929 only 270 feature players performed in leading roles. The star system had begun to work and names became bankable.

Production costs of a silent feature-length film in the years from 1926 to 1929 averaged 175,000 marks; none cost more than 4 million or less than 20,000 marks. The studios spent an annual average of 36.5 million marks. A breakdown shows that approximately 14.253 million were spent for wages, salaries and royalties (29 percent) of staff personal. The industry paid approximately 7.665 million to hire screenwriters, directors and cameramen (21 percent). Leading performers were paid 4.745 million (13 percent), bit players and extras 1.825 (five percent) million marks. In most cases contract terms were for one production only. The free lance status of top talents made them willing objects of the marketing policies of the studios. Only a few were earning much money, whereas many other professionals were underpaid or had no regular employment at all.

However, a relatively large number of companies were active producing films. Between 1926 and 1929 a total of 834 pictures were released by 191 companies. Of these, 32 companies (17 percent) produced more than two pictures per year, or 507 pictures (61 percent) of the industry's output in that four-year period, 1926-29. On top of the scale during this time ranked Ufa with 56 films followed by Emelka (33 films), Aafa (31 films), Terra Film (26 films), Phoebus Film (23 films). A 1929 survey of the trade journal *Film Kurier* showed three Ufa pictures in top positions: Lang's *Die Frau im Mond*, Hans Schwarz' *Die wunderbare Lüge der Nina Petrowna*, and the first German sound feature *Melodies des Herzens* (screenplay by Hans Székely; directed by Hans Schwarz; music by Werner Richard Heymann; starring Dita Parlo and Willy Fritsch). The Terra Film company was a subsidiary of the Ullstein publishing group until 1928 when it was purchased by the chemical concern I.G. Farbenindustrie AG, which in 1930 sold it to a Swiss group; (the company returned in German hands in 1935). The Phoebus Film AG, then Germany's fourth largest motion picture company, was covertly subsidized by the Department of the Armed Forces (*Reichswehrministerium*). When the company ran into financial difficulties and official subvention became known, the Secretary of the Armed Forces, Otto Gessler, had to take his hat; Phoebus went bankrupt in 1928 and Emelka took over studio facilities and paid the German Government for its loss of bonds. The 1929 *Film Kurier* survey ranked Piel Jutzi's *Mutter Krauses Fahrt ins Glück* rather low with 38 votes. The picture was produced and distributed by Prometheus Film GmbH, an affiliate of a media group organized by the Communist MP Willy Münzenberg. Though the Prometheus company primarily was established as a distribution agency for Soviet films, it produced ten features and several documentaries between 1926 and 1929, including *Überflüssige Menschen* (1926), directed by the Soviet film maker Aleksandr Razumny, and *Der lebende Leichnam* (1928), directed by the Soviet film maker Fjodor Otsep (Fedor Ozep), an adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's play with another Soviet director, Wsewolod Pudowkin, as leading actor in that co-production of Prometheus with the Soviet State film company Meshrapomfilm. Also in 1928 Prometheus released *Schinderhannes*, directed by Kurt Bernhardt, an adaptation of Carl Zuckmayer's play.

Film companies with an output of fewer than films during the 1926 to 1929 era, allowed some screenwriters, directors and performers to test their talents. In 1929 Billy Wilder wrote his first screenplay, *Der Teufelsreporter*, for the

German outlet of Universal Pictures; his second script, *Menschen am Sonntag*, was accepted by Moritz Seeler for his small company Filmstudio 1929. The H.R. Sokal Film GmbH released pictures by Henrik Galeen, e.g., the 1926 remake of *Der Student von Prag* and *Die weisse Hölle vom Piz Palù* by Arnold Fanck with G.W. Pabst. Pabst and Wilhelm Dieterle often chose small companies to produce their films as did screenwriters like Willy Haas—later to become editor of the literary weekly *Literarische Welt*—and Béla Balász, author of theoretical studies on films and filmmaking as an art published in 1924 and in 1930.

Between 1900 and 1912 exhibition left the fairs, vaudeville and variety shows to settle down in “cinematographic theatres.” After World War I, in 1919, some 2800 motion picture theatres existed in Germany. The average seating capacity grew from approximately 200 seats in 1910 to approximately 350 seats in 1928. Movie theatres were small compared with the average capacity of theatres in other European countries at that time. Most theatres were owned and operated by local family firms. Although metropolitan or first-run theatres had been affiliated with the Ufa or Emelka chains, some movie houses were affiliates of independent, regional chains. Motion picture attendance went up towards the end of the silent era, but soon dropped with the advent of sound, because of the weakening buying power of the audiences due to general economic recession. With the coming of sound, average admission prices went up only six Pfennige, but had to be reduced again when audiences shrank and theatre earnings dropped from 274.9 million in 1928 to 196.6 million marks in 1931.

Between 1926 and 1931 overall attendance averaged five visits a year, while Berlin, Hamburg, and Bremen moviegoers went to their favorite place once every month. Audience losses and plummeting box office receipts had an immediate effect on production and distribution employment. Early in 1929 the first American sound pictures were shown in Berlin theatres. On March 5, Walter Ruttmann’s semi-documentary sound film, *Melodie der Welt*, passed the official censorship board. The film was produced by a new sound film company (Tobis), in a joint venture with a shipping line (Hamburg-Amerika-Linie/Hapag), and told the story of a journey around the world on board a Hapag ocean liner. Music was composed by Wolfgang Zeller. The first German sound feature films—original sound productions—were:

Company	Title	Director	Censorship
Aafa	<i>Dich hab' ich geliebt</i>	R. Walther-Fein	Nov. 22
Ufa	<i>Melodie des Herzens</i>	H. Schwarz	Dec. 19
Froelich	<i>Die Nacht gehört uns</i>	C. Froelich	Dec. 19

In 1928 a group of German banks had formed the Tonbildsyndikat AG (Tobis) to exploit several Dutch and German sound-on-film patents. The electrical companies AEG and Siemens & Halske together with the record company Polyphon AG established the Klangfilm GmbH to produce and purchase sound equipment for studios and theatres. Both companies merged to form Tobis-Klangfilm AG which went into business in 1929 marketing sound equipment and also producing sound films. Costs for the installation of sound systems in approximately 3,500 German theatres ran up to 55-60 million marks. Financing procedures changed considerably when costs of new studio equipment had to be taken into account. Legal problems with musical rights had to be handled. Production costs of a sound picture were 30-50 percent higher than that of a silent movie. Companies soon learned that it had become difficult to market a sound picture internationally. To handle this problem, the system of bi-national or multi-national co-production was developed, with Austrian, French,

Hungarian and US companies. The labor situation changed as well. With the annual production output going down drastically, the number of regular hired craft and talent diminished. At least two new professions showed up in the credits. The film composer and the sound technician joined the production unit. From 1930 to 1933 approximately 175 composers wrote the music for approximately 535 films; roughly ten percent of the composers were active in scoring ten or more motion pictures. Adaptations of operas and operettas paved the way to a new genre, the film musical.

The development of the German film industry from 1930 to 1933, during the first sound era, began with a favorable production increase in 1930 and 1931, followed by a downturn in 1932 and 1933. This decline was at least to some extent due to an erosion of democratic institutions signalling the end of the Weimar Republic. Although 69 companies were in business in the years 1930 to 1933, that number does conceal the fact that several studios had to seek protection under the financial umbrella of a large company. In 1932 a wave of mergers and bankruptcies caught the film industry. Emelka broke down in 1933, as did Nero Film AG, producer of successful pictures of Pabst, Lang and Czinner. At the beginning of the thirties, the German motion picture industry was on its way to becoming an oligopoly with Ufa as the leading integrated company producing films (an average of 20 a year), operating its own distribution system, and owning a chain of approximately 100 theatres all over the country. Originally, distribution in Germany was in the hands of small family business. In 1919, approximately 275 distributors were in trade. In 1929 the number was 475, and in 1931 the total number was 499. Of these, 192 were located in Berlin and 307 served regional markets. These figures might veil the fact that a growing number of distribution companies became subsidiaries of production companies or bought their own chains of theatres. Obviously, distribution was a natural element of the new type of vertically-structured film company as a fully integrated production-distribution-exhibition concern.

Already in 1925, a contingent act governing film imports was issued. As a consequence, foreign motion picture companies established their own business corporation with the rights and liabilities of a German company (Aktiengesellschaften AG). Three of the American Big Five motion picture companies created production-distribution outlets in Germany: Deutsche Universal Film AG under the chairmanship of the late Paul Kohner, Paramount Film AG and Deutsche Fox-Film AG (Defa).

During the last period of silent film (1926-29) an annual average of 486 movies were distributed in Germany, including an average of 208 domestic productions and 277 foreign productions (including 38 percent American pictures). During the first period of the sound film (1930-33), the total annual average was 245 pictures distributed comprising 105 domestic and 11 foreign productions (including 29 percent US pictures). In December 1929, only four percent of approximately 5000 theatres already had sound installations. The rate went up to 20 percent in August 1930, to 51 percent in August 1931, and in September of 1932 the number of wired houses was 3,532, or 68 percent of all theatres, i.e., 78 percent of the total seating capacity in the country. Attendance reached 352 million at the end of the silent era (1928-29). Figures went down in the following years falling to 328 million (1929-30), to 290 million (1930-31), to 273 (1931-32) and to 238 million (1932-33). Correspondingly the annual intake of the box-offices dropped from 275 million marks (1928-29), to 176 million marks (1932-33). This downturn was only stopped by rigorous measures of the Nazi government when the propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, put the film

industry under state control to guarantee the effective use of his favorite medium for the ideological strategies of the regime.

Broadcasting

As does every national broadcasting system, the German broadcasting system always reflected the country's underlying political philosophy. This is almost a truism, since all over the world telecommunications is a state monopoly and is therefore considered as part of the public administration, historically the post office. This principle places a duty on any government agency to administer the use of electromagnetic frequencies for broadcasting or other forms of radio communication in the national interest. That, in fact, is the main reason for what in German is called *Staatsnähe* (perhaps: state proximity), the governmental connotations of the broadcast medium in every country. The distance between government and broadcasting will be determined in each country according to its political, cultural, and communication philosophy. Comparative broadcasting research would have to study three principal questions: 1. legal organization, 2. business structure, and 3. control of programming. What follows is a brief evaluation of how Weimar radio was organized, how it was financed, and how programming was controlled. Keep in mind that the political administrations of the Republic were utterly unprepared for the birth of a new medium of public communication.

In January 1919, on the eve of general elections for the National Assembly of Weimar, the Secretary of the post office sent a memorandum on the use of radio telegraphy to a small number of government officials, recommending radio communications technology for the modernization of the public telecommunications system. Several weeks later news agencies and newspaper publishers were invited by the post office to engage in a joint venture established a radio news service, but they did not like the idea—with one exception. Ernst Ludwig Voss, managing director of a small government-owned financial news service (market reports, stock-exchange quotations), the *Eildienst für amtliche und private Handelsnachrichten*, took his chance and began to cooperate with the post office in test transmissions of the Eildienst services.

The key figure in the post office at this time was Hans Bredow, former manager of the Telefunken radio engineering company. He had joined government service immediately after the war and rose to become a German broadcasting pioneer like David Sarnoff, whom he met several times in the United States. It was Hans Bredow who, as early as November 1919, began advertising the idea of "radio for all," the idea of "broad-casting." In 1922 a delegation of post office officials visited the United States to study the development of radio there. Reporting to an interdepartmental committee back home, the visitors painted a dismal picture of what they called "American Wireless Craze," strictly warning off any hopes of establishing broadcasting as a commercial enterprise.

Meanwhile the Ministry of the Interior insisted on tight security measures for whatever organizational solution was to be chosen. The post office declared that it would not be able to take any responsibility for the content of radio transmissions. So the debate on radio control was going on long before a single program was on the air. The best way to gain control would have been to set up a central studio and build one powerful transmitter serving the whole country. This, however, was beyond the possibilities of the post office for various technical and financial reasons. Looking across the Channel to Britain, the post office finally saw a solution for its dilemma: decentralization and limited participation by private enterprise providing the risk capital. With the aid of

Ernst Ludwig Voss, who maintained good relations with business circles in Berlin and in several other cities who were the customers of his radio news service, the post office promoted the establishment of nine private companies in nine cities. To pay for their licences, these local broadcasting companies had to transfer the majority of capital shares to the post office and, additionally, had to cover part of the expenses of setting up a nationwide network of small transmitters. This concept enabled the post office 1.) to avoid political interference during the decisive years of early organization, 2.) to spare its budget, notoriously in very bad shape and with only dim hopes for a paying audience given the low buying power of the population at that time.

Local and regional broadcasting companies were founded from 1922 to 1924 in Berlin, Munich, Leipzig, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Breslau (then Province of Silesia, Königsberg (then East Prussia), and Münster (later moving to Cologne when French occupation of the Rhineland was terminated). The Berlin company, the *Funk-Stunde A.G.* (literally Radio Hour Co.), first started regular daily transmissions on October 29, 1923. During the following year the remaining eight companies or stations went on the air. The new medium was financed like any other postal communication service—by licence fees. To use his radio set, every Teilnehmer (participant) had to take out a monthly licence at the price of two marks; the same price had to be paid for a monthly subscription of the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* or the *AIZ-Arbeiter-Illustrierte Zeitung*. Licenses were issued by the post office and, after deducting a 40 percent service charge, 60 percent of the revenue was passed on to the nine stations to cover operating costs. Funding was distributed proportionally to the number of registered set owners in the *Sendebereich* (operating area), of every single station. The companies soon found it difficult to operate on those revenues alone and consequently tried to seek supplementary revenue. They took up advertising “in a modest scope,” as they were officially told. In fact, advertising returns remained totally irrelevant in the Weimar broadcasting business. Substantial revenue, however, came from the sale of weekly radio magazines modelled after the BBC's highly successful *Radio Times*. Total circulation of 10 station-owned radio magazines was at 3.8 million in 1931, roughly equivalent to the number of licences set owners at the same time. These magazines, by the way, are important and often the only sources of programming history today.

The unrestrained days of relative independence from central administration came to an end when the regional companies, and the new medium as a whole, attracted political and cultural attention from the governments of the German States (*Länder*). When several state administrations, the Prussian government taking the lead, claimed political and financial participation in the broadcasting companies on their territories, the post office immediately acted to safeguard its authority. In May 1925 a central holding company was established, the *Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft mbH (RRG)*. The post office received 51 percent of the stock with the remaining shares to be held by the regional companies. Originally this holding company only had to provide its members with financial, legal, and technical services and was not allowed to produce programs. Eventually some coordination of programming was required, and in a short time, the RRG was exerting considerable influence on programming. The triumvirate behind this influence, the top management of the RRG, consisted of the chairman, Hans Bredow, and two executive directors, Kurt Magnus, and Heinrich Giesecke. Hans Bredow had left his post at the post office (Ministry of Post and Telecommunications) in 1926 to be appointed chairman of the board of the RRG, at the same time acting as Broadcasting Commissioner of the Postmaster-

General. The philosophy of radio of this highest-ranking broadcasting official in Germany was essentially paternalistic. In his view broadcasting had to be a national *Kulturinstrument* (cultural instrument), a “non-political”—his word for non-partisan—medium of public education and entertainment.

Whereas nine regional stations had embarked upon an intensive effort to devise programs reflecting local and regional culture, the original idea of a central or national service was still not forgotten. So, under the name of *Deutsche Welle GmbH*, a tenth broadcasting company was established and went on the air in January 1926 with daily educational and school programs. Company stock was distributed among the RRG (70 percent) and the Prussian state (30 percent). A powerful longwave transmitter technically providing coverage of the whole German territory was set up near Berlin. The station could only be heard by listeners owning an expensive radio set. Some years later this national program was reorganized under the name of *Deutschlandsender* as a compilation station essentially consisting of relay exchanges supplied by the regional stations. News reporting began in broadcasting with a friendly announcer reading the morning paper. At first some stations could not or would not subscribe to wire-service news. Newspaper publishers occasionally sued stations for using their papers as news sources. So stations yielded to the services of news agencies. When the holding company RRG obtained financial control, its directors reviewed the accounting policies of the nine subsidiaries or affiliates and one of their first measures was to cut costs of news reporting by centralizing the supply of news services. On the political side, the post office, while legally not responsible, always felt uncomfortable with the journalistic implications of broadcasting and saw a good opportunity when the Ministry of the Interior recommended a small public relations agency to become a radio news agency.

The company was reorganized under the name of *Drahtloser Dienst A.G. (DRADAG)*. The Ministry of the Interior remained principle proprietor, and the minority capital was distributed among the *Reichsverband der deutschen Presse*, the association of journalists, two news agencies (*WTB* and *TU*) and the Berlin publishers Mosse and Scherl. The DRADAG started its operations in 1926. It never employed its own reporters or correspondents; all national or international material was received from the German wire services, edited into proper radio format, and relayed to the nine regional stations which were obliged to use only this material. The only news reporting the regional stations were allowed to do by themselves were local and sports news and the regional weather reports.

The establishment of a central broadcasting holding company, the RRG, was, for the time being, the last administrative act required to institute overall financial and technical control. After protracted negotiations, the post office, the Minister of the Interior, and the state governments finally agreed on *Richlinien über die Regelung des Rundfunks* (Guidelines on the Regulation of Broadcasting), which were passed over to the Reichstag on December 7, 1926. The German parliament saw no reason to take further legal action, although those regulations decreed an efficient system of political control of broadcasting: censorship, to say it more precisely. Warning voices that held that those regulations might prove unconstitutional went unheard. Two executive organs, the *Politischer Überwachungsausschuss* (Political Supervisory Committee), with up to four members and the *Kultureller Beirat* (Cultural Council), with up to ten members, were appointed to the management of every regional station and of the central *Deutsche Welle*, assuming more or less benevolent control of all programming.

Meanwhile the post office bought new generations of transmitters and substantially enlarged its radio cable network to improve program exchange. To catch up with activities in some European countries, the post office initiated a large-scale program for the construction of powerful transmitters along the Eastern and Western borders of Germany. Broadcasting policy now became a trans-national challenge. The idea was to fend off overlapping foreign broadcasts and keep German listeners tuned-in to their own stations, protecting national identity on the air and serving German-speaking minorities in neighboring countries such as France or Poland. A regular German-language overseas service under the name of *Weltrundfunk-Kurzwellensender* (World Radio Shortwave Station), was launched in 1929 and frequently used for international relay exchanges. Only ten years later, short-wave broadcasting had become an instrument of international propaganda.

In 1931 the central RRG and the ten regional stations combined had 1800 full-time employees; in 1926 the number was 760. With the post office and the RRG painstakingly counting licencees (i.e., set owners), we have at our disposal exact figures to describe the growth of an audience. Starting with some 500 paying listeners in December 1923, the first million was registered in 1926, the second million in 1928, the third million in 1930, and the fourth million in 1932. On January 30, 1933, as the twelve o'clock news brought confirmation of Hitler appointed to the office of Reichskanzler, the 4.5 million broadcasting audience did not realize that this was the end of democratic government in Germany.

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in Exile:

A History of the *Pariser Tageblatt* – *Pariser Tageszeitung*,
1933–1940

Max Niemeyer Verlag
Tübingen 1987

Soul Journal de combat contre l'hitlerisme pour la liberte et les Droits de l'Homme

Pariser Tageszeitung

Das Kampfblatt gegen den Hitlerismus, für die Freiheit und die Menschenrechte

Chefredakteur: GEORG BERNHARD

Subscription information and contact details for the newspaper.

Einheitsfront gegen den Verrat!

Die Stimme der anständigen Menschen WIR KLAGEN AN!

Ein Freund unseres Blattes... Das alte 'Pariser Tageblatt' ist tot...

Feine Verbündete! Liebe Kollegen und Freunde! Der Anschlag der nationalsozialistischen...

Freunde, für Ihr unsichtiges und entschlossenes Handeln... Die deutsche Emigration haben zu Ihnen das Vertrauen...

Die letzte Nummer des freien 'Pariser Tageblatt' hat folgende Erklärung veröffentlicht: Wir sehen uns gezwungen...

len wäre. Plötzlich war bei dem Verleger Vladimir Poljakow aber eine Sinnesänderung eingetreten...

nen Gewinn davontragen. Es war vorzuziehen, dass Poljakow alles veräußern würde...

viel Glück und Erfolg! Das alte 'Pariser Tageblatt' ist tot... Die Hoffnung blendet das sie in gemeinsamen Front...

Das Sprachorgan der geeinten deutschen Linken!

Arbeit mit gewaltigen Geldmitteln... 'Braunes Netz' wurde nachgewiesen...

Wir deutschen Oppositionellen gegen das Hitlersystem und alle, die den Krieg verbinden...

'PARISER TAGESZEITUNG' Rechtzeitig gewarnt... Die gesamte französische Presse hat mit Entzweiung...

Wir klagen den jüdischen Verleger Vladimir Poljakow an... Er eröffnete ein neues Unternehmen...

Unsere Argumente verfehlten hingegen ihren Eindruck nicht auf Heinz Pol...

Dieselbe Weise - denselbe Text... Ich gratuliere den Herren Kollegen...

Frau Georg Bernhard erklärt: Ich erkläre hiermit, dass mein Mann...

Willi Münzenberg... 'Pariser Tageszeitung' ausserordentlich gross ist...

Ein Streich der Nazipropaganda... Ein Streich der Nazipropaganda misslingt...

Streiklage Die augenblickliche... Im Streik der Warenhäuser und Einzelhandelsgeschäfte...

Der Widerhall im Ausland... Auch im Ausland ist der Widerhall unserer Aktion...

Max Braun

Der Widerhall im Ausland... Auch im Ausland ist der Widerhall unserer Aktion...

Abonnieren Sie die 'Pariser Tageszeitung'... Ein Streich der Nazipropaganda...

Abonnieren Sie die 'Pariser Tageszeitung'... Ein Streich der Nazipropaganda...

Abonnieren Sie die 'Pariser Tageszeitung'... Ein Streich der Nazipropaganda...

Abonnieren Sie die 'Pariser Tageszeitung'... Ein Streich der Nazipropaganda...

Verlangt bei allen Händlern die 'Pariser Tageszeitung'

The roads to the first station in emigration were as adventurous for some as they were routine for others. Prior to the Reichstag fire, Bavaria appeared to be a haven for some of the politically threatened. It was mistakenly believed that Bavaria's monarchism and traditional opposition to Prussian hegemony, backed by assurances from President Hindenburg to the state's prime minister Heinrich Held in 1932 and again in early February 1933, would enable it to resist any National Socialist threat to its independence.¹ As early as the summer of 1932, following Papen's coup of 20 July against the Social Democratic Prussian government, Leopold Schwarzschild, fearing a governmental ban, had relocated the office of the *Tagebuch* to Munich.²

In the hours and days immediately following the fire, many of the leading critics of the new régime assembled for the last time prior to their flight from Germany in the south. Among them were Gustav Stolper,³ Hellmut von Gerlach, Rudolf Breitscheid, Rudolf Hilferding, Albert Grzesinski, and Theodor Wolff.⁴ Georg Bernhard likewise belonged to those optimists who contended that this "bastion of Bavarian particularism and the Catholic clergy was not to be taken by storm by the National Socialists."⁵ Not yet cognizant of the full extent of their defeat, these democrats evidently clung to the belief that the Weimar constitution was still operative.

The Berlin inspired putsch of 9 March and subsequent replacement of Held by the National Socialist General Ritter von Epp meant the *Gleichschaltung* of the last free German state⁶ and an end to the only remaining safe refuge against the régime's repressive course. Without losing any time, the SA moved against all

¹ Bracher, *Stufen der Machtergreifung*, p. 192.

² Walter, *Exilpresse*, p. 72.

³ Kantorowicz, *Politik*, p. 28. Gustav Stolper, editor of the respected economic journal *Der Deutsche Volkswirt*, considered placing the publication in Bavarian "security" as well. Toni Stolper, *Ein Leben in Brennpunkten unserer Zeit. Wien. Berlin. New York. Gustav Stolper 1888–1947* (Tübingen: Rainer Wunderlich Verlag-Hermann Leins, 1960), p. 315.

⁴ Concerning Theodor Wolff's flight from Germany, see Kohler, *Der Chef-Redakteur*, pp. 262–264. Also refer to Walter, *Bedrohung*, pp. 167–168.

⁵ Bernhard, *Die Deutsche Tragödie*, p. 13.

⁶ Bracher, *Stufen der Machtergreifung*, pp. 197–199.

unmatched; it was not uncut to draw the appropriate conclusions.

Many of the individuals were warned of their impending arrest. Sometime in the second half of March the Bernhards received word of an impending house search. The former editor of the *Voss* first sought refuge in a Franciscan hospital and then made his way to a friend's estate in Mecklenburg. From there he traveled to Warnemünde and over to Copenhagen. The family, however, remained in Berlin until 31 March and then left without difficulty via Switzerland. By the beginning of April the family was reunited in Paris.⁹ Similarly, the Independent Socialist, banker, and former Prussian Finance Minister Hugo Simon received a timely warning that he too was in danger. At first Simon had been assured by friends with connections to Papen and Hitler that he would be safe. Then around 27 March these same friends advised him to leave immediately.¹⁰ Neither Bernhard nor Simon left as did the majority with only a suitcase in hand. Both were able, ostensibly through assistance from high-ranking friends and perhaps connections to foreign embassies, to transfer furniture, art objects, and capital out of Germany.¹¹

In contrast, Willi Münzenberg and Hellmut von Gerlach fled under more hazardous circumstances than Bernhard. On the evening of 27 February Münzenberg spoke at an election gathering in a small town east of Frankfurt am Main. After the engagement, the SA arrived to arrest him, but Münzenberg had already left for Mainz with friends. It was there that he first learned about the burning of the Reichstag, and the raid on his Berlin apartment. On the following day Mün-

⁷ Walter, *Bedrohung*, p. 168.

⁸ BVZ, 15 Feb. 1933, M, p. 2.

⁹ This information is taken from Kessler's *Tagebücher*, 16 April 1933, p. 715, and from an interview between Friedrich Ferrer and Bernhard's daughter, Eva Bernhard-Robinson, printed in the *Welt am Sonntag*, 19 Oct. 1975.

¹⁰ Kessler, *Tagebücher*, 5 April 1933, p. 714.

¹¹ Ernst Feder records that according to a mutual acquaintance of the Bernhards, Adolph Philippborn, also a contributor in the first years to the *Pariser Tageblatt*, Bernhard was able to furnish his seven room apartment in Paris with his Berlin furniture; Feder diary, LBI, 8 Sept. 1933. On 10 October Feder noted [Bernhard] Kahn's contention that the editor had been able to ship the largest portion of his things abroad already prior to Hitler's appointment as Chancellor.

Gerlach remained in the house of the pacifist Constanze Hallgarten until the events of 9–10 March made it obvious that Bavaria no longer afforded safety against the deluge. An offer by the Czechoslovakian President Beneš to provide a guide to assist the former editor across the forested border had to be turned down due to Gerlach's age (68) and his weakened physical condition.

In order to avoid the inevitable, Constanze Hallgarten arranged another plan with a friend of the family living in upper Bavaria near Austria. The elderly guest was packed into an overcrowded chauffeur driven car. At the Austrian border, the female members of the group coquetted with the German control, thereby diverting the guard's attention away from Gerlach. In this fashion, the controversial pacifist and proponent of human rights was able to leave Germany without having to present his passport. From Vienna, von Gerlach made his way to Switzerland, finally arriving in the French capital around the end of March.¹³ Unlike Münzenberg, who upon arrival in Paris enjoyed the support of the French Communist Party and had his own financial resources,¹⁴ the elderly von Gerlach arrived in the city of lights in a "rather worn-out suit, with a coat and hat, and financially destitute."¹⁵

Not all those who took up work for the emigrant daily left Germany at this time. Carl Misch and Kurt Caro were among the only two major figures who were not purged from Ullstein and Mosse after 1930. Misch, who had served as the *Voss's* political editor, continued to work for the paper from March/April until July 1933 as Julius Elbau's successor¹⁶ — this in spite of his being a Jew and member of the left-wing of the SPD. Matters took a marked turn for the worse after July. From then until his flight to France in late September or early October (under the

¹² Gross, *Willi Münzenberg*, pp. 246–249.

¹³ Refer to Grossmann, *Ossietzky*, p. 359; Walter *Bedrohung*, pp. 225–226. See the introduction by Karl Holl and Adolf Wild in Hellmut von Gerlach, *Ein Demokrat kommentiert Weimar. Die Berichte Hellmut von Gerlachs an die Carnegie-Friedensstiftung in New York 1922–1930* (Bremen: Schünemann Universitätsverlag, 1973), pp. 37–38. See also Milly Zirker to Kurt Grossmann, 13 Oct. 1963, Hoover Institution Archives, Kurt Grossmann Collection, box 14, folder "Milly Zirker."

¹⁴ Gross, *Willi Münzenberg*, p. 250.

¹⁵ Emil Ludwig as cited in Walter, *Bedrohung*, p. 226.

¹⁶ Bosch, *Liberalie Presse*, p. 25; Feder diary, LBI, 27 Nov. 1935.

not the dangers then the painful fact that they were to be nothing else but “second-class citizens”¹⁹ in Hitler’s Third Reich. The majority of those who joined the staff of the *Pariser Tageblatt* were Jewish, but they all had a very different understanding of “Jewishness.” Indeed many barely recognized themselves as Jews. In the final analysis, the reasons for emigration were as much political as they were racial, and indeed the two are often barely distinguishable.

For many, if not for most of the exiled literary figures, exile meant “a process of development”:

One changed countries, one’s views, one’s faith, one’s citizenship and in individual cases also the language in which one wrote. Free believers became professed Jews, Communists converted to Catholicism. Bourgeois liberals converted to Marxism. Apolitical aesthetes became Austrian legitimists. Known social critics hid themselves in ivory towers. Pacifists turned into pugnacious advocates of the defensive war against National Socialism.²⁰

Although for many this process began, as in the case of Georg Bernhard, already in the Weimar Republic, the political and intellectual maturation forms no immediately apparent continuum. Georg Bernhard, proud and temperamental, spoke on arriving in Paris with the utmost bitterness about Germany. He swore against any return to “that country,” choosing instead to regard himself no longer as a German.²¹ But equally characteristic of the man was his refusal to accept defeat. Whereas Theodor Wolff retreated into himself, Georg Bernhard, the “political causeur,” the classic “Sehauemann,”²² or Jack-in-the-box, plunged him-

¹⁷ Feder diary, LBI, 31 Oct. 1933.

¹⁸ Boveni, *Wir liegen alle*, p. 75.

¹⁹ Hannah Arendt cites this reason, among others, for her decision to emigrate. It invariably applies to most of those who later assembled around the *Pariser Tageblatt* – *Pariser Tageszeitung* including the paper’s secretary Mrs. Gerda Ascher-Misch. Mrs. Ascher-Misch found herself reduced to the level of a second-class citizen and very early on left Berlin for Paris; see also Adelbert Reif, ed., *Gespräche mit Hannah Arendt*, “Was bleibt? Es bleibt die Muttersprache. Ein Gespräch mit Günter Gaus” (Munich: R. Piper & Co., 1976), p. 13.

²⁰ Kantorowicz, *Politik*, p. 20.

²¹ Kessler, *Tagebücher*, 16 April 1933, p. 715.

²² Georg Grosz to Richard and Beate Hülsenbeck, 13 March 1933, in Georg Grosz, *Briefe 1913–1959*, ed. by Herbert Knust (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag GmbH, 1979), p. 164.

of the emigrants. Today there are around 4,000 here. Here everyone meets everyone else. Nice prospects indeed!"²³

Characteristic for the first months, as well as for the next seven years, was the wavelike character of the emigrant flight from Germany into France and the other host countries. In general four distinct waves of emigration can be identified. The first wave arrived in France following the burning of the Reichstag and the mass arrests which followed it. These emigrants consisted largely of those militants belonging to the German workers' parties along with the more outspoken leftist bourgeois intellectuals. It was this wave which carried Georg Bernhard, Hellmut von Gerlach, Kurt Caro, Ernst Feder, Theodor Wolf, Münzenberg, Breitscheid and Hilferding into France. Thereafter a lull set in only to increase again following the boycott on 1 April of Jewish business and the first measures against Jewish professionals.

According to one estimate, the refugees arrived in France at a rate of 1,500 per month between April and August, thereafter the number fell to some 500 in September and 300 or 400 in October and November.²⁴ By June 1933 the German embassy in Paris notified Berlin that "not since 1926 has so much German been spoken on the streets of Paris as is now the case."²⁵ A second Reich informer

²³ Willi Münzenberg to Fritz Brupbacher, 15 May 1933, as cited in Ursula Langkau-Alex, *Volksfront für Deutschland?* vol. 1: *Vorgeschichte und Gründung des 'Ausschusses zur Vorbereitung einer deutschen Volksfront', 1933–1936* (Frankfurt/M: Syndikat, 1977), p. 49.

²⁴ Gilbert Badia, "L'émigration en France, ses conditions et ses problèmes," in Gilbert Badia et al., *Les barbelés de l'exil. Etudes sur l'émigration allemande et autrichienne (1938–1940)* (Grenoble: Presse universitaires de Grenoble, 1979), p. 18.

²⁵ The German embassy in Paris divided the emigrants into three categories: "Die Flüchtlinge aus Deutschland, die sich zur Zeit in Frankreich aufhalten, zerfallen in drei Gruppen: erstens Sozialisten, Kommunisten und mit ihnen sympathisierende Intellektuelle, zweitens Juden und drittens solche Emigranten, die sich einer der beiden vorhergehenden Gruppen anschließen, um der evtl. Begünstigung teilhaftig zu werden, die sich die Flüchtlinge als solche in Frankreich versprechen. Wie groß die drei Gruppen im einzelnen sind, läßt sich nicht übersehen – um so weniger, als sie sich vielfach überschneiden. ... Tatsache ist, daß seit 1926 auf den Pariser Straßen nicht so viel deutsch gesprochen worden ist wie jetzt"; Report, Wisler, German Embassy Paris, to AA, 8 June 1933, PA AA, Ref D/PO 5 N.E. adh. 4, Nr. 1, "Deutsche Emigranten im Ausland," Bd. I. For a discussion

patterns closely reflect the nature and extent of the National Socialist state's repressive political and economic measures.²⁷

Prior to September 1935 the main body of emigrants consisted of political refugees (forced to leave in the first months because of their activity as Socialists, Communists, democrats or pacifists), Jewish professionals, and skilled workers.²⁸ During this period, the Nazi state was primarily concerned with eliminating Jews from public and professional offices. For the average Jewish citizen, although life had been made uncomfortable, he could still go about his daily business much as he had done before. Only after the Nuremberg Laws, "the legal abrogation of the

²⁷ of the embassy staff in Paris originally published in the *Neue Weltbühne* (1935), see Maximilian Scher, *In meinen Augen* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1977), pp. 182–88.

²⁸ Dr. Megeyer to AA, "Abschrift zu II.Fr. 2053. Vertrauliche Aufzeichnung über Beobachtungen in Paris über die deutsche Emigration nach Frankreich," 16 June 1933, PA AA, Gesandtschaft Prag, A. III 1b8, "Emigranten," Bd. I Sbd.

²⁹ Ruth Fabian and Corinna Coulmas, *Die deutsche Emigration in Frankreich nach 1933* (Munich: K.G. Saur Verlag, 1978), p. 16.

³⁰ The age and occupational pattern of the emigrants in France for the first years tend to match the statistics taken in January 1934 from one small Parisian refugee assistance committee. According to its findings, 89 percent of those who emigrated to France in 1933 were male and only 11 percent female, of which barely 3 percent were married. It is concluded that especially in respect to political refugees, the families remained behind in Germany; and it was only in single cases that unmarried women left. Age-wise, the statistics were as follows: 61 percent were between 40 and 50 and only 3 percent between 50 and 60. Those over the age of 60 hardly made up a percent. Characteristic of this emigration was the high educational and professional level of its members. Thirty-seven percent of those who reported for assistance were skilled workers and 26 percent were businessmen in various commercial trades. Although only 17 percent worked on a free-lance basis (broken down to 8 percent writers and journalists, 3 percent medical doctors and dentists, 3 percent lawyers and 3 percent trained musical and graphic artists), there was a higher percentage of intellectuals than reflected in these findings. The remaining 9 percent consisted of governmental officials, students, and apprentices. The age and occupational patterns cited above changed after the Nuremberg Laws of September 1935 and of course were dramatically altered after the *Kristallnacht* in November 1938; see "Bevölkerungsstatistik der Emigration," PT 50, 30 Jan. 1934, p. 3. Also refer to Langkau-Alex, *Volksfront*, pp. 44–45, for a more detailed statistical breakdown of the professional background of the German emigration in France.

Berlin *salon* *Lowen* or journalists dattered over the estrangement or a new press. The cafés provided an opportunity, in the company of fellow emigrants, to escape temporarily their loneliness and misery.

Sometimes the effort to forget their plight proved to be in vain. After five years in exile, one emigrant sorrowfully acknowledged: "It is the fate of emigrants to while away many a free hour in coffee houses, happy to hear now and again a little music which, however, does not dispose us, as it had once done, to be joyful and hopeful but rather causes us to think even more sadly about the lost homeland."³¹

Very often the cafés were segregated according to the political or professional *émigré* clientele. Refugee students forced to leave German universities generally frequented the restaurants Capoulade or La Source on the Boulevard St. Michel. And Communists, Socialists, liberals, leftist intellectuals as well as avant-garde journalists assembled in Le Dôme. The more established professionals gathered in the cafés along the Champs-Élysées.³² The concentration of German emigrants in certain areas of the city had become so pronounced by October 1933 that the former political editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt* and avid diarist Ernst Feder recorded that a type of German Jewish ghetto had come into existence, especially around particular cafés, some of which justifiably had the right to hang up a sign: "ici on parle français."³³

The exact number of German refugees in France is difficult to establish. Firstly, there are no exact figures of the number who lived *irrégulière* (i.e., without being properly registered with the responsible authorities); and secondly, France served

²⁹ Bernhard, "Der Nürnberger Reichstag," PT 644, 17 Sept. 1935, p. 1.

³⁰ Langkau-Alex, *Volksfront*, p. 41. The number of political refugees in France in 1935 is estimated to be slightly under 10,000. These are broken down as follows: 3,000–3,500 Social Democrats, 4,000–4,500 Communists; and another few hundred are divided up among other leftist groups (i.e., SAP, KPO, JSK, LO); 500–600 are classified as pacifists and democrats; 250–300 are listed as Catholics; Langkau-Alex, *Volksfront*, p. 42.

³¹ Richard Wantuch, reader, to PTZ, 9 Dec. 1938, ZStAP, Nr. 70, Bl. 625.

³² Anonymous report, 24 Oct. 1935, APP, dossier 60, no. 241.155-1-a: "Réfugiés Allemands." Also refer to Rita Thalmann, "L'immigration allemande et l'opinion publique en France de 1933 à 1936," in *La France et l'Allemagne, 1932–1936*, Communications présentées au Colloque franco-allemand tenu à Paris du 10 au 12 Mars 1977 (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1980), p. 151.

³³ Feder diary, LBI, 10 Oct. 1933.

In comparison to the other emigrant nation-states in France, the German emigration remained relatively small. From the beginning of the political upheavals of the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth century, France had been the classical land of asylum. In demographic terms, France had been underpopulated since the middle of the nineteenth century and in constant need of foreign labor. Secondly, France's liberal-revolutionary tradition dating back to 1789 attracted a wide variety of political thinkers and radicals.³⁷

The first decades of the twentieth century saw several non-German waves of immigration. Already in the 1880s and 1890s France, and especially Paris, had become a refuge for a massive number of Eastern European Jews fleeing the

³⁴ Report, German embassy Paris to AA, 8 June 1933, PA AA, Ref. D/PO 5 N.E. adh. 4, Nr. 1, "Deutsche Emigranten im Ausland," Bd. I.

³⁵ Langkau-Alex, *Volksfront*, p. 36 and p. 224, n. 13. See also Badia, "L'émigration en France, ses conditions et ses problèmes," in Badia et al., *Les barbèlés de l'exil*, pp. 18–19.

³⁶ Fabian and Coulmas, *Die deutsche Emigration*, p. 16. Refer also to the statistics from the MacDonald Commission according to which France by December 1933 had taken in some 25,000 German refugees. An additional 21,000 was reported for April 1934; reprinted in: unsigned article, PT 144, 5 May 1934, p. 2.

³⁷ Between 1846 and 1848 Paris, a city of around 1,250,000, provided refuge to some 50–60,000 Germans. The emigration of the mid-forties had been both economic and political. Along with the substantial numbers of business and tradesmen came political and literary figures drawn by the events of July 1830, among them were Ludwig Börne, Heinrich Heine, and Karl Marx. The coup d'état of 2 December 1851, establishing Louis Napoleon as dictator, brought a ruthless end to France's reputation as a harbinger of foreign revolutionaries. Already two years earlier, on 3 December 1849, a decree went into effect regulating the sojourn of foreign visitors to France. According to the law, all foreigners whose stay went beyond eight days had to apply for a residence permit – *carte d'identité* – obtained from the préfecture responsible for the département. Native Frenchmen who took in foreigners had to report this within twenty-four hours. The severity of this decree, according to Ruth Fabian and Corinna Coulmas, stemmed from the desire of the bourgeois reactionary government of Louis Napoleon to rid itself of foreign radical agitators whom it contended had played a leading role in the revolutionary ferment of the preceding two years; see Fabian and Coulmas, *Die deutsche Emigration*, pp. 25–30, *passim*. See also Badia, "L'émigration en France, ses conditions et ses problèmes," in Badia et al., *Les barbèlés de l'exil*, p. 14.

to the world economic crisis were generally incorporated into France's work force. France's political and economic instability in the 1930s, however, directly affected the Hitler refugees as well as the some 490,000 Spaniards who arrived in France after the debacle of the Spanish republic.⁴¹

The First Stirrings of an Emigrant Press in Paris

The parasites of any emigration, the spies and informers, likewise accompanied the German emigrants of the 1930s. The foreign office, German embassies, and consulates as well as the Gestapo carefully observed the emigrant scene. Emigrant publications were closely read and the internal politics within the community were meticulously followed and recorded. Although from the outset the Reich authorities were well aware of the wall of apathy or outright hostility confronting the German emigrants, they remained equally fearful – almost paranoid – of their potential political influence. Particularly onerous to them was the early development of an emigrant press.

By early May two journals appeared in Paris specifically addressing the emigrant cause and largely contributed to by the exiled writers and journalists. That an emigrant press had to evolve was clear to the émigrés and Reich authorities alike. "More essential than the small, damned important remuneration (*Honorar*) was something else. Everyone who wrote," observed Maximilian Scheer, "felt ill, as if over night he had lost his voice, as if he could still only whisper but nobody would hear him."⁴²

³⁸ David H. Weinberg, *A Community on Trial. The Jews of Paris in the 1930s* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 3.

³⁹ Reter to Thalmann, "L'immigration allemande et l'opinion publique en France de 1933 à 1936," pp. 149–150.

⁴⁰ Marcel Livian, *Le Partit socialiste et l'immigration. Le gouvernement Léon Blum, La main-d'œuvre immigrée et les réfugiés politiques (1920–1940)* (Paris: Editions Anthropos, 1982), p. 10.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

⁴² Maximilian Scheer, *So war es in Paris* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1964), p. 51.

of *die aktion*. In May 1933 the news bulletin *impress* was also founded by Kurt Rosenfeld and the Hungarian Communist Sandor Radó. Once again Maximilian Scheer acted as the editor of the German edition with the French Communist Vladimir Pozner as the responsible editor for the French edition.⁴⁵

Both *die aktion* and *Freiheit!* were discounted by Reich informers as constituting a real threat. However, an air of uneasiness and expectation existed in the foreign office and the Paris embassy as to the next move of the German émigrés. The “emigrated pacifists” and “radical socialists,” among them Hellmut von Gerlach and Emil Gumbel from the *Liga für Menschenrechte*, Georg Bernhard, and Rudolf Breitscheid, former leader of the SPD Reichstag delegation, were particularly singled out. The intensity of their journalistic activity coupled with their far-reaching and innumerable political connections extending to the French Left, elected officials, and journalists were believed responsible for creating a “malignant atmosphere” which could easily influence French left-wing politicians and journalists, “especially since these emigrants almost daily [had] the ear of these people. [me!] them in the Chamber, in editorial rooms, at party gatherings or at salons.” In essence, the left-bourgeois circles posed a greater threat, according to this Nazi agent, than Communist and radical-pacifist groups “who as a result of

⁴³ Ibid., p. 38. The journal *die aktion* / *l'aktion* had several subtitles: editions 1–12 (1933): *Organ zur Verteidigung der deutschen Flüchtlinge und zum Kampfe gegen den Hitlerfaschismus* – *Organe pour la défense des victimes de l'hitlerisme*; editions 13–34 (1933): *Für die Deutschen im Ausland* – *Pour l'étranger aide des Allemands à l'étranger*; the 1934 editions: *Kampf für Freiheit und Frieden* – *Organe de combat anti-hitlerien*. A listing of the contributors to the émigré press can be found in Maas, *Handbuch der deutschen Exilpresse 1933–1945*, 3 vols.

⁴⁴ Maas, *Handbuch*, vol. I, p. 49. Feder records that *die aktion* was reputedly sponsored by the French government and that a certain “Weiß” and “Hamburger” worked for it, taking their directives from a French owner. Feder diary, LBI, 21 Nov. 1933. The initial circulation of *die aktion* was reported to have been 3,000, and by November 1933, it reached 7,000; Thalmann, “L'immigration allemande et l'opinion publique en France de 1933 à 1936,” p. 153.

⁴⁵ Dieter Schiller et al., *Exil in Frankreich* (Leipzig: Verlag Philipp Reclam, 1981), p. 78.

included Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, and its readership consisted largely of German tourists in Paris or Germans and German speaking groups in these countries who desired information on Paris. The financial backbone of the *Neue Pariser Zeitung* was the advertising agency *Publicité Meisl*.⁴⁹

Negotiations between the paper's owner and representatives of the Reich were initiated in order to assure the paper's solvency and above all to keep it out of the hands of the emigrants. Feelers were already going out from both sides in mid-June and talks continued into July 1934. When in October 1933 rumors began circulating to the effect that the *Neue Pariser Zeitung* was being subsidized by the German Reich and that a representative of the Reich sat on the supervisory board, Delestrée published a sharply worded editorial rebuttal – a statement in large measure at odds with the true nature of things. The indignant editor reaffirmed the paper's political neutrality and apolitical purpose:

The objective guidelines of our paper provide us Frenchmen, deeply rooted as we are in the republican institutions of our land, with the task of remaining true to the idea of understanding between peoples and not to concern ourselves with the political system by which they are ruled.

Furthermore, Delestrée rejected outright the notion that either he or an appointed representative of his had received money from either a foreign political organization or the government of the Reich.⁵⁰ What he neglected to mention was the

⁴⁶ Dr. Megerle to AA, "Abschrift zu II Fr. 2053. Verräufliche Aufzeichnung über Beobachtungen in Paris über die deutsche Emigration nach Frankreich," 16 June 1933, PA AA, Gesandtschaft Prag, A. III 1b8, "Emigranten," Bd. I Shd.

⁴⁷ German embassy Paris to Aschmann (AA), 12 July 1933, PA AA, Presse Abteilung, Deutschland la Frankreich, "Die deutsche Presse in Frankreich," Bd. 3. It is at this time that the suggestion is made to use the paper for propaganda purposes.

⁴⁸ German embassy Paris to AA, 5 May 1933, *ibid*.

⁴⁹ Köster, German embassy Paris to Dr. Walther Heide, 16 June 1933, *ibid*.

⁵⁰ Hubert Delestrée, "Die Aufgaben der 'Neuen Pariser Zeitung' in Europa. Erklärungen unserer Grundsätze," *Neue Pariser Zeitung*, 2 Oct. 1933: "Die objektive Richtlinie unseres Blattes stellt uns eine Aufgabe, uns als Franzosen, tief verwurzelt in den republikanischen Einrichtungen unseres Landes, treu zu bleiben dem Gedanken der Verständigung der Völker, ohne uns darum zu kümmern, von welchem politischen System diese geleitet sind."

A copy of the article is available in: PA AA, Botschaft Paris, Paket Nr. 695 V.8, "Deutsche Presse in Frankreich, Verbote, 'Grüne Post' usw.," Bd. I.

embassy and those favoring financial support for the ailing publication were operating under the notion that the first wave of emigrants fell into three categories: firstly, Socialists, Communists and their intellectual fellow travelers; secondly, Jews; and lastly, those who in order to obtain relief assistance were destined to latch on to one of the other two groups.⁵⁴ This latter category, following another report, were non-Jews who in "hysteria and panic" had fled over the border. They were generally loyal to "the fatherland" and not "traitorous." "In any case," so the report continued, one had to "differentiate between this panicked group and the truly dangerous and more influential one: the group around Breitscheid and Bernhard."⁵⁵

The embassy and foreign office hoped to stop any émigré political faction from gaining control over the professionally recognized organ. With the paper secured, it could then be established as the official mouthpiece of the German colony.⁵⁶ It was assumed that a politically and culturally neutral daily would attract the vastly apolitical emigration and so-called German colony in Paris; at the same time it would detract from the more politically charged anti-Nazi efforts of the bourgeois Left, Socialists, and Communists.

These early efforts to bolster the *Neue Pariser Zeitung* shed light on the importance placed by the Reich on cultural propaganda and the countering of emigrant claims of being the guardians or representatives of the "real Germany." The project came to an abrupt halt in mid-July 1934. Dr. Walther Heide of the foreign

⁵¹ Wister, *German embassy Paris to Aschmann*, 12 June 1933, PA AA, Presse Abteilung, Deutschland la Frankreich, Bd. 3.

⁵² Telegram, von Köster, *German embassy Paris to AA*, 27 Jan. 1934, *ibid.*

⁵³ Memorandum: "Neue Pariser Zeitung," 26 Jan. 1934 (4 May 1934), *ibid.*, Bd. 2.

⁵⁴ Report, Wister, *German embassy Paris, to AA*, 8 June 1933, PA AA, Ref D/PO 5 N.E. adh. 4, Bd. 1.

⁵⁵ Dr. Megetle to AA, "Abschrift zu II Fr. 2053. Vertrauliche Aufzeichnung über Beobachtungen in Paris über die deutsche Emigration nach Frankreich," 16 June 1933, PA AA, Gesundheitsrat Prag, A. III 1b8, "Emigranten," Bd. 1 Sbd.

⁵⁶ Confidential Memorandum: "Umwandlung der 'Neuen Pariser Zeitung,'" Wister, *German embassy Paris to AA*, 17 March 1934, PA AA, Presse Abteilung, Deutschland la Frankreich, "Lügenpropaganda," Bd. 2.

The Founding of the *Pariser Tageblatt*

Efforts within the emigrant colony to found a daily newspaper began early, although the impetus and the capital required did not come from within the German emigration itself. From the outset it became clear who would actively participate or be willing to sponsor an emigrant press and who would not.

France offered asylum to three star Berlin editors: Wolff, Feder, and Bernhard. Wolfram Köhler's assertion is correct that Theodor Wolff would certainly have had excellent chances to continue his journalistic career in Paris.⁵⁹ Ernst Feder recorded that Wolff's son Rudolf spoke of an offer given his father from a Dutch editor to found a new *Berliner Tageblatt*, but the sixty-five year old journalist declined.⁶⁰ In emigration he chose to remain outside the political and journalistic arena and to avoid "newspaper polemics and propagandist activity."⁶¹ The humanist Wolff, loyal to his cherished ideal of reason, devoted his last years to the composition of an historical work treating the Weimar Republic, his memoirs, and an autobiographical novel. The Dutch editor's bid went to Leopold Schwarzschild for the *Neue Tagebuch*.⁶²

During the early months of exile, contacts between the Russian and German emigrants were fairly open, and various circles within the Russian émigré community shared a measure of sympathy for the plight of the newcomers. The initial steps that eventually led to the founding of the *Pariser Tageblatt* were first taken by Russian Jewish émigrés.⁶³ True to character, Ernst Feder, who throughout the

⁵⁷ Dr. Walther Heide, Auslands-Pressebüro, to AA, 19 July 1934, *ibid.*, Bd. 3.

⁵⁸ Memorandum, Dr. Walther Heide to AA, 15 May 1934, *ibid.*

⁵⁹ Köhler, *Der Chef-Redakteur*, p. 270.

⁶⁰ Feder diary, LBI, 14 Sept. 1933.

⁶¹ Theodor Wolff, *Das Grabmal der Unbekannten Soldaten*, unpublished ms., 1941, as cited in Köhler, *Der Chef-Redakteur*, p. 270.

⁶² Feder diary, LBI, 14 Sept. 1933. It is likely that the Dutch editor was actually J.C.S. Warendorf, the Amsterdam lawyer who sometime in June (?) provided Schwarzschild with the necessary capital for his journal, the first edition of which appeared 1 July 1933.

⁶³ The German emigrants acknowledged the same in May 1939 at the death of Wladimir

when Metzl, a Czech immigrant to Russia, established an advertising agency in St. Petersburg. Wladimir Poliakov, director of the *Odessa News (Odesskia Novosti)*, assumed co-directorship of the firm L. and E. Metzl and Company after a sister married one of Metzl's sons. The advertising agency closely resembled the Mosse firm in Berlin both in purpose and in political style. The enterprising Poliakov soon began publishing the liberal *Sovremennoe Slovo*, and he was closely associated with the liberal paper *Ryech* whose editor was the former "Cadet" leader Paul Miliukov. The Bolshevik Revolution resulted in the family's escape and eventual resettlement in the French capital where Wladimir assisted in reestablishing the family advertising agency as *Publicité Metzl*. He likewise sponsored the founding in April 1920 of one of the Russian emigration's most important papers, *Latest News (Poslednie Novosti / Les Dernières Nouvelles)*, edited by his friend and fellow émigré Paul Miliukov. The newly founded advertising agency also leased ads to several other papers, including *Harasch*, an Armenian émigré paper, and the Yiddish daily *Paris Today (Pariser Hainl)*.⁶⁶ The firm's association with Del-estree's *Neue Pariser Zeitung* has already been mentioned.

The difficult and tedious negotiations over the establishment of the German émigré paper continued through the summer months and on into November. Feder was preferred as editor by Poliakov's son-in-law, the jurist Boris Mirkine-Guetzevich, as well as by several others party to the discussions.⁶⁷ The major stumbling block to an agreement between Feder and Poliakov was Poliakov's insistence that the paper start out small, with a monthly budget of 10,000 francs, as had been the case with the initial budget of the *Pariser Hainl*. For Feder this figure was far too small. He contended that in order to make the paper competitive, an

Poliakov when the *Pariser Tageszeitung* noted: "The German emigration will not forget that it was Wladimir Poliakov who created its daily organ at a time when no German publisher or financier wanted to hear of such a newspaper project"; unsigned article, *Pariser Tageszeitung (PTZ)*, 993, 11 May 1939, p. 3.

⁶⁴ Feder diary, LBI, 17 Oct. 1933.

⁶⁵ Léon Poliakov, interview with author held in Massy, France, 10 May 1977.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Feder diary, LBI, 19 Oct. 1933.

⁶⁸ Feder diary, LBI, 20 Oct. 1933. A French journalist in turn concluded that the tabulation for a modest editorial staff would be approximately 22,000 francs. The estimates he provided Feder ran as follows:

- 1. editor-in-chief 6,000 francs
 - 2. advertising costs 1,500
 - 3. desk editor (a Frenchman) 2,000
 - 4. editorial secretary 2,000
 - 5. 2 reporters 3,000
 - 6. syndicated articles (300 articles at 25 franc per article) 7,500
- 22,000 francs

See Feder diary, LBI, 21 Oct. 1933.

A second meeting between Poliakov and Feder at which Meitzl was also present resulted in Poliakov presenting the following proposed editorial costs:

- 1. printing costs 26,000 francs
 - 2. paper 7,000
 - 3. total editorial costs 10,000
- 43,000 francs

Poliakov estimated the revenue to be as follows:

- 1. 2,000 copies sold 15,000 francs
 - 2. daily 600 frcs for ads (25 days) 15,000
- 30,000 francs

The debit balance would run at 13,000 francs. Eventual financial support from outside sources:

- 1. Meitzl-Poliakov 300,000 francs
- 2. Others 300,000

At this meeting Feder refused Poliakov's proposal to maintain the editorial costs at 10,000 francs; see Feder diary, LBI, 23 Oct. 1933.

⁶⁹ Refer to the entries in Feder diary, LBI, 20 Oct. 11 & 30 Nov. 1933.

⁷⁰ Feder diary, LBI, 4 Nov. 1933.

⁷¹ German embassy Paris to AA, 24 Nov. 1933, PA AA, Presse Abteilung, Deutschland la Frankreich, "Die deutsche Presse in Frankreich," Bd. 2.

Word of the discussions underway between Feder and Poliakov spread like brush fire throughout the emigrant “ghetto.” By late November a kind of editorial circle at large had gathered or, more precisely, thrown themselves around Feder. The political editor, historian of the Russian Revolution, and contributor to the *Berliner Volkszeitung*, Michael Smilg-Benario, made inquiries⁷⁶ as did Richard Dyck, former editor of *Mosse’s 8-Uhr Abendblatt*. Walter Hasenclever, the expressionist dramatist and lyric poet, announced his willingness to work as the film and theater critic with Feder but not with Georg Bernhard. Egon Erwin Kisch, Alfred Kerr, and Ernst Toller were also mentioned by Hasenclever as potential contributors or staff members.⁷⁷ Several days later, while “Knocking about” Paris, Feder met the financially secure but nevertheless unemployed Richard Lewinsohn at the Café de la Paix. There the former Ullstein economist nominated himself as the paper’s financial editor.⁷⁸

Indeed if the nascent emigrant paper was to perform no other function, it at least promised to provide the flood of unemployed writers a chance to fulfill the main consideration of their profession. The scramble to find a place beside Feder, meaning in turn a chance to publish and earn, no matter how minimal, “that damned Honorar,” is suggestive of the desperate plight the majority of émigré writers had found themselves in after the first months of exile.⁷⁹

⁷² Feder diary, LBI, 31 Oct. 1933.

⁷³ German embassy Paris to AA, 1 Dec. 1933, PA AA, Botschaft Paris, V. 8 adh., “Pariser Tageblatt . . .,” Bd. I.

⁷⁴ Feder diary, LBI, 12 Nov. 1933.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 2 Nov. 1933.

⁷⁶ Feder diary, LBI, 10 Nov. 1933.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 18 Nov. 1933.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 22 Nov. 1933.

⁷⁹ The case of Alfred Kerr, former theater critic for the *Berliner Tageblatt*, is particularly telling. In November Feder recorded: “Kerr traugtes Bild, Verfolgungswahn, zieht von einem Hotel ins andere”; Feder diary, LBI, 19 Nov. 1933. The situation did not change in the following years when the proud, often pedantic, Kerr had to scramble after every franc, pound, and dollar in order to support himself and his family. See Judith Kerr’s autobiographical children’s novel, *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*, Lions edition (Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co., Ltd., 1979). The *Daily Parisian* for which the father wrote was the *Pariser Tageblatt*.

Poliakov, ostensibly tired of Feder's apparent laxity and burdened by other financial considerations, who began to waver in his commitment.⁸¹

On the evening of 24 November 1933 Metzl informed Feder that the project as planned had fallen through: Georg Bernhard and not he was to be the paper's editor. As far as the final decision was concerned, Metzl pointed out that it was based on practical economic factors and relations between parties within the Polish and Russian emigrant communities. Isaac Grodenski, editor and co-owner of the *Pariser Haini*, and other Polish Jews wanted to found a paper with Georg Bernhard. Ample capital was available for such an undertaking. In order to avoid competition, the two parties agreed on pooling their resources.⁸²

The main stumbling block revolved around the issue of who was to edit the paper. Wladimir Poliakov himself had very little idea and left the decision in the hands of others. Feder was preferred by Metzl as well as Mirkine, the latter finding Bernhard "too general in his editorials and positions."⁸³ Equally critical, Metzl found the former editor of the *Vossische Zeitung* "used up and lacking vitality." But in the end Metzl and Mirkine were overruled. Unable to push their preferred editor, they bowed to the choice of the ostensibly richer and therefore more influential Polish Jews.

The final arrangement allowed for the costs of running the paper to be divided: Poliakov was to pay the printing costs and lease the ads while the *Haini* circle assumed the editorial expenditures. The editorial policy of the paper was to be completely independent of either party, and the arrangement would be open for reconsideration within three months after the signing of the agreement.⁸⁴

Two weeks later the Basel *National Zeitung* ran a short notice: "On Tuesday morning [12 December] appeared the first issue of a German language paper, the *Pariser Tageblatt*, edited as the organ of all Germans who 'stand outside the discipline of the Third Reich.'⁸⁵ For Ernst Feder, whose subsequent role with the

⁸⁰ Feder diary, LBI, 16 Nov. 1933.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 17 Nov. 1933.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 24 Nov. 1933.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 19 Oct. 1933.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 24 Nov. 1933.

⁸⁵ *National Zeitung*, Basel, 12 Dec. 1933. Press cutting on file at the Ullstein Archiv, Berlin.

French governmental circles to the founding of an émigré press was at best mixed. In May 1933 the request made by the publisher of *die aktion* to permit the journal to be shouted by the newspaper vendors on the streets of Paris was rejected. The *Préfet de Police* justified his decision with “the sole thought in mind of avoiding all incidents.”⁸⁷ And in October he went even further by asking the Minister of the Interior to consider banning the distribution and sale of *die aktion* and *Freiheit!* Ostensibly, rowdiness and right-wing demonstrations in and around cafés frequented by émigrés motivated him to propose this radical curtailing of the nascent German émigré press. Throughout September the police had been repeatedly called upon to break up serious scuffles at the popular Le Dôme and several cafés along the Montparnasse and Boulevard Saint-Michel. These incidents were provoked by right-wing organizations such as the *Camelots du Roy*, the *Association des Travailleurs français*, and the *Jeunesses Patriotes*.⁸⁸

When Valot, a French journalist and acquaintance of Ernst Feder, spoke to Pierre Comert, *Directeur du Service de Presse* at the Quai d’Orsay, about the founding of a German paper, the latter reputedly replied: “We are completely against newspapers from the German refugees.” But the question by Valot came at an inopportune moment. The French press chief was irritated by an irresponsible report printed by another recently founded paper announcing Hitler’s assassination in Saarbrücken.⁸⁹ And Comert, despite his unflinching sympathy for the émigré cause, had to avoid openly entangling the French government in the émigré fight against the Hitler government.

The *Pariser Tageblatt* recognized and acknowledged its accountability and moral responsibility toward both the host country and its emigrant readership. This dual responsibility carried difficulties with it. In the paper’s one hundredth issue it set forth the dilemma confronting it. The *Tageblatt* reaffirmed its desire to offer

⁸⁶ Feder diary, LBI, 15 May 1939.

⁸⁷ Préfet de Police to the Ministre de l’Intérieur, 10 May 1933, AN, F¹ 13430.

⁸⁸ Bresson, Le Préfet de Police to the Ministre de l’Intérieur, 13 Oct. 1933, APP, dossier 60, no. 241.155-1-a.

⁸⁹ Feder diary, LBI, 27 Oct. 1933.

owe the country in which we enjoy the privilege of asylum. Obviously that does not prevent us from defending ourselves against injustice if in our opinion such occurs to to the German emigration.⁹¹

As the temper of the editorial implies, the *Pariser Tageblatt* found itself forced to concentrate its efforts on emigrant socio-economic affairs. But it did so while also endeavoring to establish a medium between its own political character (defined by the politics of its editors) and the restrictions placed upon it by the host country.

The *Pariser Tageblatt* met the needs of its emigrant readership in a variety of ways. The paper regularly featured a column consisting of "how to" and "where to seek assistance" articles. Usually found on page three, these articles informed newcomers on such essentials as getting around Paris, where to shop, or the establishment and location of day-care centers for the refugee children.⁹² The difficulties in placing telephone calls and understanding the numbers over the phone formed the subject of two other articles.⁹³ A short article, "I'm Learning French," from the pen of Anton Kuh, a former *Weltbühne* contributor, was aimed at encouraging the German readers to begin the all-too-necessary task of adjusting.⁹⁴ The legal technicalities and ways of overcoming French bureaucratic red tape were regularly addressed. "The Possibilities of Obtaining Citizenship," "Legal Proof According to French Law," and "Working without a Permit," all prepared

⁹⁰ Bernhard, "100," PT 100, 22 March 1934, p. 1.

⁹¹ "Briefkasten," PT 658, 1 Oct. 1934, p. 4: "Sie verlangen von uns etwas Ummögliches. Wir sind nicht in der Lage, Kritik an französischen Behörden zu üben. Das würde der grundsätzlichen Tendenz des *Pariser Tageblatts* widersprechen und außerdem auch dem Takt zuwiderlaufen, den wir als Emigranten dem Lande schulden, in dem wir Asylrecht genießen. Selbstverständlich hindert uns das nicht, uns gegen Unrecht zu wehren, wenn solches nach unserer Auffassung der deutschen Emigration geschicht."

⁹² Emilie Grant, "Ein Hilfswerk wandert," PT 1, 12 Dec. 1933, p. 2. Also refer to PT 5, 16 Dec. 1933, p. 3, and PT 42, 22 Jan. 1934, p. 3. These are only two of the many articles treating work permits. Also refer to Adolf Philippsborn, "Wo man Hilfe findet," PT 18, 29 Dec. 1933, p. 3. Other examples are to be found in the regular feature column "Was Sie wissen müssen": "Französische Geschäftstrübe," PT 19, 30 Dec. 1933, p. 3, and "Rückfahrten auf der Metro," PT 20, 31 Dec. 1933, p. 3.

⁹³ "Was jeder wissen muß," PT 3, 3 Jan. 1934, p. 3. Continued in PT 29, 9 Jan. 1934, p. 3.
⁹⁴ Anton Kuh, "Ich lerne französisch," PT 43, 23 Jan. 1934, p. 4.

turning classes and French society at large, and German refugees experienced an attitude ranging from tolerance and acceptance to anti-Semitism and xenophobia. In large measure this can be explained by the fact that the German refugees arrived at a time when France was in the throes of the Great Depression which in turn was accompanied by political and social instability.⁹⁷

During the first months of the German emigration in France, the refugees were fairly well treated. Ministerial instructions regulating the distribution of visas into France displayed a large measure of generosity and accommodation.⁹⁸ Writing in the *Tageblatt*, Hellmut von Gerlach suggested that this first phase saw a variety of relief programs established to assist the newcomers who were treated with tolerance, understanding, and generosity by the various private and religious relief organizations. In short they were treated, as one *Tageblatt* reader indicated, as "summer guests."⁹⁹

It was during this period that the French government called into being the National Committee of Assistance to the German Refugees and Victims of Anti-Semitism (*Comité national de secours aux réfugiés allemands victimes de l'antisémitisme*). This agency was inspired by Baron Robert de Rothschild and its first

⁹⁵ "Wie werde ich Franzose? Die Möglichkeiten der Einbürgerung," PT 14, 25 Dec. 1933, p. 3; "Beweismittel im französischen Recht," PT 106, 28 March 1934, p. 3; "Beschäftigung ohne Ausweis," PT 133, 24 April 1934, p. 3.

⁹⁶ Unsigned article, "Emigranten – so und so. Drei Typen, die jeder kennt," PT 33, 13 Jan. 1934, p. 4.

⁹⁷ Barbara Vormeier in her "Dokumentation zur französischen Emigrantenpolitik (1933–1944) – Ein Beitrag," in Hanna Schramm, *Menschen in Gurs. Erinnerungen an ein französisches Internierungslager* (1940–1941) (Worms: Verlag Georg Heintz, 1977), pp. 168–173, presents a concise overview of France's economic situation and the domestic implications for French politics in the 1930s.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁹⁹ Walter Andreas Kraft, "Die Probleme der Arbeit in der Emigration," PT 365, 12 Dec. 1934, p. 5. According to Kraft, granting the refugees work permits would not have increased France's already high unemployment, since the largest percentage of the German emigration consisted of either "merchants, businessmen, and manufacturers or artists, handicraftsmen, and journalists" who for the most part were all self-employed. A breakdown of the numbers of German exiles officially employed in France in 1936 can be found in Vormeier, "Dokumentation zur französischen Emigrantenpolitik," in Schramm, *Menschen in Gurs*, pp. 194–195.

The German émigrés likewise organized relief organizations. The German Relief Committee (*Deutsche Hilfskomitee*), made up of many Communists and independent leftists around Münzenberg, was constituted in March 1933,¹⁰¹ and the German Socialists and trade unionists organized the Committee for German Refugee Assistance (*Comité de secours aux réfugiés allemands*).¹⁰² In June 1933 Leonce Bernheim, lawyer and president of the French Committee for a World Jewish Congress (*Comité français pour les Congrès Mondial Juif*), and Georg Bernhard filed for permission to create a Committee of German Jewish Refugees (*Comité des réfugiés israéliens allemands*). As defined by its organizers, the purpose of the committee was: (1) to issue an identity card to those individuals recognized by the committee as Hitler refugees; (2) to instruct the newcomers on their legal status and the need to scrupulously observe the laws of the host country; (3) to assist in distributing the refugees throughout the various départements; and (4) to promote émigré participation in solving their own problems.¹⁰³ Although

¹⁰¹ Langkau-Alex, *Volksfront*, p. 258, n. 253. See also a report treating the “centres d’hebergement de réfugiés allemands,” Oct. 1933, APP, dossier 59: “Pièces et Rapports Coupures de Journaux concernant les Israélites.” For a comprehensive list of the various committees and agencies refer to Vormeler, “Dokumentation zur Französischen Emigrantpolitik,” in Schramm, *Menschen in Gurs*, pp. 281–282. Ursula Langkau-Alex’s article “Zu den Beziehungen zwischen Organisationen der politischen deutschen Emigranten in Frankreich und französischen Organisationen 1933–1940,” in *Leben im Exil: Probleme der Integration deutscher Flüchtlinge im Ausland 1933–1945*, ed. by Wolfgang Frühwald and Wolfgang Schieder (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1981), pp. 188–199, presents an excellent overview of the relations between French organizations and the German political emigration.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

¹⁰³ In regard to the funds of the *Comité de secours aux réfugiés allemands* and relations between the French and German Socialists, refer to Langkau-Alex, *Volksfront*, p. 71 and p. 258, nn. 252 and 259, as well as her article “Zu den Beziehungen . . .” in *Leben im Exil*, ed. by Frühwald and Schieder, p. 142. Livian responds that the German Socialists tended to concentrate their efforts on continuing the propaganda struggle against Hitler’s Reich and thus depleted the funds available for refugee assistance; Livian, *Le Parti socialiste et l’immigration*, pp. 192–195.

¹⁰⁴ Leonce Bernheim, Georg Bernhard, Max Strauß, Maxime Phia, and Sylvain Cahn to Monsieur le Préfet de Police, 30 June 1933, APP, dossier 61, packet 241.155-H: “Comité de Défense des Juifs persécutés en Allemagne.”

view one perceives with concern this stream of *Literaten*, musicians, artists, doctors, and journalists....¹⁰⁵ Within a short span of time, this estimation of the situation proved to be correct. The social and political divisions that characterized France in the thirties also afforded the National Socialists one of their most effective means of isolating and discrediting the German emigrants.

Although French Jewry showed hospitality and generosity toward their German co-religionists, many in the German emigration nevertheless questioned the methods, the extent of assistance, and above all the motives. A standoffishness, even in the early months, marked the relations between the hastily established relief agencies and the German emigration. Georg Bernhard complained that the "German emigrant leadership" was not always drawn into the decision-making process, and rarely called upon to give advice. Hence, this led to the situation where the funds at the disposal of the various committees were often wasted.¹⁰⁶ At the crux of the problem stood not only the lack of funds but the social and racial composition of the German emigration itself.

The influx of refugees came at a time when the French economy was severely racked by the effects of the Great Depression. As elsewhere, the ramifications of this economic crisis reached into the political realm with the result that anti-Semitism from the Right once again attracted a broader public.¹⁰⁷ French Jewry, only half-aware of its precarious social and legal position,¹⁰⁸ reacted to their religious counterparts in several ways.

¹⁰⁴ Unsigned carbon copy summary treating the proposed committee, 11 July 1933, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Dr. Megeyer to AA, "Abschrift zu II Fr. 2053. Vertrauliche Aufzeichnung über Beobachtungen in Paris über die deutsche Emigration nach Frankreich," 16 June 1933, PA AA, Gesandtschaft Prag, A, III 1b8, "Emigranten," Bd. I Sbd.

¹⁰⁶ Bernhard, "Baron Robert de Rothschild über die Flüchtlingsfrage, Eine große Konferenz der Hilfsorganisationen," PT 38, 18 Jan. 1934, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ Refer to Michael Marrus's concise article "Vichy avant Vichy," *Histoire*, Nr. 3 (Nov. 1979): *Les Juifs en France*, pp. 77–82. A translation of Marrus's article "Vichy before Vichy: Anti-Semitic currents in France during the 1930s," can be found in the *Wiener Library Bulletin*, XXXIII (1980).

¹⁰⁸ The reader is referred to Weinberg's *A Community on Trial*.

“summer stint,” the relief committees and organizations began advocating in even stronger terms the hope that the German emigrants could find work and in turn contribute to France’s economic well-being. The human interest articles, especially those penned by Emile Grant and Adolf Philippsborn during the paper’s first months, repeatedly emphasized the successful attempts by German refugees to establish themselves in the French work force by joining together to learn, found, or practice new trades useful both to themselves and the host country. As a rule these quasi-collectives failed.

Writing for the *Tageblatt*, Raymond-Raoul Lambert described the situation of the German emigration in France. The tone reveals the changed attitude confronting the German emigration at the end of its second year in France. According to Lambert, General Secretary for the *Comité national* as well as its successor the *Comité d’assistance aux réfugiés* and still later the *Union générale des israélites de France*, the effort of the relief organizations in locating work for the emigrants was made more difficult by reason of the fact that the largest percentage of refugees had come from two different social groups: intellectuals and businessmen. Lambert, a colleague of Edouard Herriot, lamented that “neither technical engineers nor trained artisans or professional farmers, who would easily have found possibilities for establishing themselves in France, came to us.” Addressing the attempts to form emigrant farm collectives, he cautioned against all such future undertakings “for technical, political, and psychological reasons.” Only settle-

¹⁰⁹ Fabian and Coulmas, *Die deutsche Emigration*, p. 36.

¹¹⁰ Walter Andreas Kraft, “Die Probleme der Arbeit in der Emigration,” PT 365, 12 Dec. 1933, p. 5. Senator Henry Bétenger, following the Lausanne Conference organized by the League to regulate and clarify the German refugee problem, informed the *Tageblatt* readers on the measures already undertaken by France and indicated a rapidly approaching end to the nation’s capacity to assist. He called attention to the work of three organizations: *Comité national de secours aux réfugiés allemands victimes de l’antisémitisme*, inspired by Baron de Rothschild and presided over by Bétenger; *Alliance israélite universelle*, under the direction of the chief Rabbi Israël Lévy; and *Le comité d’aide aux intellectuels réfugiés*, created by Professor Sylvain-Lévy. Bétenger stressed that from the beginning of their relief efforts, it had been understood that their work was provisional and that the German refugees could not remain in France; see Henry Bétenger, “Die deutschen Flüchtlinge,” PT 14, 25 Dec. 1933, p. 1.

kind of emporassed toleration and uneasiness at the presence of German Jewry in France, can be followed in the *Tageblatt's* coverage of the relief organizations and their treatment of the refugees. In December 1933 Adolf Philippsborn reported the "burning question" for the emigrants to be the inefficiency of the relief committees. Many emigrants simply did not have the 100 francs required for the *récépissé* (residence permit valid for three months). The committees, rather than providing the money, advised the unfortunate to "sit it out" with the result that many received an *Ordre de refoulement*, one of the two forms of expulsion.¹¹² And in the same month, responding to criticism waged by Baron Robert de Rothschild against the "thanklessness" of German Jews, Bernhard stated, "it ought not be forgotten that the assistance for Jewish refugees persecuted because of their religious beliefs and their origin is a self-evident duty of French Jews as well as all Jews of the world. German Jewry had been conscious at various times in an exemplary degree of this duty toward foreign Jews." In addition, Bernhard claimed, Rothschild perceived the plight and situation of the German refugees "through the eyes of a man who has always given assistance but has never had to receive any."¹¹³

At the bottom of the differences between Bernhard and Rothschild rested the thinly concealed notion held by the president of the Paris Consistory that French anti-Semitism originated from the presence and political activity of emigrant Jews. In a speech delivered before the General Assembly of the Paris Consistory in May 1935 Rothschild emphasized: "It is vital that the foreign elements assimilate as

¹¹¹ Raymond Raoul Lambert, "Die moralische Anpassung der Emigration," PT 365, 12 Dec. 1934, p. 5. See also Fabian and Coulmaz, *Die deutsche Emigration*, p. 50.

¹¹² Adolf Philippsborn, "Eine brennende Frage," PT 17, 28 Dec. 1933, p. 3.

¹¹³ Bernhard, "Baron Robert de Rothschild über die Flüchtlingsfrage," PT 38, 18 Jan. 1934, p. 2. In reference to Bernhard's article, the German embassy in Paris reported the following: "Bemerkenswert aus der Wiedergabe des Herrn Bernhard sind die eingehende Kritik, die Baron Rothschild an dem Beiseitestehen reicher jüdischer Flüchtlinge aus Deutschland geübt hat, und andererseits die kritischen Bemerkungen Bernhards gegenüber der Tätigkeit des Hilfskomitees." German embassy Paris to AA, 25 Jan. 1934, PA AA, Inland II A/B 83-79, "Emigrantenpresse, 1934-1940," Bd. I.

March and April 1933 had all but vanished. The initial feeling of being “desirables” had been replaced by the impression of being “indésirables.”¹¹⁶ In practical terms, this change in attitude meant severe difficulties in obtaining a *carte d'identité* and *carte de travailleur*, both essential for legally residing and working in France. Moreover, during this period until the establishment of the popular front government in the spring of 1936, there was a steady increase in the number of *refoulements* (a summons to leave France within a specified time but with the possibility of an extension) and *expulsions* (the “undesirable” foreigner was forcibly deported and forbidden to reenter the country).¹¹⁷ In both cases the hapless refugees were at the mercy of the individual prefects.

As far as conditions would allow, the *Pariser Tageblatt* – *Pariser Tageszeitung* remained forthright in its coverage of the relief committees and the treatment accorded the German emigration. The paper aimed at awakening the conscience of all to the plight of the otherwise shunned and helpless emigrant. Although incessantly reiterating thanks for all assistance and kindnesses shown, the editors, both through the printed word and their participation in various refugee committees, were able to make the views of the German emigration known.

The situation was vastly different in regard to the paper's coverage of French political and governmental policies. The chicanery and arbitrariness of many French bureaucrats toward the German refugees was barely addressed, nor was there any direct indication in the *Tageblatt* of the increasing anti-Semitism following the Stavisky affair in 1934. The increased number of deportations following the Stavisky episode and even more so after Barthou's murder were never blamed on the French authorities. Instead, the paper explained away the incidents as indica-

¹¹⁴ Baron Robert de Rothschild as cited in Paula Hyman, *From Dreyfus to Vichy. The Remaking of French Jewry, 1906–1939* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 203.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

¹¹⁶ Hellmut von Gerlach, “Frankreich und die Fremden,” PT 213, 13 July 1934, pp. 1–2. See also the report by the French journalist Charles Houpert to Gerlach's article, “Frankreich und die Fremden,” PT 262, 31 Aug. 1934, p. 3. The tone gives some insight into the hostility of many on the Right against the German refugees.

¹¹⁷ Vornzeier, “Dokumentation zur französischen Emigrantenpolitik,” in Schramm, *Menschen in Gürtel*, p. 188.

hopes, and illusions shade their newscoverage. "The French people," wrote Bernhard in the wake of the civil war-like situation that ended in Gaston Doumergue's National Coalition, "react differently than the Germans. Here the revolutionary tradition has remained alive. Here one still fights for one's convictions. The barricade is no piece in an historical museum."¹²¹ For Caro, "The Riotous Street" was seen as part of France's revolutionary tradition. Once again it was proven that France was the land of the "traditional revolutionary élan to which the Republic was always more than a monstrous, bloodless notion; here the form of state . . . had become a symbol."¹²²

Such reporting can only partially be attributed to the "tact" owed by emigrants to the host country. Bernhard and Caro only acknowledged that aspect of French political and cultural traditions epitomized by the Enlightenment, and they contended these were valid for the entire nation. It was not until the Munich Agreement in the fall of 1938 that Bernhard openly expressed his doubts concerning France.¹²³ And in the case of Heinrich Mann, not an immediate to the circle but a "friend," the myth lingered on to emerge in his autobiographical work *Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt*.¹²⁴

The francophile editors of the paper and their friends simply could not admit that the hostile responses also stemmed from a general spirit of anti-Germanism.

¹¹⁸ Refer to von Gerlach's "Frankreich und die Fremden," PT 213, 13 July 1934, pp. 1–2.

¹¹⁹ See for example, "Die Meinung der Welt," PT 59, 8 Feb. 1934, p. 2, and the subsequent issues.

¹²⁰ Refer to "Verfassungskrise in Frankreich?" PT 61, 10 Feb. 1934, p. 1, and "Reformen in Sicht," PT 62, 11 Feb. 1934, p. 1.

¹²¹ Bernhard, "Was wird nun?" PT 59, 8 Feb. 1934, p. 1.

¹²² Caro, "Die unrühige Straße," PT 59, 8 Feb. 1934, p. 1.

¹²³ Bernhard to Stephen Wise, 23 Sept. 1938, American Jewish Historical Society, American Jewish Congress, XI D, box 90, no. 3. To wit: "Die große Liebe, die ich ein Leben lang für Frankreich gehabt habe und die was das französische Volk anbetrifft noch immer andauert, hindert mich, meinem moralischen Katzenjammer den richtigen Ausdruck in Worten zu geben. Wenn ich in meinen Entschlüssen frei wäre, so würde ich Europa verlassen und in Amerika mit zum dritten Male eine neue Existenz aufbauen."¹²⁴ Heinrich Mann, *Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, 1976), pp. 280–99, passim.

Gumbel of mixing in the internal affairs of France;¹²⁶ the arrest of five German emigrant Communists at a recent demonstration; and a wall placard from a French fascist organization to the effect that German refugees had participated in the muggings of its members. The editor seized the opportunity to instruct "all responsible emigrants" to refrain from engaging "under any circumstances" in the internal affairs of their respective host countries.¹²⁷ Throughout the following months, matters continued to worsen for the emigrants and such appeals did little to alter the situation.

Three days after the assassination of Louis Barthou and the Yugoslavian King Alexander I, during the latter's visit to Marseille on 9 October, Bernhard expressed his concern over the possible effects the incident could have on the status of the German emigration in France. Implicit was his hope that the murders would not lead to any indiscriminate moves by French authorities against the unfortunate refugees.¹²⁸ This did not prove to be the case, and a mass of capricious measures carried out by individual governmental officials followed. On the same day that the Ministry of the Interior issued an official statement addressing the emigrant question, Bernhard reiterated his often expressed plea for the German refugees to remain absolutely outside French affairs. This time he posited the chilling alternative confronting them:

Obviously it is not easy for the temperamental among us to practice self-restraint. . . . And it is not easy to live as foreigners among other peoples. But – and we should always think about this – in any case it is always much easier than in a German concentration camp.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Henry Pachter, *Weimar Erasdes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 314.

¹²⁶ On the Emil Gumbel case, refer to an unsigned article, "Kein 'Fall' Gumbel. Eine Richtigung," PT 135, 26 April 1934, p. 2. The German foreign office was likewise informed of the incident; German embassy Paris to AA, 4 May 1934, PA AA, Inland II A/B 83–75, "Deutsche Emigrantenätigkeit im Ausland," Bd. 2.

¹²⁷ Bernhard, "Unsere Sache," PT 135, 26 April 1934, p. 1.

¹²⁸ Bernhard, "Der falsche Paß," PT 304, 12 Oct. 1934, p. 1.

¹²⁹ Bernhard, "Fremde," PT 319, 27 Oct. 1934, p. 1: "Es gibt kein Recht in der Welt, dem nicht auch eine Pflicht des Berechtigten gegenübersteht. Auch nicht das Gastrecht. Wer

Bergery.¹³¹ This practice was further expanded to include syndicated articles by Duff Cooper, Winston Churchill, and Wickham Steed to name but a few. In so doing, the paper not only claimed "big names" for its list of contributors, but also hoped to get around the restrictions placed upon it. Still another practice was to translate articles from French newspapers and speeches delivered by French representatives and present them to its readership without editorial comment. The perceptive reader could then read between the lines.¹³²

Behind the increasing harshness accorded the refugees, there undoubtedly loomed the political and economic arms of the Third Reich. The Reich overtly and

Das ist, muß die Besonderheiten der gastlichen Stätte respektieren. Das gilt für Emigranten genau in gleichem Maße wie für alle andern Fremden. Vor allem muß der politische Mensch bei seinem Handeln in der Fremde sich genau überlegen, wie er in der Heimat auf die Handlungen anderer reagiert hätte. Wir Deutschen sind früher auch außerordentlich empfindlich gewesen, wenn Ausländer sich in unsere innere Politik einmischten. Leider bis auf einen Fall: Der Österreicher Adolf Hitler hat in Deutschland das Unterste zuoberst kehren, die Volksschichten gegeneinander aufhetzen und die höchsten Spitzen der deutschen Behörden verleumdend dürfen, ohne daß die republikanischen Regierungen den Mut gehabt hätten, ihn an die Luft zu setzen. Diese Weisheit (die gar nicht demokratisch, sondern nur dumm war) sollte uns doppelt Veranlassung geben, die Berechtigung anderer Völker zu größerer Vorsicht anzuerkennen. Wir sind in unserem eigenen Lande gewöhnt gewesen, ohne Rücksicht auf etwas anderes als die Gesetze, alles, was wir für richtig hielten, zu reden und zu tun. Es waren immer unsere eigenen Angelegenheiten, in die wir uns mischten. Und es ist uns nun nicht leicht, als Fremde unter anderen Völkern zu leben. Aber — denken wir stets daran auf alle Fälle immer noch viel leichter als in einem deutschen Konzentrationslager." Poliakov, *Mémoires*, p. 46. Dr. Poliakov maintained that although Grumbach had received 1,000 francs monthly, almost no articles appeared by him in the *Tageblatt*.

[ach] to Gaston Bergery, deputy director of *la Fleche*, 16 Oct. 1936, ZStAP, PTZ, Nr. 72, Bl. 25. Neither a reply nor an article from Bergery could be located. For example, to the reprint of the Chamber debates on the front page of the *Tageblatt*: "Flüchtlingsdebatte in der Kammer. Ein dokumentarischer Bericht — Das Sitzungsprotokoll," PT 437, 22 Feb. 1935, pp. 1-2, and "Innenminister Regnier zur Emigrantenfrage. Ein dokumentarischer Bericht. — Das Sitzungsprotokoll," PT 438, 23 Feb. 1935, pp. 1-2.

unscrupulous officials.¹³⁴ The *Pariser Tageblatt* could not participate in this cause largely sponsored by the French Socialists and Communists. Only through their participation in the various relief committees and appeals before the League of Nations were they able to make their case known, and even this activity won them the suspicion and distrust of many within the French Jewish community.

The popular front government ruling France from June 1936 until April 1938 brought a significant easing of the legal situation for the refugees. Following the July 1936 Intergovernmental Conference in Geneva sponsored by the League of Nations, the French government issued the relatively liberal Decree of 17 September 1936. This measure created an identity/travel pass (*Certificat d'Identité pour les réfugiés provenant d'Allemagne*) for the German refugees who were legally residing in France prior to 5 August 1936. And for those who were *irregulière*, it granted them an amnesty and the opportunity to correct their legal status by 1 November 1936. For the recalcitrant, an extension was granted until 31 December 1936.

In addition, an advisory committee (*Comité Consultatif*) was created to assist in determining who qualified for the *Certificat d'Identité*. As if in response to earlier complaints by the émigrés that they were not called upon to give advice to the various refugees committees, in the *Comité Consultatif* they were able to work side by side on an equal basis with Frenchmen. Representing the émigrés were Albert Grzesinski, Willi Münzenberg, and Georg Bernhard.¹³⁵ The fall of the Blum gov-

¹³³ Charles Bloch, "La Place de la France dans les différents de la politique extérieure du troisième Reich (1933–1940)," in *Les Relations Franco-Allemandes 1933–1939*, Colloques internationaux du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, No. 563 (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1976), p. 24.

¹³⁴ Thalmann, "L'immigration allemande et l'opinion publique en France de 1933 à 1936," pp. 170–171. See also Jacob, *Kind meiner Zeit*, p. 185.

A detailed study of French public opinion during these years can be found in two studies by Rita Thalmann, "L'immigration allemande et l'opinion publique en France de 1933 à 1936" and "L'émigration et l'opinion française de 1936 à 1939," in *Beihfte der Francia*, vol. 10: *Deutschland und Frankreich. 1936–1939*, 15. Deutsch-französisches Historikerkolloquium des Deutschen Historischen Instituts Paris, ed. by Klaus Hildebrand and Ferdinand Werner (Munich & Zurich: Artemis Verlag, 1981).

¹³⁵ Livian, *Le Partie socialiste et l'immigration*, p. 100.

world press, to the Rue de Turbigo, where the *Pariser Tageblatt's* first office was located, implied far more than a temporary geographical relocation. The conditions in exile demanded from the émigré journalists and writers a professional reorientation to their trade and its practice that earlier could neither have been imagined nor anticipated. Not surprisingly, the altered material circumstances of publishing a foreign language daily in Paris left their mark on the make-up and quality of the *Pariser Tageblatt* — *Pariser Tageszeitung*. From the most elementary yet aesthetically important level (page setting, proof reading, and marketing) on up to the daily quest for news, the paper like its staff and readers, remained confined by the material conditions of emigration.

A variety of individuals and talents composed the immediate staff of the *Pariser Tageblatt* — *Pariser Tageszeitung*. Until the end of 1937 Georg Bernhard structured the editorial policy of the paper. The *Tageblatt's* original publisher, Wilhelm Poliakov, exerted little immediate influence on the style, content or politics of the paper; his control was tied more closely to the power of the purse. Bernhard's assistant editor, Kurt Caro, remained with the paper until the beginning of 1939. Richard Dyck, former editor of the *8-Uhr Abendblatt*, and Erich Geisler, free lance reporter for the *Berliner Tageblatt* and *Berliner Volkszeitung*, were responsible for the local news and *feuilleton*. Later they were joined by Robert Breuer, former editor-in-chief of the weekly *Die Glocke* and a regular contributor to the *Weltbühne*. Georg Wronkow, who had begun his journalistic career when Otto Nuschke of the *Berliner Volkszeitung* offered him the job of covering human interest stories in Berlin¹³⁶ and in 1929 rose to the position of director of the photo division for Mosse's *Weltspiegel* and *Berliner Tageblatt*,¹³⁷ served as the *Tageblatt's* editor of the "World Press in Review."¹³⁸ Unlike the arm of editors, reporters, and foreign correspondents who had served the *Vossische Zeitung* and *Berliner Tageblatt*, this small group during the *Pariser Tageblatt's* first years were responsible for publishing the emigration's most important and widely read daily newspaper.

¹³⁶ Wronkow, "Kleiner Mann in Großen Zeiten," pp. 80–82.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

financial situation, personal animosities, and rivalries accentuated by conditions in exile, and lastly the political climate in emigration.

Political and economic analyses of conditions in Germany as well as elsewhere were given close attention. But the *Pariser Tageblatt* – *Pariser Tageszeitung*, in stark contrast to the journalistic practices perfected in the latter half of the nineteenth century, operated without regular correspondents. Instead the paper relied heavily on individual émigré journalists, desperate for any remuneration, to supply reports on the domestic political and cultural scene in the various host countries. Needless to say, the quality of their coverage and their insights in the first instance was directly dependent on the nature and reliability of their contacts and secondly, on their ability to understand and analyze the operative forces in their respective host countries. Aside from the editorials of Bernhard, Caro, Misch, and later Bornstein, Rudolf Olden, former political editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt* until 1931, provided commentaries on Britain's domestic and foreign policy. Manfred George and Kurt Grossmann performed a similar function for the paper in Czechoslovakia. Reports on the situation for Jews in Palestine came from Schalom Ben-Chorin, Erich Gottgetreu, and Karl Loewy.

Heinrich Jordan and Kurt Rosenfeld occasionally reported on the American scene, but these infrequent reports never scratched beneath the surface of the American cultural or political scene. Characteristic of the émigré mentality, it was only after 1938 that the *Pariser Tageszeitung* began seriously looking toward the United States as a possible alternative. After Manfred George's immigration to the United States in 1938, the *Tageszeitung* in October requested George to send reports "on general political questions" of interest and importance "for us Europeans" along with "interesting contributions on life over there and in this respect also information on the fate and the changes for the new immigrant."¹⁴⁰ The special feature column treating emigration was edited by Anna Geyer.

Bernhard using his earlier nom de plume, Plutus, assessed the crisis of the 1930s from an economic perspective. Hans Meyer, writing under the initials of "W. G.,"

¹³⁹ Notification, Fritz Wolff to Anna Geyer, May 1939, ZStAP, PTZ, Nr. 3, Bl. 214.

¹⁴⁰ Stefan Fingal to Manfred George, 30 Oct. 1938, DLM, NL Manfred George.

career in pre-Hitler Germany began with Ullstein's evening paper *Tempo*, edited the *Tageszeitung's feuilleton* page and regularly contributed to the paper throughout its existence. Alfred Kerr, former theater critic of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, ran a feature column in the paper treating French and later English theater and movies. Until his departure for the United States in the summer of 1934, the music critic Paul Bekker penned commentaries for the *Tageblatt*; after immigrating, he continued his work for the *New Yorker Staatszeitung*.¹⁴⁵ The expressionist art critic and founder of *Das Kunstblatt* and later *Die Schaffenden*, Paul Westheim, injected into the paper astute commentaries on the graphic arts in the Third Reich as well as a serialized novel, *Heil Kadlitz*. Short reviews of theater, movies, books etc., written by Pem (Paul Marcus) were featured in the paper as they had been prior to 1933 in the *12-Uhr Blatt*. This list could be expanded to include every major and minor writer in emigration, including Heinrich Mann, Klaus Mann, Joseph Roth, Kurt Hiller, and the poets Max Hermann-Neisse, Paul Zech, and Alfred Wolfenstein. One should note, however, that many of these financially pressed writers offered their material to whichever emigrant publication could pay for it.

By the time *Pariser Tageblatt* became a hybrid of the more serious Berlin press and the mass-oriented "boulevard press." In the Weimar Republic these journalists and writers had a far greater range of possibilities in which to market their work. They could be more selective and discriminating concerning the journal or paper in which they wished to see their manuscripts or articles published. Emigration had a leveling effect — a situation not without its psychological consequences. "Serious" journalists such as Georg Bernhard, Rudolf Olden, Alfred Kerr, and Joseph Bornstein were thrown together with the more popularist or mass oriented writers

¹⁴¹ Hans Meyer, Lake Placid, New York, telephone interview with the author, 15 Feb. 1978.

¹⁴² Michael Smilg-Benario to the author, 28 Dec. 1978.

¹⁴³ Wronkowitz, "Kleiner Mann in Großen Zeiten," p. 176.

¹⁴⁴ Kestler, *Arrow in the Blue*, p. 190.

¹⁴⁵ Obituary notice of Paul Bekker's death, PTZ 272, 10 March 1937, p. 5.

six columns rather than the standard three characteristic of the Berlin format. The make-up of its front page thus consisted of a one to two column editorial by Bernhard, usually centered somewhat above the second column in order to attract the eye, regular feature commentaries and analyses from its star contributors, and shorter one to one-and-a-half column articles generally dealing with the international or domestic French scene. Obviously this format, more in line with the French papers, afforded the editors more leeway than they hitherto enjoyed, but it was a choice made for them rather than by them.

The conditions under which these journalists had to work in Paris were considerably different from those they had previously enjoyed in Berlin. As Hans Jacob recalled, "the material circumstances were so modest that in normal times one could not have even produced a small club paper."¹⁴⁷ Not all émigré enterprises were as meagerly financed. Indeed, by comparison to the "plush" offices of Schwarzschild's *Neue Tagebuch* in one of Paris's most prestigious neighborhoods,¹⁴⁸ the quarters of the *Pariser Tageblatt* appeared slightly better than spartan. The original editorial staff consisting primarily of Kurt Caro, Hans Jacob, Richard Dyck, Erich Kaiser, and Georg Wronkow, the latter who, as he himself phrased it, being present whenever the need arose and "above all when the finances permitted,"¹⁴⁹ sat in two small rooms. Bernhard worked at home with his staff keeping him informed by telephone of the latest events. Three writing tables, and one or two typewriters completed the equipment, with the result that most of the articles were handwritten. In the evening the work shifted to a "nook" in a small printing office in Montmartre.¹⁵⁰ Every page went directly to the typographer. A pair of old typesetting machines had to serve three newspapers: the Russian émigré *Poslednie Novosti*, the Yiddish *Pariser Haint*, and the *Pariser Tageblatt*. The compositor responsible for the *Haint* and *Tageblatt* allegedly knew

¹⁴⁶ Walter, *Exilpresse*, p. 550.

¹⁴⁷ Jacob, *Kind meiner Zeit*, p. 185.

¹⁴⁸ Walter, *Exilpresse*, p. 73.

¹⁴⁹ Wronkow, "Kleiner Mann in Großen Zeiten," p. 175.

¹⁵⁰ The firm E.I.R.P., operated by O. Zeluk, served as the printer of the *Tageblatt* until October 1935 after which time the firm I.E.P., operated by Marcel Schwitzgruebel, took over. Refer to Maas, *Handbuch*, vol. II, p. 439.

“the most important happenings in the area of literature, theater, art, and science.”¹⁵⁵ By 6 February the *Tageblatt* offered its subscribers legal advice on matters both in the Reich and in the host country. The service, provided two afternoons a week, was carried out by the French lawyer Sylvain Cahn and the former Berlin lawyer Theodor Trichauer.¹⁵⁶ This success paradoxically caused the paper, its publishers, and its staff much hardship and bitterness.

As in the case of all emigrant publications, the buyers and subscribers of the *Pariser Tageblatt* — *Pariser Tageszeitung* stemmed primarily from the German emigration, and its geographical circumference reflected its limited appeal. In the wake of the Stavisky scandal and rising xenophobic reaction, the paper felt obliged to describe briefly in French its political purpose, adding that its geographical circulation included among other lands Switzerland, Holland, the Scandinavian countries, the Saar, Czechoslovakia, and Romania.¹⁵⁷ The German speaking minorities outside the Reich also provided a readership. After 1935 special efforts were undertaken to attract a wider market in Palestine.¹⁵⁸ And in reference to the Balkan countries, the *Tageszeitung* claimed with particular pleasure that it sold better than the Nazi papers.¹⁵⁹

Despite such claims, the foremost market for the paper remained Paris. The capital accounted for approximately one-quarter of its circulation followed by the

¹⁵¹ Jacob, *Kind meiner Zeit*, p. 185. Refer also to Wronkow, “Kleiner Mann in Großen Zeiten,” pp. 174–175.

¹⁵² Feder diary, LBI, 14 Nov. 1933. Feder had been advised on this matter by Hugo Simon.

¹⁵³ Poliakov, *Mémoires*, p. 45.

¹⁵⁴ Messageries Hachette to *Pariser Tageblatt*, 18 June 1936, ZSIAP; PTZ, Nr. 51 Bl. 73. The claim made by the PTZ in October 1936 that its circulation ran at 34,000 copies was widely exaggerated. It stemmed from its desire to receive communication privileges concerning the 1937 Paris Exhibition; PTZ to M. le Commissaire general de l'Exposition, 28 Oct. 1936, ZSIAP, PTZ, Nr. 72, Bl. 65.

¹⁵⁵ Notice, PT 26, 6 Jan. 1934, p. 1.

¹⁵⁶ Notice, PT 55, 4 Feb. 1934, p. 5.

¹⁵⁷ Advertisement, PT 43, 23 Jan. 1934.

¹⁵⁸ Confidential report to AA, 2 Nov. 1935, PA AA, Presse Abteilung, Deutschland la Frankreich, Bd. 3.

¹⁵⁹ Dr [ach] to Gaston Bergery, deputy director of *la Fleche*, 16 Oct. 1936, ZSIAP, PTZ, Nr. 72, Bl. 25.

paper of its kind. The overseas distribution was thoroughly dependent on surface mail. Hence, it took approximately eight days to reach Palestine.¹⁶³ Schalom Ben-Chorin, one of the paper's regular contributors, recalled that the paper was read "in intellectual circles of the German refugees to Palestine, but always arrived (by ship) too late to be topical and had no political influence."¹⁶⁴ Its circulation in Palestine, never amounting to more than a few hundred copies, was hampered firstly by its tardiness and by the fact that whereas elsewhere its anti-Hitlerian stand might have proved unique, in Palestine — at least among the Jewish inhabitants — this position was well represented by the Hebraic press and the English language *Palestine Post*, various hectographic weekly bulletins put out by German Jewish refugees, and sundry weeklies published by the German emigration.¹⁶⁵

Similarly, a "friend" reported back to the *Tageszeitung* staff that at the World Jewish Congress in Geneva he had heard comments circulating about the difficulties of obtaining the paper in Geneva and in getting subscriptions. The informant added, "all over I have heard the same objection that the paper is too expensive abroad, especially in countries with weak currencies such as Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, Austria, etc. Otherwise I could have straight away obtained orders, especially among the congress participants from these countries."¹⁶⁶ For the German emigrants in New York City, the paper was extremely difficult to

¹⁶⁰ Using the general figure of 13,000 as the number of copies sold on the newspaper stands, and a figure of 2,800 (PTZ 627, 6 March 1938) referring to the numbers sold in Paris alone, one arrives at 22 percent. Using a conservative estimate, one can add another 3 percent to the total subscriptions in the Paris area. Another estimate for the *Pariser Tageblatt* can be gained by combining the progression of sales on the stands of the PT (as reported by Hachette) with those sales in the French provinces and abroad to arrive at the following statistics: in January 1934 Paris accounted for 37 percent of the sales and the remaining 63 percent came from elsewhere. This fluctuated from month to month in 1934 and 1935; ZStAP, PTZ, Nr. 51, Bl. 80.

¹⁶¹ PTZ 627, 6 March 1938, p. 1.

¹⁶² PTZ 639, 20 March 1938, p. 1.

¹⁶³ A letter from a reader in Tel-Aviv to the PTZ noted that he had only received the 1 November issue of the paper on 9 November. Judging from this along with other accounts (see below) one can assume that it took approximately eight days for the paper to reach Palestine; "Briefkasten," PT 708, 20 Nov. 1935, p. 4.

¹⁶⁴ Schalom Ben-Chorin to the author, 25 April 1977.

¹⁶⁵ Erich Gottgeiren to the author, 8 July 1977.

¹⁶⁶ Lore Cohn to PTZ, 15 Aug. 1936, ZStAP, PTZ, Nr. 45, Bl. 206.

the Austrian Socialist Party, the *Tageblatt* announced its first one year ban in one of its most important German markets.¹⁷⁰ Another ban was imposed on the paper following discussions between German and Austrian authorities in November 1937.¹⁷¹ However, it was the cascade of political and diplomatic events that began in 1938 and ended with the outbreak of war in September 1939 that proved to be the most serious for the paper's financial existence. Hitler's expansion into Austria and Czechoslovakia marked the first considerable reduction in the paper's circulation. With the outbreak of the war and the Swiss acquisition to National Socialist pressure still another German speaking market was lost.¹⁷²

Not only did the financial and intellectual security of a steady readership vanish in emigration, and not only was a trained and accredited network of journalists absent, but so too were those technical advances which contributed to the quality of the Berlin press. "Teletype, foreign telegrams, telephone reports: all these modern conveniences of news reporting were replaced with a bicycle by the *Pariser Tageblatt*..."¹⁷³ This messenger belonged to the semi-official French news agency *Agence Havas*.

The Reich authorities, always attributing more influence to the émigrés than they actually possessed, were perpetually pre-occupied with locating the "sources" of information of the emigrant accounts. The German foreign office suspected a

¹⁶⁷ Bruno Buchwald to Bernhard, 23 March 1937, ZStAP, NL Bernhard, Nr. 44, Bl. 10.
¹⁶⁸ Otto Lehmann-Russbüdt to PTZ, 10 Aug. 1936, ZStAP, PTZ, Nr. 65, Bl. 288.

¹⁶⁹ PT 51, 31 Jan. 1934, p. 1. As a result of the editors' protest, the ban was reduced to six months; unsigned article, "Danzig – ein Beispiel," PT 84, 6 March 1934, pp. 1–2. In October another six month ban was announced; PT 320, 28 Oct. 1934, p. 1.

¹⁷⁰ PT 78, 28 Feb. 1934, p. 1.

¹⁷¹ PTZ 533, 28 Nov. 1937, p. 2.

¹⁷² "Bemühungen um Weiterführung der PTZ im Frühjahr 1940," ZStAP, PTZ, Nr. 2/1, Bl. 9–11.

¹⁷³ Wronkow, "Kleiner Mann in Großen Zeiten," p. 174. For a concise history of Agence Havas refer to *Histoire Générale de la Presse Française*, vol. III, pp. 289–94 and pp. 461–88. Also refer to a brochure prepared in March 1937 tersely reviewing the history and nature of the French press: "Leitheft: 'Die französische Presse,'" BA, R58/1102.

worked evenings on a part-time basis for the *Tageblatt's* chief-editor. Through his long standing personal contacts with Havas, however, Bernhard received a reduced rate for Havas's information services.¹⁷⁶ The incident reveals the degree of Reich infiltration into the emigrant community and sectors of French public and private life. And indeed the *Tageblatt* – *Tageszeitung* relied heavily on the French news agency for its information.

The personal contacts established over the years by the left-bourgeois journalists with foreign governmental officials served the émigré press well. Through these channels they were able to gain access to information otherwise closed to them. For example, the exiled political scientist and occasional contributor to the *Pariser Tageblatt* Arcadius Gurland received his information through the Czech embassy in Berlin.¹⁷⁷ Given the francophilism of the *Tageblatt* journalists, one can assume that regular information came from the French embassy in Berlin as well.

In France excellent relations existed between several leading French political personalities and the émigrés. The Radical Socialist director of the press at the Quai d'Orsay Pierre Comert and the Socialists Léon Blum and Salomon Grumbach are repeatedly singled out in émigré circles and by Reich authorities for their assistance to the emigrant cause. The French Socialist Jean Longuet gave assistance and shelter to Breitscheid and Hilferding as well as many other German

¹⁷⁴ German embassy Paris to AA, 4 Aug. 1933, PA AA, Presse Abteilung, P 16 Allg., "Propaganda gegen Deutschland und Gegenpropaganda," Bd. 3.

¹⁷⁵ Hearing of Pierre Comert, former Chef de Presse du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 27 Dec. 1979, *Les Evénements survenus en France de 1933 à 1945. Témoignages et Documents Recueillis par la Commission d'Enquête Parlementaire*, vol. VII (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, n.d.), p. 2176. See also Thalmann, "L'immigration allemande et l'opinion publique en France de 1933 à 1936," pp. 165–169; Thalmann discusses efforts on the part of Reich authorities to win over or at least neutralize French public opinion and leading industrialists and journalists.

¹⁷⁶ German embassy Paris to AA, 14 Feb. 1934, PA AA, Presse Abteilung Frankreich 4, "Propaganda und Allgemeine Angelegenheiten, Geheim," Bd. 4. On the day of the changeover of the *Tageblatt* into the *Pariser Tageszeitung*, Fritz Wolff requested Havas to continue its services at the former monthly rate of 1,000 francs; Fritz Wolff to Agence Havas, 12 June 1936, ZSIAP, PTZ, Nr. 1, Bl. 7.

¹⁷⁷ Arcadius Gurland, interview with author held in Darmstadt, FRG, 1 April 1977.

political, economic, and professional independence, even during the most favorable years under Léon Blum's popular front government. The peculiar circumstances with which these journalists in exile found themselves confronted drastically determined the content and caliber of their journalism. Especially when reporting events in the home country, they were forced to rely almost exclusively on secondary sources and accounts – be they from non-German journalists, the foreign press or newly arrived fellow emigrants. The situation did not change greatly in reference to their coverage of either French or English domestic and foreign policy. One looks in vain in the *Pariser Tageblatt* – *Pariser Tageszeitung* for new and original insights into national and world events. Rather, the paper's singularity rests in its analysis and interpretation of events – and in the politics it espoused.

¹⁷⁸ Livian, *Le Parti Socialiste et l'immigration*, p. 179.

¹⁷⁹ Bernhard to Wladimir Poliakov, 4 Dec. 1934, ZSKAP, PTZ, Nr. 51, Bl. 74–75.

¹⁸⁰ Other individuals who have been mentioned in this context include Gaston Palewski, Henri Laugier, Yvon Delbos' cabinet chief, Georges Mandel, Pierre Cot, and Jean Giraudoux; see Thalmann, "L'immigration allemande et l'opinion publique en France de 1933 à 1936," pp. 153–154.



Leopold Schwarzschild and the Neue Tage-Buch

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Leopold Schwarzschild and the *Neue Tage-Buch*

Hans-Albert Walter

On 1 July 1933, barely three months after he had escaped from Germany, Leopold Schwarzschild brought out in Paris the first number of the weekly *Das Neue Tage-Buch* (The New Diary). Just as the *Neue Weltbühne* (The New International Scene, published first in Prague, then in Paris, 1933–9) continued the traditions of Ossietzky's and Jacobsohn's Berlin weekly, so Schwarzschild set out to carry on those of the former *Tagebuch*. This highbrow weekly appeared until 1933 in Berlin, first under the editorship of Stefan Grossmann and then under that of Schwarzschild himself. While the *Weltbühne* was indubitably the more important of the two before 1933, the *Neue Tage-Buch* became under Schwarzschild's guidance far and away the best of all German emigré publications.

Schwarzschild was in no way prepared for life in exile. After Chancellor Papen's unconstitutional take-over of Prussia in 1932, he had moved his offices and residence to Munich, believing that the dividing walls of German particularism would provide adequate protection against 'further departures from strict legality'. An astute enough precaution against the encroachments of a Papen-like regime, but of course utterly ineffective against the sort of terror Hitler was going to unleash. Elisabeth Castonier, until 1933 herself a *Tagebuch* contributor, described this 'naive dodge' as a 'repression of an underlying sense of impending doom'.¹ Be that as it may, the episode certainly highlights the delusion common even among highly perceptive democrats that their sworn enemies would deal with them according to the customary procedural rules.

For a brief interval after Hitler's accession to power, the paper continued unmolested. But when, on 9 March 1933, Bavaria was brought to heel (*gleichgeschaltet*), the *Tagebuch* was immediately banned and its editors had to flee the country.

¹ Elisabeth Castonier, *Stürmisch bis heiter* (Munich, 1964), p. 204.

The weekly's speedy reappearance in exile was entirely due to the exertions and munificence of Mr J. C. S. Warendorf, a wealthy Dutch lawyer. He was in Rome when Hitler became chancellor, and the comparatively mild terror of the fascist blackshirts helped him to gauge what was happening further north. When a few weeks later an English acquaintance mentioned Schwarzschild's difficulties, Warendorf decided on a salvage operation enabling the *Tagebuch* to be published outside Germany. He and Schwarzschild formed the *Société Néerlandaise d'Éditions* with a share capital of 200,000 French francs (approximately £4,000), subscribed entirely by Warendorf, an amount he later increased by an additional loan. It was he who had the periodical installed in the exclusive Rue du Faubourg St Honoré, opposite the British Embassy.² Motivated by a feeling of political solidarity and human fellowship, Warendorf's unstinting generosity demonstrated what democratic dedication coupled to a sense of civic responsibility could achieve.

At first the weekly carried on with an almost unchanged panel of contributors, among them such well-known political analysts as Konrad Heiden and Rudolf Olden and essayists of the calibre of Ludwig Marcuse and Joseph Roth. Later the *Neue Tage-Buch* provided a forum for luminaries even more illustrious; Heinrich and Thomas Mann, Alfred Döblin, Arnold Zweig, Ernst Toller, Lion Feuchtwanger, Siegmund Freud wrote for it. So did distinguished foreign commentators like Ilya Ehrenburg, Wickham Steed, Harold Nicolson, Pertinax, and Wladimir d'Ormesson. The articles regularly contributed from 1933 onwards by Winston Churchill did perhaps most to mould the paper's characteristic political physiognomy. Still a voice in the wilderness in his own country and an outsider in his party, Churchill had been one of nazidom's earliest and most implacable foes.

On sale everywhere in the countries of Europe with a free press after July 1933, the *Neue Tage-Buch* deliberately avoided any commitment to a specific programme. But its first editorial still rings out today like a proclamation of its purpose and objectives.

It seems hardly necessary to provide this publication with an introduction or a programme. Two points may be briefly made: the special

² Personal communication to the writer by Mr Warendorf, during a conversation in Amsterdam in 1963.

LEOPOLD SCHWARZSCHILD AND THE *NEUE TAGE-BUCH*

circumstances under which a German journal is being published in an alien environment justify their mention. Since we shall be compelled to report on German affairs, indeed since it will be one of our main tasks to do so frequently and in minute detail, we want here to state and explicitly acknowledge – because our present condition painfully impresses this fact on our consciousness – that the unhappy country beyond the Rhine remains our homeland. Impossible ever to sever the innumerable ties that consciously and unconsciously link us through our own experience and the accumulated heritage of generations to our country; impossible to tear out the roots that bind us to German society, its culture and its language. It is precisely because we feel our responsibility towards the best traditions of our fatherland, and have remained loyal to them that we must now expose the motives and deeds of the thugs who are on the verge of obliterating, desecrating, and poisoning whatever was once noble and beautiful in Germany. Love for Germany must nowadays assume the guise of implacable hatred of those who have enslaved it. This is the first point we want to make. The second consists in what one might call a pious hope. Emigration, the process of uprooting oneself, can have two results: it can blur one's vision or add to it. It can infuse such hatred and bitterness into people as to blind them completely. On the other hand, the greater distance it inevitably imposes on places and events, in terms both of time and space, can make for a deeper understanding, a more objective and detached insight into the essence of things. The history of emigration knows of both alternatives. It is our earnest hope that we may ultimately come to exemplify the latter.³

The *Neue Tage-Buch* did not aim at mass appeal; facts were analysed rather than reported and the paper assumed that current events as well as the context within which they occurred were known to its readers. Insisting on such exacting standards, it virtually selected its own readership. Though exiled, it still addressed itself to an opinion-forming and decision-making elite, which in view of the special circumstances of its publication could not consist entirely of the weekly's own compatriots.

The emphasis on political and economic developments greatly restricted the space available for the arts and literature. These limitations, however, made for reviews so intelligently selective and concise as to provide today's reader with an unflinching guide to the truly representative works of the period. Roughly three-quarters of

³ *Neue Tage-Buch* (hereafter, NTB), 1 July 1933, p. 3.

its thirty pages dealt with political and economic topics; the rest was given over to articles of general interest, literary reviews, and such regular features as the glossary entitled 'miniatures' and the highly informative news column 'Outside the Reichskulturkammer'.

In one respect, however, the former *Tage-Buch* style had to conform to the requirements imposed by the conditions of exile. Before it could be analysed in the usual manner, news from the Third Reich had first to be made to yield the information the nazis tried to conceal. Cutting through the web of deliberate official deceptions and half-truths required an all-embracing expertise able to illuminate, assess, and correlate intricate inter-relationships, and familiarity with the crucial factors in the highly complex structure, of, for example, the economy or the monetary system, against which the veracity of official information could be checked. Particular attention was paid to Germany's secret rearmament and to the economic and financial policies that made it possible. The weekly's greatest journalistic triumph was the discovery of the near-fraudulent circulation of 'Mefo' treasury bills which paid for the clandestine arms. The way in which Haniel and Hans Hermes managed, by careful analysis of official German figures and information published in the business section of the daily press, to disclose Schacht's financial manipulation, qualifies as one of journalism's classic exploits. It would go beyond the scope of this article to retrace the intricate procedures and elaborate cross-checks employed to substantiate Schwarzschild's findings – they took almost a year to complete. Finally, in September 1935, the painstakingly collected evidence yielded incontestable proof, based, as the article explained, 'on official figures, subjected only to a novel method of evaluation'.⁴ The entire, highly technical investigation rested on official data concerning the circulation of treasury bills, the income from stamp duties, and divergences between these sets of figures. The importance of the exposure and the consternation it caused became obvious when within a week of its appearance, the German government introduced legislation prohibiting the publication of such vital data. It was possible to score such a scoop because Schwarzschild combined an unusually imaginative analytical

⁴ *Ibid.*, 31 August 1935, p. 829. The account of the investigation opened in the issue for 21 July 1934, and was continued at intervals, the final article appearing on 6 September 1935.

intelligence with exceptionally wide and solidly based knowledge. Company reports, balance sheets, import and export statistics, promotion lists from the army gazette, in short every scrap of public and private information from nazi Germany was carefully scrutinized. Sometimes seemingly unimportant snippets of news would contain intelligence of great significance.

The *Neue Tage-Buch* was read by the chancelleries and the general staffs of Europe; it counted among its subscribers diplomats, high-ranking officers, industrial and financial leaders; it was frequently quoted by the international press, and its articles and commentaries were debated in the Parliaments of Britain, France, and Holland.

Looking back across the distance of thirty years and in the light of evidence now available, it is of course easy to show how often the paper went wrong. Yet set against the difficulties of gathering news in exile, and compared with the delusions and misinterpretations of other emigré papers – for example on the effectiveness of refugee resistance or the impending overthrow of the Hitler regime – the *Neue Tage-Buch* strikes a note of exemplary realism. It erred neither in its appreciation of the general situation nor in its judgment on immediate fact; it did, however, misjudge occasionally some of the most inscrutable factors in a dictatorship; the power structure, and personal rivalries between various leaders, as well as frictions between contending organizations such as the army and the party, or between party factions. Liable to be mistaken on such detail, Schwarzschild was, nevertheless, more often than not right in his overall conclusions. For he had intuitively grasped Hitler's essentially expansionist aims, and it was its tireless and consistent exposure of these which earned the *Neue Tage-Buch* its lasting fame, pre-eminence, and international reputation.

Nowhere else between 1933 and 1939 were warnings against Germany's war preparations more frequent and urgent, and more discerningly documented than in the *Neue Tage-Buch*. Time and again the western democracies were shown what to make of nazi protestations of peaceful intent; official assurances were constantly compared with the relevant passages in *Mein Kampf*; the incontestable economic evidence of the sustained armament drive was continuously scrutinized; and Schwarzschild untiringly demonstrated to his readers everywhere the futility and folly of appeasement. Half-jokingly but aptly, they nicknamed him Cassandra.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

Through him the other, the civilized Germany, denounced its monstrous alternative. This record allowed the *Neue Tage-Buch* to share the proud self-awareness which induced Thomas Mann to proclaim: 'Where I am is Germany'. Schwarzschild – a Jewish German rather than a German Jew – hated nazidom so relentlessly because, as Klaus Mann noted with undisguised admiration, it simply outraged his innate patriotism.

For all that, little notice was taken of the *Neue Tage-Buch's* exhortations. Inertia, lack of imagination, preoccupation with internal problems, the social upheavals of the economic crisis, all these were issues that seemed more immediate and pressing than insubstantial prophecies of future doom. Schwarzschild noted the stupidities of the appeasing years with a sort of frenzied bitterness; week in week out he recorded them, commented upon them, inveighed against them, and, forgetting none, entered them each on the debit side of history. His articles often reflected the fury of the unheeded prophet, the wrathful desperation of a man who, to keep his sanity, had to shrug it all off in fits of derisive laughter. The European Left – and here lay the irony of the situation – which should have been his most understanding and reliable ally, slowly turned into his most obstinate adversary.

We have to get used to the paradox that the social-democrats and certain ageing radicals in some of the most important countries are actually aiding and abetting Hitler. This of course is not their intention. But it is their policy all the same. For insofar as they insist on equating peace with disarmament, they are playing Hitler's game. The 'disarmament of the rest' which they demand, amounts *ipso facto* to the 'rearmament of Germany', which they oppose. The labour parties might have learned from the fate of their German comrades that with Hitler, brute force, naked and undisguised, has entered upon the scene. But with what other than force can you counter force? Failure to grasp this fact and trust in the persuasiveness of moral arguments destroyed Germany's democracy and her labour movement. What a spectacle to see labour parties of other countries now proposing policies which, if successful, would inevitably repeat on a global scale what had previously happened in Germany.⁵

This was written in November 1933, and similar charges were to be repeated again and again in the years to come. The paper had to fight a war on two fronts: on one against Hitler, and on the other

⁵ NTB, 4 November 1933, p. 444.

against misguided democratic attitudes. It was endlessly and furiously attacked by 'dedicated' liberals, but gave as good as it received. Schwarzschild's tone grew increasingly contemptuous as with the passage of time the blind obstinacy of his opponents became more and more apparent. Once challenged, he fought back ruthlessly, often holding his adversaries up to undying ridicule with one of his telling quips. When, in spring 1939, after the occupation of Prague, Western opinion finally awoke to the truth he had preached for years, it was already too late. In one of his most moving and eloquent articles, Schwarzschild, drawing the moral from these wasted years, wrote:

This did it. After six years, this finally did it. The sinister documentary of violence, robbery, and murder during the ides of this March, rammed the lesson home. A country which, because it was a credit to civilization, had already been assaulted and crippled, was finally to perish in the process. An honest, hard-working, trusting nation has now to pay the price and to endure the long night of bondage. But this has opened their eyes! They now know what they are up against. They now know what to expect. At long last it is understood, acknowledged, and accepted. No more attempts to prevaricate, construe, twist, contradict, and indulge in fantasies. It has at long last been recognized: these men are out to subjugate everything and everybody. To exercise power, to rule, is their one and only objective.

For six years we have tried to get this message across. For six years people either pretended not to notice, or managed to repress any glimmer of understanding. Bah, they said, this is none of our business . . . If he touches us we will rap him over the knuckles good and hard . . . We're not afraid, we won't let him spoil our fun. When the monster was already strong we warned them again. How come, they said, what gave you this idea? . . . It is absurd, improbable, unproved and unprovable. You are prejudiced, that's all. Didn't he explicitly assure us? . . . Well then. Didn't he sign this agreement? . . . Well then. All of a sudden he made a startling and alarming move. Ah, they said, obviously an exception when seen in proper perspective. Ah, they continued, when something similar happened again, an isolated incident, not really typical. And the next time they said it was nothing more serious than acting out a sort of inner compulsion. Any loophole offering escape from reality would be seized upon. This is now over and done with. Yes, notwithstanding the lessons of scepticism learned over the years, this period is now over and done with. That much can be asserted.⁶

⁶ NTB, 25 March 1939, p. 207.

A bitter triumph to have been proved right by such catastrophes. Actually, and although Schwarzschild himself may not always have been aware of it, he had already gone beyond merely resisting Hitler and repudiating nazi philosophy. He was evolving a new concept of humanism, a new insight into the meaning of exile which added to the self-knowledge of the expatriates. Gone was the optimistic acceptance of progress, the lofty humanitarianism of the well-intentioned; gone too was the axiomatic belief in the superiority of moral and intellectual forces. The 'new humanist' was no longer the smiling sage of the Erasmic tradition, nor was he either the uncommitted onlooker who retired to the heights until the waters of the deep had receded or the dedicated pacifist, who for the sake of peace was ready to sacrifice himself and all he stood for. The new humanism as Schwarzschild perceived and practised it (without, however, making much use of the term, or explicitly defining it) was infinitely more active, forward-looking and militant than it had ever been in the days of Weimar. It was also completely free of any doctrinal or party affiliation.

The latter point is of importance and accounts for the difficulty in defining the *Neue Tage-Buch's* exact political position. By nature not a contemplative man, writing was for Schwarzschild a deliberately chosen substitute for action. This gave his work its brilliance and its compelling sense of urgency. Moreover, he had the rare gift of expressing with seeming ease, concisely and clearly, what he felt and wanted to say. His striking analytical power operated on causal and linear rather than on dialectical lines, so that, even if incorrect on some minor details, the structure of his thought and reasoning remained cogent and unassailable.

Schwarzschild would certainly have objected to being called a liberal. In exile, left-wing pacifist opponents repeatedly referred to him as a 'man of the left'. He never contradicted them, although increasingly aware of the irrelevance of such classifications. A liberal camp follower in his younger days, he quickly changed his views when he became professionally acquainted with the results of *laissez-faire* economics. The clash between private gain and social need soon persuaded him to equate liberalism with 'Manchester', to him a derisive term, signifying the buccaneering exploitation of the many for the benefit of the few. The down-to-earth, no-nonsense Schwarzschild, rather than the economic

theoretician, became more and more convinced of the urgent need for a complete overhaul of the economic system. In this respect he had completely outgrown his bourgeois background. On the other hand his middle-class upbringing had bequeathed him an outspoken independence of spirit which compelled him to subject every issue to close rational analysis rather than to trust his instinct and spontaneous reactions. Such dispassionate detachment presupposed a pioneering mind, untrammelled by considerations of expediency and totally oblivious of conventional patterns of thought and behaviour. Schwarzschild was an outspoken pragmatist, and although much of his strength lay in this rigorously practical approach it could on occasion mislead him. He was indubitably on slippery ground when in his eagerness to strengthen the anti-Hitler forces he supported the near-nazi regimes of Dollfuss and Mussolini. The Spanish civil war demonstrated the danger of being swayed by considerations of short-term expediency, just as the Moscow trials shocked him into a realization of the basic difference between totalitarianism and democracy. He had, however, never allowed his pragmatic approach to override moral scruples, and he unfailingly backed departures that promised to promote the cause of human progress. He was one of the first to welcome Roosevelt's New Deal at a time when such unconditional support was still quite rare:

The first attempt at capitalist planning, this first testing of steering mechanisms, devised for the time being to overcome the present crisis, but ultimately to be used for the prevention of other crises, will in all probability be looked upon in years to come as one of those colossal landmarks that here and there dominate the landscapes of history. No one before him has dared to interfere as radically and as decisively with the workings of the capitalist machinery. Inasmuch as the changes he introduced were rooted in the concept of a socially responsible and responsive economy and tended to restrain the freebooting approach of private enterprise, he may well be called a socialist. It is one of the more grotesque ironies of history that the presidency of Roosevelt should coincide with the emergence of the German Führer who, assuming the garb and guise of a socialist revolutionary, yet manages to stifle all change and to cling like grim death to the most ancient of the old reactionary orders, vociferously and shamelessly denouncing any departure from established procedures.⁷

⁷ NTB, 22 July 1933, p. 89.

III

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

Given his approach to the structural problems of modern society, it can hardly be surprising that Schwarzschild was greatly impressed by the Soviet Union and the vast promise of its social experiment. Louis Fischer had been the periodical's Russian correspondent since long before 1933, a choice that speaks for itself; but its own attitude, as expressed in editorials on the various five-year plans, was equally enthusiastic, and there can be little doubt that Schwarzschild's admiration was sincere and independent of the Soviet Union's usefulness as an ally against Hitler. He regarded the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional phase, and the restrictions on individual liberty, odious as they were to him, as indispensable though strictly temporary expedients. Since, among the mushrooming European totalitarianisms, he accepted the Russian as the only progressive one holding out some hope for mankind, he felt that in this particular instance the ends justified the means.

Schwarzschild's independence of any party line or doctrine, the strange blend of his middle-class upbringing, revolutionary fervour, and personal approach to socialism, inevitably brings the word 'humanist' to mind. This, in the circumstances of exile and in the political context of his day, implied, in practical terms, support for some kind of comprehensive, undoctinaire popular-front coalition. From 1935 onward he campaigned for a united front among all anti-Hitler refugees. When the 'popular front' finally emerged, he whole-heartedly backed it and played a leading part in its councils. But he was soon disillusioned and shocked by the failure of the various parties to sink their differences and to agree on a common policy. 'It would have been better to have started from scratch, without parties obsessed by the imagined necessity to maintain their petty identity.'⁸

His subsequent lone-wolf approach to politics, his complete aloofness from party groupings even among his fellow exiles, dates from this chastening experience which, of course, included knowledge of and contact with the exiled German Communist Party. Yet even familiarity with its tortuous tactics hardly explains why Schwarzschild should have turned into one of the most rabid communist baiters among the German expatriates. Ludwig Marcuse, a

⁸ NTB, 26 December 1936, p. 1231. The break with the popular front came only after the first Moscow trial.

close collaborator and friend of Schwarzschild, calls him a premature McCarthy among the German refugees.⁹ What had happened? Like Arthur Koestler and Willi Münzenberg, Schwarzschild was deeply outraged by the Moscow show trials.

The tragedy of this trial is not even that of the victims. What is tragic is the way it is being conducted and that it should have taken place at all. To state this in public is the prerogative and indeed the duty of those who have consistently advocated a coalition with Russia, and have openly acknowledged their admiration for the Soviet Union's progressive approach to social and economic issues. Just as they were busily refuting the false alternative of 'western civilization on the one hand, and bolshevism on the other', so assiduously spread to subvert the undecided nations, they suffered the mortification of being confronted with a spectacle of such sinister barbarity as to reinforce the very prejudices they were trying to demolish.¹⁰

The particular application of these general conclusions to his own political conduct Schwarzschild summed up as follows:

Those who oppose to the totalitarian ideology the concepts of democratic government and the rule of law would undermine their own position if they were to acquiesce in any act of dictatorial arbitrariness. They could then be reproached with condemning it in some countries while condoning it in others.¹¹

In spite of its studiously moderate tone, the article in which this appeared marked a turning point, the rethinking of accepted ideas, a disenchanting new departure. But why did Schwarzschild keep on returning to the same subject whether it was topical or not? Is it really too far-fetched to suggest that something akin to disappointed love, perhaps an only half-acknowledged, deeply emotional commitment, compelled him almost obsessively to regurgitate the same issue time and time again?¹² This would account for the savage editorials which followed this first onslaught. The crude and excessive violence of later articles was his reaction to the slanders German emigré communists had published about him in a Prague paper. These purported to prove on the strength of forged documents that the *Neue Tage-Buch* was subservient to Goebbels. Schwarzschild's inability to treat the matter with the contempt it

⁹ Ludwig Marcuse, *Mein 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1960), p. 204.

¹⁰ NTB, 29 August 1936, p. 826.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 828.

¹² The persistence of the obsession can be seen in his biography of Karl Marx, entitled *The Red Prussian*, published in New York in 1947.

deserved, and to be satisfied with having unmasked and made fools of the clumsy forgers, reveals a serious flaw in his character. Unaccountably, and to the detriment of the paper, he treated these absurd imputations as a reflection on his journalistic integrity. Unrequited love and personal resentment combined to generate an insensate, almost paranoiac hatred of communism, the Soviet Union, and all communists. His comments on the twentieth anniversary of the Russian revolution were shameful and at the same time ludicrously at variance with his normal standards of excellence. Blinded by hate, he resorted to the wildest accusations and his articles soon vied with the Moscow trials in the sheer grotesqueness of their charges. Where his pet hate was concerned, this most painstaking journalist, who would never print a news item unless it was properly verified, unscrupulously manipulated facts, substituting venomous invective for rational argument. One such article published soon after the outbreak of war proved particularly vicious. It anonymously tarred the membership of the *Schutzverband Deutscher Schriftsteller im Exil* (Association of exiled German writers) with the communist brush, casting doubt on the democratic reliability of men who had for years contributed to the paper. These allegations had serious and sometimes fatal consequences, for they debarred those libelled from obtaining visas to oversea countries, especially to the United States. After the fall of France this was often tantamount to a death sentence. The writers never forgave Schwarzschild this infamy and shunned him for the rest of his days. The entire unedifying episode revealed an unsuspected and grave weakness in his personality.

As Schwarzschild had a journalist's nose for what was in the air, the *Neue Tage-Buch* often initiated discussions which were then taken up by a larger and occasionally world-wide public. One such topic, which the *Neue Tage-Buch* first debated in spring 1939, when war was imminent, was the post-war treatment of a defeated Germany. It sparked off an animated discussion not only among German exiles but also between such widely different papers as the *Populaire* of the French socialists and *Das Schwarze Korps* of Hitler's SS.

The brilliantly prophetic *Neue Tage-Buch* editorial on the subject correctly anticipated the collapse of all authority (the simultaneous destruction of the economic potential could not be foreseen); the annihilation and corruption of cadres which could form

an alternative administration (forgetting perhaps too glibly the political concentration camp prisoners); the totalitarian – read communist – danger of a power vacuum; the impossibility of continuing, as if nothing had happened, where the Republic had left off in 1933. Analysing the presumed German situation at the ‘zero hour of defeat’, Schwarzschild concluded this exercise in abstract computation as follows:

It would probably be best if after the collapse of Nazi power in the finally defeated Germany a way could be found to prevent the country from once more assuming the ambiguous position which her demons and her genius, her fortune and her misfortune, have apparently conspired to mark out for her. One wonders, therefore, whether for some considerable time to come the victors should not deploy their administrative and military personnel as teachers in government. This would allow the victors to introduce rational considerations into the question of governmental succession which, without such intervention, would have to be left to the workings of blind chance. Before handing over to new men and institutions, they could slowly re-educate the country in the arts of government and citizenship, and step by step wean the Germans from those aggressive and self-destructive habits acquired over centuries of misdirected effort.¹³

Here Schwarzschild had the courage to bring into the open a problem which German exiles of all political denominations, from Konrad Heiden to Prince Löwenstein and the communist Hermann Budzislowski, indignantly and patriotically refused to face. Their ingrained ‘national pride’ invariably clouded their judgment and sense of reality. They were all, of course, spokesmen of ‘the other Germany’, and hoped to assume power as representatives of the bourgeoisie, the Roman Catholics, or the proletariat. Their party bias perhaps even more than their Teuton patriotism prevented them from grasping the full implications of the problem. On the other hand it is surprising that the hard-bitten Schwarzschild, familiar as he was from his fight against the follies of appeasement with the amazing staying power of the irrational, should have set such store by the slow, steady process of education. For anyone who actually witnessed the workings and the failure of ‘re-education’, the hope that reason will ever be a guide to national attitudes turned to despair.

¹³ NTB, 15 July 1939, p. 685.

Module 5: The Rise and Fall of the Literary Reportage in the Interwar Period: The Case of Joseph Roth | Aufstieg und Fall der Literarischen Reportage in der Zwischenkriegszeit – am Beispiel von Joseph Roth

Director: Tobias Eberwein (Languages: English, Deutsch)

- 1. To be announced.**

Module 6: British War Correspondence and Literary Journalism, 1914-1918

Director: Andrew Griffiths (Language: English)

1. "A Wood of Death," (*Daily Mail*) by William Beach Thomas (1914)
2. "On a Flemish Hill, 17 May 1915," (*The Times*) by John Buchan (1915)
3. *France at War* by Rudyard Kipling (1915)
4. "The Storming of Beaucourt," (*Daily Mail*) by William Beach Thomas (1916)
5. "How the Tanks Went Over," (*B.E.F. Times*) by "Teech Bomas" (1916)
6. "First Phases of the Battle," (*Daily Telegraph*) by Philip Gibbs (1916)
7. *The Battles of the Somme* by Philip Gibbs (1917)
8. *Disenchantment*, by C. E. Montague (1922)
9. "A Legend of Truth," from *Debts and Credits* by Rudyard Kipling (1926)
10. *The First Casualty: The War Correspondent as Hero and Mythmaker from the Crimea to Iraq* by Philip Knightley (2003 [1975])
11. *A New History of War Reporting* by Kevin Williams (2019)

A WOOD OF DEATH.

HAUNTING SIGHT FOR AN ENGINEER.

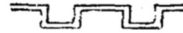
FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT,
W. BEACH THOMAS.

CALAIS, Sunday.

We hear of the heroism of war, and our soldiers, gay as ever, give the fighting its salt of humour. Between the fine deeds and merry words the horrors are in part omitted. But it is not well to forget that war is war. If we do we certainly shall not know what the fighting of the last fortnight has been on the terrible battlefields of Ypres. What men here have endured to suffer those at home must endure to hear.

The greatest of our recent successes has been the clearing of the enemy out of the woods, many of them of young trees and scrub, north of Ypres. They were doggedly held for a long time and persistently attacked. This way and that way the fight swayed, till a final hour when two bodies of our infantry advancing from different angles, and fighting with the bayonet, swept through and killed every man who held his ground.

When the work was over the men, after the established custom of this war, turned to the task of digging themselves in at the selected places. The first rough trenches zigzagged in the usual manner like battlement and embrasure, thus



The work took some two hours, and the men were able to rest in temporary security. When night fell some engineers who had been resting farther back during the day and had not joined in the attack were sent for to fix barbed wire and help to turn these rough trenches into living-places: to drain the bottom with a sunk line of stones, to cut the two steps and slope the sides—steep at the back, more sloping in front.

One of these engineers—a man whose plucky services have procured him promotion, who has seen moving sights enough to harden any sensibility—stopped as he began to enter the wood under such a sense of horror as paralysed his mind and his limbs. He could not go forward or back. The trees were filled with the strange light of winter evenings, and wherever he looked he saw the forms and the faces of the dead in number multitudinous. The ground was strewn, almost heaped, with forms, in every attitude, each twisted into horrible grotesqueness by the waning light.

HAUNTED SHADOWS.

When the wind wailing through the branches brought down one of the relic leaves of a "pestilence-stricken multitude," which brushed against his clothes like a great moth, he trembled like a frightened child; at last, when from the haunted shadows a thin voice called for water, his spirit was quite daunted and power of movement quite abandoned him. He could do no more.

When, later, free of the wood, he was busy at the dangerous game of fixing an entanglement of wire before the trenches, he felt in a haven of safety. [This is no decorated picture but the bare experience of an unsentimental soldier promoted for nerve in face of danger.]

It is a thing almost beyond belief that men can endure what on the evidence of this wood the Germans have endured. In these bayonet charges quarter is not asked or given. The ground is burdened not with wounded but with dead, and those who advance against our trenches have almost always to make their way over swathes of their fallen fellows. Their losses have often been as fifty to one, and the men who so suffer are fighting with little hope, certainly with no enthusiasm.

The battle of Ypres has been
Continued in Next Page.

for us the battle of the war. The result is—for the Allies, a few miles gained and great losses; for the enemy death beyond reckoning and a defeated dream.

THREE AIDS TO WARMTH.

Can this fighting continue in winter weather? The Germans boasted to some prisoners, one of whom escaped, that they had taken Dixmude—a victory of which now the prisoners are the only fruit—that they re-won the town because the Allies, too soft for life in the trenches, sought sleep and refuge in the houses. It is true that some of the trenches, even in the scene of the shifting battles round Ypres, are nearly as luxurious as houses. Sheltered passages lead to back premises—on one side the store-room or kitchen, on the other to various offices. The drainage and sanitation would pass the Factory Acts. But what of the wounded and the ill when the fouler weather comes? The Germans will suffer most because they must attack, and attack is trebly difficult.

One of our Tommies said that if you had cards, cigarettes, and socks the trenches weren't so bad. Well, these can be provided; and who shall say what influence on a campaign may not be exercised by these three aids to warmth and a lively spirit?

2. John Buchan, 'On a Flemish Hill, 17 May 1915,' *The Times*, 22 May 1915

On a Flemish Hill

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The Battleground of the North

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Memories of British Heroism

-

The Splendid Tale of Ypres

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(from John Buchan)

We publish today the first of a series of articles from Mr. John Buchan, who is on a visit to the British lines in France.

BRITISH HEADQUARTERS IN FRANCE, MAY 14

It is only a small hill, but in this flat country it is a viewpoint to be thankful for. A round knuckle of green 100ft. or so above the plain, it commands almost the whole extent of the British front. Behind are the ridges which march by the Mont des Cats and the Hill of Cassel to the uplands behind St. Omer. North are the low levels towards Dixmude, and south the valley of the Lys and the plains towards the Scarpe and the Scheldt. In front, a few miles off, are the trench lines round which has been waged one of the greatest battles in the world.

The landscape before us has been the scene of war for 2,000 years. In the haze to the right, where the tall factory chimneys of Lille just show above the ridges, Caesar put on his new mantle 'that day he overcame the Nervii.' Twenty miles off, in the middle distance the red-coated burghers of Ypres drove Count Robert of Artois and the chivalry of France to their doom in the marshes of Courtrai, and first established the prestige of modern infantry. Down there on the Lys rested the left wing of Villar's trenches which he designed to be the *ne plus ultra* of Marlborough. But all former history is eclipsed by the events which have taken place since October last, and which under our eyes are happening this very day.

In the winter it was a bleak landscape with stagnant water in every bottom and draggled woods of larch and waterlogged meadows. Now in this second week of May, it is as green as Oxfordshire. This morning it rained and the wind blew from the north. The wind still blows, but the rain has gone, and white clouds drift in a clear sky, as in some Flemish painting. Here, on the hillside, broom and lilac and wild hyacinths are everywhere. Cattle graze in fields round the little red homesteads below, and, for a moment, a man might delude himself with the belief that he was looking on some prosperous spring champaign in the happy days of peace.

A BROKEN ILLUSION.

But there are sights and sounds that break the illusion. Brown scars, which are not heather or bracken, line the woods, zig-zag across the meadows, and stand out, red and raw, on the farther slopes. A neat chateau shows in a gap of forest, but the glass reveals it as a riddled husk. And over the trees come puffs of fleecy smoke and an occasional splash of yellow, while on the ears falls a muffled booming, not loud or terrific, but curiously insistent. The ear at such times calls the mind to order quicker than the eye. It is that noise, so unlike the homely sounds of a countryside, that interprets the meaning of the red zig-zags and the white puffs.

The first sight of the front is in the nature of an anti-climax, if it takes the form of a bird's eye view from a hilltop. One is accustomed to the heavy preoccupation at home, the lists of casualties, the strained expectancy of the Press, the immense scars bitten into our national life. Then come the great ports, crowded with transports and cargo-

boats, the huge base hospitals, the supply depots, the 1,500 clerks in one department. Then 50 miles of country crowded with military traffic, the various headquarters, the railheads where punctual daily trains deliver their loads of food and ammunition. The whole hinterland is a beehive of military preparations, and leaves an unforgettable impression of sustained effort.

Then come the last narrow roads filled with battalions retiring into reserve or advancing to the trenches, and motor convoys without intermission, and every hamlet full of khaki. And, at the end of it all, these red zig-zags and smoke puffs and muffled undertones of sound. A spectacular battle with flags and charging masses would seem a fitter climax. But as one looks there seems a greater drama in this secret warfare, hidden in the earth and the crooks of hill. There is something desperate in its secrecy, something deadly in its silence, as viewed from this hilltop. Every half-mile of ground as far as the eye can reach has been the scene of some memorable struggle. And the story is not ended.

FRENCH BATTLE-GROUND.

South-east one sees the tops of chimneys behind a swell of land, where Armentières lies. Beyond is the brume which marks a plain—the Black Country of the Pas de Calais—and on the far horizon a faint line of upland. That is the ridge of Notre Dame de Lorette, from which on Sunday last the French made one of the great thrusts of the war in the West. We in England have heard far too little of that wonderful campaign of the Tenth Army round Arras, which defended what Louis XIV declared was the true gate of Paris. There on October 4, Maud'huy flung back a deadly assault of von Bülow as a time when his left flank was not yet protected by British troops. There, on October 24, the Prussian Guard drove in vain against the French lines based on the Arras lunette of hills. A week ago, after months of 'nibbling', came an artillery preparation which can scarcely have been equalled in this war. Those who saw it said that it was far more crushing than Neuve Chapelle, and it seems to have been greater than Langle de Cary's effort in Champagne. Then followed the *furia francese* of the infantry; the Freiburg corps were all but destroyed; and the villages were won which command the slopes towards Lens.

But that *terrain* is out of our picture from this hilltop. So, too, is the ground of the British line from La Bassée to Armentières: it is hidden in the brume of the Lys valley. But the line northwards is all in front of us. On the right, hidden behind the hill of Kemmel, is the famous Ploegsteert Wood, where in the most fantastic system of trenches conceivable, our troops have been confronting the Saxon 19th Corps since October. Farther north, and full in sight, is a line of shattered buildings on a ridge. That is Messines, which Allenby's cavalry held to November 1, when they were driven out after a fierce struggle. Along that ridge runs the high road from Armentières to Ypres, and its possession was one of the main German objectives. They hold most of it today, for the great campaign of the autumn, if it did not give them a road to Calais, gave them better trench positions than ours and on higher ground. Just opposite our hill top is the village of Wytschaete, some broken red walls on the ridge crest, and below it, in a field of yellow mustard, are the opposing trench lines. These slopes to the left of the ruins are Petit Bois and Maedelsteed, which the Gordons and the Royal Scots fought for desperately last December.

YPRES SALIENT.

Half a mile north the situation changes, for now the British lines are on the heights. Just over the Dickebusch pond there is a wooded slope with a skeleton house on the top of it. That was once the Château of Hollebeke, and to the left of it is the hamlet of St Eloi, which we held in the November fighting and again in March in the counter attack after Neuve Chapelle. There begins the famous salient of Ypres, which is likely to be regarded by future generations as the classic battleground of the British Army. Every field and spur and farmstead is famous. That brownish patch to the right of the distant church spire is Hill 60, where one of our divisions has for weeks struggled against howitzer fire and poison gas. There the Klein Zillebeke ridge begins, and a hundred yards east raged the critical struggle on October 31, when Moussy, with a division of the French 9th Corps, held the position by dismounting his cavalry escort and drawing upon cooks and ambulance men for the attack. There too on the evening of November 6 Kavanagh's Household Brigade saved the situation by their charge and the Blues and the 2nd Life Guards lost their commanders. Along the ridge, towards Gheluvelde, Cavan's Brigade came out of action reduced to its brigadier, five officers, and 700 men.

A little to the north, where the English estate, the charge of the 2nd Worcesters saved our battle front on a general afternoon of October 31, and 11 days later the

assault of the Prussian Guard broke itself against our 1st Division. Still further north, beyond the town, the second battle of Ypres has raged since April 22. The tale of this great fight has still to be written—a tale not less splendid than the epic of the autumn, for, if the situation in the second battle was strategically less critical than in the first, the heroism of the stand was not less splendid, and to the menace of superior numbers and far more numerous guns was added the horror of poison gas. There the Canadians and others of our troops won eternal glory.

THE BRITISH STAND.

We still hold the salient of Ypres, but it is no longer the same salient. The sharp angle of November has been replaced by an easy curve, several miles shorter in diameter. Gheluvelde, with its famous crossroads, is lost to us; and Zonnebeke and Langemarck; and Bixschoote, where Dubois's Zouaves fought so gallantly in November. The retention of the salient of Ypres is not a strategical necessity. It might be cut off without disadvantage, as the Russians cut off the salient of Lodz. What the future may bring is unknown, but the value of the British stand of the past month is clear beyond all doubt. [...] But the ground we have lost is too sacred for us to view its passing without regret. Some day we shall advance, with the resolve of every passing soldier, and shall hold again the resting places of our heroic dead.

The drawing in of our salient has meant the destruction of Ypres. Looking from our hilltop, one sees an incessant bursting of 'white hopes' which is the British soldier's nickname for 8-inch high explosive shell. Volumes of dark smoke rise in different quarters where fires have been kindled, and for the moment the place is obscured by a sombre cloud. Ten minutes later, as we look northward again, there is a sudden lull. The shells have stopped, the fires have died down, the sun is lighting up the white towers, and Ypres looks again a gracious and delicate little city in its cincture of green hills. It is with a sharp shock of surprise that we realize that it is an illusion, that Ypres is doomed beyond hope. The Cloth Hall, that miracle of homely Gothic, is mostly in ashes. The great towers of St. Martin's Church are only skeletons and any moment may see them fall. The Germans bombard it to prevent its use by the British, and we may have to destroy the last ancient buildings to clear our field of fire. Such war as this knows no pity, and the little city has become a shadow.

A NEW YPRES.

Some day the refugees will creep back to their ruined homes, and a new Ypres will arise, designed for the strict necessities of livelihood by an impoverished people. It will not be the old Ypres, for the treasures of stone and Lime will have gone past recall. Yet there will be consolations. The name of Ypres will be one of the most famous in the world, for it will be linked with two of the greatest fights in human history. It will have a new meaning too, for Britain. [...] The name of the little Flemish town has recalled the divisions in the British race and the centuries-old conflict between France and Britain. But from now, and henceforth, it will have other memories. It will stand as a symbol of unity within our race and unity within our Western civilization, that true alliance and that lasting unity which are sealed by a common sacrifice.

3. Rudyard Kipling, selection from *France at War*, 1915

I

ON THE FRONTIER OF CIVILIZATION

"It's a pretty park," said the French artillery officer. "We've done a lot for it since the owner left. I hope he'll appreciate it when he comes back."

The car traversed a winding drive through woods, between banks embellished with little chalets of a rustic nature. At first, the chalets stood their full height above ground, suggesting tea-gardens in England. Further on they sank into the earth till, at the top of the ascent, only their solid brown roofs showed. Torn branches drooping across the driveway, with here and there a scorched patch of undergrowth, explained the reason of their modesty.

The chateau that commanded these glories of forest and park sat boldly on a terrace. There was nothing wrong with it except, if one looked closely, a few scratches or dints on its white stone walls, or a neatly drilled hole under a flight of steps. One such hole ended in an unexploded shell. "Yes," said the officer. "They arrive here occasionally."

Something bellowed across the folds of the wooded hills; something grunted in reply. Something passed overhead, querulously but not without dignity. Two clear fresh barks joined the chorus, and a man moved lazily in the direction of the guns.

"Well. Suppose we come and look at things a little," said the commanding officer.

AN OBSERVATION POST

There was a specimen tree—a tree worthy of such a park—the sort of tree visitors are always taken to admire. A ladder ran up it to a platform. What little wind there was swayed the tall top, and the ladder creaked like a ship's gangway. A telephone bell tinkled 50 foot overhead. Two invisible guns spoke fervently for half a minute, and broke off like terriers choked on a leash. We climbed till the topmost platform swayed sickly beneath us. Here one found a rustic shelter, always of the tea-garden pattern, a table, a map, and a little window wreathed with living branches that gave one the first view of the Devil and all his works. It was a stretch of open country, with a few sticks like old tooth-brushes which had once been trees round a farm. The rest was yellow grass, barren to all appearance as the veldt.

"The grass is yellow because they have used gas here," said an officer. "Their trenches are— ——. You can see for yourself."

The guns in the woods began again. They seemed to have no relation to the regularly spaced bursts of smoke along a little smear in the desert earth two thousand yards away—no connection at all with the strong voices overhead coming and going. It was as impersonal as the drive of the sea along a breakwater.

Thus it went: a pause—a gathering of sound like the race of an incoming wave; then the high-flung heads of breakers spouting white up the face of a groyne. Suddenly, a seventh wave broke and spread the shape of its foam like a plume overtopping all the others.

"That's one of our torpilleurs—what you call trench-sweepers," said the observer among the whispering leaves.

Some one crossed the platform to consult the map with its ranges. A blistering outbreak of white smokes rose a little beyond the large plume. It was as though the tide had struck a reef out yonder.

Then a new voice of tremendous volume lifted itself out of a lull that followed. Somebody laughed. Evidently the voice was known.

"That is not for us," a gunner said. "They are being waked up from———" he named a distant French position. "So and so is attending to them there. We go on with our usual work. Look! Another torpilleur."

"THE BARBARIAN"

Again a big plume rose; and again the lighter shells broke at their appointed distance beyond it. The smoke died away on that stretch of trench, as the foam of a swell dies in the angle of a harbour wall, and broke out afresh half a mile lower down. In its apparent laziness, in its awful deliberation, and its quick spasms of wrath, it was more like the work of waves than of men; and our high platform's gentle sway and glide was exactly the motion of a ship drifting with us toward that shore.

"The usual work. Only the usual work," the officer explained. "Sometimes it is here. Sometimes above or below us. I have been here since May."

A little sunshine flooded the stricken landscape and made its chemical yellow look more foul. A detachment of men moved out on a road which ran toward the French trenches, and then vanished at the foot of a little rise. Other men appeared moving toward us with that concentration of purpose and bearing shown in both Armies when—dinner is at hand. They looked like people who had been digging hard.

"The same work. Always the same work!" the officer said.
"And you could walk from here to the sea or to Switzerland in that ditch—and you'll find the same work going on everywhere.
It isn't war."

"It's better than that," said another. "It's the eating-up of a people. They come and they fill the trenches and they die, and they die; and they send more and *those* die. We do the same, of course, but—look!"

He pointed to the large deliberate smoke-heads renewing themselves along that yellowed beach. "That is the frontier of civilization. They have all civilization against them —those brutes yonder. It's not the local victories of the old wars that we're after. It's the barbarian—all the barbarian. Now, you've seen the whole thing in little. Come and look at our children."

SOLDIERS IN CAVES

We left that tall tree whose fruits are death ripened and distributed at the tingle of small bells. The observer returned to his maps and calculations; the telephone-boy stiffened up beside his exchange as the amateurs went out of his life. Some one called down through the branches who was attending to—Belial, let us say, for I could

not catch the gun's name. It seemed to belong to that terrific new voice which had lifted itself for the second or third time. It appeared from the reply that if Belial talked too long he would be dealt with from another point miles away.

The troops we came down to see were at rest in a chain of caves which had begun life as quarries and had been fitted up by the army for its own uses. There were underground corridors, ante-chambers, rotundas, and ventilating shafts with a bewildering play of cross lights, so that wherever you looked you saw Goya's pictures of men-at-arms.

Every soldier has some of the old maid in him, and rejoices in all the gadgets and devices of his own invention. Death and wounding come by nature, but to lie dry, sleep soft, and keep yourself clean by forethought and contrivance is art, and in all things the Frenchman is gloriously an artist.

Moreover, the French officers seem as mother-keen on their men as their men are brother-fond of them. Maybe the possessive form of address: "Mon general," "mon capitaine," helps the idea, which our men cloke in other and curter phrases. And those soldiers, like ours, had been welded for months in one furnace. As an officer said: "Half our orders now need not be given. Experience makes us think together." I believe, too, that if a French private has an idea—and they are full of ideas—it reaches his C. O. quicker than it does with us.

THE SENTINEL HOUNDS

The overwhelming impression was the brilliant health and vitality of these men and the quality of their breeding. They bore themselves with swing and rampant delight in life, while their voices as they talked in the side-caverns among the stands of arms were the controlled voices of civilization. Yet, as the lights pierced the gloom they looked like bandits dividing the spoil. One picture, though far from war, stays with me. A perfectly built, dark-skinned young giant had peeled himself out of his blue coat and had brought it down with a swish upon the shoulder of a half-stripped comrade who was kneeling at his feet with some footgear. They stood against a background of semi-luminous blue haze, through which glimmered a pile of coppery straw half covered by a red blanket. By divine accident of light and pose it St. Martin giving his cloak to the beggar. There were scores of pictures in these galleries—notably a rock-hewn chapel where the red of the cross on the rough canvas altar-cloth glowed like a ruby. Further inside the caves we found a row of little rock-cut kennels, each inhabited by one wise, silent dog. Their duties begin in at night with the sentinels and listening-posts. "And believe me," a proud instructor, "my fellow here knows the difference between the noise of our shells and the Boche shells."

When we came out into the open again there were good opportunities for this study. Voices and wings met and passed in the air, and, perhaps, one strong young tree had not been bending quite so far across the picturesque park-drive when we first went that way.

"Oh, yes," said an officer, "shells have to fall somewhere, and," he added with fine toleration, "it is, after all, against us that the Boche directs them. But come you and look at my dug-out. It's the most superior of all possible dug-outs."

"No. Come and look at our mess. It's the Ritz of these parts." And they joyously told how they had got, or procured, the various fittings and elegancies, while hands stretched out of the gloom to shake, and men nodded welcome and greeting all through that cheery brotherhood in the woods.

WORK IN THE FIELDS

The voices and the wings were still busy after lunch, when the car slipped past the tea-houses in the drive, and came into a country where women and children worked among the crops. There were large raw shell holes by the

wayside or in the midst of fields, and often a cottage or a villa had been smashed as a bonnet-box is smashed by an umbrella. That must be part of Belial's work when he bellows so truculently among the hills to the north.

We were looking for a town that lives under shell-fire. The regular road to it was reported unhealthy—not that the women and children seemed to care. We took byways of which certain exposed heights and corners were lightly blinded by wind-brakes of dried tree-tops. Here the shell holes were rather thick on the ground. But the women and the children and the old men went on with their work with the cattle and the crops; and where a house had been broken by shells the rubbish was collected in a neat pile, and where a room or two still remained usable, it was inhabited, and the tattered window-curtains fluttered as proudly as any flag. And time was when I used to denounce young France because it tried to kill itself beneath my car wheels; and the fat old women who crossed roads without warning; and the specially deaf old men who slept in carts on the wrong side of the road! Now, I could take off my hat to every single soul of them, but that one cannot traverse a whole land bareheaded. The nearer we came to our town the fewer were the people, till at last we halted in a well-built suburb of paved streets where there was no life at all. . . .

A WRECKED TOWN

The stillness was as terrible as the spread of the quick busy weeds between the paving-stones; the air smelt of pounded mortar and crushed stone; the sound of a footfall echoed like the drop of a pebble in a well. At first the horror of wrecked apartment-houses and big shops laid open makes one waste energy in anger. It is not seemly that rooms should be torn out of the sides of buildings as one tears the soft heart out of English bread; that villa roofs should lie across iron gates of private garages, or that drawing-room doors should flap alone and disconnected between two emptinesses of twisted girders. The eye wearies of the repeated pattern that burst shells make on stone walls, as the mouth sickens of the taste of mortar and charred timber. One quarter of the place had been shelled nearly level; the facades of the houses stood doorless, roofless, and windowless like stage scenery. This was near the cathedral, which is always a favourite mark for the heathen. They had gashed and ripped the sides of the cathedral itself, so that the birds flew in and out at will; they had smashed holes in the roof; knocked huge cantles out of the buttresses, and pitted and starred the paved square outside. They were at work, too, that very afternoon, though I do not think the cathedral was their objective for the moment. We walked to and fro in the silence of the streets and beneath the whirring wings overhead. Presently, a young woman, keeping to the wall, crossed a corner. An old woman opened a shutter (how it jarred!), and spoke to her. The silence closed again, but it seemed to me that I heard a sound of singing—the sort of chant one hears in nightmare-cities of voices crying from underground.

IN THE CATHEDRAL

"Nonsense," said an officer. "Who should be singing here?" We circled the cathedral again, and saw what pavement-stones can do against their own city, when the shell jerks them upward. But there *was* singing after all—on the other side of a little door in the flank of the cathedral. We looked in, doubting, and saw at least a hundred folk, mostly women, who knelt before the altar of an unwrecked chapel. We withdrew quietly from that holy ground, and it was not only the eyes of the French officers that filled with tears. Then there came an old, old thing with a prayer-book in her hand, pattering across the square, evidently late for service.

"And who are those women?" I asked.

"Some are caretakers; people who have still little shops here. (There is one quarter where you can buy things.) There are many old people, too, who will not go away. They are of the place, you see."

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"And this bombardment happens often?" I said. Page 420

"It happens always. Would you like to look at the railway station? Of course, it has not been so bombarded as the cathedral."

We went through the gross nakedness of streets without people, till we reached the railway station, which was very fairly knocked about, but, as my friends said, nothing like as much as the cathedral. Then we had to cross the end of a long street down which the Boche could see clearly. As one glanced up it, one perceived how the weeds, to whom men's war is the truce of God, had come back and were well established the whole length of it, watched by the long perspective of open, empty windows.

II

THE NATION'S SPIRIT AND A NEW INHERITANCE

We left that stricken but undefeated town, dodged a few miles down the roads beside which the women tended their cows, and dropped into a place on a hill where a Moroccan regiment of many experiences was in billets.

They were Mohammedans bafflingly like half a dozen of our Indian frontier types, though they spoke no accessible tongue. They had, of course, turned the farm buildings where they lay into a little bit of Africa in colour and smell. They had been gassed in the north; shot over and shot down, and set up to be shelled again; and their officers talked of North African wars that we had never heard of—sultry days against long odds in the desert years ago. "Afterward—is it not so with you also?—we get our best recruits from the tribes we have fought. These men are children. They make no trouble. They only want to go where cartridges are burnt. They are of the few races to whom fighting is a pleasure."

"And how long have you dealt with them?"

"A long time—a long time. I helped to organize the corps. I am one of those whose heart is in Africa." He spoke slowly, almost feeling for his French words, and gave some order. I shall not forget his eyes as he turned to a huge, brown, Afreedee-like Mussulman hunkering down beside his accoutrements. He had two sides to his head, that bearded, burned, slow-spoken officer, met and parted with in an hour.

The day closed—(after an amazing interlude in the chateau of a dream, which was all glassy ponds, stately trees, and vistas of white and gold saloons. The proprietor was somebody's chauffeur at the front, and we drank to his excellent health) —at a little village in a twilight full of the petrol of many cars and the wholesome flavour of healthy troops. There is no better guide to camp than one's own thoughtful nose; and though I poked mine everywhere, in no place then or later did it strike that vile betraying taint of underfed, unclean men. And the same with the horses.

THE LINE THAT NEVER SLEEPS

It is difficult to keep an edge after hours of fresh air and experiences; so one does not get the most from the most interesting part of the day—the dinner with the local headquarters. Here the professionals meet—the Line, the Gunners, the Intelligence with stupefying photo-plans of the enemy's trenches; the Supply; the Staff, who collect and note all things, and are very properly chaffed; and, be sure, the Interpreter, who, by force of questioning prisoners, naturally develops into a **2nd Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School** and the half-words which, if one understood, instead of blinking drowsily at one's plate, would give the day's history in little. But tire and the

difficulties of a sister (not a foreign) tongue cloud everything, and one goes to billets amid a murmur of voices, the rush of single cars through the night, the passage of battalions, and behind it all, the echo of the deep voices calling one to the other, along the line that never sleeps.

.....

The ridge with the scattered pines might have hidden children at play. Certainly a horse would have been quite visible, but there was no hint of guns, except a semaphore which announced it was forbidden to pass that way, as the battery was firing. The Boches must have looked for that battery, too. The ground was pitted with shell holes of all calibres—some of them as fresh as mole-casts in the misty damp morning; others where the poppies had grown from seed to flower all through the summer.

"And where are the guns?" I demanded at last.

They were almost under one's hand, their ammunition in cellars and dug-outs beside them. As far as one can make out, the 75 gun has no pet name. The bayonet is Rosalie the virgin of Bayonne, but the 75, the watchful nurse of the trenches and little sister of the Line, seems to be always "soixante-quinze." Even those who love her best do not insist that she is beautiful. Her merits are French—logic, directness, simplicity, and the supreme gift of "occasionality." She is equal to everything on the spur of the moment. One sees and studies the few appliances which make her do what she does, and one feels that any one could have invented her.

FAMOUS FRENCH 75's

"As a matter of fact," says a commandant, "anybody—or, rather, everybody did. The general idea is after such-and-such system, the patent of which had expired, and we improved it; the breech action, with slight modification, is somebody else's; the sighting is perhaps a little special; and so is the traversing, but, at bottom, it is only an assembly of variations and arrangements."

That, of course, is all that Shakespeare ever got out of the alphabet. The French Artillery make their own guns as he made his plays. It is just as simple as that.

"There is nothing going on for the moment; it's too misty," said the Commandant. (I fancy that the Boche, being, as a rule methodical, amateurs are introduced to batteries in the Boche's intervals. At least, there are hours healthy and unhealthy which vary with each position.) "But," the Commandant reflected a moment, "there is a place—and a distance. Let us say . . ." He gave a range.

The gun-servers stood back with the bored contempt of the professional for the layman who intrudes on his mysteries. Other civilians had come that way before—had seen, and grinned, and complimented and gone their way, leaving the gunners high up on the bleak hillside to grill or mildew or freeze for weeks and months. Then she spoke. Her voice was higher pitched, it seemed, than ours—with a more shrewish tang to the speeding shell. Her recoil was as swift and as graceful as the shrug of a French-woman's shoulders; the empty case leaped forth and clanged against the trail; the tops of two or three pines fifty yards away nodded knowingly to each other, though there was no wind.

"They'll be bothered down below to know the meaning of our single shot. We don't give them one dose at a time as a rule," somebody laughed.

We waited in the fragrant silence. Nothing came back from the mist that clogged the lower grounds, though no shell of this war was ever launched with more earnest prayers that it might do hurt.

Then they talked about the lives of guns; what number of rounds some will stand and others will not; how soon one can make two good guns out of three spoilt ones, and what crazy luck sometimes goes with a single shot or a blind salvo.

LESSON FROM THE "BOCHE"

A shell must fall somewhere, and by the law of averages occasionally lights straight as a homing pigeon on the one spot where it can wreck most. Then earth opens for yards around, and men must be dug out,—some merely breathless, who shake their ears, swear, and carry on, and others whose souls have gone loose among terrors. These have to be dealt with as their psychology demands, and the French officer is a good psychologist. One of them said: "Our national psychology has changed. I do not recognize it myself."

"What made the change?"

"The Boche. If he had been quiet for another twenty years the world must have been his—rotten, but all his. Now he is saving the world."

"How?"

"Because he has shown us what Evil is. We—you and I, England and the rest—had begun to doubt the existence of Evil. The Boche is saving us."

Then we had another look at the animal in its trench—a little nearer this time than before, and quieter on account of the mist. Pick up the chain anywhere you please, you shall find the same observation-post, table, map, observer, and telephonist; the same always-hidden, always-ready guns; and same vexed foreshore of trenches, smoking and shaking from Switzerland to the sea. The handling of the war varies with the nature of the country, but the tools are unaltered. One looks upon them at last with the same weariness of wonder as the eye receives from endless repetitions of Egyptian hieroglyphics. A long, low profile, with a lump to one side, means the field-gun and its attendant ammunition-case; a circle and slot stand for an observation-post; the trench is a bent line, studded with vertical plumes of explosion; the great guns of position, coming and going on their motors, repeat themselves as scarabs; and man himself is a small blue smudge, no larger than a foresight, crawling and creeping or watching and running among all these terrific symbols.

TRAGEDY OF RHEIMS

But there is no hieroglyphic for Rheims, no blunting of the mind at the abominations committed on the cathedral there. The thing peers upward, maimed and blinded, from out of the utter wreckage of the Archbishop's palace on the one side and dust-heaps of crumbled houses on the other. They shelled, as they still shell it, with high explosives and with incendiary shells, so that the statues and the stonework in places are burned the colour of raw flesh. The gargoyles are smashed; statues, crockets, and spires tumbled; walls split and torn; windows thrust out and tracery obliterated. Wherever one looks at the tortured pile there is mutilation and defilement, and yet it had never more of a soul than it has to-day.

Inside—"Cover yourselves, gentlemen," said the sacristan, "this place is no longer consecrated"—everything is swept clear or burned out from end to end, except two candlesticks in front of the niche where Joan of Arc's image

used to stand. There is a French flag there now. [And the last time I saw Rheims Cathedral was in a spring twilight, when the great west window glowed, and the only lights within were those of candles which some penitent English had lit in Joan's honour on those same candlesticks.] The high altar was covered with floor-carpets; the pavement tiles were cracked and jarred out by the rubbish that had fallen from above, the floor was gritty with dust of glass and powdered stone, little twists of leading from the windows, and iron fragments. Two great doors had been blown inwards by the blast of a shell in the Archbishop's garden, till they had bent grotesquely to the curve of a cask. There they had jammed. The windows—but the record has been made, and will be kept by better hands than mine. It will last through the generation in which the Teuton is cut off from the fellowship of mankind—all the long, still years when this war of the body is at an end, and the real war begins. Rheims is but one of the altars which the heathen have put up to commemorate their own death throughout all the world. It will serve. There is a mark, well known by now, which they have left for a visible seal of their doom. When they first set the place alight some hundreds of their wounded were being tended in the Cathedral. The French saved as many as they could, but some had to be left. Among them was a major, who lay with his back against a pillar. It has been ordained that the signs of his torments should remain—an outline of both legs and half a body, printed in greasy black upon the stones. There are very many people who hope and pray that the sign will be respected at least by our children's children.

IRON NERVE AND FAITH

And, in the meantime, Rheims goes about what business it may have with that iron nerve and endurance and faith which is the new inheritance of France. There is agony enough when the big shells come in; there is pain and terror among the people; and always fresh desecration to watch and suffer. The old men and the women and the children drink of that cup daily, and yet the bitterness does not enter into their souls. Mere words of admiration are impertinent, but the exquisite quality of the French soul has been the marvel to me throughout. They say themselves, when they talk: "We did not know what our nation was. Frankly, we did not expect it ourselves. But the thing came, and—you see, we go on."

Or as a woman put it more logically, "What else can we do? Remember, *we* knew the Boche in '70 when *you* did not. We know what he has done in the last year. This is not war. It is against wild beasts that we fight. There is no arrangement possible with wild beasts." This is the one vital point which we in England *must* realize. We are dealing with animals who have scientifically and philosophically removed themselves inconceivably outside civilization. When you have heard a few—only a few—tales of their doings, you begin to understand a little. When you have seen Rheims, you understand a little more. When you have looked long enough at the faces of the women, you are inclined to think that the women will have a large say in the final judgment. They have earned it a thousand times.

TANK'S VICTORY.

You would have said that no troops could pass it; but after continuous efforts on all sides various groups forced their way past and irregular lines were won and made firm some distance beyond, while this monster was still nursed in the bosom of our position. Runners took back messages of a "nest" or "pocket" left uncleared. It was much more than that. It was a fortress, unharmed and not quite invested.

But it was not impregnable. Monster was to meet monster. Towards seven in the evening an inconspicuous carapace, a great sluggish, grunting beetle was seen by the German garrison wriggling very slowly forward in arcs and at tangents, carefully avoiding any wounded who lay in its path. As if the scent was not good, though just sufficient, it nosed slowly forward, along and over the old German front trench. Earlier, an infantry officer was observed urging it on, like a master talking to an undecided bloodhound.

After many minutes it approached so near its crouching prey that it could surrender, scent for sight. It prepared for action. What this dragon of the slime did, what flames came from its mouth, what threats were roared I must not say in precise detail. But it did and threatened enough. Out of one of the mouths of the earth and concrete fortress appeared a white cloth waved on a stick. Not so much as a hand or arm was visible, but the flag of surrender waved. Firing ceased and the beast bellowed no more but allowed its myrmidons to go forward and accept the surrender. Presently, crouching there, it watched nearly twenty score of Germans file out, draw up in rank, and march back across the old front line. Good beast; it had done its part. Not what the infantry had done, but good service—good service.

A POINT FOR THE GERMANS.

Of the thousand and one episodes of this sphere of battle, none is more unofficial, more English, than the collecting of prisoners by a member of the force who had accompanied the rest as a supernumerary. After himself gathering in several groups he found the work becoming too extensive for his individual energies, so he formed a little limited company from his friends, and together they developed the business rapidly. The largest nugget they collected was a trenchful of 346, whose colonel after surrender attempted mutiny, of course in vain.

I believe the Naval Division captured in all about 1,350, but, to their severe disappointment, three or four hundred went astray into the "cage" of another unit!

In regard to the prisoners the German wireless account brings out one charming point. It reports the appearance of British cavalry behind the infantry and conjectures that they were waiting to break through. The truth is that they were isolated groups preparing to act as escort to prospective prisoners; and they did not prove too numerous for the job. Certainly some of the horses that I saw at work were in a lather and had done pretty well all they were capable of before noon. They were not there to break through, but to pick up prey breaking back.

Among the booty not yet collected is a field gun or two lying out just in front of our lines.

THE B.E.F. TIMES.

HOW THE TANKS WENT OVER.

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT,
Mr. TEECH BOMAS.

In the grey and purple light of a September morn they went over. Like great prehistoric monsters they leapt and skipped with joy when the signal came. It was my great good fortune to be a passenger on one of them. How can I clearly relate what happened? All is one chaotic mingling of joy and noise. No fear! How could one fear anything in the belly of a perambulating peripatetic progolodymythorus. Wonderful, epic, on we went, whilst twice a minute the 17in. gun on the roof barked out its message of defiance. At last we were fairly in amongst the Huns. They were round us in millions and in millions they died. Every wag of our creatures tail threw a bomb with deadly precision, and the mad, muddled, murderers melted. How describe the joy with which our men joined the procession until at last we had a train ten miles long. Our creature then became in festive mood and, jumping two villages, came to rest in a crump-hole. After surveying the surrounding country from there we started rounding up the prisoners. Then with a wag of our tail (which accounted for 20 Huns) and some flaps with our fins on we went. With a triumphant snort we went through Bapaume pushing over the church in a playful moment and then steering a course for home, feeling that our perspiring panting progolodomyte had thoroughly enjoyed its run over the disgruntled, discomfited, disembowelled earth. And so to rest in its lair ready for the morrow and what that morrow might hold. I must get back to the battle

TEECH BOMAS.

OUR MATRIMONIAL COLUMN.

Everything in this department receives the greatest discretion and secrecy, and correspondents may be assured that all correspondence is treated with the utmost delicacy.

CAPTAIN.—35, handsome and dashing appearance. Thoroughly domesticated and capable of looking after the home. Feels lost in his present position of Camp Commandant. Fond of dogs. Would welcome correspondence with a view to matrimony. Money no object as he has his pay.—Write Vatican, c/o this paper.

BRIG GENERAL.—Young — charming personality—feels lonely. Bashfulness has made him take this way of settling his future happiness, and he would like to correspond with some priceless young lady matrimonially inclined.—Write Rudolph, c/o this paper.

BRIG GENERAL.—Companionable—jocose—domesticated—loving. Is feeling his unattached condition very much, and seizes this opportunity of making overtures to some sympathetic young lady.—Write Jock, c/o this paper.

LIEUT COLONEL.—Gone grey through loneliness. Feels that his life could be brightened by the introduction of a female element. Romantic disposition, and has had many "affaires," but would entertain an opportunity of settling down. Widow preferred. Money no object, but would like one with small public house.—Write Buffs, c/o this paper.

LIEUT COLONEL.—Tall and striking appearance. Just recovered from wound, feels lost now without feminine attentions, and would welcome correspondence that might ultimately end in providing him with congenial society for life.—Write Rugger, c/o this paper.

(Many thousand advertisements are held over for lack of space.)

6. Philip Gibbs, 'First Phases of the Battle.' *Daily Telegraph*, July 3, 1916.

FIRST PHASES OF THE BATTLE.

TERRIFIC ARTILLERY.

TORRENTS OF SHELLS.

From PHILIP GIBBS. BRITISH HEADQUARTERS, Saturday.

The great attack which was launched to-day against the German lines on a twenty-mile front began satisfactorily. It is not yet a victory, for victory comes at the end of a battle, and this as only a beginning. But our troops, fighting with very splendid valour, have swept across the enemy's front trenches along ; a great part of the line of attack, and have captured villages and strongholds which the Germans have long held against us. They are fighting their way forward, not easily, but doggedly. Already hundreds of the enemy are prisoners in our hands. His dead lie thick in the track of our regiments.

And so, after the first day of battle, we may say with thankfulness: All goes well. It is a good day for England and France. It is a day of promise in this war, in which the blood of brave men has poured out upon the sodden fields of Europe. For nearly a week now we have been bombarding the enemy's lines from the Yser to the Somme. Those of us who have watched this bombardment knew the meaning of it. We knew that it was in preparation for this attack. All those raids of the week which I have recorded from day to day were but leading to a greater raid when not hundreds of men but hundreds of thousands would leave their trenches and go forward in a great assault. We had to keep the secret, to close our lips tight, to write vague words lest the enemy should get the hint too soon, and the strain was great upon us and the suspense an ordeal for the nerves, because as the hours went by they drew nearer the time when great waves of our men, those splendid young men who have gone marching along the roads of France, would be sent into the open, out of the ditches where they got cover from the German fire. This secret was foreshadowed by many signs. Travelling along the roads we saw new guns arriving—heavy guns and field-guns, week after week. We were massing a great weight of metal.

TIDE OF NEW TROOPS

Passing then, men raised their eyebrows and smiled grimly. A tide of them flowed in from the ports of France—new men of new divisions. They passed to some part of the front, disappeared for a while, were met again in fields and billets, looking harder, having stories to tell of trench life and raids.

The army was growing. There was a mass of men here in France, and some day they would be ready, trained enough, hard enough, to strike a big blow. A week or two ago the whisper passed "We're going to attack." But no more than that, except behind closed doors of the mess-room. Somehow by the look on men's faces, by their silences and thoughtfulness, one could guess that something was going to happen. There was a thrill in the air, a thrill from the pulse of men who know the meaning of attack. There were roses in the gardens of old French chateaux. Poppies put a flame of colour in the fields, close up to the trenches, and there were long stretches of gold across the countryside. A pity that all this should be spoilt by the pest of war.

So some of us thought, but not many soldiers. After the misery of a wet winter and the expectations of the spring they were keen to get out of the trenches again. All their training led up to that. The spirit of the men was for an assault across the open and they were confident in the growing power of our guns. The guns spoke one morning last week with a louder voice than has yet been heard along the front, and as they crashed out we knew that it was the signal for the new attack. Their fire increased in intensity, covering raids at many points of the line, until at last all things were ready for the biggest raid.

NIGHT BEFORE BATTLE.

The scene of the battlefields at night was of terrible beauty. I motored out to it from a town behind the lines, where through their darkened windows French citizens watched the illumination of the sky, throbbing and flashing to distant shell-fire. Behind the lines the villages were asleep, without the twinkle of a lamp in any window. The shadowy forms of sentries paced up and down outside the stone archways of old French houses. Here and there on the roads a lantern waved to and fro, and its rays gleamed on the long bayonet and steel casque of a French

Territorial, and upon the bronzed face of an English soldier, who came forward to stare closely at a piece of paper which allowed a man to go into the fires of hell up there. It was an English voice that gave the first challenge, and then called out " Good night! " with a strange and unofficial friendliness as a greeting to men who were going towards the guns.

The fields on the edge of the battle of guns were very peaceful. A faint breeze stirred the tall wheat, above which there floated a milky light transfusing the darkness. The poppy fields still glowed redly, and there was a glint of gold from long stretches of mustard flower. Beyond, the woods stood black against the sky above little hollows, where British soldiers were encamped.

There by the light of candles which gave a rose-colour to the painted canvas boys were writing letters home before lying down to sleep. Some horsemen were moving down a valley road. Further off, a long column of black lorries passed. It was the food of the guns going forward. A mile or two more, a challenge or two more, and then a halt by the roadside. It was a road which led straight into the central fires of one great battlefield in a battle line of eighty miles or more. A small corner of the front, yet in itself a broad and far-stretching panorama of our gunfire on this night of bombardment.

I stood with a few officers in the centre of a crescent, sweeping round Auchonvillers, Thiepunt, La Boisselle, and Fricourt, to Bray, on the Somme, at the southern end of the curve. Here, in two beetroot fields, on high ground, we stood watching one of the greatest artillery battles in which British gunners have been engaged. Up to that night the greatest.

The night sky, very calm and moist, with low-lying clouds not stirred by the wind, was rent with incessant flashes of light as shells of every calibre burst and scattered. Out of the black woods and ridges in front of us came explosions of white fire, as though the earth had opened and let forth its inner heat.

WORK OF HIGH EXPLOSIVES.

They came up with a burst of intense brilliance, which spread along a hundred yards of ground, and then vanished abruptly behind the black curtain of the night. It was the work of high explosives and heavy trench mortars falling in the German lines. Over Thiepunt and La Boisselle there were rapid flashes of bursting shrapnel shells, and these points of flame stabbed the sky along the whole battlefront.

From the German lines rockets were rising continuously. They rose high and their star-shells remained suspended for half a minute with an intense brightness. While the light lasted it cut out the black outline of the trees and broken roofs, and revealed heavy white smoke clouds rolling over the enemy's positions. They were mostly white lights, but at one place red rockets went up. They were signals of distress, perhaps, from German infantry calling to their guns. It was in the zone of some of these signals, over towards Ovillers, that our fire for a time was most fierce, so that sheets of flame waved to and fro as though fanned by a furious wind. All the time along the German line red lights ran up and down like red dancing devils. I cannot tell what they were, unless they were, unless they were some other kind of signalling, or the bursting of rifle-grenades. Sometimes for thirty seconds or so the firing ceased, and darkness, very black and velvety, blotted out everything and restored the world to peace. Then suddenly, at one point or another, the earth seemed to open to furnace fires. Down by Bray, southwards, there was one of those violent shocks of light, and then a moment later another, by Auchonvillers to the north. And once again the infernal fires began, flashing, flickering, running along a ridge with a swift tongue of flame, tossing burning feathers above rosy smoke-clouds, concentrating into one bonfire of bursting shells to Fricourt and Thiepval upon which our batteries always concentrated.

A " MUFFLED " BOMBARDMENT.

There was one curious phenomenon. It was the silence of all the artillery. By some atmospheric condition of moisture or wind (though the night was calm), or by the configuration of the ground, which made pockets into which the sound fell, there was no great uproar, such as I have heard scores of times in smaller bombardments than this. It was all muffled. Even our own batteries; did not crash out with any startling thunder, though I could hear the rush of big shells, like great birds in flight. Now and then there was a series of loud strokes, an urgent knocking at the doors of night. And now and again there was a dull, heavy rumble deep, followed by a long rumble,

that mines were being blown further up the line. But for the most part it was curiously quiet and low-toned, and somehow this muffled artillery gave cue a greater sense of awfulness and of deadly work.

Along all this stretch of the battle-front, there was no sign of men. It was all inhuman, the work of impersonal powers, and man himself was in hiding from these great, forces of destruction. So I thought, peering through the dark, over the beetroots and the wheat.

But a little later I heard the steady tramp, of many feet and the thud of horses' hoofs, walking slowly, and the grinding of wheels in, the ruts. Shadow forms came up out of the dark tunnel below the trees, the black figures of mounted officers, followed by a battalion marching with their transport. I could not see the faces of the men, but by the shape of their forms could see that they wore their steel helmets and their fighting kit. They were heavily laden with their packs, but they were marching j at a smart, swinging pace, and as they came along were singing cheerily. They were singing some music-hall tune, with a lilt in it, as they marched towards the light of all the shells up there in the places of death. Some of them were blowing month-organs and others were whistling. I watched them pass—all these tall boys of a North Country regiment, and something of their spirit seemed to come out of the dark mass of their moving bodies and thrill the air. They were going up to those places without faltering, without a backward look—and singing! Dear, splendid men.

I saw other men on the march, and some of them were whistling the "Marseillaise," though they were English soldiers. Others were gossiping quietly as they walked, and once the light of bursting shells played all down the line of their faces—hard, clean-shaven, bronzed English faces, with the eyes of youth there staring up at the battlefires and unafraid.

A young officer walking at the head of his platoon called out a cheery good-night to me. It was a greeting in the darkness from one those gallant boys who lead their men out of the trenches without much thought of self in that moment of sacrifice.

In the camps the lights were out and the tents were dark. The soldiers who had been writing letters home had sent their love and gone to sleep. But the shell-fire never ceased all night.

7. From Philip Gibbs, 'Introduction', *The Battles of the Somme*. London: 1917.

So we came to July 1, that day so great in hope, in achievement, and in tragedy, and what happened then and for three and a half months of fighting days is told in the articles now printed in this book. I might have rewritten them, polished their style, put in new facts here and there, and written a narrative of history with a more considered judgment than was possible day by day. But I have thought it best to let them stand as they were written at great speed, sometimes in utter exhaustion of body and brain, but always with the emotion that comes from the hot impress of new and tremendous sensations. They may hold some qualities that would be lost if I wrote them with more coldness and criticism of words and phrases. Even the repetition of incidents and impressions have some value, for that is true of modern warfare — a continual repetition of acts and sounds, sights and smells and emotions.

The method of attack has become a formula — the intense preliminary bombardment almost annihilating the enemy's front trenches (but not all his dug-outs), the advance across No Man's Land under the enemy's curtain-fire, the rush over the enemy's broken parapets in the face of machine-gun fire the bombing-out of the dug-outs, the taking of prisoners. One captured "village" destroyed utterly by shell-fire days before the final attack upon its earth-works is exactly like another in its rubbish-heaps of bricks and woodwork. The pictures repeat themselves. Heroic acts — the knocking-out of a machine-gun, the bombing down a section of trench, the rescue of wounded — repeat themselves also through all the battles. In my chronicles these repetitions will be found, and the effect of them on the reader's mind should be the effect in a faint, far-off way of the real truth.

Some people imagine, and some critics have written, that the war correspondents with the armies in France have been "spoon-fed" with documents and facts given to them by General Headquarters, from which they write up their dispatches. They recognize the same incident, told in different style by different correspondents, and say, "Ah, that is how it is done!" They are wrong. All that we get from the General Staff are the brief bulletins of the various army corps, a line or two of hard news about the capture or loss of this or that trench such as appears afterwards in the official communiques. For all the details of an action we have to rely upon our own efforts in the actual theatre of operations day by day, seeing as much of the battle as it is possible to see (sometimes one can see everything and sometimes nothing but smoke and bursting shells), getting into the swirl and traffic of the battlefields, talking to the walking wounded and the prisoners, the men going in and the men coming out, going to the headquarters of brigades, divisions, and corps for exact information as to the progress of the battle from the generals and officers directing the operations, and getting into touch as soon as possible with the battalions actually engaged. All this is not as easy as it sounds. It is not done without fatigue, and mental as well as physical strain. It takes one into unpleasant places from which one is glad and lucky to get back. But we have full facilities for seeing and knowing the truth of things, and see more and know more of the whole battle-line than is possible even to Divisional Generals and other officers in high command. For we have a pass enabling us to go to any part of the front at any time and get the facts and points of view from every class and rank, from the trenches to G.H.Q. Because the correspondents sometimes tell the same stories it is because we tell them to each other, not believing in professional rivalry in a war of this greatness. Our only limitations in truth-telling are those of our own vision, skill, and conscience under the discipline of the military censorship. I have no personal quarrel with that censorship — though all censorship is hateful. After many alterations in method and principle it was exercised throughout the battles of the Somme (and for months before that, when there was no conspiracy of silence but only the lack of great events to chronicle) with a really broad-minded policy of allowing the British people to know the facts about their fighting men save those which would give the enemy a chance of spoiling our plans or hurting us. If there had been no censorship at all it would be impossible for an honourable correspondent to tell some things within his knowledge — our exact losses in a certain action, failures at this or that point of the line, tactical blunders which might have been made here or there, the disposition or movement of troops, the positions of batteries and observation-posts.

These are things which the enemy must not know. So I do not think that during the whole of the Somme fighting there was more than a line or two taken out of one or the other of my dispatches, and with the exception of those words they are printed as they were written. They tell the truth. There is not one word, I vow, of conscious falsehood in them. But they do not tell all the truth. I have had to spare the feelings of men and women who have sons and husbands still fighting in France. I have not told all there is to tell about the agonies of this war, nor given in full realism the horrors that are inevitable in such fighting. It is perhaps better not to do so, here and now, although it is a moral cowardice which makes many people shut their eyes to the shambles, comforting their souls with fine phrases about the beauty of sacrifice.

One thing hurt me badly in writing my accounts and hurts me still. For military reasons I have not been permitted to give the names of all the troops engaged from day to day, but only a few names allowed by our Intelligence. The Germans were counting up our divisions, reckoning how many men we had in reserve, how many were against them in the lines. It was not for us to help them in this arithmetic. But it is hard on the men and on their people. They do not get that immediate fame and honour for their regiments which they have earned by the splendour of their courage and achievements. It is not my fault, for I would give all their names if I could, and tire out my Wrist in praising them if it could give them a little spark of pleasure and pride. But, after all, each man who fought on the Somme shares the general honour which belongs to all of them.

The correspondents with the armies in the field do not prophesy or criticize or sit in judgment. That is not within our orders, and belongs to the liberty of writing-men who sit at home with their maps and the official bulletins and our dispatches from the front. "There is not one of these industrious men," writes a critic of our work, "who has had the experience to form a military judgment." Well, that is as may be, though we have had more experience of war than most men will have, I think, for another fifty years. In our own mess we are critics and prophets and judges, and I fancy we could give a point or two to the experts at home, and, with luck, later on, may do so. Now in the war-zone we are but chroniclers of the fighting day by day, trying to get the facts as fully as possible and putting them down as clearly as they appear out of the turmoil of battle. Even now in this Introduction I shall attempt no summing up of the results achieved by these battles of the Somme, except by saying that by enormous sacrifices, by individual courage beyond the normal laws of human nature as I thought I knew them once, by great efficiency in organization and a resolute purpose not checked or weakened by any obstacles, our troops broke through positions which the enemy believed, and had a right to believe, impregnable, carried by assault his first, second, and third systems of trenches, drew in his reserves with many guns and men from Verdun so that the French could counter-attack with brilliant success, and inflicted upon the enemy heavy and irreparable loss which as we hope and believe, though with imperfect knowledge, he cannot afford without weakening his line of defence on our own front and facing our Allies. These hammer-strokes were not decisive in victory. I believe that the German strength of resistance and attack is still great. I do not see a quick ending of this most horrible massacre in the fields of Europe. But it was only the weather which stopped for a time our forward progress when at the end of October the rain-storms made all the battlefield a swamp and obscured the observation which our men had won by three months and a half of uphill fighting and desperate strife. Even then in the mud they took many more prisoners in heavy fighting up by the Stuff and Schwaben Redoubts which the enemy hated us to hold because of their dominating ground to the north of Thiepval — and then in the fog made that great, audacious attack on Beaumont-Hamel, which captured one of the strongest positions against our own front with over 6000 prisoners. Of that last attack I saw nothing, being home on sick-leave.

I must say a word or two about the Tanks. After the first great surprise, the exaltation of spirits caused by these new motor-monsters, there followed a disappointment in the public mind and even among our soldiers. Some of the infantry, poor lads, hoped that at last the enemy's deadly machine-gun fire would be killed by these things and that in future infantry attacks would be a walk-over behind the Tanks. That was hoping too much. It would require thousands of Tanks to do that and we had only a few. But I have the record of what each Tank did in action up to the middle of October, and it leaves no room for doubt that, balancing success with failure, these new machines of war

have justified their inventors a hundred-fold. They saved many casualties at certain points of the line and helped to gain many important positions, as at Thiepval and Flers, Courcellette and Martinpuich. If we had enough of them — and it would be a big number — trench warfare would go for ever and machine-gun redoubts would lose their terror.

The battles of the Somme — as we call this fighting, curiously, for on our side it is not very near the Somme — are not yet finished. As I write these words it is only a lull which seems end them, and does end at least the first phase with which I deal in the pages that follow. They are pages written on the evenings of battle hastily and sometimes feverishly, after days of intense experience and tiring sensation. Yet there is in them and through them one passionate purpose. It is to reveal to our people and the world the high valour, the self-sacrificing discipline of soul, the supreme endurance of those men of ours who fought and suffered great agonies and died, and if not killed or wounded, came out to rest a little while and fight again, not liking it, you understand — hating it like the hell it is — but doing their duty, with a great and glorious devotion, according to the light that is in them.

8. From C.E. Montague, *Disenchantment*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1922

IV

Partly it came of the nature — which could not be helped by that time — of war correspondence. In the first months of the war our General Staff, being what we had made it, treated British war correspondents as pariah dogs. They might escape arrest so long as they kept out of sight ; that was about the sum of their privileges. Long before the end of the war the Chiefs of Staff of our several armies received them regularly on the eve of every battle, explained to them the whole of our plans and hopes, gave them copies of our most secret objective and barrage maps ; every perilous secret we had was put into their keeping. A little later still an Army Commander would murmur, with very little indistinctness, if he thought the war correspondents had not been writing enough about his army of late. After the Armistice Sir Douglas Haig made them a speech of thanks and praise on the great bridge over the Rhine at Cologne, and at the Peace all the regular pariah dogs were offered knighthoods.

The Regular Army had set out by taking a war correspondent to be, ex officio, a low fellow paid to extract kitchen literature from such private concerns of the military profession as wars. It harboured the curious notion that it would be possible in this century to feed the nation at home on communiques from G.H.Q. alone or eked out with “ Eye-Witness ” stuff — official “ word-painting ” by, some Regular Officer with a tincture of letters. With that power of learning things, only just not too late, which distinguishes our Regular Army from the Bourbons, it presently saw that this plan had broken down. About the same time the Regular Army began to recognise in the abhorred war correspondent a man whom it had known at school, and who had gone to the university about the time when it, the Army, was going into the Army Class. That was enough. Foul as was his profession, still he might be a decent fellow ; he might not want to injure his country.

When these reflections were dawning slowly over the Regular Army mind it happened — Sir Douglas Haig having a mind himself — that his Chief of Intelligence was a fully educated man with a good fifty per cent, more of brains, imagination, decision, and initiative than the average of his fellow-Regulars on the Staff. He knew something of the Press at first hand. Being a Scotsman, he regarded writers and well-read people with interest and not with alarm. Under his command the policy of helping the Press rose to its maximum. War correspondents were given the “ status,” almost the rank, of officers. Actual officers were detailed to see to their comfort, to pilot them about the front, to secure their friendly treatment by all ranks and at all headquarters. Never were war correspondents so helped, shielded and petted before. And, almost without an exception, they were good men. Only one or two black sheep of the trade would try to make a reader believe that they had seen things which they had not. The general level of personal and professional honour, of courage, public spirit, and serious enterprise, was high. No average Staff Officer could talk with the average British correspondent without feeling that this was a sound human being and had a better mind than his own — that he knew more, had seen more, and had been less deadened by the coolie work of a professional routine. When once known, the war correspondents were trusted and liked — by the Staff.

V

There lay the trouble. They lived in the Staff world, its joys and its sorrows, not in the combatant world. The Staff was both their friend and their censor. How could they show it up when it failed? One of the first rules of field censorship was that from war correspondents “ there must be no criticism of authority or command ” ; how could they disobey that ? They would visit the front now and then, as many Staff Officers did, but it could be only as afternoon callers from one of the many mansions of that heaven of security and comfort. When autumn twilight came down on the haggard trench world of which they had caught a quiet moon-day glimpse they would be speeding west in Vauxhall cars to lighted chateaux gleaming white among scatheless woods. Their staple emotions before a

battle were of necessity akin to those of the Staff, the racehorse-owner or trainer exalted with brilliant hopes, thrilled by the glorious uncertainty of the game, the fascinating nicety of every preparation, and feeling the presence of horrible fatigues and the nearness of multitudinous deaths chiefly as a dim, sombre background that added importance to rousing scene, and not as things that need seriously cloud the spirit or qualify delight in a plan.

“ Our casualties will be enormous,” a General at G.H.Q. said with the utmost serenity on the eve of one of our great attacks in 1917. The average war correspondent — there were golden exceptions — insensibly acquired the same cheerfulness in face of vicarious torment and danger. In his work it came out at times in a certain jauntiness of tone that roused the fighting troops to fury against the writer. Through his despatches there ran a brisk implication that regimental officers and men enjoyed nothing better than “ going over the top ” ; that a battle was just a rough, jovial picnic ; that a fight never went on long enough for the men ; that their only fear was lest the war should end on this side of the Rhine. This, the men reflected in helpless anger, was what people at home were offered as faithful accounts of what their friends in the field were thinking and suffering.

Most of the men had, all their lives, been accepting “ what it says ’ere in the paper ” as being presumptively true. They had taken the Press at its word without checking. Bets had been settled by reference to a paper. Now, in the biggest event of their lives, hundreds of thousands of men were able to check for themselves the truth of that workaday Bible. They fought in a battle or raid, and two days after they read, with jeers on their lips, the account of “ the show ” in the papers. They felt they had found the Press out. The most bloody defeat in the history of Britain, a very world’s wonder of valour frustrated by feckless misuse, of regimental glory and Staff shame, might occur on the Ancre on July 1, 1916, and our Press come out bland and copious and graphic, with nothing to show that we had not had quite a good day — a victory really. Men who had lived through the massacre read the stuff open-mouthed. Anything, then, could figure as anything else in the Press — as its own opposite even. Black was only an aspect of white. With a grin at the way he must have been taken in up to now, the fighting soldier gave the Press up. So it comes that each of several million ex-soldiers now reads every solemn appeal of a Government, each beautiful speech of a Premier or earnest assurance of a body of employers with that maxim on guard in his mind — “You can’t believe a word you read.”

9. Rudyard Kipling, 'A Legend of Truth', *Debits and Credits*, 1926

Once on a time, the ancient legends tell,
Truth, rising from the bottom of her well,
Looked on the world, but, hearing how it lied,
Returned to her seclusion horrified.

There she abode, so conscious of her worth,
Not even Pilate's Question called her forth,
Nor Galileo, kneeling to deny
The Laws that hold out Planet 'neath the sky.
Meantime, her kindlier sister, whom men call
Fiction, did all her work and more than all,
With so much zeal, devotion, tact, and care,
That no one noticed Truth was elsewhere.

Then came a War when, bombed and gassed and mined,
Truth rose once more, perforce, to meet mankind,
And through the dust and glare and wreck of things,
Beheld a phantom on unbalanced wings,
Reeling and groping, dazed, dishevelled, dumb,
But semaphoring direr deeds to come.
Truth hailed and bade her stand; the quavering shade,
Clung to her knees and babbled, 'Sister, aid!
I am – I was – thy Deputy, and men
Besought me for my useful tongue or pen
To gloss their gentle deeds, and I complied,
And they, and thy demands, were satisfied.
But this – ' she pointed o'er the blistered plain,
Where men as Gods and devils wrought amain –
'This is beyond me! Take thy work again.'

Tables and pen transferred, she fled afar,
And Truth assumed the record of the War ...

She saw, she heard, she read, she tried to tell

Facts beyond precedent and parallel –
Unfit to hint or breathe, much less to write,
But happening every minute, day and night.
She called for proof. It came. The dossiers grew.
She marked them, first, 'Return. This can't be true.'
The, underneath the cold official word:
'This is not really half of what occurred.'

She faced herself at last, the story runs,
And telegraphed her sister: 'Come at once.
Facts out of hand. Unable overtake
Without your aid. Come back for Truth's own sake!
Co-equal rank and powers if you agree.
They need us both, but you far more than me!'

Chapter Five

The Last War 1914–1918

This, the greatest of all wars, is not just another war—it is the last war!

—H. G. Wells in *The War That Will End War*

The last war, during the years of 1915, 1916, 1917 was the most colossal, murderous, mismanaged butchery that has ever taken place on earth. Any writer who said otherwise lied. So the writers either wrote propaganda, shut up, or fought.

—Ernest Hemingway in *Men at War*

The First World War was like no other war before or since. It began with the promise of splendour, honour, and glory. It ended as a genocidal conflict on an unparalleled scale, a meaningless act of slaughter that continued until a state of exhaustion set in because no one knew how to stop it.

At first, the sacrifices, which all wars demand, were offered only too willingly. “My only regret is that the opportunity has been denied me to repay you for the lavish kindness and devotedness which you have always shown me,” Lieutenant Glyn Morgan wrote to his father two days before he was killed in action. “Now, however, it may be that I have done so in the struggle between Life and Death, between England and Germany, Liberty and Slavery. In any

case, I shall have done my duty in my little way...goodbye dearest of fathers." Walter Limmer, a student from Leipzig, later to die of wounds, wrote to his mother: "This hour is one such as seldom strikes in the life of a nation and it is so marvellous and moving as to be in itself sufficient compensation for many sufferings and sacrifices."¹

But when the generals, commanding larger armies than the world had ever seen before, could find no way of using them except as fodder for the machine guns, a mood of disillusion with the pointlessness of it all set in. Siegfried Sassoon, in his poem "The General," expressed it perhaps best of all.

*"Good morning; Good morning!" the General said
When we met him last week on our way to the line.
Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of 'em dead,
And we're cursing his staff for incompetent swine.
"He's a cheery old card," grunted Harry to Jack
As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.*

*.....
But he did for them both by his plan of attack.²*

To enable the war to go on, the people had to be steeled for further sacrifices, and this could not be done if the full story of what was happening on the Western Front was known. And so began a great conspiracy. More deliberate lies were told than in any other period of history, and the whole apparatus of the state went into action to suppress the truth.

In Britain, under the Defence of the Realm Act, a system of censorship was created so severe that its legacy lingers today.* The willingness of newspaper proprietors to accept this control and their co-operation in disseminating propaganda brought them the rewards of social rank and political power. But it also undermined public faith in the press.

A large share of the blame for this must rest with the British war correspondents. They were in a position to know more than most men of the nature of the war of attrition on the Western Front, yet they identified themselves absolutely with the armies in the field; they protected the high command from criticism, wrote jauntily

* The government can examine incoming and outgoing cables and can censor newspapers.

about life in the trenches, kept an inspired silence about the slaughter, and allowed themselves to be absorbed by the propaganda machine. Some of them had sufficient decency to feel shame at the way they were discrediting their craft, and when the post-war revulsion set in, one of them, Sir Philip Gibbs (who had been knighted for his services), was able to look back and attempt an explanation. “Nobody believed us. Though some of us wrote the truth from the first to the last—*apart from the naked realism of horrors and losses, and criticism of the facts*, which did not come within the liberty of our pen [emphasis added].”³

Perhaps the war correspondents of the First World War were to be pitied. Propaganda dates back 2,400 years, to Sun-tzu’s *The Art of War*, but the First World War saw its first use in an organised, scientific manner. War correspondents were among its first victims.

Obviously matters could not go on like this. The government was now under some pressure to make a few changes. There was no danger of anything slipping through that might create public criticism of the conduct of the war or depress the nation, because the Defence of the Realm Act could be used to manipulate the press to fall in with the government's wishes.* Not that most newspapers would need more than a light touch of the rein now and then, since they had already made it clear that they would back the war effort wholeheartedly. "Trust the generals," Lord Northcliffe said.

But the opinion that carried the most weight, and was probably responsible for persuading the Cabinet to accredit at least some war correspondents, came not from within Britain but from America. On January 22, 1915, in a little-known letter to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, the former American president Theodore Roosevelt said bluntly that the British government's refusal to allow war correspondents to pursue their tasks was harming Britain's cause in the United States. "There has been a very striking contrast between the lavish attention showered on war correspondents by the German military authorities and the point-blank refusal to have anything to do with them by the British and French governments ... the only real war news, written by Americans who are known to and trusted by the American public comes from the German side.* If you think [American] public opinion should be taken into account, then it is worth your while considering whether much of your censorship work and much of your refusal to allow correspondents at the front has not been a danger to your cause from the standpoint of the effect on public opinion without any corresponding military gains."**

The Cabinet began to press the high command, and GHQ agreed to have a few "writing chappies" with the armies in the field. It spent weeks drawing up regulations to govern war correspondents and laying down rules of field censorship. Obviously,

* Churchill, in fact, recommended to Asquith that *The Times* be commandeered and converted into an official British gazette, which, he said, "would have afforded the administration a sure and authoritative means of guiding public opinion." Asquith ignored this advice.

** In an attempt to help win opinion in neutral countries to her cause, Germany had welcomed American correspondents and had given them every

there could not be any mention of regiments by name, and no mention of places, either, except in the vaguest manner, and no “writing up” of any officers other than the commander-in-chief. But would it be safe to allow any mention of the weather? And who was to decide what would encourage recruiting and what might discourage it? These remained problems until the end of the war, but a rough rule-of-thumb was indicated by a remark of General J. V. Charteris, Chief of Intelligence, when asked by a correspondent how much of an action he would be allowed to report: “Say what you like, old man. But don’t mention any places or people.”¹⁹ What it came down to in the end was that in the eyes of GHQ the ideal war correspondent would be one who wrote what he had been told was true, or even what he thought was true, but never what he knew to be true. Given these restrictions, the war correspondents might just as well have stayed in London.

Instead, they arrived at GHQ in June 1915, where they were greeted by the commander-in-chief, Sir John French, who was wearing his top boots and spurs. Sir John made a little speech saying he was pleased to welcome the correspondents to his army and that he trusted their honour and loyalty. The correspondents were: Philip Gibbs, representing the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Chronicle*; Percival Phillips, a deep thinker on war, who had been a correspondent since the age of twenty, and represented the *Daily Express* and the *Morning Post*; William Beach Thomas, a classics scholar, representing the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror*; H. Perry Robinson, the oldest of the team, who was fanatical about detail, representing *The Times* and the *Daily News*; Herbert Russell, representing the Reuters news agency; and Basil Clarke, representing the Amalgamated Press. From time to time these numbers were swelled by H. W. Nevinson, Filson Young, Percival Gibbon, George Dewar, and H. M. Tomlinson, but this first group saw the war through to the end.

They were in officers’ uniform, without badges or insignia of rank (although they had honorary status as captains), and wore a green band on the right arm. They were given an old house in the village of Tatinghein as their headquarters and were provided with orderlies, lorries, cars, conducting officers, and censors. Almost the first thing they learned was that, although GHQ had agreed to have them, they were by no means welcome. Lower-ranking regular officers were extremely hostile to the idea that there would be war correspondents “prying around” and “giving the whole show away.” So they were to be allowed to go nowhere without a conducting officer, and it did not take long to learn that these officers had been dis-

crectly instructed to waste the correspondents' time as much as possible. These travelling censors went wherever the correspondents went, lived with them, ate with them, read their dispatches, and even examined their private letters, with authority to use, if they considered it necessary, chemical tests to look for invisible ink. It was not a job they greatly enjoyed, coming, as they mostly did, from adventurous parts of the Empire and in expectation of greater glory than being conducting officers or censors. There was Colonel John Faunthorpe, cavalry officer, pig-sticker, tiger hunter, judge, and poet, open in his ridicule of journalism in general and war correspondents in particular. There was Hesketh Pritchard, big-game hunter, cricketer, all-round sportsman, and author of stirring books on Empire. Later there was Colonel the Honourable Neville Lytton, painter, musician, and diplomat, a man who valued "form" above all else. This elegant, intelligent, but insensitive officer spent his leisure time at the front playing Bach on an eighteenth-century ivory flute and doing remarkable imitations of the noise ducks make when lapping up weeds on a pond. And there was Colonel Hutton Wilson, a debonair staff officer, who became thoroughly convinced that war correspondents, "even *The Times* man, by God," were all Bolsheviks.

The correspondents soon settled down into a routine. On the day that an attack was scheduled, they drew lots to see who would cover which area. Each then set out in his chauffeur-driven car, accompanied by his conducting officer. They went as close to the front as possible, watched the preliminary bombardment, got into the backwash of prisoners and walking wounded, interviewed anyone they could, and tried to piece together a story. Back at their quarters, the correspondents held a meeting, and each man outlined the narrative part of his story, keeping any personal impressions for his own dispatch. They then retired to their own rooms, wrote their pieces, and submitted them to the waiting censors. What the censors left was given to a dispatch rider, who took the messages to Signals at GHQ, where they were telephoned to the War Office and sent from there by hand to the various newspaper offices. The War Office had no right to touch a message once it had been censored in France, and the newspapers were not allowed to alter or cut anything the correspondents wrote. Once they had appeared in Britain, the dispatches were distributed throughout the Empire, under the direction of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association.

It was a routine designed with two ostensible ends in view: to enable the public to have a picture of its army at the front, and at the same time to prevent the publication of any information that

might be of use to the enemy. But, of course, these were not the real aims. The real aims were, first, to provide colourful stories of heroism and glory calculated to sustain enthusiasm for the war and ensure a supply of recruits for the front and, second, to cover any mistakes the high command might make, preserve it from criticism in its conduct of the war, and safeguard the reputations of its generals. The smarter war correspondents realised this very early on, but for various reasons decided not to confront the system. Some hoped that as the war progressed things would change. Some thought that the high command had the right idea. Others were worried about the reaction of their editors. Had the correspondents had the moral courage to refuse to play their part in the charade, the government might have been forced to reconsider its attitude. (On one occasion, all the correspondents went on strike because of the excessive repression of one censor and won their case.) But they went along with the system, grumbling sometimes, it is true, but saving their protests for the memoirs they published after the war, when it was too late. The justifications and rationalisations they offered, both at the time and later, for permitting themselves to serve as propagandists, to be used in a manner that allowed nothing of the real picture of the war on the Western Front to emerge, go a long way towards explaining why, as one historian said, “there was no more discreditable period in the history of journalism than the four years of the Great War.”²⁰

Sir Philip Gibbs wrote, in 1923: “We identified ourselves absolutely with the Armies in the field... We wiped out of our minds all thought of personal scoops and all temptation to write one word which would make the task of officers and men more difficult or dangerous. There was no need of censorship of our despatches. We were our own censors.”²¹

Naturally, *The Times*, above all other newspapers, approved this view: “Throughout the war the commentators of *The Times* could seldom be anything but *laudatores temporis acti*. They felt that their task was to sustain the morale of the nation in mortal combat; therefore they praised victories no less highly than they deserved; in stalemates they found elements of advantage; and defeats they minimised, excused, or ignored.”²²

Once they realised that the war correspondents were on their side, the attitude of the GHQ staff began to change. Some of the officers actually came to like some correspondents and to treat them, as the Honourable Neville Lytton said, “as officers, i.e., with complete confidence and trust.” But the closeness of this relation-

ship between the staff and correspondents was disastrous to the correspondents' work. If the staff was their friend, their confidant, their censor, then how could they write about it when it failed? For their part in keeping quiet, the six major correspondents were received by King George V when he visited the front, were met on the great bridge over the Rhine by Haig, the commander-in-chief, who made a little speech of praise and thanks, and finally, at the war's end, were offered knighthoods. Gibbs, the most sensitive of them, had occasional nagging doubts. After the slaughter at Loos in September 1915, General G.M. W. Macdonough, of Army Intelligence, personally cut forty pages from Gibbs' story. The idea appeared to be, Gibbs said, to conceal the truth not from the enemy but from the nation, "in defence of the British High Command and its tragic blundering."

It is instructive to compare a soldier's description of trench warfare with what the correspondents sent. The French Socialist author René Naegelen wrote, after the war:

Three of us were crouching in a hole under the barrage of artillery fire. Then a flame, a blast; then darkness and smoke, the acrid smell of gunpowder. Was I killed or wounded? I cautiously moved my arms and legs. Nothing. My two friends, however, lying one upon the other, were bleeding. The bowels of one were oozing out. The other had a broken leg; there was a red spot spreading on his breast, and he was rolling his panic-stricken eyes. He looked at me silently, imploringly; then unconsciously he unbuttoned his trousers and died urinating on the gaping wound of his comrade.²³

The correspondents preferred lines of stalwart soldiers burning to go like greyhounds on the leash, impatient to leap out of the trenches and charge from shell-hole to shell-hole, from cheer to cheer. C. E. Montague, an assistant editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, first a soldier, then a censor, was caustically critical of the correspondents.

They would visit the front now and then, as many staff officers did, but it could only be as afternoon callers from one of the many mansions of GHQ, that haven of security and comfort. When autumn twilight came down on the haggard trench world, of which they caught a quiet noon-day glimpse, they would be speeding west in Vauxhall cars to lighted chateaux.... The average war correspondent—there were golden exceptions—insensibly acquired [a] cheerfulness in the face of vicarious torment and danger. In his

the fighting troops to fury against the writer. Through his despatches there ran a brisk implication that the regimental officers and men enjoyed nothing better than ‘going over the top’; that a battle was just a rough jovial picnic, that a fight never went on long enough for the men, that their only fear was lest the war should end this side of the Rhine. This, the men reflected, in helpless anger, was what people at home were offered as faithful accounts of what their friends in the field were thinking and suffering.²⁴

The effect of this distortion was immense. The average Englishman had been accepting it all his life that if something was printed in the newspapers, then it was true. Now, in the biggest event of his life, he was able to check what the press said against what he knew to be the truth. He felt he had found the press out, and as a result he lost confidence in his newspapers, a confidence to this day never entirely recovered.

Photographers, too, were hamstrung. First, only two photographers, both army officers, had been assigned to cover the Western Front, and since their main task was considered to be that of compiling a historical record, not providing newspapers with material, none of their “realistic” photographs was released. The penalty for anyone else caught taking a photograph at the front was the firing squad.* If not photographers, then how about artists? Artists were not allowed to go to the front until 1916, when Charles Masterman, a former MP working in propaganda, convinced the War Office that some suitably softened sketches would improve his propaganda publications. Muirhead Bone was the first. He arrived in France in July 1916, and was followed by Eric Kennington, Francis Dodd, James McBey, William Orpen, Paul Nash, C. R. W. Nevinson, Adrian Hill, William Rothenstein, Wyndham Lewis, William Roberts, John Sargent, Stanley Spencer, and many others, so that by 1918 there were more than ninety of them. They were not much more successful than the war correspondents in presenting a true picture of the war. Paul Nash protested at the limitations placed on the artists—“I am not allowed to put dead men into my pictures because apparently they don’t exist”—and, with Nevinson, appeared more moved than most by what he saw, saying, “I am no longer an artist. I am a messenger who will bring back word from the men who are fighting to those who want the war to go on for ever. Feeble,

*One soldier risked it. F. A. Fyfe, a press photographer who had enlisted as a private, concealed a small camera in his bandolier and took a photograph of a dawn attack on German positions.

inarticulate will be my message, but it will have a bitter truth and may it burn their lousy souls."²⁵

It was but a small step from concealing conditions at the front to ignoring German victories. Retreats became strategic retirements, evacuations were rectifications of the line, and a defeat such as that at the Somme in July 1916—perhaps the most bloody defeat in Britain's history—brought only bland, innocuous reports, with nothing to show that the Allies had not had a good day, or even a victory. Gibbs, in fact, wrote in his dispatch: "It is, on balance, a good day for England and France. It is a day of promise in this war..." Gibbs excused himself later with this explanation: "I have had to spare the feelings of men and women, who have sons and husbands still fighting in France."²⁶ Beach Thomas confessed after the war what had really happened about the correspondents' reports at the Somme. Just before the battle, the Chief of Intelligence, General Charteris, arrived at the correspondents' quarters and briefed them on the Allied plans. During the battle, dispatch riders came up at regular intervals with progress reports, and on the authority of these "we sent off in common a short cable message to say all went well for England and France." But, as Beach Thomas and the others quickly realised, the message was untrue, and the great part of the intelligence supplied to them had been utterly wrong and misleading. "I was thoroughly and deeply ashamed of what I had written," Beach Thomas confessed, "for the good reason that it was untrue ...the vulgarity of enormous headlines and the enormity of one's own name did not lessen the shame."²⁷

If war correspondents had not become part of the propaganda machine, if censorship had not been so complete, what could they have written? What were the great unwritten stories of the First World War? After the Battle of the Marne, each side began to grope for an open flank by successive side-steps, until by October 1914 the movement had come to rest by the sea and the trenches stretched from the Swiss frontier to the English Channel. A new and radical thinking on the art of warfare was necessary to break this deadlock. It was not forthcoming in Britain. "I don't know what is to be done," Kitchener said. "*This isn't war.*"¹⁸ And, in France, President Poincaré pointed out that "there really seems no reason why the Germans and ourselves should not stand facing one another for all eternity." The stalemate had caught the Allies

unprepared, but, of course, this was not the story a war correspondent could write. Their editors campaigned over the shortage of shells, but no one wrote that at the end of 1915 there were still 160,000 men in the line without arms, or that the Russians were short of no fewer than 1 million rifles.

While shells, arms, and ammunition were short, men were overplentiful. On August 7, 1914, the day after Kitchener took office as Secretary for War, he issued his famous call for 1 million volunteers. Recruiting offices were overwhelmed, and recruits had to be billeted in shops and factories and trained in civilian clothes and with broom handles instead of rifles. There were not enough regular officers to spare for instructors' duties. One typical new battalion had three trained officers: a commanding officer of sixty-three who had retired before the Boer War, a subaltern with a broken leg, and a retired quartermaster who was totally deaf. But the French were demanding that Britain shoulder a larger burden of holding the line, and these new, raw, poorly trained divisions had to be committed. Some are said to have marched towards the front line baaing like sheep. The French, for their part, were equally free with soldiers' lives. Black troops from the French colonies were thrown into exposed positions in order to save white troops from slaughter, "attack fodder so numbed that they could not fix bayonets or throw hand grenades."³⁹ What stories these could have made!

And what of the staff officers, the men of the red badge, known later to the fighting troops as "the red badge of funk"? Scions of wealthy and aristocratic houses, they considered Kitchener's volunteer army to be made up of useless, shiftless men and treated them as such.* Generals, overwhelmed by the size of their forces, became increasingly sensitive to criticism and increasingly isolated from the men under their command. Secure in their headquarters, where a band played ragtime and light music during dinner, and where the diners were at one time served by little Waacs with the GHQ colours in bows in their hair,⁴⁰ most generals came to view the slaughter at the front with equanimity. This did not pass unnoticed, and by 1916 antagonism between staff and combat troops had become so bitter that at the front "a young staff officer with red tabs was like a red flag to battalion officers and men and they desired his death intensely."⁴¹ For by that time a soldier in one of

* The author Frank Richards writes of his commanding officer, "Buffalo Bill"—so called because he was always drawing his revolver and threatening to blow his men's brains out: "I never remember him having any favourites. He treated all the men the same way—like dirt."

the better divisions could count on a maximum of three months' service without being killed or wounded, and the life expectancy for an officer at the front was down to five months in an ordinary regiment and six weeks in a crack one.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the British public—and the French and the German—did not know or understand the full extent of the casualties until after the war. Even today, many figures are still disputed. (The Germans began to fake their figures in 1916, and became so muddled by their own lies that the truth will probably never emerge.) In any case, the figures that are known defy real comprehension. Who can comprehend that half a million Frenchmen were lost in the first four months of war, 1 million lost by the end of 1915,¹² and 5 million by 1918? Who can imagine that the Allies lost 600,000 men in one battle, the Somme,¹³ and the British more officers in the first few months than in all wars of the previous hundred years put together?

At Stalingrad, in the Second World War, the Wehrmacht had 230,000 men in the field. The German losses at Verdun alone were 325,000 killed or wounded. For every British serviceman killed in the Second World War, three were killed in the First World War. The *Daily Mail*, on April 20, 1915, received from its Copenhagen correspondent the latest German casualty figures, which brought, after only eight months of war, the total number of German soldiers killed, wounded, and missing to *two and three quarters million*. The item was given one inch of space at the bottom of page five.

Casualty figures became debased and lost their real meaning. But there is evidence that, among the correspondents, Gibbs, at least, was aware of the magnitude of the killing. After the war, he wrote that the correspondents had seen more than most men of the wide sweep of war on the Western Front. "We saw the whole organization of that great machine of slaughter...the effect of such a vision, year in, year out, can hardly be calculated in psychological effect unless a man has a mind like a sieve and a soul like a sink."¹⁴ Why did he not write about it at the time?

Lloyd George, then Prime Minister, provides the answer. On December 28, 1917, he invited C. P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, to breakfast and told him: "I listened last night, at a dinner given to Philip Gibbs on his return from the front, to the most impressive and moving description from him of what the war in the West really means, that I have heard. Even an audience of hardened politicians and journalists was strongly affected. *If people*

don't know and can't know. *The correspondents don't write and the censorship would not pass the truth* [emphasis added]. . . The thing is horrible beyond human nature to bear and I feel I can't go on with the bloody business: I would rather resign."⁴⁵ Here we have it in a nutshell: "The correspondents don't write and the censorship would not pass the truth." So the whole sordid conspiracy to keep the truth from the people was allowed to grow. *The Times* offers an explanation for this terrible failure of the war correspondents.

The first reason for the inadequacy of the [war] correspondents was that they did not themselves understand what was happening. Obstacles were not eventually put in their way of getting right up to the front line—provided they did not try to go there when anything in particular was happening; no limits were placed on the people to whom they could talk—provided they did not talk to anyone who was busy! . . . Press officers directed their movements so closely that they hardly had any initiative in choosing where they should go. The man who came out from a spell in the line never wanted to describe what it was like. Even if correspondents did get any inkling of what conditions for the fighting soldier were really like, they were not necessarily encouraged to send them home: *indeed such knowledge as was theirs inspired silence* [emphasis added].⁴⁶

Only one correspondent did not remain silent, and his criticism was muted by his intense nationalism. This was Charles Bean, the official Australian war correspondent. Bean was concerned not so much with news as with a record of the war, for the official history he later wrote. Somewhat to the amazement of the British correspondents, he set himself the task of visiting, on the day of the battle or soon afterwards, every important trench or position occupied by Australian troops in Gallipoli and France. He accepted little second-hand information. "He regarded it as his bounden duty," Gibbs wrote, "to see everything with his own eyes." He became known by sight to almost every Australian soldier, not just as a correspondent, but as a civilian who was prepared to share their discomfort and their risks. Although he did not question the war itself, he did ask whether Britain was making the best use of Australian

* If *The Times* knew all this, then why did it not speak out, if not on behalf of all correspondents, then at least on behalf of its own? The answer, from *The Times*' own account, is a damning one: "A principal aim of the war policy of Printing House Square was to increase the flow of recruits. It was an aim that would get little help from accounts of what happened to recruits once they became soldiers."

troops in seeking to win it. The British accused him of excessive partiality, but the chief censor agreed that “most of his criticisms of the Mother country were justified” and that he was motivated by “high-minded patriotism.”⁴⁷

4

THE GREAT WARS (1905–19)

Setting the terms of trade of war reporting

The Great War is seen as the low point in the history of war reporting. Correspondents are accused of committing a wide variety of offences, from reporting known untruths, concealing the truth, promoting fear, hysteria, propaganda and lies, making exaggerations, omitting facts, publishing fake pictures and not reporting the reality of what actually happened on the battlefield.¹ Philip Gibbs, knighted for his 'services' to journalism after the war, refers to the 'atrocities-mongering' and the 'wild perversions of truth' in the press at the outset of the war; he believed that 'a journalist proud of his profession must blush for shame at its degradation and insanity'.² He apologised for the performance of war correspondents between 1914 and 1918 but the lessons of the conflict for the history of war reporting relate less to the deeds of journalists and more to the deployment of news management. Correspondents' room for manoeuvre and independent thinking was severely curtailed. The war witnessed the transformation of the correspondent from a freewheeling individual, a 'lone wolf' into a 'quasi-military officer', a cog in the military machine.³ According to Michael Sweeney, the outbreak of total war resulted in governments 'enlisting journalists as full-fledged participants' in their war effort; a conflagration that deployed 'huge armies' and relied on 'big government' necessitated 'a massive effort to control the press'.⁴

The reporting of the Great War should be understood as the final stage in the 'extended trajectory' of conflicts⁵ that led up its outbreak. Prior to the conflagration, there were a series of small wars across the world which prepared the news media for what was to happen. Little attention is paid to these conflicts despite the near obsession many correspondents had with Central and Eastern Europe and the Far East where most occurred. Relatively obscure today, they represent in different ways the first manifestation of modern war reporting. They attracted an international press corps and the coverage was in three dimensions: moving,

still and print. The series of conflicts leading up to the Chinese Rebellion (1911), the Italian-Turkish war (1911–12), the wars in the Balkans (1912–13) and the Mexican border wars (1914) are portrayed as the twilight years of the old fashioned war correspondent.⁶ G Ward Price of the *Daily Mail* described them as the 'last of the nineteenth century type of war, in which war correspondents would be dependent on horse-transport and accompanied by a staff of interpreters, grooms and batmen'.⁷ They were the harbingers of the horrors to come. The reporting of atrocities during these wars consolidated a rhetoric that was to become familiar in future reporting of war. The embedding of more effective arrangements for managing correspondents which characterised the Great War began with these wars. Some of the techniques implemented by pioneers of the moving image during the combat had a profound impact on the visual representation of modern warfare. More significantly, the centrality of the media to modern warfare was recognised by people in positions of authority and the lessons learned from these wars determined the treatment of correspondents during the Great War.

Preparing for the Great War

Two of these conflicts, the so-called Italian-Turkish War (1911–12) and the 1912–13 wars in the Balkans⁸ perhaps have greater significance for the development of war reporting. They attracted considerable international currency and controversy in their time. More than 200 accredited reporters, including Leon Trotsky whose articles were published in the Kiev paper *Kievskaya Misl*, are estimated to have covered the two Balkans wars.⁹ The wars embodied the growing realisation that the process of eyewitnessing had to confront the horrors of conflict. The experience of one 'would-be' war correspondent highlighted the gradual way in which reporting was coming to terms with modern warfare. Henry Farnsworth went to the Balkans to find adventure. On getting nearer to the military action, the 'outskirts of the turmoil and vortex', he was seized with 'excited visions of thrilling incidents at the front, batteries coming in to action at a gallop and dangerous night rides a la Kipling to be first with the news'.¹⁰ Farnsworth's account of 'drifting along the lines' of the combatants did not focus on stories of heroism and chivalry but on cholera camps, deserted villages, dead peasants, brigands and brigandage. Philip Gibbs and Bernard Grant's account of their 'adventures of war with cross and crescent'¹¹ highlights the failure to report the battles of the Balkans wars because they 'nor any other correspondents, were allowed to see very much of the fighting'.¹² The rigid control exerted on correspondents was unprecedented¹³ and reporters relied on the various authorities for news. The trickle of official information drove them to report on other aspects of warfare. Gibbs and Grant conceded that war 'consists of more than battles' and their inability to access the front led them to expand their view of war; the 'real enduring drama of it (war) is to be found not in military facts and figures but in the human side of it'. They concentrated on the small episodes in which 'the

meaning, the misery and the spirit of war are to be found'.¹⁴ These small episodes were humanitarian stories including the suffering of refugees and the activities of the Red Cross.

The various warring parties to the Balkans wars were found 'equally guilty' by a group of experts brought together by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in 1913 to survey the conduct of the wars in which the combatants were accused 'of committing atrocious war crimes as well as crimes against humanity'.¹⁵ Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey were blamed for perpetrating 'ethnically motivated violence'. The international press carried stories of the slaughter of women and children, the burning of villages, the rape and murder of girls and women which were typical of what *The Times* inelegantly described as the 'systematical extermination of the enemy'.¹⁶ Correspondents' awareness of the horrors of warfare was accentuated by the efforts of the international community to codify the rules of warfare. The gentlemen's agreement that governed the conduct of war was replaced by the 1899 and 1907 Hague Conventions which put into place more formal arrangements to govern the treatment of combatants and civilians caught up in conflict. For the first time there was reference to the legal protection of accredited war correspondents, outlining how they should be treated. Greater sensitivity to atrocity stories and the strict restrictions placed on the correspondents gaining access the front colluded to produce more reporting of the horrors of war. The veracity of this reporting depended on the political inclination of the newspaper and the propaganda policies of the combatants.¹⁷ Correspondents were rarely able to verify what their sources told them. Misinformation abounded as correspondents had to overcome considerable obstacles to check official statements and the claims of those fleeing the warzone.¹⁸ The German newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung* confessed that the lack of reliable information from the front made it impossible to know what was going on.¹⁹

Atrocity propaganda characterised the wars that led up to the Great War. The year-long Italian-Turkish war began in September 1911 when Italian forces seized Turkish territories in Libya. Stories of atrocities committed by Italian forces a few weeks into the fighting were widely reported. The *New York Times* news report of 31 October entitled 'Arabs Slaughtered by Italian Troops' was typical. Italian denials of indiscriminate slaughter of Arab civilians were refuted by 'proof in photographs' of what had happened.²⁰ Denials were soon supplemented by reports of Turkish atrocities and accounts of the bravery, nobility and heroism of the Italian forces. Correspondents started to complain about the suppression of information and the censoring of copy which amounted to a 'full cover-up'.²¹ The strategy proved successful as British and American newspapers became more supportive of the Italian action. In response to criticism from the Italian government, one of the correspondents who had first reported the atrocities, Francis McCullagh of the *Westminster Review* and *New York World*, published a book in May 1912 in which he 'vehemently defended his own account against what he regarded as the Italian government's shameful lies and censoring

versions'.²² The collective failure of the 40 correspondents present to provide a fair and complete picture of the combat was attributed to the 'official censorship of Italy and unofficial censorship of Italians'.²³ The Italian government placed 'every possible obstacle in the way of independent accounts being published until its own optimistic, official account had been printed'.²⁴ Reporters such as Walter Weibel of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and Gottlob Krause of the *Berliner Tageblatt* who attempted to report what they saw were told by the Italian Press Bureau they would be expelled if they furnished copy hostile to the Italian military.²⁵ Journalists were accused of inventing atrocity stories; the *Daily Mirror's* reporter Horace Grant was reproached for making up accounts of massacres in order to get expelled to avoid catching cholera sweeping through the Italian army.²⁶ Most significantly, war correspondents had to rely on Italian sources that had 'practically a monopoly of news about this war'.²⁷

Managing the news

The large number of reporters attending the wars in the early 20th century provided the opportunity for combatants to disseminate their message worldwide. Military and diplomatic officials were apprehensive about more correspondents and new media forms. Numerous photographers and cinematographers as well as print reporters arrived in the Balkans. It is estimated that 29 film-making companies produced around 109 documentary films about the two Balkan wars.²⁸ There was a strong reaction to the arrival of moving pictures: 'I think it horrible having cinematograph pictures of the war', wrote a British Foreign Office official in 1912.²⁹ More than 100 correspondents went to Sofia during the first Balkan war, a number swelled by the huge entourage of cooks, grooms, interpreters and assistants who accompanied them.³⁰ It was reported they required a special train to take them to the front. Correspondents in such numbers presented a bureaucratic challenge. The 'handling of such a large detachment necessitates the employment of special and highly educated officers' which resulted in a 'loss of officers, of time and of trains'.³¹ Censorship was strictly enforced. Gibbs observed that correspondents were 'treated by the military authorities on each side not as war correspondents but as prisoners of war – not as friends but as enemies of dangerous character'.³² Rigid censorship was justified on the grounds of the bad faith and trickery amongst correspondents eager to get a scoop.

Correspondents with the Turkish army were subject to a Code of Regulations drawn up by the Ministry of War which demanded that they remain with the army until the fighting was over. This was, according to the head of Turkish press relations, intended to 'discourage too many correspondents from going to the front, we do not wish to have people remain up there for a few days and then to hurry back to give away our military secrets'.³³ Telegrams had to be sent in French if they were to pass over the military wire to Constantinople, which was 'the initial source of all the bitter quarrels between the correspondents and the authorities'.³⁴ The Turks were slow to hand out press passes; procrastination

and postponement, delay and deception pervaded official relations with correspondents in Constantinople. Certain reporters were singled out for special attention. Lionel James of *The Times*, MI Donohoe of the *Daily Chronicle* and Ashmead-Bartlett of the *Daily Telegraph* were provided with their own agent by the War Ministry. He was to accompany them everywhere and act as interpreter, enabling them to enjoy more freedom than if they were tied up with other correspondents. They found out that he was a police spy.³⁵

The situation for reporters in Sofia was not much different. The Balkan states introduced a variety of mechanisms to restrict the flow of information.³⁶ The Bulgarian military prevented correspondents from seeing anything of their operations and only three British journalists witnessed the decisive battle of Chatalja.³⁷ Correspondents were proscribed from speaking to soldiers. Frank Fox of the *Morning Post* described the censorship as 'very severe'.³⁸ Cyril Campbell of *The Times* in memoirs published anonymously in 1913 apologised for the amount of misinformation the public received about the Balkans wars. He wrote: 'the veil of secrecy ... which has been cast over events by a vigilant General Staff may have led to the insertion of errors which only time can disclose. For such we apologise'.³⁹ Fox predicted that the future of the war reporter was 'gloomy' as armies will not allow correspondents to see anything at all. The German newspaper, *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, stated that 'the often romantic and dangerous profession of the war correspondent has come to an end', a familiar refrain of the correspondents that covered the conflicts prior to the Great War.⁴⁰

Coverage of the Balkans wars was based 'almost entirely on reports that correspondents were unable to verify'.⁴¹ Not able to reach the front, correspondents relied on the official sources available in the capital cities in which they were based. Newspapers such as the *Manchester Guardian* informed their readers that they often were not able to check what they were told.⁴² This did not stop the extensive reporting of these wars by the European press. Despite the vagueness of the news from the theatre of war, editors had to meet readers' expectations of detailed coverage.⁴³ Hence the large number of unverified accounts that filled the newspapers. Journalists based in Constantinople, for example, turned to the vast number of refugees flocking into the city for their stories, another source of information it was difficult to substantiate.

Other topics such as the politics of war were covered. In the case of Italy's war with the Turks, McCullagh, described as a 'latter day John Pilger',⁴⁴ extended his reporting to include the role of the Catholic Church and financial capitalism. In 1911, he produced an anti-war pamphlet⁴⁵ and established a reputation as an international celebrity. His capture by the Bulgarians was a news story around the world.⁴⁶ The *Tyrone Constitution*, his local Irish newspaper, hailed McCullagh as one of the great journalists of the day:

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Trotsky of Russia knows Francis McCullagh. So does President Calles of Mexico. Peter, the King of Serbia, was McCullagh's friend. The head-hunters of the upper Amazon list Francis McCullagh as one of their

principal deities. The warring tribes of Morocco call him blood brother. A room is always ready for him in the imperial palace of Siam. The latches of hundreds of Siberian peasant huts are out in anticipation of his coming.⁴⁷

McCullagh was 'one of an elite group of Irish journalists...who made a global reputation for themselves as foreign correspondents in the English-language press in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'.⁴⁸ In many ways, his work was typical of the era in which he lived but it is possible to single him out as a founder of a more crusading form of war reporting. John Horgan identifies a number of ways in which he contributed to the 'tradition of investigative and even declamatory journalism'. His political sympathies for the exploited, foot soldiers, peasants and farmers, his belief that the abuse of state power was damaging democracy, the ferocity of his language in an era in which journalism was becoming more bland, his propensity to frequently be out of line with public taste or the taste of media owners, his tendency to attack targets such as the Church, financial and business interests and political elites generally distinguished his journalism.⁴⁹ McCullagh was 'less and less a respected witness to important world events, more and more a crusader'; an example of how war correspondents were beginning to cover a wider range of subject matter.

Inside the press corps

The large number of correspondents covering the wars in the first decade of the 20th century undermined the cohesion of the specialism. Not only were there more correspondents, they were drawn from a more varied background, more cosmopolitan in their qualities and they adopted different approaches to their work. This 'caravan of journalists' was international in its composition. The majority of the press corps covering the Balkans wars were British but there were also French, German, American, Italian, Russian, Austrian, Czech, Hungarian, and Scandinavian reporters.⁵⁰ They brought a range of national perspectives to the reporting which was sometimes articulated in chauvinistic terms. English war correspondents believed they had advantages over their foreign rivals. Ashmead-Bartlett⁵¹ dismissed the French correspondents as 'charming writers and still more charming companions' who are not interested in cabling news or spending money on their work and are 'hardly in a position to compete for speed with ourselves'. The Germans were 'hopelessly at sea unless they are being watched over by the Censor and his colleagues'. They 'lack that spirit of enterprise which renders the English Press supreme during campaigns'. These comments reflect the Anglo-American obsession with the 'scoop' not present then in most other national media cultures.

The large influx of correspondents generated tensions within the press corps. Some correspondents were experienced war reporters but 'a great many of them had never been out of Fleet Street or seen a shot fired in anger in their lives'.⁵²

The experienced reporters asserted their know-how and skills to differentiate them from their untried and untested colleagues: 'the old hands scored time and time again over their inexperienced rivals'.⁵³ The Balkans war press corps also brought a more varied approach to the job due to the presence of members of the visual media. The arrival of photojournalists, press photographers and film makers had an impact on the reporting of the Balkans wars. The photographs of early photojournalists such as Jimmy Hare, who covered the Spanish-American War for *Collier's Weekly*, were 'a poor fit with traditional depictions of war'.⁵⁴ Less dramatic and with an abundance of detail, Hare's photos demanded a different layout and narrative than the illustrations of the 19th-century press and magazines which by and large accorded with the rules of painting. War photographers were technically not able to document violence and dramatic action: the absence of long lenses, problems of gauging exposure and distance and bulkiness of the equipment meant that static rather than action pictures prevailed. Delays in getting photographs back home reinforced their timeless quality; sending images home by cable was not possible until the end of the 1930s. However, via ship and horse, photographs were beginning to pour into newsrooms around the world; as competition increased, for example *Collier's Weekly* sent a whole team to cover the Russo-Japanese War. Editors selected, sorted and arranged the flow of photographs on the page to provide a new narrative of warfare which took in the boredom, banality and brutality of war.⁵⁵

Images of war at the beginning of the 20th century ceased to be the great battle compositions of 19th century art and drawing. Rather, it was according to one critic in 1905 represented as a 'few patches of smoke far away in the sky, men crawling cautiously along on their stomachs and taking shelter in every furrow of the ground ... a series of tiny, identical incident; that is the way we see battle in which a hundred thousand soldiers are lost'.⁵⁶ In depicting the dead, photojournalists 'showed self-restraint', reflecting the attitude of the age.⁵⁷ The *Illustrated London News* reproduced a set of 12 'gruesome' photographs from destroyed Balkan villages, noting that they were examples of 'how horrible even modern war can be', likening them to those of 'a modern Cawnpore massacre'.⁵⁸ McCullagh attempted to use some pictures of the massacres in his book on the war but the publisher deemed they were 'unsuitable for publication in a work intended for general circulation and replaced them'. Social mores played their part in restricting how early filmmakers and photographers depicted war.

Images of war

Moving and still images became a feature of media accounts of conflict in the opening decade of the 20th century. Simon Bottomore⁵⁹ in a fascinating thesis explores the treatment of war in early cinema taking in the filming of several conflicts. He identifies a variety of strategies deployed by filmmakers to deal with the difficulty of representing war on screen. Filmmakers would co-operate with the military, whereby the cameraman would 'arrange' to film the troops

in the war zone in apparently genuine military activity. Another strategy was to film 'war-related' actuality: views of people and places connected with the war. Producers would also make staged films far away from the front, re-enacting battles or skirmishes or key events. Fakery and filming went hand in hand. However, when Bulgaria attacked Greece and Serbia in 1913, two Serbian cameramen accompanied their army to the front and shot footage of devastated villages, prisoners of war and soldiers' everyday life which was edited into a number of short documentaries or newsreels, the earliest recordings of military action.

Film and photographic images were for the first time used as a source of 'evidence' to determine the 'truthfulness' of accusations about atrocities and war crimes. In the early days of the Italian-Turkish war, the US film company Vitagraph produced footage that allegedly showed Italian troops committing war crimes against Arab population in Libya. In response, Italian film companies produced actualities that were part of a counter-campaign of disinformation. The Italian ambassador to Washington labelled the US films as part of an 'anti-Italian campaign' and the *New York Times* reported that the Italian Prime Minister had 'failed to eradicate the impression created by the reports of several correspondents and the absolute evidence of their correctness afforded by photographs'.⁶⁰ This was one of the first occasions when visual documentation was used to support the veracity of what was reported. The extent to which the visual evidence was factually true is a matter of discussion but the debate in the press highlighted the need in the midst of a propaganda war for concrete evidence to support what correspondents had written. The perceived power of pictures made 'the photographer and the moving picture man objectionable to the armies of civilised nations'.⁶¹

The Great War

Revisionist historians argue that the Great War should be considered as another episode in the Balkan conflicts. This is contested but for the history of war reporting many of the components of media management developed in the previous wars, particularly the Balkan wars, were utilised and perfected during the 1914-18 conflict. The development of propaganda and censorship is intimately tied to the performance of the war reporters. The rigid system of censorship imposed by the combatants encouraged correspondents to 'peddle fantasies and ignore real stories', such as the heavy casualties, military mismanagement and poor training of rank and file soldiers.⁶² The flow of official propaganda on the home front, the battlefield and in enemy countries impeded the ability of reporters to find out what was happening amongst the lies and distortions pumped out by the military and governments. Knightley's damning judgement is that the correspondents lacked the 'moral courage to refuse to play their part in the charade' of the propaganda effort.⁶³ They were willing participants in the 'most discreditable period in the history of journalism', a view articulated by some of the correspondents at the time.

Scholars such as Paul Moorcraft and Martin Kerby take issue with this assessment. They are critical of the view that correspondents colluded in a conspiracy to distort the news from the front or were part of a 'meta system of propaganda and myth making'.⁶⁴ Kerby⁶⁵ in his desire to exonerate Gibbs from the charge of collusion points to the overwhelming support for the war from writers, the public and newspaper editors and owners which constrained the reporting of the correspondents. Moorcraft⁶⁶ similarly highlights the constraints placed on correspondents by the popularity of the war. Whatever the price, the public 'thought it was a war worth fighting'⁶⁷ and if correspondents had written about the death and devastation in the trenches they would have been dismissed as 'defeatist'. There were correspondents who attempted to do this. Henry Nevinson, a critic of militarism, sought to make people at home aware of the 'true hideousness' of warfare.⁶⁸ Public reaction was hostile and some of the public meetings at which he was scheduled to speak were cancelled.

The nature of public opinion during the war is a matter of interpretation – Knightley, for example, draws attention to the strong feelings amongst a large section of the public about being dragged into war in 1914,⁶⁹ while the British Prime Minister Lloyd George admitted in 1917 that 'if the people really knew, the war would be stopped tomorrow. But of course they don't know and can't know'.⁷⁰ Although the British public did come together the day war broke out, marked differences between the political parties remained.⁷¹ How much correspondents were able and wanted to tell the public is crucial to passing any judgement on their performance. Many point to the draconian system of censorship that restricted their movements and ability to tell the truth. Their personal desire to put King and Country before their duty to their profession is also crucial. To make a complete analysis of the performance of correspondents during the Great War, we need to examine the way in which reporting was managed. Restrictions on what journalists could report varied during the war with the changing nature of news management. As the war progressed, correspondents appeared to be less willing and able to challenge and criticise, with some exceptions, the official perspective.

Prior to May 1915

Lord Kitchener was appointed as the British Secretary of War the day after the Great War broke out. He was determined that the reporting of war should be a matter for the military and the military alone. This came as a surprise to the British press which had been negotiating a voluntary system of releasing sensitive information in the months leading up to the outbreak of war.⁷² Historical accounts of the initial reporting of the war emphasise the restrictions the British War Office placed on allowing reporters access to the front. Martin Farrar refers to the role of the war correspondent as 'almost non-existent' at the outset of the war.⁷³ The blame for this state of affairs is placed fully on the shoulders of Lord Kitchener who detested reporters and sought to eliminate the need for them at

the front. He gave them 'no help, no briefings, no guidance and little courtesy'.⁷³ He set up a Press Bureau in August 1914 which would be responsible for all communication from the warzone and emergency legislation was introduced to control all telegraph, cable and wireless communication. This set of arrangements brought the military into conflict with the press who were keen to publish information about the fighting, not least to exploit the surge of popular support for the war to sell papers.

Kitchener's decision to have a blanket ban on war reporting meant that correspondents were treated as 'outlaws' who faced arrest and expulsion if found in the warzone.⁷⁵ The outcome was that correspondents 'embarked on adventures in a bid to keep the British public informed'.⁷⁶ The reporting which characterised the period between August and November 1914, when the German armies advanced into Belgium, does not figure as prominently as it should in the general histories of war reporting. As the military authorities in a variety of European countries sought to establish systems of accreditation, reporters poured into north-western Europe. Considerable risks were undertaken to inform people of what was happening. Furnished with 'any kind of statement, letter or pass they could obtain from any kind of official who would grant one' they travelled to possible news locations.⁷⁷ One British reporter spent several weeks in France with a pass that only allowed him access to the War Office building in London. Several reporters attempted to access the front without military permission. Nevinson of the *Daily News* evaded the British military and the German enemy by joining the Quakers and acting as an orderly. His initiative was not rewarded as his reports of the first Ypres Offensive were never published; his editor believed they were 'too horrible for readers to bear'.⁷⁸ Gibbs found several ways to get to the scene of the fighting and provide reports, including an account of the Battle of the Marne. He was arrested at Le Harve in early 1915 trying to get to the front as part of the efforts of the Red Cross. Gibbs was detained for ten days and Kitchener threatened to have him shot if he tried again.⁷⁹

One of the most celebrated Great War reporters was Basil Clarke of the *Daily Mail*, who performed considerable feats to avoid capture and detention in France.⁸⁰ His ability to operate in the warzone is attributed to the help he gained from military officials unsympathetic to Kitchener's press policy, friendly soldiers willing to speak and locals willing to help. Other correspondents such as Gerald Campbell of *The Times* attached themselves to the French Army. Campbell made his services available to the local French general in the Verdun area and was able to send reports of the fighting in that region until January 1915 when Paris became aware of his presence and expelled him.⁸¹ Many correspondents relied on the goodwill of strangers to get their copy back home⁸² or returned to the coast to bribe a purser on a cross-channel steamer.⁸³ Numerous correspondents shared the 'cat and mouse' experience of late 1914 and several were arrested, imprisoned, expelled or nearly shot for their endeavours but it was clear they felt a sense of independence that would be absent in the latter years of the conflict. Clarke speaks for most when he writes that 'in those early days none of us, I fear, had

quire acquired the discipline that came to us later – willingness to bow to official dictates, to obtain a permit for this, a permit for that, to refrain from doing this and that, from going here or there'.⁸⁴

This freedom of movement produced some of the 'most colourful reporting' of the whole war.⁸⁵ The Northcliffe press reported the British retreat in vivid terms referring to 'broken divisions' and 'remnants of battalions' in describing the defeat at Mons.⁸⁶ Passed by the censors – in what many describe as a lapse of judgement by FE Smith, first director of the Press Bureau – this coverage was criticised by politicians, Northcliffe's competitors and other war correspondents for its pessimistic tone.⁸⁷ Correspondents' freedom to roam did not equate with informed coverage. The rapid advance of the German army in these months and the efforts to evade capture by the British and French authorities prevented reporters from obtaining an adequate knowledge of what was happening. Gibbs conceded that it was difficult 'to piece together the various incidents and impressions and to make a picture of them'.⁸⁸ Their reports did not necessarily communicate a picture that was any clearer than that provided by the authorities. They were also supportive of the war effort and the British Army. Newspapers complained about denial of access and censorship on the grounds it prevented them from doing their patriotic duty. Most correspondents in the combatant countries wanted to be part of the war effort; it was their duty as part of a battle for national survival.⁸⁹

Kitchener appointed in September 1914 an official war – or rather War Office – correspondent, Lieutenant Colonel Ernest Swinton, whose job it was to feed news to the press. Swinton had been a junior officer during the Boer War and shared the prevailing attitude of his rank that the 'scare headlines in the papers at home' had had a detrimental impact on the Army's capacity to wage war.⁹⁰ Swinton's communiqués were until July 1915 the only means by which the press and public learned of what was happening on the battlefield. Swinton and his staff under the by-line 'Eye-witness' between November 1914 and July 1915 supplied the War Press Bureau with 103 stories.⁹¹ They resembled the dull and dreary accounts of warfare in the early 19th century and were dismissed as 'eye-wash' by the press. The several layers of censorship that Swinton's accounts had to pass through were primarily responsible for their turgid nature but they also reflected his lack of journalistic experience which contrasted with the French Army whose *Section d'Information* made use of skilled journalists to write stories of human interest and heroism.⁹² The lack of such stories increased the frustrations of the British press which mounted a campaign to gain access to the battlefield in the face of Kitchener's repeated refusal to discuss the situation. Dissatisfaction with Swinton's accounts was not confined to the press; many inside the Army were increasingly upset by what they saw as the preference given to Kitchener's view of the war. Swinton in his memoirs stated he was 'getting it in the neck' from the Army.

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American correspondents continued their efforts to gain access to the front throughout 1915. William Shepherd of the *United Press* agency successfully

evaded British and French restrictions in April 1915 to report on the casualties of the first German gas attack.⁹⁴ However, many American reporters followed the example of Richard Harding Davis who 'despaired at their inability to cover front line fighting, and returned home rather than compromise their integrity'.⁹⁵ American correspondents attached to the German forces fared better. The initial German success in advancing through the Low Countries led them to be more open with the foreign press. They continued to make use of the conducted tour system after the fighting became bogged down in the trenches which facilitated accounts from American correspondents from the German side. Pro-British voices in the United States complained the restrictions on correspondents were harming British efforts to gain support from the American public. The relative degree of autonomy the German authorities gave to US correspondents meant that 'the only real war news, written by Americans who are known and trusted by the American public comes from the German side'.⁹⁶ Pressure from the other side of the Atlantic including from former president Theodore Roosevelt persuaded the government to change policy.

Band of brothers, 1915–17

By the beginning of 1915, the character of the war changed as trench warfare was established. This form of warfare enabled the authorities to exercise more control over the reporters as access could be more effectively policed. The French and British as a concession selected a number of reporters to gain access to the warzone. The new policy was to embed a handful of officially accredited correspondents with the British Army. Five British reporters including Gibbs and Bennett as well as the most respected American correspondent of the time Frederick Palmer were chosen, put into uniform and awarded the rank of captain. They acted as a pool working for the British and American press as a whole rather than for their individual publications, their number rising to 50 in 1917 with representatives of papers from other neutral countries joining their ranks.⁹⁷ The complicity of these correspondents in the misreporting of the war – at least the British ones – has been highlighted by many scholars. The extent of this complicity is usually illustrated by Gibbs' candid post-war reflection that he and his colleagues had 'identified ourselves absolutely with the Armies in the field' and 'wiped out of our minds all thought of personal scoops and all temptations to write one word which would make the task of officers and men more difficult and dangerous'.⁹⁸ His words are echoed in the statements of newspaper proprietors and politicians. According to wartime Prime Minister Lloyd George, 'the correspondents don't write the truth and the censor would not pass the truth'.⁹⁹ Lord Rothermere, owner of the *Mail and Times*, said that 'you've seen the [war] correspondents shepherded by General Charteris. They don't know the truth, they don't speak the truth and they don't write the truth'.

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The official First World War correspondents were carefully selected. Social standing and reliability were important considerations. The reporters had to be

'gentlemen of the press' but they also had to be amenable to authority. For example, the experience and connections of Henry Nevinnson were second to none. He was dubbed as the 'King of Correspondents' by his colleagues in 1914.¹⁰⁰ However, the military believed he would not adapt to censorship and restrictions and despite his seniority he was not chosen. It was the background of the selected correspondents that was more telling than the official machinery of censorship in determining what correspondents wrote. Colin Lovelace argues that self-censorship best explains the press coverage of the Great War, pointing out that 'the censorship which operated during the war was in part compulsory but in large part voluntary'.¹⁰² The extent to which the authorities, he argues, exercised control over the press has been exaggerated; 'the press during the First World War was far too powerful an institution for any government to control or to suppress'. The Defence of the Realm Act, 1914, extended considerable power to the government to regulate the flow of information and news. It was used to smother the expression of opinion such as the suppression of *The Globe* in November 1915 for falsely reporting the imminent resignation of Lord Kitchener. The newspaper, however, was soon back in publication. There are some instances of newspapers being fined, but in general magistrates dismissed efforts to prosecute the press.¹⁰³

It was the 'discrete and patriotic' attitudes of correspondents and their editors that led the British press to ignore or downplay the death, devastation and suffering of the Great War. One of the correspondents, Beach Thomas, summed up the attitudes of the selected band of official correspondents when he said there was 'no need of censorship of our despatches. We were our own censors'.¹⁰⁴ They saw it as their patriotic duty to support the war effort and did not believe this was incompatible with their professional obligations. With correspondents 'on team', the relationship between the military and the press improved. With one or two notable exceptions – for example, the shell shortage scandal of May 1915 and the reporting of Gallipoli in September 1915 – the press did not break ranks. Of more significance in the long run was the discussion inside the press as to whether access to the front was necessary to report war and conflict. For one correspondent it was not. Charles à Court Repington was a former soldier, military analyst, *Times* reporter and confidant of the good and great in the British army and British society in general. More so than most of his colleagues in the press and army, he had foreseen at the beginning of the 20th century that the nature of warfare was radically changing and that a new kind of journalism was required. Military news specialists became part of the British press at the end of the 19th century. In the German press, they had a longer lineage with commentaries on the actions of the Franco-Prussian War appearing in the *Kölnische Zeitung*.¹⁰⁵ Repington was appointed as the *Times* military correspondent in 1903 and he showed that the job of reporting war could be done by relying 'on contacts and ... professional instincts' instead of 'strength and stamina to take him around the battlefield'.¹⁰⁶ This was a literary journalism Summer School of the Great War. Based in London – with occasional visits to the front to meet with his friend the head of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) Sir John French –

he was able through cultivating his connections with hostesses, politicians, officers and soldiers and the War Office to build a more reliable picture of what was happening at the front than the accredited war correspondents. His efforts highlighted that 'a military correspondent in his editorial office could present a different, though no less realistic perspective' than the reporter at the front.¹⁰⁷

Repington's relationship with *The Times* was never easy. A force in his own right in British politics—the 'twenty-third member of the Cabinet' according to one MP—he was a 'publicity hunter and an intriguer' who used the newspaper to push his own policies.¹⁰⁸ A supporter of Kitchener and conscription, he nevertheless revelled in the political machinations of the war effort, writing a number of articles for other newspapers, journals and publications advocating this or that position. This brought him into conflict with his editors whom he accused of 'destroying his reputation by suppressing his work'.¹⁰⁹ One of those editors, Geoffrey Dawson of *The Times*, described him as 'viewy, vain and un-amenable to office discipline'.¹¹⁰ Using 'off-the-record' and confidential information as well as his connections, Repington produced the most accurate account of the deployment of the BEF and its combat failure in the first weeks of the fighting. He also broke the story of the shortage of shells for the British army which led to a change of government in 1915, for some, the high point of independent reporting during the conflict. Repington 'eschewed descriptive cameos for hard-headed analyses of larger questions of tactics, equipment, strategy and the relationship between the commander in the field and the politician at home',¹¹¹ the antithesis of the human interest story.

Agents of propaganda, 1917–18

By 1917, war correspondents had become an integral part of the war effort in combatant countries. The British government, military and press barons saw correspondents as providers of propaganda. They were there to furnish the public with positive stories of heroism and progress and to aid recruitment. The limited number of accredited correspondents operated as a press pool providing stories for the rest of their colleagues. They were regularly briefed by their minders who escorted them on the daily incursion into the field which was carefully organised. Every afternoon they returned to relatively comfortable billets between General HQ and the front where they were debriefed on the day's events by military officials. They were constantly in the presence of guides, minders, officials and censors.

It was not just correspondents in the field that were incorporated into the war effort; editors and owners were subject to different pressure and persuasion. Many journalists volunteered for service during the war, but under Lloyd George, newspaper proprietors and editors were appointed to government posts. In 1918, Lord Northcliffe became Director of Propaganda in Enemy Countries, Lord Beaverbrook was made minister of information and Robert Donald, editor of the *2nd International Literary Journalism Summer School* in Neutral Countries.¹¹² The co-ordination of the flow of information posed problems for the duration of the war,¹¹³ but by 1917, a sophisticated mechanism to systematic

manage the flow of information through propaganda, censorship and press control had been established in Britain. The Press Bureau set up by Kitchener in 1914 sought to prevent the publication of anything likely to upset the public and the prosecution of the war, as did the War Press Office in Germany and the Section d'Information in France. However, in Britain, and to a lesser extent France, the authorities came to see blanket censorship and restriction as counterproductive. They sought to persuade correspondents to identify with the armies in the field. By granting them access to the front and fully briefing them on operations and troop movements, they attempted to gain their trust. As a result, the British and later French governments were more successful at using their media to promote their war aims.¹¹⁴ For American correspondents such as Frederick Palmer, the result was that the war reporter 'survives only as a writer who can give human expression to what the military staff utters'.¹¹⁵

Conclusion

The Great War brought an end to 'solitary, enterprising journalism'.¹¹⁶ The trend observed during the wars in the first couple of decades of the 20th century was solidified when correspondents were integrated in 1914–18 into the war machine. The arrival of new media such as film and photography reinforced the government's view that journalism was an essential component of ensuring public support for war and must be managed. The growing involvement of the public in warfare reflected the need for the total mobilisation of societies to prosecute the Great War and the extension of modern democracy. Patriotic journalism was a means by which correspondents were co-opted. Duty to country led correspondents not to report the truth of the war, the casualties, suffering and conditions. More significant were the mechanisms deployed to restrict what correspondents could see, where they could go and what they could report. Initially, correspondents attempted to act independently on the battlefield, but from 1915, there was a concerted effort to manage how correspondents did their work. Press releases, press conferences and press spokespersons were embedded into the newsgathering process, making reporters more dependent on the military authorities. The failure of the reporter in the field to fully and fairly report the war was highlighted by Repington's achievements as a military correspondent to cover the fighting from London. The inability of the reporter at the front to act independently of the military was not so much the product of heavy-handed censorship or crude propaganda or patriotism but more the sophisticated organisation of his or her working routines to propagate the official perspective.

Notes

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- 1 See Farrar, M., *News from The Front: War Correspondents on the Western Front 1914–18*, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998.
- 2 Gibbs, P., *Adventures in Journalism*, London: William Heinemann, 1923, 217.

- 3 G. Ward Price quoted in Mathews, *Reporting the War*, 254; see also Farrar, *News from the Front*, x.
- 4 Sweeney, *The Military and the Press*, 24.
- 5 See Bertellini, G., 'Dramatizing the Italian-Turkish War (1911–12): Reports of Atrocities, Newsreels, and Epic Films in Italy and the USA' *Early Popular Visual Culture* 14(2), 2016, 131–154.
- 6 It is possible to extend this list to include even more historically obscure wars and conflicts such as the British Expedition to Tibet (1903–4), the Mexican Revolution (1910–20) and the Portuguese Revolution (1910) which nevertheless acquired international attention at the time.
- 7 Quoted Best, B., *Reporting from the Front: War Reporters During the Great War*, Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2014, 7.
- 8 First Balkans War (1912–13), Second Balkans War (1913).
- 9 For an account of Trotsky as a war correspondent see Todorova, M., 'War and Memory: Trotsky's War Correspondence from the Balkan Wars' *Perceptions* XVIII(2), 2013, 5–27.
- 10 Farnsworth, H., *The Log of a Would-Be War Correspondent*, New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1913, 18.
- 11 Gibbs, P. and Grant, B., *The Balkans War: Adventures of War with Cross and Crescent*, Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1912.
- 12 Gibbs and Grant, *The Balkans War*, 1.
- 13 See Keisinger, F., 'Uncivilised Wars in Europe? The Perception of the Balkans Wars 1912–1913 in English, German and Irish Newspapers and Journals' in Geppert, D., Mulligan, W. and Rose, A. (eds) *The Wars Before the Great War: Conflict and International Politics Before the Outbreak of the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 343–358.
- 14 Gibbs and Grant, *The Balkans War*, 4.
- 15 Quoted in Keisinger, 'Uncivilised Wars in Europe?', 347.
- 16 *The Times*, 9 December 1913 quoted in Keisinger, 'Uncivilised Wars in Europe?'.
- 17 Cetinkaya, Y., 'Atrocity Propaganda and the Nationalisation of the Masses in the Ottoman Empire During the Balkans War (1912–13)' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, 2014, 759–778.
- 18 This situation led to the establishment by the government of teams to document the extent of the atrocities in addition to the efforts of the non-governmental Carnegie Endowment for International Peace see Ungor, U., 'Mass Violence Against Civilians During the Balkans War' in Geppert, D., Mulligan, W., and Rose, A. (eds) *The Wars Before the Great War: Conflict and International Politics Before the Outbreak of the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 76–91.
- 19 *Kölnische Zeitung*, 12 February, 1913 quoted in Keisinger, 'Uncivilised Wars in Europe?', 349.
- 20 Bertellini, 'Dramatizing the Italian-Turkish War', 134.
- 21 Bertellini, 'Dramatizing the Italian-Turkish War', 135.
- 22 Bertellini, 'Dramatizing the Italian-Turkish War'.
- 23 McCullagh, F., *Italy's War for a Desert: Being Some Experiences of a War-Correspondent with the Italians in Tripoli*, Chicago: F.G. Browne & co, 1913 (first published 1912 London: Herbert & Daniel, 1912), xvii.
- 24 McCullagh, *Italy's War for a Desert*, xviii.
- 25 McCullagh, *Italy's War for a Desert*, xx.
- 26 McCullagh, *Italy's War for a Desert*, xxiii.
- 27 McCullagh, *Italy's War for a Desert*, xxxiii.
- 28 Michailidis, I., 'Reporting from the Frontline' *Media History* 2018, 8.
- 29 **2nd International Literary Journalism Summer School** (eds) *Film and the First World War*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995, 28.
- 30 'Has The War Correspondent Seen His Last Fight' *American Review of Reviews*, April 1913. Scholars have estimated that nearer 200 correspondents covered the war of

Module 7: Hollywood et le reportage dans les années 1930

Director: Anna Saignes (Language: Français)

1. Valentin Mandelstamm, *Le Monde illustré*, 1/05/1920
2. Claude Blanchard, *Le Crapouillot*, 1/01/1930
3. Fabio Fabiano, *Paris-Soir*, 02/01/1933
épisode 8 sur 15
4. Blaise Cendrars, *Paris-Soir*, 31/05/1936–13/06/1936
5 épisodes sur 8 :
 - 1) Hollywood 1936, 31/01/1936 (p.1)
 - 2) Fiction et réalité, 9/09, 1936 (p. 4)
 - 3) Wally Westmore, 10/06, 1936 (p. 4)
 - 4) Vingt-trois stars, 11/06, 1936 (p. 5)
 - 5) Dans l'ombre des vedettes, 12/06, 1936 (p. 6)
5. Blaise Cendrars, *Hollywood : la Mecque du cinéma*, Paris, Grasset, 2005, « Les cahiers rouges », extraits (il s'agit du recueil en volume des reportages précédents, avec les illustrations de Jules Guérin ; l'édition originale date de 1936).
6. Kessel, Joseph. *Hollywood, Ville mirage*. Paris, Le Sonneur, 2020, extraits, (1937)
7. Nadja Cohen, David Martens, « Au miroir du septième art: Portrait de Hollywood chez Dekobra, Cendrars & Kessel », *French Forum*, Volume 43, Number 1, Spring 2018, pp. 147–65.

Valentin Mandelstamm, *Le Monde illustré*, 1/05/1920

A LOS ANGELES

UN ROYAUME DU CINÉMA

D'abord — puisque nous sommes en Amérique — quelques chiffres !

Il y a, aux États-Unis, à l'heure présente, environ vingt-six mille salles de cinéma, dont quelques unes, telles que le *Realto* et le *Shand*, à New-York, le *Gramman's* à Los Angeles, sont des merveilles d'agencement de confort, de décoration et de contenance des orgues valant cinq cent mille francs.

Dans ces théâtres, dont il se construit tous les jours de nouveaux, défilent annuellement deux à trois milliards de spectateurs ; et, à leurs guichets, en 1918, on a encaissé un milliard deux cent mille dollars de recettes brutes, soit, au change actuel, environ dix-huit milliards de francs.

Des étoiles comme Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin gagnent, par an un à deux millions de dollars.

Un des établissements — non le plus grand — des États-Unis, a utilisé ou consommé, pour cinquante-deux films fabriqués dans l'année : 500.000 mètres linéaires de planches, poutres et lattes ; 12 millions de clous ; cinq mille serrures, charnières et poignées de portes ; 25.000 mètres de papier peint ; 1.500 gallons de peinture ; 100.000 meubles, accessoires et objets divers servant à la mise en scène ; un million d'ampères-heures ; 500.000 mètres de pellicule.

Très fréquemment, pour construire un décor qui ne servira qu'une fois, on dépense dix, quinze, vingt mille dollars. On enco e, lorsqu'on a besoin, par exemple, de figurer un accident de chemin de fer, on va trouver une compagnie, on fait un prix pour l'achat de matériel, locomotives et wagons, plus ou moins usagé, puis on organise une véritable catastrophe, où les dites locomotives et les dits wagons sont *véritablement* démolis.

Et tout à l'aventure.

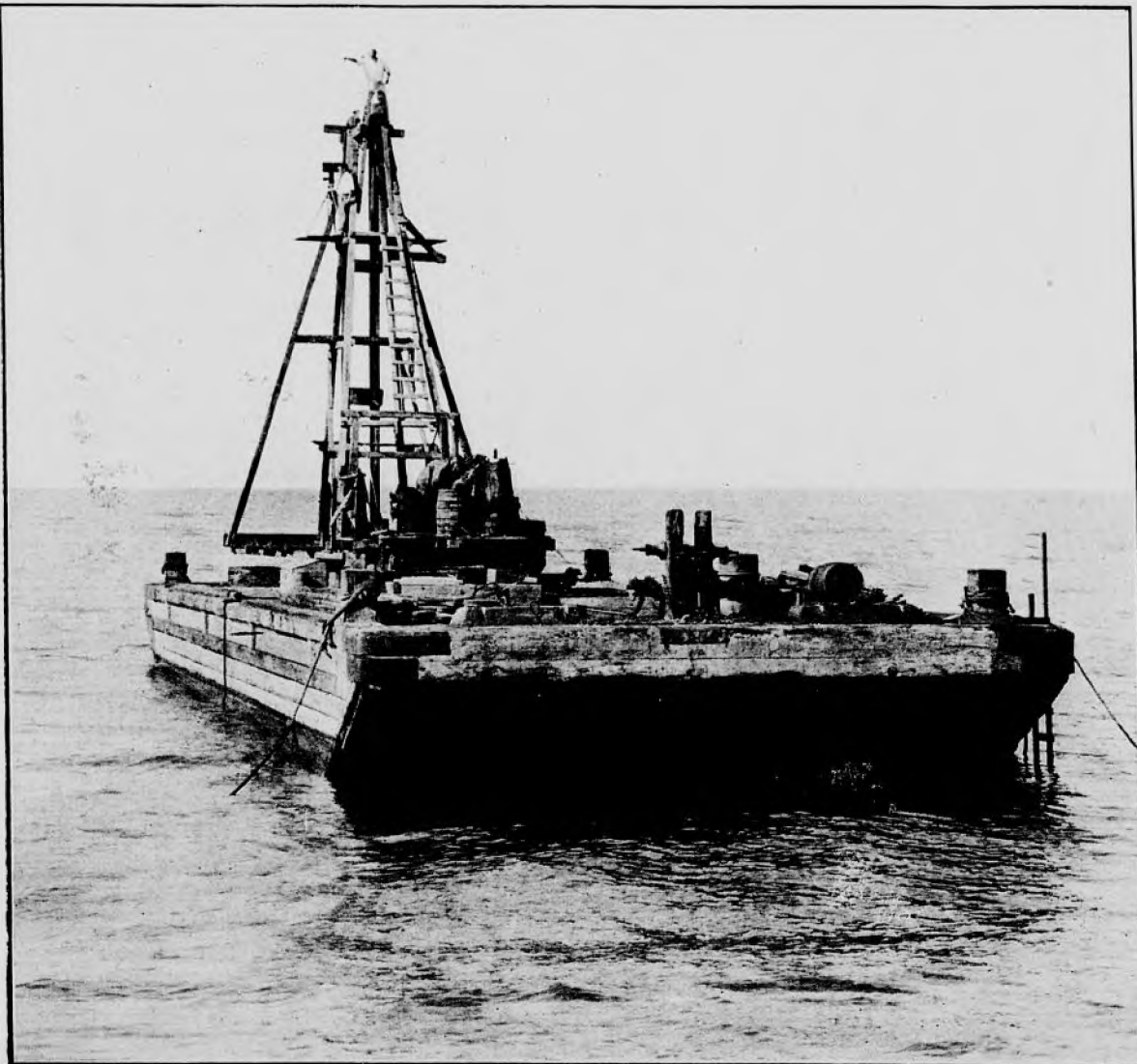
C'est aux Studios (nom générique des établissements de production) de Los Angeles en Californie, non loin de la côte du Pacifique et à quatorze heures par voie ferrée de San Francisco, que sont fabriqués actuellement quatre-vingt-dix pour cent des films américains (le reste vient de New-York et, dans de petites proportions, de Chicago).

C'est sans doute, à cause de sa belle lumière et de la fixité de son climat, — un printemps éternel — que Los Angeles et ses alentours a été élue par les metteurs en scène du Nouveau Monde, pour y monter leurs scénarios.

Un autre motif de ce choix est la proximité de la mer, d'îles pittoresques comme Santa Catalina, des montagnes et des plaines de l'Arizona et du



Deux rois de l'écran et deux amis. — Charlie Chaplin et Max Linder, récemment photographiés à Los Angeles.



Sur la côte du Pacifique : Un metteur en scène fait tourner un épisode maritime.

Texas du Grand Cañon de Californie, des dernières Réserves Indiennes, ce qui permet de pouvoir tourner, sans trop de frais de déplacement, toutes ces aventures bougeuses, toutes ces histoires de ranchmen, de cow-boys, de chercheurs d'or et bandits de grand chemin, dont le public yankee se montre toujours si friand.

Et, sûrement, c'est à la vogue du cinéma qu'est due la croissance et la fortune de Los Angeles, qui, en 1850 ne comptait guère que 50.000 habitants, et qui, aujourd'hui, en possède plus de cinq cent mille.

À dire vrai, en tant que ville, Los Angeles ne diffère pas des autres cités américaines. Comme ailleurs, il y a là des maisons à multiples étages, des hôtels à deux mille chambres, un échiquier de rues tracées au cordeau et à angle droit. La particularité la plus frappante de l'endroit, c'est le nombre inouï d'automobiles qui y circulent, ou, plutôt, qui s'y déplacent en procession sans fin : car il faut savoir qu'en Californie les statistiques accusent l'existence d'une automobile par quatre habitants !

C'est aux environs, dans de lointains faubourgs verdoyants et pittoresques — coupés de larges avenues que bordent d'imposants palmiers d'allure tropicale, et que sillonnent des trans extra-rapides, faisant couramment du quatre-vingt-dix à l'heure — que se trouvent les Studios.

Ils se localisent particulièrement dans la banlieue Ouest, appelée Hollywood ; c'est là que se trouvent ceux des fameux Players Lasky, du Metro, de Douglas Fairbanks, de Sesse Hampton, de Fox, de Charlie Chaplin, de Robert Brunton.

Ce dernier est un des plus modernes et des mieux agencés.

M. R. Brunton a été, pendant longtemps, le collaborateur intime du grand comédien et metteur en scène anglais Sir Robert Irving ; et dans bien des détails de cette organisation modèle on retrouve l'inspiration d'un tel maître.

Le Studio Brunton comprend dix acres de superficie couverte par les bâtiments permanents, théâtres de prise de vue, ateliers, bureaux ; trente acres utilisés pour les constructions volantes, rues entières de New-York et de Londres, de Paris et de Pékin, de villes de l'Ouest et de l'Est, pagodes hindoues, jardins japonais, minarets persans, patios mexicains, châteaux historiques, palais royaux, quais de gares, docks, cheminées d'usines, ponts de steamers etc., etc. et à moins d'un quart



Un des maîtres de la mise en scène cinématographique, M. Tourneur, et la célèbre vedette Mary Pickford.

d'heure en auto. L'établissement possède un ranch de cinq cents acres, en pleine montagne, avec toutes les variétés imaginables de sites et d'horizons.

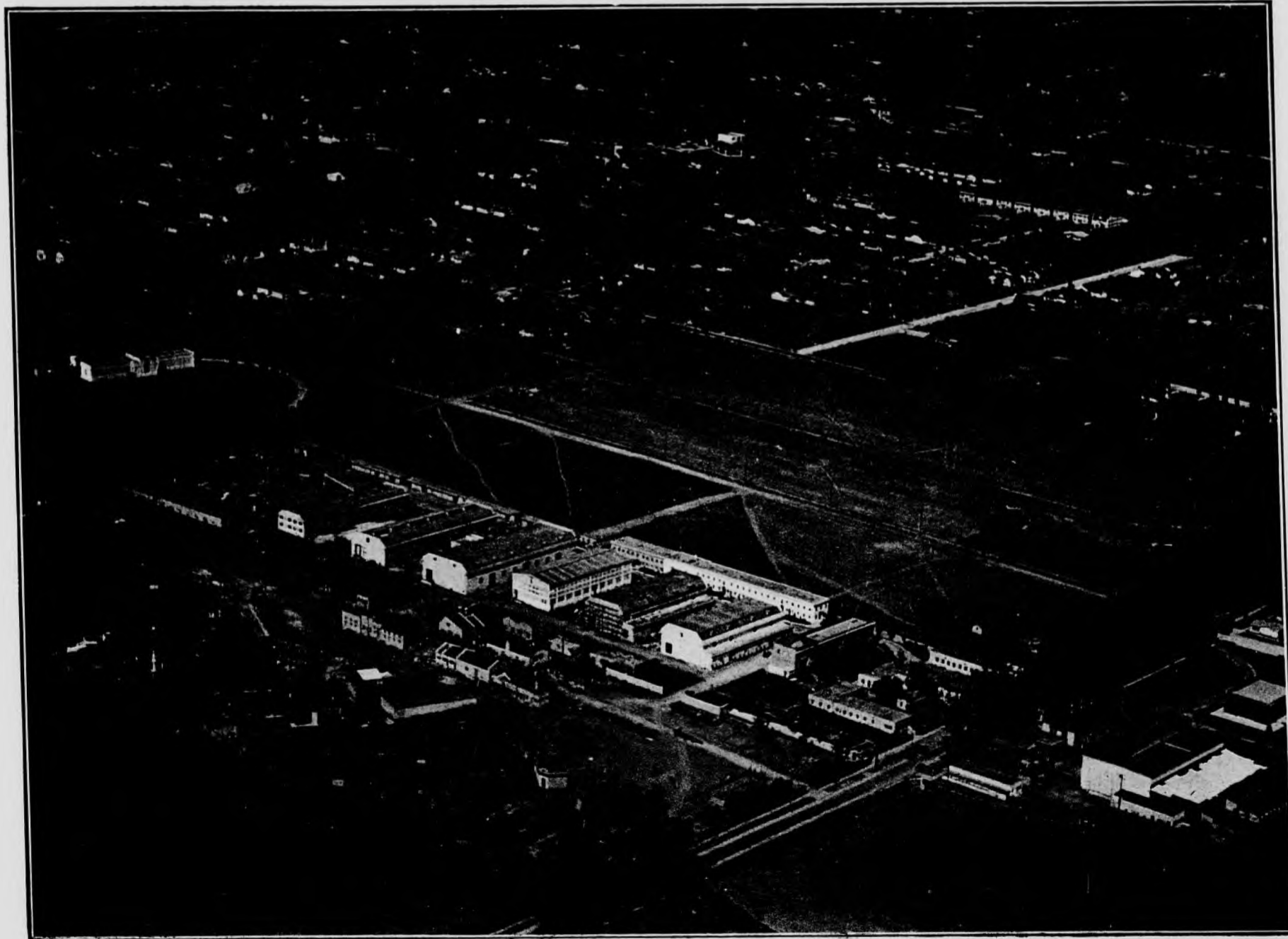
Quatorze compagnies peuvent, en même temps, tourner leurs « intérieurs » dans six spacieux théâtres, merveilleusement équipés au point de vue de l'éclairage électrique : à noter que sur les six, il n'y en a qu'un à parois de terre : les autres sont complètement clos. En effet — paradoxe étonnant — dans ce pays de soleil admirable, les metteurs en scène ont, de plus en plus, tendance à user de la lumière artificielle, cela pour des motifs d'ordre... commercial.

Une large avenue, avec des parterres de fleurs, qu'ombragent des palmiers, est bordée de bungalows où se trouvent les loges d'artistes. Une de ces maisons, un peu isolée et noyée dans de la verdure, appartient à Mary Pickford, l'étoile des étoiles, qui travaille presque toujours chez Brunton. C'est également là que le champion du monde Jack Dempsey tourne, pour le compte du Pathé-Exchange de New-York, un grand film à épisodes sensationnels.

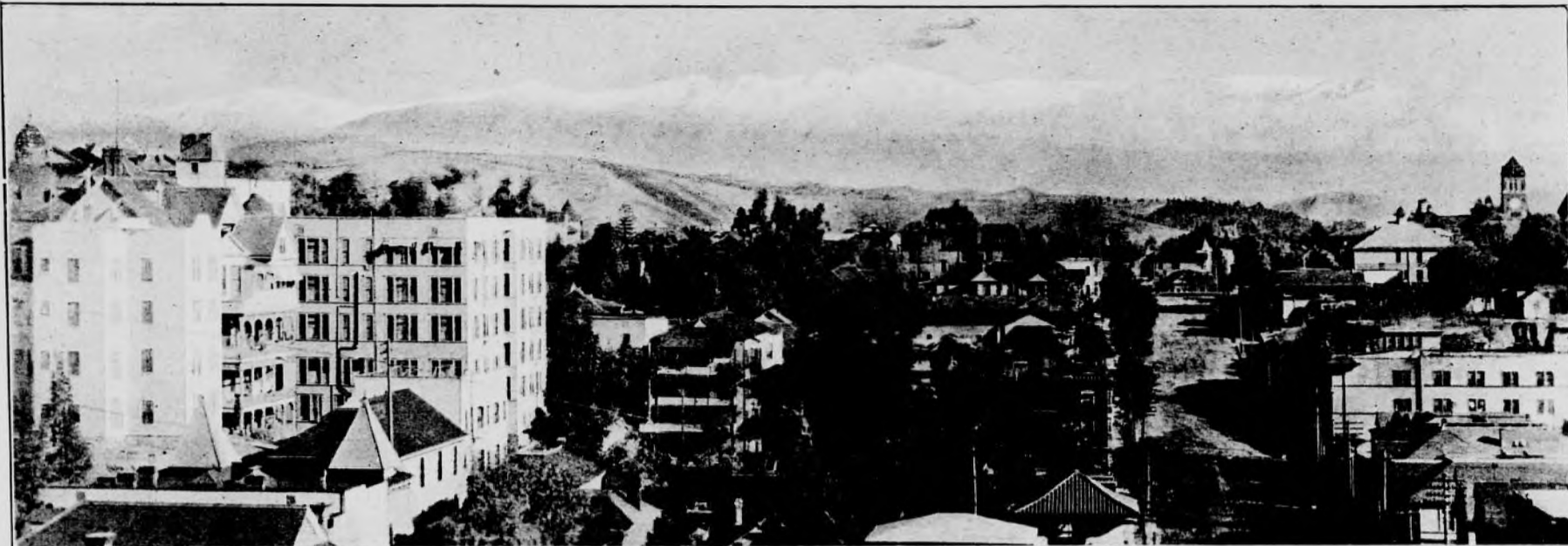
D'immenses magasins-halls à deux étages regorgent de meubles, d'accessoires, d'objets de décoration, d'appareils d'éclairage, fabriqués de toutes pièces, dans les ateliers de menuiserie, d'ébénisterie, de ferronnerie de mécanique et de peinture, annexés à l'établissement, et marchant — bien entendu — à l'électricité, depuis les perceuses et raboteuses jusqu'aux aspirateurs de sciure et de copeaux.

Une section spéciale comprend des groupes électrogènes sur tracteurs, des machines à faire la pluie, le vent, la fumée, la tempête, les tremblements de terre. Et, lorsqu'on arrive chez Brunton — dans le parc d'autos, le garage, et, de ci, de là, le long des allées et des bâtiments — on est tout surpris de voir deux ou trois cents automobiles de toutes dimensions et de toutes marques, qui attendent... On se croirait à une réunion sportive ! Ce sont, simplement, les voitures des artistes, des employés, des ouvriers.

Il y a un bureau de poste, un département de police et de pompiers, une très grande piscine, traversée d'un pont, et où l'on peut exécuter toutes sortes de scènes nautiques — un hall de sports,



Vue panoramique des Studios Brunton, à Los Angeles



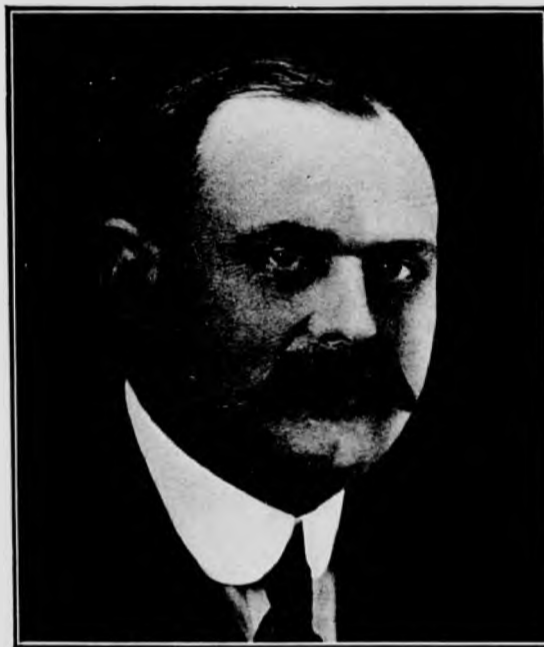
Vue de Los Angeles.

une infirmerie avec une salle d'opérations digne d'un Institut Rockefeller, un vaste restaurant où, pour des prix modiques, on se nourrit parfaitement.

Et l'un des spectacles les plus amusants auxquels on puisse assister chez Brunton, c'est l'heure du déjeuner, dans cet espèce de réfectoire, où étoiles, directeurs, figurants, accessoiristes, chauffeurs, se coudoient et voisinent dans un pêle-mêle vraiment démocratique.

L'on se sert soi-même : on se nantit, en passant près de casiers *ad-hoc*, d'un ticket, d'un plateau, d'un couvert, d'une serviette ; puis on passe devant un vaste étalage de plats variés, où des maîtres-cuissiniers vous délivrent ce qu'on désire, en vous pointant votre ticket de manière à indiquer le chiffre auquel monte votre emplette ; puis l'on paie à la caisse et l'on va s'installer, à telle table qui vous est le plus sympathique.

Les artistes viennent là tout costumés et grîmés, et c'est ainsi que des cow-boys aux copieuses buffleries voisinent avec de magnifiques arabes à burnous, des Mexicains aux moustaches circonflexes coudoient des mandarins en robes de soie ; voici un abbé Louis XV, un fakir hindou ; voici des soldats en uniformes de tous pays, et même de pays qui n'existent pas ; voici des écuyères de haute école, en chapeau melon et en bottes fauves, et des prêtresses grecques en peplum, et des princesses de légendes aux amples toisons d'or... et voilà des accessoiristes, en « combinaison » de toile



M. Paul Brunet, président du Pathé-Exchange de New-York.



Magasin de meubles aux Studios Brunton.

écru, avec leurs marteaux bizarrement accrochés par derrière, à une agrafe de leur ceinture.

Un seul département fait défaut au Studios Brunton, qui se trouvent, en surcroît, à *Universal City* (situé dans la montagne, au nord de Hollywood) et chez *Seelig*, (du côté de Pasadena). C'est une ménagerie !

Seelig notamment, s'est fait une spécialité des films avec bêtes féroces, (très goûtés aux États-Unis) et entretient, à grand frais et dans un magnifique décor naturel parmi les palmiers et les parterres fleuris, toutes les variétés d'animaux connus, depuis les lions, les ours et les panthères jusqu'aux singes et aux onistitis, en passant par les oiseaux de paradis, les poissons rouges et les alligators !

Une des curiosités d'*Universal-City*, est un énorme éléphant qui — énonce-t-on d'une voix admirative — a déjà tué cinq personnes et lequel demeure constamment enchaîné par un pied dans un anneau scellé aux dalles de son hangar. Après tout c'est peut-être à cause de cela qu'il est devenu si féroce, l'histoire ne disant pas si cette précaution est une cause ou un effet.

C'est à *Universal-City*, que travaille actuellement M. Tourneur, l'acteur français, devenu un des premiers metteurs en scène des États-Unis, situation qu'il partage avec Griffiths, avec Cecie B. de Mille (que seconde admirablement Miss Macpherson, une « scénariste » idéale), avec Thomas Inns, avec trois autres français : Capellani, Chautard, et Léonce Perret l'auteur des « Étoiles de Gloire » et de « Lafayette, nous voici » deux films de propagande, exécutés pendant la guerre, et qui ont obtenu en Amérique le plus légitime succès.

Sur ce chapitre de l'influence française, ces notes, si succinctes soient elles, seraient trop incomplètes si nous ne signalions pas l'inappréciable concours qu'apportent, à la Propagande officielle française, l'institution des « Nouvelles Cinématographiques Pathé », distribuées sous les auspices actifs et éclairés de M. Paul Brunet (le président du « Pathé-Exchange » de New-York), dans six mille théâtres de l'Amérique, avec changement de programme deux fois par semaine, et qui se déroulent en moyenne devant quinze millions de spectateurs hebdomadairement !

Il y aurait toute une étude à consacrer aux « trucs » cinématographiques, tous plus étourdissants les uns que les autres, et qu'inventent chaque jour les producteurs yankees dans ce besoin national de faire constamment « de plus en plus fort ».

Citons-en un, entre mille, assez plaisant : Un directeur, pour une de ses bandes, avait besoin de montrer, dans les rues d'une ville, une foule agitée par l'annonce d'un événement sensationnel et peu agréable au public.

Voici comment il s'y prit, pour arriver à ses fins, (tout en s'épargnant les frais d'une figuration qui, en aucun cas, n'aurait donné une impression de réalisme aussi intense) : ayant embusqué, aux bons endroits, un certain nombre d'opérateurs, il lança, vers midi, sur les trottoirs, une nuée de boys, porteurs de feuilles volantes, imprimées pour la circonstance, et annonçant en manchette, avec des lettres énormes, que... « l'Angleterre venait de déclarer la guerre à l'Amérique ! ». On s'imagina l'effet, les figures haineuses et la gesticulation des passants.... Pendant ce temps les opérateurs tournaient la manivelle.

Un peu plus tard, on s'aperçut que c'était un bluff. Les autorités s'émurent, firent une enquête ; on parla de poursuivre l'auteur de cette farce... Mais ce sont des choses qui s'arrangent ; et, en attendant le tour était joué, et bien joué.

Valentin MANDELSTAMM.

Claude Blanchard, *Le Crapouillot*, 1/01/1930

(extrait d'un numéro spécial consacré aux États-Unis)

LE CRAPOUILLOT

MAGAZINE PARISIEN

publie un numéro spécial sur



VUE DE NEW-YORK, par GARNERAY (1830)

L'AMÉRIQUE ET LES AMÉRICAINS



VUE DE NEW-YORK

L'Amérique et *Les Américains*

par **CLAUDE BLANCHARD**

à *Élie-J. Bois*

New-York



Il y a mille façons de découvrir la proue amincie de Manhattan et son jeu d'orgue aux tuyaux de pierre rose, grise ou verte, surmontés de temples grecs, de cathédrales gothiques et de chapeaux Henri II garnis de plumets de vapeur. Tous les jours, toutes les heures, cette vision classique, préparée dans l'esprit du voyageur, par le nouveau lyrisme de la photographie, change selon la lumière ou la brume. Tantôt elle est grise, plate, transparente, découpée dans de la mous-

seline, tantôt, au contraire, elle s'anime, se creuse d'ombres profondes parmi lesquelles le soleil accroche une façade, la transforme en un long lingot d'or où flambent les vitres innombrables.

Ma première rencontre avec ce fameux paysage me le montra tout différent. Au matin, le bateau avançait dans un épais brouillard en jouant de la sirène, à laquelle répondaient les « ouap! ouap! » des remorqueurs et tous les cris, les meuglements de la faune fluviale et maritime qui encombre les deux rivières de chaque côté de Manhattan. On ne voyait rien, mais l'émotion que j'éprouvais d'approcher de la terre n'en était que plus grande.

ouverts. Sur la porte, un écriteau annonce : *Nourriture de santé. Conférence gratuite.* A l'intérieur, des chaises sont rangées devant une estrade, sur laquelle un bonhomme en veston s'agite parmi des microscopes, des intestins en bocaux et des tableaux en couleurs représentant l'appareil digestif.

La salle est toujours comble. Les petits rentiers qu'attire sur la fin de leurs jours le ciel bleu de Californie se pressent à ce spectacle, le seul que leur permettent leurs convictions puritaines.

Sur ce public, le camelot auquel des lunettes d'or confèrent l'autorité de l'expert, sème, en termes véhéments, la terreur de l'anémie et la haine des œufs au lard.

« Nourrissez-vous scientifiquement, s'écrie-t-il, absorbez les matières caloriques comprimées du professeur Sanctus. Au siècle du mécanisme, il n'est plus permis d'ignorer, ladies and gentlemen, qu'il existe des super-nourritures portables, dynamiques, efficaces et stérilisées. Mangez la nourriture de l'avenir, soyez les pionniers des temps nouveaux. »

Peu à peu, on voit les spectateurs, comme soulevés par une conversion, quitter leur place et s'approcher en silence d'un comptoir où une serveuse, munie de gants en caoutchouc, pose devant ces malheureux des morceaux de choses froides et grisâtres, dont certaines ressemblent à du celluloïd, d'autres à du carton détrempe et qu'ils mâchent, mâchent, et déglutissent lentement, sans rire, sans mourir de rire, oh, Molière !

— Dans un médaillon électrique, on lit : « *American minut lunch* », « déjeuner américain en une minute ». A la devanture s'étalent, dans une apothéose de charcutaille pleine de fleurs en papier, de photos de sport pourries de taches de graisse, les jambons de Virginie qu'on fait cuire plantés de clous de girofle et enduits de sucre. Ces jambons ainsi préparés, ne sont pas mauvais, mais regardez dans la boutique. Qu'est-ce donc que cette série de fauteuils semblant préparés pour un spectacle qui va se dérouler le long du mur ? Les fauteuils sont tout blancs, la salle est toute blanche, le balayeur est tout en blanc et porte des souliers de tennis. On dirait un centre d'épouillement de l'Armée du Salut... et pourtant c'est là un restaurant. Le bras droit de chaque fauteuil forme console, on y pose son assiette qu'on a été remplir en échange d'un ticket.

J'ai voulu faire moi-même l'expérience de ce dîner sans table. Je ne puis donner une idée de l'impression atroce que j'ai ressentie. Je ne voyais devant moi que le dos d'un homme qui mangeait, avec son chapeau sur la tête. Je regardais mes pieds, je croisais mes jambes. Soudain, n'y tenant plus, je m'enfuis, laissant là mon « baked ham with mashed potatoes ».

— Mary m'a dit : Restez donc dîner » et elle m'a mis sur les genoux les deux cent cinquante-six pages de la *Sunday edition*, du *New-York Times*, pour me faire patienter pendant qu'elle improvise le repas. Par la porte ouverte, je vois la cuisine, son fourneau électrique muni d'une pendule qui peut arrêter auto-

matiquement la cuisson d'un rôti pendant qu'on est en voyage, sa machine à laver, ses meubles à tiroirs d'aluminium et le couvercle du conduit qui descend les ordures du trentième au rez-de-chaussée dans une chute verticale. Au milieu de ce matériel luisant, poli, sans une tache, sans rien qui atteste la gourmande prévoyance d'un plat futur, je trouve à mon hôtesse une ressemblance étonnante avec les publicités en couleur des « magazines » pour les réfrigérateurs : la petite dame blonde penchée complaisamment vers la machine qui fait son bonheur et, derrière elle, le mari de cinéma souriant, content de son cadeau : « Is'nt lovely darling ? »

Mary est devant son rayon de boîtes de conserves et son imagination est en train de composer un plat nouveau.

Voyons, est-ce que la sauce tomate irait sur un morceau de fromage américain ? Non, ça ne serait pas joli. Elle a une idée ; elle se souvient d'une recette qu'elle a vue sur une affiche. Alors elle éventre résolument une boîte d'abricots au sirop et, délicatement, elle pose une demi-douzaine d'hémisphères rosâtres sur un plat froid de pommes de terre frites.

— Voilà ! N'est-ce pas joli ? », dit-elle, en ajoutant à mon couvert une canette de bière à 2 %.



PRISE DE VUE 1930 D'UNE SCÈNE 1900 DANS LE ROYAUME DU CINÉMA

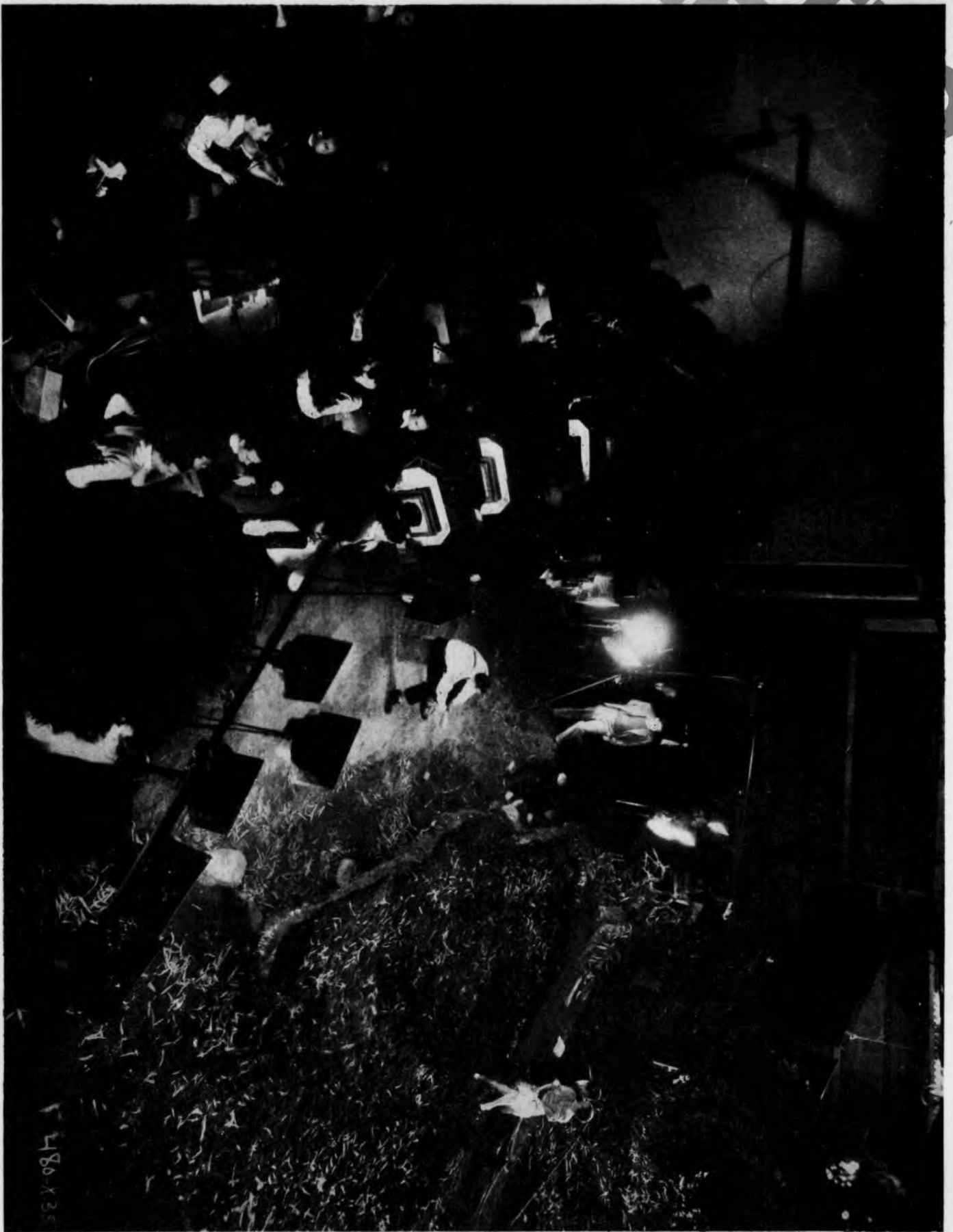
Hollywood

La majorité du public s'illusionne sur la véritable physionomie d'Hollywood. Ce faubourg de Los Angeles apparaît dans les imaginations, paré d'une certaine poésie tropicale, faite de palmiers, d'Océan Pacifique, de costumes de bains, remplis par les plus belles anatomies de la planète et de bungalows où des messieurs habillés en explorateurs, pensent aux destinées du septième art.

Il faut déchanter. Malgré la douceur d'un beau climat, Hollywood est une usine sévère dont les mascarades sont standardisées. La seule préoccupation de cette espèce de Creusot est de fabriquer, au meilleur

REF

Comment on tourne un duo d'amour à Hollywood





« ON TOURNE » A HOLLYWOOD

prix de revient, assez de mètres de distraction pour satisfaire, tous les jours, dans tout l'univers, les goûts romanesques, les aspirations sexuelles et le sens critique de cent millions de spectateurs. C'est seulement sur ce plan purement industriel qu'on peut trouver quelque curiosité à la capitale du celluloïd.

Le fait le plus remarquable, à mon avis, est que l'énorme population d'acteurs de toutes les races, de tous les sangs, de tous les genres qui se presse, lutte, intrigue autour des studios, est classée comme une matière première, sous des étiquettes qui correspondent à toutes les qualités, tous les défauts, toutes les difformités des types humains.

Les *casting offices* d'Hollywood tiennent ainsi, dans leurs classeurs, des assortiments complets de chauves, de bègues, de barbus, d'Apollons, de femmes fatales, de bootleggers, de rois de France, etc. Je veux parler, bien entendu, des anonymes et non des vedettes que chaque minute couronne de quelques centaines de dollars.

Quand on visite les fabriques d'images, le caractère purement industriel du cinéma américain apparaît plus clairement encore. J'ai assisté à une prise de vues dans les studios de Universal City.

Une femme d'une beauté hollywoodienne, peinte au point de ressembler à un biscuit Lulu, était assise dans un salon. Autour d'elle, on avait disposé une véritable usine portative ; des câbles électriques s'enroulaient autour de ses chevilles, sur sa tête se promenait une longue antenne, qui guettait ses paroles pour les avaler et les porter à des transformateurs, des tripodes de tous genres l'entouraient, tandis que l'opérateur, logé dans une sorte de sous-marin à roulettes, était poussé lentement vers cette gracieuse et faible femme que tout cet attirail semblait prêt à dévorer pour fabriquer de la pellicule.

La voracité de l'énorme machine à images ne respecte rien, ni les arts abstraits, ni les arts plastiques, parmi lesquels elle s'ébat, gronde et fait des ravages comme un chien dans de la porcelaine. Elle ne pense

pas le moins du monde, à travailler pour l'avenir. Il faut produire... produire sans prendre le temps de créer, de réfléchir, de s'instruire de quoi que ce soit.

« Allez ! coupez-moi cette symphonie en deux pour y glisser la *Madelon* au moment du ballet, et plus vite que ça. Ce mouvement de Wagner ne colle pas, flanquez-moi donc des triples croches. Et le Cosaque ! Comment est-ce fait un Cosaque ? Y a-t-il un Russe ici ?

La plupart des productions frémissantes, enivrantes, palpitantes, montrent des chercheurs d'or d'almanachs, des bohémiens de foire au pain d'épice, des aventuriers de livres d'étrennes qui chantent, en piétinant sur place, « Marchons ! Courons ! » dans des forêts en angélique et des déserts en caca d'oie dont les qualités acoustiques sont celles d'un éden de Bécon-les-Bruyères.



PRISE DE VUE A HOLLYWOOD D'UN FILM DE PEAUX-ROUGES AVEC UN FOND DE ROCHERS ARTIFICIELS

ou enfin quelqu'un de la région ? Ah ! dépêchez-vous, je vous en prie, les frais généraux sont de 700 dollars par minute (1). Comment ? Nous n'avons plus assez de vedettes ? Alors faites-m'en une pour l'été prochain. Publicité habituelle : campagne de trois mois par la radio, annonçant que la merveilleuse artiste parlera à toute la nation, pour la première fois, le 23 mars. Et beaucoup de *sex appeal*. C'est convenu ? »

Après avoir vu Hollywood sous ce jour, je ne m'étonne plus du tout de l'immense pommade multicolore que sont devenus les films américains.

La couteur, dite naturelle, et le phonographe ont fait du cinéma une sorte d'opéra-bouffe descendu au niveau de la vomissure.

(1) Les frais d'établissement d'un film sont calculés à la minute.

J'ai rêvé qu'un jour un formidable raz de marée emporterait Hollywood, ne laissant, après son passage, que Charlie Chaplin, nouveau Noé, dans son studio muet, miraculeusement préservé, au milieu de la désolation universelle, parmi les perruques et les bottes de mousquetaires détrempées.

Maurice Chevalier

Le succès de Chevalier aux Etats-Unis n'a eu d'égal que celui de Valentino.

L'Amérique est capable de ces engouements qui frisent l'idolâtrie. Il a suffi d'un peu de gouaille parisienne, d'un mauvais accent fort habilement travaillé et d'un entrain endiablé, pour faire roucouler les masses américaines aux pieds de cet amusant titi pari-

sien. Ce phénomène est, je crois, de l'ordre purement sexuel. Il faut savoir combien les foules d'outre-Atlantique sont sensibles à cette espèce de domination. J'ai entendu tant de fois répéter par des Américains des deux sexes : Maurice peut tout se permettre ici, on lui passe tout, n'importe quoi.

J'ai eu l'occasion de voir Chevalier à San Francisco, alors qu'il était engagé, au prix de 25.000 dollars par semaine, pour chanter tous les soirs trois chansonnettes dans une exposition d'automobile.

On sentait là son incroyable influence sur le public. Il chantait *Valentine* en français et l'on voyait cette chose extraordinaire : quarante mille personnes, debout, à chanter en chœur le refrain. On sait que les Américains nous appellent, non sans ironie, les *frogs*, les grenouilles. Devant ce public subjugué, Chevalier disait : « Avez-vous déjà vu comme une grenouille est heureuse quand elle nage ? Eh bien ! la grenouille, c'est moi. » Cette allusion faite par quelqu'un d'autre aurait pu paraître inamicale. Elle valut à Chevalier un succès triomphal. Je ne crains pas d'affirmer que sa présence sur la côte a fait renaître, à ce moment-là, les sentiments francophiles de la Californie.

À ce propos, j'ai reçu les confidences d'un banquier qui revenait de son premier voyage en Europe. Il me confia qu'il trouvait que la France était un pays terrible et comme je voulais savoir ce qu'elle lui avait fait il me raconta que, se promenant un jour dans Paris, il avait vu une boucherie chevaline. Le boucher lui avait expliqué que la viande de cheval était excellente, mais comme l'Américain se montrait scandalisé à l'idée qu'on pût manger de cette viande, le boucher lui avoua que les Français la préféraient au bœuf et que partout, dans les meilleurs hôtels, on servait des filets mignons qui avaient gagné le Grand Prix. Le malheureux, affolé, était rentré à son hôtel et, pendant quinze jours s'était nourri exclusivement de conserves américaines qu'il faisait ouvrir en sa présence.

— Oui, me disait-il, la France c'est un pays affreux. Et il ajoutait : « Heureusement pour vous, vous avez Maurice Chevalier ! »

Je jure que cette histoire est vraie.

Alors ? Pourquoi pas Chevalier adjoint à l'Ambassadeur de France ? On lui dessinerait un joli costume genre « Parade d'Amour » avec un shako et un plumet.

..

J'ai vu « la Grande Mare » dans un cinéma de New-York. Ce film qui nous paraît d'assez mauvais goût, fait en Amérique une propagande extraordinaire pour la France, propagande qui lutte heureusement contre toute une production antifranaïse qui ne traverse pas l'Océan, et pour cause.

Je ne citerai que deux films de ce genre, *They had to see Paris*, de l'humoriste américain Will Rogers dans lequel le Français est représenté par un nain barbicu qui gesticule pour obtenir une dot et se sauve à toutes jambes dès que l'Américain, élégant et sportif, fait mine de se déranger pour aller le fouetter.

Le second film est plus pénible. Il s'appelle *High*

Society Blues. Un aristocrate français, qui s'exprime d'ailleurs comme un sidi du boulevard de Grenelle, est le rival d'un Américain auprès d'une jeune fille. Ce dernier, pour détourner notre compatriote (*sic*) d'un galant rendez-vous, décide de le saouler et l'on assiste alors à cette scène énorme : l'Américain donnant à boire au Français tandis que lui-même, caché derrière un rideau, jette les cocktails par-dessus son épaule. Après quoi, le vicomte à moitié dévêtu, étendu sur un canapé, se met à divaguer longuement d'une voix pâteuse et moldo-valaque en chantant des bribes de la *Marseillaise* et en s'écriant : « hou ! vive la France... bédite fââme, ah ! ah ! ah ! »

Quand on est seul Français, peut-être, parmi huit mille spectateurs qui se gondolent, on se sent le front qui perle.

Les Allemands agissent pour éviter de pareils affronts. Après la présentation à New-York de « *Nothing new on the Western Front* », d'après le livre de Remarque, ils émirent une protestation, suivie d'effet, parce que la façon dont on avait représenté certains personnages-caricatures ne leur plaisait pas.

Beaucoup de gens ne saisissent pas encore quelle fabuleuse puissance de propagande est le cinéma, mais les Américains l'ont compris dès longtemps. Ils ont mis, avec raison, le film au service de la plus grande Amérique en montrant, à propos de n'importe quelle histoire d'amour leurs cuirassés, leurs avions, leur Broadway, leurs soldats et leur chaste jeunesse, obligée de jouer la comédie, derrière les rideaux, pour faire croire qu'elle boit autre chose que du jus d'ananas et de la bière de racine.



Charlot

Même à Hollywood il reste mystérieux, et les toits de tuile vernie qui abritent ses studios cachent aux yeux de tous, la vraie personnalité de ce génial petit bonhomme neurasthénique, que traversent soudain, pendant qu'il est en proie à une nostalgie dont on ignore toujours l'objet, le plus fou, le plus cocasse, le



EXAMEN D'UN ÉMIGRANT

(Extrait de *l'Amérique moderne* de Jules Huret)

plus diabolique accès de rigolade. Il se met à danser, à faire des dialogues en n'importe quelle langue dont il ignore le premier mot, à imiter des hommes politiques, à jouer mille farces imprévisibles, dont la moindre est étonnante, avant de retomber, pour longtemps quelquefois, dans un mutisme absolu.

Je tenais pour Charlot une lettre d'introduction d'un de ses plus chers amis. Je ne l'ai pas vu et je le regretterai toujours. Je n'ai même pas pu lui faire parvenir le message de l'affection. Parmi les grands de ce monde, il est peut-être le plus inaccessible. Lunatique, solitaire, son ombre règne et force au respect la société vaniteuse et cosmopolite qui l'entoure.

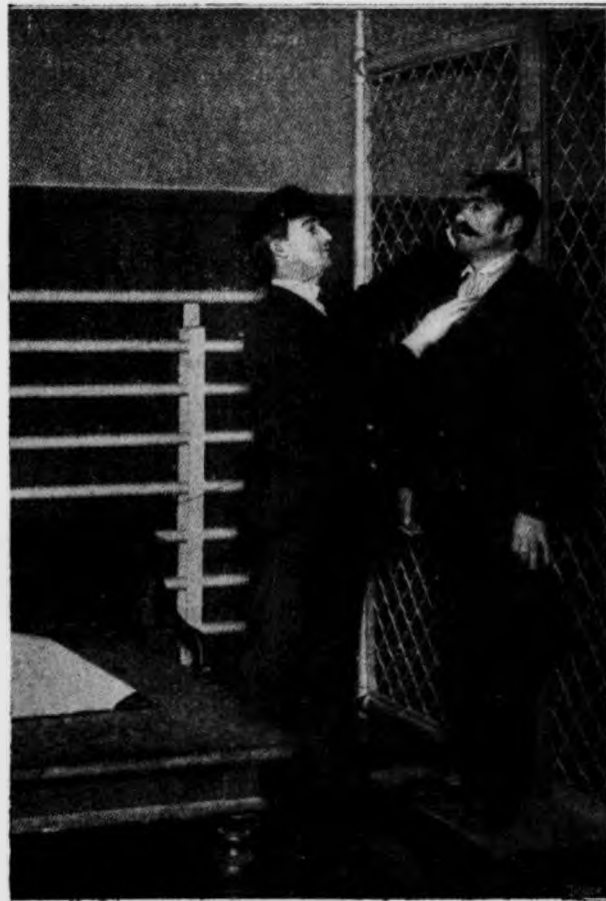
Son ami et collaborateur R. W... m'a dit, de Chaplin, quel prodigieux effort de mise au point il faisait pour la composition de ses films. Dans « Une vie de chien », me disait-il, la scène de l'attaque dans la rue a été refaite huit jours de suite en changeant chaque fois des détails. Tantôt il la concevait trop cruelle, tantôt trop bouffonne, jusqu'au moment où se tournant vers n'importe qui, un machiniste ou le plus humble figurant, il demandait brusquement : « Cela va-t-il ? N'est-ce pas ? Je crois que c'est ça. »

Il lui arrive souvent, me disait W..., de travailler dix-huit heures de suite, sans manger, mimant tous les

personnages, se promenant de long en large, interrompant les conseils qu'il donne aux autres pour ébaucher soudain un geste de son propre rôle. Puis il disparaît pendant trois ou quatre jours. Toute sa vaste usine l'attend, mais personne ne sait où il est.

Il lui arrive quelquefois de pousser si loin l'invention-farce qu'on doit le ramener dans les limites de la convention.

W... m'a raconté, comme exemple, la fin de *Charlot soldat*, qu'il a dû couper pour ne pas faire scandale. On se souvient qu'à la fin de cette caricature de la guerre, la plus belle qu'on ait jamais faite, Charlot fait le kaiser prisonnier. Le film se termine sur cet événement. Or voici ce que Chaplin avait imaginé. Charlot étant le grand vainqueur de la guerre, toutes les puissances alliées décident de lui offrir un banquet. Il a repris son costume civil et se trouve assis à table, entre le roi d'Angleterre, tout chamarré, et le Président de la République française. A l'heure des discours, Charlot se lève et pendant qu'il parle, George V se glisse derrière lui et coupe subrepticement un des boutons de derrière de l'immortelle jaquette, afin de conserver une relique de celui auquel l'Humanité doit la victoire. C'est sur l'intervention des Affaires étrangères, qui craignait des complications diplomatiques, que cette fin magnifique a été supprimée.



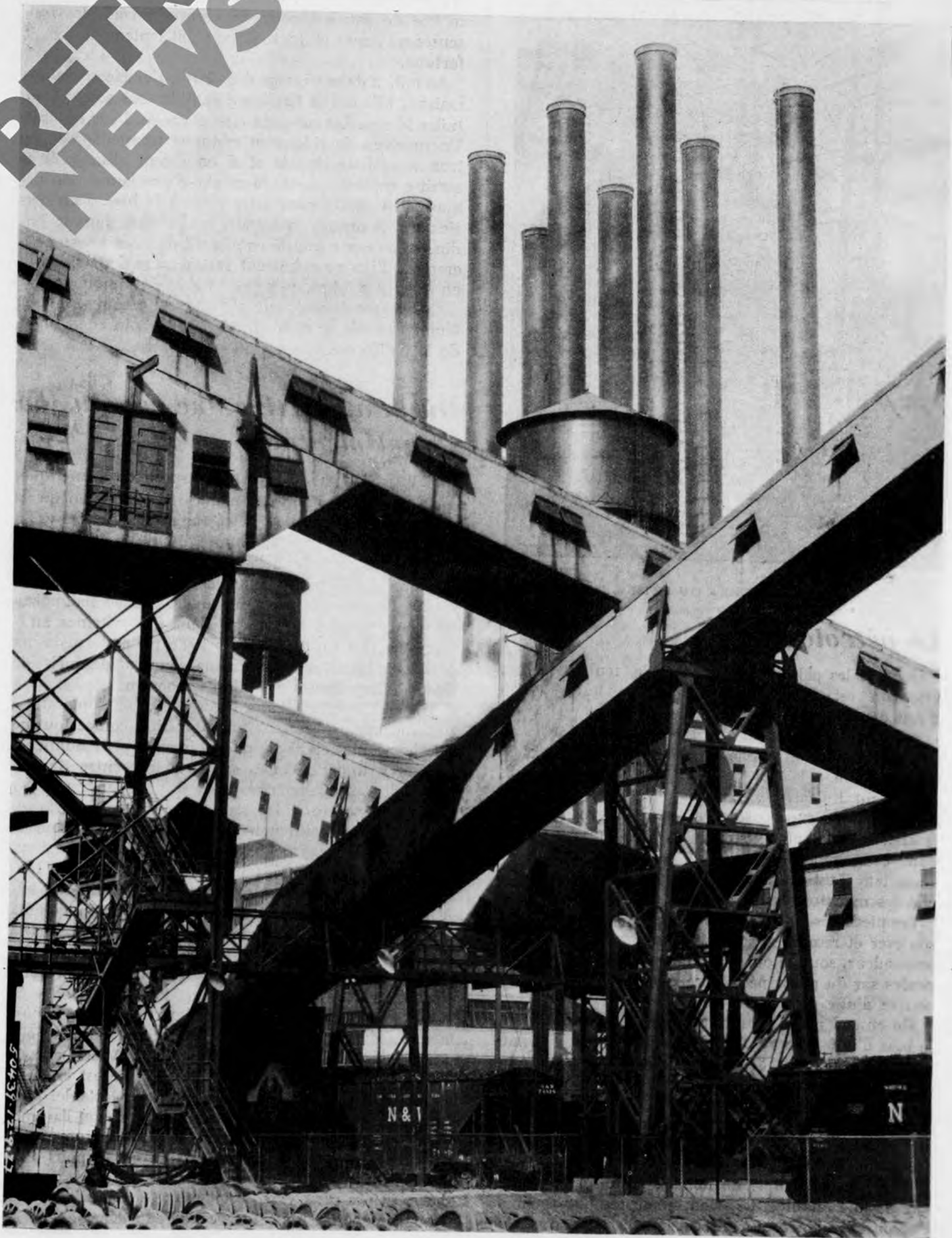
EXAMEN D'UN ÉMIGRANT

(Extrait de *l'Amérique moderne*, de Jules Huret)

ABONNEZ-VOUS AU " CRAPOUILLOT "

RETRO NEWS

PAYSAGE AMERICAIN



Une rue de l'usine Ford

2nd Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School
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Fabio Fabiano, *Paris-Soir*, 27/12/1932 – 10/01/1933

(épisode 8 sur 15))

La tradition et la cuisine

par Paul REBOUX

Le respect de la tradition était... Les conserves est leur spécialité.

Chaque fois que des modifications gastronomiques ont été accomplies... c'est ainsi que Carême, ensuite, a discipliné la science culinaire.

Mais leur opposition, comme toutes celles qui se dressent en face du progrès, ont été vaines.

Et c'est ainsi que les rognons coqueux et les menus excessifs du dix-septième siècle ont été remplacés par les soupers délicats mis à la mode au temps de la Régence; c'est ainsi que Carême, ensuite, a discipliné la science culinaire.

La transformation du matériel a été pour beaucoup dans ces évolutions. Jadis, le fourneau s'appelait le potager et comportait plus d'une dizaine de trous.

Époque d'ailleurs charmante que celle-là ! Le potager occupait une partie de l'énorme cuisine, toute pavoisée de cuivres miroitants.

Mais, à mesure que les agglomérations sont devenues plus denses, la place s'est faite plus restreinte. Il a donc fallu s'accorder aux cuisiniers que des instruments réduits, en même temps qu'on leur imposait un combustible propre et une force calorifique facile à régler.

Elles évoquaient avec tendresse le rustique instrument sur lequel furent accomplis leurs premiers essais. Elles pensaient aux batailles valeu-

DEUX SUR

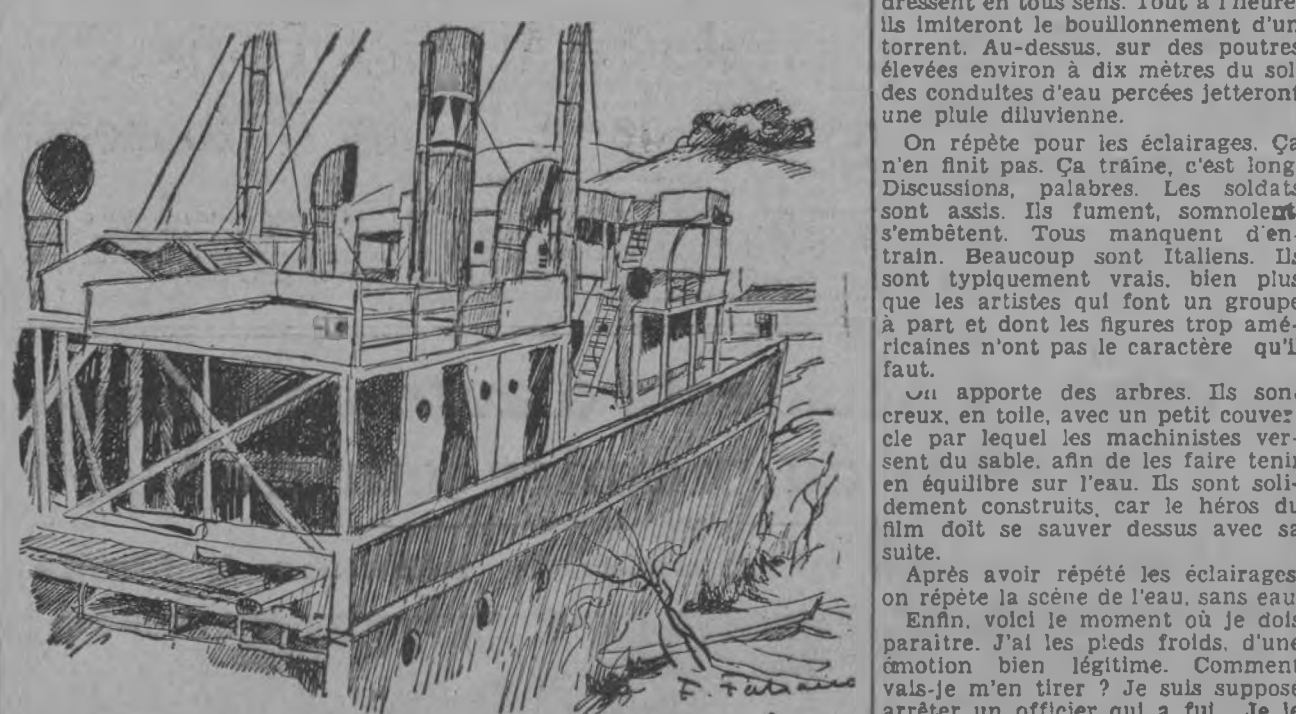
HOLLYWOOD ET CHEZ LES STARS

REPORTAGE ÉCRIT ET DESSINÉ PAR F. FABIANO

F. Fabiano nous conduit à Hollywood, cité des girls et stars, un Hollywood peu connu, fort éloigné de l'Hollywood officiel qu'on montre aux cinéastes et aux journalistes.

VIII. -- Moi aussi, j'ai tourné. Pendant toute une après-midi, je me suis promené dans un drôle de pays. J'avais contempné un temple hindou, visité un souk de Tunis.

Un jour, je reçus le coup de téléphone que j'attendais : « Trouvez-vous mercredi 22 heures, au studio X, vous tournerez dans un épisode de la retraite italienne de Caporetto pendant la guerre. Votre rôle sera celui d'un capitaine de bersagliers. »



J'avais cru rêver en voyant un bateau dans un ravin.

enseignes du « Chat qui pelote », de l'Auberge de la Bonne Trogne et de Morin cordonnier. Je m'étais trouvé tout petit devant une cathédrale. Un amalgame sale et blanc, imitant la neige sur les toits d'un village alpestre, avait succédé à un premier plan de sable, derrière lequel une toile de fond représentait le désert. Une gare avec des wagons rangés sur le quai m'avait semblé la dernière étape d'un pays mort.

Je suis allé dans un pays mort. Dans un coin de paysage chaotique, il y avait un avion brisé. J'avais imaginé l'aviateur mourant auprès de son appareil. On ferait du vent, beaucoup de vent, on lancerait du sel ou du bicarbonate, tout cela afin d'émouvoir les candides spectateurs dans leur fauteuil et de faire pleurer la petite jeune fille de Cavallion ou d'ailleurs, devant la fin atroce du héros.

J'avais cru rêver en voyant un grand bateau dans le creux d'un ravin. Tout y était : cabines, baleinières, passerelles, même le chaudière des machines ; cependant, la coque en toile, trouée par endroits, flottait au vent et des brins d'herbe léchalaient son étrave. En contournant le navire, j'avais vu la machinerie compliquée pour simuler le tangage et le roulis.

Pendant toute une après-midi, bien seul, je me suis promené dans un drôle de pays. Dans des quartiers arabes, indiens, moyenageux, tropicaux, égyptiens, que sais-je ? dans tous les coins variés des mondes.

Je suis allé dans un pays mort. Dans un coin de paysage chaotique, il y avait un avion brisé. J'avais imaginé l'aviateur mourant auprès de son appareil. On ferait du vent, beaucoup de vent, on lancerait du sel ou du bicarbonate, tout cela afin d'émouvoir les candides spectateurs dans leur fauteuil et de faire pleurer la petite jeune fille de Cavallion ou d'ailleurs, devant la fin atroce du héros.

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LES CONTES DE "PARIS-SOIR"

Une idée de femme

Il y a des gens pour prétendre que don Juan était laid. Bien entendu, ce sont des hommes. Les femmes ont d'autres idées sur ce regrettable mon-

En tout cas, il est prouvé que de nos jours la laideur masculine n'est pas contemptible de la séduction. Point n'est besoin d'être beau pour être un amant recherché. Point même n'est besoin d'être riche ; il suffit de savoir faire des dettes.

Jérôme de Sabian était la terreur des maris et des mères. Nul cœur ne lui résistait quand il voulait se donner la peine de le conquérir. Et le fait qu'il avait exercé bien des ravages lui donnait toute facilité pour en faire d'autres.

Jérôme était grand, fort et de pieux fin. Il avait les traits épais, mais l'œil intelligent et toujours en éveil. L'œil est la fenêtre de l'âme. Il permet de comprendre et d'être compris.

Pour être capable de pitié quand on consacre sa vie à l'amour, il faut s'appeler Jésus. Jérôme était féroce, plutôt par indifférence que par égoïsme. Quand une femme ne lui plaisait plus, il passait à une autre. Quoi de plus naturel, est-ce ?

Mais les délaissées se montraient rarement contentes de l'être. Elles piquaient de se faire haïr, selon leur tempérament. Il en résultait des duels ou quelques-uns de ces petits drames mondains qu'on oublie si vite.

Nelly Rassenford se targuait d'être une des plus jolies filles d'Amérique. A vingt-cinq ans, elle avait déjà eu trois maris. Chacun était parti en payant rançon, de sorte que Nelly arborait des bijoux extraordinaires et hantait les pal-

Elle y rencontrait beaucoup d'hommes à l'affût de sa grâce et de ses millions. Surtout de ses millions, car c'est dans les palaces qu'on trouve la plus forte proportion d'hommes inquiets du lendemain.

Nelly vit Jérôme et se sentit tout de suite irrésistiblement attirée vers lui. C'était la première fois qu'elle éprouvait un pareil sentiment. Notons en passant que l'hypocrisie contemporaine qualifie de sentiment « les plus animales manifestations de l'instinct sexuel ».

Jérôme ne résista pas ; ce n'était pas la règle du jeu. Il se laissa aimer, il aimait peut-être lui-même. Trois mois durant, on le signala partout avec la belle Amérique. Elle n'avait pas peur de se compromettre, et c'était bien agréable pour un amant lassé des sournoises prudences des femmes mariées.

Nelly était folle de Jérôme. Elle lui prouvait trop cette folie, cela l'éveilla. Or, un séducteur professionnel n'a pas le droit de gaspiller ses forces.

Sur ce, arriva à Paris une charmante

Une "leçon" de moralité

Dans un établissement de Montmartre où le champagne, le soir du réveillon de la Saint-Sylvestre, coulait à petits flots, on remarquait que les petites femmes ne créaient plus, dans la salle, cette jolie ambiance qui, mon Dieu, n'était pas tellement indésirable...

Chacun est maître chez soi... Mais quelle ne fut pas la surprise de notre confrère en apercevant, à une table voisine, le patron d'une des plus illustres maisons hospitalières de Paris, qui traitait quelques amis au champagne... Et, à part lui, il pensait que cette présence n'était peut-être pas plus morale que celle des quelques jeunes femmes exclues et qu'en tout cas, elle était moins agréable à regarder...

La tête du père

On sait que la femme de Gorgoloff a accouché d'une fillette qui est née avec une abondante chevelure exactement semblable à celle qu'avait l'assassin du Président Doumer. La mère, en regardant l'enfant, s'étonne de cette étrange et, dernièrement, elle écrit à M^{lle} Henri Géraud, qui fut le dévoué défenseur de son mari : « J'ai l'impression que la tête du père a subitement repoussé ! »

Pour les sans-logis

Chaque matin, accompagné de deux gardiens de la paix, un contrôleur passe dans la salle d'attente de Saint-Lazare et vérifie la qualité des personnes présentes. Celles qui ne sont pas munies de titres de circulation sont expulsées et ces expulsions donnent parfois lieu à des scènes vraiment navrantes.

Beaucoup de sans-logis recherchent, en effet, actuellement des salles où l'on peut dormir à l'abri du froid et de la pluie. Un certain nombre d'entre eux sont des débarqués de fraîche date qui ignorent tout de Paris.

La lettre d'amour et la dactylo

C'est un curieux procès qui vient de se plaider devant le tribunal des prud'hommes de Berlin. Une dactylographe ayant refusé de taper une lettre d'amour que lui dictait son patron, directeur d'une importante maison de commerce, se vit aussitôt congédiée par lui. Arguant de l'article du Code du Travail, qui prescrit que les salariés ne sont pas tenus d'obéir à des ordres immoraux (?), elle demanda au conseil des prud'hommes, qui la lui accorda, une indemnité de trois mois de salaire.

Musique de chambre

Un jeune écrivain, qui aime à se lever de bonne heure, cassa, l'autre matin, de vieilles planches pour allumer son feu. Ses coups de hache réveillèrent le locataire du dessous, et celui-ci, qui avait eu déjà à se plaindre de son voisin, s'habilla sommairement et monta frapper à sa porte.

Les trois frères Bouillon

Ceux qui fréquentent un de nos grands music-halls ne sont pas sans avoir remarqué ce tout jeune homme — il a 24 ans — svelte et élégant, qui en dirige l'orchestre.

COMMANDITE

Table with 10 rows and 10 columns of letters for a crossword puzzle.

Solution du problème n° 112

Table with 10 rows and 10 columns of letters for a crossword puzzle solution.

Au feu !

La façade d'une maison de commerce, dans une rue centrale, est surmontée de tubes au néon qui, le soir, illuminent la rue de beaux reflets rouges. Et comme d'une cheminée voisine s'échappe sans cesse une fumée abondante, on a l'illusion d'un gigantesque incendie.

Zotos-Indéfrisable

Sécurité absolue — Résultats parfaits Sans Appareil. Sans Électricité. Demandez Zotos à votre Coiffeur Gallia - Coiffeurs vous renseigne 8, rue N.-D.-de-Lorette, Paris (IX^e)

Renée

Les Successeurs de Marcelle Bellin, 183, bd Saint-Germain, soldera ses modèles d'hiver en manteaux et robes fillettes demain Mardi 3 janvier et jours suivants.

Réalisation du Stock

de robes et manteaux pour femmes et enfants à partir de 50 fr. Douillettes tout soie, 125 francs. Atal, 34, rue de Penthièvre (2^e étage).

Les Chaussures Caumartin

solderont leurs fins de séries, le mardi 3 janvier et jours suivants, à des prix extrêmement réduits. Lot important de pointures extrêmes à 30 francs. 15, rue Caumartin.

Il y a soldes... et soldes

A partir du Mardi 3 Janvier : Renée, Couture, 193, bd Saint-Germain, soldera ses modèles d'hiver en robes et manteaux.

ArLuc, Fourreur

118, boul. de Clichy, solde tous ses manteaux. Manteaux Astrakan pleines peaux, 1.500 francs, etc... Ouvert Dimanche et Lundi.

Néologie

On nous prie d'annoncer le décès du peintre Pierre Carrier-Belleuse, officier de la Légion d'honneur. Les obsèques seront célébrées le mercredi 4 courant, à 10 heures précises, en l'église Saint-François de Sales, (rue Brémontier). On se réunira à la maison mortuaire, bd Berthier 31, à 9 heures 3/4. Le présent avis tient lieu d'invitation.

Mots croisés

Problème numéro 113

Table with 10 rows and 10 columns for a crossword puzzle.

Table with 10 rows and 10 columns for a crossword puzzle solution.

Blaise Cendrars, *Paris-Soir*, 31/05/1936 – 13/06/1936

5 épisodes sur 8 :

1) Hollywood 1936, 31/01/1936 (p.1)

2) Fiction et réalité, 9/09, 1936 (p. 4)

3) Wally Westmore, 10/06, 1936 (p. 4)

4) Vingt-trois stars, 11/06, 1936 (p. 5)

5) Dans l'ombre des vedettes, 12/06, 1936 (p. 6)

REGION PARISIENNE : Temps instable et un peu frais. Nuages éclaircis par moments, assez ensoleillés, mais averses...

Hailé Sélassié nous déclare à Gibraltar :

« Je suis en relations avec le gouvernement de régence établi dans le sud éthiopien. » « La Société des Nations avait été le bon juge, nous avons voulu être le bon soldat. » « Je ne suis pas venu en Europe pour recevoir des honneurs, mais pour faire une œuvre humaine. »

(De notre envoyé spécial Marcel GRIAULE)

GIBRALTAR, 30 MAI (par télégramme via Eastern).

Les Anglais ont du goût. Gibraltar est une chose étonnante. L'arrivée par la terre, par le poste espagnol de la Linéa, est inoubliable.

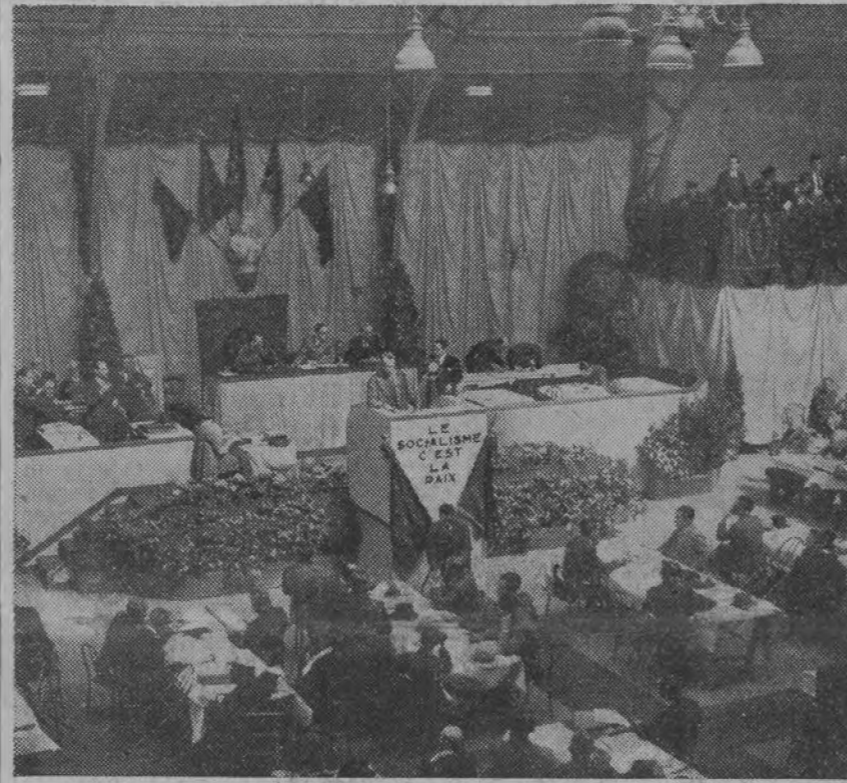
On croirait l'énorme robe de pierre d'une femme en marche, droite devant, avec une traîne qui s'enfonce jusque sous les bateaux de guerre.

(Suite en page 5)

Le XXXIIIe Congrès socialiste délibère au gymnase Huyghens

IL CONFIRMERA, A L'ISSUE DE SES TRAVAUX, LE MANDAT DONNÉ PAR LE CONSEIL NATIONAL A M. LÉON BLUM

Le leader S.F.I.O., qui parlera demain aux militants, a été réélu président du groupe parlementaire



Pendant une allocution de M. Séverac (Lire en page 5 l'article de Dominique CANAVAGGIO)

Le conflit métallurgique en voie de règlement

DANS DE NOMBREUSES USINES, LES OUVRIERS ONT ÉVACUÉ LEURS ATELIERS

Mais la grève a éclaté ce matin dans deux nouveaux établissements

Ailleurs, les pourparlers continuent entre patrons et ouvriers dont M. Frossard compte recevoir ce soir les délégués



Un dortoir improvisé dans l'usine

UN GRAND REPORTAGE DE « PARIS-SOIR » HOLLYWOOD 1936

(De notre envoyé spécial Blaise CENDRARS)

Nous commençons aujourd'hui un grand reportage du célèbre écrivain Blaise Cendrars : HOLLYWOOD 1936. Les lecteurs de Paris-soir qui ont lu, dans ces colonnes, la belle série de Cendrars sur le premier voyage de « Normandie » et son passionnant récit : Hors la loi, n'ont certainement pas besoin qu'on leur présente Blaise Cendrars, poète, romancier, journaliste. Il a su décrire la vie dangereuse, les hasards délicieux et mortels de l'aventure, avec un lyrisme omni de la vérité, en mots simples et profonds, en mots de tous les jours.

Des Dix neuf poèmes élastiques et de Kodak au Plan de l'Aiguille et à la



San Hollywoodland (Dessin de Jean Guérin.)

Confession de Dan Jack, en passant par l'Or et Moravagine, dans toutes ses œuvres apparaît le sens profond de la vie, l'amour des âmes singulières. Mais jamais sujet n'avait été mieux accordé à sa sensibilité. Hollywood et Cendrars vibrent sur la même longueur d'ondes. C'est pourquoi le confesseur de Brinsail l'aventurier et Al. Capone, dans le voyage qu'il vient de faire à Hollywood, pour les lecteurs de Paris-soir, a pu déchiffrer les secrets les plus profondément cachés de la cité des mirages, sans avoir besoin d'employer la ruse ou l'attraction ; il les a devinés par sympathie, par amour.

(Lire le premier article en page 5.)

Armand Spillers, l'évadé de la Santé est-il l'assassin du Dr Lauvinerie ?

Le criminel nie le nouveau meurtre qu'il a commis hier avant son arrestation



Voici la voiture des policiers devant la bijouterie cambriolée par Spillers. A gauche : l'agent Fautou, tué par le bandit. A droite : Spillers après son arrestation

MAIS DES TÉMOIGNAGES FORMELS L'ACCABLENT

L'agent, victime du bandit, a été cité à l'ordre de la Nation

(De notre correspondant particulier) Bayonne, 30 Mai (par téléphone)

Dans ses dernières éditions d'hier, « Paris-soir » a relaté la tragique arrestation du bandit Spillers, l'évadé de la Santé, qui, avant d'être maîtrisé, s'est chargé d'un nouveau crime.

Cet homme particulièrement redoutable qui, on s'en souvient, au cours de son éviction du bagne, il y a plusieurs années, n'hésita pas à dévorer de la chair humaine, n'a pas voulu faire mentir sa terrible réputation : il a opposé aux enquêteurs et aux magistrats qui l'interrogeaient l'énergie la plus farouche.

(Suite en page 7)

Les espoirs olympiques de cinq nations courront demain aux Tuileries le Grand Prix cycliste d'Europe

(Lire les détails de l'organisation en page sportive)

M. Albert Lebrun a inauguré la nouvelle Ecole navale à Brest



M. Albert Lebrun sortant de l'Ecole (LIRE NOS INFORMATIONS EN PAGE 3)

4 Cette mégère : l'inflation

L'ENNEMIE JURÉE DE L'OUVRIER DE L'EMPLOYÉ, DU FONCTIONNAIRE, DE L'ÉPARGNANT

Les lecteurs écrivent...
LA DATE D'OUVERTURE DES VACANCES SCOLAIRES

La question de la date d'ouverture des vacances scolaires est posée une fois de plus devant le Conseil général de la Seine.

15 juillet ou 1^{er} août ?

Les partisans du 15 juillet, qui avaient emporté l'année dernière, espèrent bien gagner encore la partie, cette année. Leurs arguments, certes, ne sont pas sans valeur. Cependant, comment ne pas reconnaître que la date du 15 juillet présente pour les familles de nombreux inconvénients ? Le départ le 15 juillet, c'est la rentrée le 15 septembre. Or, imaginez qu'une famille parisienne compte plusieurs enfants. Pour être peu fréquente, la chose, cependant, n'est pas encore anormale. Les aînés vont au lycée ou au collège, les petits à l'école communale.

Ceux-ci rentreront le 15 septembre, alors que leurs frères rentreront le 1^{er} octobre. Ce qui revient à dire que ces derniers devront réintégrer le domicile familial quinze jours avant la fin de leurs vacances. Même situation pour les parents. La rentrée le 15 septembre, c'est, pour un grand nombre d'entre eux, la suppression d'un demi-mois de vacances.

Que les congés scolaires, dans l'enseignement primaire, commencent, comme dans l'enseignement secondaire, le 15 juillet soit 1^{er} nous n'y voyons pas d'inconvénient; au contraire ! Mais qu'ils se terminent tous à la même date, le 1^{er} octobre !

Un père de famille nombreuse, Courbevoie (Seine).

L'IMPOT SUR LE REVENU

L'on a pu lire récemment, d'après les statistiques du ministère des Finances de 1935, qu'il n'y a, paraît-il, que 34.000 personnes en France qui ont un revenu ou font un gain annuel de plus de 100.000 francs.

Or, si l'on voulait recenser, à Paris seulement, les voitures conduites par des chauffeurs particuliers, l'on s'apercevrait du ridicule du chiffre de 34.000.

Le Français ne songe qu'à travailler, qu'à distiller, et comme le petit employé ne peut nier le montant de son salaire déclaré par son patron, il est naturellement le plus lourdement grevé.

Comment, après de telles constatations, s'étonner du grand nombre de mécontents ?

M. S. H., rue Verniquez.

Gardons-nous surtout de la confondre avec la dévaluation

par Paul REYNAUD, ancien ministre des Finances

L'INFLATION monétaire que, depuis longtemps, je montrais menaçante à l'horizon, arrive, ou, plutôt, elle est arrivée.

Que veut dire « faire de l'inflation » ? Cela veut dire faire imprimer des billets par la Banque de France pour les besoins de l'Etat. C'est faire de la fausse monnaie. L'Etat jette ces billets de banque dans les canaux de la circulation. Il y a donc plus de billets, mais comme il n'y a pas plus de marchandises en face de ces billets plus nombreux, le prix des marchandises monte. C'est l'effet inévitable d'une loi bien connue, celle de l'offre et de la demande.

Nous sommes donc en présence du fléau. Comment le détourner de nous ? Cela revient à dire : comment rétablir l'équilibre des dépenses et des recettes de l'Etat ?

Mais, d'abord, pourquoi cet équilibre a-t-il été rompu ? Il a été rompu parce que les prix ayant considérablement baissé depuis le début de la crise, depuis cinq ans, le pourcentage que prélève l'Etat sur les affaires du pays lui a rapporté moins d'argent. Bien plus, la baisse des prix a eu pour effet de ruiner les producteurs qui sont la vache à lait de l'Etat. En effet, le prix de vente

est tombé, pour beaucoup, au-dessous du prix de revient. Ils ont, alors, comprimé les prix de revient, c'est-à-dire diminué les salaires et, par là, réduit le pouvoir d'achat des salariés, donc l'activité économique du pays. Malgré ces compressions, beaucoup n'ont pu joindre les deux bouts et ont dû fermer leurs portes en mettant leurs ouvriers, devenus des chômeurs, à la charge de l'Etat.

C'est pourquoi le problème de l'équilibre nécessaire des recettes et des dépenses de l'Etat pour éviter l'inflation, c'est le problème de la remise sur pied de l'économie nationale.

Presque tous les pays du monde ont restauré leur économie par le moyen que j'ai souvent expliqué : la dévaluation. C'est ainsi qu'ils ont échappé au désastre qui nous menace : l'inflation avec son cortège de ruines.

Nous avons vu cela dans bien des pays après la guerre, parce que, pour payer les énormes dépenses de guerre et d'après guerre, il avait fallu fabriquer des billets de banque que l'Etat avait remis à ses fournisseurs.

La conséquence fut désastreuse : le coût de la vie devint cinq, six, sept fois plus élevé qu'avant la guerre. On augmenta, certes, les fonctionnaires, les ouvriers, les employés, mais avec retard. Et, pendant la durée de ce retard, toutes ces catégories de Français souffrirent. Quant aux rentiers, ils souffrirent à titre définitif.

Or, nous avons déjà fait plus de 12 milliards d'inflation depuis quelques mois et, s'il est vrai que le nouveau gouvernement ait l'intention d'augmenter les dépenses de l'Etat, notamment en faisant de grands travaux, et de diminuer ses recettes en faisant des dégrèvements, on peut craindre que l'inflation se fasse, désormais, à une cadence accélérée.

POURQUOI, en effet, un Etat a-t-il recours à l'inflation ? Parce que les recettes qu'il tire des impôts sont inférieures à ses dépenses. C'est donc le déséquilibre des finances publiques qui est à l'origine du mal. Dans ce cas, l'Etat commence par emprunter. C'est ce qui s'est produit depuis le début de la crise. L'Etat a accru sa dette publique de la somme gigantes-

que de 75 milliards. Quand il n'a plus trouvé de prêteurs en France, il a passé le détroit et il est allé emprunter 3 milliards en Angleterre. Après quoi, il ne lui restait plus qu'une planche de salut, la planche à billets. C'est ainsi que l'inflation vient de recommencer en France.

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HOLLYWOOD 1936

Fiction et réalité se mêlent étrangement dans les immenses studios de la ville interdite

ON NE SAIT JAMAIS SI LES PERSONNAGES RENCONTRÉS SONT « VRAIS » OU « FAUX »

(De notre envoyé spécial Blaise CENDRARS)

Hollywood, Juin.

N'entrez pas ! Ces mots que j'ai vus inscrits au-dessus du guichet d'une des plus grandes firmes peut être la devise de toutes les autres.

L'équipe qui se relie au guichet d'un autre studio est toute du genre boxer. Ce sont des jeunes gens costauds, bien balancés et très décidés. Mais ils ne sont pas « sport » pour un sou ! Si vous vous appelez Durand ils annoncent M. Dupont, et si vous demandez à être mis en rapport avec M. Adam, ils vous adressent froidement à M. Cook.

Un jour, un de ces jeunes matamores qui m'avait fait épeler par trois fois non pas « Constantinople », mais non nom et qui l'avait noté correctement sous les yeux : C-E-N-D-R-A-R-S, eut le front d'annoncer à une vedette qui m'attendait, et pensant que je ne saisissais pas le nom qu'il escamotait au téléphone, qu'un certain M. Wilson demandait à la voir !

Il faut croire que ces tours de passe-passe sont d'un usage généralisé dans cette firme et que la loge lunatique des concierges y fait la pluie et le beau temps, car chaque fois qu'un chef de service vous fixe un rendez-vous, il est obligé de descendre ou d'envoyer sa secrétaire en saut pour établir à l'avance une fiche d'entrée, un simple coup de téléphone de sa part ne suffisant pas à venir à bout de l'homme fantaisiste des bureaux. Souvent d'ailleurs, cette fiche se trouve égarée quand vous vous présentez à l'heure dite au guichet, ainsi que cela m'est arrivé un autre jour que Charles Boyer, qui ne dispose que d'une toute petite heure pour déjeuner, se morfondait et mourait de faim en attendant au restaurant du studio ce pendant qu'un jeune athlète distraît qui avait égaré mon laissez-passer voulait m'appliquer sa consigne de cèrèbre qui est justement de ne laisser passer personne. Je dus parlementer durant trois quarts d'heure et faire débrancher vingt personnes avant d'avoir gain de cause, de pouvoir passer... et me mettre alors à la recherche de Charles Boyer qui avait fini par s'en aller sans déjeuner, l'heure pressant...

Un fonctionnaire aimable

Aux United Artists, le guichetier de service n'est pas seulement d'un tout autre genre que les jeunes boxeurs à l'entraînement, il est aussi d'une autre génération et même d'une tout autre extraction sociale comme il convient à cette firme bien pensante, la plus distinguée du monde du cinéma et qui se pique à Hollywood d'urbanité et de civilité.

C'est donc un homme affable qui m'accueille quand je me présente, un monsieur d'un certain âge, aux gestes protecteurs, enveloppants, et c'est tout juste si ce cher homme me laisse le temps de formuler un désir ou de prononcer un nom que déjà, tant sa hâte est grande de me être agréable, il presse un bouton et que la porte s'ouvre devant moi. Comme je m'y engage ce gentleman-cèrèbre se lève et m'accompagne trois pas pour bien préciser les indications qu'il me donne. Je suis confus et me confonds en remerciements.

C'est le cas de le dire, je suis ses instructions à la lettre : cour Sud, bâtiment 39, corridor B, escalier III, 1^{er} étage, bureau 15... et quand j'arrive à destination, j'entre dans un bureau, chauffé certes, avec une rose rouge dans un vase, des cigarettes, des allumettes, une tige de papier blanc, des crayons soigneusement taillés, les journaux du jour, un bureau sans un grain de poussière, mais un bureau où

Un jeune nazi frais débarqué

A la Metro Goldwyn Mayer, la première fois que j'y suis allé, il y avait quelques centaines de marins japonais qui encombraient le couloir. Me frayant un chemin au milieu d'eux, je croyais boucler des figurants en uniforme. Mais je me trompais, ainsi que l'on peut se tromper à chaque pas dans la bagarre des studios hollywoodiens, car l'on ne sait jamais si juste si la personne sur le pied de qui l'on marche est un vrai ou un faux personnage, et surtout si ce quand peut voir qui j'étais, mais il ne me reconnut pas... et moi je n'allais pas lui courir après, pour lui serrer la main, pensant que Doug ne désirait pas avoir été vu...

Je suis sûr que ce mardi se trouvera en quelque sorte encadré par deux aspects discordants entre la Lune et Uranus dont notre satellite traverse précisément le signe : le Verseau. Nous aurons donc à craindre des accidents, sur l'eau, sur la terre et encore plus dans les airs. Les habitants des campagnes seront exposés aux méfaits de la foudre. Les mêmes configurations, de bonne heure dans la matinée et en fin d'après-midi, nous vaudront sans doute quelques déconvenues d'affaires ou de sentiment et nous inclineraient à commettre des maladrotes. Un heureux influx de Vénus, un peu après sept heures, fera suivre par une soirée paisible cette journée mouvementée.

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— Eh bien, Mélanie, je vous avais demandé de faire les cuivres cet après-midi ?
— C'est que j'suis pas en train, rapport à une figuration maléfique d'la Lune et d'Saturne !

RESUME

Jacqueline Mareuil a été enlevée en auto sous les yeux de son fiancé Pierre Combo par d'audacieux bandits à la solde d'un mystérieux individu dit l'Homme aux Sortilèges. Il a fait conduire dans un pavillon isolé situé entre Saint-Cloud et Suresnes. En compagnie de deux inquisiteurs personnages : le Malin et la Quarteronne, le ravisseur, homme étrange et troublant, semble attendre quelqu'un avec une nerveuse impatience. Il ne cesse de gronder : « Elle devrait être là, elle devrait être là ! »

Première partie

AIMER ET SOUFFRIR

VIII. — LE REVENANT

(Suite)

Jacqueline ne lui répondit pas. Elle était vivante, pourtant ! Hélène en était sûre. Elle voyait sa poitrine se soulever légèrement au rythme d'une respiration régulière. Ses joues étaient fleuries d'un tendre incarnat. Un sourire de rêve entrouvrait ses lèvres d'où s'échappaient ces mots, prononcés lentement, avec une douceur infinie, dans l'extase d'un divin rêve :

— Que je suis heureuse !

— Jacqueline ! Jacqueline ! clamait Mme Mareuil, en meurtrissant ses mains à l'infranchissable clôture qui la séparait de son enfant.

Glisant sur le parquet, agenouillée contre la grille, Hélène demeurait là, sanglotante, éperdue, tandis que, de nouveau, une obscurité totale l'enveloppait de son manteau funèbre.

Et voilà que dans la nuit, dans le silence, s'élevait la voix de Jacqueline. Elle ne parlait plus. Elle chantait d'une voix pure, harmonieuse, avec une émotion tout humaine, une sorte de romance sans paroles, nostalgique, lointaine, étrange, qu'accompagnait en sourdine les sanglots étouffés de sa mère qui, les bras tendus vers elle, ne pouvait que supplier :

— Tais-toi, Jacqueline, je t'en supplie... Tu vas me faire mourir !

Le chant s'arrêta. La lumière revint. Jacqueline avait disparu.

Mais quelque chose était devant Hélène. C'était l'Homme aux Sortilèges.

Sévère et calme comme un justicier, il contempla un instant en silence celle qu'il avait tant adorée et

L'HOMME AUX SORTILÈGES

Grand roman d'amour et d'aventures par ARTHUR BERNÈDE

que, maintenant, il semblait exécuter au delà de toute haine.

La malheureuse, prostrée, écrasée devant lui, eut encore la force de l'implorer à travers ses larmes :

— Je vous en prie... je vous en supplie... ayez pitié d'elle, si vous n'avez pas pitié de moi !

Il se baissa vers elle, lui prit le poignet et l'attrista sans violence, mais avec une autorité tellement dominatrice que rien ne devait pouvoir lui résister. Il la fit se relever et, son visage presque contre le sien, il lui dit à voix basse, mais avec une intensité qui ne pouvait qu'ajouter au désarroi de la pauvre femme :

— Vous vous imaginez, n'est-ce pas, que j'avais disparu pour toujours de votre existence, que je m'étais résigné au sacrifice, que j'avais fait ma vie ailleurs, et que je vous avais oubliée avec la même facilité que vous m'aviez oublié vous-même.

Élevant le ton, il scandait :

— Eh bien, non ! J'ai attendu patiemment mon heure. Car, je voulais que vous souffriez par moi, autant que j'ai souffert par vous... Vous attaquer dans votre mari ? Non, car vous n'auriez pas été assez malheureuse. J'ai préféré m'en prendre à votre fille.

— Vous voulez la tuer ? haleta la malheureuse.

— Si telle était mon intention, reprit Corvetti, ce serait déjà fait.

— La séquestrer ?

— Enigmatisque, il répliquait :

— Je veux la garder jusqu'à ce que j'aie atteint mon but.

— Quel but ?

— C'est mon secret.

— Songez à ce qu'elle va souffrir loin de tout ce qu'elle aime !

Il se tassa. Elle reprit :

— Je connais le cœur de ma fille. Il est tout de bonté, de tendresse et d'amour. L'épreuve que vous lui infligez peut lui être mortelle.

L'Homme aux Sortilèges demeura impassible. Hélène objectait :

— Elle ne vous a fait aucun mal.

— Si ! répliquait féroce Corvetti. Elle m'a fait beaucoup de mal, au contraire.

— Comment cela ?

— En naissant !

— Vous êtes donc implacable !

— Je le suis devenu.

— Au point de perdre tout sens humain ?

— Oui, sauf celui de la vengeance.

— Épargnez-la.

— M'avez-vous épargné, moi ?

Et dans l'emportement d'une passion muée en l'une des plus grandes douleurs qui eussent jamais rongé, supplicié une âme, l'Homme aux Sortilèges allait se révéler tout entier :

— Vous avez connu mes rêves, s'écriait-il... Vous avez été la confidente de mes ambitions.

— Et ce sont elles qui m'ont épouvanté.

— Parce que vous étiez une femme sans courage.

— Dites simplement... une femme.

— Vous aviez peur de la lutte.

— Je voulais me contenter d'aimer.

— D'avance, vous aviez le vertige des cimes...

— Je leur préférerais la douceur d'un foyer.

— Eh bien, moi, s'exaltait Corvetti, je voyais grand, très grand, parce que j'avais la certitude de monter très haut, parce que je me rendais compte de la puissance que me conféraient mes dons naturels qui, complétés, enrichis par l'étude, m'assuraient la plus magnifique destinée...

— Vous allez dire que j'étais ou plutôt que je suis un orgueilleux ! C'est vrai ! Mais on a le droit, que dis-je, on a le devoir d'être orgueilleux, lorsque, privilégié du sort, on porte en soi le germe de ces forces dont le développement vous assure un jour une maîtrise incontestable de soi-même d'abord, et ensuite, des autres !

— Et c'est tout cela que vous avez détruit en moi ! Je ne vous reprocherai pas ce qu'a été ma vie... depuis que vous avez brisé mon rêve... Vous ne me croirez pas Et puis, cela ne vous intéresserait guère.

— En ce moment, que vous importez d'avoir assasiné un cœur, sacré d'un cerveau. Sachez seulement qu'à chaque étape de mon existence, j'ai laissé un lambeau de ce qu'il y avait de meilleur en moi et que, sans jamais commettre une action malhonnête, je n'en ai pas moins dû renoncer à tout

jamais à ce que j'avais rêvé d'être et d'accomplir.

— Pourquoi !... interrogeait Hélène qui ne comprenait pas...

— Pourquoi ? accentuait Corvetti.

Et, éperonné, il martela :

— Parce que je vous aimais... Parce que je plaçais au-dessus de tout la conquête de votre cœur, de votre âme, de votre chair, de tout votre être... Parce que vous étiez la plus haute, la plus vivante de mes ambitions. Parce que, d'avance, je recevais par vous le prix des victoires que je n'aurais pas encore remportées... Et parce que j'avais la conviction, la certitude que votre amour, que votre orgueil, que je croyais égaux aux miens, me rendraient invulnérable non seulement au milieu des batailles que j'étais en train de livrer, mais aussi au cours de celles que j'engagerais plus tard... et qui s'annonçaient non moins violentes et peut-être encore non moins meurtrières.

— Mais votre amour, que je me figurais aussi pur, aussi résistant que le diamant, n'était qu'un caprice de jeune fille, une pauvre petite chose qui est tombée en poussière au premier choc. Quant à votre orgueil, il n'existait pas. Il n'était fait que d'amour-propre inconsistant et futile.

— J'ai reçu votre lettre qui vous a réveillée à moi telle que vous étiez, c'est-à-dire pauvreuse, hésitante et sans envolée.

— Tout d'abord, j'ai voulu m'imaginer que la désillusion qu'elle m'apportait suffirait à briser le lien sentimental qui m'attachait à vous... Mon orgueil, oui, mon orgueil, toujours mon orgueil, m'a interdit de vous répondre et encore plus de vous supplier.

— Convinqu'un homme de mon caractère et de ma volonté s'effaçait promptement de son souvenir cette idylle brisée, je m'ai reparti aux armées. Et alors, poussé par un instinct ou plutôt par une sorte de subconscient qui m'empêchait d'être moi-même et me privait de mon libre arbitre, je me suis senti happé, entraîné par le désir de la mort, désir incompréhensible chez l'associé d'ambition que j'étais.

— M'efforçant de me ressaisir, je me suis demandé pourquoi je sollicitais toujours les missions les plus

HOROSCOPE QUOTIDIEN

Mardi 9 Juin.

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Chaires du sport

et le visage de la France sera changé

par Maurice BEDEL

OUI, pour tous. Pour le collégien et pour l'apprenti, pour le typographe, l'employé de banque, le garçon de pharmacie, l'ajusteur, le contrôleur de métro, la midinette, le télégraphiste, l'ouvrier en chaussures et la gilette.

mes qui se savent en bon équilibre d'esprit, dans un bon équilibre de corps. Jeunesse ouvrière d'Allemagne, jeunesse ouvrière de Suède, de Lettonie, d'Italie, de Finlande, chacune est aujourd'hui franchie de regard, hardie de démarche, et menée par une sorte d'allégresse physique qui révèle en ces jeunes gens, en ces jeunes filles, l'orgueil et la fierté d'être jeunes et sains.

du Métro possède, à la Croix-de-Berry, un fort beau parc de sports; je sais que, de tous côtés, on construit des stades, on creuse des piscines, on nivelle des pistes.

Et le visage de la France serait changé.

On nous annonce la semaine de travail de quarante heures; voilà une grande nouvelle, une nouvelle magique. On nous annonce un projet de loi demandant un crédit d'un milliard pour le sport; voilà une nouvelle qui devrait être célébrée par une liesse générale.

VOILA ce que nous verrons bientôt en France, si le milliard du sport ne s'en va pas dormir dans les cartons des commissions parlementaires. C'est presque une chance que nous arrivions toujours plus tardiers dans les voies du progrès social.

AH! que la tâche est belle à ceux qui donneront au peuple de France les ébats de plein air qui le dégageront de lui-même, le veur dire qui lui révéleront les joies claires et saines des jeux musculaires.

Et maintenant, il s'agit de faire pour le sport ce qu'on a commencé de faire pour les hôpitaux et les écoles. Il faut que le peuple de France boive de l'air à plein gosier, respire de l'eau à pleine peau, si l'on ne veut qu'il se rabougrisse et qu'il apparaisse, entre les peuples voisins, comme le mieux nourri du monde et pourtant le plus pauvre de mine.

Je ne rêve pas du tout; je suis réellement dans la plus réelle réalité. Je le répète: j'apprends que la semaine de quarante heures sera bientôt chose faite, que le sport français sera bientôt doté d'un milliard.

Je sais bien que l'initiative privée a déjà pris les devants, que les cheminots du P.-L.-M., pour ne citer que ceux-là, ont fondé une association sportive, se sont groupés en équipes de plein air et qu'ils pratiquent le ski en hiver, le campisme, et tous les jeux qui l'accompagnent, en été; je sais aussi que le personnel

Celui qui court l'Europe sur les fils des latitudes, qui se hisse ou qui se laisse aller à la corde des longitudes, celui-là rencontre sur ses routes une jeunesse ouvrière délavée des mauvais stigmates du chantier, de l'usine ou de l'atelier. Où que je porte le regard de ma mémoire, je croise, sur mes chemins, des travailleurs de belle et franche allure, assurés dans la libre démarche des hommes

Les lecteurs écrivent...

LES FEMMES DE CEUX QUI SONT SOUS LES DRAPEAUX

Pourquoi refuse-t-on aux femmes de soldats qui ont un, et parfois plusieurs enfants, des allocations militaires?

Je parle de celles qui n'avaient que le travail de leur mari comme soutien matériel.

On donne des allocations aux familles des chômeurs, et c'est très bien, mais un Français qui sert son pays sous les drapeaux est aussi, lui, un chômeur... forcé!

Mme Hugues, Chalons-sur-Saône.

LA CIRCULATION A PARIS

Nul n'ignore que le carrefour Réaumur-Sébastopol est un des plus dangereux de notre capitale. Il y a une dizaine de jours j'étais témoin d'un accident dû à l'imprudence d'un chauffeur: un cycliste en fut la victime, il était 22 heures.

Dans la nuit de samedi à dimanche, au même endroit, encore un accident, cette fois c'est un kiosque à journaux qui a été sérieusement endommagé.

Il y a environ deux mois, une fleuriste, sur le trottoir, a été renversée.

Quand la Ville de Paris pour doter ce carrefour extrêmement dangereux, de signaux automatiques actionnés par les véhicules eux-mêmes et de clous lumineux?

On doit prévenir les accidents et non compter sur la prudence des conducteurs.

Paul Echilley, 28, rue Henrieur-Du-Pansey, Paris.

PASSAGES A NIVEAU: FLEAUX DE NOS ROUTES

Me rendant de Montargis à Gien par la route, j'ai trouvé, au grand étonnement, le 2 juin, à 21 h. 35, le passage à niveau n° 62 complètement ouvert, et ce à l'instant même où un rapide passait à plus de cent à l'heure.

Et le visage de la France serait changé.

Jacques Goldberg, 26, rue de Poitou, Paris.

LES ENTHOUSIASTES...



— Encore 25 km... et on va voir des coureurs !..

Expert en sex-appeal et maître maquilleur Wally Westmore se lamente: PLUS DE STARS!

(De notre envoyé spécial Blaise CENDRARS)

« Pas de star sans sex-appeal et pas de sex-appeal sans fards. Mais sans la ligne idéale des cheveux, il n'y a pas de beauté possible... »

Tel est le premier aphorisme de Wally Westmore, le créateur de l'esthétique du visage au cinéma.

Établi depuis une vingtaine d'années à Hollywood, où il s'est spécialisé dans les soins de beauté et où il s'est rendu fameux par ses recherches et ses réussites répétées et retentissantes, Wally Westmore, le maître maquilleur de la Paramount, est tout à la fois l'inventeur et le fabricant de la plupart des stars qui se sont fait une réputation mondiale.

Expert en sex-appeal, c'est lui qui fait subir aux artistes les plus coûteuses, donc les plus fières et les plus intangibles, l'humiliation d'un test physiologique trimestriel et qui délivre à chacune d'elles la charte personnelle de beauté à laquelle toutes sont soumises.

De même, pas une débutante, pas une starlette ni chance de réussir au cinéma si Westmore, ce magicien clairvoyant ne lui fixe pas de prime abord son genre et puis son type.

« Les yeux, la bouche, la complexion, la figure peuvent être impeccables et bien proportionnés, mais il n'y a pas de véritable sex-appeal pour une femme sans l'édifice, sans l'artifice de la coiffure, car tous ses charmes naturels ne seront bien équilibrés que par la ligne de ses cheveux. »

Et il précise: « Par cette ligne, j'entends la symétrie, en quelque sorte aérienne, voire syncope, si l'ose dire, qui doit s'établir entre le bas et le haut d'un visage avant de s'étendre, de régner sur l'ensemble de la figure qui comporte des parties dures, des parties molles ou floues. »

La plupart des stars ont des défauts auxquels nous pouvons remédier par le maquillage, ou les éclairages, ou encore par des travaux photographiques; mais si la masse et la plantation de leurs cheveux sont asymétriques, ou même si la ligne de leur coiffure est déplacée, tous nos efforts seront vains et leur visage paraîtra toujours disproportionné dans ses différentes parties, c'est-à-dire qu'il semblera contrefait et tourmenté, donc pas beau.

« Comme Baudelaire: j'ai hais le mouvement qui déplace... la ligne ! »

Le plus beau visage d'aujourd'hui

La femme qui a la ligne idéale de cheveux et la figure la plus parfaite, selon l'avis de Wally Westmore, ce n'est pas une jeune fille, c'est une femme qui a subi le traitement de Westmore.

« On dit communément que les yeux sont les fenêtres de l'âme; c'est bien possible après tout, mais le style actuel de la coiffure de Miss Mary est la clef de son sex-appeal », affirme Westmore.

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Parmi toutes les autres stars dont la coiffure est en parfait accord avec leur type de beauté et qui illustrent le mieux la théorie de Westmore nous citerons toutes sorties telles que nous les connaissons de ses mains créatrices, il cite de préférence: Mae West, Jean Harlow, Kay Francis, Claudette Colbert et Sylvia Sydney.

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« La plupart des stars ont des défauts auxquels nous pouvons remédier par le maquillage, ou les éclairages, ou encore par des travaux photographiques; mais si la masse et la plantation de leurs cheveux sont asymétriques, ou même si la ligne de leur coiffure est déplacée, tous nos efforts seront vains et leur visage paraîtra toujours disproportionné dans ses différentes parties, c'est-à-dire qu'il semblera contrefait et tourmenté, donc pas beau. »

« Comment Baudelaire: j'ai hais le mouvement qui déplace... la ligne ! »

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démontre brusquement en aspergeant les passants d'une quadruple gerbe d'eau sale.

« Une chance... et je percerai ! »

Une crise des stars à Hollywood? Cela paraît impossible car il suffit d'ouvrir les yeux pour se rendre compte que Hollywood est une pépinière de talents qui regorge de jeunes gens et de jolies filles.

De la jeunesse, il y en a partout, dans les bars, dans les boutiques, dans les restaurants. Les rues en sont pleines et il n'importe quelle heure du jour ou de la nuit on peut voir passer des beautés sensationnelles en auto ou les rencontrer à pied, en n'importe quelle tenue, en short, en pyjama, en fourreau de soie, en robe du soir, en imperméable, en fourrures, mais toujours les cheveux calamistrés, faisant sur leur marché, seules ou à deux, accompagnées de jeunes gens élégants et chaperonnées par leur maman ou une vieille tante, ou suivies d'un chauffeur nègre.

Quand on a assisté une fois ou deux à un cocktail-party, quand on a entendu les rires insoucients de ces jeunes gens, quand on s'est mêlé à eux; quand on a bu, et dansé ou que l'on est sorti trois ou quatre fois avec l'un ou l'autre, que l'on a surpris la confiance d'une fille ou bavardé avec un garçon, on s'imagine facilement, on est même convaincu que toute cette jeunesse dorée (ou qui fait semblant) est promise au plus bel avenir et que rien n'est plus facile que de percer au cinéma. Hélas! il n'en est rien.

Néanmoins, leurs propos sont fous d'espoir. « Donnez-moi seulement une chance, disent-ils, et je percerai ! » « Vll strike it ! C'est leur formule. »

Mais voilà, malgré leur farouche résolution, leur volonté, leur endurance et leur courage, malgré l'argent qu'ils dépendent pour arriver et les privations qu'ils supportent, ce qui leur échoue à force de bluff, de combinaisons et de micmacs, c'est dans le meilleur des cas un bout de rôle, de la figuration intelligente ou par extraordinaire de servir de doublure à une vedette, et les années se passent sans que la chance de leur source jamais.

« Ah! si j'avais seulement un couteau, une arme, avec quelle joie je vous abattrais... »

« Mais, rendez garde à une mère qui défend son enfant est toujours la plus forte... »

« Vous le savez bien ! »

« C'est affreux, non, non, pas cela, surtout pas cela ! Râlant la malheureuse, Jacqueline, ma petite Jacqueline, cet être de grâce, de pureté et d'amour. Écoutez-moi... »

« Je ne fais que cela, madame... et reconnaissez que j'ai beaucoup de patience. »

« Et ne pas pouvoir le tuer ! Trépanant Héloïse déchaînée. »

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RESUME

Un mystérieux personnage dit l'Homme aux Sortilèges a fait enlever Jacqueline Mareuil pour se venger de sa mère qui l'a jadis dédaigné. Il attire Mme Mareuil dans un pavillon isolé de la banlieue parisienne, et il lui montre sa fille qui est en état d'hypnose. L'Homme aux Sortilèges reproche à Mme Mareuil d'avoir trahi sa vie, ses ambitions, ses rêves, et pourtant il l'a aimé passionnément. Alors, elle s'écrie: « Pourquoi n'êtes-vous pas revenu vers moi ? »

AIMER ET SOUFFRIR

VIII. — LE REVENANT

(Suite)

Tragiquement, l'Homme aux Sortilèges ripostait: — Je ne suis pas revenu, parce qu'au moment où je me préparais à vous rejoindre, j'ai appris par un journal illustré que le hasard m'avait mis entre les mains que vous veniez de vous marier...

« Je suis resté comme hébété devant votre portrait à tous deux... Vous, si belle, dans votre robe de mariée. Lui, oh! tout à fait l'homme qu'il vous fallait, élégant, distingué, l'air d'un brave garçon, sympathique même... Avec mon canif, j'ai découpé le portrait, je l'ai glissé dans mon portefeuille... Je n'ai d'ailleurs jamais pu m'expliquer la raison de ce geste... »

« Et vous n'avez plus songé qu'à vous venger de moi ! »

« Non... pas à ce moment. Ce n'est qu'après de nombreuses années d'exil volontaire, quand je suis revenu en Europe, en France, parmi un monde étonnamment neut pour moi que j'ai mesuré l'étendue du désastre que vous aviez causé. »

« Le grand homme que j'aurais dû être et que je serais certainement devenu un jour n'était plus qu'un aventurier... »

« Il était trop tard pour remonter le courant. Trop tard pour me remarier... Trop tard pour reconquérir et rassembler en moi ce trésor cérébral que le souffle de l'ouragan avait emporté. Trop tard pour m'assimiler à ce monde nouveau. »

« Le semeur d'idées, le conducteur d'hommes, le chef inspiré que j'avais rêvé être ne pouvait plus

L'HOMME AUX SORTILÈGES

Grand roman d'amour et d'aventures par ARTHUR BERNÈDE

marcher qu'à la remorque des médiocres et se cantonner dans un isolement stérile et déprimant.

« En même temps que mes ambitions refoulées remontant à la surface, mon orgueil se ressaisissait, lui aussi, en un sursaut de colère. »

« La vie que je m'étais refaite, vie qui aurait pu exalter tant d'esprits ordinaires, m'apparut tellement stupide et fade que l'idée me vint d'occuper mes loisirs en me vengeant de celle qui, de si haut, m'avait fait tomber si bas. »

« Je me suis enquis de vous. J'ai appris que votre mari vous rendait très heureuse, qu'il vous aimait comme un homme de son caractère, de sa classe et de son éducation peut aimer... c'est-à-dire avec une tendre tranquillité... J'en ai conclu que la médiocrité de vos aspirations vous avait sans doute permis de vous attacher à lui, sans passion, peut-être même sans amour, mais avec fidélité... »

« J'ai su également que vous aviez une fille, que vous l'adoriez, qu'elle allait se marier prochainement et que cette union était à la fois un mariage d'amour et de raison; bref, que vous étiez sérieusement, solidement heureuse et que vous aviez atteint et même crevé le plafond de vos bourgeoises aspirations ! »

« J'ai voulu vous revoir, apercevoir aussi, ne fût-ce que de loin, votre mari et votre fille... Ce que j'ai vu, ce que j'ai appris n'a fait que confirmer mes déductions. »

« Vous étiez heureuse... parfaitement heureuse ! Vous goûtiez, vous savouriez ce bonheur mesquin, ce bonheur sans nuage, sans heurt, que vous désiriez tant et dont la monotonie vous bergait d'une facile béatitude. »

« Et d'une voix stridente, l'Homme aux Sortilèges martela: — Et c'est pour cela que vous m'avez sacrifié... moi qui vous avais aimée au point de faire de vous l'associée de mes rêves, la compagne de mes victoires. »

« Et c'est vous qui, par votre étroitesse de vues, votre crainte de l'effort, votre lâcheté morale, oui, c'est vous qui m'avez brisé les ailes ! »

« Songez que dans cette Europe bouleversée par cette période spasmodique qui s'étend de la guerre à nos jours, à une époque où les hommes ont encore des idées, mais où les idées n'ont plus beaucoup d'hommes, qui songez, vous qui m'avez comblé quand j'étais moi-même, à ce que j'aurais devenu et jusqu'à quelles hauteurs je vous aurais entraînée avec moi ! »

« Au lieu de cet envol magnifique, de cette ascension radieuse, vous m'avez condamné à errer à travers le monde, et quand je suis revenu à mon point de départ, quand, parmi ces hommes que je pouvais dominer et conduire, je me suis vu moins que rien, et quand je me suis dit que c'était pour assurer votre bonheur à vous que, purement, égoïstement, vous aviez tout détruit en moi... Oh! alors, moi pour qui vous étiez devenue une chose lointaine, indifférente, devant l'accomplissement total de ma ruine morale que vous aviez causé, je me suis pris à vous haïr aussi éperdument que je vous avais adorée. »

« Surtout n'allez pas croire que si je me venge, c'est parce que je suis jaloux de votre amour... Non, si je vous châtie c'est uniquement parce que vous avez broyé mon idéal... Voilà pourquoi je suis sans pitié. Voilà pourquoi je vous hais, je vous hais ! »

« Constaté, Héloïse Mareuil se taisait. Toute prière n'était-elle pas inutile. »

« Maintenant, elle en était sûre, Jean Corvetti ne désarmerait jamais. Terrifiée, la malheureuse femme n'osait même pas lui demander ce qu'il allait faire de sa fille... Et pourtant, jamais angloise aussi violente n'avait étiré le cœur d'une mère... Car, ce n'était pas un dément qu'elle avait devant elle, ni même un de ces demi-fous que l'on peut avoir l'espoir de ramener à la raison ou à la pitié, mais un homme décidé à réaliser inexorablement, et jusqu'au bout, un acte longuement prémédité. »

« Lui aussi demeurait silencieux. Il la contemplait pantelante, épuisée. Plus rien d'humain n'existait dans son regard de bête de proie que, diaboliquement, ne pouvait empêcher d'aller jusqu'au bout de son œuvre infernale. »

« Galvanisée par un sublime ressaut d'amour

maternel, Héloïse se redressa, lançant d'une voix que ne brisait plus aucun sanglot: — Je veux ma fille !

« Un ricanelement lui répondit, toujours le même, le ricanelement de Satan qu'elle avait entendu la veille. Mais cette fois, elle ne se laissa point terrasser par la peur. »

« Je veux ma fille ! accentuait-elle avec une énergie qu'elle-même ne se soupçonnait pas. Et elle poursuivait avec une âpre véhémence: — Elle est ici, j'en suis sûre, je l'ai vue tout à l'heure là... derrière une grille que doit cacher ce rideau noir... Rendez-la moi ! Je ne vous supplie pas, je vous l'ordonne ! C'est une mère qui vous parle... une mère qui ne veut pas être séparée plus longtemps de son enfant... Car, en admettant, ainsi que vous le prétendez, que j'aie des torts envers vous, la pauvre enfant, elle, n'en a pas ! Et pourtant, vous la torturez autant que moi... plus encore, peut-être. »

« Ne croyez pas que j'aie l'intention de la rendre malheureuse, au contraire, ripostait Corvetti sur un ton d'énigmatique ironie. »

« Tout à l'heure vous l'avez vue reposant tranquillement et souriant à un beau rêve. Vous l'avez même entendue chanter... »

ERNEST LUBITSCH HOLLYWOOD 1936 ERNST-LUBITSCH STARS

C'est sur ce chiffre dérisoire que Hollywood risque en ce moment ses milliards

Mais Ernst Lubitsch affirme :

« Nous inventerons autre chose s'il n'y a plus de stars ! »

(De notre envoyé spécial Blaise CENDRARS)

Hollywood, Juin. J'avais demandé un rendez-vous à Ernst Lubitsch, le grand metteur en scène de renommée universelle. Je voulais l'interroger sur la crise des stars, car j'étais tout particulièrement curieux d'avoir l'avis de cet homme compétent sur une question qui intéresse au premier chef l'avenir du cinéma à Hollywood.

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L'opinion d'Ernst Lubitsch sur la crise des stars

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Révolution de palais

Le régime dictatorial et le plus souvent anonyme qui s'exerce du haut en bas de l'échelle et à chaque degré de la hiérarchie, non seulement dans les trusts, mais dans l'ensemble de l'organisme social aux Etats-Unis, me semble être un des traits les plus révélateurs de la mentalité disciplinée, conformiste, mais facilement tyrannique de la démocratie américaine, qui se proclame, à tout propos, championne de la liberté et du libre arbitre ; en tout cas, cette contradiction qui se manifeste jusque dans la vie courante est la chose en Amérique qui gêne le plus un Français raisonneur, volontiers frondeur et habitué à l'indépendance de jugement et d'action, surtout quand il s'agit de questions artistiques concernant la mise en scène au théâtre ou au cinéma.

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M. Van Zeeland met au point son programme de gouvernement

Bruxelles, 10 Juin. (Par tél.) M. Van Zeeland s'est rendu ce matin au palais de Bruxelles pour faire connaître au roi le résultat des négociations qu'il a eues avec les représentants des trois grands partis traditionnels. A 10 heures, il est quittant le cabinet du roi, il s'est borné à déclarer qu'il avait fait part au souverain de l'accord de principe réalisé sur son programme.

De grandes fêtes artistiques populaires auront lieu à Paris le 14 Juillet

M. Jean Zay, ministre de l'Education nationale, a fait approuver au cours du Conseil des ministres un programme de fêtes artistiques et populaires qui seront organisées à Paris le 14 Juillet. Une série de dix représentations est prévue pour le mois de juillet, du 14 au 21. Elles seront organisées avec le concours de la Comédie-Française, de la direction des Beaux-Arts et de la Maison de la Culture. L'Opéra fera ses portes le 14 juillet pour être mis en réparation, c'est la scène du Châtelet qui a été choisie, celui-ci étant le plus grand des théâtres de Paris.

Les points de départ d'une négociation entre Vienne, Berlin et Rome

Vienne, 10 Juin. Il résulte de renseignements complémentaires obtenus à des sources généralement bien informées sur la teneur des conversations Mussolini-Schuschnigg que le Duce se serait déclaré prêt à s'employer de toute son influence auprès du chancelier Hitler pour l'amener à une reconnaissance formelle de l'indépendance de l'Autriche et à une renonciation à toute ingérence dans sa politique intérieure. Au cas où de telles promesses allemandes seraient faites, M. Mussolini s'en porterait garant.

AU SECOURS DE L'ENFANCE MALHEUREUSE Comités de vigilance et d'action

Mme G. Baudot, 5, square Jean-Thibaud, Paris (15^e), recevra par correspondance les adhésions à son « Comité de Vigilance et d'Action » pour le quartier de Grenelle (15^e arrondissement). Elle sera chez elle le lundi 15 juin et le mercredi 17 juin, de 6 h. 30 à 9 heures. Une réunion générale préparatoire aura lieu la semaine suivante à une date et à un endroit à déterminer.

Un « amazone » en auto échappé aux agents... après avoir tenté d'enlever un trop galant passant

Depuis un certain temps les « amazones » ont tenté de passer inaperçues à l'attention des Parisiens, ce qui ne veut pas dire qu'elles n'en continuent pas moins leur fructueux et illicite commerce. Un matin, l'une d'elles a eu maille à partir avec les agents du 17^e arrondissement, mais, conduisant une excellente voiture, elle a réussi à s'échapper avec maestria.

Furieuse, la jolie blonde s'écria : — Tu l'en repentiras, je vais te faire voir du pays. Appuyant sur le « champignon », elle partit en trombe sur les Champs-Élysées et l'avenue Wagram. Arrivé à l'angle de la rue Ampère, elle aperçut un agent qui, alerté par la vitesse de la voiture et les cris d'appel qui en provenaient, leva son bâton blanc et siffla.

M. Ciano, ministre des Affaires étrangères d'Italie

Rome, 10 Juin. Comme Paris-soir l'avait annoncé il y a quelques temps, le remaniement ministériel ordonné par M. Mussolini semble bien être le prélude de cette profonde réforme de la Constitution qui consacrerait le fascisme en tant qu'élément fondamental de la monarchie italienne. Plus immédiatement ce mouvement annonce les grandes lignes suivant lesquelles le régime envisage de collaborer activement à un nouvel ordre européen.

Une ère nouvelle du régime fasciste

D'une part, MM. Lantini et Lessona, sous-secrétaires d'Etat aux Corporations et aux Colonies, deviennent titulaires de ces deux ministères, et d'autre part, M. Galeazzo Ciano, gendre du Duce, s'installe comme ministre des Affaires étrangères, remplacé au ministère de la Presse et de la Propagande par M. Dino Alfieri, jusque là sous-secrétaire d'Etat ayant remplacé M. Ciano pendant que celui-ci combattait en Afrique orientale.

Le Duce « abandonnerait » de nouveaux portefeuilles

Rome, 10 Juin. D'après certains bruits, M. Mussolini, qui occupe les postes de ministre de la Guerre, de la Marine et de l'Aéronautique abandonnerait ces portefeuilles comme il a abandonné hier ceux des Affaires étrangères, des Colonies et des Corporations. On dit également que M. Starace, secrétaire du parti fasciste, qui se trouve toujours en Afrique orientale, rentrerait à Rome le 15 juin et serait nommé ministre de l'Intérieur, ce portefeuille étant également tenu par M. Mussolini.

A trente nœuds sur « Normandie »

« A bord le 10 Juin. Nous étions, ce matin, plus de cent cinquante journalistes français et représentants de la presse étrangère qui quittions Paris par le train transatlantique pour aller expérimenter « Normandie » en pleine mer et constater que toute vibration avait disparu à son bord. A 12 heures, 40 notre caravane atteignait le Havre et s'embarqua. A 13 heures, la Compagnie Transatlantique nous faisait les honneurs de son magnifique navire de la Manche, cap sur Plymouth que nous atteindrions en fin d'après-midi. De ses flancs s'élève le murmure des dynamos, des moteurs, des turbines enroulées autour de la machine, ce sont ces cathédrales et l'emporte à 30 nœuds, travaille dans le silence des fonds sa brèche autrement sa présence que par un très doux ronronnement. A l'avant du navire le mer, déchirée, ne laisse sur l'étrave aucune rouille et blanche moustache. A l'arrière, le sillage s'étale, large comme un boulevard de neige. Le rumeur qui monte du creux de cette énorme coque fait penser au brouhaha d'une foule. Mais elle ne se traduit plus, comme par le passé, par cette vibration factieuse qui, un moment, inquiète nos ingénieurs. Nous dirons dans les toiles de « Normandie » ne donnent plus l'impression de « grelotter ». Le plan-

Un meurtrier fou tirait sur deux sergents puis se suicide

Constantine, 10 Juin. Le 2^e bataillon du 15^e Sénégalais, en garnison à Djidjeli, revenant du camp de manoeuvres, bivouaquait, hier soir, à Bal-el-Aioum. Ce matin, vers 2 heures, il se préparait au départ pour Ampère, lorsqu'un brusquement, un tirateur sénégalais, Diabolo Nouji, s'armant de son fusil, fit feu sur le sergent-chef Eckmann, le tuant net. Le sergent-chef Brainerck se précipita courageusement sur le meurtrier. Il fut abattu à son tour. Le criminel retourna alors son arme contre lui et, avant qu'aucun soldat ait pu intervenir, se fit justice en se tirant une balle sous le menton.

Le général Perraud, commandant la 3^e brigade d'infanterie, s'est rendu sur les lieux, où il a salué les dépouilles mortelles des deux sous-officiers, et procédé à l'enquête. Le meurtrier, qui avait dérobé des munitions au cours d'un exercice de tir, a agi sans motif, probablement dans une crise subite de folie furieuse. Le sergent Eckmann était marié, sans enfants. Le sergent Brainerck était père de deux enfants. Les corps des victimes ont été transportés à Constantine.

Epilogue aux Assises d'un meurtre au son du banjo

Le 5 novembre 1934, vers neuf heures du soir, M. Ramet, propriétaire d'une maison en construction, rue Mollière, à Montreuil-sous-Bois, remarquait, auprès de son immeuble, un homme, écroulé sur le trottoir et qu'il prit d'abord pour un ivrogne. Par un geste de courtoisie, l'un à la cuisse, l'autre en pleine poitrine, le malheureux expira, le lendemain, à l'hôpital.

La soirée fut joyeuse et Camille Roth, qui jouait du banjo, assis sur une chaise, en était le boute-en-train. Mais Edouard Petit, décidément trop éméché, s'oublia jusqu'à adresser à Mme Lerliche des paroles dépassant les bornes de la galanterie. Camille Roth se dressa aussitôt, en « justicier » et lâcha son banjo pour prendre son couteau dans sa poche. Il se précipita vers Edouard Petit, blessa à la main son ami Marcoux qui voulait s'interposer, atteignant, une première fois, sa victime à la cuisse et, la poursuivant dans la rue, lui plongea son poignard dans le cou.

Carbone et Spirito ont des ennuis avec la douane

« Carbone et Spirito ont été pincés en flagrant délit de contrebande au moment où ils débarquaient 33.000 kilos de parmesan... » Voilà à peu de chose près la nouvelle qui alertait, cette nuit, les tenanciers de cafés au Vieux-Port marseillais. C'est que Carbone et Spirito sont deux personnages considérables dans l'histoire marseillaise, deux gais compagnons d'aventure dont les déboires retentissants avec la justice française lors de l'affaire Prince restent encore présents à la mémoire.

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Le fromage de M. Carbone

Cette fois c'est par le fromage que Carbone et Spirito connaissent leurs ennuis publicitaires. En effet, hier matin, les pêcheurs des Salins de la presqu'île de Giens remarquèrent une tartane d'une longueur de 20 mètres qui s'amarrait après une manœuvre difficile dans une calanque, à la pointe du Brucet.

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On ouvre les fromages

Et, d'un pas tranquille, il s'éloigna. A peine avait-il disparu au regard des nocturnes travailleurs que le douanier sauta sur une moto-cyclette et, à pleins gaz, alla sonner à l'entrée de la calanque. Une véritable expédition fut organisée, et bientôt les douaniers cernèrent, mousqueton à la main, les dockers, qui n'opposèrent d'ailleurs aucune résistance. Quelques fromages furent ouverts en deux sous l'œil ironique de M. Carbone qui disait, gouaillard : — Vous espérez sans doute que « je cache » des mitraillettes dans mon parmesan ! Détrompez-vous. La nouvelle se répandit alors rapidement à Marseille : Carbone et Spirito ont été arrêtés.

Hôtel Drouot

Salle 10. — La 11^e vente de bleu turquoises de la Chine, porcelaines japonaises, céramique. (M^{lle} Alph. Bellier ; M. A. Fortier.) Salle 11. — Le 12^e vente de porcelaines, cristaux, meubles, tapis de la Chine de la vente de la princesse G. Exposition le 11. (M^{lle} R. Ondard et F. Metel.)

Les explications du capitaine

Le capitaine de la tartane « Saint-Louis », M. François Ruicillet, déclarait ce matin : — Mon petit bateau avait pris livraison à Gènes, voici près de quinze jours, mais je n'ai pu le faire transporter à Barcelone avant pendant cinq jours, par le fait du mauvais temps, je dus faire relâche à Porquerolles. — Nous reprîmes la mer, mais les mauvais temps m'obligea une fois de plus à me réfugier dans le port de Bouc. La douane monta à bord pour vérifier les papiers et déclara qu'ils étaient en règle.

Le retour du « Queen Mary »

« Queen Mary » arrive aujourd'hui à Southampton. Un certain nombre de passagers débarqueront à Cherbourg. Parmi les personnes qui se trouvent à bord, M. Nicholas Murray Butler, président de l'Université de Columbia, Mme E. Ferguson et Irene Dunne, vedettes de cinéma, le diamantaire Henri Van Damm.

HOLLYWOOD 1936

Dans l'ombre des vedettes se cachent ces trois maîtres occultes de l'écran : le maquilleur, l'agent, le chasseur de stars

CE SONT DES PERSONNAGES SOUVENT INQUIÉTANTS PARFOIS NAIFS, MAIS TOUJOURS PITTORESQUES

(De notre envoyé spécial Blaise CENDRARS)

Hollywood, Juin. Si derrière chaque star se cache son maquilleur, l'expert en sex appeal qui lui a décerné sa « charte de beauté », qui a défini son genre, qui a fixé son type, qui est le véritable auteur de ce visage immuable qu'elle porte à l'écran et lui vaut une foule d'adorateurs, c'est entendu, mais qui surtout lui donne sa valeur commerciale et lui assure des revenus fantastiques...

L'homme qui doit tout savoir

L'agent est l'homme qui a partie liée avec la star, tout en étant en relations intimes avec les studios, qui n'ont pas de secrets pour lui, mais qui met en concurrence, en menant, dans les coulisses, ses campagnes de presse, qui passionnent l'opinion publique américaine, mais qui la façonnent aussi et influent souverainement le bon ou le mauvais goût de la foule.

L'agent est au courant de ce que le public attend au cinéma, de ce que les écrivains préparent, de ce que les metteurs en scène recherchent, de ce que les studios sont prêts à payer pour mettre sous contrat une vedette dont ils ont besoin et dont ils désirent s'assurer les concours dans leur production future.

Professionnellement, il est tenu de savoir tout ce qui se passe sur les plateaux et tout ce qui se décide dans les conciliabules les plus secrets des dirigeants d'une firme, comme il doit être à l'affût des déceptions d'une prise de vues, des défauts, des faiblesses d'un scénario, des manquements, des insuffisances, du déclin d'un interprète pour pouvoir amorcer la guerre ténébreuse, souvent de longue haleine et toujours fort difficile à mener à bien, d'échos, de potins, de bavardages, de débâcles impropitables, de sous-entendus venimeux, de sarcasmes rancuniers, de comparaisons féroces, de malveillance, de calomnie, de provocation, de rivalité, d'habileté, de compromis et de scandale qui précède comme un phénomène d'accompagnement en effervescence la chute d'une ancienne et le lever d'une nouvelle étoile.

L'agent doit non seulement avoir un stock de remplaçants et de remplaçantes sous la main et être sans cesse à la recherche de nouveaux talents, mais encore doit-il avoir la main heureuse. C'est pourquoi un agent est toujours un homme d'imagination. Il a la tête qui lui éclate. Il a trop d'idées. C'est un homme universel qui se mêle et qui touche à tout. C'est un intrigant, un menteur, un imposteur né. En outre, c'est un homme d'affaires doué d'un flair prodigieux qui va jusqu'à devancer, deviner les desiderata du public et des producteurs, que sa manie est de flatter jusqu'à épuisement, mais qui l'ex-

ploite tout en les orientant selon ses vues personnelles. Car le succès oblige, et un bon agent ne se contente pas de suivre un engouement général; il fait volontiers figure de novateur en imposant à tous un nom inconnu qu'il lance et qui fera furore, mais qu'il tyrannise. C'est un métier épuisant et désespéré que celui d'agent car pour pouvoir tenir longtemps en faisant fuir des deux bords, il faut jouer dans l'âme et avoir le diable au corps, et ce n'est qu'à force de subtilité, d'épate, de ruse, de volonté et de finesse que cet homme entreprenant qui se dépense sans compter arrive à entortiller et à sévir dans les studios, qui jamais ne se méfient autant de lui et le voient venir quand, justement, il a enfin jeté son dévolu, pris la glu, appliqué, choisi, promisi, maigrionné, séduiti, trompé tout en inspirant confiance, mené grand train insouciant tout en poursuivant une idée de derrière la tête, fait aboutir mille et une combinaisons et démarches obliques avant de gonfler à bloc ou de laisser choir la star qu'il convoite, celle qui est chaque fois sa nouvelle raison de vivre, sa vanité, son orgueil, sa créature, son faible, sa chose, son commerce, sa fille spirituelle, sa maîtresse, son illusion, sa veine, sa victime, sa ruine, sa fortune dont il a rêvé, la dernière ou l'inconnue qui, pour lui et pour tout un monde de parasites qui grouillent autour de lui et qui ont tous barre sur elle, va jouer à son insu leur chance à tous.

Les chasseurs de stars

Donc, si la star ne peut rien faire au cinéma sans l'intervention de son agent et des agents de son agent, les firmes cinématographiques elles non plus ne peuvent se passer des services de cet homme apparemment simple, mais qui leur apporte tout un débrouillard, s'il ne s'improvise pas séance tenante agent de la star qu'il vient de découvrir, c'est-à-dire s'il ne se bombarde pas de son propre chef son propre patron qu'il croit tenir un merle blanc, à l'instar du grand patron dont il est alors l'émissaire, à la tendance à vouloir faire main basse sur tout ce qui lui paraît être susceptible d'intéresser, de surprendre ou de plaire et de faire de l'argent au cinéma — et non seulement une beauté ou un talent nouveaux qui sont avant tout à dénicher, mais comme les stars se font de plus en plus rares et qu'il faut bien vivre, il rabat vers Hollywood, sans discernement, et c'est en quoi son

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Par définition, le talent-scout est un simple chasseur d'étoiles. Mais comme il est avant tout un débrouillard, s'il ne s'improvise pas séance tenante agent de la star qu'il vient de découvrir, c'est-à-dire s'il ne se bombarde pas de son propre chef son propre patron qu'il croit tenir un merle blanc, à l'instar du grand patron dont il est alors l'émissaire, à la tendance à vouloir faire main basse sur tout ce qui lui paraît être susceptible d'intéresser, de surprendre ou de plaire et de faire de l'argent au cinéma — et non seulement une beauté ou un talent nouveaux qui sont avant tout à dénicher, mais comme les stars se font de plus en plus rares et qu'il faut bien vivre, il rabat vers Hollywood, sans discernement, et c'est en quoi son

Le rôle est souvent néfaste, le plus grand nombre d'attractions possible.

C'est ainsi qu'un « talent-scout » mettra sous contrat un boxeur nègre à qui il demandera de lui écrire un scénario, une danse acrobatique ou baroque, un jazz exceptionnel ou un numéro extraordinaire de music-hall, des animaux savants, un pirate infamé comme cette malheureuse ballerine Trudi Schoop, surnommée « Le Charlot femelle » qui a lamentablement échoué en Californie, des phénomènes comme « The Dionne Quintuplets », les cinq petites jumelles canadiennes qui sont les vedettes d'une comédie musicale que la Fox est en train de tourner, le héros d'un fait divers, une divorcée ou un gangster, un homme à la mode ou une femme dont on a beaucoup parlé dans les journaux comme ce pauvre Elfi Webb, dit « Le Dandy de New-York », engagé à 3.000 dollars par semaine et qui se morfond, et qui s'ennuie à Hollywood, attendant depuis un an et demi que son metteur en scène veuille bien se souvenir de lui et daigne le faire débiter, ou comme Ariette Stavisky, dont on a également annoncé la venue, une girl, une entraîneuse de « night club », comme Eleanor Powell, la chérie de Hollywood, qui dansait vingt-quatre heures par jour et qui vient d'être transportée à bout de nerfs dans une maison de santé, où elle se mit à hurler, quand on l'interna « Charmé L. Darling !... laissez-moi me tuer !... Sans la danse, la vie m'em... ! » ou Mabel Boll, qui n'a aucun talent et qui n'est pas jolie, mais qui a les plus beaux bijoux d'Amérique et qui a défrayé la chronique pour avoir été mêlée aux aventures romanesques de Charles A. Levine, le Don Quichotte de l'aviation transocéanique.

A vrai dire, tout lui paraît bon, au chasseur d'inédit qui ne sait plus à quel saint se vouer pour faire prime et se distinguer et plus une idée est abracadabrante plus il y a de chances pour qu'il la trouve géniale. Le « talent-scout » est par essence un habileur, mais aussi un badaud, c'est-à-dire d'un gogo de grande ville qui finit par se laisser prendre à ses propres boniments — et c'est pourquoi ce type, quels que soient sa jactance, sa vulgarité, son allure, son rôle, sa duplicité, ses intentions secrètes, troubles et suspects, dès qu'il est sur la piste d'une femme, n'est pas tout à fait antipathique et ce coquin est malgré tout un enjôleur, inquietant certes, mais assez populaire, pittoresque et naïf.

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Et leur signifiait leur congé. Il les avertisse que le journal allait changer de ligne politique.

M. Poliakow, nous dit M. Grave, m'a déclaré que nous étions beaucoup trop antihitlériens, qu'il y avait eu de bonnes choses dans l'Allemagne de Hitler et qu'il avait décidé de mettre à la tête du journal un nouveau rédacteur en chef et un nouvel administrateur-délégué.

Les rédacteurs du journal des émigrés se réunirent aussitôt et décidèrent de se solidariser avec les deux chefs congédiés. Le journal Pariser Tagblatt a paru ce matin avec une déclaration de la rédaction révoquant que la Gestapo et son chef à Paris, le D' Schmolze, avaient tenté de s'emparer du journal par surprise.

Une circulaire de M. Salengro contre la hausse injustifiée des prix

Nous avions dit que des procès-verbaux avaient été dressés pour hausse de prix, mais que ces procès-verbaux n'avaient pas été transmis aux tribunaux. M. Salengro, ministre de l'Intérieur, a adressé aux préfets la circulaire suivante :

Il m'a été signalé que certains intermédiaires cherchaient à provoquer des hausses abusives, injustifiables, des cours des denrées de première nécessité. Ces manœuvres qui permettraient de réaliser des bénéfices anormaux auraient également pour effet de créer de l'inquiétude et seraient susceptibles de les amplifier, de troubler l'ordre public.

Ces agissements ne sauraient être tolérés davantage. Fièrement attaché à son programme social et économique, le gouvernement veut soutenir les intérêts des consommateurs et faire respecter les efforts de mise au point et de rajustement soient annihilés dans le même temps par une hausse injustifiée du coût de la vie.

Je compte sur vos interventions personnelles auprès des représentants des divers groupements du commerce et de l'industrie afin d'obtenir d'eux qu'ils joignent leur action à la vôtre. Il importe toutefois que, le plus tôt possible, vous preniez les dispositions utiles pour qu'il soit procédé à des vérifications de prix. Tout dépassement injustifié des barèmes préfixés ou multiples, toute action qui paraîtrait concertée pour raréfier le marché, sont pour déterminer une hausse exagérée

des prix, devront faire l'objet de procès-verbaux qui seront transmis sans délai aux tribunaux, avec lesquels vous devrez, éventuellement, vous mettre en rapport.

Vous voudrez bien donner à cette circulaire la plus large publicité de manière que tous ceux qui seraient tentés de se livrer à ces agissements auxquels le gouvernement veut mettre fin soient informés des sanctions qu'ils seraient susceptibles d'encourir et qui sont prévues par les articles 419 et 420 du code pénal.

Vous aurez soin de me tenir informé des dispositions que vous aurez prises pour l'application de ces instructions et de me signaler toute manœuvre de hausse qui vous paraîtrait devoir retenir l'attention de l'autorité judiciaire.

Des appels d'associations

De leur côté, des associations de commerçants lancent des appels pour inviter leurs adhérents à enrayer la hausse.

La chambre syndicale des épiciers en détail du département de la Seine a adressé à tous ses adhérents un appel pressant pour que ceux-ci veillent à leurs prix de vente et que dans la période critique que nous traversons ils contribuent dans la mesure de leurs moyens au maintien de la paix sociale.

La Confédération de défense du petit commerce et de l'artisanat a demandé aux petits commerçants de dénoncer immédiatement au siège de la Confédération ou directement aux pouvoirs publics les grossistes, négociants, mandataires, industriels qui pratiqueraient des hausses injustifiées.

"L'HOMME MYSTÉRIEUR" qui était déjà recherché en 1914 est enfin identifié

C'est un Autrichien, qui a été arrêté dans les locaux de la Sûreté Nationale

C'est un bien curieux personnage, un escroc de grande envergure, que, dès 1914, recherché déjà toutes les polices internationales et qui était plus connu dans certains milieux diplomatiques sous l'appellation « l'homme mystérieux », qui vient d'être identifié aujourd'hui par le contrôle général de la police criminelle à la Sûreté nationale.

Il s'agit d'un certain Frédéric Hahn, originaire de Vienne, où est né le 30 décembre 1886, et qui a été arrêté en flagrant délit dans les locaux de la rue des Saussaies par le commissaire Pourcher et les inspecteurs Bernol et Jonquet. « L'homme mystérieux » s'était jeté dans la gueule du loup, sous le prétexte d'empêcher l'expulsion d'un de ses « protégés ».

Invité à expliquer, ce matin, Hahn le prit de haut. Puis, tout d'un trait, il débita une fausse histoire. Se disant marquis de Champvans de Farémont et fondateur de l'Institut littéraire et artistique de France et de l'Institut hispano-américain des sciences et des arts, président et fondateur du comité pour l'émigration en Espagne, le pseudo-marquis put un instant espérer se voir relâcher, mais le malheur voulut que plusieurs plaintes fussent parvenues au contrôle des services de police criminelle. Hahn, qui s'était précipité dans le trafic des déclarations et se présentait comme intermédiaire en vue de nominations diplomatiques,

était, depuis longtemps déjà l'objet de demandes de renseignements émanant de plusieurs polices de France et de polices internationales.

Depuis vingt ans, il n'a cessé de faire des dupes dans notre pays, notamment parmi les étrangers qui faisaient l'objet de mesures d'expulsion. Les différents titres dont se parait l'escroc n'avaient pas manqué d'influencer tous ceux qui étaient chargés d'enquêter sur son compte. Naturalisé Français, il se donnait tour à tour comme conseiller du roi de Monténégro et du roi Carol de Roumanie.

La Sûreté a pu établir qu'il procurait aussi des passeports consulaires pour l'Amérique du Sud et équatoriale : ces passeports, il les faisait payer 30 et 40.000 francs.

Au fur et à mesure que l'on fouilla dans la vie de cet individu, on va de surprise en surprise. Parmi les autres titres dont se réclamait le pseudo-marquis de Champvans de Farémont, on trouve qu'il était membre de l'Alliance mondiale pour combattre l'antisémitisme, membre de l'Institut littéraire de France, diplômé de la Croix-Rouge portugaise.

Propriétaire d'un luxueux appartement, 21, rue Leconte-de-Lisle, où il habitait avec sa femme, l'homme mystérieux a été maintenant domicilié à la Santé.

Un employé bruxellois avait égorgé sa femme

Il comparait aux Assises

Bruxelles, 11 juin (par téléphone). Une lamentable affaire se juge en ce moment devant la Cour d'Assises du Brabant. Un employé de la ville de Bruxelles, François Tourgean, a sans doute pour plaire à son amie, tranché d'un coup de rasoir la gorge de sa femme, née Jeanne Boon.

L'acte d'accusation dressé par le substitut du procureur général, M. Bayot, ne ménage guère l'accusé, cet homme de 51 ans, emporté, brutal, vaniteux, orgueilleux, qui invitait chez lui des artistes lyriques et des danseuses, à qui il faisait de fréquents cadeaux et qui ne laissait à son épouse pour subvenir aux besoins du ménage qu'une partie très réduite de son traitement.

La femme délaissée chaque soir par son mari, en vit bientôt aux reproches, qui ne tardèrent pas à provoquer des scènes de violence. C'est ainsi qu'à la fin du mois de juillet 1935, Jeanne Boon fut son domicile au siège de la Confédération ou directement aux pouvoirs publics les grossistes, négociants, mandataires, industriels qui pratiqueraient des hausses injustifiées.

Hélas, les événements se précipitèrent, et huit jours plus tard, à 7 h. 30 du matin, la belle-mère entendit du fracas dans la cuisine et son gendre qui criait :

« Voilà ! salue rosse ! » Elle courut prévenir la police et celle-ci trouva Jeanne Boon étendue sur le sol, la gorge tranchée par un coup de rasoir. Tous les meubles étaient maculés de sang.

Tourgean fut découvert affalé au fond de l'arrière-cuisine. Il s'était taillé le cou avec un rasoir. Mais il se rétablit après un séjour de neuf jours à l'hôpital. On trouva sur Tourgean un testament rédigé l'avant-veille, par lequel il légua tous ses biens à son amie.

Interrogé, Tourgean déclara qu'il avait prémédité son acte. Il revint peu après sur ses premières déclarations et nia toute préméditation. Il n'a cependant pu expliquer pourquoi il avait rédigé ce testament et envoyé au commissaire de police une lettre par laquelle il annonçait le crime qu'il allait commettre.

Les médecins aliénistes qui ont examiné Tourgean estiment qu'il est entièrement responsable de ses actes.

La cour est présidée par M. le conseiller Vanderheyde.

M. Louis Gillet reçu à l'Académie française

par Jérôme et Jean THARAUD

Quand je vais voir, tout à l'heure, mon vieil ami Louis Gillet en habit brodé d'académicien, avec un bicorne emplanté et une belle épée au côté, je ne pourrai m'empêcher de sourire. Tant d'autres images familières viennent se superposer pour moi à cette apparition magnifique.

Je nous revois ensemble potaches, lui venu de Stanislas et moi de Sainte-Barbe, dans une cour de la Sorbonne, au moment d'entrer dans la salle du Concours général. Cette année-là, il eut le prix d'honneur ; moi, je vins bon second... C'est de ce moment-là que date une amitié de plus d'un quart de siècle, et qui ne demande qu'à durer aussi longtemps !

Louis Gillet appartient à une vieille famille de bourgeois parisiens, de la paroisse Saint-Paul, dans le quartier Saint-Antoine. Parisien par son père et par sa mère qui, eux-mêmes, avaient des générations de Parisiens derrière eux. Et, je ne sais pourquoi, un Parisien du faubourg Saint-Antoine m'a toujours paru être plus de Paris qu'un Parisien de tout autre quartier... Il m'avait présenté à sa famille, et le provincial que j'étais éprouvai quel-que étonnement à voir qu'on aimait tant, dans cet appartement du vieux faubourg, entre la Seine et la Bastille, les livres, les tableaux, la musique.

Dans nos familles de province, on vivait plus au ralenti. Et ce qui achevait de donner un caractère tout à fait original à ces bourgeois parisiens, c'était une austerité, un catholicisme un peu janséniste, qui faisait que la conversation ne s'attardait guère, à mon goût pas assez, à des sujets triviales. Deux jeunes filles charmantes, les sœurs de mon ami, égayaient ce logis, où l'on vivait uniquement dans la familiarité et dans l'admiration des grandes choses et des grands hommes.

A chaque période de vacances usant de tous les moyens de locomotion alors connus, ses jambes d'abord (qu'il a fort longues), la bicyclette et le wagon (de 3^e classe, bien entendu !), Gillet filait à travers la France pour visiter monuments et musées, dessinant, prenant des notes ; bref, faisant son apprentissage de grand connaisseur d'art, qu'il est devenu par la suite. Je l'ai souvent accompagné dans ses randonnées en Allemagne, en Angleterre, en Italie. Je me rappelle même qu'une fois nous laissions nos montres (c'étaient alors des objets de valeur !) au mont-de-piété de Venise, pour regagner notre patrie...

Souvenirs de la rue d'Ulm

Formé des générations de normaliens socialistes, à commencer par Léon Blum, qui non seulement lui a pris ses idées mais même la forme de son chapeau, pas plus que moi d'ailleurs, ne fut de ceux qui se laisseraient embrigader par Lucien Herr. Moi, j'étais alors plus avancé que notre bibliothécaire, puisqu'en ce temps-là (ô jeunesse !) je faisais profession d'anarchie ! Quant à Louis Gillet, il appartenait au groupe des « talas », c'est-à-dire des catholiques, et professait un évangélisme tout à fait différent de celui de Karl Marx.

Dans la même tourne que nous, il y avait encore notre ami, le cher François Laurent, grand tala lui aussi, qui fut tué à la guerre, et l'athée décalé Jean Talagrand, qui, se proclamant l'ennemi personnel de Dieu, et déclamaient des articles de Voltaire chaque fois qu'il se mettait à tonner... La tourne voisine de la nôtre s'appelait la tourne « Utopie », socialiste cent pour cent, occupée qu'elle était par mes camarades Lévy, Jacobin patriote ; Weulersse, le neuveu du communard Bernol ; Albert Mathiez, le futur historien de Robespierre, et notre cher Fégyus...

Temps charmant, où nous étions tous, chacun à notre manière, d'épouvantables fanatiques, et où, pourtant, la camaraderie la plus franche nous réunissait tous autour du bassin aux poissons rouges, les « Ernest », comme nous nommions ces bêtes innocentes. C'est le grand miracle de la jeunesse ! Par la suite, la vie vous rend beaucoup plus dur, c'est-à-dire beaucoup plus bête.

Ce qui nous mettait, Gillet et moi, un peu à part dans ce milieu où, en dehors de leurs études, la politique passionnait surtout nos camarades, c'était le goût que nous avions, tous les deux, absolu, exclusif, pour l'art et la littérature. Le croirait-on ? A l'Ecole, la littérature était loin d'être en odeur de

littérature. Le terrible Lucien Herr l'avait en profonde aversion, et il savait en faire passer le goût à tous ceux qui ne l'avaient pas, comme Gillet et moi, hélas ! au fond d'un cœur. Ah ! disait-il d'un ton qui en imposait aux timorés, vous voulez qu'on dise de vous que vous êtes un fin lettré ! » Parole au fond assez sage, car il importe beaucoup, en effet, de décourager les beaux-arts, comme disait Degas. Et il vaut infiniment mieux être un bon professeur, un bon travailleur de bibliothèque, qu'un littérateur médiocre.

L'histoire d'art, le poète, le journaliste... Mais que nous poussions devenir des littérateurs médiocres, pensez-vous que cette idée-là pût seulement nous effleurer l'esprit ? Et cela aussi, c'est encore un miracle de la jeunesse !... Gillet s'imaginait alors qu'il serait un second Victor Hugo. Aujourd'hui, il déclare avec bonhomie qu'un suffi ! En vérité, il était bien un poète, et il l'est toujours resté par cet amour de la beauté, qui fut dans la vie son étoile. Mais c'est en prose, une des meilleures de ce temps, une prose balancée, harmonieuse, cadencée comme

un poème, qu'il devait réaliser son œuvre. Et dans ce grand oritique et historien de l'art qu'il est devenu aujourd'hui, c'est vraiment un poète que l'Académie accueille.

Certes, comme tout comme personne les bonnes méthodes d'érudition, mais, grâce à Dieu, il sait oublier ses fiches et tout ce qu'il écrit est toujours emporté dans un grand mouvement d'imagination et de lyrisme. Son Histoire artistique des Ordres médiants, son Histoire de la peinture en Europe aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles, son Histoire générale de l'art, ses admirables études sur Raphaël, Watteau, Claude Monet, Corot, Delacroix, Shakespeare et saint François d'Assise ont une tournure et un éclat qui le placent dans la lignée des grands écrivains romantiques. Chez lui, j'admire par-dessus tout un don extraordinaire pour traduire par les mots des sensations colorées et égales par la virtuosité de la phrase la virtuosité de la peinture. Je crois bien que, depuis Théophile Gautier, personne n'a possédé à ce point toutes les ressources de notre langue et cette facilité à transporter des impressions d'un langage dans un autre, du langage des formes et des couleurs dans celui des phrases et des mots.

Un autre talent de Gillet, qu'on n'a pas à connaître, depuis quelques mois déjà (et je me félicite de n'y avoir pas été étranger), les lecteurs de « Paris-soir », c'est son talent de journaliste. Ce talent, je le connaissais depuis longtemps par les lettres étonnantes de temps en temps qu'il m'adressait, et tous les coins du monde, car, à bien voir, un article bien fait, ce n'est pas autre chose qu'une lettre réussie. Or, ma foi, parmi mes amis, je n'en ai aucun qui sache écrire des lettres pareilles, à la va-vite, comme on dit, sur un coin de table, dans un café, dans une gare ou l'inconfort d'une chambre d'hôtel. Et, d'ailleurs, qui écrit encore des lettres ? On n'écrit plus que des cartes postales, ou des articles, si c'est votre métier.

Cette aptitude à écrire aussi bien une scène de la rue qu'un tableau, à analyser avec la même justesse les sentiments d'artistes disparus et ceux de personnages vivants, cette rapidité, cette aisance, cette clarté parfaite, absolument indispensables à un article qui doit se lire avec plaisir, sans effort, voilà ce qui fait de notre académicien un journaliste d'une classe supérieure, une des meilleures recrues de notre équipe à « Paris-soir ». Enfin, il a bourlingué, comme moi, plus ou moins confortablement dans tous les pays d'Europe et d'Amérique, et, pour parler avec justice de l'événement du jour, croyez-moi, rien n'est plus nécessaire que d'avoir fait d'abord une profonde étude de ces grands courants de sentiments et de pensées qui s'expriment par la littérature et par l'art.

A Cleveland, on cherche un candidat contre M. Roosevelt

(De notre envoyé spécial permanent Jacques FRANSALÉS)

Cleveland, 11 juin (par câble). A la fin de la première journée, la Convention paraît, à moins d'imprévu, devoir désigner le gouverneur Landon pour tenter de prendre la revanche du parti républicain, contre le président Roosevelt en novembre prochain.

Les raisons de ce choix, qui se cristallisent peu à peu au cours des négociations entre les différents clans dans les chambres encombrées des hôtels, sont toutes négatives.

« Ah ! Suzanne... » Cette Convention ressemble à la fois à une foire de village et à une réunion mondaine. J'ai visité le quartier général de Landon, hôtel Hollenden. C'est un vaste salon transformé en musée, dont les murs sont décorés de photos du candidat sept fois grandeur nature. On voit Landon enfant, puis prospecteur de puits de pétrole. On le voit à cheval, pêchant à la ligne, causant avec son vieux père, embrassant sa fille... Sur une estrade, un orchestre joue toutes les cinq minutes « Ah ! Suzanne », chant de guerre favori du candidat. Le chef d'orchestre italien, vêtu d'un habit bleu roi, me dit qu'il a joué cet air huit cent cinquante-trois fois depuis huit jours. Une dame aimable, fatiguée mais libre d'optimisme, assise devant une vaste table encombrée de brochures, me remet son tournesol en flanelle et un énorme paquet de journaux et de livres vantant le gouverneur Landon.

Le miracle Dans ce salon, des milliers de gens défilent matin et soir pour essayer de se familiariser avec ce candidat qui, tout en déclamaient un enthousiasme qui commence à prendre une allure fanatique, est, en somme, complètement inconnu. Les agents électoraux de Landon ont rendu possible ce miracle de populariser un candidat dont on ne sait pratiquement rien et que presque personne n'a vu, même pas à Cleveland.

La légende qui s'élabore autour de Landon est celle d'un homme rustique, simple, bon enfant, opposé en tout à Roosevelt. Mais Landon ne plaît pas seulement aux enfants du Kansas et des autres Etats fermiers : dans un hôtel de Cleveland, où se réunit tout le gratin de Wall Street et de Park Avenue, la même approbation attend ce candidat.

Les séances La séance d'hier matin fut de pure forme, mais il était curieux d'entendre la prière inaugurale et le Pater noster récités par quinze mille personnes.

La séance de nuit fut, par contre, absolument hallucinante par suite du fra-

cas des applaudissements, des hurlements, des cris d'indiens et de peaux-rouges adoptés par certaines délégations, pour manifester leur enthousiasme.

Il est fort difficile d'imaginer qu'on assiste à une Convention politique. Cela ressemble bien davantage aux Six Jours ou à un grand combat de boxe. Pour accroître l'illusion, entre les discours, on offre des divertissements ; nous entendimes un quatuor nègre et un baryton chanta Le grand méchant loup. La foule, en délire, reprenait en chœur.

Des négociations compliquées Des négociations compliquées se poursuivent entre les chefs des délégations. La question de savoir si M. Borah, Vandenberg, Knox consentiront à cesser l'opposition est toujours irrésolue. On attend le discours de Hoover pour prendre une décision.

Des maintenant, on peut prévoir que les républicains seront incapables de rien proposer de vraiment constructif. Leur programme reste négatif. On déteste Roosevelt, mais on ne peut lui opposer que des récriminations.

DERNIÈRE HEURE THÉÂTRALE

Le Comité de lecture de la Comédie-Française a reçu à l'unanimité une pièce nouvelle, Le mari singulier, de Luc Durtain, d'après une nouvelle de Cervantès.

**Blaise Cendrars, *Hollywood : la Mecque du cinéma*, Paris, Grasset, 2005,
« Les cahiers rouges »**

**Il s'agit du recueil en volume des reportages précédents, avec les
illustrations de Jules Guérin. L'édition originale date de 1936.**

d'une politesse exagérée, ahuri, bête, borné, méchant, rêveur ou souriant — ce monstre d'hypocrisie m'a toujours fait penser, chaque fois que j'ai eu à faire à lui (et c'est pourquoy je me tenais sur mes gardes), au gardien de l'enfer païen qui, comme tout le monde le sait, était un chien à trois têtes. La première toujours haut dressée, hurlait à la lune, la deuxième, aux yeux torves, bavait, écumait et grondait sans cesse, la troisième, dont personne ne se méfiait parce qu'elle était rom-pante et comme endormie, avait des détentes brusques pour mordre par derrière les chevilles des maudits qui passaient. Et c'est effectivement à des maudits que me faisaient penser les passants arrêtés à la porte des studios, attendant patiemment et sans jamais se décourager un message de l'intérieur ou le bon vouloir d'un portier menteur et qui s'en lavait les mains, toutes ces petites gens de condition modeste, nous enthousiastes de cinéma et qui ont la foi, hommes, femmes, jeunes gens, jeunes filles, petits enfants, accourus de toutes les villes du monde pour faire antichambre à l'enfer d'un paradis artificiel qu'est le ciné !

LES PHARISIENS

Le Dante²³ a placé au-dessus de la porte qui descend aux enfers l'inscription célèbre : *Vous qui entrez, laissez toute espérance...*

À Hollywood on est beaucoup plus bref, beaucoup plus direct, beaucoup plus cynique. On ne s'embarrasse pas de formuler une belle sentence. On dit aux gens ce qu'on éprouve le besoin de leur dire, et ne pouvant le leur dire brutalement en cinq lettres, on le leur fait savoir en trois mots. On affiche au-dessus de la porte et à l'usage de ceux qui s'entêtent à vou-

À L'UNIVERSAL²⁴

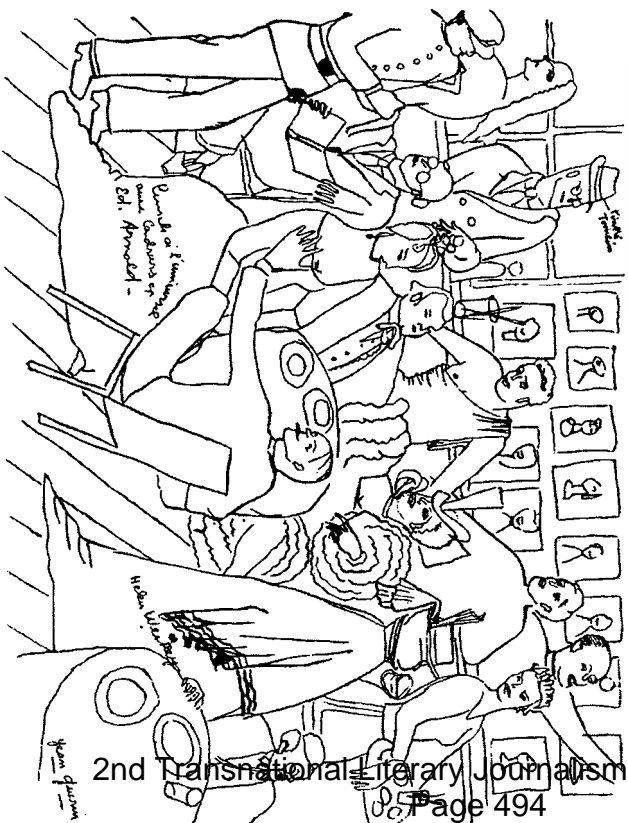
C'est ainsi qu'à l'entrée de l'*Universal-Films*, au-dessus du guichet, dont mon ami Jean Guérin a si bien su croquer la tête de faux témoin du cerbère qui l'occupe (c'est un type assez répandu dans le populaire en Amérique), est clouée un épancarte disant : *Inutile d'attendre. — Inutile d'insister. — Vous perdrez votre temps. — Les recommandations ne vous serviront à rien. — Ciel, endroit n'est pas fait pour vous. — N'entrez Pas.*

Avec cela on est fixé.

Mais comme Carl Laemmle, le président de cette compagnie, fait d'autre part une publicité effrénée dans les journaux, publiant des placards signés de son nom où il demande personnellement au public de bien vouloir collaborer avec lui en lui envoyant des observations, des remarques, des suggestions, qu'il s'engage à payer *cash* de 50 à 100 dollars si une idée soumise est retenue, c'est peut-être à la porte de l'*Universal* que « poiraient » le plus de gogos.

Si ces pauvres gens ne comprennent rien à l'ostracisme du portier, je vous avouerai entre nous que cette espèce de caméléon desséché qui joue l'ahuri, fait toujours semblant de

Un jour, un de ces jeunes matamores qui m'avait fait copier par trois fois non pas *Constantinople*, mais mon nom et qui l'avait noté correctement sous mes yeux : *C-e-n-d-r-a-r-s-e* ut le front d'annoncer à une vedette qui m'attendait, et pendant que je ne saisis pas le nom qu'il escamotait au téléphone, qu'un certain M. Wilson demandait à la voir !



Il faut croire que ces tours de passe-passe sont d'un usage généralisé dans cette firme et que la loge lunatique des

chet, ainsi que cela m'est arrivé un autre jour que Charles Boyer, qui ne dispose que d'une toute petite heure pour déjeuner, se morfondait et mourait de faim en m'attendant au restaurant du studio, cependant qu'un jeune athlète distraint qui avait égaré mon laissez-passer voulait m'appliquer sa consigne de cerbère qui est justement de ne laisser passer personne ! Je dus parlementer durant trois quarts d'heure et faire dépanger vingt personnes avant d'avoir gain de cause, de pouvoir passer... et de me mettre alors à la recherche de Charles Boyer qui avait fini par s'en aller sans déjeuner, l'heure pressant et de civilité.

AUX ARTISTES ASSOCIÉS²⁶

Aux *United Artists*, le guichetier de service n'est pas simplement d'un tout autre genre que les jeunes boxeurs à l'entraînement à la *Paramount*, il est aussi d'une autre génération et même d'une tout autre extraction sociale comme il convient à cette firme bien pensante, la plus distinguée du monde du cinéma et la seule qui se pique à Hollywood d'urbanité et de civilité.

C'est donc un homme affable qui m'accueille quand je me présente, un monsieur d'un certain âge, aux gestes protecteurs, enveloppants, et c'est tout juste si ce cher homme

un grain de poussière, mais un bureau où il n'y a jamais personne et dont le téléphone est sourd-muet !

J'ai eu trois fois à faire à ce pince-sans-rire imperturbable des *United Artists* et chaque fois il m'a joué le même tour pen-dable. À la réflexion cela ne m'étonne qu'à moitié car dès le premier abord, je lui avais trouvé un air pas trop catholique à ce bonhomme, avec sa tête de vieux saint d'almanach qui aurait dû être barbu et chevelu, mais que l'on venait justement de passer à la tondeuse, au rasoir électrique et à la pierre ponce. Et ce qui était stupéfiant, drolatique, inconcevable, même pour un déraciné, mais l'américanisait d'une façon des plus suspectes. La troisième fois, sachant que toutes les indications de ce sacré farceur étaient fausses, je trouvai la chose tordante et je profitai de l'occasion pour aller à l'aventure dans ces immenses studios qui groupent une dizaine de firmes, dont la compagnie de Marie Pickford²⁷.

Les bureaux particuliers de cette dernière, où je jetai un coup d'œil indiscret en passant, se composent d'une enfilade de bonbonnières tendues de toile de Jouy, avec des vieilles filles très honorables penchées sur des machines à écrire comme sur des machines à coudre (Marie Pickford est aujourd'hui dame patronnesse de Hollywood) et un amour de petit chien-chien blanc, pas plus gros qu'une pelote de laine, tordé, comme un chou à la crème de la table à thé dans les tapis.

C'est également ce jour-là que je rencontrai, au tournant d'un bâtiment et se glissant furtivement dans une cour, Douglas Fairbanks²⁸ que les journaux annonçaient être encore à Cannes et que je surprenais rentrant incognito dans cette maison qui a été autrefois la sienne et qui l'est peut-être encore, au moins pour la moitié. Boutonnés tous les deux dans nos imperméables, le col relevé, le chapeau rabattu sur les yeux à cause

À LA M.G.M.²⁹

À la *Metro Goldwyn Mayer*, la première fois que j'y suis allé, il y avait quelques centaines de marins japonais qui encombraient le couloir. Me frayant un chemin au milieu d'eux, je croyais bousculer des figurants en uniforme. Mais je me trompais, ainsi que l'on peut se tromper à chaque pas dans le bagarre des studios hollywoodiens car l'on ne sait jamais à quel point juste si la personne sur le pied de qui l'on marche est un vrai ou un faux personnage, et surtout pas, quand cette personne porte uniforme ou est décorée.

Mes marins japonais étaient donc bel et bien des vrais marins. C'étaient les permissionnaires d'un croiseur de bataille de la marine impériale venus faire un tour à Hollywood et ils demandaient tous, et cela je l'ai pu entendre de mes propres oreilles quand je m'approchai à mon tour du guichet, à voir *la Mme Roma et le M. Dyonikatti* ; la M.G.M. tournant à ce moment *Roméo et Juliette* de Shakespeare, avec la fulgurante Norma Shearer³⁰ comme vedette.

Or, tout le monde le sait, cette star est une créature très capricieuse qui ne supporte la présence d'aucun étranger sur le plateau quand elle tourne car cela la rend nerveuse et lui

état-major, on devait lui dire Dieu sait quoi au bout des fils et sûrement pas des choses aimables pour lui – tout cela ne l'em pêcha pas de me demander (il avait un fort accent allemand) ce que je voulais et, ô comble ! de me mettre immédiatement en rapport avec M. Vogel, M. Robert M.W. Vogel lui-même, le chef de la publicité internationale que je désirais effectivement voir, et non pas avec un quelconque M. Lévy, nom qui s'orthographe là-bas *Lazee*, non pas par camouflage mais en accord avec la prononciation locale.

Comme c'est la seule fois que j'ai été reçu sur-le-champ à Hollywood, je me suis souvent demandé depuis si ça n'avait pas été le fait d'une erreur ou d'un heureux hasard, ou si, dans ce puissant trust germano-américain, le bon sens pratique et l'ordre allemands n'étaient pas en train, – comme il perce chez la plupart des employés de cette compagnie, – de leur anglais fluent, un solide accent d'origine, – de forcer de réduire les complications, les enfantillages, les chinoiseries d'une administration tatillonne et paperassière et de donner une fameuse leçon d'efficacité et d'énergie à l'organisation américaine, si souvent futile, gratuite ou pleine de trous, ou alors qui s'exerce dans le vide, est un luxe inhumain, de la technicité pure, un art pour l'art.

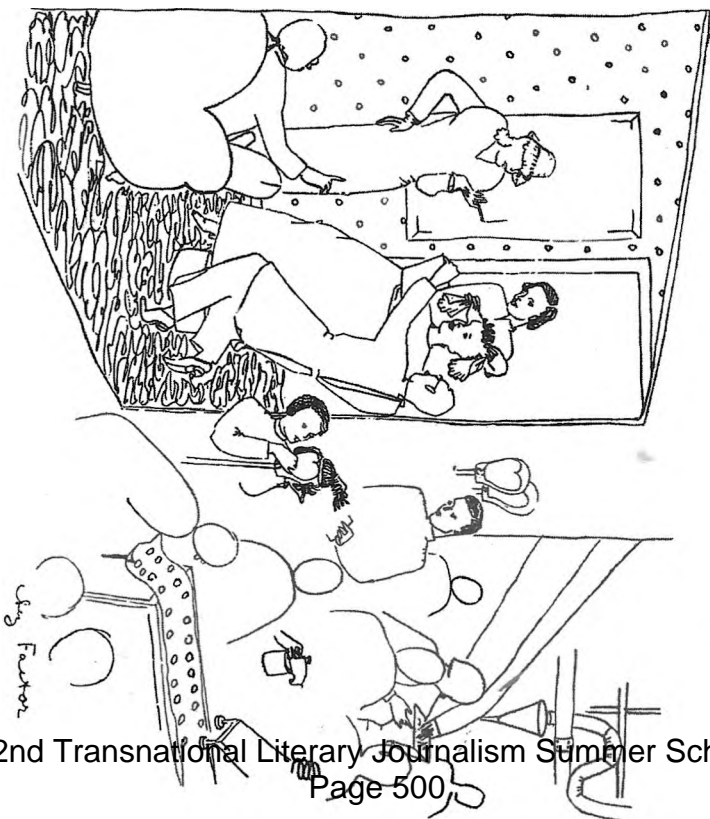
Et si je vous disais que je me suis renseigné et que j'ai appris que ce cerbère virtuose était un jeune nazi frais débarqué d'Allemagne, pourrait-on en conclure quelque chose ?

Peut-être bien qu'oui...

NOUVELLE BYZANCE

IV

WALLY WESTMORE, L'EXPERT EN « SEX-APPEAL »



gion, passe pour être infailible quand il s'agit de la beauté portée à l'écran.

Expert en *sex-appeal*, c'est lui qui fait subir aux artistes les plus cotées, donc les plus fières et les plus intangibles, l'humiliation d'un *test physiologique* trimestriel et qui délivre à chacune d'elles la *charte personnelle de beauté* à laquelle toutes sont soumises. De même, pas une débutante, pas une « starlette » n'a de chance de réussir au cinéma si Westmore, ce magicien clairvoyant, ne lui fixe pas de prime abord son « genre » et puis son « type ».

Wally Westmore est l'homme qui a fait le plus au monde pour moderniser, renouveler le charme féminin en ajoutant à son éternel mystère l'attrait de la ligne des cheveux, la ligne d'aujourd'hui, comme séduction.

LA CLEF DU « SEX-APPEAL »

« On dit communément que les yeux sont les fenêtres de l'âme ; c'est bien possible après tout, — mais le style actuel de la coiffure de Milady est la clef de son *sex-appeal*, affirme Westmore.

« Les yeux, la bouche, la complexion, la figure peuvent être impeccables et bien proportionnés, mais il n'y a pas de véritable *sex-appeal* pour une femme sans l'édifice, sans l'artifice de la coiffure, car tous ses charmes naturels ne seront bien équilibrés que par la ligne de ses cheveux. »

Et il précise : « Par cette ligne j'entends la symétrie, en quelque sorte aérienne, voire symphonique si j'ose dire, qui doit

« La plupart des stars ont des défauts auxquels nous pouvons remédier par le maquillage, ou les éclairages, ou encore par des truquages photographiques; mais si la masse et la platitude de leurs cheveux sont asymétriques, ou même si la ligne de leur coiffure est déplacée, tous nos efforts seront vains et leur visage paraîtra toujours disproportionné dans ses différentes parties, c'est-à-dire qu'il semblera contrefait et tout menté, donc pas beau.

« Comme Baudelaire : *Je hais le mouvement qui déplace : la ligne*⁴⁵ ! »

LE PLUS BEAU VISAGE D'AUGOURD'HUI

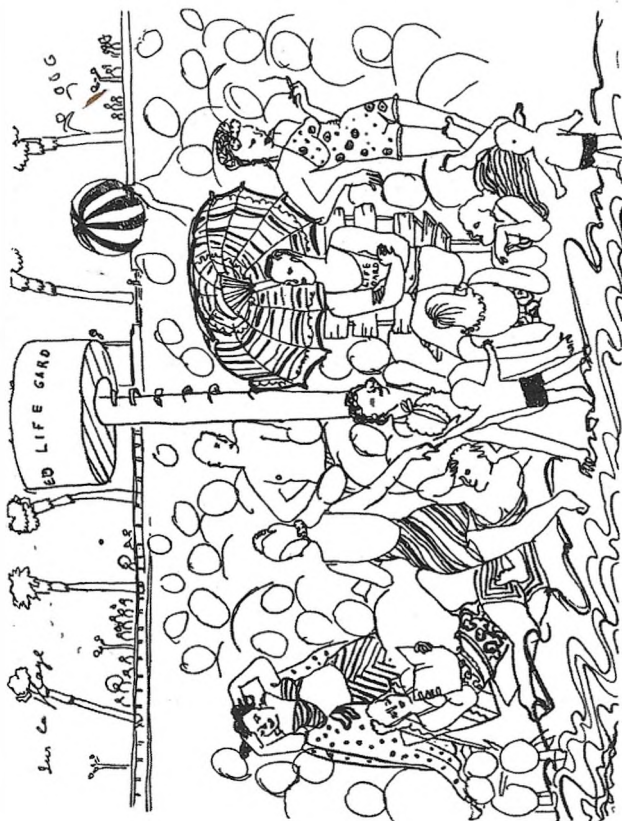
La femme qui a la ligne idéale de cheveux et la figure la plus parfaite selon l'avis de Wally Westmore, ce connaisseur passionné et sensible au point qu'il compare ce divin visage de femme à un cœur palpant, est Gladys Swarthout, la vedette du Metropolitan Opera et l'étoile du film récent *Give Us The Night* (*Donnez-nous cette nuit*)⁴⁶.

« Son front n'est ni trop haut, ni trop bas, explique Westmore, avec émotion. Il s'infléchit légèrement vers le centre, ce qui donne à la ligne de ses cheveux une double courbe en forme de cœur, noble dessin dont la pureté est

LES NÉGRESSES BLONDES

Nous étions, Westmore et moi, debout sous un portique publicitaire, à l'abri de la pluie qui tombait à seaux, mais élaboussés. Il attendait sa voiture qu'un gamin était allé quérir dans un *parking* où il y avait un demi-mètre d'eau. Jusque-là je n'avais soufflé mot, trop heureux d'écouter parler cet homme qui m'intriguait et que l'on m'avait dit être énigmatique et secret. Il s'était laissé aller à me faire des confidences et je tendais l'oreille, troublé et surpris par une note de mélancolie qui perçait sous tous ses propos. Je le sentais inquiet, fébrile, méprisant et comme insatisfait ou déçu. Mais son humeur chagrine n'était peut-être due qu'au mauvais temps ou à du surmenage. Comme sa voiture ne venait toujours pas, pensant l'amuser, je me mis à lui raconter que me trouvant au Brésil à l'époque de la représentation de *Platine Blonde*⁵¹, ce film avait eu un tel succès à Rio de Janeiro qu'en moins d'une semaine toutes les belles mulâtresses et les indolentes négresses qui sortent à la tombée du jour pour aller se promener à l'Avenida ou jouer de la fraîcheur du bord de la mer, plage des Flamants, s'étaient fait déteindre les cheveux et qu'elles se maquillaient toutes au rose-rose.

— C'était d'un drôle ! conclus-je. Mais c'était tout de même inquiétant, car elles avaient toutes l'air de n'être plus que l'envers d'elles-mêmes comme ces personnages que l'on entrevoit par transparence quand on examine un négatif à l'œil nu. Imaginez-vous ce cortège de négresses blondes dans la



savent s'en servir pour lui faire rendre le maximum de séduction en équilibrant bien tous les dons de leur beauté naturelle. Cela est dû probablement à leur ignorance des principes

vous, maître ? vous qui êtes l'auteur des nouveaux modèles vivants que les femmes du monde entier s'évertuent à imiter ; vous qui exercez une influence telle par leur intermédiaire que les mondaines les plus répandues dans la société des grandes villes comme les pauvres jeunes filles inconnues, perdues dans les villages des pays les plus lointains obéissent à leur insu à vos décisions ou à vos intentions quand elles s'étudient devant leur miroir, se poudrent, se mettent du rouge aux lèvres, se font une beauté et sont toutes prêtes à sacrifier ou à modifier leur personnalité la plus intime selon ce que vous aurez imposé à vos filles, vous, le père des stars...

— Ah, les stars ! s'écria Westmore, ne me parlez pas des stars, il n'y en a plus !... c'est la crise, la crise des stars... ici, à Hollywood... renseignez-vous... il n'y a plus beaucoup d'espoir...

Et le grand homme sauta au volant de son automobile qui était enfin arrivée et démarra brusquement en aspergeant les passants d'une quadruple gerbe d'eau sale.

« La ligne, pensais-je en le regardant s'éloigner. Il anime des lignes, et frise, et galbe, et donne une élégance calamité même à l'eau sale de la chaussée quand il y fonce en dérapant. Quel homme ! Mais c'est un possédé... »

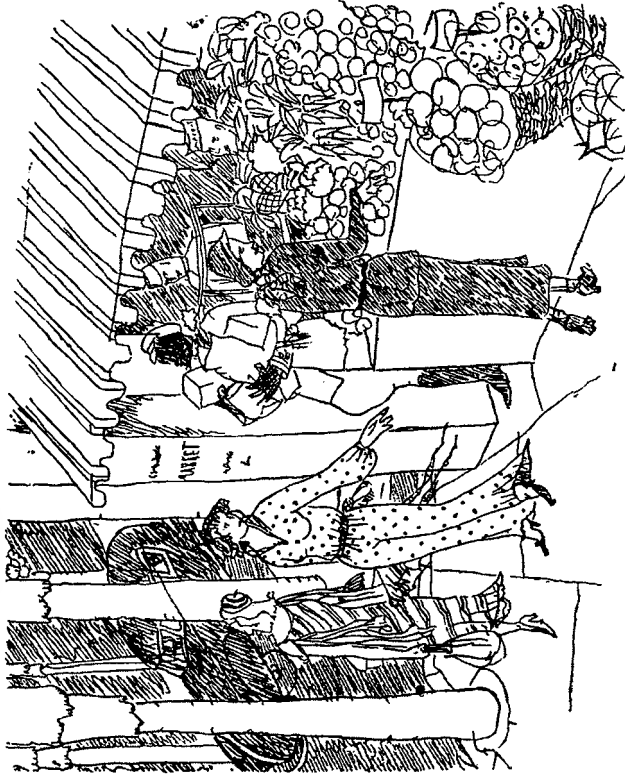
— Qu'est-ce qu'il a, le patron, ce matin, il est nerveux, hein ? me dit le gamin qui avait amené la voiture de Westmore. Vous voulez un taxi, m'sieu ?

— Non, mon petit, vois, plutôt un bateau !

En effet, la pluie redoublait et les chaussées commençaient à déborder.

De la jeunesse, il y en a partout, dans les bars, dans les boutiques, dans les restaurants. Les rues en sont pleines et à n'importe quelle heure du jour ou de la nuit on peut voir passer des beautés sensationnelles en auto ou les rencontrer à pied, en n'importe quelle tenue, en shorts, en pyjama, en fourreau de soie, en robe du soir, en imperméable, en fourrures, – mais toujours les cheveux calamistrés, – faisant leur marché, seules ou à deux, ou accompagnées de jeunes gens élégants, ou chaperonnées par leur maman ou une vieille tante, ou suivies d'un chauffeur nègre.

Dans le hall des grands hôtels où il n'y a pas une place de libre, dans les isolements des instituts de beauté où l'on ne reçoit que sur rendez-vous, dans les salons des coiffeurs où l'on fait la queue, des débutantes têtues siègent en permanence, à moins qu'elles ne suivent les cours de gymnastique et de rythmique qui ne désespèrent pas du commencement à la fin de la semaine. D'autres, merveilleusement ambitieuses, fréquentent assidûment les conférences de l'Académie du Psychisme pour former leur volonté et pour former leur corps, d'autres encore, s'ébattent dans les piscines en plein air, nagent, plongent et pratiquent tous les sports, le cheval, le ski, l'avion, l'épée. Les concours de beauté ou de danse sont fort achalandés et les « starlettes » plus ou moins connues et les célébrités en herbe ne se comptent pas que l'on rencontre dans toutes les comédi-



d'Oxford pour ne pas dire d'un chômeur intellectuel 1936. Ces dandys sont en très grand nombre et on les voit partout.

Quand on a assisté une fois ou deux à un *cocktail-party*, quand on a entendu les rires insoucients de ces jeunes gens, quand on s'est mêlé à eux, quand on a bu, ri, dansé ou que l'on est sorti trois ou quatre fois avec l'un ou l'autre, que l'on a surpris les confidences d'une fille ou bavardé avec un garçon, on s'imagine facilement, on est même convaincu que toute cette jeunesse dorée (ou qui le fait semblant) est promise au plus bel avenir et que rien n'est plus facile que de percer au cinéma. Hélas ! il n'en est rien, et parmi tous ces jeunes hommes il n'y en a pas un sur mille qui réussisse à se faire un nom à l'écran,

Mais voilà, malgré leur farouche résolution, leur volonté, leur endurance et leur courage, malgré l'argent qu'ils dépendent pour arriver et les privations qu'ils supportent, ce qui leur échoit à force de bluff, de combinaisons et de micmacs c'est dans le meilleur des cas un bout de rôle, de la figuration intelligente ou par extraordinaire de servir de doublure à une vedette, – et les années se passent sans que la chance ne leur sourie jamais.

À quoi cela tient-il puisqu'ils sont jeunes, beaux, actifs, enthousiastes et que beaucoup ont un réel talent?

À cela personne ne peut répondre et personne ne peut expliquer cette carence, mais le fait est certain : *depuis la naissance du cinéma, à peine trois ou quatre stars, je ne dirai pas étaient originaires de Hollywood, mais ont été découvertes à Hollywood!*

MÉL-MÉLO HOLLYWOODIEN

J'avais demandé un rendez-vous à Ernst Lubitsch⁵², le grand metteur en scène de renommée universelle. Je voulais l'interroger sur la crise des stars car j'étais tout particulièrement curieux d'avoir l'avis de cet homme compétent sur une question qui intéresse au premier chef l'avenir du cinéma à Hollywood.

Il serait enfantin de vouloir présenter une personnalité aussi marquante qu'Ernst Lubitsch : mais qu'il me soit permis de faire

les dirigeants financiers d'un trust cinématographique, vous imaginez aisément les efforts surhumains qu'un débutant doit faire pour soulever ce monde qui l'écrase et arriver à percer au cinéma. Mais cet exemple explique encore bien d'autres choses sans lui incompréhensibles, d'une part, comment des vedettes adorées du public peuvent disparaître de l'écran du jour au lendemain sans qu'on en entende jamais plus parler et sans que personne ne se soucie d'elles ou puisse vous dire ce qu'elles sont devenues, pourquoi et à qui elles ont déplu, et d'autre part, comment notamment il se peut faire que dans l'organisation du cinéma américain l'individu compte pour zéro et que même une star n'est qu'une chose.

Ce régime dictatorial et le plus souvent anonyme qui s'exerce du haut en bas de l'échelle et à chaque degré de la hiérarchie, non seulement dans les trusts, mais dans l'ensemble de l'organisme social aux États-Unis, me semble être un des traits les plus révélateurs de la mentalité disciplinée, conformiste, mais facilement tyrannique de la démocratie américaine qui se proclame à tout propos championne de la liberté et du libre arbitre; en tout cas cette contradiction qui se manifeste jusque dans la vie courante est la chose en Amérique qui gêne le plus un Français raisonneur, volontiers frondeur et habitué à l'indépendance de jugement et d'action, surtout quand il s'agit de questions artistiques concernant la mise en scène au théâtre ou au cinéma.

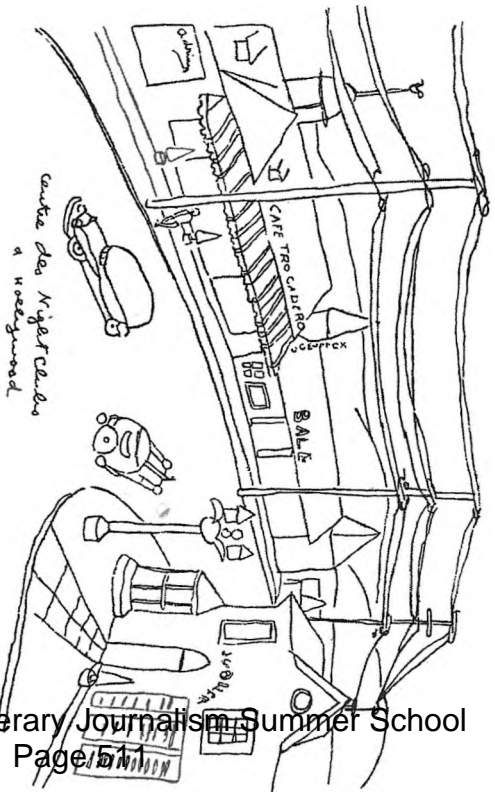
Donc, ma demande de rendez-vous se trouvait être d'autant plus indiscreète que Lubitsch lui-même était en troubles et jouait sa situation. En effet, à la suite de je ne sais quelles circonstances que personne n'a su m'expliquer clairement à Hollywood, mais probablement pour des raisons de normalisation de la production américaine, Lubitsch avait été nommé directeur de la production.

de s'en aller, refusait de tourner autre chose ou avec un autre metteur en scène et parlait même de quitter Hollywood définitivement, on s'imagine les bruits contradictoires et les rumeurs alarmantes qui se mirent à circuler en ville ; mais la stupéfaction de Hollywood fut portée à son comble quand on apprit, trois jours plus tard, que Lubitsch était remplacé provisoirement par William Le Baron à la tête de la production de la *Paramount* et qu'il lui était octroyé un congé de trois mois.

Telle était la décision irrévocable, aussi soudaine qu'inattendue, même pour ceux qui se croyaient être dans le secret des dieux, que John F. Ottersen, ex-ingénieur des Téléphones à New York, devenu par la grâce des banquiers grand maître de la *Paramount*, avait prise sans crier gare.

C'était une véritable révolution de palais, comme il s'en produit fréquemment dans cette nouvelle Byzance qu'est Hollywood, et dont les répercussions sont imprévisibles car les quantités d'intrigues qui se nouent et se dénouent chaque fois à la faveur d'un tel événement peuvent bouleverser aussi bien le *standing* de telle ou telle personnalité en vue, ce qui réjouit toujours des tas d'envieux, qu'ébranler les assises d'un puissant consortium, et cela pour le plus grand dam de tous ceux qui vivent de l'industrie du film.

En l'occurrence, Marlène Dietrich quitta la *Paramount* pour



Chine, il faut toujours *sauver la face*⁵⁸. Je crois même que c'est là la seule tradition d'honneur à Hollywood.

Naturellement, dans ce méli-mélo, Ernst Lubitsch n'est pas le temps de m'accorder l'entrevue désirée, mais ce diable d'homme, que Jacques Théry, son ami et son collaborateur le plus intime, dit être aussi spirituel et déluré que Pagnol⁵⁹ et qui est assurément une des têtes les mieux équilibrées qui soient, trouva le moyen, malgré tous les ennuis qui le tracassaient, de me faire savoir son opinion sur la crise des stars.

Et voici cette opinion telle que je l'ai reçue par téléphone, une nuit, vers quatre heures du matin. (La voix qui me parlait était alternativement dure et infléchie, mais j'attribuais les intonations féminines qu'elle prenait par moments, surtout en fin des phrases, à l'éloignement d'où elle me venait.)

— ...
« — Aujourd'hui, en 1936, ce dont nous avons le plus besoin ici, ce ne sont ni des nouveaux scénarios, ni des nouvelles histoires, ni des nouveaux écrivains, ni des nouveaux metteurs en scène, ni des nouveaux compositeurs, peintres, costumiers, décorateurs, etc., mais nous avons besoin de nouveaux interprètes, de nouveaux talents, de nouveaux acteurs, de nouvelles actrices, car ce dont nous manquons le plus ici, à Hollywood, ce sont justement des stars, des stars de gros calibre, oui... »

— ...
« — C'est urgent, immédiat, vous allez voir !... Il ne s'est peut-être jamais dépensé autant de talent et d'ingéniosité à l'écran que durant ces sept dernières années. Jamais on n'a autant travaillé. Jamais les photos n'ont été aussi belles. Jamais les éclairages n'ont été aussi réussis. La technique est à point. Le son a la voix. Tout est "O.K."... »

— ...
« — Oui, aujourd'hui tout le monde est bien. Tout le monde est intelligent. Tout le monde sait s'habiller, se maquiller, marcher, danser, chanter... Vous dites que la diction laisse beaucoup à désirer?... mais le public américain s'en fiche comme de l'an 40, car jamais nos "girls" n'ont été aussi épatantes qu'aujourd'hui !... »

ici, à Hollywood, il y a tout juste 23 interprètes dont la réputation et le talent sont à la hauteur des dépenses que l'on est toujours prêt à engager sur leur nom si ce nom assure à lui seul des recettes record ! Peu importe le film, pourvu que l'un de ces 23 interprètes figure dans la publicité !...

— ...

« — Écoutez, 23, ce n'est pas beaucoup, hein ? Avouez que ce petit nombre est tout à fait disproportionné avec les immenses capitaux que l'industrie du cinéma risque sur ce chiffre... 23 stars !... oui, pas une de plus !... 23... »

— ...

« — D'ailleurs, ce nombre aura encore fondu avant la fin de l'année : primo, parce que la renommée, la popularité, les succès sont les choses les plus éphémères qui soient, et, secondo, parce que parmi les 23 qui figurent sur ma liste certains sont déjà en plein déclin professionnel... »

— ...

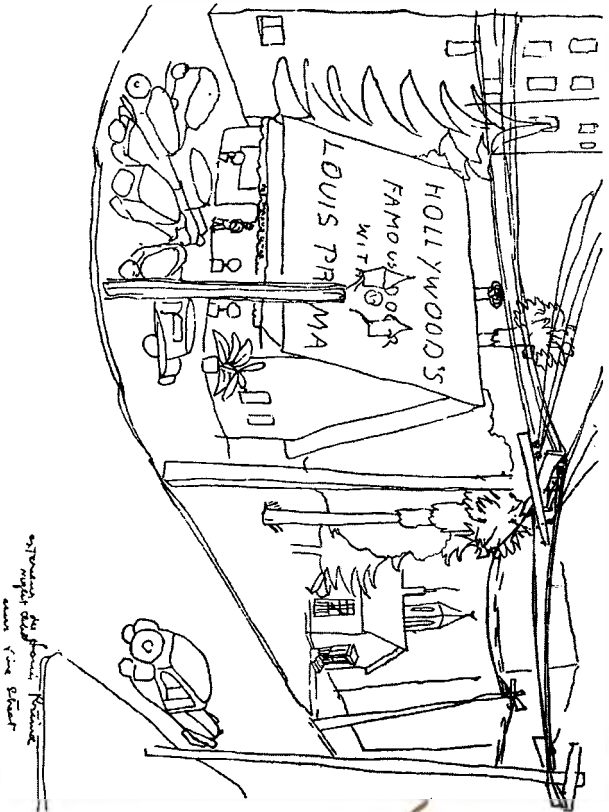
« — Ah !... autre chose... Le plan de production des studios anglais pour l'année en cours va encore apparaître nos rangs déjà si clairsemés. Dès aujourd'hui, les offres très avantageuses des *producers* britanniques attirent nos stars, nos vedettes et les Anglais ne reculent devant aucun sacrifice d'argent pour leur faire passer l'eau au plus vite. On dirait qu'ils se hâtent de faire émigrer tout Hollywood à Elstree ! Et comment dans ou trois exceptions près les Anglais n'ont personne à nous donner en échange, ils nous portent un grand coup et nous touchent dans un point vital, c'est très grave... »

— ...

« — Il y a actuellement une rivalité anglo-américaine autour des stars. On bataille autour d'un beau visage à coups de bank notes comme pour la possession d'un champ de pétrole... »

«...
« - Quoi?... si je suis actuellement prêt à aller tourner en Angleterre?... Ah, ça non, jamais, j'aime beaucoup trop Hollywood, vous savez!... Hein?... vous me demandez ce que je vais faire si cette crise des stars dure et va empirant?... Oh bien, vous pouvez l'annoncer, je me ferai plutôt *talent scout* que de renoncer à croire à la beauté conquérante de nos femmes et de nos filles... Bonne nuit!... Allô, allô!... vous dites?... C'est que le *sex-appeal* devient dans cette bagarre?... Mais le *sex-appeal* cher monsieur, est une invention américaine et les Anglais peuvent se brosser! Nous inventerons autre chose s'il n'y a plus de stars... bonne nuit!... »



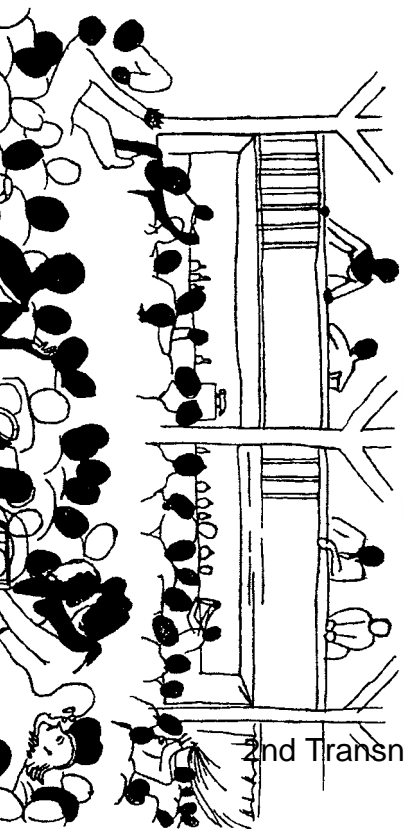


L'AGENT, UN DES MAÎTRES OCCULTES DE L'ÉCRAN

Si derrière chaque star se cache son maquilleur, l'expert en *sex-appeal* qui lui a décerné sa « charte de beauté », qui a défini son genre, qui a fixé son type, qui est le véritable auteur de ce visage immuable qu'elle porte à l'écran, ce qui lui vaut une foule d'adorateurs c'est entendu, mais est surtout une *marque de fabrique* qui lui donne sa valeur commerciale et lui

dans les coulisses ces campagnes de presse qui passionnent l'opinion publique américaine, mais qui la façonnent aussi et dirigent sournoisement le bon ou le mauvais goût de la fogue.

L'agent est au courant de ce que le public attend. Au cinéma, de ce que les écrivains préparent, de ce que les metteurs en scène recherchent, de ce que les studios sont prêts à payer pour mettre sous contrat une vedette dont ils manquent et dont ils désirent s'assurer le concours dans leur production future. Professionnellement, il est tenu de savoir tout ce qui se passe sur les plateaux et tout ce qui se décide dans les conseils liabules les plus secrets des dirigeants d'une firme, comme il doit être à l'affût des déceptions d'une prise de vues, des défauts, des faiblesses d'un scénario, des manquements, des insuffisances, du déclin d'un interprète pour pouvoir annoncer la guerre téméraire, souvent de longue haleine et surtout fort difficile à mener à bien, d'échos, de potins, de bavardages, de débinages impitoyables, de sous-entendus venimeux de



sarcasmes rancuniers, de comparaisons féroces, de méveillance, de calomnie, de provocation, de rivalité, d'habileté, de compromis et de scandale qui précède comme un phénomène d'accompagnement en effervescence la chute d'une ancienne et le lever d'une nouvelle étoile.

L'agent doit non seulement avoir un stock de remplaçants et de remplaçantes sous la main et être sans cesse à la recherche de nouveaux talents, mais encore doit-il avoir à sa main heureuse. C'est pourquoi un agent est toujours un homme d'imagination. Il a la tête qui lui éclate. Il a trop d'idées. C'est un homme universel qui se mêle et qui touche à tout. C'est un intrigant, un menteur, un imposteur né. En outre, c'est un homme d'affaires doué d'un flair prodigieux qui va jusqu'à devancer, deviner les desiderata du public et des producteurs que sa manie est de flatter jusqu'à l'épuisement, mais qu'il exploite tout en les orientant selon ses vues personnelles car le succès oblige, et un bon agent ne se contente pas de suivre l'engouement général, il fait volontiers figure de novateur en imposant à tous un nom inconnu qu'il lance et qui fera fureur, mais qu'il tyrannisera.

C'est un métier épuisant et désespéré que celui d'agent car pour pouvoir tenir longtemps en faisant feu des deux bords, il faut être joueur dans l'âme et avoir le diable au corps,

révé, – la dernière ou l'inconnue, qui pour lui et pour tout un monde de parasites qui grouillent autour de lui et qui ont tous barre sur elle, va jouer à son insu leur chance à tous.

LES « TALENT-SCOUTS »,
LES CHASSEURS DE STARS

Donc, si la star ne peut rien faire au cinéma sans l'intervention de son agent et des agents de son agent, les firmes cinématographiques elles non plus ne peuvent se passer des services de cet homme et de son équipe de rabatteurs qui leur apportent péle-mêle stars, hommes, idées, scénarios, publicité et qui ne reculent devant aucun scandale, – et l'agent, à son tour, pour rester maître du jeu et avoir tous les atouts en main, dont le plus fort est sa trouvaille personnelle : une nouvelle star, se voit dans l'obligation de se muer en *talent-scout* ou d'avoir toute une équipe de chasseurs à sa dévotion, qu'il met en campagne et qui lui coûtent cher, des as, qui sont les Buffalo Bill de ce Barnum.

Par définition, le *talent-scout* est un simple chasseur d'étoiles. Mais comme il est avant tout un débrouillard, s'il ne s'improvisait pas séance tenante agent de la star qu'il vient de découvrir, c'est-à-dire s'il ne se bombarde pas de son propre chef son propre patron quand il croit tenir un merle blanc, à l'instar du grand patron dont il est alors l'émissaire, il a tendance à vouloir faire main basse sur tout ce qui lui paraît être susceptible d'intéresser, de surprendre ou de plaire et de faire de l'argent au cinéma, et non seulement une beauté ou un talent nouveaux qu'il vient de dénicher, mais comme les stars se font de plus en plus rares et qu'il faut bien vivre, il rabat vers Hollywood, sans discernement, et c'est en quoi son rôle est souvent néfaste,

extraordinaire de music-hall, des animaux savants, un pire infâme comme cette malheureuse ballerine Trudi Schoop, surnommée le *Charlot femelle*, qui a lamentablement échoué en Californie, des phénomènes comme *The Dionne Quintuplets*, les cinq petites jumelles canadiennes qui sont les vedettes – et l'on se demande quel peut en être l'intérêt? – d'une comédie musicale que la *Fox* est en train de tourner, le héros d'un fait divers, une divorcée ou un gangster, un homme à la mode ou une femme dont on a beaucoup parlé dans les journaux comme ce pauvre Cliff Weble, dit le *Dandy de New York*, engagé à 3 000 dollars par semaine, et qui se morfond, et qui s'ennuie à Hollywood, attendant depuis un an et demi que son metteur en scène veuille bien se rappeler de lui et daigne le faire débiter ou comme Arlette Stavisky⁶⁰, dont on a également annoncé la venue sur le plateau, une girl, une entraînéeuse de *night-club* comme Eleanor Powell⁶¹, la chérie de Hollywood, qui dansait vingt-quatre heures par jour et qui vient d'être transportée à bout de nerfs dans une maison de santé, où elle se mit à hurler, quand on l'interna :



« Charme !... *daring* !... laissez-moi me tuer !... Sans la danse la vie m'emm... ! » ou Mabel Boll, qui n'a aucun talent et qui n'est pas jolie, mais qui a les plus beaux bijoux d'Amérique et qui a défrayé la chronique pour avoir été mêlée aux aventures rocambolesques de Charles A. Lévine, ce Don Quichotte de l'aviation transocéanique.

À vrai dire, tout lui paraît bon, au chasseur d'inédit qui ne sait plus à quel saint se vouer pour faire prime et se distinguer, et plus une idée est abracadabrante, plus il y a des chances pour qu'il la trouve géniale, car le *talent-scout* est par essence un hâbleur, mais aussi un badaud, c'est-à-dire un gogo de grande ville qui finit par se laisser prendre à ses propres boniments – et c'est pourquoi ce type, quels que soient sa jactance, sa vulgarité, son allure, son rôle, sa duplicité, ses intentions secrètes, troubles et suspects dès qu'il est sur la piste d'une femme, n'est pas tout à fait anupathique et que ce coquin est malgré tout un enjôleur, inquiétant certes, mais assez populaire, pittoresque et naïf.

LE TERRAIN DE CHASSE DE PRÉDILECTION
DES « TALENT-SCOUTS »

Si les chasseurs d'étoiles sont une espèce d'oiseaux de proie, ce sont des rapaces de nuit car leur terrain de chasse de prédilection est dans toutes les capitales des États-Unis, ces îlots fiévreux où dans une débauche de lumière, de musiques de jazz, d'alcools versicolores, de cris érucités par les haut-parleurs, de batailles, de défis, de passions, de danses perpétuelles, la vie nocturne bat son plein.

C'est, à New York, qui reste malgré la crise le grand centre

C'est, à Chicago, la fameuse *Boulevard*, *The Loop*, avec sa chaîne ininterrompue de foires-expositions, de ménageries, de cirques, de kermesses, de music-halls géants, de skatings monstres, de patinoires en labyrinthe, de cabarets souterrains pleins de dédales truqués, de spectacles exhibitionnistes corsés de jeux de miroirs déformants, de palais d'illusions, de maisons orientales, d'appartements à double issue, de boudoirs clandestins.

C'est, à La Nouvelle-Orléans, dont les quatre dernières petites débutantes engagées le 15 février 1936 pour leur chance ou leur malchance à Hollywood et dont j'ai retenu le nom pour voir si l'on parlerait encore une fois d'elles : Miss Louise Small (18 ans), Miss Wilma Francis (18 ans), Miss Jill Dean (18 ans) et Miss Diana Gibson (20 ans) étaient originaires, *Le Carré français* avec ses cafés, ses restaurants, ses rôtisseries, ses cabinets particuliers, ses balcons fleuris, ses rues chaudes, ses bals, son carnaval.

C'est, à San Francisco, dans le centre, les quartiers réservés *Little Italy*, et ses tavernes louches, *Chinatown*, et ses fumeries d'opium, et pôles d'attraction de la plus fameuse des côtes de la flibuste, *Barbary Coast*, *L'Embarcadéro* et *La Marina* qui sont les deux marchés de stupéfiants les mieux achalandés du monde ; c'est encore, le samedi soir et le dimanche, les îles,

HOLLYWOOD, LA NUIT

Hollywood non plus ne manque pas de boîtes de nuit, des grandes et des petites, mais les clients qui les fréquentent sont justement des gens de cinéma plus ou moins arrivés, et si l'on y rencontre un *talent-scout* c'est qu'il y est venu faire un tour par détente, pour retrouver des amis ou revoir d'anciennes pensionnaires à lui, bavarder, se distraire et non pas pour s'y tenir à l'affût. Quant à *Main Street* qui est la rue chaude, la rue brûlante de Los Angeles, c'est une rue pleine de *cafeterias* à un sou, de petits restaurants *chileno*s à trois sous, de cinémas à cinq sous, de chambres de passe à dix sous, de tirs aux pipes, de boutiques d'automates, d'académies de billard, de jeux de boules, de golfs miniatures, de *Burlesques* et de dancings de la dernière catégorie, des monts-de-piété ouverts toute la nuit. *Main Street* qui est la promenade habituelle des prostituées et des proxénètes femelles, des marlous philippins, mexicains, orientaux, nègres, des permissionnaires de la flotte stationnée à San Pedro qui viennent y faire la ribouldingue et des soldats en vadrouille, aucune vedette de Hollywood, aucune débutante n'oserait s'y aventurer aujourd'hui et l'on n'y rencontre pas un chasseur d'étoiles, à moins que ce ne soit en amateur ou en curieux, car quel est le noctambule qui n'est pas, en vérité, chasseur, c'est-à-dire, tout comme un *talent-scout* professionnel, à l'affût d'une rencontre, d'une surprise, d'une nouveauté ou d'une sensation ?

Et moi-même, l'on aurait pu me prendre pour l'un d'eux quand, quittant le soir Nelly, la vieille cuisinière de Van Vechten, l'héroïne du *Paradis des Noirs*⁶⁸ qui tient présentement un bouchon au fin fond de Central Avenue et qui vous

hantent les fraudeurs et les contrebandiers, et qui est un véritable coupe-gorge, bien que hommes et femmes y fument en public, dans des baragues sonores où fusent les éclats de rire, la *marijuana*, la fameuse herbe hilarante de la vieille secte des flagellants, *Los Hermanos de Sangre Cristo*, dont les pénitents sont épouvantables et qui célèbrent encore aujourd'hui et de temps à autre une « crucifixion de sang », comme cela a eu lieu le 5 février 1936 à Morada, Nouveau-Mexique, et qui se la dernière en date des crucifixions connues... avant les quatre-vingts bourgeois crucifiés et brûlés vifs par le *Frente Popular* de Almerndralejo, Espagne, fin août 1936⁶⁸...

Mais ceci est une autre histoire, une histoire vraie, et non plus du cinéma.

FIN

HOLLYWOOD

Mecca of the Movies

Blaise Cendrars

with 29 drawings from life by Jean Guérin

translated and introduced by Garrett White

University of California Press

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This translation is dedicated to

EDOUARD RODITI

poet, translator, scholar

1910-1992

submitted ideas was accepted, it was perhaps at the gate of Universal that the most suckers were cooling their heels.

These poor folks may not have understood anything of the gatekeeper's ostracizing them, but I'll swear between us that this sort of shriveled chameleon playing dumb always feigned not to know who we were talking about when we gave him one of the names of the company's bosses, and even when we huddled him an urgent, signed notice, he played the innocent and claimed not to know where it came from!

AT PARAMOUNT

At Paramount, the whole team that works the window is of the boxing kind. They're young, beely fellows, quick on their feet, and very determined. And they're not in "sports" for nothing! If your name is Durand,

but my name, and who had noted it correctly right in front of me. (c-o-n-f-u-s-i-o-n). had the effrontery to announce to a starlet who was waiting for me, thinking I wouldn't catch the name he was conjuring on the telephone. "but a certain Mr. Wilson wanted to see her")

You have to believe that such con games are in wide use at this firm, and that this chamber of lunatic concierges had the run of the place, because every time a Paramount department head makes an appointment with you he's obliged to come down himself or to send his secretary to fill out an entrance pass in advance, a simple phone call from him not being enough to cut through the temperamental moods of the boxers. Anyway, this piece of paper is often found having gone astray by the time you present yourself at the window at the appropriate hour, which is exactly what happened to me on another day when Charles Boyer, who



wasn't about to permit anyone to enter! I had to parley for three-quarters of an hour and unsettle twenty people before winning my case, which was just to get in . . . and go about finding Charles Boyer, who ended up taking off without eating, since he had run out of time.

AT UNITED ARTISTS

At United Artists, the window clerk is not only a completely different type from the young boxers in training at Paramount, he is also from another generation and even of an entirely different social extraction, as befits this right-minded firm, the most distinguished in the world of cinema and the only one in Hollywood to dabble in refinement and civility.

2nd Transnational Literary Journalism Summer School

It is, accordingly, a gracious man who assists me

when I show up, a distinguished gentleman with grand, patronizing gestures, and this dear man is in

steps, the better to clarify the directions he gives me. I am overwhelmed, beside myself with thank yous.

There's no doubt about it, I follow his instructions to the letter: South Courtyard, Building 39, Corridor B, Stairway III, 1st Floor, Office 13 . . . and when I arrive at my destination, I enter an office, heated of course, with a red rose in a vase, cigarettes, matches, a ream of white paper, exquisitely sharpened pencils, the day's newspapers, an office without one particle of dust, but an office in which there is absolutely no one and in which the telephone is deaf-mute!

I went back three times to this imperturbable straight-faced joker from United Artists, and each time he spun me onto the same outrageous course. Now that I think of it, this didn't really surprise me that much because at first sight I had thought there was something fishy about this gentleman, with his

it Americanized him in a way that was somehow extremely suspect.

The third time, realizing that all of this blasted wag's directions were false. I thought it was hilarious and took advantage of the situation by going on an adventure through these vast studios that house a dozen or so enterprises, among them Mary Pickford's company.

The offices pertaining to this latter, into which I glanced indiscreetly in passing, were composed of a series of daintily furnished rooms draped in Liberty print cloth, with spinsters leaning over their typewriters as if over sewing machines (Mary Pickford is now Hollywood's lady patroness) and a darling little white doggie, no bigger than a ball of wool, splashed onto the carpet like a cream puff from a tea table.

It was also on that day that I encountered, com-

is, half of it anyway. The two of us, buttoned into our raincoats, collars up, hats cocked over our eyes on account of the rain, we had the air of a couple of thieves. Having passed by quickly without really noticing me, he turned around to see who I was, but didn't recognize me . . . and as for me, I didn't run after him to shake his hand, figuring that Doug didn't want to have been sighted. . . .

AT M.G.M

At Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the first time I went there, hundreds of Japanese sailors were blocking the corridor. Clearing a path for myself among them, I thought I was plowing through a bunch of uniformed extras. But I was wrong, that's how you'll get fooled every step of the way in the free-for-all of the Hollywood studios, because you never really know if the person whose feet you have just stepped on is a real or aphony character, least of all when that person is wearing a uniform or is decorated.

But sure enough, my Japanese mariners were the real thing, bona fide sailors. They were on shore



Restaurant (Universal) — Lunch with
Cendrars: Ed Arnold, Pinki Tombin,
Helen Westey, etc.

leave from a battle cruiser of the Imperial Navy and had come to make a tour of Hollywood, and they all wanted to see — I heard this with my own ears when it was almost my turn to approach the window — “*be Misses Roma and the Mistia Djulet!*” M.G.M. having been filming just then Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, with the blazing Norma Shearer in the starring role.

Now, everyone knows that this star is a capricious creature who can’t stand the presence of the least stranger on the set when she’s filming because it makes her nervous and drains her of all her powers.

Which is to say that the Japanese were getting very upset and that the Cerberus at hand ought to have had a hundred reasons to be frazzled that morning. Absolutely not! This extraordinarily cool and prodigiously dextrous man, a veritable Cerberus-virtuoso, astounded me, for he certainly had a lot more guts than Napoléon, and the number of people he was in the midst of executing when it came my turn to meet him flooded me with admiration.

It’s said that Napoléon dictated his mail to ten secretaries at once; the gatekeeper at M.G.M., he

spoke into and answered eleven telephones at once. He had a thicket of receivers in each hand, Japanese harassing him in gibberish, and if he was patched in to Norma Shearer or to someone on her general staff, they were saying god only knows what on the other end, and surely things that were none too pleasant for him — none of which kept him from asking me (he had a very strong German accent) what it was I wanted and, what rapture! from putting me immediately in touch with Mr. Vogel, Mr. Robert M. W. Vogel himself, chief of international publicity and the man I actually wanted to see, and not some Mr. Levy, a name they spell *Zare* over there, not for camouflage but in accordance with local pronunciation.

As it was the only time I was received right away in Hollywood, I have often asked myself since whether or not it was due to an error or to some happy coincidence, or if, in this powerful German-American trust,¹⁷ good practical sense and German

17. Since M.G.M. does not seem to have been owned even in part by a German concern, one can only presume that this was yet another tongue-in-cheek embellishment.

order weren't in the process — since a solid native accent cuts through the fluent English of most of this company's employees — of exerting pressure, of reducing the complications, the nonsense, the red tape of a meddling and bureaucratic administration, and of setting a famous example of efficiency and energy for the American organization, so often frivolous, wanton, or full of gaps, or else which runs in neutral, is an inhuman luxury, pure technicality, an art for art's sake.

And if I tell you that I asked around and discovered that this Cerberus-virtuoso was a young Nazi fresh off the boat from Germany, would we be able to draw certain conclusions?

Maybe so . . .

IV

New Byzantium

VI

*The Great Mystery
of Sex Appeal*



At Max Factor's

WALLY WESTMORE,
EXPERT ON SEX APPEAL

“**N**o star without sex appeal, and no sex appeal without makeup. But without the perfect line for the hair, beauty is impossible . . .”

Such is the first aphorism of Wally Westmore, creator of the facial aesthetic of the movies.

Established for twenty years in Hollywood, where he has specialized in beauty care and made himself famous for his research and by his repeated and resounding successes, Wally Westmore, the master makeup artist at Paramount, is both the inventor and the manufacturer of most of the stars who have built worldwide reputations. And his judgment, like that of the Pope in religious matters, is considered infallible when it comes to beauty transported to the screen.

An expert on sex appeal, it is he who has sub-
jected the most valued artists, and so the proudest and
most untouchable, to the humiliation of a quarterly
“physiological test” and who bestows upon each one
of them her “personal charm of beauty,” to which they
all submit. In the same way, not one newcomer, not a
single *starlet*, has a chance to succeed in the movies if
Westmore, this clairvoyant magician, doesn’t imprint
her first with her “genre” and then with her “type.”

Wally Westmore is the man who has done the
most in the world to modernize, renovate, feminine
charm by adding to its eternal mystery the attrac-
tion of the line of the hair, the line of the day, as a
seduction.

THE KEY TO SEX APPEAL

It is often said that the eyes are the windows of the
soul, and that may be so after all — but the actual
hairstyle of *Mildred* is the key to her sex appeal.”
Westmore contends.

“The eyes, the mouth, the complexion, the fig-
ure might be impeccable and well-proportioned, but

there’s no real sex appeal for a woman without the
architecture, the artifice of the hairstyle, because all
of her natural charms will only be balanced by the
line of her hair.”

And he adds: “By this line I mean the symmetry,
somehow aerial, or even, may I say, syncopated, that
must link the lower and the upper part of the face
before spreading and governing the rest of the face
that includes the hard features, the soft or the blurred
ones. A face poorly balanced by the placement and
the mass of the hair could never seduce on the screen,
since sex appeal is a radiance, a magnetic attraction,
an emission or an exchange of waves, in a word: a
harmony.

“Most of the stars’ faults can be corrected
through makeup, or lighting, or even photographic
retouching; but if the mass and the placement of their
hair is asymmetrical, or even if the line of their hair-
style is misplaced, all of our efforts will be in vain and
their face will always appear disproportionate in its
different parts, in other words it will seem counterfeit
and tormented, thus, ugly.

"As Baudelaire said, 'I hate the movement that displaces . . . the line!'"

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FACE OF THE DAY

The woman with the ideal hair line and the most perfect face, according to Wally Westmore, this connoisseur, passionate and sensitive to the point of comparing the divine face of this woman to a beating heart, is Gladys Swarthou, star of the Metropolitan Opera and of the recent movie *Giv' Le Tbia Nigbi*.

"Her forehead is neither too high nor too low," explains Westmore with emotion. "It curves slightly toward the center, giving her hair line a double curve in the shape of a heart, a noble design whose purity is reinforced — and with what grace! — by the fluttering narrowness of her temples."

Among the other stars whose hairstyles are in perfect harmony with their beauty type and who best illustrate Westmore's theory, since they all came to us through his creative hand, he prefers to name: Mae West, Jean Harlow, Kay Francis, Claudette Colbert, and Sylvia Sydney.

BLONDE NEGRESSES

We were standing beneath a billboard. Westmore and I, finding shelter from the pouring rain, but we were still being splashed. He was waiting for a kid who had gone to get his car in a *putting* *by* flooded with a foot of water. Up to then, I hadn't breathed a word, I was too happy just to listen to the talk of this intriguing man whom I had been told was enigmatic and secretive. He allowed himself to confide in me and I pricked up my ears, troubled and surprised by a streak of melancholy in all of his thoughts. I felt he was worried, feverish, disdainful, even dissatisfied or disappointed. Perhaps his disgruntled mood was only caused by bad weather or overwork. As his car was still not ready, hoping to entertain him, I began telling him how I had found myself in Brazil when the screening of *Platinum Blonde* had had such a success in Rio de Janeiro that in less than a week all of the beautiful mulatto girls and languid negresses who go out at sunset to walk on the Avenida or to enjoy the coolness of the seashore at Flamengo beach had let down their hair and made themselves up with hot-pink makeup.

The Great Mystery of Sex Appeal

"It was so funny!" I concluded. "But unsettling just the same, because they all looked like the reverse of themselves, like those figures we catch sight of against the light when we look at a negative with the naked eye. Imagine this procession of blonde niggers in the light of the sunset, backlit, with the clear hue of their made-up faces and dead but shining hair! They could have been ghosts. One day I even met a black woman who had dyed her hair with henna, which was of a most beautiful Irish red. She was a superb creature, but as a redhead she was royally ridiculous."

"I know," Westmore said to me, in a disenchanted voice. "Very few women know their charm, and even fewer know how to use it to get maximum seductive power by well-balancing all of the gifts of their natural beauty. This is probably due to their lack of knowledge of the most elementary principles of art, architecture, poetry, and . . . makeup. A masterpiece is first and always a work of balance. That is why every pretty girl who wants to make it in the movies should first visit, before I have to bother with



On the Beach

her, an architect or a painter from among her friends to teach her the golden rule of symmetry and how it may be that today the most sublime line in a woman is the line of her hair. . . . God, they have no idea, the cuties, and I often feel I'm wasting my time. . . .

"How can you say that?" I said, stupefied by the disillusioned confession that came out of his mouth. "What, you, master? You, the author of the new living models that women all over the world strive to imitate; you, who exercise such an influence through their mediation that the best-known worldly women in the societies of the great cities as well as poor, unknown young girls, lost in the villages of the most far-flung countries, unknowingly obey your decisions or your intentions when they study themselves in their mirrors, when they powder, apply lipstick, make themselves beautiful, and who are altogether ready to sacrifice or modify the most intimate aspects of their personalities according to whatever you might impose upon your daughters, you, the father of the stars. . . ."

"Ah, stars!" cried Westmore, "don't talk to me

about stars, they're all gone! There's a crisis, a star crisis. . . . here, in Hollywood. . . . ask around. . . . there's little hope left. . . ."

And the great man jumped behind the wheel of his automobile, which had finally arrived, and took off abruptly, spraying passersby with a quadruple shower of dirty water.

The line, I thought to myself as I watched the curve of the spray. He brings life to lines, and curls and shapes and imparts a brilliant elegance even to the dirty water on the roadway as he charges through it in a skid. What a man! But he's possessed. . . .

"What's up with the boss this morning?" asked the kid who had brought Westmore's car. "He's a bit touchy, eh? Would you like a taxi, mister?"

"No, kiddo, look — how about a boat!"
As a matter of fact, the rain was coming down twice as hard, and the streets beginning to flood.

THE BIG BREAK: 'LL STRIKE IT!

A star crisis in Hollywood? This seems impossible, for you only have to open your eyes to realize that

Hollywood: Mecca of the Movies

Hollywood is a nursery of talent bursting with young men and pretty girls.

Youth is everywhere, in the bars, in the boutiques, in the restaurants. The streets are filled with it, and at any hour of the day or night you can watch sensational beauties pass by in cars or find them on foot, in every kind of attire, in shorts, in pajamas, in evening gowns, in raincoats, in furs — but their hair always waved and lustrous — doing their shopping, alone or in pairs, chaperoned by their moms or a old aunt, or followed by a black chauffeur.

In the lounges of the grand hotels where there isn't a vacant room, in the booths of the beauty salons where they won't take you without an appointment, at the hair salons where you have to stand in line, headstrong budding actresses sit perpetually, unless they're attending one of the courses in gymnastics or rhythmic that are packed from the beginning



Hollywood: Mecca of the Movies

swimming pools, swim, dive, and practice every kind of sport — horseback riding, skiing, flying, fencing. Contests in beauty or dance are well patronized, and the more or less well known *stars*, and embryonic celebrities count for nothing unless they are found at every sporting event or in the most fashionable hangouts, dance halls, night spots, casinos, clandestine clubs, races, matches, tennis championships, winter games or sunny beaches — which you can visit on the same day, Sunday — regattas, nighttime celebrations, or aboard *gambling boats* anchored three miles out, or, quite simply, leaving theaters or in a tearoom.

We could also mention just as many young men headed for the cinematic art, many of whom are extremely handsome, all spanking fresh, of a nouveau American chic, sporty and in the know, of eye-popping elegance, in the style of gangsters or, on the contrary, sober and studied as an English gentleman, or unkempt, as affected as an Oxford bachelor, if not to say a jobless intellectual of 1936. These dandies are found in great numbers, you see them everywhere.

When you've been once or twice to a cocktail

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The Great Mystery of Sex Appeal

party, when you've heard the innocent laughs of these young people, when you've mingled with them, drunk, laughed, danced, when you've stepped out three or four times with one or the other, when you've scared up the confidences of a girl or charmed with a boy, you're even convinced, it's easy to imagine, that this entire gilded — or so it seems — young generation is destined for the most beautiful future and that nothing is easier than to make it in the movies. Alas! It is nothing of the kind, and among all of these young men not one in a thousand will succeed in making a name on the screen, and not one in ten thousand of these young women will become a star.

Nevertheless, their conversation is crazy with hope. "Just give me one chance," they say, "and I'll break through, I'll strike it!" That's their formula.

But there you have it, despite their ferocious resolution, their willpower, their endurance and their courage, despite the money they spend to get here and the privations they undergo, what falls to them by way of bluffing, schemes, and confused plots is in the

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best case a shadow of a role, a clever walk-on, or, on a rare occasion, to serve as the double for a star — and years pass without fortune smiling on them even once.

What's this all about, given that they're so young, beautiful, active, enthusiastic, and since so many have real talent?

No one has an answer to this, it's a deficiency no one can explain, but the fact is undeniable: *Since the birth of cinema, hardly three or four stars — I can't say how many were originally from Hollywood — have been discovered in Hollywood!*

HOLLYWOOD HODGEPODGE

I had asked for a meeting with Ernst Lubitsch, the great, universally renowned director. I wanted to interview him about the star crisis, since I was particularly curious to have the advice of this capable man on a question of such essential interest for the future of the movies in Hollywood.

It might seem childish to want to offer up a personality as prominent as Ernst Lubitsch; but I beg to make note of the fact that when I asked him for an

interview Lubitsch was the director of production at Paramount, and that three days later he had fallen from grace. And yet this man had been responsible for the 60 films that Paramount released from January 1 to December 31, 1935, an output that represents, considering that there are 125 copies of each film, 60 million feet of footage or 18,500 kilometers of finished film, therefore an expenditure, at an average of 5 million francs per film, of at least 300 million francs.

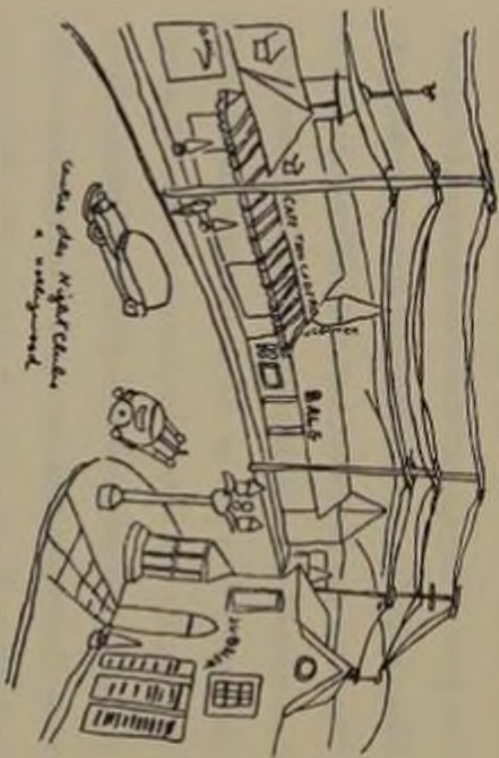
If such a heavy hitter doesn't weigh more than the stroke of a pen in the decisions made without warning by the financial rulers of a cinematic trust, you can easily imagine the superhuman efforts that a newcomer must make to rouse this crushing world and end up breaking into the movies. But this example explains a lot of other things that without it would be incomprehensible; on the one hand, how publicly adored movie stars can disappear from the screen overnight without our ever hearing of them again and without anyone giving them another thought or perhaps telling you what became of them, who was displeased with them and why, and, on the other hand,

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how in particular it happens that in the organization of the American cinema the individual counts for zero and even a star is just a gadget.

This dictatorial and, as often as not, anonymous system that operates from top to bottom of the ladder and at every degree in the hierarchy, not only in the studios but in the totality of the social organism of the United States, seems to me one of the most revealing traits of the well-disciplined, conformist, but easily tyrannical mentality of American democracy, which proclaims itself at every turn the champion of freedom and free will: in any case, this contradiction, which manifests itself even in ordinary life, is the thing in America most irksome to an argumentative Frenchman, willingly irreverent and accustomed to independent judgment and action, above all when it comes to artistic matters concerning direction in the theater or the cinema.

So, my request for a meeting was all the more indiscreet since Lubitch himself was in trouble and lending for himself. In fact, on the heels of I don't know what circumstances, which no one in Holly-



The Nightclub District

wood was able to explain to me clearly but probably for reasons of smoothing out production — the only reasons made available to the public (and for once no one said anything about nepotism in an affair like this!) — the rulers of Paramount decided to halt the shooting of *Hotel Imperial*, the grand picture that Marlene Dietrich was in the midst of filming with Charles Boyer as *leading man* and under the personal supervision of Ernst Lubitsch. Since Marlene was threatening to walk off, refusing to film anything else or work with another director, even talking of quitting Hollywood altogether, you can imagine the contradictory tales and alarming rumors that got going around town: but Hollywood's amazement was taken to a feverish pitch when it was learned, three days later, that Lubitsch had been provisionally replaced by William Le Baron as head of production at Paramount and that he had been granted a three-month leave of absence.

Such was the irrevocable decision, as swift as it was unexpected even for those who thought themselves in the confidences of the gods, that even John

E. Otterson, ex-architect of New York Telephone, who had become by the grace of the bankers Grand Pooh Bah of Paramount, found out without warning.

It was practically a palace revolution, as is frequently sparked in the New Byzantium that is Hollywood, the repercussions of which are unpredictable, for the number of intrigues hatched and unhatched every time, thanks to such an event, can completely upset the *standing* of this or that personality on view, something that always delights heaps of the envious, and this very much to the detriment of all those who make their living in the film industry.

As it happened, Marlene Dietrich quit Paramount to go shoot for Selznick, and a few weeks after her departure, Margaret Sullivan, who needed a great deal of coaxing before accepting to replace her in *Hotel Imperial*, broke her arm, so that the rulers of Paramount found themselves constrained to abandon the idea of making the film, which had already swallowed more than a million dollars, and this poor dear Charles Boyer, who was too exhausted to protest, torn as he was in all directions, left to join Marlene

The Great Mystery of Sox Appeal

with Selznick to work with her in *The Curious of Allah*, her next film, which will be released by United Artists. As for Lubitsch, I haven't heard any news of him since I left the Mecca of the Movies; I suppose he won't waste any time before taking some shattering revenge, as is practiced and even required in Hollywood, where, as in China, one must always *survive*. I really believe that here lies the sole tradition of honor in Hollywood.

Naturally, in this hodgepodge, Ernst Lubitsch didn't have the time to oblige me with the desired interview, but this devil of a man, whom Jacques Thery, his friend and most intimate collaborator, says is as spiritual and resourceful as Pagnol and who is surely one of the most levelheaded around, found a way, despite all of the difficulties worrying him, to make known to me his opinion concerning the crisis of the stars.

And herewith is that opinion as I received it by telephone, one night, somewhere around four in the morning. (The voice that spoke to me was alternately tough and inflected, but I attributed the feminine



June Cruze

intonations it had at moments, especially at the ends of phrases, to the distance from which it came to me.)

ERNST LUBITSCH'S OPINION

ON THE STAR CRISIS

"The star crisis in Hollywood? . . . But this crisis is real. It is even the only serious crisis we've known here in seven years, in other words since the advent of talkies . . ."

" . . . "

"Today, in 1936, what we most have need of here is neither new screenplays, nor new histories, nor new writers, nor new directors, nor new composers, painters, costumers, set designers, et cetera, but we need new players, new talents, new actors and actresses, for what we lack most here in Hollywood is simply stars, stars of the highest caliber, yes . . ."

" . . . "

"It's urgent, immediate, you'll see! . . . Perhaps never before has so much talent and ingenuity been expended on the screen as in the last seven years. Never have we worked so hard. Never have the pho-

tos been so beautiful. Never has lighting been more successfully achieved. The technology is perfect. Sound, voice. Everything is O.K. . . ."

" . . . "

"Yes, today everyone is fine. Everyone is intelligent. Everyone knows how to dress, put on makeup, walk, dance, sing . . . You say diction still leaves a lot to be desired? . . . but the American public couldn't care a rap, because our girls have never been more stunning than today! . . ."

" . . . "

"It is well-known that all of our actresses have sex appeal and that all of our actors are geniuses. Both are capable of expressing the entire range of human emotion, and we can ask of them anything we'd care to. They are all ready for anything. They are all possessed of an unparalleled docility. Never have they been so well paid. But never have there been fewer names on the poster, names capable of doubling receipts, names capable of packing any theater in the world, names that . . ."

"... What's that? ... You want the names? ..."

But I don't want to offend anyone! ... It's enough for you to know that at the moment, here, in Hollywood, there are only just twenty-three players whose reputation and talent are equal to the expense we are always ready to make on the strength of their name if this name alone can guarantee record receipts! It hardly matters what film it is, so long as one of these twenty-three players appears in the advertising! ..."

"Listen, twenty-three, that's not many, eh? You must admit that this little number is altogether disproportionate to the immense capital that the movie industry risks on it ... twenty-three stars! ... Yes, not one more! ... twenty-three ..."

"Moreover, this number will fade even further by the end of the year: *primum*, because fame, popularity, success are the most ephemeral things there are, and, *secundo*, because among the twenty-three who figure on my list, a few are already in the midst of professional decline ..."

"..."

"Ah! ... and another thing ... The production plan of the English studios for the current year will further impoverish our ranks, already so thin. These days, extremely advantageous offers from British producers attract our stars, our players, and the English shrink from no monetary sacrifice to make them cross the water as fast as possible. It has been said that they are sworn to make all of Hollywood emigrate to Elstree!²⁵ And since, save for two or three exceptions, the English don't have anyone to give us in return, they will deliver us a heavy blow, strike us in a vital organ, it's very grave ..."

"There is at the moment an Anglo-American rivalry over the stars. We battle it out over a beautiful face in blaisis of dollars as if over the possession of an oil field ..."

"How's that? ... No, I haven't lost hope, we'll

25. Elstree, outside of London, site of the famous British studios.

find a good way to untangle ourselves. As in your country, the *D* system²⁴ has always come through for us in America. though the struggle will become more and more heated, it's too serious. . . .

—What? . . . am I ready now to go film in England? . . . Ah, that no, never, I love Hollywood too much, you know! . . . Eh? . . . you'd like to know what I'm going to do if this star crisis goes on and gets worse? . . . Well, you can break the news, I'd rather turn myself into a talent scout than renounce my belief in the conquering beauty of our women and our girls . . . Good night! . . . Hello, hello! . . . what did you say? . . . what's happening to sex appeal in this scuffle? . . . But sex appeal, cher monsieur, is an American invention and the English can whistle for it! If there weren't any more stars, we'd invent something else. . . . Good night! . . . ”

24 *System D*, from the word *dehaviour* (to manage to get by or exist, cope oneself from a difficult situation), is a French colloquialism for finding a way to fix something in a clever, inexpensive, and resourceful manner.

VII

Hollywood
by Night

AGENTS. HIDDEN MASTERS
OF THE SCREEN

If behind every star there hides a makeup artist, the expert in sex appeal who has bestowed upon her a "certificate of beauty," defined her style, determined her type, who is the real author of that immutable countenance she carries to the screen (it's obvious what has attracted her throng of admirers — more than anything, a *trademark* that gives her commercial value and guarantees her fantastic revenues so long as this name brand, propped up by raving publicity, is popular), to the left and right of every star hover two other men without whom she would never have existed: the agent who launched her, and that star hunter, the *talent scout*, who discovered her.

The agent is the man with a stake in the star while being at the same time on the most intimate



The Famous Door

terms with the studios, which are no mystery to him, but which he throws into competition by orchestrating behind the scenes press campaigns that excite American public opinion, even shaping it and stealthily managing the good and bad tastes of the crowds.

The agent knows exactly what the public wants from the movies, what the writers are coming up with, what the directors are looking into, what the studios are prepared to pay to take under contract a star they want and whose collaboration they hope to guarantee in their future production. Professionally, it is his duty to know what's happening on every stage and to be aware of every decision made by a firm's executives in the most secret conferences behind closed doors, just as he's got to be on the lookout for any disappointments on a shoot, for faults and weaknesses in a screenplay, for failures, for deficiencies, for the decline of a performer so as to be in position to kick off a reckless war, often a long haul and above all extremely difficult to pull off, for news items, gossip, small talk, pitiless slams, venomous innuendos, vindictive sarcasms, ferocious comparisons, back stabbing, slander,

provocation, rivalry, cunning, for the compromise and scandal that precede like an effervescent accompaniment the fall of an old star or the rise of a new one.

The agent must have not only a stockpile of his- and-her replacements on hand and be relentlessly in search of new talent, he has also got to have a magic touch. That's why an agent is always a man of imagination. His head is bursting. He has too many ideas. He's a universal man mixing it up and combing over everything. He's a born impostor, a liar, a schemer. Furthermore, he's a businessman gifted with a flair so prodigious that he can anticipate, foretell the longings of the general public, as well as those of producers, whom he craves to flatter to the point of exhaustion but whom he also exploits thoroughly by stroking them toward his personal views — success requires it. And a good agent is not content just to follow current inclinations, he readily cuts a figure for himself as an innovator by imposing upon everyone a complete unknown he's now launching and who will create a sensation, but whom he will completely tyrannize.

It's an exhausting, desperate occupation, that of

the agent, for to keep on burning candles at both ends he really has to be a gambler at heart and full of devilment, and it is only by means of subtlety, swagger, sleight-of-hand, sheer will, and shrewdness that this enterprising man who spends lavishly ends up slithering and slashing his way into the studios, who never mistrust him so much as when they see him coming after he has finally set his heart on something, caught in the glue, baited, engaged, promised, rigged, seduced, deceived, all the while inspiring trust, living on a grand scale while pursuing some idea in the back of his head, concluded a thousand and one combinations and oblique advances before inflating or dropping the starlet he covets, the one who every time is his new reason to live, his conceit, his pride and joy, his creature, his weakness, his thing, his livelihood, his spiritual daughter, his mistress, his illusion, his chance, his victim, his ruin, the Lady Luck of his dreams — the last or the unknown, who for him, and for a whole world of parasites swarming around him who have complete power over her, will cast unknowingly the fortunes of all.



At the Alabam

TALENT SCOUTS, STAR HUNTERS

So, if the starlet can't do anything in the movies without the intervention of her agent and the agents of her agent, and the film companies can't do without the services of this man and his team of procurers who deliver to them pell-mell stars, men, ideas, scripts, advertising and who shrink from no scandal, the agent, for his part, in order to remain a winner and keep every trump card in hand — the strongest of which is his own personal windfall: a new star — finds himself obliged to mutate into a talent scout, or to have at his service an entire roster of hunters whom he can send out into the countryside and who cost him dearly, these aces, who are this Barnum's Buffalo Bills.

By definition, the talent scout is a simple star hunter. But since he is above all a resourceful type, if he doesn't set up right away as the agent of the star he has just discovered, in other words, if he doesn't thrust himself into the role of his own chief, his own boss, when he thinks he has a white crow in hand, in the manner of the big boss for whom he is supposedly the emissary, he's likely to want to make off with any-

thing that seems to him liable to be of interest, to surprise or please and to make money in the theaters, and not only a beauty or a new talent he has just flushed out, but, since stars seem to be more and more scarce and since he's obliged to make a living, he blindly turns toward Hollywood — and it is because of this that his role is often ill-fated — the greatest possible number of attractions.

So it is that a talent scout will place under contract a black boxer and request that a screenplay be written for him, an acrobatic or baroque dance, an exceptional jazz or extraordinary music hall number, performing animals, a loathsome clown like this unfortunate ballerina Trudi Schoop, nicknamed *The Female Chaplin*, who failed miserably in California, phenomena such as *The Divine Quintuplets*, the five Canadian sisters who are the stars — you have to wonder what could possibly be the interest in this — of a musical that Fox is in the midst of filming, the hero of some news story, a divorcee or a gangster, a fashionable man or woman who keeps turning up in the newspapers like this poor Cliff Weble, called *The Beauty of New York*, hired for \$3,000 a week and

who fretted and got bored in Hollywood waiting for a year and a half for his director to come around to remembering him and deign to give him his start, or like Arlette Stavisky, whose coming to the stage they also announced, a girl, a nightclub hostess like Eleanor Powell, the darling of Hollywood who danced twenty-four hours a day and ended up being carried with a nervous breakdown to a mental ward, where she began to shriek, when they put her away, 'Charm!... darling!... let me kill myself!... Without dance life is sh - - -!' or Mabel Boll, who has no talent whatsoever and isn't pretty, but who has the most beautiful jewelry in America and was the talk of the town for having been mixed up in the incredible adventures of Charles A. Levine, the Don Quixote of transoceanic aviation.

In fact, everything seems good to him, to this hunter of the unseen who no longer knows what saint to devote himself to in order to stand out and distinguish himself, and the more preposterous an idea, the better the chances that he will find it a stroke of genius. For the talent scout is by nature a braggart, but also a gawker, that is to say, a sucker from the big city

who ends up allowing himself to believe his own smooth talk — and that's why this kind of person, whatever may be his line, his vulgarity, his allure, his part, his duplicity, his secret troubled and suspicious intentions when he's on the trail of a woman, isn't altogether unsympathetic and why this rogue is in spite of everything a cajoler, disquicing certainly, but plenty popular, picturesque, and naive.

THE FAVORITE HUNTING GROUNDS OF THE TALENT SCOUT

If the star hunters are a kind of bird of prey, they are among the predatory night birds, for their preferred hunting grounds in every capital in the United States are those feverish islands where, in a riot of light, jazz, multicolored drinks, of cries belched through loudspeakers, of fights, challenges, passions, of endless dances, nocturnal life is in full swing.

In New York, which remains despite the Crash the great center of selection and the principal market where the talent scouts have made their most beautiful finds (95% of all movie stars have debuted on New

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Joseph Kessel



semble, par sa tiédeur, dissoudre le sang du nouveau venu.

Ce caractère irréel, inhumain, cet apprêt inefficace, ce jeu sans chaleur ni vie est plus fort que toutes les richesses et que tous les prestiges. Et c'est lui qui donne à Hollywood une monotonie et une vanité de rêve sans substance.

Il semble que des génies secrets épuisent le suc de cette terre charmante et qui dément tant de promesses. Ces génies ne sont pas introuvables. On peut même les dépister assez facilement. Il suffit pour cela de franchir le seuil des citadelles colossales de la finance et du truquage que l'on appelle les studios.

II LES USINES À MIRAGES

EN 1912, AUX PORTES DE LOS ANGELES commençait la campagne.

Les terres en friche, les prés, les cultures maraîchères, les plantations d'orangers composaient alors tout l'ornement de ce rivage californien. Dans le calme agreste, dans l'harmonie ample et douce du paysage, des maisons, de loin en loin, se cachaient parmi les arbres : fermes de paysans, villas de repos, ranchs d'élevage. Des cavaliers couraient le long des chemins. Des voitures attelées à deux chevaux allaient paresseusement.

Aujourd'hui plus rien ne subsiste de cette époque bucolique. Les pistes interminables de ciment sur lesquelles courent sans arrêt des milliers d'insectes de métal ont rongé la terre colorante. C'est qu'une étonnante humanité, le peuple de Hollywood, a bâti là sa termitière.

En un tiers de siècle, la Californie a vu se réaliser son troisième *rush*, sa troisième ruée vers la fortune, son troisième Eldorado. Il y eut l'or. Il y eut le pétrole. Le tour est maintenant aux films.

Il a eu, lui aussi, ses défricheurs, ses pionniers, ses fièvres et ses victimes. Comme ses devanciers, il a connu sa période héroïque, son âge d'aventure. Mais, comme eux également, il s'est vite soumis à des lois fixes, à un code inexorable. Il est devenu une industrie.

Une industrie lourde.

Rivale des plus puissantes et des plus productives.

La Metro Goldwyn Mayer a construit ses bâtiments sur un champ de pétrole. Quoi de plus éloquent et de plus brutal que ce dédain d'un liquide pour lequel des nations se déchirent que cette préférence donnée à l'usine d'images sur les puits de huileuse richesse?

Il est facile de discerner, pour peu que l'on ait vécu à Hollywood, les éléments favorables qui ont déterminé la naissance, en ce point de la terre, et le prodigieux développement d'une entreprise singulière entre toutes. Un climat et un éclairage constants, soutenus et propices presque tout le long de l'année, le voisinage de l'océan, la proximité des montagnes, du désert, de la brousse, tel est le concours que la nature apportait aux producteurs d'images.

Il m'a suffi de quelques heures d'automobile au mois d'avril dernier pour me trouver tour à tour dans des paysages neigeux et parmi des dunes brûlantes. À peu près tout ce que l'univers porte de contrastes, de profils violents, tourmentés, heurtés et romanesques se trouve réuni dans les environs de Hollywood.

Mais ce concours naturel n'eût pas suffi. Il fallait encore, et de toute nécessité, la présence dans la même région d'un centre urbain. Logement des premières équipes, recrutement des figurants et des ouvriers, sécurité du ravitaillement – elle seule pouvait les fournir. Avant que fût dressée la machinerie de Hollywood, avant que se fût rassemblée sa population, Los Angeles joua ce rôle indispensable.

Los Angeles était une grande ville, l'une des plus grandes des États-Unis. Mexicains, Chinois, Nègres, cow-boys, Japonais y grouillaient côte à côte. Les belles filles abondaient. Quelle matière humaine pour les premiers metteurs en scène!

Et c'est la rencontre de deux facteurs essentiels – les commodités de la nature et celles de la grande cité – qui localisa impérieusement le royaume du film.

Maintenant, une ville immense s'est détachée de Los Angeles. Ville aux noms divers, qui a envahi jusqu'aux collines et qui sans cesse poursuit son accroissement, ses

conquêtes. Elle est vouée uniquement au métier des images. Elle ne respire que par lui.

J'ai tâché de décrire son caractère étrange : splendeur morte, trompeuse douceur, charme inhumain, irréel qui dort dans les rues sans passants et sans voix. Il faut quelque temps pour pénétrer cette absence de vie, cet extraordinaire désert fleuri. Mais quand on a conquis sa clé, tout s'éclaire de la lumière la plus limpide.

Hollywood est une cité ouvrière.

Sous ses apparences de calme, de loisir, sous sa carapace de luxe, elle est pareille aux villes minières, aux agglomérations de hauts-fourneaux qui se vident de l'aube au crépuscule pour envoyer leur population aux galeries ou à la chaîne. Hollywood fabrique des images parlantes comme Ford sort des automobiles.

Ce qu'il y a de vivant, de réel, de vrai à Hollywood, ce n'est ni la rue, ni la demeure, ni le marché. Ce sont les studios, ou mieux les usines à films, qu'on persiste à désigner d'un nom qui ne convient plus à leurs dimensions ni à leur rôle.

Car elles représentent une source de richesses colossale, un mouvement d'argent qui se chiffre par milliards. Elles emploient un peuple de travailleurs et font vivre tout un pays.

J'avoue ne pas savoir le nombre exact de studios à Hollywood. Chaque compagnie, même la plus petite, a le sien. Il en est qui sont spécialisés dans les films de cow-boys, d'autres dans les films policiers, d'autres dans les histoires pour enfants, d'autres « font » dans la grossièreté et d'autres dans le sentiment. Cette différenciation porte à elle seule la marque d'une grande cité industrielle.

Mais si l'on veut avoir une idée d'ensemble, une vision surprenante de ce que signifie, à l'heure actuelle, le cinéma en Amérique, c'est naturellement dans les studios de l'une des quatre ou cinq principales sociétés qu'il faut se rendre. Qu'on visite la Fox Twentieth Century, la Metro Goldwyn Mayer, la Paramount, l'Universal, l'impression ne varie guère: on sort de là écrasé, ébloui et doutant presque de sa propre existence.

Chacun de ces studios forme une ville dans la ville. Leur accès est défendu par des murs infranchissables, par des gardiens qui ne se laissent fléchir qu'à la vue d'un laissez-passer minutieusement signé, timbré, estampillé.

Lorsque le visiteur a franchi ce cordon de sentinelles, cette manière de corps de garde, un espace s'offre à lui dont il n'aperçoit pas les limites ni le terme. Il n'est possible de parcourir un studio de cette envergure *qu'en automobile*. Encore y faut-il des heures. À l'intérieur de ces murs les

employés, les figurants sont obligés de se déplacer en autocar.

Comment énumérer ce que l'on découvre en roulant à travers ces citadelles closes, à travers ce monde où n'arrive aucun écho de la vie, où tout se trouve truqué, transformé, reconstruit selon une optique et une nécessité déformantes?

Dans un dédale de décors bâti pour des années, on va, en quelques tours de roues, de la jungle à la place Vendôme, de l'auberge arabe au transatlantique grandeur nature. Voici une petite rue de province française et voici Picadilly. Des bœufs des Indes paissent tout près des neiges de l'Alaska. Des soldats bleu horizon tapissent une tranchée boueuse tandis que, quelques mètres plus loin, dans un arroyo, se baignent des Tonkinoises et que des milliardaires boivent de frais cocktails sur une plage consacrée de Floride.

Mais qu'on ne se trompe pas sur cette fantaisie.

Elle n'est que superficielle. Elle n'est que le maquillage de l'usine.

Maquillage également, ces édifices somptueux réservés aux auteurs, aux musiciens. Les rouages marchent impitoyablement. Tout est organisé, hiérarchisé, standardisé. Jusqu'à la pensée, jusqu'à l'inspiration.

Tous les écrivains, tous les compositeurs, même s'ils sont illustres, même s'ils sont payés de vingt à cinquante mille francs par semaine, *doivent* produire dans leurs bureaux numérotés. Leur présence est exigée depuis neuf heures du matin aussi strictement que par un pointage. Leurs outils les attendent là : machine à écrire, bibliothèque, piano, orgue ou violon.

Ils sont assimilés aux opérateurs, aux stars, aux figurants, aux monteurs, aux ingénieurs du son, aux docteurs, aux infirmiers et infirmières (car ces villes ont leurs propres hôpitaux), aux secrétaires, aux balayeurs, bref à l'humanité en réduction qui s'agite au bénéfice et à la gloire de l'espèce de temple dressé au milieu du studio.

Il est splendeur et silence. Mais de lui dépend la fantastique usine. C'est là que se réunissent les dieux de l'Olympe : les *executives*¹ et les vrais maîtres du lieu : les *producers*.

1. Administrateurs. (Note de l'auteur.)

VII

LES ENFANTS JOUENT

PARMI LES SENTIMENTS les plus vrais et les plus frais que nourrisse le peuple américain, il en est un qui, en beauté, en vigueur, en intensité et en profondeur efficace me semble dépasser tous les autres : l'amour qu'il a des enfants.

Son exceptionnelle valeur est de ne pas tremper dans un attendrissement assez fade et sucré, dans cette espèce de bain-marie conventionnel qui enveloppent de pastel, de caramel, de tiédeur et d'eau de rose tant de mouvements intérieurs dont la sincérité pourtant est certaine. L'attitude des Américains pour l'enfance a quelque chose de simple et de direct, de viril et de gai, qui donne une résonance du meilleur aloi.

Ce qu'ils ont reçu en partage exclusif et précieux, la santé qu'ont perdue les vieux peuples, l'instinct de la camaraderie aussi franche que gauche et entière, on les retrouve por-

tés à leur développement le plus haut, le plus fin quand ils parlent avec un petit garçon, une petite fille, quand ils jouent avec eux, quand ils s'occupent d'eux.

Et au fond, sont-ils si loin de ceux qu'ils savent si bien aimer? Et leur drame n'est-il pas de vivre, avec une âme enfantine, une existence qui ne l'est plus?

En tout cas, ce sentiment si fort, si organique devait être exploité par Hollywood. Une industrie ne peut réussir que si elle travaille pour des besoins primordiaux. Un succès isolé, fût-il retentissant, ne peut pas assurer les gains d'une grande compagnie cinématographique. Ce sera toujours un accident, une chance sans suite. C'est en série qu'il faut débiter selon le goût public. À la série des amourettes, menées avec une brutalité rapide et joviale, à la série des cow-boys, à la série des gangsters, à la série historico-instructive (selon les conceptions de Hollywood, bien entendu) est venue tout naturellement se joindre la série des films d'enfants.

Cette dernière, en importance, en fréquence, en rapports ne le cède en rien aux autres et parfois les dépasse.

Depuis que Charlie Chaplin, dans sa prescience unique de pitre génial, a employé Jackie Coogan pour bouleverser les spectateurs avec le *Kid*, les tentatives pour créer des étoiles en culottes courtes ou les cheveux dans le dos ne se

comptent plus. C'est tellement tentant et si commode. Un enfant, presque toujours, joue bien et juste. Il est plus facile à dresser qu'un adulte. Il a l'oreille plus fine et un mimétisme naturel. De plus, une fois accepté, on ne lui demande plus de varier son personnage. Tandis que les artistes les plus fascinants fatiguent si on les emploie trop dans la même direction, on n'exige aucune variation de l'acteur puéril. Il est *l'enfant*.

Cela suffit.

S'il porte sur le public, quelques années merveilleusement fructueuses sont promises à la firme qui l'a découvert, acheté. Aussi, toutes se sont mises en chasse. Elles n'ont pas cherché cependant à suivre la voie indiquée par le grand Chaplin. Dans ce domaine, comme partout, il a été seul. Les *producers*, même les plus épais, sentent ce qu'il y a en lui d'inimitable.

Eux, ils ont dirigé leurs efforts selon une pente qui leur était normale. Ils ont préféré la gaieté à la misère, amuser que toucher. Répondant d'ailleurs par là au désir véritable des foules américaines, ils ont voulu peupler les films de gamins prompts et impertinents, de fillettes saines et vives. Ils ont livré au public une meute de petits démons innocents et de diabesses ingénues. Les histoires que l'on bâtit autour de ces héros étaient sans prétention. Cela

importait peu. La grâce de jeunes chiens, de jeunes chats en liberté que montraient les enfants emportait l'assentiment général.

L'expression la plus significative de cette exploitation, son épanouissement, son apogée jusqu'à ce jour, on les trouve dans le cas de Shirley Temple. Je ne la décrirai pas. À quoi bon ? Elle est connue de l'univers.

Elle a, en France, comme partout, ses fidèles. Au Mexique, où Rouben Mamoulian se promenait en touriste inconnu, on apprit par hasard quel était son métier. Aussitôt il vit imprimer dans les journaux : « Le célèbre metteur en scène de Shirley Temple nous rend visite. »

Comme il expliquait qu'il n'avait jamais vu de sa vie la petite étoile, l'étonnement fut immense. Hollywood tout entier et ses planètes n'étaient rien auprès de Shirley Temple.

Aux États-Unis, elle inspire une passion collective. Les graphiques des bureaux de location montrent qu'elle bat tous ses concurrents, même les plus chevronnés, même les plus ancrés dans la faveur du public.

Ni Marlene Dietrich, ni Greta Garbo, ni Gary Cooper, ni Mae West, ni James Cagney, ni Clark Gable ou Claudette Colbert ne peuvent rivaliser avec elle. Je l'ai déjà dit, Shirley Temple, par les recettes qu'elle assure, représente un capi-

tal qui dépasse un milliard de francs. Ce n'est pas sans tâtonner, se tromper, ni fouiller ciel et terre, ni poursuivre le but avec ténacité, avec acharnement que l'on parvient à capturer l'oiseau de feu. Pour « faire » une Shirley Temple, il a fallu essayer, former, pétrir, rejeter plus d'enfants qu'il n'a fallu faire défiler de belles filles avant de découvrir une Joan Crawford.

La consommation des acteurs puérils est énorme à Hollywood. Chaque jour, sur tous les écrans, on peut lire les offres faites par les compagnies cinématographiques aux petits garçons et aux petites filles entre quatre et huit ans, les promesses d'argent, les garanties de gloire. Des agents, des prospecteurs de toute nature rabattent vers les studios des espoirs dont certains savent à peine parler. La Paramount possède une véritable pépinière où se cultivent en serre chaude les fleurs d'où jaillira peut-être celle qui fera la fortune de la maison.

Les enfants y étudient le chant, la danse, l'acrobatie, la diction, s'accoutument aux appareils de prise de vue et de prise de son. En même temps, pour satisfaire à la loi sur l'instruction obligatoire, des institutrices leur enseignent les leçons qu'apprennent dans toutes les écoles d'Amérique les enfants promis à de moins emphatiques destins.

Il arrive souvent qu'un *producer* dépourvu d'acteurs de cet âge vienne louer un spécimen de l'élevage singulier.

Car, lorsqu'ils sont à bout d'idées, d'argent ou de souffle, les *producers* ont presque toujours recours à un film d'enfant. Il y a, à cet égard, dans *Boy Meets Girl*, la pièce dont j'ai parlé ici pour illustrer le bagne où sont enfermés les auteurs de scénarios, il y a une scène éloquente entre toutes.

Exténués, désespérant de trouver une intrigue amoureuse qui soit nouvelle, les deux collaborateurs demandent des sandwiches et du whisky. Une servante attachée au studio les leur apporte. Soudain, elle s'évanouit. Apprenant qu'elle est enceinte d'un père inconnu, les écrivains adoptent l'enfant. Et, du même coup, la trouvaille géniale les visite. Le héros de leur prochain film sera ce nouveau-né. Ses vagissements, ses sourires, ses mouvements entravés et jusqu'à ses coliques feront pâmer les États-Unis. Les auteurs suivent ce beau dessein. Un succès colossal les récompense.

C'était, de toutes les situations de la pièce, celle qui me divertit le moins, parce qu'elle me parut la plus manifestement invraisemblable et outrée de la plus grossière façon.

Je vis que j'avais mésestimé le public américain le soir où, assis dans un fauteuil du Théâtre chinois de Hollywood,

monstrueux de laideur agressive, je contemplai le film intitulé *Country Doctor* (« Le Médecin de campagne ») et dont les protagonistes véritables sont les cinq petites jumelles de la famille Dionne. On connaît l'aventure de ce pauvre ménage canadien dont la femme mit au monde, l'une après l'autre, cinq petites filles *vivantes*. Là résidait la singularité qui fixa sur leur naissance l'attention de leur pays d'abord, puis de tous les autres. Le nombre des enfants venus à terme en même temps n'était pas un cas unique (je crois qu'on en vit jusqu'à sept) mais le fait qu'il n'y eût parmi eux aucun mort. La presse américaine s'empara de cet événement comme elle sait le faire. La sensiblerie publique fut mise en branle. Les cadeaux affluèrent.

Alors l'un des chefs de la Fox Twentieth Century eut une sorte de révélation. Il envoya des émissaires aux époux Dionne et acheta par contrat régulier leur quintette pour cent mille dollars. Le film *Country Doctor* fut le premier résultat de cette opération. •

Je ne voudrais pas me montrer violent, mais comment ne pas dire que je suis sorti du Théâtre chinois plein d'une tristesse affreuse? Rarement m'avait été imposé spectacle si bas.

Aucun moyen n'a été épargné pour rendre ce film odieux et vil. On y voit mourir des nouveau-nés tandis que des

mères hurlent derrière les fenêtres de l'hôpital. On y voit le bon médecin, le bon prêtre, la bonne infirmière et le méchant gouverneur et le méchant professeur de grande ville. Tout cela exécuté d'une main grossière, pesante, insupportable. On entend des sermons larmoyants, des prêches emphatiques. Enfin lorsque le bon médecin va être chassé intervient l'accouchement de madame Dionne.

On s'étonne de ne pas assister à ses douleurs. Mais les petites filles sont apportées scrupuleusement l'une après l'autre. Et la seconde moitié du film commence, qui nous montrera les jumelles dans les couveuses, puis jouant dans des cages, pleurant, grandissant. Tout finit par un discours du bon docteur ainsi récompensé.

Le métrage énorme qu'a dû exiger une pareille performance n'a pas été perdu. De Los Angeles à New York, de l'Alaska au golfe du Mexique, le Dionne Quintuplet a provoqué une ruée immense vers les salles de spectacle. Quand j'ai quitté l'Amérique, les recettes atteignaient cinq millions de dollars. Et l'exploitation ne faisait que commencer.

D'ailleurs, le *Country Doctor* n'est que le premier film des cinq jumelles. La Fox Twentieth Century se propose bien de continuer la série dont elle a l'exclusivité.

Un *producer* qui m'avait accompagné au spectacle me demanda rêveusement quand nous sortîmes :

– Dites-moi, est-ce que les frères siamois sont encore vivants? Vous ne voudriez pas écrire une belle histoire d'amour pour eux?

VIII

LA GLU

L'ÉCRIVAIN QUI, CE JOUR-LÀ, m'avait invité à déjeuner, dit, comme je montais dans sa voiture :

– Si vous le permettez, nous n'irons pas au Vendôme ni au Brown Derby. Il y a trop de gens que je connais dans ces restaurants. J'en ai assez. Toujours des artistes, des *producers*, des metteurs en scène ou des auteurs ! Je vais vous mener dans une petite boîte italienne où l'on mange mieux que n'importe où et où nous serons libres de parler de nos affaires.

Pour renouveler son inspiration, mon hôte voulait, en effet, que je lui donne une liste de livres français susceptibles d'être transformés en scénarios.

La « petite boîte » se trouvait être un établissement luxueux et, comme par hasard, il y avait dans tous les coins des gens de studios. Mon compagnon serra rapidement



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Au miroir du septième art

Portrait de Hollywood chez Dekobra, Cendrars & Kessel¹

NADJA COHEN & DAVID MARTENS

Pour Jan Baetens, ardent défenseur des midinettes

Durant les années 1930, le reportage signé par des écrivains de renom connaît une vogue sans précédent ni équivalent depuis. Aux côtés d'Albert Londres, devenu le saint patron du reportage en France, des écrivains aussi différents que Cendrars, Carco, Colette ou encore Mac Orlan se font reporters et publient des séries d'articles dans la presse avant d'éventuellement les reprendre en volume. Ces publications témoignent de la veine documentaire qui innerve la littérature européenne de cette décennie.² Elles croisent en outre ponctuellement un autre genre, lui aussi marqué par un essor significatif durant cette période, celui du portrait de territoire (villes ou pays), notamment sous forme phototextuelle.³

Au cours de la même période, le septième art est lui aussi touché par des mutations significatives, notamment dues à l'avènement du parlant. Ces années constituent, en outre, un âge d'or pour Hollywood, devenu le centre de gravité planétaire de l'activité cinématographique.⁴ Malgré la Dépression, qui a occasionné une baisse de fréquentation des salles, la production américaine n'a pas ralenti et elle continue de rayonner sur les écrans du monde entier, portant dans son sillage une mythologie moderne,⁵ non dénuée de propagande,⁶ dont les écrivains se font l'écho, en particulier parce que certains font la découverte de ce lieu singulier.⁷

Compte tenu de la place prise par Hollywood dans l'imaginaire culturel des pays occidentaux, rien de surprenant à ce que la ville constitue un pôle de fascination et que la presse française de la période sollicite souvent des écrivains pour évoquer cette cité des merveilles. Plusieurs reportages présentant la ville et la place qu'y prend l'industrie du septième art sont ainsi publiés par des écrivains en vue: en 1931, Maurice Dekobra,⁸ auteur à succès

de *La Madonne des sleepings*, ouvre le bal avec la publication d'*Aux cent mille sourires*, qui commence par sur un reportage consacré à Hollywood: cinq ans plus tard, c'est au tour de Blaise Cendrars de se livrer à l'exercice, avec *Hollywood, la Mecque du cinéma*; enfin, en 1937, Joseph Kessel publie *Hollywood, ville mirage*.

Si ces portraits de Hollywood participent de la volonté de réel qui caractérise les écrivains des années trente,⁹ cette ville apparaît en même temps comme un espace entièrement dévolu à la fabrication d'univers fictifs, comme nous le verrons dans un premier temps. Elle produit non seulement des fictions cinématographiques, mais la façon dont elle les engendre et les mœurs de cette ville en font une usine à rêves.¹⁰ Ce motif de la fabrication en série affecte l'écriture même, telle qu'elle est pratiquée à Hollywood, comme nous le verrons dans un deuxième temps, ce qui permet aux auteurs de creuser l'écart entre le monde de l'art et celui de l'industrie. Enfin, nous montrerons plus particulièrement comment le thème de la mort de l'individu amène chacun de nos trois auteurs à défendre son individualité par l'adoption d'une posture singulière.

1. Portrait critique d'une "ville mirage"

Ces reportages présentent Hollywood comme un véritable miroir aux alouettes, miné par son caractère foncièrement artificiel et fallacieux. Si le cinéma, en son principe, se présente déjà comme le royaume des simulacres,¹¹ Hollywood, par les illusions qu'elle crée, les stars qu'elle fabrique et le culte dont elle s'entoure en est à plus d'un titre la capitale.

La vie à Hollywood est tout d'abord dépeinte comme équivoque, les simples passants se mêlant aux acteurs dans ces vastes usines que sont les studios. Cendrars note cette interpénétration du réel et de la fiction lorsqu'il relate sa première visite à la MGM. Croisant des marins japonais, le reporter croit à tort "bousculer des figurants en uniforme," tant il est vrai qu'on ne sait jamais à Hollywood "si la personne sur le pied de qui l'on marche est un vrai ou un faux personnage" (Cendrars 61). L'impression de facticité qui prévaut dans les studios est surtout due à ce "véritable dédale de décors" permettant "en quelques tours de roues," ainsi que l'écrit Kessel, d'aller "de la jungle à la place Vendôme, de l'auberge arabe au transatlantique grandeur nature" (22). Les plus élémentaires lois de la géographie paraissent ne plus s'appliquer dans ce monde de pure apparence, qui concentre en un espace réduit la diversité du monde:

Des bœufs des Indes paissent tout près des neiges de l'Alaska. Des soldats bleu-horizon tapissent une tranchée boueuse tandis que, quelques mètres plus loin, dans un arroyo, se baignent des Tonkinoises et que des milliardaires boivent de frais cocktails sur une plage consacrée de Floride. (Kessel 22)

L'écrivain se garde de célébrer ces visions incongrues qui auraient pu revêtir la magie d'un rêve éveillé. L'impression de fausseté s'étend au pays entier, la capitale du cinéma en apparaissant comme la quintessence, concentrant les plus spectaculaires réussites mais aussi les pires travers de l'Amérique. Lors de sa longue traversée ferroviaire du continent, Cendrars identifie ce "bluff américain," omniprésent à Hollywood, jusque dans les paysages du Nouveau Mexique, ce qui l'amène à affirmer, non sans condescendance, à son compagnon de voyage:

Loeb, mon petit . . . , comme tous vos compatriotes, vous êtes victime du décor. Tenez, regardez . . . Le train quittait Lamy. La gare, la station-hôtel d'El Ortiz, avec son porche indien et son patio mexicain, ressemblait à une auberge montmartroise dont l'entrée décorative en stuc, mène à un jardinet stylisé. On se serait cru place du Tertre . . . Et pour compléter l'illusion, un péteux costumé en cow-boy . . . attendait des clients problématiques . . . Le dernier cow-boy dans un décor en carton-pâte planté dans le désert du Nouveau Mexique ! (Cendrars 44)

Ce sentiment de "déjà vu, de déjà entendu, d'erreur ou de mensonge" (Cendrars 44) trahit le dédain pour un pays prétendument dépourvu de culture digne de ce nom, qui se contenterait de recycler et de mélanger sans à propos les styles les plus disparates. Même le "cow-boy," figure locale s'il en est, s'avère factice, comme si le pays en était déjà réduit à une parodie de lui-même.

La fausseté affecte particulièrement les vedettes lorsque, par malheur, "l'opérateur, le maquilleur, le coiffeur, les jeux de lumière ne protègent plus l'étoile" (Kessel 50). Kessel évoque ainsi la déception que peut causer la rencontre de stars, dont l'apparence sur les écrans est démentie par la réalité, du moins aux yeux d'un observateur lucide: "quand on les voit de près et à l'état naturel, il est impossible de ne pas être déçu" (Kessel 50). Plus que les hommes, les femmes souffrent cruellement de la comparaison avec l'idéal qu'elles ont incarné à l'écran: "il n'en est pas une qui rappelle les sirènes des salles obscures. Celle-ci louche, celle-là a l'air d'une petite

bonne, une troisième montre un visage flasque et des yeux vides. Une autre laisse éclater la bêtise la plus crue” (Kessel 49).

Fabriquées de toutes pièces, ces stars n’ont rien de naturel. Dans un chapitre intitulé “Le laboratoire aux étoiles,” Dekobra pointe avec son ironie coutumière le rôle capital de la publicité en ces matières, énumérant les périphrases et épithètes utilisées par les studios pour asseoir le succès de Greta Garbo. S’il ne dénie pas toute qualité à l’actrice dont le visage “insignifiant à la ville” (51) est jugé extraordinairement photogénique, l’auteur analyse sans complaisance le processus auquel elle doit sa renommée:

Ajoutez à ses qualités naturelles . . . une publicité soigneusement entretenue par la firme qui l’exploite: *Greta la Ténébreuse* . . . *Greta la silencieuse* . . . *L’Insaisissable, La Fugace* . . . et vous comprendrez la capital représenté . . . par cette madone des Vikings à la voix grave, aux cils très longs. (Dekobra 51)

À la faveur d’une plaisante saynète, il montre ensuite les rivaux de cette firme réfléchir à la manière de “garboniser” (Dekobra 52) une actrice de leur écurie. Le néologisme, procédé poétique par excellence quand il sert des visées expressives, ne signe ici aucune forme de créativité: il révèle le cynisme d’un producteur prétendant transformer une “girl” quelconque en une nouvelle Garbo, par un processus éprouvé au point d’être verbalement étiqueté. En proie à l’*hybris*, le producteur, véritable Pygmalion, ambitionne de redoubler la création divine en donnant naissance à des êtres entièrement artificiels: “Dieu créa le monde en six jours. Vous créez bien une étoile en six semaines” (Dekobra 52), remarque l’un de ces petits maîtres des studios. Tels des maquignons, les producteurs observent des photos et jettent leur dévolu sur celle qui deviendra . . . Marlene Dietrich.

Cet univers factice a su s’auroler d’une toute aussi illusoire aura sacrée, qui explique la puissance d’attraction exercée par cette “usine aux illusions” (Cendrars 68). De ce culte voué à la “Mecque” du cinéma (Cendrars 52), ces reportages rendent compte dans une série de métaphores et de périphrases faisant des studios “l’Olympe” des dieux du cinéma (Kessel 57) et de la ville un “temple” ou une “cité interdite” (Cendrars 21). L’incipit de *Hollywood ville mirage* reprend le topos en y adjoignant une touche d’humour:

Les catholiques ont le Vatican.
Les musulmans ont la Mecque.
Les communistes, Moscou.

Les femmes, Paris.

Mais pour les hommes et les femmes de toutes les nations, de toutes les croyances, de toutes les latitudes, une ville est née [. . .], plus fascinante et plus universelle que tous les sanctuaires. Elle s'appelle Hollywood. (Kessel 7)

De Hollywood à la secte soutirant d'onéreuses oboles à ses adeptes, il n'y a qu'un pas, comme le note Kessel dans un chapitre consacré au culte instauré à Los Angeles par une prêtresse de pacotille, adorée par des dizaines de milliers de fidèles. La célébration à laquelle assiste le reporter éberlué est dépeinte comme une mise en scène d'une naïveté confondante, au cours de laquelle officie "une merveilleuse *actrice*" (Kessel 156, nous soulignons). Elle se termine par une quête lucrative, à la faveur de laquelle l'officiante profère une litanie aux visées sans équivoque: "Jésus veut des dollars" (Kessel 145). Le respect religieux voué à Hollywood (et à l'Amérique) reposerait donc sur une illusion, mise au jour par le regard acéré de l'écrivain-reporter.

Jouant du "scénario de l'effraction" caractéristique du reportage, (Boucharenc 125) Kessel, comme Dekobra et Cendrars, prétend dévoiler la nature secrète de la ville. Loin d'être un temple de la création, celle-ci se révèle être une usine obéissant à une logique industrielle: "Hollywood est une cité ouvrière. Sous ses apparences de calme, de loisir, sous sa carapace de luxe, elle est pareille aux villes minières . . . Hollywood fabrique des images parlantes comme Ford sort des automobiles" (Kessel 19–20). Mis en œuvre par des hommes de plume européens, ce stéréotype relatif à l'Amérique des années trente leur permet de mettre en balance deux régimes de production distincts qui touchent à la question de l'écrit de manière antagoniste: celui de l'art et celui de l'industrie, associé à l'univers marchand et à celui de la renommée, dont Hollywood serait la parfaite incarnation.

2. L'écriture en régime industriel

À Hollywood, l'environnement auquel sont confrontés les écrivains est soumis à des normes et à des formes de création bien différentes de celles qu'ils connaissent dans le monde littéraire. La logique qui y prévaut est en effet perçue comme résolument industrielle, ce qui se traduit dans la métaphore filée du travail à la chaîne. Dekobra, Cendrars et Kessel voient tous trois dans Hollywood un lieu marqué par une dégradation de l'art

due à un “cocktail de taylorisme et de mépris de l’esprit” (Roger 551) qui caractériserait le monde cinématographique. Sur ce terrain, s’engage pour les écrivains un conflit de valeurs entre des “mondes” présentés comme étrangers l’un à l’autre: d’un côté, celui du cinéma hollywoodien, conjuguant les valeurs des mondes “industriel,” “marchands” et “de l’opinion” décrits par Boltanski et Thévenot, et de l’autre le “monde inspiré”¹² de l’art.

La dimension industrielle de l’écriture se traduit au premier chef par la “cargaison colossale de scénarios” (Dekobra 63) produits à Hollywood et par la manière dont ils le sont: à la chaîne et sur un même modèle. Dekobra relaye à ce propos cette saillie d’un humoriste anglais qui, invité à écrire pour Hollywood, aurait répondu: “mais je croyais qu’ils avaient déjà un scénario à Hollywood: car n’est-ce pas le même qui sert depuis 15 ans?” (Dekobra 66) Cette standardisation correspond évidemment au désir de répondre au goût du plus grand nombre. “[I]l faut leur donner un produit qui satisfera les émotions primitives et l’intelligence moyenne de 500 millions d’individus. Alors il faut standardiser toutes les histoires, passer les scénarios au laminoir, fraiser les originalités, aplatir les défauts” (Dekobra 65), sans la moindre considération pour le travail des scénaristes, dont le travail est réduit à rien comme le rapporte encore Dekobra lorsqu’il décrit l’hilarité des producteurs devant l’idée que ces écrivains pourraient avoir quelque amour propre:

La conscience artistique? Est-ce que mon équipe d’écrivains à la semaine qui travaille au scénario 27 a plus d’amour-propre que l’équipe des ouvriers à la journée qui vissent l’écrou 227 chez M. Henry Ford? (Dekobra 70)

Chez Kessel aussi, les écrivains sont présentés comme des tâcherons, soumis aux maîtres-mots de l’industrie hollywoodienne: “hâte, rendement, précision” (Kessel 59). Vivant au sein d’une véritable “géhenne” faite de formatage, de déni de l’auctorialité et de censure, “tous les écrivains, tous les compositeurs, même s’ils sont illustres” (Kessel 23) doivent “pointer,” scandaleuse irruption d’une logique industrielle dans le monde de l’art. “Leurs outils les attendent là: machine à écrire, bibliothèque, piano. . . .” L’ironie de Kessel révèle une réelle indignation face à la désacralisation de l’écriture et de l’art en général. La création, au lieu d’être soustraite aux regards, se voit cruellement exhibée, mais aussi, et surtout, planifiée et quantifiée. Elle est devenue un métier, alors même que la professionnalisation, caractère majeur du “monde industriel,” constitue un repoussoir au

sein du champ littéraire.¹³ Cendrars le constate avec amertume: cette écriture n'a "plus rien d'artistique, mais est un travail de série, épuisant, éreintant pour tous" (Cendrars 73), comme tout travail, chez cet auteur qui se plaît à rappeler que, pour la Bible, le travail était "une malédiction" (Cendrars 42).

Cendrars se montre encore frappé, non tant par les évolutions techniques, qui ont transformé l'industrie du cinéma, que par l'aspect "ordonné et sans joie" (Cendrars 72) d'une besogne située aux antipodes des valeurs qui régissent le "monde inspiré": "on ne vous demande pas d'avoir du génie mais d'obéir et de faire vite." Énumérant longuement les étapes de production d'un film, du scénario au produit fini, Cendrars prête une attention particulière au "département lecture," véritable machine à transformer les livres en synopsis, selon un processus qui aboutit à une totale dépossession de l'auteur, qu'il résume en ces termes lapidaires: "À Hollywood, l'auteur c'est "l'emm. . . ." On lui a payé ses droits, il n'a qu'à se taire" (Cendrars 80). Au terme de la transformation, les scénarios n'ont plus rien de commun avec les livres d'origine et le reporter, endossant sa casquette d'écrivain, fait une discrète allusion à ses propres mésaventures en la matière.¹⁴

Au miroir du cinéma hollywoodien, la littérature ne reconnaît guère les siens. Cendrars s'amuse ainsi du fait que celui qui rédige le scénario est considéré comme l'auteur, même lorsque l'auteur adapté se nomme . . . Shakespeare:

Les écrivains attachés à la firme sont toujours les auteurs du scénario. Et c'est ainsi que sur les affiches Max Reinhardt et quelques auteurs obscurs . . . ont pu signer *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été* à la place de Shakespeare sans faire rire personne . . . à Hollywood! (Cendrars 81)

Kessel évoque cette question en passant, comme signe du manque d'imagination des scénaristes qui pillent le répertoire littéraire. Invité à déjeuner par un des leurs, il relate la requête de son hôte: "pour renouveler son inspiration," ce dernier lui demande en effet de "lui donne[r] une liste de livres français susceptibles d'être transformés en scénarios" (Kessel 81, nous soulignons). Ce dernier verbe, qui renvoie au processus industriel exclusif, là encore, toute considération artistique. Il en dit long sur la façon d'envisager l'adaptation non comme une recreation par des moyens originaux mais comme l'exploitation sans scrupules d'une œuvre antérieure, dont les modifications ne répondent nullement à des impératifs esthétiques, mais à des fins purement commerciales.

Si les scénarios sont produits en série, le recrutement de leurs auteurs obéit à une logique tout aussi inflationniste. Ces reportages sur la vie à Hollywood insistent sur le nombre, jugé excessif, de scénaristes, dont les plus talentueux triment, mais dont beaucoup sont engagés sans réelle utilité et se retrouvent désœuvrés. Quand Cendrars énumère tout ce que l'on ne trouvera pas dans son reportage, il mentionne ainsi un chapitre "sur les deux mille écrivains sous contrat . . . dont les habitudes de paresse sont celles d'une lamasserie" (Cendrars 5). Dekobra, s'interrogeant sur le gaspillage d'argent dans la production filmique, invoque lui aussi, entre autres causes, la responsabilité des producteurs qui engagent "50 scénaristes, adaptateurs, docteurs ès dialogues et chirurgiens ès découpages qui touchent de 5000 à 50 000 F par semaine" (Dekobra 34) et dont les manuscrits, une fois achetés, sont fréquemment oubliés dans les tiroirs.

Cette masse de scénaristes s'explique par le mode d'écriture des studios, qui s'oppose en tout point à la conception de l'auteur unique, voire du génie solitaire qui constitue l'horizon de référence des écrivains français de l'entre-deux-guerres. À Hollywood, les scénaristes travaillent en équipe, de sorte que la logique artistique cède le pas aux impératifs de l'efficacité et, en dernière instance, du rendement. Chez Dekobra, Cendrars et Kessel, la rationalisation de la production filmique, imposée par la nécessité de plaire au plus grand nombre, se paie par un nivellement par le bas. Pour Kessel, "ce n'est pas aux raffinés de ce monde qu[e] [les films] sont destinés mais à des yeux candides, à des esprits incultes, écrasés sous le faix du travail et de l'ennui" (Kessel 167–68). Dans cette optique, le cinéma répond en effet à un besoin primaire: une "faim de spectacles," offrant une médiocre pitance au spectateur moyen.

Kessel souligne la totale absence de sens artistique des "grands mogols." Dénonçant "ce troc de voix et de figures humaines" (Kessel 31), au pays où tout se vend et s'achète, le reporter explique en quoi consiste la tâche des producteurs: faire de l'argent sans chercher le moins du monde à faire un "noble usage de moyens poétiques" (Kessel 30). Le qualificatif "poétique" est ici choisi pour le considérable prestige symbolique dont il jouit dans la hiérarchie des genres, au sein duquel il est le parangon de la gratuité, de la pureté et de la pleine maîtrise d'un art. C'est donc en vertu de cette littérarité revendiquée que nos trois auteurs condamnent la mise en péril de l'individu et du génie à Hollywood.

3. Hollywood: tombeau de l'individu

Mandatés en leur qualité d'écrivains pour écrire ces reportages relatifs à la capitale du septième art, nos auteurs adoptent volontiers une telle posture.

Cependant, loin de s'adresser à des lettrés de cabinet, leur prose investigatrice est destinée aux journaux. C'est dire que l'opposition tranchée entre la fabrique industrielle des films et la création littéraire ne va pas de soi. Elle touche à leur positionnement au sein du champ journalistico-littéraire de l'époque. Selon des inflexions singulières, tous trois présentent la facticité de la cité, celle du cinéma hollywoodien et des mœurs qu'il génère comme mortifères et écrasantes pour des individus qu'elle dévore. Leur critique est d'autant plus sévère que le cinéma passe, selon eux, à côté de ce qu'il aurait pu et dû représenter, et que leur pratique du reportage leur permet en revanche de mettre en œuvre.

a) Dekobra, le pince-sans-rire

Dans la préface de son livre, reprenant un *topos* d'époque consistant à renvoyer dos à dos libéralisme américain et communisme soviétique, Dekobra explique combien, à ses yeux, l'individu est la principale victime des révolutions de civilisation entreprises dans ces deux pays:

En Russie, on tue brutalement. Aux États-Unis, on endort l'individualisme. La méthode américaine est plus humaine. Mais le résultat est le même. Chacun de ces deux pays pourrait afficher sur ses postes frontières:

CI-GIT
L'INDIVIDU
REQUIESCAT IN PACE

Le pays tout entier se voit ainsi placé sous le signe funèbre du tombeau de l'individu. Le caractère artificiel que lui prête l'auteur la situe en effet aux antipodes de toute forme de vitalisme, particulièrement lorsqu'il s'agit de traiter de la manière dont les films sont réalisés. La métaphore industrielle bascule alors volontiers dans un autre lieu commun de cette période, qui consiste à comparer la production cinématographique à la filière agro-alimentaire.¹⁵ Au terme du processus de formatage des scénarios, ceux-ci se voient en effet transformés en une "chair à saucisse insipide," selon la méthode plaisamment décrite par Dekobra: "Le scénario vivant est d'abord désarticulé et égorgé à Hollywood. Qu'il s'agisse d'une pièce de théâtre, d'un roman ou d'un scénario original, il est essentiel de les tuer avant tout pour les accommoder selon la recette classique" (Dekobra 66).

Dans ce processus de production trivial du film sur la base d'une mise à mort de l'œuvre littéraire, supposée "vivante," ces écrivains ouvriers se

désintéressent d'autant plus du scénario que leur amour-propre, on l'a vu, n'est guère de mise dans cette "Chicago du spectacle" (Dekobra 25).

Pour préserver son individualité de tout danger, c'est-à-dire, dans ce contexte, son auctorialité, le reporter ménage de plusieurs façons une distance entre l'*ethos* qu'il façonne et l'univers qu'il peint. S'il se défend de vouloir, "comme certains écrivains européens qui ont traversé l'Amérique, déverser [s]on fiel sur un pays qui renferme à la fois le meilleur et le pire" (Dekobra 15), il n'en reste pas moins que Dekobra se garde de manifester la moindre adhésion aux valeurs du monde qu'il dépeint. Dans la récolte d'informations qu'il présente sous forme dialoguée, il donne à voir l'incompatibilité foncière entre lui-même et le cinéma hollywoodien. À l'occasion d'une soirée mondaine à Beverly Hills, il interroge ainsi Cecil B. de Mille sur les dépenses faramineuses engagées dans certains films. Sa question est biaisée d'entrée de jeu puisque, non content de parler à un producteur américain en francs (!), elle s'achève par l'expression de l'opinion de l'intervieweur:

—Monsieur de Mille, comment peut-on dépenser quatre-vingt millions de francs pour faire des films comme *Hell's Angels* (*Les Anges de l'Enfer*), cinquante millions pour le *Roi du jazz* ou trente millions pour *Whoopee* en couleurs? J'ai l'impression qu'il doit y avoir là beaucoup d'argent gâché.

M. Cecil B. de Mille poussa un soupir. Alors un jeune acteur inconnu me répondit:

—Les augures n'ont pas le droit de rire. Mais moi, je vais vous parler en toute franchise. Vous allez comprendre pourquoi ces superproductions peuvent coûter si cher. (Dekobra 32)

Significativement, la réponse du célèbre producteur est on ne peut plus laconique. Le dialogue initié ne se noue d'ailleurs pas. Pour Cecil B. de Mille, une telle question, lassante, ne se pose pas, sans doute parce que sa réponse va de soi. Aussi est-ce un subalterne dépourvu de toute aura qui se charge de répondre: significativement, dans cette ville ou la renommée est tout, ce "jeune acteur" n'est pas nommé, donc pas individué à proprement parler. Chez Dekobra, la prise de distance s'opère à travers un *ethos* d'ironiste patenté, qui ne résiste guère au plaisir du jeu de mots et de la formule. L'auteur laisse parler ses interlocuteurs, se bornant à assembler des discours rapportés en les ponctuant de remarques qui déploient en filigrane une axiologie relativement ambiguë. À travers ces propos rapportés et par l'ironie à travers laquelle il les livre, Dekobra manifeste son indi-

vidualité: opposant à un monde dont il est familier et qu'il moque dans le même temps, il pose dans le costume de celui qui a pu pénétrer cet environnement sans en être affecté, puisqu'il dévoile les rouages de cet univers.

b) Cendrars ou les vérités d'un "cœur d'homme"

Dans la préface de son livre, Cendrars prends soin d'insister sur le travail de mise en perspective auquel il s'est livré. Balayant toute prétention à l'exhaustivité et à l'exactitude, il s'engage à livrer de Hollywood une vision singulière. Ce disant, il fait de nécessité vertu, car il ne semble pas avoir vu grand-chose de la ville. Comme le note Alain Masson, "c'est un Hollywood de l'échec que Cendrars veut peindre" (Masson 128). "[N]'étant resté que quinze jours," il a en effet multiplié au cours de son enquête les rendez-vous manqués et les rencontres ratées. Cet avant-propos place *Hollywood, la Mecque du cinéma* sous le signe de l'incomplétude, comme en témoigne la négation exceptive (ne . . . que) mais surtout l'énumération de tout ce que l'on ne trouvera *pas* dans son livre ("Il manque encore bien d'autres choses à mon livre"), que l'auteur reprend plus bas en anaphore ("Il manque encore à mon livre . . .") (Masson 128).

Toutefois, Cendrars s'accommode volontiers de ces difficultés. Mieux, il assume ces lacunes au point d'en tirer une forme paradoxale de valorisation d'un travail à l'occasion duquel il ne se serait pas contenté de collecter des informations ("où cela m'aurait-il mené?," Cendrars 6) mais aurait plutôt livré une vision personnelle de la ville. L'une de ses rencontres avortées est celle d'un certain Harold Loeb, ancien dadaïste, devenu, selon ses propres termes, un "technocrate." Auteur d'un rapport truffé de statistiques sur l'économie américaine, réalisé avec l'aide d'un "état-major de cinquante professeurs, techniciens, économistes et ingénieurs qualifiés," ne s'inscrirait-il pas dans la logique industrielle qui prévaut dans la production cinématographique hollywoodienne et que dénonce précisément Cendrars? Il n'y a donc pas lieu de s'étonner que l'auteur du reportage insiste sur le "profond mépris de la poésie et de la littérature" (Cendrars 46) qui caractérise ce prosaïque individu.

Au terme d'une conversation qui, comme celle de Dekobra avec Cecil B. de Mille, tourne au dialogue de sourds, et d'un voyage qui les a menés en Californie, Cendrars donne ses coordonnées à son interlocuteur, qui ne le recontactera pas (Cendrars 46-47). Cette rupture manifeste la distance que pose Cendrars entre l'idéologie américaine incarnée par Loeb (les "sta-

tisticiens n'aiment pas l'homme" (Cendrars 47) et un système de valeurs au sein duquel l'être humain occupe une place centrale.

La ville apparaît d'autant plus décevante à Cendrars que "Hollywood a su capter, ranimer un ancien centre de vie" (Cendrars 21), mais en s'y livrant à une activité effrénée qui précisément réduit à rien cette vie, qu'il entend pour sa part préserver, ainsi qu'il l'expose dans un passage métadiscursif clé. L'auteur y reprend ce parallèle pour justifier son mode particulier d'écriture:

Je ne prends jamais de notes en voyage. Je ne veux pas m'encombrer l'esprit d'une multitude de détails contradictoires. Je ne veux pouvoir rapporter que l'essentiel des choses vues.

Un reporter n'est pas un simple chasseur d'images, il doit savoir capter les vues de l'esprit.

Si son œil doit être aussi rapide que l'objectif du photographe, son rôle n'est pas d'enregistrer passivement les choses. L'esprit de l'auteur doit réagir avec agilité, son tempérament d'écrivain, son cœur d'homme . . .

Rien n'est aussi émouvant pour un enquêteur . . . que de rapporter de cette plongée une actualité vivante, palpitante, récalcitrante, mais de signification générale et qui est le seul témoignage réel que nous puissions donner de la vie de l'univers, cet inconnu . . .

Aussi, plus un "papier" est vrai, plus il doit paraître imaginaire. À force de coller aux choses, il doit déteindre sur elles et non pas les décalquer. Et c'est encore pourquoi l'écriture [est] peut-être tout ce que nous pourrions jamais connaître du réel. (Cendrars 43)

Dans le droit fil de cette réflexion, Cendrars loue le travail du dessinateur Jean Guérin, qui a illustré son reportage. "[P]ris sur le vif" (Cendrars 1), ses dessins révéleraient la "sensibilité exquise" d'un "œil humain" qui fait contrepoint (et contrepoids) avec l'objectif, dans ce contexte du règne de la caméra et de l'appareil photographique. Une analogie explicite s'opère entre l'écrivain et le dessinateur par opposition avec le photographe (et par extension le cinéaste). Cendrars relaye ici curieusement un reproche éculé, adressé à la photographie depuis les origines, celui d'être non un art mais une technique de reproduction servile.¹⁶ Le rejet est d'autant plus frappant qu'il est formulé par Cendrars, qui a pourtant fait de la photographie un modèle imaginaire (notamment dans son recueil *Kodak*),¹⁷ et parce qu'il s'inscrit dans un reportage sur Hollywood, "capitale de la photographie et de l'objectif" (Cendrars 7).

Par contraste, l'écrivain-reporter offrirait une véritable recreation du réel et de son caractère vivant. Mobilisant le principe d'une "vision" singulière de l'auteur qui apparaît comme un trait distinctif de ce type d'écrit et un gage de qualité, Cendrars valorise ainsi les "vues de l'esprit" de son auteur, plus profondes que cet éloge de la surface que constituerait la photographie. La mise en équivalence du "cœur d'homme" et du "tempérament d'écrivain" témoigne de ce que la poétique cendrarsienne du reportage se veut résolument vitaliste, comme l'ensemble de l'œuvre de l'auteur.¹⁸

c) Kessel ou l'amoureux déçu

Contrairement à Dekobra et Cendrars, Kessel n'accompagne pas son reportage d'un discours d'escorte. Sa conception du genre transparait indirectement dans les variantes tonales qu'il lui imprime: les saynètes pittoresques y alternent avec les diatribes morales, laissant occasionnellement place à des descriptions, parfois poétiques, l'ensemble visant à donner la "clé" (Kessel 19) de la ville. Comme le remarque Myriam Boucharenc, Kessel se situe entre une volonté de "transparence adamique" et un souci d'affirmer sa signature (Boucharenc 130). La griffe de l'auteur se manifeste en l'occurrence par la position de surplomb moral adoptée par rapport à une ville volontiers présentée comme mortifère. Le reporter décrit ainsi sa "splendeur morte," son "charme irréel, inhumain" (Kessel 13, 19), son ciel qui "semble, par sa tiédeur, dissoudre le sang du nouveau venu" (Kessel 13) et ses maisons confortables dans lesquelles "on ne sent pas de vie" (Kessel 12). Kessel adopte un style sentenciel accordé à la hauteur morale et à la mission qu'il assigne au reportage, comme lorsqu'il s'interroge sur la spécificité de la ville:

Hollywood exige l'idée fixe, comme l'exigerait toute autre ville qui serait aussi anormalement conçue qu'elle. On frémit en imaginant ce que serait l'existence d'une vaste cité uniquement peuplée de médecins, ou d'écrivains ou de commerçants ou d'inventeurs. Une vie sociale n'est *respirable* qu'en fonction de la diversité de ses cellules. Elle n'est harmonieuse qu'en proportion de sa souplesse, de sa richesse de formes, de sa multiplicité d'aspects. (12)

Le présent gnomique, les articles à valeur généralisante, la métaphore du corps social et la forme quasi mathématique donnée à ce dernier énoncé révèlent assez l'ambition de Kessel dans cet ouvrage. Il s'agit de déchiffrer

le réel, de délivrer un savoir sur le monde, tout en tenant un discours sur la société et ses valeurs, alors même que celles-ci paraissent avoir déserté la ville. Loin d'être gratuite, cette anecdote aboutit à une interrogation oratoire sur le caractère pernicieux de Hollywood, qui touche au principe de l'humanité: "Qui, dans cette atmosphère d'agio perpétuel, ne perdrait pas le sens des valeurs humaines?" (Kessel 32). Le simple fait de formuler une telle question lui permet de se présenter comme le garant de cette humanité, au contraire des producteurs, scénaristes et aspirants acteurs dont il décrit les mœurs.

Kessel présente dans cette perspective une scène à valeur itérative ("Combien de fois ai-je assisté à ce troc de voix et de figures humaines dans les bureaux des producers! Le tableau ne variait guère," [31]) montrant un producteur vulgaire, "les pieds sur la table," le cigare au bec, l'oreille constamment vissée à son téléphone, interpellant familièrement ses interlocuteurs par leur prénom ("Hello, Jim! . . . Hello, Walter!") et braillant des ordres, comme un courtier à la Bourse ("OK. J'achète le boy"). À la vignette pittoresque s'ajoute une note typique de l'anti-américanisme français dans l'agacement devant "cette bonhomie américaine [et] cet optimisme forcené" qui "épuisent à leur contact *les vitalités* moins bien construites en série" (Kessel 31, nous soulignons), celles des individus, par contraste avec la collectivité anonyme dont il fustige le manque d'inventivité assumé.

Générés sur un même patron, les scénarios usent de stéréotypes narratifs comme le fameux "boy meets girl" qui donne son titre à un chapitre dans lequel Kessel met en scène, dans l'espace du reportage, une rivalité entre cinéma et littérature se jouant sur une scène de théâtre. Ce principe provient d'une pièce satirique du même titre, jouée à New York, qui dépeint les déboires de scénaristes hollywoodiens exécutant une "danse démente autour [du] squelette obligatoire" que constitue l'histoire d'amour, à laquelle il faut impérativement se conformer pour parvenir à vendre son scénario.¹⁹ Le terme de "squelette," curieusement choisi pour décrire ce passage obligé des fictions commerciales, n'a évidemment ici rien de gratuit, et vient renforcer l'isotopie de la mort omniprésente dans ce reportage. Kessel rapporte la trame de cette pièce à succès, drôle et cruelle, qu'il aurait prise pour une pure fiction s'il n'avait vu la scène se reproduire dans la vie réelle lors de son séjour à Hollywood. Elle fait en effet écho à sa rencontre avec un duo d'auteurs, digne d'un spectacle de Broadway: "il dévida une histoire sur un rythme de mitrailleuse, l'entre-coupant de grimaces, d'obscénités, jouant, mimant, dansant, tempêtant et

riant tout à la fois” (Kessel 41) mais la puérité et les facéties de cette équipe cessent d’amuser Kessel à l’annonce de l’exécution de Bruno Hauptmann, coupable de l’enlèvement et du meurtre du fils de Lindbergh, dont la nouvelle, donnée en direct, bouleverse le reporter. Elle suscite en revanche l’indifférence des scénaristes, absorbés par leur scénario et leur cabotinage: “Et les trois possédés enchaînèrent. C’étaient pourtant les meilleurs garçons du monde” (Kessel 104). Cette disparité des réactions permet à l’écrivain-reporter d’assurer sa différence radicale. Le réel et les questions humaines restent sa préoccupation majeure, pas celle des scénaristes, qui paraissent vivre en marge du reste du monde. Sa posture morale, l’idée de dévoilement de la nature réelle de la ville et l’élaboration stylistique le situent, indirectement, à l’opposé de ce brio de bonimenteurs.

Chaque scène, si pittoresque soit elle, cède le pas à l’amertume et permet à Kessel de jeter un éclairage nouveau sur la ville. La singularité de ce reportage réside dans l’affirmation d’une hauteur morale, dont les deux autres, davantage marqués par l’ironie, sont dépourvus. À en croire le reporter, ce divorce procède d’un espoir déçu dans les vertus d’un cinéma qui aurait pu/dû “ressusciter”²⁰ l’union entre les foules et les élites. Le choix d’un lexique marqué par le sacré et participant du “monde inspiré” est ici évidemment significatif. Et Kessel d’ajouter:

Comme au temps du “Roman de la Rose” et des mystères médiévaux, le clerc et l’homme du peuple s’accordent dans la même joie.

Et c’est parce que le film peut ressusciter cette foi commune, qu’il est le seul art aujourd’hui capable de le faire . . . que je me suis montré, au cours de ces chapitres, peut-être trop dur envers la ville des mirages.

Ce n’est ni mépris, ni haine. Mais plutôt, en vérité, de l’amour déçu.
(169–70)

4. La littérature à l’ère du cinéma de masse

La rencontre du cinéma et de la littérature dans le creuset du reportage est celle de deux champs culturels, dont les systèmes de valeurs coïncident d’autant moins qu’à l’opposition entre deux médias se surimpose celle entre deux cultures, celle de la vieille Europe confrontée à celle de l’Amérique. Dekobra, Cendrars et Kessel présentent cette confrontation de manière tranchée en opposant des univers présentés comme antithétiques: celui de l’écrivain inspiré et celui du scénariste mercenaire: celui de l’œuvre

d'art unique et celui des films produits en série, celui de l'art et celui du commerce. La pratique du reportage répond en cela à leur désir d'engagement. Comme l'explique Myriam Boucharenc, les écrivains y voient "une forme d'écriture idéale, de nature à réaliser une écriture en acte . . . Enfin une occasion de tremper sa plume directement dans la vie mais également d'agir par l'écriture. L'enquête avait ainsi de quoi répondre au besoin de vécu des années vingt aussi bien qu'au désir d'engagement des années trente" (Boucharenc 38), ce qui est particulièrement sensible chez Kessel et, dans une moindre mesure, chez Cendrars.

Si, pour les écrivains-reporters des années 1930, le cinéma apparaît comme un miroir, ils entendent bien s'en démarquer, en dépit de la fascination que le septième art a exercée sur eux. La seconde moitié de l'entre-deux-guerres se caractérise en effet par l'émergence d'une relative défiance envers le cinéma, dont l'évolution ne correspond guère aux espoirs que certains écrivains avaient placé en lui, en particulier du temps du muet.²¹ Seuls sont épargnés quelques rares cinéastes comme "un Lubitsch, . . . un Walter Wanger qui sont ou de véritables créateurs ou qui, tout au moins, possèdent une divination singulière du public" (Kessel 34). Un réalisateur se voit à cet égard conférer une place particulière: Charlot,²² "admirable artiste" (Dekobra 48) pour Dekobra, et que Cendrars présente, avec beaucoup de fantaisie, comme un "vieux copain" auquel il voue une "grande admiration" (Cendrars 5), voire comme une figure d'identification.²³

Toutefois, malgré ces positions de principe par lesquelles nos reporters creusent délibérément l'écart entre leur écriture et celle qui se pratique à Hollywood, il convient de remarquer, pour finir, que le reportage répond lui aussi à une logique d'industrialisation de la littérature, ce qui nous amène à considérer leur posture avec une vigilance toute particulière. En s'adonnant à une pratique lucrative comme le reportage, Kessel, Cendrars et, plus encore Dekobra (auteur d'un best-seller avant l'heure avec sa *Madone des sleepings*) visent eux aussi un large public et cèdent aux promesses de rémunérations juteuses d'une presse de grande diffusion, opérant désormais elle aussi à une échelle industrielle. Leur discours sur Hollywood, émaillé de clichés d'époque, flatte l'antiaméricanisme français, dans la lignée des *Scènes de la vie future* de Duhamel, et montre par là-même que le reportage est lui aussi un genre en voie de standardisation. S'ils adoptent volontiers une position de surplomb, n'est-ce pas justement parce que Hollywood leur tend un miroir accusateur? Leur attirance ambivalente pour un genre marqué lui aussi par les préoccupations commerciales pourrait en partie expliquer la réaction de lettrés effarouchés, anti-

modernes qu'ils affichent dans leurs reportages. Ceux-ci relaient en effet une certaine *doxa* selon laquelle la France se devrait de conserver le privilège de l'esprit face aux vulgarités américaines. Au miroir du cinéma hollywoodien, le reportage français ne lirait-il pas en fin de compte lui aussi d'inquiétantes "scènes de [s]a vie future"?

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Notes

1. Nous tenons ici à remercier Myriam Boucharenc pour sa relecture et ses remarques avisées.
2. Voir *Littérature et document autour de 1930. Hétérogénéité et hybridation générique* (s. dir. Anne Reverseau, Sarah Bonciarelli, et Carmen Van den Bergh [Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, "La Licorne," 2014]).
3. Voir *Paper cities. Urban Portraits in Photographic Books* (s. dir. Susanna Martins et Anne Reverseau [Leuven: Leuven UP, 2016]) et *Le Portrait de pays illustré. Une genre phototextuel* (s. dir. Anne Reverseau [Paris: Minard, 2017]). Pour une perspective théorique sur ce genre, voir David Martens, "Qu'est-ce que le portrait de pays? Esquisse de physionomie d'un genre mineur," dans *Poétique*, à paraître.
4. Voir Douglas Gomery, *L'Âge d'or des studios* (Paris: Éditions de l'Étoile-Cahiers du cinéma, 1987).
5. Voir Jean-Loup Bourget, *Hollywood années trente* (Paris: Hatier, 1986).
6. Voir *Hollywood, 1927-1941. La Propagande par les rêves* (s. dir. Alain Masson [Paris: Autrement, 1991]).
7. *Europe-Hollywood et retour* (s. dir. Michel Boujut [Paris: Autrement, 1986]).
8. Notons que ce dernier a ponctuellement été scénariste. Voir Nathalie Mongin, Jan Baetens, et Sjef Houppermans, "Entretien," dans *Relief. revue électronique de littérature et de culture françaises* 9.1 (*La Madonne des sleepings* de Maurice Dekobra, s. dir. Jan Baetens & Sjef Houppermans [2015]: 15, <https://www.revue-relief.org/55/volume/9/issue/1/>).
9. Voir Myriam Boucharenc, *L'Écrivain-reporter au cœur des années trente* (Ville-neuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, "Objet," 2004).
10. Selon un stéréotype d'époque dont Philippe Roger a souligné l'enracinement historique dans *L'Ennemi américain. Généalogie de l'antiaméricanisme français* (Paris: Seuil, "Essais," 2004).
11. Parmi d'innombrables témoignages de ce type, voir le célèbre et précoce article de Gorki qui pointe le caractère spectral de la projection cinématographique lorsqu'il relate son voyage "au royaume des ombres" (Maxime Gorki, "Brèves remarques," *Nijegorodskilistok*, 4 juillet 1896, n 182, repris dans Jérôme Prieur, *Le Spectateur nocturne: les écrivains au cinéma* [Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 1993], p. 31).
12. Voir Luc Boltanski et Laurent Thévenot, *De la justification. Les économies de la grandeur* (Paris: Gallimard, "NRF Essais," 1991).

13. Voir à ce sujet Nathalie Heinich, *Être écrivain. Création et identité* (Paris: La Découverte, "Armillaire," 2000).

14. "C'est pourquoi tant d'auteurs—Carco, O'Flaherty, moi, etc.—ne reconnaissent plus leur œuvre une fois qu'elle a été portée à l'écran" (Cendrars 80).

15. La visite des abattoirs de Chicago a fortement marqué les observateurs étrangers. On en trouve des traces dans *Tintin en Amérique* qui a notamment influencé Duhamel dans ses *Scènes de la vie future*.

16. Pour un historico de ce préjugé, voir Philippe Ortel, *La Littérature à l'ère de la photographie. Enquête sur une révolution invisible* (Nîmes: Jacqueline Chambon, "Rayon photo," 2002).

17. Sur les relations de Cendrars à la photo, voir notamment Sylvia Schriber, "Blaise Cendrars: photographie et écriture," dans *BlaiseMédia. Blaise Cendrars et les médias* (ed. Birgit Wagner et Claude Leroy [Paris: Université Paris X, "Recherches interdisciplinaires sur les textes modernes," 2006], pp. 119–36).

18. Voir David Martens, *L'Invention de Blaise Cendrars. Une poétique de la pseudonymie* (Paris: Champion, "Cahiers Blaise Cendrars," 2010).

19. Chez Dekobra aussi, il est question d'une pièce satirique sur Hollywood jouée à Broadway. Cette opposition qui recoupe aussi la rivalité East coast/West coast aura la vie dure. Le thème de l'écrivain new yorkais qui se "vend" à Hollywood est souvent mis en scène au cinéma, comme dans *Barton Fink* des frères Coen, et transparaît encore aujourd'hui dans une série comme *Californication*.

20. En un sens beaucoup plus littéral, les contemporains des premières séances de cinéma avaient pu rêver que le nouveau médium "ressuscite" les morts en projetant la figure des chers disparus sur grand écran et en les faisant revivre en leurs gestes et attitudes. Voir par exemple le témoignage de deux journalistes du journal *La Poste* qui écrivent en 1895: "Lorsque ces appareils seront livrés au public, lorsque tous pourront photographier les êtres qui leur sont chers non plus dans leur forme immobile mais dans leur mouvement, dans leur action, dans leurs gestes familiers, avec la parole au bout des lèvres, *la mort cessera d'être absolue*" (nous soulignons), repris dans *Le Cinéma, naissance d'un art, 1895–1920*. Textes choisis et présentés par Daniel Banda et José Moure (Paris: Flammarion, "Champs," 2008), p. 41.

21. Voir Nadja Cohen, *Les Poètes modernes et le cinéma (1910–1930)* (Paris: Garnier, "Études de littérature des XXe & XXIe siècles," 2013), en particulier pp. 319–26.

22. Voir à ce sujet Nadja Cohen, "Charlot, poète malgré lui," dans *Interférences littéraires/Littéraire interférentielles* (18 mai, 2016, pp. 203–14), ainsi que Loxias, "Chaplin et la poésie" (s. dir. Sandrine Montin, 2015), 49. <http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=7975>.

23. Voir Jean-Carlo Flückiger, "Portrait de l'autre en Charlot," dans *Blaise Cendrars 5—Portraits de l'artiste*, édité par Claude Leroy (Paris: Minard, 2003).

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Module 8: Soldier Trench Journals from WWI: British, French and German Literary War Journalism | Les journaux des tranchées de soldats de la Première Guerre mondiale : Le journalisme littéraire de guerre britannique, français et allemand

Director: John S. Bak (Languages: English, Français)

1. “Muds I Have Met,” *The Listening Post* (Canada), No° 22 (15 February 1917), 146.
2. ““Where Did You Git Them Pants?”, Says I; ‘From your Uncle Samuel’, Says Jerry,” *The Mess Kit* (United States) N° 1.1 (June 1919), 10.
3. *The Wipers Times* [film], dir. Andy de Emmony, broadcast BBC2, 11 Sept. 2013.
4. A selection of French, British and German trench journals.
5. “Trench Newspaper Issued by Soldiers.” *New York Times* 23 May 1915: 5.
6. “Life in Trenches as Soldiers Tell It.” *New York Times* 5 May 1916: 5.
7. Robert L. Nelson, “Soldier Newspapers” in *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*. Eds. Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 2014.
8. Robert L. Nelson, “Soldier Newspapers: A Useful Source in the Social and Cultural History of the First World War and Beyond.” *War in History* 17.2 (2010): 167–91.
9. John G. Fuller, “Trench Journalism” in *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies, 1914–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 7–20.
10. Graham Seal, *A Soldiers’ Press: Trench Journals in the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

“Muds I Have Met,” *The Listening Post* (Canada), No° 22 (15 February 1917), p. 146

In my school days of long ago, my teachers told me that the surface of the earth is composed of land and water. That division is by no means complete. There is another factor in the composition of the earth – a factor more important and more widely spread than either of the two usually taught. This third component is MUD. We have MUD, MUD, Mud and ordinary mud.

The first mud with which I came in contact was the Irish variety. In common with all things Irish, it was a good consistency and generously lavish. Its acquaintance I made in a hail-fellow-well-met way on country roads, football fields and, en passant, as splashed up by automobiles in the city streets. Always it was courteous in its attentions and, while naturally inclined to cling, submitted quietly to an order to “vamoose”.

American mud has something all its own. It gets there every time; when it arrives, it’s there to stay, and you’ve got to go some to get it off. You can bet your bottom dollar, it’s no cinch to make your get-away; no sirree! America’s the land that put the “M” in MUD, see?

Mixing the obstinacy of all things English with the pertinacity of all things Yankee, and you’ve got the essence of all things Canadian. Thus – Canadian mud. It’s got a nasty habit of smoothing over the surface of roads as rough as the Rocky Mountains, and carts, autos and foot-sloggers have their work cut out to beat their way through. When Mr. Mud lays down his ultimatum that you can’t pass – you can’t; not even in a Ford; till Jack Frost comes along and freezes [*sic*] Mr. Mud out.

Captain Bruce Bairnsfather has made every effort humanly possible to portray Ploegsteert mud, but there’s something about Plug Street that’s not human. If it isn’t just heavenly, at least it’s unearthly. It’s omnipresent and almighty as were the rats of Hamelin, and there’s no Pied Piper. With the mud of Ypres, it belongs to the category of things that beggar description and turn the hair of the war-correspondent grey.

Picardy mud! Thy chalky inconsistency; thine all-confounding greasiness: these thy peculiarities shall go down to posterity as a by-word and anathema. Oft would I fain have encompassed thee with sandbags sewn by Sister Susie’s sister-in-law Sarah, but I’m hanged if thou would’st go therein. Thy miles of chalk-white trenches, torn and pitted with milliard shell-holes, slipping, sliding, treacherous and faithless as ever a Prussian; – these shall [*sic*] be they memorials so long as man shall speak of the World War.

THOU ART THE LAST WORD IN MUD!

[signed] “Instonian”

Fritz is what is known as “a big eater” under all conditions. Even the, to him, depressing news of the armistice, spelling the doom of Kultur and the German cause, dit [*sic*] not impair his appetite to any appreciable extent. Nor were his rations curtailed in the least. Poetically speaking, the heart and soul plays a big part in international struggles, but the idea of the practical Yank is to base his humanity upon the filling of his enemy’s belly, once that enemy has fallen into his hands.

“Sure we feed ’em and clothe ’em well”, said one sergeant in charge of a detachment of German prisoners, “d’ye think we’d starve ’em and let ’em go naked? Abuse of prisoners is not in our line. We have fought a square fight from start to finish – from the S.O.S. to the front line trenches. That’s one reason why we carried ’er through to a smashing finish.

“Not that we baby ’em any. They’ve got work to do and they’ve got to do it and do it right. Our own fellows kick in and do their share and the other fellow is expected to do the same. A square deal that doesn’t work both ways is no square deal at all.”

PAGE TEN. THE MESS KIT.

**“Where Did You Git Them Pants?”, Says I;
“From Your Uncle Sammel”, Says Jerry.**

**CIVILIAN PANTALOONS
VERSUS MILITARY O.D.’S.**

It is the story, as popular stories go, of how the Yanks cut off the German prisoners’ suspender buttons to keep them (the Germans, not the suspenders) from making their escape. Odd, but always good, and upon the testimony of a few hundred (assumed) witnesses, true. Now comes the latest development of the tale of suspended buttons, the sequel so to speak, of the Yank of Unsuspenders Interest. The Yank, it seems, when they had taken their prisoners lack of the lines, not only replaced the late lamed buttons, but, in doing so, gave the captives buttons with trousers attached.

To these the Yanks added buttons and in cases where they were needed, rubber boots. In the case of Austrian prisoners, whose uniforms is green, the uniforms with which they were equipped by their American captors were dyed the regulation emerald hue.

In road work in France it is no uncommon sight to see a detachment of Austrian prisoners, equipped from crown to sole with warm, durable clothing furnished by the Americans.

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**BUTTON SHOES TABOO;
HE’S BACK ON HOBNAILS.**

A private who had made a considerable “refering” in a crap game, decided to invest a portion of his gains in a pair of “stove” shoes. And thereupon hangs a sad narrative.

The soldier got a peek by one of the line ports which was near his camp, and after a few hours’ window shopping found a set of foot gear that captured his eye.

The storekeeper demanded 72 francs for the pair, and since that figure corresponded with the price tag, the buck paid over the amount without a murmur.

He donned his brace of bright yellow “lady-killers” and went out for a promenade with his old “hobnails” under his arm.

Everyone seemed to look at his feet, but he took this for admiration and walked proudly on. But at one of the corners he was chapped by one of the spheroids of law and order.

“Button shoes”, pronounced the M.P., “do not come under the head of regulation issue.”

The private changed back to his hobnails when he found that arguments were unavailing. At the store he tried to change his purchase for a pair of shoes that looked. But he had already scuffled them beyond the possibility of exchange.

“Oh, well”, said he, as he went back to camp with his non-regulation shoes under his arm, “I’ll soon be able to wear ’em with a suit of civvy clothes.”

**2 YARNS ABOUT IRISHER;
NAME IS ‘BILL’ NOT ‘PAT’.**

So many fictitious stories are told concerning the spontaneous wit of the Irish, that these two true stories should be acceptable, in the interests of variety.

Both concern one Irishman, a luck private in the A.E.F., whose irrepressible humor has worked either favorably or unfavorably for him on more than one occasion.

One of the unfavorable times occurred when the company was lined up for inspection. The Irishman, whose name is not “Pat”, but Bill, presented a gun whose appearance could not be described as either spick or span.

“What’s the matter with this gun?”, demanded the captain.

“I don’t know, sir”, said Private Bill, “it ain’t mine, sir.”

“Whose is it?”, demanded the captain.

“The government’s, sir”, replied Private Bill. The after effects of this remark, he was permitted to reflect upon in the guard house.

An occasion where Private Bill’s wit brought pleasure to all concerned, was payday. Bill flourished a handful of five franc notes in the company hut and shouted: “Vin Blane Detail, fall in!”

A platoon of tired and trusty drinkers of fermented grape juice came helter to attention and Private Bill marched his detachment to the nearby village.



JULIAN RIND-TOFT

BEN CHAPLIN

MICHAEL PALIN



THE WIPERS TIMES.

BASED ON A TRUE STORY



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'an extraordinary true story... Funny, sad, and peculiarly British. And told with an

2nd Transnational Literary & Linguistic Summer School

Page 602

The Guardian

As seen on BBC



CLOTH HALL.
YPRES.

Great Attraction This Week

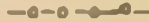
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THE
WIPERS TIMES.

OR
SALIENT NEWS.

No. 1 Vol. 1.

Monday the 13th March 1880

Price 200 Pages

Editorial.

Firstly, we must apologise to our numerous subscribers for the delay in bringing out our third number. (Owing to the inclemency of the weather our cutters became completely demoralised, also the jealousy of our local competitors, Messrs. Hun and Co, rendered an acute stage, and brought some of the wall down on our machines. But we have surmounted all these difficulties by obtaining, on the hire-purchase system, a beautiful Cropper? (I think that's the name) machine. This machine is jewelled in every hole, and has only been obtained at fabulous expense. So that we are once more able to resume our efforts towards peace, and by still telling the truth to our subscribers we hope to retain their confidence, which may have been shaken by pernicious utterings of the Yellow Press during our absence. Our

great insurance scheme met with instant success, and we have already paid out three tons of 117 owing to an unfortunate accident on the Zillebeke Head, where a celebrated firm of commission agents took the branch. At the urgent request of the printing staff we have just imported our new machine. It is certainly a ghastly looking arrangement, and we hesitate to trust our ewe lamb in it's spacious nose, but as it is either that or an ewe lamb we'll risk it. We hear that the war (to which we alluded guardedly in our first number), is proceeding satisfactorily, and we hope shortly to be able to announce that it is a good concern. So for the time being there we will leave it, and turn to graver subjects. We regret that there is still reason to deplore the inability, inefficiency, impatience and inertia of our City Fathers with regard to the condition of the roads (these are mostly up hill).

and the lighting of the town. We should like to see these matters taken in hand at once. There are many more justifiable reasons for dissatisfaction on the part of our fellow townsmen, notably the new night club, which has recently been opened near the Hotel des Nations, prepares a beautiful "cup" for its patrons. This is a step in the right direction, and long may it flourish. All the stars can be seen there nightly, and consequently all visitors will have reason for satisfaction. This being our grand summer number, we have doubled the price, as is usual on these occasions. Before closing we must thank our numerous subscribers for the kindness we have received, both congratulatory and financial.—A happy Xmas to you all!

THE EDITOR.



People We Take Our
Hats off To.

—o—o—o—

Tom I.B.

—oo!—

The French of Verdun.



The corp's and the privy they
Was standing in the road.
Do you suppose, the corp'ri said,
That it is "à la mode?"
I doubt it! said the privy as
He shouldered up his load.

Correspondence.

—o—o—o—

To the Editor,

"Wipers Times." 3218

Sir,—I read, with feelings of disgust, a letter in your last week's issue over the non-deplume of "One Who Knows." Know's what?—I ask! Nothing!—I reply. One who has not the courage to even sign his own name. I am surprised that the editor of a paper with the circulation that you boast should have found room for such a scurrilous, lying effusion. The ignorance of the person is visible in every sentence. Will you please find room for this letter, as otherwise my reputation may suffer in the eyes of those who do not know the true facts.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

"A LOVER OF NATURE."

P.S.—I beg to state that I am the first to hear the cuckoo this season.

—o:—

To the Editor,

Sir,—May I encroach on your valuable space to a small extent. We had a somewhat heated argument at Uxley Vale the other night, and wish you to give us a ruling on the point. The question raised was, "Are the engineers better plumbers than the plumbers are engineers." The argument was continued at the neighbouring restaurant, but no definite conclusion was arrived at.—Thanking you in anticipation,

I am, yours faithfully,

ONE WHO HAS TRIPPED
AND FALLEN.

—oo—

To the Editor,

Sir,—Whilst walking along the Rue de Lisle the other night, a gentleman (sic) coming in the opposite direction accosted me quite abruptly with the words "Who are you?" When I told him not to be inquisitive he became quite offensive, and assumed a threatening attitude. This incident was repeated several times before I had reached the Square. I endeavoured to find a constable, but could not. Where are our police, and what are they doing? Have any more readers had the similar unpleasant experience?

Yours, etc.,

TIMIDITY.

OUR NEW SERIAL.

Herlock Shomes at it
Again.

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.

SYNOPSIS

John Pike, a plump, white-powdered man in a frock coat, the scene of a dinner given to commemorate the third year of office of the mayor of that town, falls into a cramp hole, where he is left unconscious. In the meantime, whilst a merry frolic is making its way along the Devon Road towards Tipton, Humber, the fair but erratic daughter of the shell-hob merchant of Hodge, whilst passing by the Colvert, catches sight of the "Devil" form of Bill Baxter, and although faint into the Bellowville Bay, the waters of which flow so. This incident is noticed by Saunders and Dr. Pinner, who were passing by the Colvert at the time they both themselves fall into the Dec, the waters of which continue to flow on.

CHAPTER 1

The Mystery of the Closed Gate.

We now return to our friend John Pike, who having anticipated for exactly 13 minutes without once pausing to take breath or repeating himself, decides to extricate himself from the cramp hole into which he had so inadvertently fallen. While thus engaged, the silver chimes of the clock on the Cathedral spire bawl forth into song announcing the magic hour of zero p.m. "Whither!" ejaculated Pike to the Pinner's landlady, "At a quarter past zero I proceeded to meet Lizzy at Fell Hill Corner. I must indeed get a move on, otherwise she will be wroth." With

(She) be picked up his hammer and his nail from out of the cramp hole, and proceeded at a rapid pace to the corner of the Square, above, after besting his boots polished and some of the most beautiful linen of his clothes by Bertie, the blue-eyed boot boy, he went off at the double along the road leading to the Devil's Gate. He had not proceeded very far when perforce his pace had to slacken on account of the density of the merry crowd advancing in the opposite direction in close columns of bands, all bent on spending a merry evening at the Death Hall. Herlock's opinion was not a gay one, a flier was he in a merry mood; a drop plot was hatching in the Pinner's kitchen, in which, let it be whispered, Wivly Lizzy was to play a not unimportant part. On reaching Truicide Corner he entered the little shop kept by Sandy Sam, the universal eye and sand-bag merchant. "Evening, Sam," said Phil. "What, you, lashed?"—replied the old man—"What's in the air?" "What's bangs and circumstances mostly, tonight,"—traversed the other—"but I'm in a hurry, I want a good sized bag." This article having been produced, and approved of, John sold the bill with a worthless cheque on Fox's, and placing his hammer and nail in the sand bag and slinging the latter over his shoulder again, took to the road; such was his hurry that, generally observant as he was, he did not notice the shadowy figure of old Sam following in his wake. When within fifty yards of the Devil's Gate the suspended spy took his S.O.S. signal from out of his pocket, unwrapped mine, and hurled it into the air, the being almost immediately answered by three pious horns from the direction of the gatekeeper's dug-out, whose Tim Simons, the sand-bag merchant's foster-son resided. Instantly, still intent on his job's work, hurried on until he reached the Gate, where he fell over a cunningly concealed trap wire, at the same instant a cry, hoarse and hoarse, was heard, increasing in volume and ending in a loud crash!—The Pinner was trapped!!—The Devil's Gate was closed!!!

(To be Continued.)

Next Week:—An entirely new set of characters, and another thrilling instalment.



Le goût du "Kolossal" a toujours été très en honneur chez nos

ennemis de même que chez les partisans de la Kultur! Déjà en l'an de grâce 1453 les Turcs avaient forgé un canon monstre au près duquel le fameux 420 d'aujourd'hui ne serait qu'un jouet. Malheureusement, pour eux, la pièce éclata au premier coup tuant plus d'un millier de soldats ainsi que l'inventeur du mortier.

Il a fallu plus de 500 années d'efforts et de persévérance pour que ces lourds Beutons parviennent à reconstituer celle qu'ils appellent si malicieusement "la grosse Bertha".

Le célèbre inventeur italien *Marconi* vient, paraît-il de découvrir le moyen de voir à travers les profondeurs et même les murs d'une épaisseur de 10 centimètres.

Que les Boches se tiennent bien, car dès que les "poilus" les auront

affaire sera claire et ils auront vite fait de les expédier dans le royaume des bœufs.

On a pu voir dernièrement qu'au cours des récents combats qui se sont déroulés au nord d'Ypres, un officier allemand a été fait prisonnier dans son "home" alors qu'il se trouvait en caleçon!

Les poilus ont bien rigolé, mais vraiment si ces gens-là ne peuvent pas s'habiller tranquillement.....



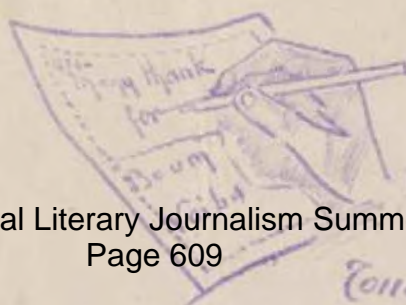
Afin de parer au terrible danger qui menace l'empire allemand tout entier par suite de la pénurie de vivres qui s'y fait sentir, le Kaiser vient de décréter le carême forcé jusqu'à la fin des hostilités.

On dit que cette décision a singulièrement affecté les voraces sujets de Guillaume et qu'une révolte est imminente.

Jean Pi



ILLUSTRE



Tous lisent le *Bonjour Voile*
Bessy d'my G'p'p'



Mon excellent et intime ami
 Jehan le Sol me prie à omieu-
 sement la trompette épique pour son-
 ner très haut la bravoure et le
 tempérament guerriers de notre
 éminent Dapier, lequel ^{vous le mainte-}
 nant. Lui-même le dit un air très de-
 lant.



Je ne l'ai pas pensé, et j'ose dire sim-
 plement qu'il exagère.
 L'ennui naquit un jour de l'uniformité
 Notre docteur Maître n'ignore pas ses
 élanques c'est pourquoy sans aucun
 doute, et à l'encontre de son voisin le
 Don Juan Moderne, il a. ne à changer
 d'air. C'est pour cette raison également
 qu'il fréquente la plage. Je me suis laissé
 aller qu'il était venu fuir le danger...
 Comme le monde est méchant.

J'ai vu votre vénérable ami de rue
 certain soir... et je puis affirmer que
 le but de ses promenades est tout simple-
 ment d'admirer la grande cathédrale,
 de rêver à la lune, et de s'endormir
 parfois au doux murmure des flots...
 (c'est dur vous savez la poésie) Un soir
 je l'ai surpris à terra. Le crépuscule n'aid-
 dait à peine. Je me suis rappelé les
 vers de mon poète préféré:

Jamais sans yeux plus doux vint du ciel le plus pur
 Sonnet la profondeur et effleuri l'azur...
 J'ai l'air de côté ma vieille trompette,
 J'ai perdu son embouchure, et les sons que
 j'en tirerais pourraient effrayer à nouveau
 votre serje des temps anciens

Ignobis. Maman

Un dieu de la classe 16. Votre ancien vous
 a trompé mes amis, même, montant
 vous ne pourriez voir maintenant d'ici!

Une lecture enthousiaste. Il existe dans cet
 domaine deux modèles bien distincts: le
 système Anglais qui est gros et court,
 le système Français qui est long et mince.
 Un système anglais français vous
 conviendrait parfaitement je crois.

Offres et Demandes.

Désire acheter bicyclette de dame
 ayant très peu roulé.
 Offre Bureau du Journal.

Demoiselle momentanément gênée voudrait
 vendre canapé. Style Faubourg 4^e, état
 de neuf, ayant Coule 13. 75. Courant
 rent à l'ordre quelques chose dessus.
 écrire: Bertha, Bureau du Journal.

À nos collaborateurs

Le retard de l'apparition du Boum
 est dû à une négligence du service R.
 Nous rappelons qu'il est nécessaire que
 soient les copies nous parvenant avant
 la soirée du mardi. J. le S.

Imprimerie Vechaubert et C^o
 Secteur 11.

" Lui " par Jehan le Sol.

Mardi, 4 Octobre 18...

C'est demain que je dois parler.
 Demain?

Tout à l'heure devant la chambre de
 Maman. Je me suis arrêté. J'ai entendu
 le son de sa douce voix. Maman
 Mère, elle pleure comme elle pleurait un
 jour, où j'ai vu Lara élever ses yeux
 et sa tête, les yeux levés vers le ciel et dans
 ses mains jointes un chapelet et une petite
 croix.

Deux jours je me suis demandé pourquoi
 elle avait mis dans les mains les emblèmes
 d'une religion qui il ne pratiquait
 pas. Je ne m'explique pas l'avoir vu
 dans une église quelconque. Même en
 silence je l'entendais parler en mauvaise
 part du "cléricalisme"

Dieu sait, peut-être à l'heure où
 il demandait à Maman de lui raconter
 que l'on appelle les derniers sacrements de
 religion? Je n'ai jamais osé
 lui dire ce que j'en pense, et en mystère

et ce soir je ne veux pas parler plus
 longtemps le rôle de ce pauvre vieillard.
 Et son âge il est d'autres préoccupations.
 Et puis, là, tout près de moi, Maman
 pleure parce que je m'éloigne d'elle. Je
 ne suis tout entier à cette nouvelle douleur.
 Pourtant le souvenir de mon Père mort
 m'obsède et me fait mal.

Je ne sais pourquoi nous aimons
 si gentiment l'enfer aux endroits où
 nous avons souffert. Est-ce faiblesse de
 l'homme, ou est méchanceté de la nature?
 Je l'ignore. Mais ce soir j'éprouve une
 joie sauvage à raviner mes souvenirs
 dans la cervelle, et chez étrange
 mais les souvenirs douloureux reviennent en
 foule et laissent aucune place aux
 heures de douce joie que j'ai pu
 goûter.

Oh, pourquoi la mémoire ne rebau-
 tisse pas! Je voudrais tout oublier.
 surtout ce soir je voudrais ne point
 voir, ne point entendre. Ce que je
 verrai, ce que j'entendrai me
 fera souffrir.

RIDEAU 1915. ROPAR

BOUM VOILA!

SAMEDI 26 JUIN

DÉPÊCHES DU MONDE ENTIER, ET D'AILLEURS

ORGANE LITTÉRAIRE ET ARTISTIQUE DES C.O.A.

DIRECTION ET ADMINISTRATION

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ABONNEMENTS
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3 MOIS 4 FR.

AU SOIR DE MES VINGT ANS

J'ai caché dans ce livre, au soir de mes vingt ans,
Ma jeunesse et mon cœur, mes amours, mes folies;
Mais je voudrais, avant d'enterrer mon printemps,
Cueillir, maman, pour vous, ses fleurs les plus jolies.

Vous n'y trouverez pas ces bouquets éclatants
Faits de parfums trompeurs et de roses salées.
Ces fleurs sont sans apprêt, sans ces fleurs que le Temps,
Pour marquer le passé, ce soir aura pâlies!

J'ai caché dans ce livre aussi tous mes espoirs,
Mes rêves les plus bleus, mes soucis les plus noirs,
Illusions, qu'enfant, je croyais éternelles!

Siemens éphémères d'amour ou fusions d'un moment,
Vous tous, mes rêves d'or! Recueillez-les, maman,
Dont combés du Nord avant et avec ses ailes!

elle et pure et délicat devait être
cruellement blessée à la vue des fleurs
fanées. Pour ma part, je n'aime pas
voir les fleurs se faner. Il me semble
que c'est un peu beaucoup de mon
âme qui se fane avec elles...

LE MENESTREL / Chant

Appareil de Chauffage
à combustion lente,
Spécial pour les tranchées
ne ressemble en rien aux fourneaux
boches
Bire bien.
ne rougit jamais,
Marche par tous les temps.
ne se rouille jamais
Absolument incallébrable.

Le poêle U utilise tout, consume
tout, s'améliore à l'usage.
Le poêle U n'est pas un
"qu' alors y faire".
Le poêle U n'a pas les hiéds
nichés, mais il est entièrement
verni.

Il est dangereux de le faire fumer?
Modèles décorés.

TYPES DE CAMPAGNE

... Le Cuisotot ...

Du milieu de son arsenal :
Fourneaux, marmites, bouilloires,
Cuillères, fourchettes et couteaux,
Le cuisotot de croix générale,
Du le roi de la création.
Il rouspite comme un daimier,
Fait un chambard de tous les diables,
Et songeant à ces misérables
Qui vont lui manger son dîner
Et qui lui courent sur le râble.

Sole, crasseux plus que de mise,
Du calot jusqu'à ses talons,
Veste, cravatte, pancalon,
Crauselles, flanelle, chemise ;
Et se voit, ne dites pas non.

Et quand des clients d'ordinaire
Viennent lui chercher leurs rations,
Il suit marchander leurs portions.
Faire du râble et sa manière,
Il dit très peu des cordons.

Sort en queue tout m^{me} fignot,
Il est larec tous ses farouches.
Si c'est un rouspite il dit "ta g. bouche"
Et lui sert un râle de râge. Et
Cuisotot s'autant de louché.

La règle n'est pas immuable.
Ious ne font pas manger des chiens
Ni ne vont bricoler en raurien.
Certains cuisotots sont très aimables
Et on pourrait dire adault du mien.

Recevant Jean du Nord.
3 Juillet 1915.

A nos lecteurs.

Il vous a été impossible de faire
paraître votre journal la semaine
passée, le bombardement du D. G. G.
avait jeté le désarroi parmi les Services
militaires.
Nous vous excusons de ce retard.
A l'avenir bataille chon ne se
prolongera plus.

La Direction.

" Nos héros "

Le 22 Août 1914 un jeune
sous lieutenant de la promotion de " Les
Cœurs du Dragon ", Jean Allard
Mous, combattit glorieusement sur le
champ de bataille.

Devant au souffle suçant, d'une
délicieuse tenace. Allard Mous, au
soir de ses vingt ans, avait composé
deux ou trois le sonnet que nous don-
nons en première page.

" Vingt ans c'est à dire des joies...
c'est le rêve qui commence, le rêve
rêve bercé et doux, le rêve un cœur,
de mon cœur au soir de ses vingt ans..

Seul éte ces lignes nous appa-
raissent, elles, aujourd'hui, empreintes
d'une sentimentalité exagérée. N'oublions
pas que le jeune poète parle à sa mère,
sa mère confiante et sur son sein il
vient pleurer le passage trop rapide de
ses vingt premières années : mes vingt
ans se fanent et j'ai peur d'en perdre
le parfum.

Hélas le rêve de son cœur de vingt
ans, ce beau rêve bercé et doux
s'est bien vite effacé. Mais avant de
tomber sous les balles ennemies, il a
eu le rare bonheur de vivre son rêve.
Combien nombreux sont ceux qui voient
leurs rêves s'effacer, et qui doivent
vivre cependant !...

Allard Mous est mort à l'au-
tanne de sa vie de jeune homme. Il avait
eu le pressentiment de sa mort quand
il écrivait " il est doux parfois de voir
mourir les fleurs au déclin de leur
printemps ". Je l'ignore. Mais je
sais qu'il ne perdit pas son âme
à écrit. Non, non, son âme grandit



Un journal de province écrit sérieusement sous le titre "Un carlinif nouveau". Deux habitants de ... ont découvert un exploit nouveau... il s'agit sans doute de celui du ... typro!



Après un repos forcé de huit jours, imposé par l'incorrigible censeur, le Bonhomme réapparait avec un nez en de vie et de bonne humeur. Que certains ne viennent pas dire que la cen- sure n'est qu'un prétexte et que seule la promesse engendrée par l'éclatement des "holocaustes mar- mites" doit être mise en cause! S'il est parmi nous, quelque un que les omes émotionnent particulière- ment, il ne faudrait pas, pour cela, en faire une généralité.

Mais, trêve de discussions. J'ai vu que tous nos amis ont convaincus, et que c'est les vains nœuds que nous soulevons à nouveau nous présenter devant notre grand public.

Or donc, les Roches ont daigné se rappeler à notre bon souvenir, personne ne se plaint de leur amabilité, les moyens seuls sont un peu bruyants, un peu de modération ne serait pas pour nous déplaire.

Un jeune et éminent collaborateur du "Bonhomme" nous a quitté pour un poste plus belliqueux. Non content de l'obtenir, mais utile travail au C.O.A., le jeune "Guépin" s'en est allé rêvant batailles et ... gains.

Ne désespérons pas de le voir bientôt général ou tout au moins ... d'adant de 1^{re} classe.

Quel lieu que l'alcoolisme, ses vic- times ne se comptent plus, un de nos camarades vient pour intempérance d'être atteint de 11 jours de tole, un autre de 11 jours de ... coliques.

Ceffer Duchonogue.

COMMUNIQUÉS OFFICIEUX.

Un de nos plus grands quotidiens (qui dit tout) vient de broder le moyen d'abréger la durée de la guerre: il a porté la longueur du jour à 100 heures.

En lit, en effet dans le ... (pour nous de renouveau ment) consulter dame Centure) ... du 15 Juin, 2^e page, 2^e colonne, les lignes sui- vantes: ...

à 25 heures 45, la section franche parvenue. etc ...

On se demande si cette innovation ne va pas être appliquée d'urgence, dans le but de guérir les gens atteints de plus noir pessimisme

Sans Censure bien que souvent imitoyable, aime parfois à se montrer malicieuse. Jugez-en:

Vos journaux ont publié dernièrement le chiffre des prisonniers tombés aux mains des Allees ainsi que le nombre de ces prisonniers inter- nés dans chacune des quinzaines de la quadruple- Entente.

En ce qui concerne la France, la Censure s'était uatée à la Cisailla.

Et il se trouve encore des manuscrits languet pour en plaindre!

Jean Ri Annonce

A vendre nombreux Carnards! (s'adresser à Léonore-Marie Bimes). (Bureau du journal). N° 135.687.

Ne jugez pas et ...

"Ne jugez pas et vous ne serez pas jugé" dit le sage. Tant pis pour le sage ou pour moi: je veux juger en attendant de l'être.

Je veux vous parler de l'esprit de contradiction et de la neurasthénie. Comme les dissertations de métaphysique ne sont pas mon fort, je concrétise mon sujet. Déjà je me sens à l'aide, car j'ai mon personnage sous la main.

"Eh, mon bon", je vous vois venir avec vos gros sabots; vous voudriez bien que je le nomme. Apprenez que je tiens beaucoup à être déboulé. Je le serai.

Vous vous remarquerez parfois l'allure macabre du croquemort pendant sa triste et funèbre besogne, le patient que j'ai entre les mains rappréhende à lui seul tout un enterrement. Il est du Midi, mon cher, mais vu d'après lui, le Midi m'apparaît quelque peu triste et morose.

Vos traits exécutés par une fatigue dont per- sonne autre que lui ne connaît les causes, la conversation monotone, presque monosyllabique, vous plonge dans une somnolence peuplée de cauchemars, le regard terni, le teint pâle mais d'un beau rose, sous une chevelure noire, astroléris coupée par le milieu d'une raie aussi droite que celle, tout enfin me fait le tableau de neurasthénie et qui sait si un jour je ne lui imposerai pas une surtute.

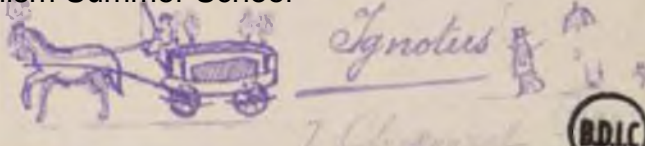
J'ai parlé de sa conversation, j'aurais mieux fait de n'en rien dire, car c'est elle qui montre son esprit de contradiction, aussi facilement que le carillon sonne minuit.

Mais je ne veux pas caqueter: et comme rien ne vaudrait l'expérience personnelle, si vous avez le soir place J.-B., sur le coup de 18 heures, vous allez le plaisir de rencontrer ce charmant jeune homme. Surtout ne le confondez pas avec un flic ou un facteur de campagne rentrant de tournée.

Salut-lui, même du Nord, et s'il vous donne raison une seule fois, J.-B. descendra de son piédestal pour vous saluer.

Ami, mon voisin, ne m'en veuillez pas de vous exposer ainsi tout au haut d'une colonne (hélas, pas girmonine); je sais que le vertige vous retient de fréquenter les hauteurs et que vous n'avez rien de défilé.

Mais, Dio mio, qu'avez-vous n'acquiescez vous pas de tendis en temps sur vos lèvres blanchissant un léger sourire de fin de son qui pentes l'enchantement



Celle du Diables sousigné fut particulièrement bonne la semaine des... le Diable n'ayant du paraître en raison et événements fâcheux en tout au moins peu d'agréables, qui ont encore troublé notre chère "quadrille", et n'a pas eu à se débarrasser et à prescrire des pauvres mariages pour produire quelque étonnement de la culture.

Malheureusement sur lui cette semaine fut peu fertile en merveilles et il fut bien à l'égard lui que le Diable à ses collègues tout le chemin de la nature, tout l'esprit de ses collaborateurs.

Aussi se voit-il contraint de "sonner" quelque chose et c'est bien ce qui rend sa situation intenable, car plus ça va plus ça ne va plus.

Mais, comme ce n'est point pour la modeste personne que la "Situation" a été créée, il lui faut parler un peu de la "Situation Centrale".

Or c'est justement de celle-là que l'on ne peut rien dire sous nos grands colonnes hâssent leur temps à nous raconter les histoires les plus invraisemblables. Depuis le jour où ils ont inventé que le "Boche" était destiné à une fin immédiate par suite d'immolation, ils ont été émis pour à tour les rôles les plus fantastiques, et sans pour nous, Français, les plus invraisemblables. "Cigarette de guerre" (les caresses perdant leur point, objet de leur orgueil); élévation considérable du prix des denrées (toutes les ménagères prétendent que c'est encore moins cher qu'en France); ... et que sais-je de ce goût...

La dernière trouvaille, tout le monde, hélas, la connaît. On nous représente la retraite russe comme une opération stratégique de la "Kustbaute", l'abandon de Przemyśl, etc. sans importance... La chute de Lemberg: oh quelle merveille... "Edus eos praxus confisus, an n' d're, ne s'adent et c'est parce que je ne voudrais pour moi au monde en faire autant qu'ayant servi cette chère "humaine situation", dont tout le monde saura, je pense, apprécier la gravité, je m'abstiens de juger.

Sapiens. Fouley

Regrets !!!

Notre dévoué collaborateur Ignolus nous fait connaître que il ne pourra se longtemps étendre avec nous.

Nous ignorons les raisons de cette brusque détermination, que nous regrettons.

Vous pourriez vous en occuper, cher sans votre encouragement quelque un qui voudrait se charger de la partie critique

le nouveau article de votre honorable collaborateur. Pour le moment et toujours. Chantre Jehan le Sor.

La Critique est...

La critique est aisée... non, d'ordinaire vous, elle peut vous paraître celle, changez vous même et vous aurez une idée des difficultés qui elle présente quand elle doit être faite judicieusement et d'une façon courtoise.

Je ne veux point critiquer les "Boches"; pour eux il faut l'accusation, le réquisitoire. A l'heure voulue la France entiera se levra contre eux.

Je ne veux point critiquer mes amis, ni mes amis, car je passerai pour un sans cœur d'abord et un insolent ensuite.

Mais alors, qui vais-je critiquer? Et bien, ce sera moi-même car depuis cinq minutes je vous retiens pour ne rien dire.

Cependant, j'ai une excuse. La critique ainsi nommée est devenue la Censure et notre cher J. le Sor, dans son premier article nous a interdit de toucher à cette jeune mais sérieuse personne.

Je m'en recueille point si je ne juge pas mes ennemis, et si je n'ai point de "mot" à dire de mes amis.

Pour cela je pourrais l'avoir demandé auparavant à un professionnel de marque d'un feuille de chou et qui dit tout, mais nous sommes en guerre d'abord et C. O. A. ensuite, et rien ne doit sortir de notre grande famille.

Par conséquent, et j'aurais mieux fait, peut être, de commencer par là je vous offrirai tout simplement de temps en temps un article de fond, sans "point" bien entendu...

Je vous prie, dans la prochaine, de vous lecteurs. Je vous promets de faire tout mon possible pour être intéressant.

Chantre N. O. P. P.

A tous les Collaborateurs

Je serais très reconnaissant à tous nos chers collaborateurs de bien vouloir faire remettre leurs copies au bureau de la Rédaction, le Mardi soir ou au plus tard le Mercredi matin.

J. le S.



N^o 1-10

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JM

SCHÜTZENGABEN

IN DEN
VOGesen

HERAUSGEBER: GEFREITER PAUL ERKENS.

469
82



P. ERKENS 1915



„Unsere Mitarbeiter“

Herr Doenglare (1) ist Repräsentant und schreibt über „Freundschaft“. — Herr Milan Wanzinger (2) über „Innere Angelegenheiten“. — Ale. Popowitsch (3) über „den Weg zum Erfolg“. — John Bull in Firma „Friedensbertha Nachf.“ (4) Redakteur des Handelsblattes. — Fräulein Danstlarne (5) z. B. weibl. Redakteur der Zeitschrift „Nimm mich mit“ für 5 Pf. — Herr di Dolenta (7) ist tonho. Transnational Literary Journalism Summes School im Will sie'n (8), Gurtha (6), Djamma! (9) sind Mitarbeiter.



Der Fremdwortkrieg¹⁾

Man kann fast alles übertreiben,
Als Jungfrau selbst das Sitzenbleiben,
Als Ehefrau: das Kinderkriegen,
Als Gatte: heimlich auszufliegen.
Man kann das Tanzen übertreiben,
Das Poesie- und Prosaschreiben,
Das Spielen, Trinken, Sumpfen, Rauchen
Wie auch das Fremdwort zu gebrauchen.

Der Deutsche soll nicht animieren,
Nicht ennulieren, nicht verziehen,
Soll nie „good bay“, „good morning“, sagen,
Auch nicht: „comment ça va-t-il?“ fragen.
Doch kann man echter Deutscher bleiben
Und Wechsel blanco unterschreiben,
Und auch Kredit in Anspruch nehmen,
Sich selbst bewegen in Extremen.

Auch Schiller sprach von Limonade,
Und Goethe von der Masterade,
Fürst Bismarck lebte zu zittern,
Und Nietzsche zu philosophieren.
Nicht jedes Fremdwort soll man melden,
Oft braucht man's, um zu unterscheiden:
„Artisten“ können sich entzwei'n,
Und brauchen keine „Künstler“ sein.

Wer jedes Fremdwort will verdrängen,
Sucht seine Sprache einzuengen
Und wird nur Unglückseler legen,
Zum Beispiel, wenn man den Kollegen

„Berufsfreund“ ferner titullert,
Der dich am liebsten freilassert,
Der gar zu gern dein Grab umzäunte;
Ich danke bestens für die Freunde!

Doch hältst Berufsfreund du für besser,
So nenn' Stilet auch Dreieckmesser,
Nenn das Klavier jetzt Klingklanghiste,
Sag für Silentium: „Stille biste!“
Sag für Hotel stets Fremdenbleibe,
Und statt Roulette sag Schieber-Scheibe.
Parfüm nenn Nasenliebingsduft,
Und das W. G. nenn Honiggruft.
Eunuch ersetze durch Zeugungsleerer,
Und Missionar durch Seelenlehrer.
Billard heiß' ferner Murmeltisch,
Attest, devot: Beglaub'ungswisch.
Den Joden nenne Reiternutte,
Den Gutaway Gesellschaftstutte.
Sag Scheinbehauptung für Perücke,
Und statt „dear darling“ — — kleine Dide!
Schwadron benenne Reiterrudel,
Importe kurz Entäuschungsnudel.
Die Ammen nenne Kindertühe,
Die Medizin Bereich'rungsbrühe.
Statt Loge sage Dreiwandlammer,
Und statt Parlettisch Sichfleischlammer.
Den Querulanten nenne Truhmann,
Und Herrn von Jagow — Überschußmann.
Für Dortemonnale sag Taschenpinle,
Und für Adieu jetzt: Winte, winte!
Für Opernglas sag Singspielgude
Für chavvinistisch, kurz: „meschugge!“

¹⁾ Aus dem neuen Satirenband: H. D. Weber, „Humor und Becher“ — 60 Pfg. (Heinrich F. C. Bachmair Verlag, Berlin W 62).



Unser Gesangverein!

Spruch aus: „Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus“

„Die Lampe leucht’ Dir fein, doch mußt Du sie auch laben
 Mit fett’ Olivenaft, die Flamm sonst bald verlischt.
 Getreuer Dienst durch Lohn gemehrt wird und erfrischt;
 Soldaten Tapferkeit will Unterhaltung haben.“

Lürisches Kriegsgedicht

In Schüttelreimen

Lasset doch det Nasentrümpfen
 Englands dürre Rasen=Nümpfen!

Frankreich auch Du! Loddermädchen,
 In der Weltenmodder Lädchen!

Wißt ihr schon, det Polen hin
 Weil ick et am holen pin!

Tehen wir mit Hussah rin
 Ist ein jeder Russa hin!

Dies man eine Chose heißet
 Ihr bald in die Hose steigt!

Kriegsflibel



7!
 Ein Carban haben manfuer
Carloun küßt ihr Hörinflain ^{Abnzen} hengen!



7!
 Kriß maufur yinbt in jandur Herdt
Labrinna in Mustin berd!



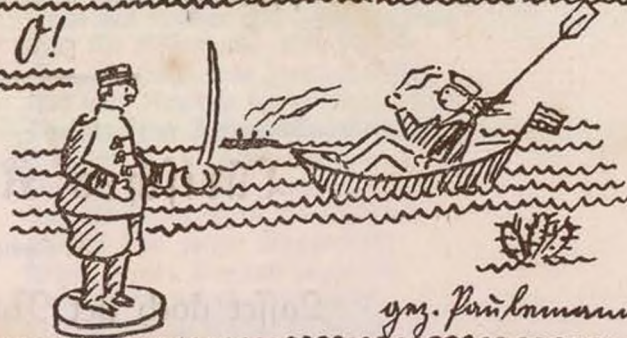
7!
 Ein Solomitus sind uefaban
 Ein Jaggan kuin Abündretkurben!



7!
Joformu linbt Ein Jofo Billan
Jo pfminstman wüßt auf Ein Herdt Stellen!



7!
Wit Opülpf ladnt man Kernnen
Ein Grücker poll in Ein Ein neofman!



7!
Offanden lingt wüßt in Offersan
Woffen got Offen fin offen ber fin!

Achtung!	<h2>Etablissement Goldberg!</h2> <h3>Für Nervenschwache!</h3> <p>Ruhiges Plätzchen! Höhenluft! Bäder! Parkanlagen! Waldwege mit Parkettfußboden! Jeden Abend Feuerwerk! Eigener Schießplatz für stehende und bewegliche Ziele! Reizvolle Versteckspiele in eigenst dazu gebauten Stollen! Wasserspiele! Hôtels am Plaze: „Zur Alpenrose!“ „Zum Hasenstall!“ „Zum Lokomotivführer!“ „Zum bayr. Hiasl!“ „Villa Krach!“ Man verlange Prospekte</p>	Achtung!
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Der Unterstand der verantwortlichen Schriftleitung befindet sich im Vogesen-Schühengraben der I. Komp. des III. Batl. des Bayer. Ers.-Inf.-Regts. Nr. 1. Das Original der Zeitschrift wird dort hergestellt. Alle Rechte vorbehalten; Nachdruck verboten. Monatlich erscheinen möglichst zwei Hefte zum Preise von je 10 Pf., Doppelhefte kosten 25 Pf. Abonnements durch den Buchhandel. Heinrich F. ... International Literary Journalism Sommer-Schule für ... Man verlange Prospekte
 (Zuschriften nur an ... nach Berlin erbeten.)

LIFE IN TRENCHES AS SOLDIERS TELL IT

Little Paper Published at the
Front by Canadian Scottish
a Human Document.

DAILY TOLL OF CARNAGE

But Stout-Hearted 'Johnny Canuck,'
Despite the Nerve-Racking Strain,
Is Cheerful Through It All.

Military authorities on the western front of the European war seem to be encouraging the publication of regimental journals by the men in the trenches. At any rate, these little papers are increasing rapidly in number.

Judged by journalistic standards, they are "trifles light as air," devoted, as they are, mainly to the chronicling of regimental gossip and persiflage, but they serve to lighten the gloom of the great tragedy that is convulsing the Old World, and render more bearable the lot of the men who, day after day, go down into the inferno of the cataclysm.

These publications began to spring up in the early days of the war. Even on the 'dash for Paris' German soldiers found time to commandeer newspaper or job offices, and turn out regimental publications. One can imagine what they must have been—German text in roman type—but they did well enough as a makeshift. Since then the custom has spread, and now the chances are that nearly every regiment on each side on the western front has a publication of some kind. Not so much is known of conditions on the other fronts, but it is probable that the soldiers there also have their little papers.

Few details have been received about the journalistic activities behind the lines of the Central Powers, due, of course, to the difficulties of communication, but comparatively full reports have come from the Entente trenches. The Canadians seem to have their full share of these enterprises. A partial list of battalion publications includes The Dead Horse Corner Gazette, The Listening Post, The Growler, The Twentieth Gazette, Trench Echoes, and The Forty-niner, while field ambulance papers include The Iodine Chronicle, The Splint Record, and Now and Then.

The Brazier Is Lighted.

And now comes The Brazier, a new publication, the first number of which has just reached New York. This is the organ of the Sixteenth Battalion, the Canadian Scottish, and it is "published by permission of Lieut. Col. J. E. Leckie, D. S. O." The trench publications, The Brazier explains, "are issued periodically, as opportunity affords. Some are printed in England and others by French job offices at the front, while The Brazier has an added distinction in being set up and printed by regimental employes. Prices of these journals range from 1 penny to 1 franc."

The price of The Brazier is twopence. It is an eight-page paper, the pages being about 9 by 11 inches in size. It is not badly printed, and it is illustrated, but the printing is better than the illustrating. The latter evidently is the work of amateurs, probably members of the battalion. One of the illustrations is in the form of a cartoon which has to do with the Christmas season. It seems to be a reproduction of a Christmas card from Brig. Gen. R. G. Edwards Leckie, C. M. G., and officers of the staff of the Third Canadian Infantry Brigade, "somewhere in France." The card presents the figure of John Bull, helmeted and militant, and that of a soldier in kilts, who is handing to "Dear Chief," with the compliments of the season, what at first glance looks like a smoking Christmas pudding, but,

on closer inspection, turns out to be a lighted hand grenade.

The Brazier is introduced to the world with a card from Colonel Leckie, the commander of the battalion, in which he speaks of the paper as being issued primarily "as a vehicle for regimental news and anecdote," invites "contributions of verse, story, joke, or sketch," and bespeaks for the publication "the hearty support of all ranks in making the enterprise a permanent medium which will reflect the esprit de corps of the Canadian Scottish." The manager of The Brazier is Private Percy F. Godenrath. The mechanical staff consists of Drummer A. R. McCreadie and Piper George Inglis.

Whispered His Speech.

The first page is devoted to battalion news of a more or less serious character. For instance, there is an account of an entertainment given in the Y. M. C. A. marque at Bulford Camp on Jan. 18, which included band music, a boxing contest, songs, and Highland dancing and piping. The chief guest was Major G. Godson-Godson, former Adjutant of the battalion, who recently had been decorated with the Distinguished Service Order for gallantry at the battle of Ypres. The Major was wounded in this engagement and was still suffering from his injuries so severely as to be unable to make himself heard, so he whispered his speech to Captain Heakes, who repeated it word for word to the audience—a grim reminder of the realities of war. Major Godson-Godson complimented the battalion on the "magnificent way you behaved on the night of April 22 at Ypres and subsequently at Festubert." He said he never had seen such an exhibition of courage and discipline.

Another news item tells of the gift of four machine guns to the battalion from a patriotic admirer in Vancouver, B. C. Another is devoted to the sports of the battalion—football, boxing, and indoor baseball. Still another item tells of the gift of a moving picture machine to the Third Infantry Brigade from friends in Canada, with which cinema shows are given in barns where troops are billeted. The machine is to make the rounds of the brigade, new films being provided from time to time.

Under date of "Somewhere in Flanders, Jan. 31," an open letter is addressed to "Johnny Canuck" at home, detailing "regimental happenings while on active service." At the outset the writer attempts to remind the reader of the various units that originally composed the battalion; but this is military information, and the conscientious censor has cut it out, leaving a blank space of an inch inscribed "Deleted by Censor."

The chronicler goes on to comment that "few, indeed, of the original Sixteenth, and, for that matter, the first draft, are now with us. But this is war." He then proceeds to describe the Winter in Flanders.

Daily Deluge of Missiles.

"It is not cold or freezing, as we understand that kind of weather at home, but the weather is raw, with chilly rainstorms and hard gales that beat over the flatlands. It is a gaunt, gray outlook between here and the front," he goes on—he is writing in camp several miles behind the trenches. "Human endurance seems to face with equanimity the daily deluge of high explosives, machine and rifle fire under the pitiful shelter of parapet, trench, and dugout, but with the elements also to combat life at the front takes on a greater physical strain. For these temporary earthworks and shelters have, indeed, suffered more severely from the elements than the enemy's cannon. Due to the continuous rain, communication trenches, dugouts, and even massive parapets, constructed of many thicknesses of sandbags, have collapsed, and for days on end miles of parallel and connecting subterranean passages have been temporarily rendered useless in places through being undermined by the running water."

The writer adds that the Sixteenth, with the other three battalions of the Third Brigade, has occupied the same frontage for seven months, a record.

"It has been," he goes on, "a period of constant watchfulness—ever on the alert to frustrate a possible advance by an equally vigilant enemy. We pay a constant toll from the hidden sniper, the daily bombardment; and periodic attempts at bombing our position. There is much grim truth in what a Lieutenant said to me: 'This plagued trench warfare is simply mud, monotony, and murder.' No wonder, when the shell fire becomes almost unbearable and one's nerves are frazzled out the Canadian feels it would be a genuine relief for 'our blokes to go over'—the graphic expression of his British confrère for the order to advance to the attack."

“L’Indiscret” Has
All Sorts of Items of
Every-Day Life
Among French
Troops.

WHEN the soldiers in the European war are not fighting they try their hands at journalism. Not long ago a picture appeared of a printing office and by German troops in Northern France, where a daily newspaper is issued for those fighting in the German trenches. And now a copy has come to America of a paper issued by French soldiers in the French trenches for the celebration of their comrades during “off” hours.

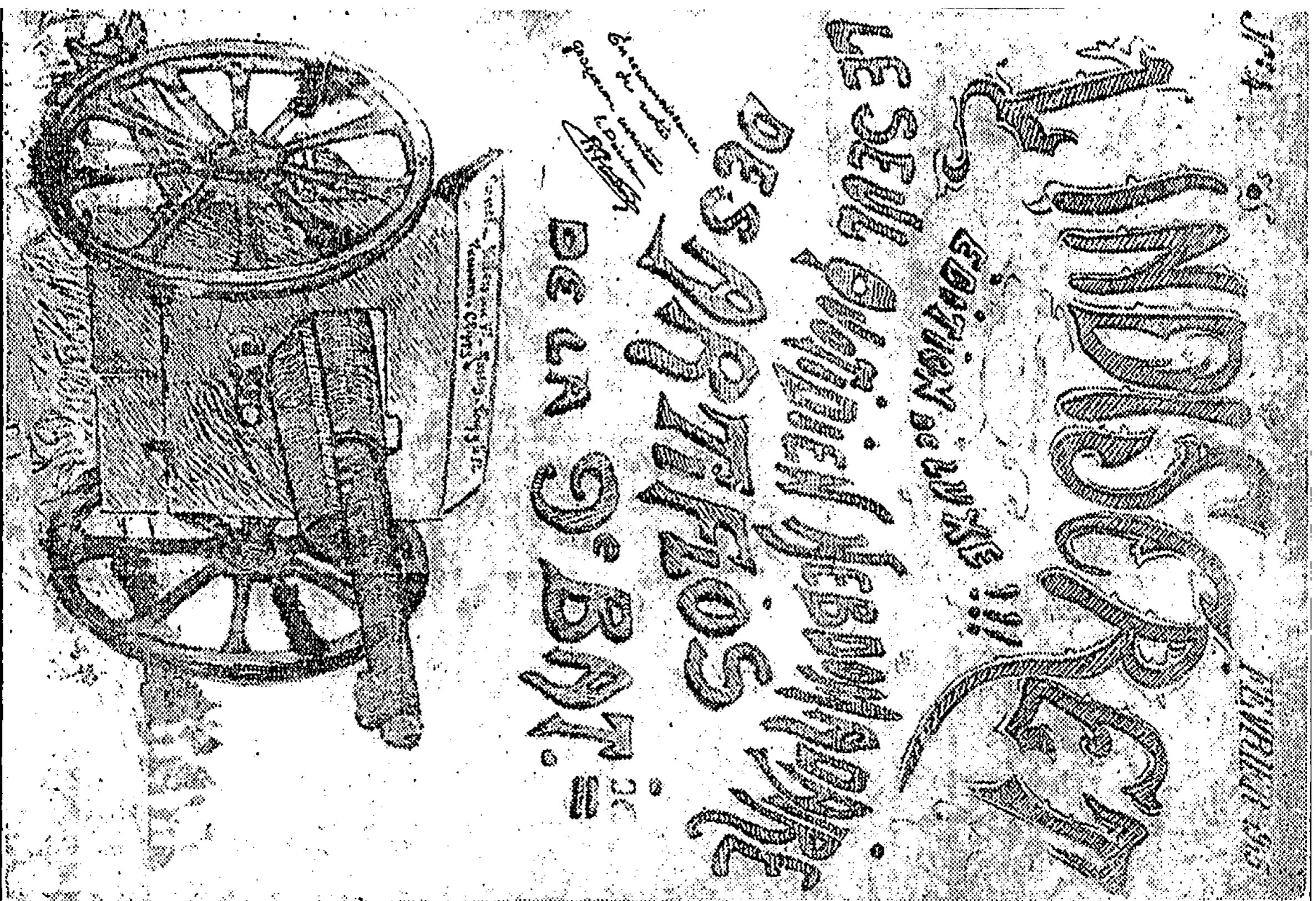
This one, though, is not printed. The modest resources of its publishers do not allow of anything better than mimeographing. It is called L’Indiscret and makes a brave showing with its bold purple ink “news,” written in long-hand, and a number of pen and ink sketches.

The cover of L’Indiscret informs us that it is the “only daily weekly” of the Ninth Battery of Artillery, below which announcement is a picture of a very business-like looking cannon, presumably of the brand used by the battalion.

The copy which has found its way to America also has quite a spirited ballade, celebrating the prowess of the “poilus” of the Ninth Battery. This states, among other things, that the Crown Prince of Germany is in the habit of trembling at the approach of the said Ninth. Another item runs thus:

Painted persons have circulated the report that L’Indiscret had gone into bankruptcy. This is a base calumny. The department of publishing has been due solely to the lack of paper. Shame to the slanderers!

“We note with sorrow,” says another item, “the little interest shown by citizens of R— in attending the fun-



Page from Newspaper Published in the Trenches.

Stirring Verses,
Football Reports,
and Criticisms of
Camp Cookery
Find Place in Its
Columns.

erals of our poor comrades killed in defense of their country.”

Somewhat more cheerful is this: INHERITANCE—Our friend R— having just come into some money, and having been promoted, offers a supper to all his friends on L’Indiscret. Evening clothes. Bring your own platter and drinking cup.

A cartoon shows Germany and Austria seated at a table and inviting Italy to share their repast, only to be told, to the accompaniment of disrespectful gestures, “No! I won’t eat!” The influence of England is seen in another item, headed “Football,” telling of a victory of a team from the Ninth Battery over one from the Thirteenth Artillery Regiment.

“This match,” we learn, “was umpired with much impartiality by Cousin, editor of The Aero.”

On the last page of L’Indiscret is a highly uncomplimentary tirade against the food served in the particular trench or trenches occupied by the gallant Ninth Battery. It purports to be an advertisement of the “Great Provision Firm” supplying the soldiers with eatables and sings the praises of “green and frozen meats, old rancid lard, remnants of old candles for frying, Japanese tea received by an indirect route,” &c., &c. The advertisement includes a drawing showing some of these tempting delicacies.

We are told that a concert was held somewhere near the front, at which a “violinist of great talent” was warmly applauded for his rendition of the “Meditation” from “Thais.” The issue concludes with this little item:

We learn of the founding of a Don’t Worry Club. An evening spent with its members enabled us to state that the club is well named.

Soldier Newspapers: A Useful Source in the Social and Cultural History of the First World War and Beyond

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Abstract

To memoirs and soldiers' letters, the new military historian must add soldier newspapers as a rich and useful source for understanding the fears and hopes of the troops of all ranks. By analysing the production and creation of these newspapers for the British, French, and German armies in the First World War, and indicating both the unique national traits of each nation's journals and the universal stories found across the three armies' newspapers, it is hoped that this article will point researchers toward the vast archive of soldier newspapers available for many of the wars of the last 250 years.

Keywords

Censorship, First World War, Germany, journalism, newspapers, propaganda

As the social and cultural history of warfare continues to expand and become more sophisticated, historians are developing sources that tell us increasingly profound stories about the soldier participants at the heart of the new military history. To this day, one of the most significant shifts in source analysis remains the move from reading the memoirs of soldiers, usually officers, or at least better educated soldiers, to the analysis of soldiers' letters, a move from top to bottom.¹ It is now unthinkable for a historian of a modern western war to write a book in which he or she purports to tell us

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- 1 See J. Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York, 1976); P. Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York, 1975). The pioneer of soldiers' letters use in Germany was P. Knoch, ed., *Kriegsalltag: Die Rekonstruktion des Kriegsalltags als Aufgabe der historischen Forschung und der Friedenserziehung* (Stuttgart, 1989). A classic study now available in English is B. Ziemann, *War Experiences in Rural Germany, 1914–1923*, trans. A. Skinner (New York,

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what the soldiers believed, without making serious reference to what those soldiers scribbled down on dirty, crumpled paper, hunched over to thwart the rain, while sitting in a trench at Petersburg, Ypres, Stalingrad, or Khe Sahn. There is, however, another source that was available in all four places just mentioned, a set of texts that can help us fill out the mental landscape of soldier participants in the modern era: soldier newspapers. These journals were sometimes written solely by active soldiers, sometimes shaped by propaganda officers; either paid for through subscription or distributed freely; closely monitored by censorship officials or written and nailed to a nearby tree. In every case, a sophisticated approach to either what soldiers themselves wrote in these newspapers or, more complicatedly, what propagandists ‘believed’ their troops would find acceptable helps us fill out the life-world of the soldier, and depicts for us the many images, stories, and justifications that, whether he believed them or not, were a part of his mental universe. The new military historian dismisses such sources at his or her peril.

Of course, for historians, the depth and breadth of source material is crucial to any investigation, and some wars were undoubtedly more fruitful than others when it came to sheer production of written text. And as is the case with soldiers’ letters, the First World War also represents the peak of soldier newspaper production. In the modern era, the period which has produced for us literate, lower-class soldiers, no other event saw so many of these young (and old) men sitting around for so long in the same place, writing so many millions of letters and writing, distributing, and reading so many soldier newspapers. On the Western Front soldiers from all armies commandeered buildings some 20 to 30 km behind the static front lines, and set up newspaper offices and sometimes even printing presses.

In what follows I will examine the story of soldier newspapers in that conflict, as it unfolded for the British, French, and German armies. Initially, I will briefly lay out the broad, generalized character of each national army’s soldier newspapers, and the differences I have been able to highlight through reading all extant copies.² For the bulk of this methodological essay, however, I will examine the authors, production, distribution, and censorship of the newspapers, and then discuss the act of reading. I will then return to ‘content’, and provide some clues as to what such ‘mass media’ can tell us about universal aspects of soldier life in the First World War: namely, the image of the enemy and the ubiquity of women in the thoughts (and lives) of these men. I will end with a discussion of the under-studied soldier newspapers of other nationalities in 1914–18, and provide an overview of the possibilities for future research through reference to the soldier newspapers produced in many of the other wars throughout the modern era.

2007 [orig. 1997]). A useful overview in English of the shift to a social history of French soldiers is D. Englander, ‘The French Soldier, 1914–18’, *French History* I (1987), pp. 49–67.

2 I saw and read all extant issues of the soldier newspapers of the German, French, British, and Dominion armies in Stuttgart, Leipzig, Paris, Cambridge, and London. See R.L. Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers of the First World War* (Cambridge, in press).

I. Soldier Newspapers and National Difference in the First World War

Jack and Bill
 Went up a hill
 To see a Frenchman's daughter;
 The Censor's here,
 And so I fear
 I can't say what they taught her.

The Minden Magazine, August 1916

All historians of Britain in the First World War should spend time at the British Library reading soldier newspapers.³ Before going in they may have to steel themselves in order not to disturb their neighbours with their laughter. The hallmark of British (and especially Australian, though not so much Canadian) trench journals is the incredible, seemingly never-ending display of wit. Clearly, British authors and their soldier audience coped with ever-present death and the absurdity of war through humour. Beyond this, the newspapers were focused upon music hall and sport, all in an attempt to justify British presence and sacrifice in France and Flanders as a necessary defence of the British 'way of life'.⁴ Both the avoidance of cruel reality with jokes, and the vague idea that the status quo was good and must be maintained at great sacrifice, render the British journals ultimately rather conservative in nature. Although the number of British soldier newspapers was significantly lower than the ubiquitous German productions appearing across no-man's-land, the richness of material has gone a great length to filling out our understanding of the daily life and thoughts of the average Tommy.

The difference in tone of the French soldier newspapers is most clearly shown with a January 1916 sketch in the journal *Bellica*. Here a nurse unglamorously kneels and washes the feet of a soldier amputee. Nothing of the sort ever appeared in either the British or German newspapers. It is this unflinching honesty about the war that is so noticeable in the French *journaux*.⁵ French authors were indeed the only participants who spent no time justifying their presence at the front, nor working at framing the conflict as a war of defence. Unlike the British and the Germans, such things 'went without saying'.

3 While the British Library holds perhaps the fullest set of British and Dominion soldier newspapers, excellent collections can also be found at the Imperial War Museum and Cambridge University Library.

4 This is the main argument of J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies, 1914–1918* (Oxford, 1990). I agree with his findings that the practice of entertainment and sport was used, by both officers and enlisted men, to remind themselves of what they believed they were protecting.

5 The most complete set of French soldier newspapers can be found at the Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine, Nanterre. A large number can also be found at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, as well as at the Service historique de l'armée de terre, Vincennes.

Yet, underneath this silence, what is remarkable is the utter commitment to the basic national ideal that there was a nation worth defending. The historian of the French soldier newspapers, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, refers to this vague understanding among the newspapers and their audience as ‘national sentiment’.⁶ Beyond this stoicism other aspects of the French newspapers stand out, such as the very interesting racial imagery surrounding ‘tirailleurs sénégalais’, and the rather noticeable amount of nude women in sketches.

Finally, the German soldier newspapers of the First World War provide by far the largest source base, in both number of issues to appear and sheer distribution, and were unquestionably a part of the textual universe of almost every German soldier who spent more than a few weeks at or near the front.⁷ Quite the opposite of the French, and to a certain extent the British, the authors of the German *Soldatenzeitungen* were obsessed with justification. Everywhere their readership daily fought to ‘defend’ the Fatherland, while standing on foreign soil and occupying foreign populations. Through a self-justificatory language of manly comradeship and the provision of a *mission civilisatrice* to the ‘backward’ locals, German soldiers could daily find the texts and images they needed to understand their sacrifice.⁸ Crucially, through an analysis of the German soldier newspapers, we are able to move beyond the First World War trope of no-man’s-land in the west, and focus upon the theatre of operations that has been gaining an increasing amount of attention of late in our understanding of the war and its place in the grand story of the first half of the twentieth century, namely the Eastern Front.⁹

II. Soldier Newspapers as a Source

I Authors

Although the soldier newspapers are full of evidence that all ranks contributed, it is the editors, those in control, who can be somewhat more clearly identified. The ‘average’

6 S. Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War: National Sentiment and Trench Journalism in France during the First World War*, trans. H. McPhail (Providence, RI, 1992 [orig. 1986]).

7 The most complete set of German soldier newspapers can be found at the Deutsche Bücherei, Leipzig. Excellent collections can also be found at the Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte, Stuttgart, and the Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg im Breisgau.

8 This is the central thesis of my forthcoming study: Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*. A recent study of German soldier newspapers that focuses on their use for the distribution of propaganda is A. Lipp, *Meinunglenkung im Krieg: Kriegserfahrungen deutscher Soldaten und ihre Deutung 1914–1918* (Göttingen, 2003). A notable early use of German soldier newspapers is D.E. Showalter, ‘The Homesick Revolutionaries: Soldiers’ Councils and Newspaper Propaganda in German-Occupied Eastern Europe, 1918–1919’, *Canadian Journal of History* XI (1976), pp. 69–88.

9 See the already classic V.G. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge, 2000). In my reading of the German soldier newspapers of both fronts, I found profound differences in the representations of the occupied populations. Slavic populations were represented as primitive, dirty, and in need of a German overlord. The tone was indeed ‘colonial’ in nature. See Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*, ch. 5.

soldier newspaper editor of the First World War was a middle-class, low-ranking officer, with a teaching or otherwise belletristic background. He was reasonably well educated and was older than the average soldier, and thus typically ascribed to pre-war conservative politics.¹⁰ While we lack detailed information for the British newspapers, all the hallmarks of such a background are apparent throughout the articles. The historian of the British and Dominion trench journals, John Fuller, was able to identify the rank of the editor(s) for 66 of the 107 newspapers he analysed: ‘According to these identifications, twenty-seven seem to have been edited by officers only, twenty-five by other-ranks only, and fourteen by a combination of the two.’¹¹ Audoin-Rouzeau was able to compile statistics for 500 of the French editors, and a similar breakdown occurs: roughly one-third come from the ranks, and the remaining two-thirds were mainly NCOs and junior officers. He was further able to determine the pre-war occupation of 60 editors, of whom the largest groups were: 16 artists or writers, 13 journalists, 5 lawyers, and 4 teachers.¹² Finally, in his 1937 dissertation, Karl Kurth was able to use documents (later destroyed by an air raid in 1945) to provide much information on the German soldier newspaper editors. Of the 180 newspaper staff he identified, 34 were lower ranks, and the remainder were NCOs and junior officers through to the rank of captain. Of the 100 pre-war occupations he identified, 32 hailed from the publishing industry, 18 were artists, and 10 were teachers.¹³

Although we lack the data, it is safe to say that these editors were older men. Soldier newspapers began to appear in large numbers by mid-1915, and there are some general statements that can be made about the armies on the Western Front from that point on that tell us about who the editors were. First of all, the armies of 1915 were already replacement armies. The pre-war armies of professional soldiers in their mid- to late twenties had suffered heavy losses, and now the ranks were being filled with two large groups: the young, just out of school, and the older reservists being called back to service. The resulting demographic bulges of men closer to the age of 20 and those 30 and over resulted in a separation of duties. Those younger, faster, and typically without their own families to take care of were more likely to be at the front, running, fighting, and dying. The older and slower, with wife and children on the home front, were more likely to be behind the lines, working in supply, and doing paperwork, such as, for instance, editing soldier newspapers.¹⁴ These were not ‘two’ fronts at the front; all were part of the same semantic universe, had worries, were often bored, and could be (and many editors were) killed. Nevertheless, the editors were relatively older, and, especially because of their backgrounds,

10 Although the development of literacy, and the association of a university education with conservative politics, varied across each country, in general it is safe to assume that the ‘average’ editors in all three countries were similar in education and general national-political leaning.

11 Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 11

12 Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, pp. 9–10.

13 K. Kurth, *Die deutschen Feld- und Schützengrabenzeitungen des Weltkrieges* (Leipzig, 1937), pp. 215–17.

14 I would like to thank Michael Geyer for alerting me to this generational difference and segregation taking place at the front during the war. For an excellent discussion of this point, see Ziseman, *War Experience*, pp. 34–35.

most often moderately conservative nationalists. They were raised in, worked in, and often had taught or written about a world of middle-class bourgeois ideals, whether it was a belief in the positive contribution of the British Empire, the universal application of French-born thought, or the hard-working, sober traits of all Germans. Yet in most cases any individual ideology of this or that editor was always tempered by the fact that he¹⁵ was writing for a large and diverse audience. That audience was almost always a paying audience, and it was an audience that contributed written pieces to be included in the newspaper. Thus, although the background of the editors is important, the content of the soldier newspapers reflected much more than the ideas and beliefs of these few men.

The editors were at great pains to gain the acceptance of the soldier audience. Beyond the provision of entertainment and escapism, which will be discussed under 'reading newspapers' below, one of the chief motivations for the newspapers' editors was to bring all the men together, in solidarity and comradeship. After declaring that obviously top-down efforts to create *esprit de corps* were doomed to rejection by a soldier audience, Fuller claims:

More sustaining was a simple concern with the battalion as a practical community, evolved in training and quickly bound by experience. *The Vic's Patrol*, for example, aimed 'to bring the different units within the Battalion into a more intimate relationship'; *The 20th Gazette* to bring 'officers, NCOs and men of the 20th battalion CEF into closer touch with one another'. Both enjoyed long runs.¹⁶

Some British journals went further by declaring that through the use of this medium for 'grousing' and venting, tensions that were intergenerational, green vs veteran, or officers vs other ranks, could be defused: 'our columns are open to every grouch in the Battalion, and a growl on any subject, whether the grievance be either real or fancied, will be joyfully received and have immediate insertion', promised the aptly named newspaper *The R.M.R. Growler*.¹⁷ This theme of solidarity was far less prominent in the French newspapers, but did occasionally appear, as in this editorial from *Le Poilu du 6-9*: 'The only purpose of this paper is to inform our friends about regimental life and to strengthen, to draw tighter still if possible, the ties of friendship which unite them'.¹⁸

Creating and strengthening a sense of comradeship was, however, the hallmark of the German soldier newspapers. 'A trusted comrade is what we'd like to be', claimed the editors in the first issue of *Der Schützengraben*:

This newspaper would like to hold more firmly and tightly the ribbon that binds us together, the members of this Corps. It is the spirited comradeship in both the world of the trenches as well as the larger corps area which brings about an unforced exchange of our big and small

15 I have only found one caveat to the use of this pronoun: one of the three editors of the largest and most famous German soldier newspapers, the *Liller Kriegszeitung*, was the female author Friedel Merzenich.

16 Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 13.

17 This quote appeared in the January 1916 edition, cited in Fuller, *Troop Morale*, pp. 13–14.

18 1 August 1916. Cited in Audain-Russow, *Men of War*, 14.

experiences, in both curious and multifaceted ways. The humorous and childish, the reflective, serious, and profound, should all be found here.¹⁹

The welcoming article in the first issue of the *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, entitled ‘What We Want!’, referred to itself as a ‘soldier’s rag that would like to be a dear comrade to the grunts’. In addition to ‘seriousness and joy’, its contents would also include ‘instruction and edification’. This newspaper was conceived as a vessel for the soldiers: ‘Honest and German, written in the bosom of truth [*Knien der Wahrheit*], what you the comrades have to say!’ Its location in the east as the main beacon of German culture in a vast alien landscape led the editors in their introductory issue to use language which rarely appeared out west: ‘working together in *völkisch* Work for the German Spring . . . sharing the innermost, holiest and highest German character that is the salt of the earth and the light of the world’.²⁰ As we will see below, the Germans furthest from home, far off on the Eastern Front, produced many more soldier newspapers, indicating both the lack of other easily available home front newspapers and also a stronger need for self-identification. The same was true for Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand troops, who all produced relatively more soldier newspapers than their British confreres.

The editors of the soldier newspapers of all three armies shared the same powerful motivation: they believed they were documenting a great historical event and that their newspapers would be valuable to future historians. In the *Kriegszeitung der 4. Armee* Dr H. Dreyhaus wrote an article entitled ‘Home Front and Soldier Newspapers in the Wars of Liberation’.²¹ He described the research he was conducting on the soldier newspapers of the wars against Napoleon, how important they were, and how difficult it was to find any surviving samples. Here, as elsewhere in the soldier newspapers of the First World War, there was a strong sense that those creating these texts were involved in something greater than the mere provision of ephemeral news and humour for the troops. They believed that they were manufacturing documents that would provide ‘the truth’ of the war experience for future historians.²² But these newspapers were also to be a historical document for the participants as well. The success of *L’Echo des marmites* was measured by:

the pleasure it gives their editors in relieving the monotony of trench life by taking up some of their rest hours spent in villages that are almost always evacuated, then the delight of being able to send their families a souvenir of the campaign, and finally, for those who return home, the joy of reading later, at rest, these pages full of memories.²³

And the bridging of both ‘history’ and the personal lives of the soldier audience was perhaps best summed up in the pages of a very popular Dominion journal: ‘the history

19 22 August 1915.

20 9 December 1915. This was to be accomplished ‘without schoolmasterliness’ [ohne Schulmeisterei].

21 15 February 1917.

22 See J. Winter, ‘Philipp Witkop and the German “Soldiers’ Tale”’, in P. Witkop, ed., *German Students’ War Letters* (Philadelphia, 2002), pp. v–xxiv.

23 20 April 1915. Cited in Austin-Roussan, *Men at War*, p. 18.

of the Aussie Army is being given by the Official War Correspondents. “Aussie” wants to give its spirit.²⁴

2 Production and Distribution

Although there were some examples of mobile presses, throughout the war for the most part the production of soldier newspapers began and continued in earnest behind fixed front lines, and, in the German case, especially in the static and quiet area of the Vosges, with Colmar becoming an early capital of soldier print. The earliest and crudest newspapers were handwritten, progressing to sheets pressed onto a gelatin tray one at a time. Although still handwritten originally, the next innovation involved using mimeograph printing, which could produce up to 1000 copies. Eventually, however, sets of type were found on both sides of the front in abandoned French buildings. Where the newspapers were ultimately printed varied greatly, with most German soldier newspapers printed in towns safely behind the lines (Lille, Colmar, Vilnius), while many French newspapers were printed in Paris. Although the smallest soldier newspapers were locally distributed, for the vast majority the military postal system was the method of delivery. Additionally, these newspapers were sold at train stations, in military bookstores, and in the street. Finally, as Kurth notes: ‘As a consequence of the soldier newspapers’ limited print run, relative to troop strength, they must have been passed from hand to hand. For the same reason, they were tacked to bulletin boards, and copies were made available in soldiers’ homes [*Soldatenheime*] and canteens.’²⁵

Although troops could sometimes come across soldier newspapers distributed at no cost, it is crucial to note that the vast majority were purchased. And the few that were free were able to survive on advertising income, such as the most famous German soldier newspaper of the war, the *Liller Kriegszeitung*. This is crucial when one considers the ‘usefulness’ of soldier newspapers as sources for the social and cultural history of war. These were not propaganda leaflets printed on the cheap by the army then ‘thrown’ en masse at uninterested soldiers who ignored such obvious tripe. The soldier newspapers were exceedingly popular, and were paid for in the millions.²⁶ Further, this was not simply a ‘lack of choice’ situation: there were millions of home front newspapers available at the front, and thousands of military bookstores. Ultimately, then, the military did not

24 *Aussie*, February 1918, cited in Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 15. The editor of the June 1916 edition of *The Incinerator* immodestly believed his journal would be important for ‘that future Macaulay who writes the history of the great European War 1914–’. Cited in Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 4.

25 Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen*, pp. 212–13. Kurth believes (as do I) that all German troops read soldier newspapers, or at least any who spent more than a few weeks at or near the front.

26 In his apologetic memoir of 1920, the German ‘Director of News Services’ of the First World War, Major Walter Nicolai, noted that the price tag of the soldier newspapers was an effort to ensure the content was not seen as propagandistic: ‘Payment was preferred to free distribution, in order to lessen the impression of influence’. W. Nicolai, *Nachrichtendienst, Presse und Kollektivmoral im Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1920), p. 67.

finance the newspapers. Yet, by dint of circumstance, a military situation did help defray costs: the staff was already paid for, the buildings were commandeered, and distribution was free. Subscription paid for paper, oil, and colouring.

It is safe to say that the British and Dominion armies produced the smallest amount of trench journalism (both in sheer number and per capita). John Fuller identified 107 titles, and although a select few of these had print runs of 5000 or more, for the most part these newspapers were relatively small in number and reach (though unquestionably rich and very important as a source).²⁷ Next we have the French, the army with the most ‘titles’, that is, distinct publications, of any fighting force: Audoin-Rouzeau located roughly 200, and reasons that twice as many may have existed. He further estimates that, in the middle of 1916, 75 000 to 132 000 copies per month were printed. This leads him to presume that, although this is a significant number, it is most likely that the majority of French soldiers never saw a trench journal.²⁸

While the combined number of titles may have been higher on the Allied side, the sheer volume of German soldier newspapers dwarfed their counterparts. This was due to the much larger printing runs and professionally administered distribution by the Germans. In 1916–17 at least 1.1 million soldier newspapers per month were distributed on the Western Front, and over 2 million on the Eastern Front. In 1916 the average number of soldiers at the front was 3 million in the west, 1–1.5 million in the east.²⁹ While it is probable that a majority of Allied soldiers may never have seen a troop journal, it is likely that from late 1915 only the rare German soldier spent more than a few weeks at the front without reading, or at least ‘hearing’, a soldier newspaper.³⁰ Indeed, the practice of ‘reading aloud’ is not mentioned in the studies of the Allied newspapers and puts into question any simple calculation of printing runs equating readership. Unlike the relatively ‘private’ conditions of civilian life it could be surmised that under the conditions of static trench warfare, where men spent many long hours together, one member of a small (or large) group of friends may well have read aloud items of interest.³¹ Finally, although historians of soldiers’ letters rightfully claim to represent many more men in

27 Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 9–10.

28 Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, p. 25.

29 Figures based on Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen*. Troop numbers in R. Bessel, *Germany after the First World War* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 5–7, and Liulevicius, *War Land*, p. 14. Notice the much higher ratio of soldier newspapers to troops on the Eastern Front, reflecting the relative lack of home front newspapers.

30 The first number of the *Champagne-Kamerad* (18 December 1915) contained the following stanza in the poem ‘The New Newspaper’: ‘In the trenches, in the billet, / In the bunker, in the hero’s hollows, / In the hospital and the casino / Nowhere shall this little paper fail to appear’ (‘Im Schützengraben, im Quartier, / Im Unterstand, in Heldenhöhlen, / Im Lazarett und im Kasino / Soll nirgendwo dies Blättchen fehlen’).

31 On the rise of literacy and reading in Germany pre-1914, see P. Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin, 1900* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), pp. 51–58. See also his comment on the duality of using newspapers as sources: on the one hand, there are many commonalities among newspapers, creating in a certain sense one experience; on the other hand, German society was far from homogeneous, and one can simultaneously discover fissiparous experiences in newspapers (pp. 247–50).

uniform than the better-educated subjects of Paul Fussell's and others' work,³² their source base is still limited to those who actually felt comfortable writing, who were motivated to actively write, and whose letters have survived. Soldier newspapers, however, touched the lives of a very great number of Allied troops, and indeed a substantial majority of German soldiers in the First World War. The degree to which this source reflected the thoughts and beliefs of the vast majority of those who participated in the war is, however, far more difficult to ascertain.

3 Censorship

The most fundamental constraint upon how we use soldier newspapers to represent the voices of the soldiers themselves is the existence of an apparatus of censorship that surrounded trench journalism to varying degrees throughout the war. Added to this, the soldiers' press operated under a form of self-censorship that must be recognized in order to appreciate the affinities between these newspapers on both sides of the line. Self-censorship is most often presented in histories of propaganda as editors swallowing dissenting words that might displease those higher up the chain of command. What is less often mentioned is the manner in which the taste and acceptance of the readership forms a powerful 'censor' itself, forcing editors into reactive forms of self-censorship. For evidence of the latter it may not be unreasonable to refer to the noticeable absence of slurs upon, or critique of, enemy soldiers, to be discussed below. Whatever officers may have thought about it, soldiers would not accept a language that denigrated the men on the other side of the line. Yet it is important to recognize that, from early 1916, both the French and even more so the German soldier newspapers were formally and systematically censored.

We know that the smaller in number British newspapers were censored at either the battalion or divisional level (as indeed all examples of that other great source of First World War social and cultural history, the soldier's letter, were censored at the company level). As the editor of *The Minden Magazine* wrote: 'we are not allowed to insert the names of the various places we go to; neither are we allowed to discuss too minutely the ins and outs of our prolonged misunderstanding and unpleasantness with the Germans. Neither are we permitted to criticise too freely our political enemies or friends.'³³ Fuller judges that in the end the British censors were remarkably liberal and ultimately rarely if ever censored the details of everyday soldier life, thus leaving us with information not always apparent in other sources.³⁴

After a period of unofficial internal censorship of the French soldier newspapers, on 8 March 1916 General Joffre issued the following circular to his generals:

32 Prior and Wilson claim that when Fussell describes the splendid, innocent Edwardian period that was forever destroyed in 1914, one is led to believe that the nation as a whole spent its time 'lolling about in deck chairs and awaiting the fall of a wicket'. R. Prior and T. Wilson, 'Paul Fussell at War', *War in History* 1 (1994), pp. 64 and 68.

33 Cited in Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 19.

34 Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 19.

It has been brought to my notice that certain trench newspapers have been suppressed by order of staff officers in command of the corps publishing the papers. The aim of these papers is to divert and amuse the fighting men. At the same time they demonstrate to all that our men are full of confidence, cheerfulness and courage. The propaganda branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs uses the trench newspapers to demonstrate to the correspondents of foreign newspapers the excellent morale of our troops along the whole of the front. I consider that their publication should be viewed with goodwill as long as they do no harm to the army and on condition that their management is closely supervised, to avoid the publication of any article that does not fit in with the aim stated above. I would ask you to be so kind as to encourage the senior officers under your command to take heed of these considerations in relation to any trench newspapers which may be published by troops placed under your command.³⁵

The mutinies of 1917 and the arrival of Pétain were required, however, before the French censorship apparatus began to approach the thoroughness of the German example seen below. With his order of 21 October 1917, Pétain recommended that a copy of every issue be sent to general headquarters, as he was worried about ‘the dangers that might be presented by a lack of supervision in the editing of trench newspapers’.³⁶

The German army’s control over soldier newspapers significantly surpassed what was occurring on the Allied side, and, because of their much greater presence in the lives of German soldiers, it is necessary to provide more attention to the details of German censorship. On 11 March 1916 the military press office (*Feldpressestelle*) was formed with a mandate to maximize the effectiveness of the soldier newspapers in the west as a tool to maintain the morale of the troops. Major Walter Nicolai, the overseer of all newspaper censorship in Germany, met the editors of the largest army newspapers in Charleville on 24 May 1916 in order to coordinate their efforts. At this meeting, Nicolai said the following:

Army newspapers do not fall under the jurisdiction of the censorship that controls home front newspapers. The fundamental rules that operate for the home front press must be authoritative for the army newspapers.

Some main points are emphasized:

- A) Exclusion of everything that could be seen as having a religious, moral or political direction:
- B) Especially protect the Civil Peace [*Burgfrieden*].³⁷

A similar meeting occurred on 1 February 1917, on the Eastern Front in Vilnius, where Captain Friedrich Bertkau was in charge of all newspapers.³⁸ At Charleville, it was also ordered that two copies of every issue of every soldier newspaper was to be sent to the

35 Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, p. 20.

36 Op. cit., p. 22.

37 Cited in Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen*, pp. 234–35.

38 Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen*, p. 227.

Feldpressestelle, three more to the War Press Office (*Kriegspresseamt*), and one to the Prussian war ministry.³⁹

A further attempt to bring Western Front newspapers into conformity was *Korrespondenz IIIb*. This collection of articles was written by the staff of the *Feldpressestelle*, and then made available to the soldier newspapers, two to three times per week. The editors could then choose which of the articles, if any, to print. There was no order to incorporate the articles, but Nicolai made it clear that he desired that the editors would do so more often than not. In fact, according to Kurth, only a third of the soldier newspapers did so.⁴⁰ In an October 1916 *Feldpressestelle* briefing, the lack of compliance with this request was further evidenced when it was admitted that those in attendance knew of the existence of only 32 soldier newspapers and that, of those, on average only 7 or 8 regularly accepted the *Korrespondenz*.⁴¹ In the east the *Presseabteilung Ober-Ost* similarly made available the *Korrespondenz B* (for Bertkau). Further, in the summer of 1917, the programme of ‘patriotic instruction’ (*Vaterländischer Unterricht*) was implemented to varying degrees throughout the German army. Ludendorff had argued that the longer the war dragged on, the greater the need directly to educate the soldiers on the ‘goal and meaning of the war’.⁴²

In a memorandum of 29 July 1917 this new ‘offensive’ was spelled out: officers were to make ‘conviction, sense of duty and clear determination’ the ‘basis for the fighting power of the army’. Because it was understood that the soldiers were weary and wanted only an end to the conflict, the necessity of such a programme was deemed paramount: ‘Desire for peace is understandable, but a sense of duty and will for victory must be

39 Lipp, *Meinungslenkung*, p. 49. At a meeting of the *Feldpressestelle* on 22 January 1917, a set of directives (*Richtlinien*) was drawn up for the editors of the army newspapers. Number two reads: ‘It is the nature of the situation that the soldier newspapers are the voice of a certain intellectual upper class in the army. They must nevertheless strive to echo *all* comrades. Only thus will they awaken and strengthen a feeling of togetherness and become the spiritual focus of the troops.’ Point seven emphasized the need for the newspapers to nurture the connection to the home front. Thirteen and fourteen highlighted the desire for reports on the occupied lands and peoples. And directive seventeen, while asking the newspapers to foster humour, requested nevertheless that a serious tone be maintained, and that not too many jokes appear. In both the description of who wrote the newspapers (authors, journalists), the desired audience of those editors (all comrades), as well as the content (home front, occupied lands, and lacklustre humour), it can be said that all of these ‘directives’ were well in place, having emanated from the editors themselves, long before this set of guidelines appeared. ‘Richtlinien fuer die Schriftleitungen der Armeezeitungen’, *Feldpressestelle beim Generalstab d. Feldheeres Gr. H. Qu. West.*, B Nr. 1576, 22 January 1917, Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv-Kriegsarchiv, Dresden, KA (P) 21152.

40 Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen*, p. 229.

41 See ‘Dritte Besprechung mit den Schriftleitern der westlichen Armeezeitungen im Grossen Hauptquartier’, *Feldpressestelle beim Generalstab d. Feldheeres Gr. H. Qu. West.*, B Nr. 1576, 17 October 1916, Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv-Kriegsarchiv, Dresden, KA (P) 21152.

42 Document 328, 17 July 1917, ‘Befehl des Generalstabes des Feldheeres an die Oberkommandos der Heeresgruppen und Armeen betr. die Einrichtung einer Aufklärungsorganisation beim Feldheer’, in W. Deist, *Militär und Innenpolitik im Weltkrieg 1914–1918* (Düsseldorf, 1970), II, pp. 835–7.

stronger'.⁴³ In a fascinating exchange at a November meeting on patriotic instruction, Nicolai stated that he had often heard the judgement that the soldier newspapers were rejected by the troops. He then asked if anyone present concurred. After a pause, Nicolai continued: 'Because none of you put up your hand, I take it that we all believe that the soldiers value the soldier newspapers. I hope, though, that this unanimity is not influenced by the fact that some of the leaders of patriotic instruction sitting here are also simultaneously heading soldier newspapers.'⁴⁴ Thus, by the latter half of 1917, there was significant new pressure on the editors of the soldier newspapers to increase the amount of top-down propaganda emanating from the high command, while simultaneously maintaining credibility in the eyes of the readership.⁴⁵

It is not surprising that a historian with a Nazi agenda such as Kurth would press the charge at the end of his analysis of the First World War soldier newspapers that the 'employment of propaganda was insufficient and methodologically wrong'. Writing in 1937, Kurth sought to make sure that, 'should the German people again be forced to defend their right to life through arms', the front press would be properly used by the propaganda organs of National Socialism.⁴⁶ While the Nazi claim that the propaganda of the First World War was almost non-existent surely goes too far, it is also incorrect to claim that 'propaganda' uniformly made up the contents of the German soldier newspapers. As one historian points out, there was more than a little resentment among the 'independent-minded' army newspaper editors during and subsequent to the meeting in Charleville with Nicolai.⁴⁷ As is already clear from the proud words of editors cited earlier, these men believed they were creating work of lasting historical (and belletristic) integrity. One of their main complaints against incorporating more and more 'official' articles was that this would directly reduce the 'authenticity' they maintained among their readership.

The relationship and negotiation between author and audience in any mass literary phenomenon is far more subtle and complex than a simple true/false, propaganda/not propaganda dichotomy. Both the producers and the consumers of the First World War soldier newspapers looked to the product for: (a) material that would maintain and/or

43 Document 335, 7 September 1917, 'Verfügung des stellv. Generalkommandos des XIII. AK an die unterstellten Militärbehörden: Zur Behandlung politischer Fragen im Rahmen der Aufklärung', in Deist, *Militär und Innenpolitik*, II, p. 858.

44 'Aufzeichnungen über die Besprechung über den Vaterländischen Unterricht. Am 4. 11.17 in Charleville und 5. 11. 17 im Grossen Hauptquartier', Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg, RM 5/3820.

45 Deist argues that 'Patriotic Instruction' was completely ineffective, in 'Der militärische Zusammenbruch des Kaiserreichs: Zur Realität der "Dolchstoßlegende"', in U. Büttner, ed., *Das Unrechtsregime: Internationale Forschung über dem Nationalsozialismus*, vol. 1, *Ideologie – Herrschaftssystem – Wirkung in Europa* (Hamburg, 1986), p. 108.

46 Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen*, p. 247. For an introduction to the as yet unanalysed soldier newspapers of the Second World War, see H.-W. Eckhardt, *Die Frontzeitungen des deutschen Heeres 1939–1945* (Vienna and Stuttgart, 1975). Without the experience of a largely immobile *Stellungskrieg*, these newspapers seem to have almost immediately become something akin to 'occupation newspapers' (*Besatzungszeitungen*).

47 Lipi, *Metropolis*, pp. 17–51.

boost the morale and mood of all members of the army; (b) explanations and justifications for the context, both political and moral, in which these men found themselves, both as warriors and, in the German case, as occupiers; and (c) ways of relieving boredom, always an accompaniment of military service. Ultimately the degree to which the soldier newspapers satisfied the readership cannot be known, but as the most popular form of 'propaganda', their contents are important both for the manner in which they detail how the bourgeois editors and contributors formulated their ideas, as well as for how those same editors thought those ideas could most effectively be presented to the lower ranks.

III. Reading Newspapers

Despite the limits on what could appear in soldier newspapers and our knowledge of the relatively educated, bourgeois background of virtually all soldier newspaper editors, we know that these journals were popular and read by millions. But what exactly was this 'act of reading'?⁴⁸ What was this 'escape'? On a sunny day, free of shelling and well protected from sniping, it may very well have taken place while sitting on the fire-step of a trench. At night, the escape might have occurred by lamplight in a subterranean bunker. Simply as a result of the amount of time spent 'behind the lines' as opposed to in the trenches, it was more often the case that reading occurred in the immediate rear, or up to 20 km away, where the soldiers could safely relax well away from the fight.

What exactly was read? The newspapers ranged in size and quality from 10×10 cm handwritten 'trench' newspapers, to the very best of the German 30×30 cm 'army' newspapers, which closely resembled the look and feel of home front newspapers of the era.⁴⁹ Some issues simply had the title and a drawing on the front page, while others began with many headlines and short articles, again much like a civilian newspaper. The smaller papers had as few as 4 pages, the larger up to 16, with an insert special section. In the later stages of the war, especially for the blockaded Germans, the paper became worse in quality, as did the ink. A typical life of one of these newspapers consisted of: the printing, the transport to the subscriber, being read most likely in snippets, sometimes aloud, then being either passed along or left in a communal area, such as an *estaminet* or *Soldatenheim*. Eventually, after a life measured in days or perhaps weeks, the once-, twice-, or dozen-times-read piece of First World War history would end its life, as a fire-lighter, or as insulation in the walls of dugouts during long winters, or, most likely and ignominiously, as toilet paper.

This material, these spaces, and some measure of time all came together as the environment for this escape, the formal act of reading. In her seminal study *Reading the Romance*, Janice Radway analyses the role and function of escapist literature among American female housewives. She argues convincingly that the expectations

48 W. Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore, 1978).

49 'Trench' newspapers denote small, roughly company-level journals, whereas 'army' newspapers were the larger, more professionally made journals, edited and written at the army level.

in compensatory literature are very strict: oppressed communities are always eager to escape their drudgery, find 'vicarious emotional identification' and be 'recognized' for 'the value they doubted they possessed'.⁵⁰ Time and again historians have discovered the same among working-class audiences of the past. Richard Hoggart argues that the lower classes in Britain saw virtually all art as escape,⁵¹ and Stanley Pierson shows how, in 1890s Germany, there was a powerful reaction to the kitchen-sink realism of 'naturalism', with Social Democrats claiming that workers had enough misery and required escape, even though the vast majority of such pleasurable works were run through with 'bourgeois mentality'.⁵² Thus, to an important degree, Radway's modelling of the act of reading romance novels can be applied to the fulfilment of desire so sought after by lower-rank soldiers throughout the war.⁵³

As in romance novels the fulfilment found in reading soldier newspapers was twofold: on the one hand, there was the simple pleasure of escape through the act of reading; on the other hand, and more powerful ideologically, was the compensation achieved through justification of one's position and actions. Soldiers function in a dangerous environment, and are involved in breaking the ultimate taboo in society: killing. It is easy to understand why many soldiers, in being asked both to risk the sacrifice of their own lives and to take the lives of others seek out moral certainty in what they are doing. This desire extends into a tendency for many soldiers to rely upon 'firm', often 'conservative', beliefs and values when they find themselves in terrifying environments.⁵⁴ For the British, this was most obvious through the largely uncritical framing of virtually everything through humour, as well as the rather vague, yet deeply conservative, justification of the war as the defence of a 'way of life'. Although there were many German soldiers who were quite comfortable critically assessing their nation's role in this war and questioning the concept of a 'war of defence' while stationed almost exclusively on foreign soil, it is surely the case that there were as many, if not more, soldiers who were incapable of critically assessing their identity, for such a line of thought was uncomfortable in the extreme, if not untenable. It is for this latter group, a truly vast number of men, that

50 J.A. Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1991 [orig. 1984]), p. 113.

51 R. Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working-Class Life with Special References to Publications and Entertainments* (London, 1957).

52 S. Pierson, *Marxist Intellectuals and the Working-Class Mentality in Germany, 1887-1912* (Cambridge, MA, 1993), ch. 5. On the shift to nationalism within the SPD see Pierson's ch. 10 as well as V.L. Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (Oxford, 1985).

53 Of course, the crucial difference here is that, unlike Radway, I am unable to interview my readers and thus must hypothesize about the role of fantasy in the soldier audience. I thank Roger Chartier for his thoughtful comments to me on this and other aspects of the reading of soldier newspapers.

54 This is known as 'terror management theory', and was initially sparked by the influence of E. Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York, 1973). See J. Greenberg, S. Solomon and T. Pyszczynski, 'Terror Management Theory of Self-Esteem and Cultural Worldviews: Empirical Assessments and Conceptual Refinements', *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, XXIX (1997), pp. 61-130.

the soldier newspapers provided a soothing balm, the very escape and justification that so many desired.⁵⁵

In his study of the French soldier newspapers Audoin-Rouzeau argues that although such a primary source is ‘a reflection of the combatants’ attitudes and way of thinking’, it ‘cannot constitute the sole source of information about the men of 1914–18; every source has its limitations, its gaps and its pitfalls’;⁵⁶ there existed not only formalized censorship but, even more importantly, the self-censorship of the journalists who refrained from writing about subjects they and others deemed off-limits. Such a source, like any other, cannot represent an unclouded window upon the ‘reality’ of the front in 1914–18. Nevertheless, the soldier newspapers can be used, carefully and with healthy suspicion, to embellish further and elaborate upon the social and cultural world in and behind the lines created by soldiers themselves.

IV. Soldier Newspapers as Comparative History: Elements of the Universal Experience

While brief reference was earlier made to significant national differences among the soldier newspapers of the British, French, and German armies, analysis of these sources can also highlight some of the more universal experiences of soldiers in the First World War.⁵⁷ Thus the overall nature of daily life on the Western Front can be gleaned through a comparative approach to the soldier newspapers, and is demonstrated through a discussion of two subjects: the image of the enemy and the depiction and portrayal of women.

55 ‘If the events of the heroine’s story provoke too intense feelings such as anger at men, fear of rape and violence, worry about female sexuality, or worry about the need to live with an unexciting man, that romance will be discarded as a failure or judged to be very poor. If, on the other hand, those events call forth feelings of excitement, satisfaction, contentment, self-confidence, pride, and power, it matters less what events are used or how they are marshaled. In the end, what counts most is the readers’ sense that for a short time she has become other and been elsewhere. She must close that book reassured that men and marriage really do mean good things for women. She must also turn back to her daily round of duties, emotionally reconstituted and replenished, feeling confident of her worth and convinced of her ability and power to deal with the problems she knows she must confront. When a writer can supply a story that will permit the reader several hours of vicarious experience living as a woman who flourishes because she receives the attention, devotion, and approval of an extraordinary man, that writer will have written an ideal romance . . . The Smithton group’s reliance on this evaluation system enables the women to insure that a media institution, which in fact operates to benefit others financially, also benefits them emotionally. As a result, they at least partially reclaim the patriarchal form of the romance for their own use. By selecting only those stories that will reinforce their feelings of self-worth and supply the replenishment they need, they counter the force of a system that functions generally by making enormous demands upon women for which it refuses to pay.’ Radway, *Reading the Romance*, p. 184.

56 Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, pp. 2 and 35.

57 Of course, I speak here of the war in Europe. A truly universal experience would incorporate the experiences of participants in the other global theaters of the war.

I The Image of the Enemy

One of the most striking absences in the soldier newspapers of all combatant forces is the lack of an image of the 'hated' enemy.⁵⁸ To be sure, there were attacks upon the abstract enemy nations and their leaders, but the soldiers opposite, hunkered down in the cold and wet trenches, suffering the same daily pains and discomforts as the newspaper authors and editors, were virtually never depicted as anything but worthy adversaries. While home front 'eyewash' might occasionally label enemy soldiers 'evil', at the front there was rarely anything but stubborn respect for the men sharing the same fate of the world of no-man's-land.

There was very little expression of direct hatred toward the enemy in the British and Dominion journals, and instead humour was the main method used to deal with this subject. In a sketch in the Canadian *Listening Post*, scared, half-naked Germans run around in no-man's-land, with the caption 'Silesian Unterwehr'.⁵⁹ *The Minden Magazine* presented a joke where a German yelled from the trenches that he had a wife in Birmingham. A Tommy hollers back, 'Get yer head down or there'll be a widow!'⁶⁰ There were several articles lending credence to the idea that there existed a 'live and let live' system between combatants, with unofficial truces occurring frequently. One piece reported that the orders to fire the mortar had been 'lost' and that therefore no murderous German retaliation could be expected that day.⁶¹ An article in *The Outpost* commented on how well German trenches were built,⁶² and a satirical piece in *The Whizz-Bang* of January 1916 poked fun at outrageous home front propaganda with a faked newswire story: 'Germans have taken more babies' lives today'. German prisoners of war were sketched in positive ways,⁶³ as exemplified by a 'small world' cartoon in the Canadian ambulance journal *The Splint Record*: a German prisoner asks his Canadian guard, 'Do you know my brother Hans who vos working in Winnipeg?'⁶⁴ Exceptions to these friendly portrayals were an uncaptioned sketch in the *Listening Post* of April 1918, depicting a guard hitting a German prisoner, and the humorous yet horrific joke in the March 1916 *Minden Magazine*, 'T.A. (member of burying party): "Sargint, 'eres a German wot aint quite dead." Sergeant: "Never mind; Shovel 'im in. You can't believe a word wot these bleeders sez."'

58 Another striking absence in the soldier newspapers is combat. Beyond the occasional 'rescue story', what happened in no-man's-land was not discussed. The escapist function of the journals, as discussed above, would not work if the soldiers were reminded of their worst moments. Comradship, however, was a major theme of the German soldier newspapers, and elsewhere I argue that this was one of the crucial ways in which unit cohesiveness was found in the German army. See Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*, ch. 3.

59 10 August 1917.

60 December 1915.

61 *The Minden Magazine*, December 1915. See T. Ashworth, *Trench Warfare, 1914–1918: The Live and Let Live System* (New York, 1980). More references to this kind of behaviour are cited in Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 64.

62 *Outpost*, September 1916, cited in Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 62.

63 *Whizz-Bang*, March 1916.

64 27 December 1917.

Unlike the British and Dominion trench journals, there were a few mentions of direct fraternizations between French and German soldiers in the French trench newspapers. The June 1916 edition of *La Saucisse* described two patrols meeting in the mist of no-man's-land. The Germans continue on their way, one of them saying 'Sad war, gentlemen, sad war!', before disappearing again.⁶⁵ Audoin-Rouzeau claims that 'the soldiers assessed their comrades and their leaders by the yardstick of their courage under fire, and they judged the enemy by the same criterion: it was this which forbade the latter to be denigrated. Self-respect and respect for the enemy were inseparable.'⁶⁶ Further, the unmistakable superiority of German trenches could not be avoided in the commentary of the French newspapers. The author of 'A German Trench' described at length what he encountered after a successful advance, 'Despite ourselves, a cry of stupefaction escaped from us when we saw the door. Could this be a war shelter? A dug-out? Did we have before our eyes the capricious work of a bourgeois visionary?' He then framed the deft engineering by stating that, with his prudent materialism, the German needed such comfort. The Frenchman, buoyed by idealism and his 'flamme intérieure' is 'more capable to support himself in simpler conditions'.⁶⁷ The few references to German prisoners demonstrated differing attitudes. In a story from October 1917 French soldiers expressed sympathy for two Germans holding a dying comrade,⁶⁸ while an undated cartoon in *Le Poilu du 37* (no. 13) depicted arrogant French guards laughing at gloomy German prisoners.

Respect was shown to the French soldiers in the German soldier newspapers as well. 'The French Grave', of 1915, told the story of a French soldier who died in battle,

65 See also *Marmite*, 10 January 1915. Both articles are cited in Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, p. 164.

66 Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, pp. 165–71, quote p. 169. *Le P'tit père*, 9 December 1917, argued that the Kaiser forced Germans to fight: cited in Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, p. 163. *L'Argonnaute*, July 1917, featured a sympathetic sketch of German prisoners. See, however, J.P. Daughton, 'Sketches of the *Poilu*'s World: Trench Cartoons from the Great War', in D. MacKaman and M. Mays, eds, *World War I and the Cultures of Modernity* (Jackson, MS, 2000), pp. 35–67. Here, at least with regard to French cartoons, Daughton depicts a French audience seemingly more willing to accept 'propagandistic' stereotypes of enemy soldiers than were either the British or Germans. Audoin-Rouzeau has since significantly changed his tone, and, along with Leonard Smith and Annette Becker, he now argues that hatred of the Germans (a certain 'war culture' mentality) was a powerful motivating force for the average French soldier, specifically because of the German occupation of French land and mistreatment of French civilians therein. This line of argument has proven very controversial, and indeed does not hold when one compares the image of the enemy in the French, British, and German soldier newspapers. All newspapers share an equal uninterest in the image of the enemy as a hated barbarian. On the 'war culture' argument, see S. Audoin-Rouzeau and A. Becker, *14–18: Understanding the First World War*, trans. C. Temerson (New York, 2002 [orig. 2000]); L.V. Smith, S. Audoin-Rouzeau and A. Becker, *France and the Great War, 1914–1918* (Cambridge, 2003).

67 *Le Crapouillot*, March 1918, cited in J.-P. Turbergue, ed., *1914–1918: Les Journaux de Tranchées* (Paris, 1999), p. 39.

68 *Poils et Plume*, October 1917, cited in Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*, p. 165.

‘a young hero’, a ‘brother’. The Germans gave him a full military burial and were therefore all the more incensed at being referred to by the enemy as ‘barbarians’. A cartoon of 1916 slightly ‘feminized’ the enemy, but was not vitriolic or belligerent; ‘Peace Dream of a French Soldier’ showed that the typical *poilu* dream for peace was not reunion with family or return to work, but rather a fantasy about being able to wear a new suit.⁶⁹ The German soldier newspapers’ sympathy for the French even went so far as to justify their resistance. ‘The Deserter’ described the story of a certain French soldier who had a wife and child in occupied France. He was killed trying to sneak through the German lines. The story was sympathetic, and the German soldiers were described as full of ‘melancholy’ for the fallen man and his family.⁷⁰ ‘The French Soldier’ argued that the French simply wanted to free their land of the enemy. The same article, which appeared in September 1918, went on to claim that the French treated their prisoners very poorly.⁷¹

Such information, which had been appearing in the occasional article since late 1917, was probably placed by the editors in the newspapers to discourage what had slowly but surely become a haemorrhage of German soldiers defecting to the enemy. It is thus interesting that it appeared within a story ‘justifying’ the fighting spirit of the French. Here again, there seems to be ‘negotiation’ between author and audience. A further fascinating example of that negotiation appeared in the article ‘A Third Winter Offensive’ in October 1916. Written as a *Korrespondenz* article, it was adopted by many soldier newspapers. The author admitted that the Germans had destroyed many buildings in France, but the French would inflict a thousand times as much damage on Germany. And with regard to the French, ‘admittedly, their forefathers from the time of Melac have provided them with bravery’, but they lacked chivalry, argued the author, as demonstrated by the way they threw the ‘Blacks’ and ‘Yellows’ at the Germans. The author further provoked the audience, asking them to imagine what would happen to German wives and daughters if these coloured fellows broke through.⁷² Soldier newspapers could provide their audience with reasons to fight, yet fell well short of maligning the courage of their opponents.⁷³

69 *Der Schützengraben*, 21 November 1915. The sketch is in the *Liller Kriegszeitung*, 19 February 1916.

70 *Liller*, 1 February 1917.

71 *Liller*, 9 September 1918.

72 Lipp, *Meinungslenkung*, p. 231. The depiction of blacks in the French soldier newspapers was rather ambiguous. While they very much appreciated the help they were receiving from their West African soldiers, they nevertheless invoked typical racial stereotypes, including their fear that these black men wanted to sleep with white Frenchwomen. See Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*, ch. 3.

73 Criticizing and sometimes poking fun at the perceived weaknesses of the Russian army occurred almost exclusively in the newspapers of German soldiers not fighting the Russians, namely, those on the Western Front. In the article ‘Our Enemies: “The Russian Soldier”’, *Kriegszeitung der 4. Armee*, 18 February 1916, the Russians were berated for their ‘blind obedience’, and accused of having no concept of saving manpower in an assault. This, however, might be interpreted as a powerful form of ‘duty and loyalty’, such as the accompanying cartoon depicting a soldier being completely covered in snow if told to stay put and stand guard. The image was comic, yet implicitly showed admiration. Comments and jokes were made both about the perceived lack of Russian intelligence and the technical inferiority of

2 Girls, Girls, Girls

Although soldiers' letters can illuminate many aspects of the social and cultural life of soldiers, including some soldiers' beliefs and opinions that are not addressed in soldier newspapers, there is one significant lacuna at the centre of letters written by soldiers for mothers, family members, girlfriends, and wives: the women of the war zone and soldiers' relationships with them. Indeed, one of the most immediate ways in which soldier newspapers establish their importance as a neglected historical source is the degree to which they make clear the ubiquity of women in soldiers' lives just behind the lines.⁷⁴

German soldier newspapers perpetuated the long established ideal of beautiful *françaises*. The famous bust 'The Beautiful Girl from Lille' seems to have already been quite well known in Germany, for the *Liller Kriegszeitung* made reference to this lovely sculpture constantly, simultaneously using it as a metaphor for the local women.⁷⁵ There were many sketches of pretty, stylish women with the caption 'Lillerin',⁷⁶ and a silhouette entitled 'The Wonder' depicted two *Landser* turning to gawk as a very attractive Frenchwoman walked by.⁷⁷ There were also sketches of young, pretty girls, often identified as the daughters of the local billet.⁷⁸ The ultra-chic nature of some local women occasionally translated into humour in the newspapers, as in 'O-o la lah!', with a *Landser* voyeuristically watching a woman keeping her little poodle in tow.⁷⁹ The witty poem 'Little Girl from Lille' described a pretty girl, yet lamented her inability to communicate in German and the fact that she wore far too much perfume. Indeed, the cartoon 'French Perfume' had one *Landser* complaining to another that he could not kiss the Frenchwoman standing nearby without a gas mask.⁸⁰

The newspapers also reveal attempts to debunk the 'myth' of the extremely beautiful Frenchwoman. In one cartoon's first frame she is depicted early in the morning, looking monstrous, hair askew. In the second frame, she is transformed in the afternoon, her

the Russian army. The article 'German and Russian Trenchwork', *Kriegszeitung für das XV. Armeekorps*, 7 April 1915, explained that German trenches were clean and exact, while those of the Russians were dirty and structurally inferior. This orientalist vision of the backwards east, however, was limited to Western Front soldier newspapers, thousands of kilometres away. See Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*, chs 3 and 5.

74 One of the main ways in which the German soldier newspapers discussed the relationship between home and front was through the many references to the women at home. These women were cast as *Kameradinnen*, a home front working together with the soldiers, not against them. Thus, whereas Lipp reads the soldier newspapers as being key in the construction and distribution of the myth of the stab in the back, long before the collapse of 1918, I found little evidence of this, and in fact, more often quite the opposite. See Lipp, *Meinunglenkung*, and Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*, ch. 3.

75 *Liller*, 13 October 1916, and throughout the *Liller Kriegszeitung*.

76 Example in *Sommewacht*, 25 February 1917.

77 *Liller*, 24 July 1918.

78 *Liller*, 10 May 1916; *Sommewacht*, 21 January 1917; *Sommewacht*, 29 April 1917.

79 *Sommewacht*, 13 July 1917.

80 *Liller*, 10 May 1916; *Sommewacht*, 6 July 1917.

face made up, her hair neatly set.⁸¹ ‘How Hirnhofer-Jakl Got to Know the Beautiful Girl from Lille’ described a Casanova arriving on duty in France hoping to enjoy the highly touted local ladies. He discovers that they are particularly unattractive before they put on their make-up, and, even more frustrating, he cannot understand a word they say.⁸² Occasionally unflattering sketches of rural women appeared, including a pipe-smoking old farming woman, a raggedy daughter of the local billet, and even a bearded grandmother.⁸³ These negative portrayals implied that German women were naturally beautiful, and the fact that Frenchwomen were only ‘superficially’ attractive fitted nicely into larger discourses surrounding French ‘civilization’ versus German ‘culture’ in general. But these negative images were exceptional. The German soldier newspapers make it clear that Frenchwomen were sought after and that German soldiers were having active, indiscreet relationships with them.⁸⁴

In his brief and anecdotal history of Lille under German occupation in the First World War, Richard Cobb describes how French girlfriends of German soldiers, *les filles à boches*, were greatly envied by the local women, for they had, firstly, a man, secondly, material advantages, and, thirdly, freedom of movement in and around the controlled city.⁸⁵ Indeed the German soldier newspapers did little to conceal the fact that Germans were seriously involved with local women, as the large sketch of a German officer with his French girlfriend on the front page of the 8 July 1917 *Sommewacht* made clear. ‘Little Marguerite!’ was the story of a German and his French *petite amie* in Paris shortly before the war began, and the cartoon ‘Soldier Rudow in his Billet’ depicted a happy soldier being warmly welcomed by his hostess. He declares that if he were single he would marry her, but, alas, instead produces a photo of his fat wife. Another cartoon, this time portraying a large-breasted Frenchwoman walking past two *Landser*, explained that there were all kinds of possibilities for new French ‘relationships’.⁸⁶ The jealousy that existed among soldiers for those lucky enough to have a relationship with a local woman was depicted in a cartoon: a *Landser* urinates into the boots left at the foot of a ladder that leads up to what is presumably a local woman’s window.⁸⁷

81 *Liller*, 30 July 1916.

82 *Liller*, 10 February 1916.

83 *Schützengraben*, 1 January 1917; *Liller*, 14 March 1916; *Liller*, 4 August 1917.

84 It is thus the complete absence of any reference to Slavic girlfriends in the Eastern Front newspapers that so clearly displays the growing radicalization in how Germans viewed the peoples of the east. See R.L. Nelson, ‘German Comrades – Slavic Whores: Gender Images in the German Soldier Newspapers of the First World War’, in K. Hagemann and S. Schüler-Springorum, eds, *Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in 20th Century Germany* (New York, 2002), pp. 69–85.

85 R. Cobb, *French and Germans, Germans and French: A Personal Account of France under Two Occupations, 1914–1918/1940–1944*, 2nd edn (Hanover, 1984), pp. 13–14. See also H. McPhail, *The Long Silence: Civilian Life under the German Occupation of Northern France, 1914–1918* (New York, 1999).

86 *Sommewacht*, 2 December 1917; *Champagne-Kamerad*, 31 March 1918. The cartoon about relationships is in *Liller*, 16 October 1916.

87 *Schützengrabenzeitung*, Christmas 1915.

I found only one reference to local prostitution, in the small trench newspaper *Im Schützengraben in den Vogesen*.⁸⁸ The paper printed an ‘official’ report that the nearby, and very popular, ‘House of Desire’ was being forced to move south of its current position in the Vosges mountains. The author joked that although this would put it inside the Swiss border, luckily that country’s government had no problems with such an establishment, as it was not used for ‘purely military purposes’. ‘Sexual Life and War’, in the *Kriegszeitung der XV. Armeekorps*, provided the history of ‘prostitutes’, concluding that these women were important and had ‘always’ been a part of war.⁸⁹ Nothing was mentioned about the current situation, however, nor the specifics of what exactly these women did. In his own reading of the *Liller Kriegszeitung*, Richard Cobb surmises that the many advertisements in the newspaper for local French ‘fortune tellers’ may have been for prostitution.⁹⁰

The Allied soldier newspapers were much the same in depicting soldiers as interested in local women for the straightforward pursuit of sex. ‘An Interlude in Boulogne’ depicted British soldiers checking out attractive French mothers walking in the park, while the cartoon ‘A General Offensive’ displayed an older officer leering at a young Frenchwoman.⁹¹ The similarities between the German and British newspapers also extended to the mildly critical assessment of peasant women. The ‘Ballad of Imperfections’, about a hard-working girl of Picardy, asked, ‘Why are your boots so flat and vast?’, and, in ‘French Dictionary. – No. 111’, ‘Say la gaire’ was translated as ‘She ain’t wot I’d look at at ‘ome’.⁹² Nevertheless, when an advertisement by a ‘lonely subaltern’ wishing to marry a ‘wealthy heiress’ claimed ‘nationality no bar’, this nicely summed up the British soldiers’ attitude toward available women.⁹³ The October 1918 *Aussie* featured a Digger walking with an Englishwoman in one frame, and a Frenchwoman in the second. Finally, the many references to the phrase ‘promener ce soir’, and what was meant therewith if a Frenchwoman asked it of a soldier, or vice versa, makes it clear that prostitution was well known, and accepted, by the British army in France.⁹⁴

88 No. 3 [n.d.].

89 15 March 1915.

90 Cobb, *French and Germans*, p. 22.

91 *Outpost*, May 1917; *Dump*, 1917.

92 *Aussie*, 4 April 1918; *Minden*, March 1916.

93 *Minden*, January 1916. The immediate postwar edition of *Aussie* (Christmas 1918) had a Digger asking a gentleman how to say ‘Voulez-vous . . .’ in German.

94 See the obvious conversation, including the word ‘combien’, in *The Dump*, 1917, as well as the discussion, in ‘franglais’, about prostitution, in *The Minden Magazine*, June/July 1916. Although Fuller was correct when he stated that there was no mention of brothels in the British and Dominion soldier newspapers, he failed to notice that these journals contained many references to prostitution. Judging by the evidence in the trench journals, he must surely be wrong when he dismisses the pursuit of prostitution with his claim that soldiers had ‘girlfriends’, but were short of time and money for anything more. See Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p. 75. See K.C. Gibson, ‘Sex and Soldiering in France and Flanders: The British Expeditionary Force along the Western Front, 1914–1919’, *International History Review* XXIII (2001), pp. 535–79. The pitfalls of relying on soldiers’ letters and memoirs with regard to sex behind the lines is apparent when David Simpson refers to Donald Morton’s work in the Canadian

The French newspapers were full of references to women,⁹⁵ but it is difficult to tell when they are referring to Frenchwomen ‘on the home front’ or to those just behind the lines. One newspaper in particular is surprising for its very large number of images of women, often semi-nude, and its many indicators that the soldier audience was especially sexually active. *L’Esprit du cor* was the newspaper of the Alpines, and, judging from the image put forward in these sources, these soldiers saw themselves as an élite that entertained women regularly. The first six issues leave the reader with the sense that these men did little other than discuss their sexual conquests (or fantasies thereof). One cartoon depicted a woman, lying in bed, asking a dressing soldier, ‘Well, well! My little soldier, what do you say to that counter-attack?’ Another sketch portrayed a doctor grabbing the naked breasts of his female patient.⁹⁶ The macho, élite nature of this newspaper achieved its zenith when it was claimed that the *Alpines* slept with local women, and that civilian French men should fear these soldiers.⁹⁷ These depictions of women extended to openly portraying prostitution, as in the cartoon that featured a Frenchwoman in lingerie complaining to a *poilu* that if he wanted to pay less, the nights would be shorter.⁹⁸

V. Soldier Newspapers in the First World War and Beyond: Further Research

Hopefully this overview of the authorship and production of German, British, and French soldier newspapers in the First World War, as well as brief examples of what this source contributes to the social and cultural history of that war, from the reliance of the British on humour, to the honesty of the French, to the need for justification among the Germans, will spur military historians to seek out and read the equivalent sources for other nationalities and other wars. What follows is some advice on possible trajectories.

Alfred E. Cornebise, the expert on American army newspapers, has provided us with an excellent history of what he rightly calls ‘Undoubtedly . . . the best-known army newspaper of all time’, *The Stars and Stripes*, from its foundation in February 1918 through to the end of its first run, in June 1919.⁹⁹ This monster, which at its height had a print run of 526 000, is recognizably of the same ‘category’ as the newspapers discussed above, with its mix of humour and morale-boosting stories. Like its brethren, it had to cover its own costs through subscription and advertising. Indeed, in words that Major Nicolai would

soldier in the First World War (‘throughout Canadian soldiers’ memoirs and letters home, they insisted that the few women found in areas near the front were sexually unappealing’) in his ‘Morale and Sexual Morality among British Troops in the First World War’, in D. MacKaman and M. Mays, eds, *World War I and the Cultures of Modernity* (Jackson, MS, 2001), pp. 20–34, quote on p. 31.

95 The journals most concerned with female imagery were *Face aux Boches*, *Le Petit écho*, and *Notre rire*.

96 Both cartoons are in the 30 June 1917 edition.

97 30 June 1917.

98 16 June 1917.

99 A.E. Cornebise, *The Stars and Stripes: Doughboy Journalism in World War I* (Westport, CT, 1984).

have approved, the 7 February 1919 edition stated: ‘Then the fact that the doughboy paid his ten cents for every issue made it possible for us to remind all and sundry from time to time that the paper was his and that every one else in the world could keep hands off’.¹⁰⁰ From the uncomfortable relationship between the draftees of a democratic nation and their officers, to the rather ‘French’ situation of exhibiting pride for fellow black soldiers while simultaneously reproducing old racial stereotypes, Cornebise more than demonstrates the usefulness of this newspaper for the social and cultural history of US soldiers in the First World War, and alludes to the ‘dozens’ of other US soldier newspapers available for analysis, as well as the plethora of ‘camp newspapers’ that were born stateside.¹⁰¹

In addition to a much-needed return to older studies of the soldier newspapers of the Italian and Belgian armies of 1914–18,¹⁰² there remains the need to analyse the journals of the Habsburg monarchy. While the German language newspapers are numerous and easily accessible, it is unclear which if any of the many other linguistic groups in the Austro-Hungarian army had their own publications. The problem of illiteracy among the lower ranks arises when we shift our focus to Russia. While Hubertus Jahn mentions a centralized broadsheet produced for the Russian army,¹⁰³ I am unaware of other Russian soldier newspapers. Finally, a whole subset of related and unanalysed sources exist for the German experience in the First World War, that of the occupation newspapers. Prevalent in the east, these were journals produced for both occupying soldiers and the locally occupied populations, and appeared in many languages, such as the Grodno and Bialystok newspapers with their German, Polish, and Yiddish columns.¹⁰⁴

For more than a century before 1914, however, soldier newspapers were created and distributed in various theatres of war. In his overview, *Ranks and Columns: Armed Forces Newspapers in American Wars*,¹⁰⁵ Cornebise provides a plethora of rich details and points to many areas of possible research, extending back to what may be the first modern soldier newspaper: the *South Carolina Gazette*, published by Nathanael Greene’s colonial troops in 1782. The 25 soldier newspapers that appeared during the war and occupation of Mexico (1846–48) are especially intriguing, filled with stories of heroism, as well as descriptions of a ‘squalid’ but pretty Mexican landscape. Cornebise has located 300 titles for the American Civil War, with print runs of up to 4000. The editors were full of advice, from how to avoid sunburn to what to eat before battle. Although the pre-1914 German soldier newspaper history is limited to a few titles during the Napoleonic Wars, there are some unanalysed gems, such as the *Pekinger Deutsche Zeitung*, produced

100 Op. cit., p. 25.

101 For the soldier newspaper of the post-1919 US occupation forces, see A.E. Cornebise, *The Amaroc News: The Daily Newspaper of the American Forces in Germany, 1919–1923* (Carbondale, 1981).

102 M. Isnenghi, *Giornali di trincea 1915–1918* (Torino, 1977); F. Bertrand, *La Presse francophone de tranchée au front belge, 1914–1918* (Brussels, 1971).

103 There is a reference to Russian scholarship on newspapers for soldiers in H. Jahn, *Patriotic Culture in Russia in World War One* (Ithaca, 1995), p. 186, fn. 36.

104 See F. Bertkau, *Das amtliche Zeitungswesen im Verwaltungsgebiet Ober-Ost: Beitrag zur Geschichte der Presse im Weltkrieg* (Leipzig, 1928).

105 A.E. Cornebise, *Ranks and Columns: Armed Forces Newspapers in American Wars* (Westport, CT, 1993).

during the Boxer Rebellion. It stands to reason that the British and French adventures of the long nineteenth century possibly produced a wealth of soldier newspapers during conventional wars, as well as colonial newspapers along the lines of the German occupation newspapers mentioned above. The scope for new research is truly vast.

Finally, there are the untapped sources of soldier newspapers beyond 1918. Although the German soldier newspapers of the Second World War have been categorized and superficially analysed,¹⁰⁶ a great opportunity exists for a historian able to get past the unhelpful argument that Nazi soldier newspapers should be dismissed as pure 'propaganda'. Instead this resource should be mined for additional details of the daily lives of soldiers in perhaps the most significant conflict of all. While there are some tantalizingly brief examinations of the exploits of the British soldier newspaper editors in the Second World War,¹⁰⁷ their comprehensive history has yet to be written. American scholarship has moved beyond the recent history of an ever more 'institutional' *Stars and Stripes* to include fascinating analyses such as that of the 'underground' newspapers of the Vietnam era.¹⁰⁸ It is easy to imagine the potential of this approach up to and including analyses of present-day conflicts. As we move beyond the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, with an ever more literate class of lower-rank soldiers, historians have access to an increasingly fascinating bounty of 'soldier newspapers', from the base publications of the long-standing Cold War forces in Europe to the blogs being written and commented upon every minute today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

106 Eckhardt, *Die Frontzeitungen*.

107 S.P. MacKenzie, 'Vox Populi: British Army Newspapers in the Second World War', *Journal of Contemporary History* XXIV (1989), pp. 665–81. See also J.A. Crang, *The British Army and the People's War, 1939–1945* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 97–99.

108 J. Lewes, *Protest and Survive: Underground GI Newspapers during the Vietnam War* (Westport, CT, 2003).

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Soldier Newspapers

By [Robert L. Nelson](#)

Soldier newspapers are a massive, yet little used primary source of the First World War. They were read and written by the almost universally literate men at or near the front in the French, British, and German armies. Although they were shaped by both official censorship as well as powerful self-censorship, these newspapers were popular. Importantly, they were purchased by a soldier audience seeking both reassurance and justification. Each army found itself in a different context. Although each set of newspapers depicts elements of a universal experience for all soldiers, they also unsurprisingly indicate the distinct national experiences of each army.

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Introduction

The newspapers created by and for soldiers, at or near the front, in the First World War (WWI), represent the single greatest shared print discourse of the war.^[1] The many millions of **soldiers' letters**, while often using the language of this shared discourse, were nevertheless private and almost always intended for a non-military audience. Soldier newspapers, however, were written for – and shared among – a massive, yet distinct community of (almost solely) men seeking daily justification and motivation for – and an understanding of – their often extreme circumstances. These were "club newsletters," in a manner of speaking. Both the authors and the readers were members of the same club, away from home, every one of them familiar with the threat of mortal danger. Like letters, newspapers were the victim of both official and self-censorship, and like letters they must always be read with a critical eye. But they were enormously popular and were read (or read aloud and listened to) by millions. Therefore, they cannot be dismissed as mere **propaganda**.^[2] They function as lenses through which one sees elements of the daily life of soldiers, catches glimpses of **humour**, and beholds visions of women (both loyally on the home front and not so "loyally" behind the lines). But interestingly, for the most part in these pages there are no depictions of the enemy, at least not the portrayals endorsed by home front propaganda. Finally, the similarities and differences between the newspapers of the German, French and British armies illustrate the many ways in which the soldiers of each nation participated in the same war, but with intriguing disparities accounted for by the very different circumstances each army confronted.^[3]

Soldier Newspapers: History, Production, Authorship

The Pre-1914 History of Soldier Newspapers

Just as the Americans managed to conduct their revolution shortly before the French, so did **Nathanael Greene's (1742-1786)** colonial troops' *South Carolina Gazette* of 1782 beat out **Napoleon I, Emperor of the French's (1769-1821)** *France vue de l'Armée d'Italie* and *Le Courier de l'Armée d'Italie*, both founded in 1796, as the first example of a soldier newspaper. Only somewhat later, while in fact fighting Napoleon's forces, did the Germans print their initial soldier newspapers, the first was in both German and Russian at Vitebsk and appeared in 1812. One year later, in October 1813, Prussian Headquarters produced the *Feldzeitung*, which ended its run seventy-nine issues later in Paris on 29 April 1814.^[4] Although the Americans again produced soldier newspapers – such as during the war and occupation in Mexico (1846-48) – in Europe, the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) seems to have moved too quickly and ended too abruptly to produce any such literature. While there was one fascinating product of the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901), the *Peking Deutsche Zeitung*, there are surely some as yet unearthed newspapers from the many imperial endeavours of the British and French in the 19th century.^[5] Soldier newspapers required time, a certain amount of stability, literate soldiers and some specialized equipment. While such circumstances were clearly a rarity from 1782 to 1914, the following four years would provide the best set of conditions for such production that the world had ever seen, and would perhaps ever see again.

Production

The first soldier newspaper of the Great War was actually an amalgam of both soldier interests and those of the civilian population, with whom the soldiers were in very close contact. The *Kriegszeitung der Feste Boyen und der Stadt Lötzen* was founded on 7 September 1914 in an East Prussia overrun with Russian troops. A mere week later on the Vosges front, a notoriously quiet sector throughout most of the war, Staff Sergeant Edmeier of the Bavarian Army handwrote four copies of a leaflet full of stories and poems, tacked it to a tree near the frontline, and thus birthed the war's first 'trench' newspaper. It was called the *Hohnacker Neuste Nachrichten* and would eventually develop into the *Bayerische Landwehrmann*, entertaining several local units and peaking at a circulation of 2,000.^[6] Similar developments occurred on the other side of no-man's-land in the British and French armies, as the front lines became ever more permanent. By early 1915, the German army's support for soldier newspapers began to far surpass that of the French and the British armies. It supported the foundation of 'army'-level newspapers, which often matched the professionalism and polish of the home front dailies and enjoyed circulations over 50,000.

Initially, small newspapers were produced in a bunker with a mimeograph. Eventually, as readership grew, a dedicated space was required. This was usually a building commandeered to handle the editorial duties and house the 'found' printing presses. These publishing establishments were located up to thirty kilometres behind the lines, such as in Lille. In some Allied cases, the actual printing occurred back in Paris or London. The military postal system provided distribution to paying subscribers; copies were also sold through military bookstores and at train stations. Although some of the most successful German soldier newspapers, such as the *Liller Kriegszeitung*, were able to cover their costs through paid advertising, most were purchased by their readers.^[7] Subscription costs importantly distinguish soldier newspapers from mass-printed military propaganda broadsheets, which were produced without the input of frontline soldiers and distributed freely. Soldier newspapers were bought by troops, and thus meant something to the soldier audience.

The British and Dominion armies created 107 distinct titles, few of which had a circulation of more than 5,000. At least 200 distinct titles appeared in the French army, and in mid-1916, between 75,000 and 132,000 copies were appearing each month. While both of these collections were very rich and will be discussed throughout this essay, it is probably safe to say that the majority of French soldiers, and very likely a high percentage of British and Dominion soldiers, never saw a soldier newspaper. The case in the German army, however, is exactly the opposite. On the Western Front in 1916-17, at least 1.1 million soldier newspapers were being printed and distributed to German troops. On the much more 'foreign' Eastern Front, where home front newspapers were far more difficult to come by,^[8] that monthly number surpassed 2 million. To understand what that means in terms of saturation: in 1916 there were three million German soldiers on the Western Front and 1.0 to 1.5 million in the East. There were at least 110 distinct titles and thus, while the French produced more distinct titles, they were smaller 'trench' level newspapers that never reached anywhere near the number of readers as the German newspapers. It is therefore unlikely that any German soldier in the

First World War spent more than a few weeks at or near the front without reading or listening to a soldier newspaper.

Authorship

There exists enough evidence about the editors of the soldier newspapers to make some generalizations about who they were. In general, they were educated, middle-class, low-ranking officers, often from a belletristic background (authors and journalists). They were likely to be older and of a more conservative leaning. That last assertion can be made due to the simple fact that already by early 1915, a separation was occurring. The faster, more idealistic (i.e. younger) men, with 'only' their lives to lose, were at the front lines, while older, slower, family men, who tended to more openly complain and be somewhat more conservative in their politics and with their lives, could be found in the rear, working in logistics or editing newspapers.^[9] The background information of those older editors can be somewhat pieced together for each army.

Unfortunately, there are few available details on the British editors. The solid information is that they were evenly split between officers and other ranks. The more conjectural evidence, based on what appeared in the newspapers, points to an educated background and familiarity with writing and journalism. In the French newspapers, one third of the editors were other ranks while two thirds were officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs). The prewar occupation of sixty French editors is also known. From that group, sixteen were artists or authors, thirteen worked in journalism, five were lawyers and four were teachers. The ranks of 180 German newspaper staff who could be identified were: thirty-four lower ranks, with the rest ranging from NCOs to officers. Of the 100 identified prewar occupations of German editors, thirty-two were in the publishing business, eighteen were artists and ten were teachers.

The common vision voiced by the editors was that the journals be a place promoting unit cohesion, where comradeship could be nurtured. The editors of the first issue of *Der Schützengraben*, on 22 August 1915, wrote:

This newspaper would like to hold more firmly and tightly the ribbon that binds us together, the members of this Corps. It is the spirited comradeship in both the world of the trenches as well as the larger corps area, which brings about an unforced exchange of our big and small experiences, in both curious and multifaceted ways. The humorous and childish, the reflective, serious and profound, should all be found here.

Similar declarations appeared in *The Vic's Patrol* – 'to bring the different units within the Battalion into a more intimate relationship'^[10] – as well as the 1 August 1916 edition of *Le Poilu du 6-9*: 'The only purpose of this paper is to inform our friends about regimental life and to strengthen, to draw tighter still if possible, the ties of friendship which unite them'.

Much like the individual letter writer penning a missive to his mother, the editors of the soldier newspapers had to deal with the dual constraints of both official censorship and the more mercurial nature of self-censorship. The letter writer knew there were many things he 'officially' was not allowed to include in what he wrote to his mother, but he also had to decide whether or not to tell her everything he was *allowed* to write. The audience, that is, the mother of a soldier, did not want to know just how dangerous and horrifying her son's world truly was. In the case of the soldier newspaper editor, on the one hand, official censorship disallowed many things from appearing in the newspapers, including negative or pessimistic stories that could hurt morale. On the other hand, self-censorship, that is, carefully meeting the needs of the audience, was just as powerful a moderator on what the editors could and could not write.

The audience that daily experienced the realities and horrors of frontline warfare did not want a newspaper that explicitly and honestly walked through the realities and horror of frontline warfare. These newspapers were purchased because they provided escape. This was not the complete escape that could be found in novels purchased at military bookstores. Instead, it was the escape depicted in stories about soldiers' lives, mainly behind the frontlines. The tales had to be truthful enough that the paying soldier audience found them acceptable, but not 'real' enough that they simply told the story that war is hell. In fact, violence and no-man's-land appeared very rarely in any of the belligerent forces' soldier newspapers. But at the same time, there was no condemnation of that violence, no treasonously pacifist point of view put forward. Thus, editors could please the 'higher ups' by eliminating anything 'anti-war', but at the same time perhaps disappoint the upper echelons by tempering any 'pro-war' messages that would have surely turned off their paying audience.

Lastly, while those 'defending' on French soil could largely placate their audiences with escapism, the German editors and indeed audience needed something more: justification for **occupation**. While not exactly a 'pro-war' message, German editors did spend time catering to the needs of their audience in explaining how, in a 'defensive' war, they all stood on foreign soil. Again, as opposed to pure 'propaganda', such messages both pleased the censors but also appeased the desires of the audience.^[11]

Unsurprisingly perhaps, the British had the most lax system of official censorship, but again, not much is known about it. It was most succinctly laid out in *The Minden Magazine*:

We are not allowed to insert the names of the various places we go to; neither are we allowed to discuss too minutely the ins and outs of our prolonged misunderstanding and unpleasantness with the Germans. Neither are we permitted to criticise too freely our political enemies or friends.^[12]

The French formalized their censorship apparatus in March 1916, as laid out in the following circular of Joseph Joffre (1852-1931):

It has been brought to my attention that certain newspapers have been suppressed by order of staff officers in command of Page 651 publishing the papers. The aim of these papers is to divert and amuse the fighting men. At the same time they demonstrate

to all that our men are full of confidence, cheerfulness and courage. The propaganda branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs uses the trench newspapers to demonstrate to the correspondents of foreign newspapers the excellent morale of our troops along the whole of the front. I consider that their publication should be viewed with goodwill as long as they do no harm to the army and on condition that their management is closely supervised, to avoid the publication of any article that does not fit in with the aim stated above. I would ask you to be so kind as to encourage the senior officers under your command to take heed of these considerations in relation to any trench newspapers which may be published by troops placed under your command.^[13]

Philippe Pétain (1856-1951) then further tightened this scrutiny after the 1917 mutinies, recommending that a copy of each issue be sent to general headquarters.

Again unsurprisingly, especially in light of the much greater seriousness with which Germans approached the whole business of soldier newspapers, control over German newspapers surpassed that seen in the Allied armies. In 1916, a *Feldpressestelle* (military press office) was instituted, and the man who oversaw newspaper censorship on the home front, Major Walter Nicolai (1873-1947), issued the following directive to soldier newspaper editors on 24 May 1916:

Army newspapers do not fall under the jurisdiction of the censorship that controls home front newspapers. The fundamental rules that operate for the home front press must be authoritative for the army newspapers.

Some main points are emphasised:

A) Exclusion of everything that could be seen as having a religious, moral or political direction.

B) Especially protect the Civil Peace.^[14]

Similar to what the French would institute in 1917, it was ordered that two copies of each newspaper be sent to the *Feldpressestelle*. Lastly, in a move beyond anything seen on the Allied side, the *Feldpressestelle* sometimes wrote its own articles and forwarded them to the major soldier newspapers in the hopes some would be printed. Again, clearly due to editors' fears that their paying audience would abandon them if they thought their beloved newspapers were becoming propaganda sheets, the *Feldepressestelle* complained bitterly that at most a third of the editors regularly included one of these articles. The pressure on the editors only increased in the latter half of 1917 with the introduction of Erich Ludendorff's (1865-1937) 'Patriotic Instruction', leading to Nicolai's renewed hope that editors would partake in this intensified propaganda effort by including more of the *Feldpressestelle*-written articles.

Daily Life

The irony evident in referring to anything in the First World War as quotidian, or 'normal', was savagely mocked in the May 1915 edition of the British *Whizz-Bang*: a cartoon entitled 'Scenes from our Daily Life' depicted an officer about to be decimated by an incoming shell. He asked 'Oo called this Sanct-u-ary Wood?'^[15] More so than in the other armies, the British were rarely allowed to be truly 'idle', and thus throughout their soldier newspapers there are many parodies of the word 'rest'. There was similarly little, if any, discussion of everyday life in French newspapers. Germans, on the other hand, were sometimes allowed to be 'bored', and made fun of that fact: again, in the quiet Vosges sector, issue number three (n.d. 1915), of the small *Schützengrabenzeitung* was named the 'Quiet Number', and featured a cartoon of a weary man standing behind a counter, with the caption, 'A Day in the Life of the Baggage-Train, or, My God is this Boring'.

Eastern Front German soldier newspapers did more often portray 'daily' life, because this was one gigantic, relatively quiet sector. Indeed, one sketch 'Position on the Shchara', depicts a vast no-man's-land with waist-high trenches on the German side and no discernable enemy line in the distance.^[16] Other Eastern Front newspapers discussed the boring, lice-infested, damp daily life. One whimsical cartoonist went so far as to metaphorically depict the hell of an endlessly drenched life with a sketch of a steel-helmed water monster emerging from a swampy trench.^[17] Life here was so quiet that one author, in the 31 February 1916 issue of the *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, complained that, as opposed to 'war', soldiers in the East were taking part in something much more akin to 'border patrol', and likened their position to the Roman '*Limes* against the Barbarians'. And in yet another quiet sector, the Macedonian Front, an article in the 9 March 1917 *Kriegszeitung der 9. Armee* observed that there was only rarely evidence that a war was underway in the occasional long range [artillery](#) shell hurtling overhead.

As mentioned earlier, the soldier audience was little interested in the extreme violence and extreme boredom they already knew so well. There were virtually no depictions of the former and only a smattering of the latter. Soldier newspapers were purchased to provide escape and enjoyment, both of which were nevertheless to be grounded in the reality the audience understood.

Humour

The Latest War News

The Germans have taken Cascara Sagrada on the Dutch frontier.

The British admit the Germans have taken Cascara, but doubt their ability to hold it.

The enemy is evacuating all along the line, and the strain on their rear is tremendous.

The Germans are trying to suppress this, but it is leaking out in several places.

What price the scrap of paper now?

[The Press Bureau has no objection to our publishing this, but will take no responsibility as to its accuracy.]^[18]

Daily life in the trenches meant an endless cycle of stomach ailments and bowel issues. This provided a rich source of humour in the newspapers of all armies. Similar to the above-quoted British diarrhea-themed joke, a 1916 German newspaper contained this quip:

A man goes to the doctor and asks for medicine to counter his diarrhea. The doctor prescribes castor oil. Days go by. Doctor: 'Well? How are you, are you still coughing?' Soldier (with one hand on his stomach, the other holding onto the bottom end of his backbone): 'But doctor, dare I?'^[19]

And a French cartoon, in the November 1915 *La Bourguignotte*, depicted a new [weapon](#): several soldiers had their rear ends bare and pointing toward the enemy while another fed them from a large pot labeled 'beans'.

While all soldier newspapers attempted humour, it is no exaggeration to claim that the British journals were completely saturated with it. The relentlessness with which everything was treated as a joke in these pages initially suggests that these were incredibly open and free editors. Yet, further reflection leads to a recognition that there was something deeply conservative, and indeed 'self-censoring' in the nature of this humour. Much like the 'culture of consolation' argument put forward about the counter-revolutionary effects of music hall,^[20] it is the eternally joking and 'grousing' British soldier that ultimately never questions anything he is told. The French newspapers in general were much more serious in tone but they also indulged in scatological humour, as well as humour at the expense of women. One French cartoon entitled 'Obsession', in the 15 January 1917 edition of *Tacatacteuftauf*, depicted a very large wife getting into bed with her horrified German husband, who yells, "No! No! ... Not the tanks! Not the tanks!" And in the same newspapers on 15 April 1917, there was a sketch of a woman cupping her naked breasts and declaiming, in reference both to her breasts and the troops at the front, "*Pourvu qu'ils tiennent!*" ("I hope they hold up!")

German soldier newspapers were similar to the French in their rare incidence of humour, but they nevertheless engaged in some scatology, as referenced above, as well as poking fun at things such as women's fashion. "Fashion in the Trenches" depicted women modeling belt-cinched trenchcoats, gasmasks adorned with lovely necklaces, and [barbed wire](#) wrapped in the manner of a skirt.^[21] Additionally, there was one form of humour that surprisingly mocked the official Germanisation campaign against foreign words: in the 10 September 1915 *Liller Kriegszeitung*, the sketch "What a Man Heard and Saw while on Leave" showed someone taking down a "Coiffeur" sign above a shop. An onlooker then said, "Just right, Mr. Head Washer (Kopfwascher), away with the enemy's language!"

Soldier newspapers of the First World War furnish a very powerful argument against the so-called "war culture" thesis, the theory that the troops' deep hatred for the enemy fuelled their motivation and endurance.^[22] The fact of the matter is that there were virtually no negative depictions of the enemy in any of the armies' soldier newspapers. The absence of such images cannot be attributed to official censorship, for what could have pleased the high command of each army more than these newspapers whipping their men into a froth of hatred? And what could have put the editors into a better relationship with their superiors than the inclusion of hateful images of the enemy? The only explanation for their non-appearance must be that the paying soldier audience would not accept such images. Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau's conclusion in his study of the French soldier newspapers supports this view:

The soldiers assessed their comrades and their leaders by the yardstick of their courage under fire, and they judged the enemy by the same criterion: it was this which forbade the latter to be denigrated. Self-respect and respect for the enemy were inseparable.^[23]

The British almost always depicted the enemy with humour. Two examples from the *Minden Magazine* show the perceived similarity of the soldiers on both sides, while simultaneously making light of murderous violence: in the December 1915 issue, a German yelled from his trench that he had a wife in Birmingham, while the Tommy replied, "Get yer head down or there'll be a widow!" In the March 1916 issue another joke played out as follows: "T.A. (member of burying party): 'Sargint, 'eres a German wot aint quite dead.' Sergeant: 'Never mind; Shovel 'im in. You can't believe a word wot these bleeders sez.'" The French newspapers did not deal with the enemy humourously, and depicted them most rarely. In one of the few examples, *La Saucisse* of June 1916 told of two patrols, one French, one German, coming across each other in a misty no-man's-land. Just after silently passing each other, one of the Germans remarked "Sad war, gentleman, sad war!" The Germans, like the British, could poke fun at the enemy: one cartoon entitled 'Peace Dream of a French Soldier' portrayed a dozing *poilu* fantasizing about a new suit.^[24] And in the 19 October 1915 *Liller Kriegszeitung*, there was a cartoon depicting the Eastern Front which, while in no way exhibiting 'hatred', did manage to portray a cultural bias against Slavs: "Bravely 'forward'" depicted two illiterate Russian soldiers marching towards St. Petersburg because they could not read the sign.

Women

The same Eastern Front bias appeared with regard to the representation of women in the German soldier newspapers. While Lithuanian, Polish and sometimes Russian women were sketched or mentioned, they were almost never depicted as love interests. The inverse was the case in occupied France. French women were relentlessly put forward as objects of German desire and clearly as the girlfriends of the soldiers in stories, poems and drawings. The only hint of cultural chauvinism on the Western Front were sketches that indicated that French women were ugly in the morning and that only after applying makeup and fancy clothes were they attractive, while German women were truly (and thus always) beautiful. Here one sees the difference that French civilization was but a thin

patina, like mascara, whereas German *Kultur* was much deeper.

The British newspapers, while chaste in their drawings of women, could be bawdy with jokes that winked at the real meaning behind "*promener ce soir*", and over the top in nursery rhymes such as

Jack and Bill
Went up a hill
To see a Frenchman's daughter;
The Censor's here,
And so I fear
I can't say what they taught her.^[25]

And again, holding to national stereotype, the French soldier newspapers were the most focused on the pursuit of women, especially the journal of the élite *Alpins*, *L'esprit du cor*, whose first six issues seem to be one long bragging session about the men's conquests: one cartoon, in the 30 June 1917 edition, depicted a naked woman lying in bed. She asked the soldier now dressing, "Well, well! My little soldier, what do you say to that counter-attack?" Unlike the other national newspapers it is difficult to tell when the French were discussing the women at home, or merely behind the lines. The depiction of French women on the home front was a complicated mixture of both praise as well as fear that these women were being unfaithful, expressed most luridly with cartoons featuring white French women cavorting with black African soldiers.^[26] Similar praise and worry were featured in the British newspapers, but relative to the French and German journals, they had little to say about the women at home.

German soldier newspapers, however, had much to say about those "faithful" women at home, and in doing so display an interesting gendered discourse on "loyalty." As already indicated, German soldiers were very open in their newspapers – though not in letters home – about their many relations with local women. Yet, German soldiers were constantly referred to as "faithful" men. This was because faithfulness for men referred to a sense of loyalty to the nation, and not simply the wife. This was a public, not private, faithfulness. In sharp contrast, German women described in the newspaper were always true to their men. They waited quietly and personally loyal on the home front. This juxtaposition between how soldiers and soldiers' wives were to behave was most powerfully depicted in the ironically titled "The Faithless Wife," in the 15 April 1917 *Sommewacht*. In this story, a soldier on leave attempts, unsuccessfully, to seduce his comrade's wife.

There was of course another category of women that defied easy labeling, yet were omnipresent behind the lines and often appeared in the soldier newspapers: nurses. Interestingly, although depicted as white angels in the journals of each army, and while clearly being publicly "faithful" to the nation much like a German soldier, nurses were often less described in the newspapers as

objects of relentless sexual desire. There were German stories of soldiers obsessing about the "touch" from the hands of the sisters, and British paeans to past nurses, but in a telling example of the seriousness of the French newspapers, the January 1916 edition of *Bellica* depicted a nurse on her knees washing the feet of a soldier who had lost both arms. Similarly uncomfortable sketches never appeared in British or German newspapers.

Soldier Newspapers and National Difference: France, Britain, Germany

French Soldier Newspapers

Whether with the sketch of an amputee or with such "jokes" as this one – "The rank stupidity of the army and vastness of the sea are the only two things which can give an idea of infinity"^[27] – the French soldier newspapers set themselves apart from the British and German with a certain seriousness and frankness that could be quite striking. Unlike the British making jokes of everything or the Germans' overwhelming focus on justifying their presence on foreign soil, the French editors clearly had no reason to explain, justify or make light of things. The situation was dire, and the war – the defense of France – required no explanation. Soldier newspapers reveal the constant justification and legitimation soldiers required for the horrible things they were constantly asked to do, except in the circumstances of obvious defense on home soil. Every French soldier, whether he liked it or not, whether or not he wanted to fight or flee, knew why he was in the trenches. Such a recognition of the situation by the audience freed the editors from any explanations, and in fact allowed them to actually criticize their superiors sometimes. Although there were moments in the British and German newspapers where a mildly pejorative tone towards parliamentarians appeared, there was nothing like the following passage from the 1 September 1917 issue of *Le Gafouilleur*:

Truly wiped out by the hard sessions of the House – whose unhealthy fetid odors are well known – our deputies decided to take a vacation. They will rest their minds, tortured by the anguishing questions resolved this year. [...] So deputies, have a [censored] happy vacation, enjoy the sun and countryside. Don't you do anything: [censored]. And if for a few months we don't have your sessions, we will still have the shells we mentioned, for there are Germans in France.

Thus, in a way peculiar to the French newspapers, underneath the naked women, the occasional jokes, and often viscous honesty, there is the stubborn but quiet acceptance of what needs to be done for the nation, a mood Audoin-Rouzeau called *sentiment national*. But it must again be noted that, similar to British and German newspapers, this national sentiment did not involve hatred of the enemy, for the enemy was rarely depicted or discussed. Although German atrocities were a major feature of home front French newspapers, the *poilu* dismissed "baby-killing" and other atrocities as eye-wash. French soldier newspapers provide no evidence of a "war culture," the theory that hatred of the enemy was a prime motivator for combatants in World War One.

The tone of the British soldier newspapers, while similar to their French allies in lacking any distinct hatred for "Fritz," was otherwise quite different from either their French or German counterparts. As evidenced already, almost everything in these journals was presented as comic relief. The author of a 1940 article entitled "They laughed at war", correctly claimed that "the keynote of the British journals was humour."^[28] Psychologically, the British occupied a murky ground somewhere between the French, confident in their moral position, and the occupying Germans, constantly reminding themselves that they were the gentlemanly defenders of *Kultur*. While the British could easily see themselves as "defending," as they stood shoulder to shoulder with their French allies on French soil, it was much more difficult to tell themselves that they were defending "Britain." It surely goes without saying that the British soldier newspapers did not even begin to discuss the fact that for the last half-millennium the British had constantly been at war with the French, and for the last two centuries often allied with the Germans. John Fuller argued that the manner with which the British successfully dealt with this abstract notion of "defense" while on French soil, was that the British thought of themselves as defending a certain "way of life," that if the Germans reigned supreme on the Continent, life simply could not, and would not continue as before in Albion.

While humour was part and parcel of that British "way of life," so was the unifying, cross-class popular culture of British music hall. The songs and skits of this form of entertainment were much more prominent in the British journals than either the French or German. Because both officers and enlisted men had attended the same theatres in Britain and could sing the same songs, a bond existed between officers and men in the British soldier newspapers that was not found in the other nations' journals. But again, this cross-class singing and humour, while always possessing an element of "grumbling," was also a conservative acceptance of the circumstances, another way to grin and bear it. As noted above, Gareth Stedman Jones' idea of a "culture of consolation" seems to hold very true for the British soldier newspapers of the First World War.

German Soldier Newspapers

The most striking manner with which German readers of soldier newspapers consoled themselves seemed to be by depicting themselves as good, gentlemanly comrades.^[29] Everywhere German readers and the editors of German soldier newspapers found themselves on occupied, foreign soil, yet soldiers tend not to want to see themselves as aggressive conquerors, but rather as "defenders," and indeed, it was in full knowledge of this that the German government had always framed this as a "war of defense." Thus, perhaps as a balm against feelings of insecurity in at least appearing to be the aggressor, the newspapers were full of stories of the faith and loyalty of German soldiers as well as German women on the home front. The journals were constantly detailing acts and stories of great comradeship between soldiers. In the rare depictions of the violent front lines, there were occasional stories of rescue in no-man's-land, of comrades saving comrades, but never about actually killing the enemy.

among foreign civilians and foreign languages. The newspapers were full of local culture and history, told with a perspective that clearly suggested that the German presence in France or Lithuania was good for the occupied. To a certain extent France, but to a much greater extent Eastern Europe was depicted as backward and in need of German know-how and order. Thus, in addition to being good comrades to each other, upstanding German soldiers were portrayed as gentlemen occupiers lifting the poor local civilians up to a higher standard of living in a version of the "*mission civilisatrice*" normally found overseas.

These elements of a gentlemanly, indeed a "manly," defensive justification of Germany's role in the war was most clearly seen in the sketches of armoured knights. From 1916, but much more frequently during the last ever more desperate months from the summer of 1918, German soldiers as medieval knights holding back the onslaught of the Allied powers became a popular theme in the newspapers. It is this last theme, a fairy tale-like escapism to both understand and justify "holding out," that most clearly demarcates the German soldier newspapers from those of the Allies. The German newspapers were at the far end of the sliding scale of justification, one that begins with the serious and honest tone of unapologetic French editors defending *la patrie*, through the more fanciful and elaborate obscurantism of humour and songs with "normally" French-hating British editors defending France, to the haughty escapism of German authors justifying aggressive occupation on French soil. Each audience had different needs and each set of soldier newspapers responded to those needs differently.

Conclusion

Soldier newspapers can provide a lot of information on what soldiers wanted to read about, and what they in fact read. They craved articles about the women just behind the lines; they did not want details about the horrors of no-man's-land. The British read the newspapers in order to laugh, to "muddle through," while the Germans sought information about the occupied populations behind the lines in order to feel better about their role on foreign soil. Although soldier newspapers should be read with a critical eye, the soldier-to-soldier discourse found in these newspapers is a crucial addition to our understanding of what soldiers read and believed from 1914 to 1918.

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Notes

1. ↑ The British soldier newspapers can be found in the British Library, London, and the Imperial War Museum, London; the French in the Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine, Nanterre, and the Bibliothèque national de France, Paris; the German in the Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte, Stuttgart, the Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg im Breisgau, and (most comprehensively) in the Deutsche Bücherei, Leipzig.
2. ↑ Throughout this essay, information about the Allied newspapers is gleaned from: Audoin-Rouzeau, Stéphane: *Men at War, 1914-1918. National Sentiment and Trench Journalism in France during the First World War*, translated by Helen McPhail, Providence 1992 (orig. 1986); Fuller, J.G.: *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies. 1914-1918*, Oxford 1990; as well as Nelson, Robert L.: *German Soldier Newspapers of the First World War*, Cambridge 2011, which analyzes the British and French soldier newspapers alongside the German. The authors of the major studies on the British and French soldier newspapers agree that they cannot be dismissed as propaganda, although one of the historians of the German soldier newspapers believes that for the most part the German newspapers provide little more than propaganda. See Lipp, Anne: *Meinungslenkung im Krieg. Kriegserfahrungen deutscher Soldaten und ihre Deutung 1914-1918*, Göttingen 2003.
3. ↑ While these three armies represent by far the most substantial sources of soldier newspapers, there are other intriguing examples: the unique position of Belgian soldiers, fighting and living almost completely cut off from their homeland, pervaded the articles of their soldier newspapers. See Bertrand, F.: *La presse francophone de tranchée au front belge. 1914-1918*, Brussels 1971. The late, yet massive entry of American forces produced *The Stars and Stripes*, "[u]n doubtedly ... the best-known army newspaper of all time." See Cornebise, Alfred E.: *The Stars and Stripes. Doughboy Journalism in World War I*, Westport 1984, p. 3. For a study of Italian soldier newspapers, see Isnenghi, Mario: *Giornali di trincea 1915-1918*, Torino 1977.
4. ↑ A key study for American soldier newspapers is Cornebise, Alfred E.: *Ranks and Columns. Armed Forces Newspapers in American Wars*, Westport 1993. The references to the first German soldier newspapers come from the earlier, important dissertation: Kurth, Karl: *Die deutschen Feld- und Schützengrabenzeitungen des Weltkrieges*, Leipzig 1937, pp. 8-11, as well as from the useful article: Buck, Gerhard: *Feld- und Schützengrabenzeitungen des 1. und 2. Weltkrieges im Archiv der Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte*, in: *Jahresbibliographie. Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte* 39 (1967), p. 487. Kurth made reference to earlier forms of material printed by military formations in the 16th and 17th centuries, but claimed that the 'modern' form only appeared with Napoleon (p. 8). Buck would seem to agree (p. 487). The newspaper of the Pennsylvania Fifth Regiment, in 1861, had a four column section in German, for its German recruits. Cornebise, *Ranks and Columns* 1993, p. 27.
5. ↑ Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen* 1937, pp. 10f. Kurth cited Charpentier, André: *Le livre d'or des journaux du front 1914-1918, feuilles bleu-horizon*, Paris 1935, as claiming that Rudyard Kipling was on the staff of 'The Friend' in the Transvaal in the spring of 1900.
6. ↑ Edmeier, M.: *Entstehung und Weiterentwicklung der Ersten deutschen Schützengrabenzeitung und des Ersten deutschen Schützengraben Verlag*, Lille 1916.
7. ↑ However, production was not terribly expensive: the army paid the soldiers' wages and did not charge for the post, and the buildings were commandeered. Money was only required for paper, oil and colouring.
8. ↑ Due to similar reasons, among them being 'cut off' from home by great distance, Canadian and ANZAC troops produced relatively more soldier newspapers. The tone of the Canadian newspapers was very similar to the British, though with less humour, while the Australian troop journals were notably racier, anti-authoritarian, and distinct from the British. These 'national' differences, or lack thereof, may very well lie in the fact that the Canadian forces were substantially more 'British born' than the Australian forces. The Canadian and ANZAC soldier newspapers are thoroughly analyzed alongside the British in Fuller, *Troop Morale* 1990.
9. ↑ Ziemann, Benjamin: *War Experiences in Rural Germany. 1914-1923*, translated by Alex Skinner, New York 2007 (orig. 1997), pp. 34f.
10. ↑ Fuller, *Troop Morale* 1990, p. 13.

11. ↑ Again, as noted above, Lipp disagrees, and believes that, from mid-1916 at the latest, the German soldier newspapers became the mouthpiece of a high command intent on moulding a 'stab-in-the-back' understanding of the war among the soldiers, using anti-home front propaganda to create a split between civilians and soldiers.
12. ↑ Fuller, *Troop Morale* 1990, p. 19
13. ↑ Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War* 1992, p. 20.
14. ↑ Cited in Kurth, *Schützengrabenzeitungen* 1937, pp.234f.
15. ↑ The fact that one of the only instances of portraying violence in the British newspapers also obliquely affirmed that horrific violence was a part of 'daily life', is of course fascinating.
16. ↑ *Kriegszeitung von Baranowitschi*, 7 July 1917.
17. ↑ *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, 29 April 1916.
18. ↑ *The Leadswinger*, 16 October 1915.
19. ↑ *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, 21 August 1916.
20. ↑ Jones, Gareth Stedman: *Working-Class Culture and Working-Class Politics in London, 1870–1900. Notes on the Remaking of a Working Class*, in: Jones, Gareth Stedman (ed.): *Languages of Class. Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982*, Cambridge 1983, pp. 179-238. Along these same lines, humour clearly also served as a safety valve, a way in which soldiers could comment on their seeming lack of agency in a giant and horrifying system. See both Le Naour, Jean-Yves: *Laughter and Tears in the Great War. The Need for Laughter/the Guilt of Humour*, in: *Journal of European Studies* 31 (2001), pp. 265-75, and Madigan, Edward: "Sticking to a Hateful Task". *Resilience, Humour, and British Understandings of Combatant Courage, 1914-1918*, in: *War in History* 20 (2013), pp. 76-98.
21. ↑ *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, Fastnacht 1916
22. ↑ For a good overview, see Purseigle, Pierre: *A very French debate. The 1914-1918 'war culture'*, in: *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 1 (2008), pp.9-14.
23. ↑ Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War* 1992, pp. 165-71. Audoin-Rouzeau is now one of the lead proponents of the 'war culture' thesis. See Audoin-Rouzeau, Stéphane / Becker, Annette: 14-18. *Understanding the First World War*, translated by Catherine Temerson, New York 2002 (orig. 2000).
24. ↑ *Liller Kriegszeitung*, 19 February 1916
25. ↑ *Minden Magazine*, August 1916.
26. ↑ See "The Fascination of the Home Front" in: Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War* 1992, ch. 5.
27. ↑ Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War* 1992, p.60.
28. ↑ Smith, L. P. Yates: *They Laughed at War*, in: *Defence* (1940), pp. 13f.
29. ↑ This section is based on the findings in: Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers* 2011.

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Troop Morale
and Popular Culture in the
British and Dominion Armies
1914-1918

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mud', the 24th Canadians' trench magazine carried a poem to 'The New Spirit':

How different from that long and dreary time
Of warfare in the trenches when the slime
Of Flanders mud clung to our feet, and when
Defensively we fought—raids now and then!
But at the Somme the wind of victory blows
Success our way, confusion to our foes.¹¹

The pattern of the war was more complex than modern perceptions often admit. Within a slowly changing continuum, conditions of life varied, unit by unit, according to such factors as the theatre or the section of front where one was serving, the attitudes of the authorities at each level in the hierarchy, the weather, military success, or the proximity of civilian services. Whilst being aware of the two contrary trends over time towards worsening conditions in the line and better conditions behind it, it makes little sense to chop this complex continuum into chronological sections. The experience of the mass army is best treated as a gradually evolving whole.

Finally, this study also attempts to give time behind the lines its full place within this whole. Historical analyses of the British and Dominion soldiers' experience of the Great War have concentrated attention overwhelmingly on the world of the trenches. The titles of such recent studies as E. J. Leed's *No Man's Land* or Tony Ashworth's *Trench Warfare* are sufficiently revealing of their content.¹² Little attention has been paid to the roughly three-fifths of the infantryman's service overseas spent in the rear of these lines, but as this study will show, the phases of active service life overseas were in fact so interlinked as to make it difficult to understand any part of the picture in isolation from the rest.

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¹¹ *The Vic's Patrol*, 3 (Dec. 1916), 24.

¹² E. J. Leed, *No Man's Land: Combat and Identity in World War I* (Cambridge, 1979); T. Ashworth, *Trench Warfare 1914-1918: The Live and Let Live System* (1980).

I

Trench Journalism

The British and Dominion armies overseas in the First World War were swept by a remarkable 'trench newspaper fever' which saw units of all types on all fronts producing their own company, battalion, or brigade magazines in a way not paralleled in previous wars.¹ Other armies were similarly gripped, at least on the Allied side.² The historian of French troop journals estimates that some 400 such journals were produced by French army units between 1914 and 1918, of which rather less than 200 have survived.³ This study draws on some 107 produced by the smaller British and Dominion armies overseas, details of which are listed at Appendix A.

Of the 107 journals listed, sixty-one represent units wholly or predominantly of infantry. Of the other forty-six, only ten are really productions of base units, the remainder serving artillery, cavalry, engineers, signals, field ambulances, and transport in the zone immediately behind the front line. Base units apart, in many cases the distinction is not a sharp one. The infantry journals tended to be produced when units were withdrawn into rest or reserve. Their readership certainly overlapped unit bounds, and took in men from the other arms among whom they found themselves billeted. Similarly, letters and contributions in non-infantry journals show that infantrymen were among their readers.

The journals appeared on all active war fronts. The predominant numbers were produced on the Western Front, paralleling the distribution of forces. Of the seventy-four British and Dominion Divisions which served in active war theatres, only thirteen (or 18 per cent) spent the larger part of their overseas service elsewhere than on the Western Front. The propor-

¹ *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, 2 (Dec. 1915), 22.

² Audoin-Rouzeau, *Les Combattants*, p. 7.

³ *Ibid.*, 11.

tion of the 107 journals listed produced in these other war theatres was some 19 per cent.

The journals were representative of the various types of infantry division from which the British and Dominion forces were formed. The Regular Divisions were created from the units of the peacetime army, brought up to strength with reservists. The first-line Territorial Divisions were formed from the battalions of part-time soldiers of pre-war days, brought up to establishment where necessary with a small number of rejoined men: in this category can also be included the single Yeomanry Division. The New Army, or Kitchener, Divisions were improvised from civilian volunteers after the outbreak of war, and the Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand Divisions, formed from successive waves of volunteers, were also broadly of this type. Finally, the second-line Territorial Divisions were another wartime creation, competing with the Kitchener units for recruits, but originally intended only for home service and drafting of replacements to first-line Territorial units.

There was some interchange of battalions between the Regular and Kitchener Divisions, for the purpose of stiffening the latter, but so few were the Regulars that, even though they used a quarter of their strength to this end, that still meant only a contribution of thirty-four battalions for the thirty Kitchener Divisions, which contained 360 battalions in total.⁴ This small dilution apart, divisions remained almost entirely composed of units of a single of the four types.

Only three infantry divisions fall outside this general scheme: the Guards (a mixture of Regular battalions with newly raised), the Royal Naval Division (Regular marines, naval reservists, and a variety of army troops) and the 75th (a late creation in Egypt, combining stray battalions of first- and second-line Territorials sent there from India). To these might be added the British troops serving in Indian Divisions, of approximately three divisions aggregate strength, to get an overall view of relative proportions within the British infantry (see Table 1).

All these types of unit supported troop journals. The exact provenance of non-infantry journals is in many cases not clear, but looking at infantry journals alone, there are only two cases

⁴ H. Green, *The British Army in the First World War* (1968), 64.

TABLE I. *Categories of British infantry serving in all major theatres (France, Italy, Salonika, Gallipoli, Palestine/Egypt, Mesopotamia)*

Category	No. of infantry divisions serving in major war theatres	% of total	Average time there served (months)
1. Regular	11	14	49
2. First-line Territorial	13	17	38
3. Kitchener	30	39	38
4. Dominion	10	13	29
5. Second-line Territorial	7	9	23
6. Other	3	4	28
7. British troops in Indian Divisions (Categories 1, 2, and 4)	3*	4	22

*Aggregate strength, excluding British units in Indian Divisions created out of other category divisions in the reorganization of March 1918, to avoid double-counting.

Sources: *Statistics of the Military Effort*, opp. p. 28; E. A. James, *British Regiments 1914-1918* (1978), 131-2.

where the parent unit cannot be precisely identified. Leaving these aside, production appears to have been broadly in line with the relative size of the different unit types, although with the Dominion troops markedly over-represented, bearing out the magazine of the 58th London Division's description of them as 'the most prolific of trench journalists'.⁵ (See Table 2.)

Most journals are represented by only a handful of issues. Forty-three out of the surviving sixty-one infantry journals have five extant issues or less. This is probably close to the truth of the picture. Journals that did endure showed a tendency to increase their circulation over time. Magazines usually started out to serve a single battalion, but often progressively enlarged their constituency, even to the point where the magazine of the 7th Manchesters, for example, was selling 26,000 copies in Egypt and the magazine of the 7th Canadians almost 20,000 on the Western Front.⁶ These were extraordinary figures, but other journals boosted sales to as many as 5,000 copies.⁷ With most of the

⁵ *The Direct Hit*, 1 (Sept. 1916), 2.

⁶ *The 7th Manchester Sentry*, 5 (May 1916), 4; *The Listening Post*, 19 (Oct. 1916), 118.

⁷ *The Sunchoard*, 2 (Aug. 1916): 2; *The Outpost*, 4/2 (Feb. 1917), 156.

TABLE 2. *Infantry journals according to type of unit*

Type of unit	No. of journals	% of total infantry journals	% of total infantry divisions in active war theatres
Regular	5	8	14
First-line			
Territorial	10	17	17
Kitchener	19	32	39
Second-line			
Territorial	3	5	9
Dominion	18	31	13
Other	4	7	8

Sources: See Appendix A.

journals where five issues or less are preserved, however, it is a single first issue or a run of early issues which survives. It therefore seems likely that in many cases this was all that was produced.

The fact should not be surprising. Production of troop journals represented a considerable outlay of effort in a life which was already exhausting. As the editor of *The Moonraker* commented, 'more than one sentence has been interrupted by a crump, and every page represents what might have been a pleasant sleep'.⁸ Moreover, upheavals caused by advances or retreats sometimes caused manuscripts or equipment to be lost. Moving spirits, too, were lost. Nine of the fifteen staff of *The 7th Manchester Sentry* died in the Dardanelles. On its first anniversary, only two members of the staff of *The Mudhook*, the magazine of the 63rd Division, remained. Six of the fifteen contributors to the first issue of *The Moonraker* were lost before the second issue appeared six months later.⁹

The magazines were not, however, the exclusive production of any particular period of the war. The first seem to have started in 1915, but new journals were begun in each succeeding year. The

⁸ *The Moonraker*, 1 (Apr. 1917), 1.

⁹ *The 7th Manchester Sentry*, 3 (Mar. 1916), 1; *The Mudhook*, 7 (Sept. 1918), 1; *The*

TABLE 3. *Appearance of infantry journals and arrival of infantry divisions in active war theatres*

	New infantry journals	Infantry divisions arriving overseas
1914	—	10
1915	21	43
1916	16	14
1917	13	7
1918	8	—
Not known	3	

Source: Appendix A and James, *British Regiments, passim*.

numbers of new titles declined, but so did the number of divisions arriving overseas (see Table 3).

Nor were they unique to any single rank within the army. Some details of the rank of the editorial staff can be gleaned for sixty-six out of the 107 journals. Thirty-five identify a single editor, and thirty-one an editorial team. According to these identifications, twenty-seven seem to have been edited by officers only, twenty-five by other-ranks only, and fourteen by a combination of the two. The pool from which the journals drew was not, however, limited to the editorial staff. The contributions of all ranks were invited, and the lists of contributors, where available, suggest that there was a good response.

Some of the magazines were printed or cyclostyled by the troops themselves, using abandoned French presses and paper or army equipment.¹⁰ Others were printed by agents in France or England to whom copy was sent.¹¹ The authorities gave some limited help in several cases. *The 20th Gazette*, for example, stated that without the accommodation which the battalion adjutant placed at its disposal, it could not publish. The editor of *The Leadswinger*, taking his cue from the magazine's title, claimed that its production functioned as 'neither more nor less than an excuse by means of which the staff could evade some irksome parade or fatigue'. *The Middlesex Yeomanry Magazine*,

¹⁰ *The Wipers Times* (1930 fac. edn.) p. v; *Aussie*, 3 (Mar. 1918), 1; *The Mudhook*, 5 (May 1918), 1.

¹¹ *The Outpost*, 4/6 (Apr. 1917), 228; *The Mudhook*, 7 (Sept. 1918), 1. (*The Mudhook* changed to this system following the loss of its equipment as a result of the German offensives in spring 1918.)

on the other hand, found itself initially hindered by 'unsympathetic' authorities.¹² Most journals seem in fact to have survived first and foremost by their own efforts. Before the adjutant took an interest in *The 20th Gazette* (shortly after it became officer-edited in May 1916), the other-rank editors of the magazine had earlier recorded that the only concession they had so far been granted was to be once excused a route march.¹³

In the circumstances, it may well be asked what it was that impelled men to sacrifice their free time in this way. Sometimes they were clearly concerned to produce a journal which was a message to those at home. The *Christmas Garland* of the 5th Canadian Battalion, for example, was 'an effort to answer a demand for something distinctive of the Battalion which at this particular season of the year would be suitable for all ranks to send from the trenches to friends and relatives in the British Isles and Canada'.¹⁴ This motive seems to have had particular force with the Dominion troops, cut off from home more than their British fellows. The magazine of the 24th Canadians gave as its *apologia pro sua vita* 'its ability to portray for our friends at home the conditions under which we live and to show them that it takes more than Flemish mud and German shells to quench the spirit of the 24th'.¹⁵ More simply, the journal of the 23rd Australians recorded in January 1918 that 'the first issue of the battalion paper has reached its intended destination, Australia'.¹⁶

The sentiment was rarer, though by no means absent, among British journals. The editor of the magazine of the 56th London Division gave as one of its objects to 'show the good folk at home what we are thinking and doing . . . [for] we can't tell them much in our letters and one leave a year'.¹⁷ Troops further afield than the Western Front often felt themselves to be every bit as remote from home as the Dominion troops. The editor of the magazine of the 2/4th West Kents in Palestine reflected in the third issue how 'the magazine is playing the part designed for it originally. It

¹² *The 20th Gazette*, 2/2 (July 1916), 5; *The Leadswinger*, 2 and 3 (1919, fac. edn.), p. iii; *The Middlesex Yeomanry Magazine*, 2 (Oct. 1917), 1.

¹³ *20th Gazette*, 1/9 (Mar. 1916), 46.

¹⁴ *A Christmas Garland from the Front* (Dec. 1915), 7.

¹⁵ *The Vic's Patrol*, 1/1 (June 1916), 1. Cf. *The Trench Echo*, 1 (Dec. 1915), front cover; *The Sling*, 1 (Jan. 1917), 4; *M & D*, 1 (July 1917), 3.

¹⁶ *23rd: The Voice of the Battalion*, 8 (Jan. 1918), 5.

¹⁷ *The Dagger*, 1 (Nov. 1918), 2.

is becoming the medium by which those at home can realise, far better than from the ordinary press, exactly what we are seeing and doing in the "Land of Promise" so far away.¹⁸ Journals with this purpose often sprang up very early in a battalion's service overseas, sometimes reporting first impressions and then, apparently, no more.¹⁹

Quite different was the case of, for example, *The Mudhook* of the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division, which was started after the division had been almost three years overseas, and which therefore served a real and inward-looking community. The first issue proudly proclaimed 'we shall cater for no tastes but our own'.²⁰ *The Mudhook* was a success, but where it reflected an existing *esprit de corps*, many other journals had first to try to create this feeling. Sometimes this was an official effort. The magazine of the 13th Cheshires, for example, edited by the adjutant, was designed 'to be a history of the Battalion, a chronicler of its doings and sayings, a creator and a cherisher of love of Regiment, of *esprit de corps*, of pride in its short but glorious history'.²¹ None of the productions with avowed aims of this grandiose sort seem, however, to have been long-lived. More sustaining was a simple concern with the battalion as a practical community, evolved in training and quickly bound by experience. *The Vic's Patrol*, for example, aimed 'to bring the different units within the Battalion into a more intimate relationship'; *The 20th Gazette* to bring 'officers, NCOs and men of the 20th battalion CEF into closer touch with one another'.²² Both enjoyed long runs.

Each battalion had numerous petty jealousies between NCOs and other-ranks, new drafts and old, specialists and the rank and file. Often the journal was intended to serve as a means of venting these jealousies along with other grievances, humorously defusing them, and thereby binding the battalion more closely together. *The R.M.R. Growler* of the 14th Canadians, for example, advertised that 'as the name will suggest, our columns are open to every grouch in the Battalion, and a growl on any subject,

¹⁸ *Chronicles of the White Horse*, 3 (1917), 8.

¹⁹ Examples of this are *The Judean*, *The Quaysider*, and *The Dud* of the 14th Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders: see Appendix A.

²⁰ *The Mudhook*, 1 (Sept. 1917), 2.

²¹ *The Cherrybuff*, 1 (Sept. 1917), 3. Cf. *Stand To*, 1 (May 1916), 1.

²² *The Vic's Patrol*, 1/1 (Mar. 1916), 4; *20th Gazette*, 1/1 (Apr. 1915), 1.

whether the grievance be either real or fancied, will be joyfully received and have immediate insertion'.²³ Other journals had similar names and intentions, such as *The Growler* of the 16th Northumberland Fusiliers, *The Strafer*, and *The Incinerator*. They sought to give 'a good healthy criticism of the things going on around us' and 'to provide a medium through which we can vent our little groublings'.²⁴ Many ran specific columns of complaints: 'Bricks from the Editor's Pack', 'We Wonder Why', 'Kicks and Growls', 'Ricochets from the Sniper', 'Our Strafe Column', and so on. Here, as *The Iodine Chronicle* commented, 'officers and privates find scope for criticism which is often daringly outspoken'.²⁵

The light-hearted way in which these kicks were presented was characteristic. The prevailing tone of all the journals was humorous. *The Enfield Express* described *The AOC Workshops Gazette* as 'a happy blend of *The Sporting Life* and *Punch*',²⁶ and this description could be aptly applied to many other troop magazines. *The Times Literary Supplement* in October 1916 described the trench journals overall as 'miscellanies of personal chaff, old Service jokes, crude parodies, rude drawings, spoof examination papers and bogus advertisements'.²⁷ This tone remained constant throughout the war: there is no detectable darkening.

In a sense, this is not surprising. One of the primary purposes of the journals was to amuse. Several stated their intention to 'give the boys something to make them forget their surroundings', or to be 'the means of bringing a little pleasure in this none too gay life'.²⁸ Others, however, had far less self-conscious purpose. They presented themselves as merely a response to boredom, initiated 'to provide a pastime for myself and a few comrades during our slack periods on active service' or 'to while away the tedium of the evenings of a winter in Flanders'.²⁹ Some were the fruit of a desire to 'burst into print' or a need for 'an

²³ *The R.M.R. Growler*, 1 (Jan. 1916), 1.

²⁴ *The Open Exhaust*, 9 (Sept. 1916), 5; *The Rum Issue*, 1 (June 1917), front cover.

²⁵ *The Iodine Chronicle*, 15 (Easter 1918), 4.

²⁶ *The AOC Workshops Gazette*, 11 (July 1916), 8.

²⁷ *The Times Literary Supplement* (12 Oct. 1916), 481.

²⁸ *The Forty Niner*, 1/4 (Jan. 1915), 16, 25-6. Cf. *The Mudlark*, 1 (Apr. 1916), 3; *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, 1 (Oct. 1915), 1.

²⁹ *The Leadswinger*, 2 and 3 (1919), p. iii; *Mules Monthly*, 1 (1916), 1.

outlet for volumes of penned-up gems of thought'.³⁰ Others saw themselves as part of the 'fad', a product of the vogue for unit magazines inspired in many cases by former civilian journalists who now found themselves in khaki.³¹

However, the fad itself, and the form chosen for the response to boredom, owed something to the fact that men were aware of taking part in great events. They wanted to preserve a record of their thoughts and experiences, both for themselves and for history. The value of the magazines as souvenirs is constantly emphasized. They would record the human side of the war in a way that nothing else could. Their tone was held to be not a consciously assumed pose but a reflection of the reality: 'the history of the Aussie Army is being given by the Official War Correspondents. "Aussie" wants to give its spirit.'³² In this endeavour they claimed a high degree of success. *The 7th Manchester Sentry* declared that, 'the whole series when completed will form a unique record of the life and thought, work and aspirations of a typical battalion of Manchester Territorials during the Great War. Macaulay's *New Zealander* may well trace the aptest expression of the ideals of our generation in the columns of the *Sentry*.'³³

To what extent are these claims justified? How useful are the troop journals as sources? Certainly in the area of mentalities, they have a number of advantages. They attempted to set down the mood of the moment and, unlike letters, they did so publicly and, in most cases, with a soldier audience primarily in mind. The journals were to a large extent responsive to this audience. As ventures which operated to cover their costs or, in some cases, to earn profits for unit funds from which comforts could be bought, they had to command a readership. Staff and contributors, producing for a unit audience with whom they were inescapably in daily contact, had an added reason to be sensitive to the views and criticisms of comrades. As the historian of French troop newspapers comments,

³⁰ *The Canadian Sapper*, 1 (Feb. 1918), 10; *The Shell Hole Advance*, 1 (Feb. 1917), 1.

³¹ A. J. Sansom, *Letters from France* (1921), 195; *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, 2 (Dec. 1915), 22; E. Townshend (ed.), *Keeling Letters and Recollections* (1918), 147, 202.

³² *Aussie*, 2 (Feb. 1918), 1.

³³ *The 7th Manchester Sentry*, 4 (Apr. 1916), 1.

Les rédacteurs vivaient au milieu de leurs lecteurs et ne pouvaient ignorer leur état d'esprit. Ils avaient nécessairement très vite et très directement connaissance des réactions que suscitaient leurs articles. C'est pourquoi la plupart des journaux de tranchées ont su évoluer dans le sens d'une authenticité croissante. Censure et autocensure ne pouvaient empêcher la presse de tranchées de rejoindre peu à peu les préoccupations, les intérêts, les rancœurs et les espoirs de ses lecteurs et de s'en faire l'écho. Tout journal qui aurait durablement ignoré cette 'demande' se serait condamné à la disparition.³⁴

The result should not be surprising. *The Leadswinger* found that it was losing readers because it had strayed from its original format of 'bright, brief and topical' articles, and forthwith promised to change back. *The Middlesex Yeomanry Magazine* adopted a lighter tone for its second issue because the first was criticized on the grounds 'that it was too academical, too serious, and not representative of the regiment'. Conversely *The Wiggle Waggle* was set up 'with the sole intention of providing its readers with a little wholesome amusement', but soon found that 'more serious notes seem to have crept in . . . evidence that among some of our contributors there is a desire to express some of the feelings which lie deeper than laughter'.³⁵

The journals were also of course aware of their second audience, the audience at home. For all the progressive sundering of civilian and military worlds, the soldiers still cared passionately what the Home Front thought of them. The artillery, ASC, or RAMC journals would launch verses appealing against what they felt to be unfair public neglect. British journals would complain of the excessive publicity given the Dominion forces, county regiments of the attention lavished on the London Territorials, first-contingent Canadians of the unjust lionizing of the second-contingent men. The armies in the Salonika and Palestine theatres in turn resented, and protested, the public image of these sectors as 'cushy'. Every branch and every unit trumpeted its merits, and pushed its competitive claim for attention.

Given this intense desire for their sacrifices to be appreciated, the troops were understandably angry at the extent of civilian incomprehension and complacency. A standard scene in the

³⁴ Audoin-Rouzeau, *Les Combattants*, p. 34.

³⁵ *The Leadswinger*, 2/7 (Feb. 1918), 381-2; *The Middlesex Yeomanry Magazine*, 2 (Oct. 1917), 1; *The Wiggle Waggle*, 2/3 (Nov. 1916), 17.

journals presents the returned front-soldier subjected to a barrage of idiotic civilian questions: was he not anxious to get back to France; were not the troops 'all right' because they had gas-helmets and dug-outs; was he not thrilled by the music of the guns; was it not fun splashing about in the trenches?³⁶ Nor was satire so far from reality. Basil Peacock recalls, from his first leave, his mother's expectation that hostilities would cease on Sundays, or the neighbour's anxiety to know what his mother thought of him getting home at past midnight.³⁷ One private on leave remembers being asked 'do you like it over there?'³⁸ Another was dining with a relative who proclaimed himself to be 'dying to go out and see the fun': 'at the word "fun" . . . I had an almost irresistible impulse to stand up and strike him across the face. But it was a public restaurant and I controlled myself.'³⁹

The journals were cheerful, but they tried hard to ensure that this cheeriness should be seen in its true light as something that had to be struggled for:

some people at home have got the idea that officers and men alike are having a very pleasant holiday—Rations free too—in France etc. Sir William Robertson is reported to have said that when he wanted a holiday he went to France owing to the cheeriness of the British colony there, which forms a contrast with the long faces sometimes seen at home. The truth is of course that were it not for the spirit of bonhomie and cheerfulness, we should find it very hard to keep going.⁴⁰

Similarly, the magazine of the Welsh Division declared:

to the casual stranger . . . who happens upon this Souvenir of ours we would say just this . . . do not therefore conclude that when a man becomes a soldier he develops into a queer type of being who lusts alternately for battle and for beer . . . Do not salve your conscience by pretending that he likes it. Nothing is further from the truth—for all that you read in newspapers.⁴¹

A tag from Kipling was repeatedly applied, in the hope of reminding people to see beyond the surface cheerfulness:

³⁶ *The Outpost*, 4/6 (April 1917), 197-8; *The Leadswinger*, 2/5 (Oct. 1916), 280; *The 5th Glo'ster Gazette*, 22 (Mar. 1918), 9; *Aussie*, 9 (Dec. 1918), 23.

³⁷ B. Peacock, *Tinker's Mufti* (1974), 62.

³⁸ M. Brown, *Tommy Goes to War* (1978), 225.

³⁹ F. A. Voigt, *Combed Out* (1920), 132.

⁴⁰ *The 5th Glo'ster Gazette*, 19 (June 1917), 21.

⁴¹ *A New Year Souvenir of the Welsh Division* (Jan. 1918), 7.

I have written the tale of our life,
 For a sheltered people's mirth,
 In jesting guise; but ye are wise,
 And ye know what the jest is worth.⁴²

The journals had no desire to perpetuate the distortions of the home press and quite to the contrary, one of the aims commonly expressed was to provide the people at home with a true picture of life on active service.⁴³ To do so, they did not shrink from shattering illusions, albeit politely:

people are frequently asking us how we 'enjoy' life out here. I don't know whether the following is a general opinion, but at least this remark made by one of our attached men, after reading about a man being sent to prison for a month's hard labour, gives an idea of the extent of his 'enjoyment': 'Blimey, who wouldn't do a month in quod after this lot. A bloomin' pinch ain't it'.⁴⁴

As well as the prevalence of malingering, and the front-line troops' desire not to provoke the enemy opposite, fear and physical wretchedness were constant themes of their humour. Mock advertisements begged for a means of escape, or for someone to change places with the front-line soldier. Stories were told of the man who, by one ingenious device or another, 'worked his ticket'. The men were fed up with the whole business, and said so: they were suffering from 'exhaustion' and 'war weariness', pondering 'who will give first?'⁴⁵ The 'Amateur's Alphabet', in the magazine of the 6th Battalion South Lancashire Regiment, had it that

U is the uniform he donned at first with glee,
 But the pride and glamour's faded now, 'fed up', 'sheer fed' is he
 V is the valley of abuse he'd like to pour
 On decrepit politicians who caused this blanky war.⁴⁶

The journal of the 27th Canadians requested:

⁴² *The Whizz Bang*, 7 (July/Aug. 1916), 1; *The Vic's Patrol*, 2 (July 1916), 9; *The Canadian Sapper*, 9 (Oct. 1918), 51.

⁴³ *The Dud* (Argyll and Sutherland), 1 (Nov. 1916), 1; *Chronicles of the White Horse*, 3 (May 1917), 8; 23rd: *The Voice of the Battalion*, 8 (Jan. 1918), 5.

⁴⁴ *Stray Shots*, 7 (June 1916), 2.

⁴⁵ *The Outpost*, 6/3 (Jan. 1918), 90.

⁴⁶ *The Mesopotamian*, 1 (June 1917), 3-4.

In that unhealthy land where nightmares crop,
Put some nice brown crosses and write up on top,
They were all fed up and they wanted to stop.⁴⁷

Of course, there was a censorship, exercised for some journals at battalion level and for others at divisional level, which placed some constraints on what the journals could say. However, in most cases it operated with surprising liberality. According to *The Minden Magazine*, 'we are not allowed to insert the names of the various places we go to; neither are we allowed to discuss too minutely the ins and outs of our prolonged misunderstanding and unpleasantness with the Germans. Neither are we permitted to criticise too freely our political enemies or friends.'⁴⁸ Within these limits, however, considerable freedom was allowed, as it had to be if the journals were to fulfil the 'grousing' purpose for which they had often been set up. As in the French army, 'le commandement comprenait que la survie de la presse de tranchées, jugée souhaitable, imposait des compromis quant au contenu faute de quoi, vidée de sa substance, elle ne pourrait que disparaître'.⁴⁹ As a result, one finds *The Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, for example, able to ask 'whether the officer of a certain Canadian battalion who ordered one of his men to pick up scraps of paper from the top of a communication trench in broad daylight attended the man's funeral?', or *The Swell* to enquire 'who were the 3 Non-coms who suddenly got an attack of "cold feet" when the bombardment started, and left their men to find their own way around'.⁵⁰

Quite apart from what can be gleaned of mood and morale from the journals, there is a wealth of innocuous but invaluable factual information about organization behind the lines. The censorship did not worry about details of the soldiers' daily lives, their recreations, and societies, but this information is useful to the historian trying to reconstruct a picture of the soldiers' experiences, and cannot be adequately duplicated from any other source. As we shall see, many observers attributed to recreations in particular an importance which, if justified, makes them a key feature in understanding the character of this army and even its performance.

⁴⁷ *The Trench Echo*, 4 (Dec. 1917), 3.

⁴⁸ *The Minden Magazine*, 2 (Dec. 1915), 1-2.

⁴⁹ Audoin-Rouzeau, *Les Combattants*, p. 25.

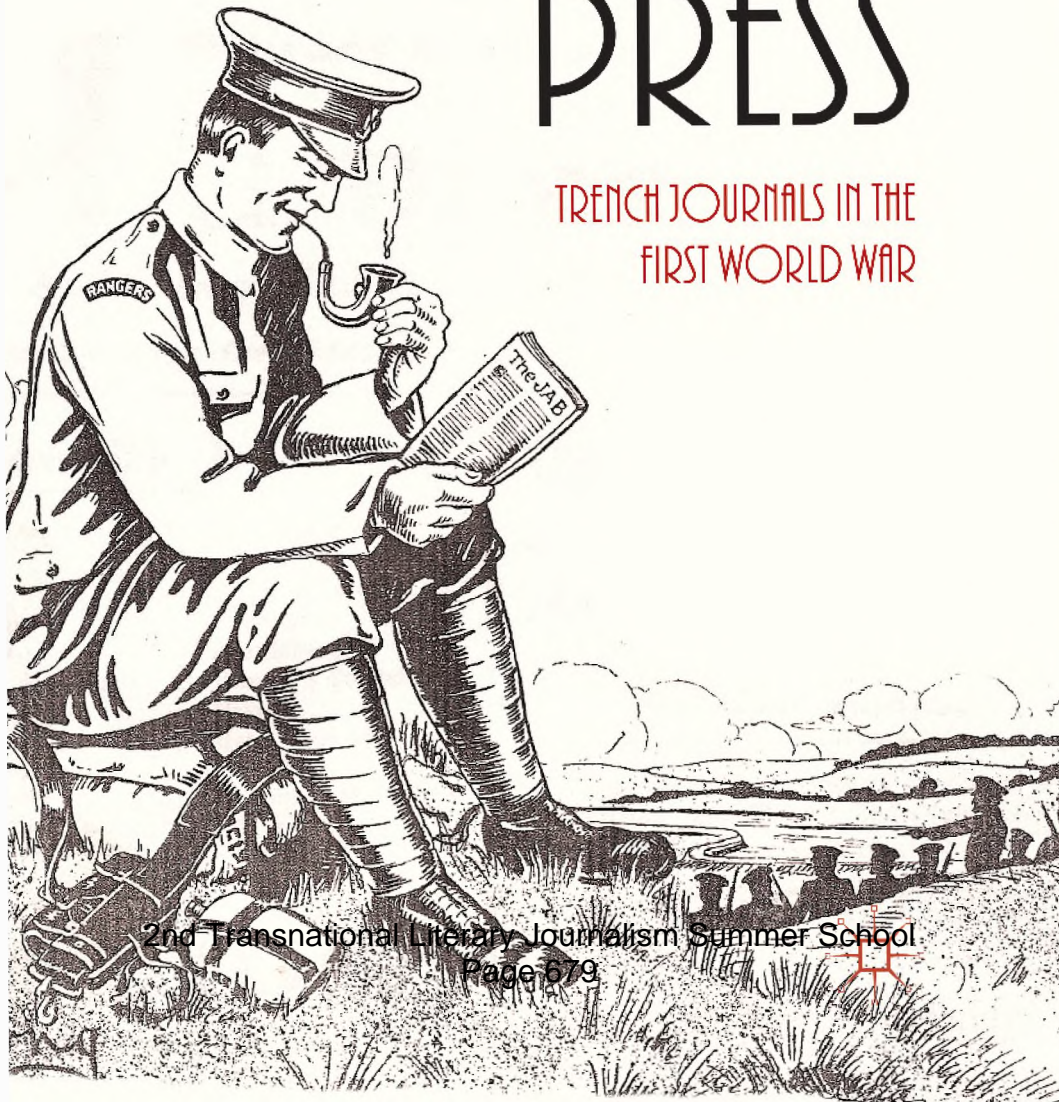
⁵⁰ *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, 1 (Oct. 1915), 5; *The Swell*, 2 (Jan. 1916), 1-2.

The evidence of the troop magazines certainly needs to be used with circumspection. They represent battalions of every type, but in each battalion they would tend to be the product of the most articulate sections, albeit influenced by the remainder. A large part of their function was to amuse and entertain. Sometimes they sought actively to boost morale. Yet they did seriously aim at being representative, they contained much incidental material which neither the writers nor the authorities had any motive to distort, and they were allowed considerable freedom to speak outside matters of military intelligence. They were not invented at divisional or even brigade level as an instrument of man-management, but came into being in response to innumerable individual initiatives. For the ephemeral, they provide invaluable contemporary testimony, validated to a great extent by their soldier audience and uncoloured by subsequent experience or by selective memory. For all these reasons, they are not lightly to be discounted and, used in conjunction with other sources to serve as a check and balance, can make a valuable contribution to our understanding of the First World War.

GRAHAM SEAL

THE
**SOLDIERS'
PRESS**

TRENCH JOURNALS IN THE
FIRST WORLD WAR



2

From the Trenches

The Splint Record is edited, printed, etc. in the zone of Shells, Bombs, Grenades, French Beer, Zeppelines [sic], Flares and Spies, but then everyone will know this once they have read it.

Splint Record, December 1916, p. 6

Although trench newspapers occasionally published verse or prose that contained highly personal views or renditions of experience, by and large the domain of the trench press is the public rather than the private sphere. Here we may observe the workings of everyday interaction between groups as they go about fighting and attempting to survive the war. The world conveyed in, and reflected by the trench publication is a collective and shared one in which the individual is mostly subsumed by the larger communicative and emotional needs of the group to which he belongs. Such large and diverse bodies of mostly citizen soldiers contained individuals with a vast array of talents, abilities and interests, and some put these to use in the creation of the soldiers' press.

Many of the textual contributions to these publications were clearly penned – sometimes pencilled – by well-educated and skilled literary hands. Not a few authors demonstrated a better than passing knowledge of classical mythology, Latin, the more complex verse forms such as the sonnet, and the ability to turn out short stories, serials, playlets, the occasional elegy and a range of non-fiction genres, often wickedly parodied. Other contributors either lacked this education and its skills or simply adopted, often with great facility, the

more popular forms of the ballad, the rhyming alphabet and the limerick. Such considerations as educational attainment, important in peacetime, had no place in the levelling experience of the trenches. The accomplished and the stumbling jostle together on the pages of the soldiers' own publications, providing much of their unique character.

The situation was the same with artistic contributions. Many have a Bruce Bairnsfather-like ability to perfectly capture the mood of the average Tommy, Canuck or Digger in a mode that appealed both to the troops and to those on the home front. Others are rudely scrawled but evocative sketches of the facts, fallacies and fantasies of trench life and death. These were not likely to be funny, or even comprehensible, to anyone without frontline experience. In between these extremes came more or less accomplished line drawings and often ornate decorations that, in their diversity of attainment, further reinforced the distinctive 'trench' style of these publications.

With the exception of the elegiac, and the occasional serious article, commentary or list of casualties, the overwhelming tenor of the trench press is humorous. The most favoured forms of humour were satire, of varying quality, and parody. Jokes and anecdotes, as already mentioned, were also common, and even rumour and gossip tended to be expressed in humorous ways. This carried through to the illustrations which even the crudest productions usually managed to include in some form or another, most frequently as single cartoons or as comic strips. Line drawings were usually humorous, as were any spoof advertisements that included visual material. Many of the often high-quality sketches were also comic in intent. The exceptions were photographs. When these were technically possible for editors to reproduce they were often of formal, usually ceremonial, subjects and intended to be taken seriously, though some of the more sophisticated titles also carried more relaxed photographs of soldiers in their huts, playing sports or participating in other recreational activities and amusements.

The characteristic genres of trench literature and art are balanced in one combination or another through all the soldier periodicals of the Great War. All without exception carried verse and rumour. The anecdote was common, as was the humorous paragraph, the spoof advertisement, the cartoon and the caricature. Also to be found

were plays, short stories, elegies, memoirs and songs. Many of these were parody, the favoured satirical form. This was an acknowledged and allowed mode within many trench journals, yet always hovering against a solid background of the humorous and otherwise diverting. Although this was an age in which the sentimental was a sanctioned expressive mode, its articulation was usually required to be discrete rather than blatantly tear-jerking.

The trench canon

The trench canon, from crude to cosmopolitan, is contained in a great many periodicals with evocative and sometimes cryptic names such as the Canadian *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, *The Whizz-Bang* (a title used by both Canadian and British publications), *The Mudhook* (Journal of the 63rd RN Division), *Poison Gas* (Unofficial organ of the 3rd Battalion Queen Victoria's Rifles), the *Direct Hit* (Journal of the 58th London Division) and the *Dug Out Despatch*. Others were more prosaically titled, such as the *14th Company Magazine*, or simply *The Fourth*, the magazine of the Fourth London General Hospital. Signifiers of national and ethnic identity were common among non-English and Empire units, including *The Kiwi* (New Zealand), *The Eaglet* (American Forces Magazine), *Bruce in Khaki* (Canada) and the *Sprig of Shillelagh* (Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers), as well as the Australian *Aussie* and the *Rising Sun* (a reference to the rising sun hat badge of the Australian troops). Regiments and units associated with particular localities also liked to reflect their geographic loyalties in titles such as the *Sussex Patrol*, the *Ontario Stretcher*, the *Minden Magazine* (Lancashire Fusiliers), *The Londoner*, the *Fifth Gloucester Gazette*,¹ *5th East Surrey Magazine* and the *Longleat Lyre*. Others used names and terms associated with their trade, specialisation or profession. *The Sling* was 'A Little Journal published by the boys of a Canadian Field Ambulance,' while 66 Battery Canadian Field Artillery launched *The Strafer*, a title also adopted by a British publication. A signals unit, the 49th Division (West Riding), came up with *The Buzzer*, while the Australian First Field Ambulance periodical in France gloried in the title *Ghutz*. Company B of the 11th Marines produced *The Devil-Dog*, a name annexed from the alleged German description of the Americans during their initial encounters.

Trench publications were primarily written, edited, printed and distributed at or near the front line. Some were produced behind the front lines at supply depots and in quarters. A few were published in England, but with substantial contributions from the front. Printing presses were sometimes retrieved from shattered French or Belgian printeries, restored and then often destroyed again by enemy action. Editions of the *Wipers Times* were put together during or between artillery attacks,² as were numbers of the many lesser-known trench publications. The initial edition of the Royal Montreal Regiment's *RMR Growler* contained a note from the editor:

As evidence of the lack of encouragement given to us by both the Huns and the elements, we might mention that, as we penned the above, the Sausages dropped five-twelfths of a dozen assorted coal boxes and whiz-bangs in our Editorial back yard, and we betook ourselves and our staff to the deepest trench we could find, and tonight, having once more taken possession of our dugout, we find the river being in flood, the floor is twelve inches deep in decidedly icy water, in which our Editorial feet are now resting.³

Usually these publications faced constant challenges to their survival. As well as the circumstances under which many of them were produced, there was often a lack of paper, paucity of contributions and unavailability of duplicating technology.⁴ Consequently, some trench periodicals were not printed at all. A number were written by hand and duplicated with sheets of carbon paper, while others made use of typewriters and the cheaper and more portable reprographic technologies available at the time, mainly duplicators using stencils as their printing 'plate.' Some were assembled at the front and mailed back to England for printing. Some began on board troopships carrying soldiers from the edges of empire to the fighting. The frequently makeshift nature of these productions meant that type might be missing, forcing editors to resort to dropping letters and punctuation, using a different font or perhaps creatively re-spelling here and there. Rarely were the editors professional journalists or printers, though they were sometimes assisted by those who had followed these occupations before the war.⁵ These necessities of circumstance and resources all helped create the characteristic improvised look and feel of many trench journals, contributing to their air of authenticity.

It was not uncommon for journals to start up, have a brief existence for six months or even a year, and then fade away. But some of them were revived as circumstances allowed, and quite a few journals had a lengthy list of predecessors incorporated into their latest incarnation. *The Mudhook* incorporated the *Dug-Out Gossip and Dardanelles Driveller*. The *Maidstone Magazine* had been preceded by the *Pandora Piffle* and the *Alecto Argus*, while the Canadian NYD had taken over from its illustrious forebears the *Iodine Chronicle*, the *Splint Record* and *Now and Then*. No. 3 New Zealand Hospital, Codford, produced the aptly named *Codford Wheeze*, the successor to the *Wiltshire Wangler*, the *Wyllye Wail* and the *Salisbury Swinger*. The Australian *Honk* became the *Rising Sun*. Many lasted only one or a few issues (Figure 2.1).

Often they trumpeted their usually unsanctioned status in their mastheads. *The Gasper*, a lively British production, subtitled itself the 'Unofficial organ of the 18th, 19th, 20th and 1st (PS) Royal Fusiliers'; the *Open Exhaust* was the 'Unofficial organ of 358 Coy.' The short-lived *Beach Rumours* of the British forces at Cape Helles on the Dardanelles Peninsula described itself as the purveyor of 'Unofficial News' and filled half the front page of its first cyclostyled issue with 'Local Rumours' under the byline of 'Truthful James.'⁶

Others were ostensibly more firmly regulated, such as *The Jab*, 'The Official Organ of the Second Rangers' of Canada. This production boasted not only an Editor, Assistant Editor, Treasurer and Secretary but also its own Censor, all individually named. *The Growler* made a fetish of its official status by not only printing in its first issue that it was issued by permission of Lieut-Col. F. W. Fisher and that it had been 'censored according to Regulations,' but also reproducing a copy of its publication permit to presumably reassure its readers. This included a notification from the Divisional Censor in which he wrote: 'I wish that all the articles I have to censor were as interesting and amusing as this.'⁷

Whatever their level of regulation, technical sophistication and appearance, these publications form an identifiable genre made up of contributions from readers and editors that were distinctively 'trench' in style, tone and intent. With few exceptions, the stated aim of these publications was to amuse, divert and generally entertain their readers. This was achieved through the use of various modes, including satire – ranging from the slapstick to the relatively subtle – parody, amusing anecdotes and humorous poetic forms such



Figure 2.1 Cover of the *Rum Issue* vol 1, no 1 November 1917

as the limerick and the venerable form of the soldiers' alphabet. Some trench journals, most notably but not solely the *Wipers Times*, also produced spoof advertisements that cast aspects of the war into humorous sidelights which clearly amused soldiers, able as they were to read the very unfunny reality of send-up concert programmes like these:

The
Three Sisters
HUN-Y
IN THEIR LITTLE SONG SCENA
Entitled:
STAR SHELLS SOFTLY FALLING

and

THE BROS
WHIZZ-BANG
These merry little fellows get there
... every time.⁸

and

"TRY OUR NEW CIRCULAR TOUR, EMBRACING ALL THE HEALTH RESORTS OF LOVELY BELGIUM. Books of Coupons Obtainable From R. E. Cruting & Co., London. Agents Everywhere (Figure 2.2)."⁹

The editor of the first edition of 58th London Division's the *Direct Hit*, in September 1916, provided a participant's description of the trench press as it had developed to the halfway point of the war. There was, he wrote, a

measure of relaxation, in print, of the restraints of discipline; nearly everybody, except the C O and the second in command, is gently chaffed. And there is any amount of joking on topics which, in the British Expeditionary Force, never grow old or fade – the trials of mess-presidents, the complexity of the established forms of official correspondence, the smallness of Belgian beer, the craft and subtlety occasionally used by the rank and file to obtain new issues of trousers or boots, before the old ones are really decrepit, and the narrowness of the army's range of medicines for minor complaints. Much of the joking is quite good, like the story of the Irish private who complained one day of a sore foot, was given a number nine (the most celebrated and least preserved pill in the whole pharmacopeia of military medicine), and reappearing next day at sick parade, said 'I put it under me fut, and devil a bit of good did it do me, sorr.'

<p>ROWLANDS RUSHIN' BATHS — COLD OR NEARLY COLD CREOSILE FREE</p> <p>IF DESIRED THE GRAMAPHONE WILL PLAY</p> <p>"IT'S JUST LIKE BEING AT HOME"</p>	<p>UNDERGROUND YSER AND YPRES TUBE EMBANKMENT STATION TO BE OPENED SHORTLY</p> <p>GOOD SHOOTING SPECIAL PRESERVES (TICKLERS)</p>	
<p>FOR SALE PAIR OF GUM BOOTS IN NEW CONDITION</p> <p>GOOD REASON FOR SELLING</p>	<p>MT BREAKDOWN GANG</p>  <p>CARS RESCUED AT SHORTEST NOTICE DAY OR NIGHT</p> <p>APPLY — O. C. WHEELS</p>	<p>DO YOU WANT A PAIN LIGHTEN YOUR BURDENS AND GET ONE PUT IN BY TANNER FOR A BOB OFFICIAL GLAZIER TO THE NEW HUTS</p>
<p>COME AND HAVE YOUR LEG PULLED AND DONT GET TRENCH FEET</p> <p>NICE YOUNG TRAINED MASSEURS</p>	<p>THE NEW HUT EMPIRE SPECIAL ATTRACTION THE 240 THIEVES IN THEIR GREAT NOCTURNAL MANŒUVRE ENTITLED THE MAGIC STONES</p> <p>ALSO THEROAD TO RUIN OR ITS NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND.</p>	

Figure 2.2 Spoof advertisements from *The Lead-Swinger* 1915¹⁰

In between retailing a few other humourosities, the editor went on: 'and there is plenty of good-humoured caricature and comic illustration.' He also noted the more serious aspects of the trench journal: 'But all trench journalism is not humorous. Some of the serious verses are almost startlingly good, of the kind that men who have never dreamed of being poets will sometimes write under pressure of some strong emotion.'¹¹ While these observations were contained within a general morale-boosting intent on the editor's part, they were reasonably accurate.

The 'khaki journalists,' as the American historian Arthur Schlesinger dubbed American trench scribblers,¹² were frequently interested in the mainstream press. This took the form of reporting on and often ridiculing what was written back home about the war. The press was also pilloried through parodies of newspaper column formats such as the agony aunt, the serial, letters to the editor, the daily diary and the classified advertisement. The *BEF Times* provides a typical example of the latter in the form of 'Our Sale or Exchange Column':

WANTED – to rent for the winter season, DRY WARM DUG OUT. Must be commodious and in healthy locality untroubled by hawkers and Huns. Good price offered for suitable residence. Apply – Reggie, c/o this paper.¹³

The juxtaposing of the peacetime everyday 'hawkers' and the wartime menace of 'Huns' is an example of a device frequently employed in trench literature and, indeed, can be seen as a metaphor of the entire genre. While these snippets may not strike us as funny today, and may not necessarily have been hugely amusing at the time, they did at least provide a semblance of normality and a lighter moment or two in the despair – *le cafard*, as the French called this feeling – that many, perhaps most, soldiers struggled with throughout the war years.

The mainstream press in Britain and other allied countries returned the compliment by reporting on and even ranking some of the better-known middling and sophisticated publications, such as the *Wipers Times* and the *Direct Hit*. The latter was warmly congratulated by the British newspapers *The Star*, *The Globe*, the *Morning Advertiser*, *The Observer*, *Evening Star* and the *East Anglian Daily Times*. Copies even

reached and were applauded by trade journals such as the *Advertiser's Weekly* and *Motor Trader* as well as a leading light of the advertising industry.¹⁴ Few trench journals were this well connected in the media industries of the day, though even more modest efforts were often noted at home. Copies of the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* found their way back to Canada, where the Toronto *Evening Telegram* and *The Globe* passed favourable opinions. *The Globe* went so far as to overwrite its impressions, though in a usefully descriptive way:

These men (the 4th Battalion) of the First Contingent, whose numbers have been lessened in the clash of arms, who know the trenches in winter, the poison gases of an unscrupulous foe, the pain of wounds and the torture of hardship, issue a publication conceived in the best possible spirit, and ranging from facetious gossip to poetic fervour.¹⁵

In 1916 the *New York Times* carried a reasonably lengthy article on Western Front trench journals. This concentrated on Canadian publications, particularly *The Brazier* of the 16th Regiment of the Canadian Scottish, but pointed out the ubiquity of the trench journal format: 'these little papers are increasing rapidly in number.' The article suggested that these regimental journals had a part to play in the maintenance of morale, declaring in the kind of sub-headline profoundly irritating to frontline soldiers that 'Stout-hearted "Johnny Canuck", Despite the Nervous Strain is Cheerful Through It All.'¹⁶

Some trench journals could even be purchased on British newsstands or ordered through the post by friends and relations anxious for a view of the war different to that usually purveyed in the mainstream press. This engendered a competitive spirit among some of those journals which had been noticed in this way and there was a more or less friendly rivalry between some. The *Direct Hit* – as we have already seen, itself a very professional publication – rated the *5th Glo'ster Gazette* 'about the best of all the trench journals.'¹⁷ In its first editorial the *Direct Hit* also described a number of other trench journals, including *The Whizz-Bang*, *Iodine Chronicle*, *Vic's Patrol*, *Trench Echo*, *Listening Post*, *Forty-Niner*, *RMR Growler*, *Twentieth Gazette*, *Now and Then*, *The Brazier* and the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette*, as well as 'several more.' These were mostly Canadian efforts, members of that nationality being noted by the editor of the *Direct Hit* as 'the most

prolific of trench journalists.¹⁸ The extent of the editor's familiarity with such a number of rivals confirms that many did have circulation far beyond their envioning units and groupings. Some publishers, particularly Canadian, also received and reported on copies of French trench journals.¹⁹

But this apparently friendly interaction between the publications of the trench and the mainstream press was illusory. The relationship between these very different organs of the fourth estate was deeply fraught, as discussed later.

The spectrum of sophistication

Trench periodicals ranged along a spectrum of production quality. At one end of the spectrum was the most basic, one-off and hurriedly scribbled sheet distributed by hand, dugout by dugout, or possibly just pinned to a board or post as a form of notice. At the other end of the spectrum were elaborately printed, illustrated and long-running productions carrying fully paid advertisements for officers' tailoring and good London clubs. Most fell somewhere between these extremes, with the famous and occasionally reprinted British *Wipers Times* inhabiting a space around the middle of this range. The least sophisticated efforts, such as the Australian *Bran Mash* and the British *Spit and Polish*, were seemingly free of any official status or control. When identified at all,²⁰ the editors and writers of these works tended to be from the lower ranks with an accordingly sceptical eye for the conduct of the war in general and sometimes for the conduct of their officers in particular. Nevertheless, the trench press universally insisted on a democracy of letters and art.

Neatly penned by hand, *Spit and Polish* announced itself to the small world of Battery 120 Royal Field Artillery on St David's Day 1916. It was published in 'The Low Countries,' according to its masthead. The editor, signing himself 'RWO,' introduced the publication to its readers, who were probably largely Welsh:

This magazine is published as occasion serves for circulation in the Battery. The editor requests that all ranks will contribute freely. MSS should be handed to the Acting Deputy Assistant unpaid Proof Reader in the Battery Office. Owing to the incapacity of the Duplicator each edition will be limited to 100 copies.

In characteristic trench style, the editorial went on: 'We are not good at writing Editorials we therefore abandon our firstborn to the Ravening of the critics without further apology.'

The editorial was followed by a joke about a signaller and a Battery Sergeant and a rumour column titled 'Things the Exigencies of the Service Do Not Permit Us To Divulge.' This contained items of gossip, such as asking 'If a certain Brasserie has other than liquid attractions' as well as more cryptic references understood only by the men of the RFA and possibly only those of Battery 120, including 'The function of Oysters' and that 'Chocolate Monier is a popular Sweetmeat in the Waggon [*sic*] Line.' This column was the work of the journal's editor. The next page contained a poem on 'Breakfast' and a playlet.²¹ The second number was issued on March 23. Under the heading 'Editorial,' 'RWO' simply wrote 'Nil' followed immediately by 'A Rum Story,' a facetious anecdote on the perennially popular topic of the rum ration. There was also a sonnet, a 'Stop Press' segment and cartoons involving artillery.²² *Spit and Polish* seems to have survived for four numbers, a creditable existence for such a basic and restricted publication, as well as testament to the commitment of its editors and the needs it fulfilled among its contributors and readers.

Another effort of similar do-it-yourself simplicity was the *Bran Mash*, created by the Australian Light Horse on Gallipoli. It was scribbled in pencil on two leaves of official typing paper, apparently duplicated with carbon paper, and seems only to have seen one issue. With the dateline of ' "Anzac Cove", Gallipoli June 15, 1915,' the *Bran Mash* began its first and last editorial with 'Whirr-Whizz-BANG!' (a reference to the sound of falling shells, soon to be universally known as 'whizz-bangs') and apologised for the 'lack of conveniences necessary for its completely satisfactory production.' It asked, as most trench newspapers would, for contributions from its readership and provided a selection of rumours or 'furfhies' and some basic 'art' in the form of a black oblong titled 'Night' by 'O. Keapit-Darke.'

Also at Gallipoli, the 63rd (RN) Division established the *Dug-Out Gossip* on July 12, 1915. It succeeded the *Dardanelles Driveller*, a type-written effort that had a restricted circulation of 'about 12 copies a week.'²³ The *Dug-Out Gossip* was itself eventually succeeded on the Western Front by another offering of the 63rd. From September 1917 *The Mudhook* began to publish a more sophisticated, printed edition, including cartoons, verse and humorous articles of various kinds (Figure 2.3).

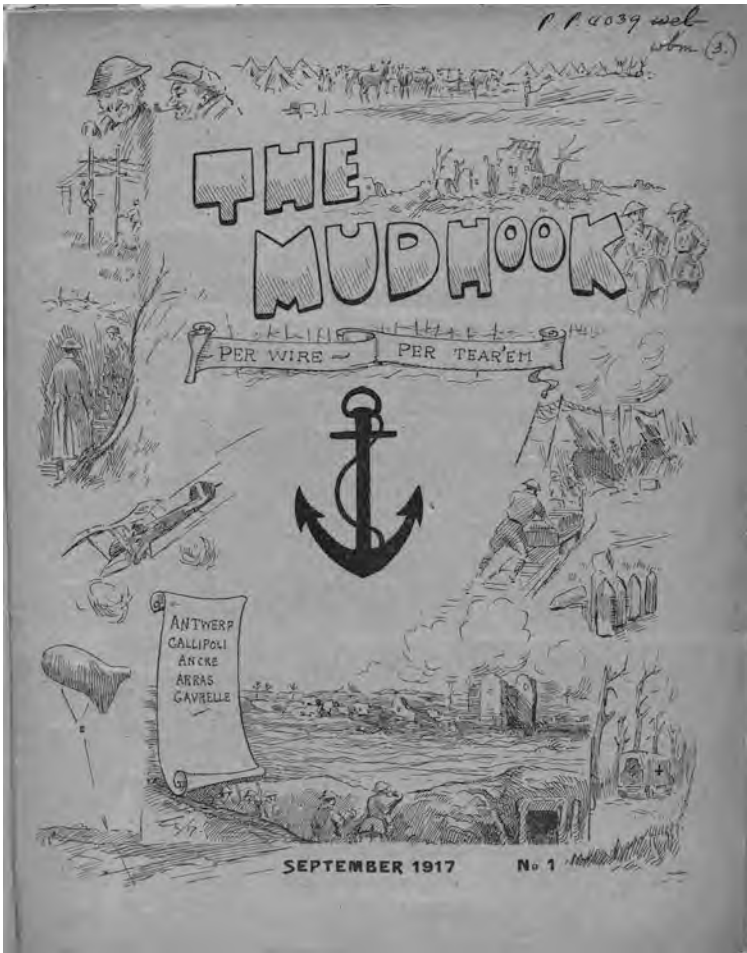


Figure 2.3 First edition of *The Mudhook*, 1917

Again on the Western Front, Number 6 MAC were known by the folk name 'Jackdaws' and titled their eight-page handwritten 'official organ' *The Jackdaw*. It seems to have run more or less monthly from January 1917. Published 'on active service' under the editorship of J. Benjamin and, later, the sub-editorship of A. Latham, *The Jackdaw* had an unusually lengthy run for such a basic work and clearly

filled a need for its offerings among its readership. Also unusually for the less sophisticated productions, it carried obituaries as well as the usual trench fare of alphabets and verse. *The Jackdaw* even aspired to a Christmas edition, all hand-drawn, including a souvenir Christmas greetings page to send home. Its cover price was a mere *quatre sous*. It seems that the paper became another casualty of 1917, and there are no further records of *The Jackdaw's* existence after December that year.

A representative example of the large middle field of trench publications was the *Listening Post*, produced by the 7th Canadian Infantry Battalion in France from August 1915 until the end of the war, supposedly twice monthly, 'Huns permitting,' and so in practice often irregularly. Like many middling journals, the *Listening Post* began its life nearer the basic end of the trench journal spectrum and gradually progressed towards the more sophisticated. Over the course of this development it went from a few pages to many pages, from none or a few cartoon illustrations to photographs of officers and notices of medals awarded. By the time of its later issues it was also including a list of contents, a rarity in trench journals. As the *Listening Post* became increasingly refined in its production and content, so it became increasingly self-conscious, publishing an anniversary edition in August 1917 complete with reproduced photographs. By the time the war ended, the journal had come to see and present itself as the representative record of the Battalion's wartime experience.

Almost inevitably as it moved further from its more or less spontaneous origins, the *Listening Post* became increasingly formal and official in tone and content. In one of its early numbers of October 1916 it carried items about some of its members in snippets and verse. The subject of sanitation was much on the mind of the Quartermaster, always a popular butt of military humour:

We understand that our even [*sic*] popular Q.M. in the intervals of acting as Customs House Officer has brought his great mind to bear upon the subject of sanitation. The new aeroplane incinerator is the result. This incinerator flits from place to place like a butterfly gathering honey like a bee in the shape of dead mules, decayed bully beef, bivvies and other articles of contraband.

A poem titled 'Aspirations' farewelled Sergeant Allan saying:

... So great is George's ambition
Expects to get a commission
As Bandmaster: Oh lofty position ...

Another poem by Pte. A00023 dealt with an officer known as 'Regimental Dick':

I suppose you've all heard of 'Regimental Dick,'
Who's art at the business is very slick,
Early in the morning his whistle [*sic*] he'll blow
And the way that he sounds it ain't very slow.
The 'Boys' to the horse lines come out on the run,
And remark to themselves 'What's next to come?'
'Hurry' says Dick, 'there's harness to clean
And sundry things, that's plain to be seen,
For tomorrow's Inspection be it sunshine or rain.'
And back goes Dick to his bivvie again.
He come out again, like a cuckoo on the fly,
And he grabs the first man that meets his eye,
Says Dick 'Harness your horses as quick as you can
Don't mind about breakfast or bacon and jam.'
The horse are hitched just in a tick,
To the great satisfaction of 'Regimental Dick.'
When the wagons away, and the rest all busy
If you want to find Dick just call at the bivvie.²⁴

The same issue also carried the text of a soldier parody of the pre-war hit song 'My Little Grey Home in the West.' Under the title 'My Little Wet Home in the Trench,' this ditty was known not only to Canadian but also to Australian troops, and was sung by British soldiers as well.²⁵ Its significance here is that it derives directly from the oral culture of the trenches, suggesting the interface between the earlier editions of the *Listening Post* and what the troops were saying and singing to each other. As we will see, this interface was a significant one, but was not a matter of simple reflection.

By Christmas 1918 the war was over and the *Listening Post* had become a professional and formal publication, carrying finely drawn and reproduced cartoons and sketches. Its cover price had gone from an initial 1d, to 2d, then to 1½ francs. Its first number had been only four pages in length, while its last boasted over 20 pages.

Although some of the papers in the middling and largest category began life as Australian, Canadian and New Zealand troopship journals, their frontline formats were distinctively 'trench.' Billed as 'The Voice of the Benzine Lancers and Organ of the Gear-Box', *Honk* originated on board troopship *A40* in January 1915 as the journal of the Australian Ammunition Park. From number 8 of August 1915, it was produced 'in the field' in France as a printed paper, usually running to six pages. In addition to the basic trench paper requirements of verse, rumour and humour, *Honk* included 'News from Down Under,' notification and results of AIF sporting competitions and even articles with a practical theme, such as how to purify water.²⁶ In common with most other Australian papers in this range, such as the *14th Company Magazine* and the 7th Field Artillery Brigade's *Yandoo*, *Honk* was a relatively sophisticated product, able to print snippets of Australian news less than two weeks old, and letters from Gallipoli and Australia, as well as patriotic verse from the Sydney *Sun* newspaper. However, *Honk* also carried items of the type common to all trench journals.

Middling publications of this kind were the most numerous providers of rumour, humour and other information to the troops. They tended to evolve from the circumstances of the fighting rather than from a previous peacetime existence and to survive well beyond one or two issues. They were printed in large numbers and carried a price on their covers for which they were supposedly sold, though the capricious price rises of the *Wipers Times* and some other periodicals suggest that there was often little serious intention of collecting the money. Their distribution was generally well organised through the unit lines of communication, assisted by their status as accepted and established entities. They were almost all more than six or so pages in extent and carried line drawings and cartoons as well as text. Advertisements, where they appeared, were often spoofs, and unlike the most sophisticated trench publications they did not seriously seek supporting revenue from commercial activities.

Some of the middling publications and all the more sophisticated and permanent periodicals required the blessing and, almost

inevitably, the supervision of their unit's senior officers, and sometimes even from above that level. They usually had a fixed staff, probably appointed rather than self-initiated, perhaps an editorial committee, and an organised subscription base. However, as we will see, this official overseeing did not necessarily involve direct censorship as we can read and see much the same attitudes, tone and implied criticisms as in their less respectable relations. These more elaborate journals tended to be those that had existed before the war as regimental or similar established publications and so had already become integral elements of the unit's internal communication and identity. They continued these roles into the fighting, adding morale maintenance to their functions, but also still publishing lengthy lists of casualties, promotions and military decorations together with the more pungent expressions of the new trench culture which, for many civilian recruits and conscripts, transcended the unit loyalties of professional soldiers.

While the aspirations of the most basic and many of the middling trench journals were generally modest, many made the same serious claims as their more elaborate competitors. They often saw and presented themselves as journals of record, chronicling the events of the war for the benefit of their sometimes numerous readers at home as well as at the front.²⁷ Many journals also presented themselves as keepsakes and souvenirs of the war experience, both for the soldiers who fought and for their families and friends. The first editorial of the AIF *Standard of C Company* hoped that: 'In the long years of the future when the war has become a memory, each little number of "The Standard of C Company" should be a valued souvenir.'²⁸ The first edition of the Canadian the *Silent 60th* began with the words: 'This little magazine is intended chiefly as a souvenir of "The Sixtieth", when on its way to uphold the honour and the glory of the "Old Flag".'²⁹ Quite a few of those operations also produced impressive special numbers for Christmas with the stated aim of providing printed mementos of the war.

Even those publications that had existed within professional soldier units before the war became increasingly 'trench' in character as their members were replaced by civilian volunteers and conscripts. The *London Scottish Regimental Gazette* could boast a pedigree of 233 issues before it went on active service 'somewhere in France' in June 1915. It was possible to obtain the journal by subscription 'to any

address in Great Britain and Ireland' and it even included an index to each of its by then 20 volumes. Although compiled and edited in France, the *Gazette* was printed and published, as it always had been, at Headquarters in London each month. It even stated that, like real commercial publications, it had been 'entered at Stationer's Hall.' The *Gazette* was a well-resourced and official publication of a professional army regiment with a long and proud history, highlights of which were frequently reprinted in its 24 or more pages. Between its printed covers was carried news of awards and medals, obituaries and casualty lists, with photographs of the slain under the caption 'Dead on the Field of Honour.' There was even a regular column of 'Notes by the Commanding Officer' of its battalions. In one of these columns the CO of the Third Battalion was allowed to write in a manner unlikely to grace the pages of less elaborate publications:

It [the 3rd Bn] has shown by its eagerness to learn, the real London Scottish spirit, which is that every man in it should feel that the honour of the Corps, its credit, and its renown (for it has that now) are his possession, and to be guarded and regarded by him. And it is no light task this. The 'Hodden Grey' has had its baptism of blood, and any man who wears it should vow to himself never under any circumstances, wherever he is, to disgrace it ... ³⁰

But by April 1916, after less than a year in France, the paper was publishing standard trench verse like 'Their Dug-out,' which began:

The Company Sergeant-Major and the Company QMS,
Have the snuggest little dug-out and a most superior mess.
And if anything you're needing, it's always to be found
In their handy little, sandy little dug-out underground.

And finished:

They're a brace of rare good sportsmen, so give them
each their due.
You'd do your damndest for them, and they'd do the same for you.
So I wish them back to England with a comfy little wound,
From their frowsy little, lousy little dug-out underground.³¹

The *Gazette* also contained other trench elements, including a gossip column, though this was carefully arranged in army style for contributions by each battalion. There was the usual assortment of humorous poems, anecdotes and cartoons. It also carried real advertisements rather than the spoofs favoured by the basic and middling trench journals. These included advertisements for the self-improvement system known as 'Pelmanism' (also advertised seriously in the sophisticated *The Dagger, or London in the Line*, published quarterly by the 56th London Division).³² The *Gazette* also carried the proper advertisements for this method, which promised to equip its followers with many superior attributes. But trench journals of the middling sort, like the *Wipers Times*, *The Hobocob* and *M+D* of the 11th Canadian Field Ambulance, mercilessly lampooned the same inducements in articles and mock advertisements.³³

Australian publications at the more sophisticated end of the spectrum included *Aussie* and *Kia-Ora Cooee*,³⁴ *Digger* (from August 1918) and the magazine that grew out of *Honk* – the *Rising Sun*.³⁵ Printed 'Somewhere in France,' the *Rising Sun* claimed to be 'A Journal of the AIF in France' and was first published on Christmas Day 1916. Edited by the official Australian war correspondent C. E. W. Bean, it included the usual fare of the upper-level trench paper – some Australian news, some general and sporting news, verse, anecdotes, humour and parodies of advertisements. In February 1917, the *Rising Sun* published best-selling Australian poet C. J. Dennis's 'Why Mick went to War' from his *The Moods of Ginger Mick*, published in book form only the previous year. Clearly, the resources of papers of this kind were some way above those of the basic and middling categories. Like the *Rising Sun* and *Digger*, *Aussie* was effectively an official publication of the larger national military groupings such as the AIF, the Base Depots and the Australian Corps rather than the more intimate offerings of individual units. Such efforts benefitted from access to supplies of paper, presses, information and other infrastructure support that few other publications of the trench enjoyed. Nevertheless, *Aussie* in particular, which began publication in January 1918, retained a strong sense of trench authenticity that made it immediately the single most popular Australian publication and one which, unlike most trench journals, survived the war by many years.

The American Expeditionary Force gave birth to a number of periodicals during and just after the war. These included *La Vie Marine*, a four-sheet effort published by the men of the Chief Paymaster's Office in Paris. Like its peers, it was concerned with rumours of going home and also featured cartoons by 'Wally,' a marine who had contributed to the official forces newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*. The Eleventh Regiment of Marines at Gievres began a paper called *Sol*, a mimeographed production whose editorial motto was 'To avoid criticism, say nothing, do nothing, be nothing.'³⁶ Other American titles included *The Caduceus*, *Over Here: Official Publication of U.S. Army General Hospital no. 3*, the *Jayhawker in France*, *The Radiator*, published by the United States Army Ambulance Service from 1918 to 1919, the *Steering Wheel*, journal of the Motor Transport Corps, *The Spiker* of the 18th Engineers (Railway)³⁷ and the optimistically titled *Ooo La La Times*, also by railway engineers.³⁸

The Americans also created *The Devil-Dog*, 'Published by and for Co. B of the 11th Marines.' It began appearing after the cessation of hostilities but contained material composed by men who had seen their share of the fighting. Like most trench publications, it proclaimed that its main aim was to maintain the *esprit de corps* of the troops – 'to help, as best it can, to keep up their morale.'³⁹ Within its well-ordered columns, the paper dealt with rumour, provided brief histories of the Company's war service, anecdotes and jokes, and good-humouredly chaffed named individuals in the Company.⁴⁰ Snippets of news, views and sightseeing tips on the history of the La Pallice area where the Company was stationed were also featured, and the publication included verse parodies, though no cartoons or other visual material. *The Devil-Dog* even published a special 'prophylaxis extra' issue, which made light of an enforced episode of compulsory medical inspection for venereal disease, a topic rarely confronted directly in British or Empire trench journals. This same edition took a swipe at a target detested by all allied troops, the Military Police. Responding to the news that MPs were to wear red trimmings under their collar devices, *The Devil-Dog* made the suggestion: 'How About A Bit of LACE on the Top of Their Puttees?'⁴¹

But despite the similarity of tone and complaint, the circumstances of the American participation in the war were very different to those of the British and Empire troops. The Americans were also much

better supplied with a great range and variety of officially and commercially produced newspapers and magazines.⁴² There was no need to negotiate the consent of Americans to fight, as most of them were avowedly keen to take part in the new sport of ‘walloping the Kaiser.’⁴³ The more restricted nature of the American trench newspapers and their very different functions were highlighted by the history of the 27th New York Division’s variously titled publication. Like many such efforts, this one had its origins in camp in the USA, as the *Wadsworth Gas Attack and the Rio Grande Rattler*. It was eventually to be known as the *Gas Attack*. However, as soon as the 27th sailed for Europe and went into action in early 1918, publication of their newspaper was suspended. It was not re-established until after the Armistice, with a special 1918 Christmas edition followed by a ‘Home Again’ edition when the division returned in March 1919.⁴⁴ Whatever purposes the American soldier newspapers served, they were not the same as those of the British and their dominion allies.

The forms of trench literature and art

The style and range of the trench press has been described above. But what were the main elements of content carried in these usually makeshift soldier newspapers? A survey of the range of papers and journals of the British, Empire and American forces reveals a range of literary and artistic genres employed by their contributors. Most of those briefly introduced here will feature in relation to themes discussed in subsequent chapters.

Fiction

Fiction writing took various forms, including short stories, serials and plays. Many of the middling journals ran usually absurd serials, paying apparently obsessive attention to the detail of their ridiculous plots. The *Fifth Glo’ster Gazette* ran one such, titled ‘The Bloodstained Billhook,’ which claimed to be ‘The most powerful and dramatic story ever written.’ So convoluted had this epic become by the April 1918 edition that it was possible for readers ‘to start anywhere and end anywhere.’ The tales featured such characters as a ‘millionaire of 24 years disguised as a temporary gentleman’ and said to be ‘passionately enamoured of Flossie Flatfoot, a dark haired, olive

skinned actress of 19.' She was the fourth and youngest daughter of the 'impecunious but hard working plate layer' George Young, who 'has vowed vengeance against Arthur Crump, a fair-haired, pleasant looking middle aged man with a glass eye and a hair lip [sic]...' And so it went on, in prefiguration of a Monty Python sketch.

The *BEF Times* featured several similar Spooneristic parodies, including 'Zero or The Bound of the Baskershores, another Herlock Shomes Episode.' The famous fictional detective had featured in earlier serials run since the first *Wipers Times* and starring, among others, 'Intha Pink – A Pioneer (in love with himself)' and Dr Hotsam, RAMC.' Sherlock Holmes was perhaps the most parodied literary character in the trench press, featuring in crazed antics in many publications. This appropriation of the classic detective story in which the solution to a crime is portrayed in the form of solving a riddle was especially relevant to the state of misinformation and perpetual puzzlement in which the average trench soldier existed. Serial inanity, often also using the detective story format as well as other genres such as the romantic melodrama, could also be enjoyed, or endured. The *Splint Record* of No. 2 Field Ambulance, 1st Canadian Division, *The Whizz-Bang* and the *Twentieth Gazette*, among many others, carried such enigmatic but evidently popular serial effusions.

Playlets were another frequent element of the trench canon, almost always parodic or otherwise humorous. The *BEF Times* carried its first dramatic piece in March 1917. Titled 'Ours or Theirs,' it was set at 'any battalion headquarters in the line. Time: The present.' Contributed by 'JWH,' the action involved British artillery blowing up its own cookhouse and latrines in a display of inane incompetence that probably occurred more often than the army would like to admit. The *BEF Times* continued to feature occasional dramatic sketches and playlets until its final issue, as did many other trench papers.⁴⁵

It has been estimated that 1.5 million poems were written by troops during the month of August 1914 alone.⁴⁶ Verse continued to be the major mode of popular cultural expression for the remainder of the war, in anthologies, newspapers, diaries and trench journals. The editor of the *Wipers Times* was at one point impelled to call for a halt to all the poetry being sent in to his publication. His contemporaries also noted the 'recrudescence of poetry' as one of the 'many curious phenomena of the great world-struggle.'⁴⁷

Although most poetic forms, including blank verse, sonnets and other complex structures, appeared in trench journals, ballads are the most frequently found. The four-line stanza or verse, with its galloping rhythm and usually vernacular vocabulary, or some variation on it, is found in every type of publication, from the simplest to the grandest. Often these were in imitation or parody of acknowledged masters such as Kipling or the national equivalents of other combatant countries, like the Australians A. B. 'Banjo' Paterson and C. J. Dennis.⁴⁸ In other cases they are in more folkloric forms.

The next most popular verse form was the alphabet, a favourite soldiers' genre of ritualised complaining since at least the nineteenth century. As discussed later, few trench journals of any longevity failed to attract at least one of these efforts, often many of them being published over the life of the periodical. Their quality was variable, but the firmness of the alphabetic framework and the familiarity of the genre allowed even the least poetically gifted the opportunity to comment in rhyme.

Similarly, the limerick was an accessible form that allowed many to make poetic comments and observations ranging from the inane to the witty.

There was a young Boche at Bazentin
Who liked the first trench that he went in:
But a 15-inch 'dud'
Sent him flat in the mud,
And he found that his helmet was bent in.⁴⁹

The humble form of the limerick was capable of being put to slightly more exalted purposes, as demonstrated by 'The Poet Lorryite' who contributed to *The Standard of C Company* a series of nine limericks chaffing named comrades,⁵⁰ a common ploy in materials of this sort that emphasised common membership of the group and the levelling imperative of trench culture.

Another favoured form of poetic parody was the nursery rhyme. The simplicity of the form and the fact that the originals were familiar to just about everyone made nursery rhymes an ideal vehicle for humorous reworking. This elaboration on 'Little Jack Horner'

appeared in a section titled 'Nursery Rhymes Revised' in *Sub Rosa*, 1917:

Little Jack Wrench
Sat down in a trench,
With a 'pork and beans' and some bread,
When an Allemande shell
On the parapet fell,
So he got 'iron rations' instead.⁵¹

Infantilism also featured in trench ditties that parodied popular songs on the lullaby theme, such as 'Hush, Here Comes the Dream Man,' which became 'Hush, Here Comes a Whizz-Bang,' and 'Far, Far From Ypres,' which depicted troops 'waiting for starshells to send us to sleep.' Trench publications interfaced with the oral culture of the trenches in various ways, but particularly through the medium of song. Soldier ditties, marching songs and a variety of parodies of popular songs and hymns appeared frequently in the journals. They were in sanitised versions acceptable for the print culture of the time, but nevertheless conveyed many of the deeply felt issues, frustrations and concerns of those who sang them. Being at home and going home were common themes, as were complaints against just about every aspect of army life and the war in general. Others were almost whimsical evocations of the dangers of whizz-bangs, barbed wire and mud, usually treated with the ironic humour that served only to highlight the desperation of their singers' circumstances.

Often used as brief fillers for otherwise empty white space, jokes ranged from the inane to the seemingly inexplicable. Jokes might be about many aspects of the zones of war, about the military system, rum rations, food, lice and so on, though items about gormless new recruits were especially popular:

Coy. officer (going round at stand to, to sentry who has spent his first night in the trenches): 'Well, are you alright this morning?'

Sentry : 'Yus, I'm alright. 'Ow's yerself'?'⁵²

Rumour and gossip were the mainstay of every trench journal. The most frequent format for presenting these factoids was a column

called 'Things We Want to Know,' or similar. Sometimes the purpose of such columns was made explicit, as in the *Listening Post's* sub-title 'The Battalion Rumourist's Calendar'; sometimes the column might be called 'Information Required, as in the *Pennington Press*. Whatever the exact title, it was a rare trench journal that did not include many such titbits, gripes, queries and items of hearsay dredged up from the mutterings and wonderings of the troops. The 84th (1st/2nd City of London) Field Ambulance RAMC TF even made its function explicit, glorying in the title *The Joy Prong: The Official Rumourmonger*, the 'joy prong' being medical folk speech of the period for a hypodermic syringe. *Beach Rumours*, *Dinkum Oil*, *Trench Echo* and the *Inchkeith Lyre* were among others that alluded, directly or otherwise, to their functions as purveyors of unofficial information. Whether rumour and hearsay should be included as fiction or non-fiction is an issue that highlights the unstable nature of the genre, forever hovering between what was actually happening and what the collectivity thought, feared or hoped to be (Figure 2.4).

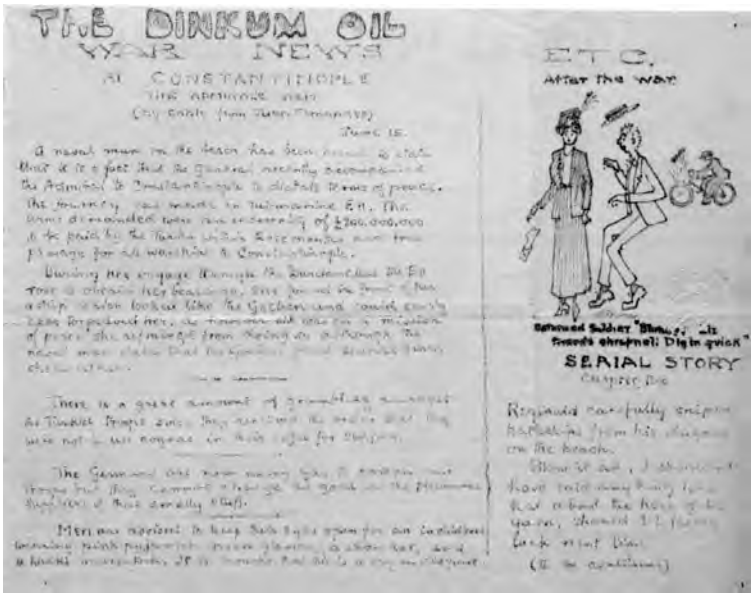


Figure 2.4 *Dinkum Oil*, Gallipoli, June 1915

Non-fiction

Many trench journals carried editorials. As in the mainstream press, these were a genre of their own. The most common tone was one of humorous self-deprecation and an appeal for mercy from prospective readers. Published 'when possible,' the *Dead Horse Corner Gazette* produced by the 4th Bn First Canadian Contingent mostly lived up to its masthead of 'A Monthly Journal of Breezy Comment.' Its foundation number outlined the aspirations of the publication under the heading 'Our Aims and Hopes':

Voila! We have at last emerged from our shell, and now brave, for the first time, the fearsome and awe-inspiring surrounds of cold print. We come to you as an infant – 'puny,' and crying in his nurse's arms, as Will of Stratford words it in his 'Seven Ages of Man.' We are puny, but with your tender care and solicitude we may even attain robustness and even virility...

The editorial even included a short poem titled 'Ourselves' to introduce the publication to its readers. It summed up the approach and philosophy of most trench journals:

Let 'Welcome' usher in our birth
In gratifying measure –
We aim to hold your interest,
And give, we hope, some pleasure.
We may not reach Elysian heights
Whene'er we twang the lyre;
But still we hope, with printer's ink,
To give, with 'rapid fire,'
This souvenir at modest cost,
Your appetite to whet.
Your smile will grow, provide you read
The 'D.H.C Gazette.'⁵³

Editors often interacted with their contributors through introductions to items and sometimes through intervention in them.

D is for 'D' Coy, the best in the Batt.
D is for 'Dash' and you bet we have that!
D for the 'Daring' we ever have shown,
D for 'Defeat' we never have known.
D is for 'Darling,' or 'it's getting worse.'
D is for 'Damn' – a comforting curse,
D is for 'Dore,' whose noise we deplore –
[D for 'Don't' think we shall print any more. – ED].⁵⁴

Editors encouraged inclusivity and unit identity, fundamental tenets of the trench culture and its press. As the editor of *The Incinerator* insisted in the first edition of his publication: 'Let it be clearly understood. *The Incinerator* is a battalion journal . . . The object aimed at is a magazine for the battalion, compiled from the battalion. Every man has the indulgent ear of the editor. Contributions are asked for from all ranks . . .'⁵⁵

Trench newspapers often supported narratives that chronicled events in which their enviroing unit had been involved. These were usually straight factual recitals of when, where and what, sometimes with a few individuals, usually commanding officers, named. They were mostly published long after the details included could have any strategic military value and focused strongly on the collective rather than the personal experiences conveyed.

Other forms of non-fiction, or purportedly so, were the anecdote and the memoir. In these genres, authors were given leeway to write from a personal perspective, though the approved focus was still on the shared. Personal experience stories often appeared, usually as short paragraphs, nuggets that highlighted a humorous moment or particularly inane incident. In some cases these were probably true stories, though many were more apocryphal yarns about encounters with the enemy, officers, or ignorance of the war on the part of civilians back home.

Space was sometimes made for more expansive reminiscences and memoirs. These tend to be found mostly in the more elaborate periodicals. In March 1917 the New Zealand publication *Chronicles of the NZEF* ran 'Reminiscences from the Somme' at some length.⁵⁶ While these were serious in tone, the trench press usually managed to satirise them. The 111th Corps Cavalry Regiment's the

Emergency Ration contained an article titled 'A Few Days in Paris by One Why Has Taken French Leave.' The remainder of the page was blank but for the parenthetical comment 'Censored on Moral Grounds.'⁵⁷

Parody and play

Inhabiting an unstable boundary between the factual and the fictional were the many parodic forms employed by the trench press. Parody provided the opportunity for satire and implied criticism that ideally suited the needs and the context of the trench press. Constrained as they were, to greater or lesser degrees, by censorship and military authority, send-ups of official communications and of mainstream newspaper genres allowed the trench press to mediate the fine and murky dividing lines between dissent and consent. The humour thus produced frequently had the character of a smile with bared teeth or the knowledge of impending doom.

We find in trench journals the likely origins of a form of folk expression that was to be characteristic of the coming information age.⁵⁸ These consisted mainly of satirical and periodic versions of official forms, such as the standard letter home, the training examination paper or the intelligence report. Even the Medical History Sheet was ripe for this form of parodisation, as the 33rd Reinforcement from New Zealand showed in its journal *Te Huia* for February 1918:

MEDICAL HISTORY SHEET

As all the information on this sheet is unnecessary care should be taken to answer the questions correctly

1. *Name*
2. *Address*
3. *Why did you marry?*
4. *Is that the only reason?*
5. *Give address of your lady friend*
6. *Do you know any other addresses?*
7. *State height, weight, and chest measurement last Christmas*
8. *Explain reason why you were born*
9. *Where were you last night?*

10. *Is that the correct answer?*
11. *What is the correct answer?* *Thank you.*
12. *Would you like a commission?*
13. *Give names of Staff officers you object to*
14. *Do you require more than Service pay?*
15. *How much?*
16. *What do you think of the Kaiser?*
17. *Is that all?*
18. *Have you ever committed suicide?*
19. *Why not?*
20. *Are you sure you have kept nothing back?*
 Sign here

*The answers must be sworn at by a Justice of the Peace and the sheet sent to the General Records Office, where it will probably be lost. If the General Commanding owes you any money telegraph the answers to him collect.*⁵⁹

Parody of the official and the authorised was also the urge behind the frequent lampooning of mainstream newspaper genres, including the agony aunt column, children’s corner and letters to the editor. Frequently, there would appear more ambitious satires of war correspondent reports and of warmongering articles by jingoists safely distant from the fighting. These items leave the reader in no doubt of the profound contempt in which the frontline soldier held much of the mainstream press and their often-blatant propagandist intentions. As we will see, these sometimes savage parodies concealed a more complex relationship between the trench press, mainstream journalism and other aspects of ‘home.’

The art of the trench journal spanned a range of styles and skill levels similar to that demonstrated by the literary offerings. At its most basic it might be a hastily scrawled pencil diagram, sketch or crude cartoon. At the other end of the range came closely drawn and sometimes surprisingly well-reproduced etchings and illustrations by artists of considerable skill. In between came all sorts of spoof advertisements, line drawings and photographs. Again, as with the literary works, trench art was sometimes signed, sometimes pseudonymous and often anonymous. As with the literary content of the magazines, the intent was frequently to humourise the traumatic realities.

Despite the circumstances under which trench journals were produced, the contemporary reader comes away from surveying them with a strong sense of their playfulness. This is evident in the favoured and mostly satirised genres, many of which are associated with play, such as nursery rhymes, limericks, children's columns, cartoons and comic strips from mainstream newspapers and magazines. The objects and subjects for such treatment include most of the elements that constituted the zones of war, including the enemy, officers and the military in general, relations with civilians, allies and those at home. The topics played with and the genres through which they are played indicate points of tension which required processing and negotiating through the trench journals. This perhaps explains the odd and unexpected feelings of regret experienced by survivors of the trenches at the war's end. Their suffering had created in four terrible years a new society, culture, economy and embryonic politic. It was of them and for them. Only those who had experienced the front could understand, appreciate and operate in it. Like eventually rescued shipwreck victims unwilling to give up the bones of those they have cannibalised, they wished to cling to the skeletons of their ordeal because that was all they had left. In the meantime, the only sane response was to try to laugh it all off, something the soldiers' press robustly encouraged.

Distinctive nature of the soldiers' press

Regardless of their level of sophistication, their longevity or their nationality, trench journals tended to focus on a number of recurring themes and concerns. These included unofficial news or rumour, what the mainstream press were writing about the war and, in the minds of many foot soldiers at least, the closely related topic of propaganda. Other major preoccupations were 'shirkers' – those believed by the troops to be avoiding joining them at the front through excuses such as illness, reserved occupation or pacifist beliefs. Weaponry, the enemy, allies and what things might be like *après la guerre*, if it ever did end, were also high on the agenda of the typical trench journal editor's list of necessary inclusions. These matters were expressed through the typical genres described above and in the new language of the trench.

Most trench journals had a fascination with trench speech: an amalgam of army abbreviations and slang, mangulations of French and German, mishearings or deliberate warping of new technical terms associated with the business of killing, and a host of other terms of mysterious origin and unknown provenance. All these linguistic innovations evolved from the experience of trench warfare and provided the means of communicating and expressing the experience within the pages of the trench press as well as in the everyday speech of fighting. It was the language in which was carried the foot soldiers' traditional prerogative of complaining. They complained of anything and everything, from the inconvenience to sleeping caused by inconsiderate enemy bombardments, to the quality – or not – of the food. There was rarely enough rum, or the sergeants or commissioned officers got it all. The mud was d—d inconvenient, as were the frequent requirements for unsociable hours and sudden decampments – and so on and on.

There was plenty of cause for complaint. But no matter how varied, frequent and shrill the complaints became, they were never, in print, expressed in bad language. Euphemisms like 'bally,' 'blanky,' 'blasted' or 'd—n' are encountered, but there is little worse than the occasional 'damned.' Serious swearing belonged to the discourse of trench oral culture and not the more slightly more rarefied form of the trench journal. No doubt the likelihood, even the desirability, of the publication being read at home was firmly in the minds of editors, but even the cruder complaints are free of bad language. Other than the occasional 'damn,' 'hell' or 'blasted,' swearing is left to the conversational cursing of everyday speech.

The distinctive tone and attitude and many of the characteristics of the trench press can be usefully highlighted by contrast with other forms of military publication. As noted, the American army published its own weekly newspaper from February 1917 to June 1919. Titled the *Stars and Stripes*, it was intended as a means of keeping the soldiers informed about what was happening back on the home front, encouraging them to write to their families and generally helping to maintain morale. It was a professional and highly organised publication with organised distribution networks and was frequently propagandistic. In short, the *Stars and Stripes* had precisely the opposite function and motivation of most trench journals, being designed, initially at least, to communicate from above to below rather than

with the main trench journal aim of communicating between unit members and from the front to those at home.

Nevertheless, even such an official organ soon developed at least one trench characteristic. In the May 3 edition of 1918 the editors established a column titled 'The Army's Poets.' This rapidly became the most popular section of the paper, attracting more than 75,000 contributions in the 17 months of the newspaper's existence. There were far too many to be included in the *Stars and Stripes*, though many were published after the war.⁶⁰ In this column American doughboys, brought up like their British, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand cousins in a pre-technological tradition in which poetry had an important place in education, in public life and in private pursuits, poured out their thoughts, feelings, fears and foibles. Their effusions resonated powerfully with all those who shared the wartime experience of the Americans, though all copy for the paper was heavily censored by the Army's Board of Control and General Headquarters, as well as by Military Intelligence. The main purpose of the paper was to retail news, maintain morale and support the idea that the war was a just one; only items that suited these criteria appeared in print.⁶¹

In another important respect the *Stars and Stripes* differed radically from most trench journals. It included news about and of interest to 'the opposite sex.' American women served in France as nurses and canteen workers.⁶² The newly installed American telephone system required bi-lingual operators, and several hundred American women were recruited and brought over to France from March 1918 to staff the system. They were known as 'Hello Girls,' and the *Stars and Stripes* reported on their progress on more than one occasion. The paper also carried a women's page, on which fashion was seriously discussed, a genre otherwise unknown in the trench journal except in the form of parody. The representation, or not, of sex and gender in trench publications is a significant aspect of their roles and functions, as discussed later.

The *Stars and Stripes* was closely connected with the larger interests of the military and government.⁶³ rather than the on-the-ground concerns of soldiers. The other allied forces also produced publications that were usually edited by professional or semi-professional journalists and not linked to a particular military unit. These publications aspired to more general coverage, often recycling news from

home, and items of government policy that would be of interest to returning soldiers during and after the war. They included the Australian *Anzac Bulletin* and, to a lesser extent, the New Zealand *Chronicles of the NZEF*, both closely linked to their respective military establishments and interests, though they did not have anywhere near the same level of resources and infrastructure. They were mostly printed and distributed in the tens of thousands while the *Stars and Stripes*, at its peak, reached a circulation of 526,000 through a well-organised transport and distribution network from which enterprising American soldiers could also earn a commission for selling the paper to their comrades.

As well as those periodicals produced at or near the fighting, there were a number of other publications by and for soldiers that arose from the war. Hospitals⁶⁴ and prison camps⁶⁵ generated a sizeable output, as did base and training camps,⁶⁶ and others were published aboard troopships coming to or going home from the front.⁶⁷ While those produced on board ships voyaging towards the fighting from New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States reflected no experience of armed combat, those produced on the return journey had a tone of war-weariness and anticipation of the return, though they were often tinged with a little regret that it was all over and trepidation about civilian life back home. Some trench journals had their origins in the outward-bound periodicals, which generally displayed the same bright, breezy, colloquial (within limits) and slightly irreverent approach to army authority, morality, religion and the war itself. They were largely written by their readers, the editors generally providing a suitable forum within which a variety of soldier expressions could be articulated and broadcast further than by word of mouth, even on crowded troopships. As in publications emanating from the front, the actions and attitudes of officers might be held up to implied criticism and correction through humorous asides, snippets and cartoons.⁶⁸

A partial distinction must also be made between trench newspapers and compilations like *The Anzac Book*.⁶⁹ These one-off productions, often produced at Christmas time or New Year, were always intended as souvenirs and as much, if not more, for home front audiences. Unlike trench papers, they were not serial publications, contained no news (spurious or otherwise) and were often not so obsessively concerned with some of the other central genres of the trench

newspaper, such as the furphy and the humorous letter. Nevertheless, these volumes were typically put together by the editorial staff of trench journals and often contained a similar array of soldier-created verse, art and other expressions originating in the frontline. These publications are occasionally quoted from where relevant.

The newsheets, papers and magazines studied in this book represented themselves as journals of the trench. Written mostly by their readers, these publications projected a version of the common soldier's lot and his views on that experience. As Jay Winter wrote in his Foreword to Stephane Audoin-Rouzeau's study of French national sentiment, *Men at War 1914–1918*: 'These small broadsheets and occasional publications constitute a set of resources of striking immediacy and authenticity.'⁷⁰ Echoing clearly through these chronicles comes the danger, unpleasantness and frequent insanity of the war, filtered through the humour, camaraderie and earthy humanity of trench culture. Yet the trench press was at once more and less than this. It was a genre that aspired to communicate urgently beyond its creators and its primary readership. It was also a genre that, while anxious to represent itself as 'authentic,' was a careful reconstruction of trench reality.