the trinity review
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Introduction

In the Fall the editors announced the formation of a new organization, The Review Society. The response was unexpectedly good with the result that the Society, informal as it is, has become one of the most vigorous and thriving organizations on campus. Informality is the keynote of the Friday afternoon sessions of coffee and criticism. The group's participants more often than not read their own material. It is then commented on by anyone who wishes. However, the Society does not limit itself to considering only its members' material. An unusually provocative few hours were spent discussing the subject of the proper subjects of literature, poetry in particular. This discussion was precipitated by one of the editors' comments that poetry could not be written about such things as ashtrays. To defend his position he offered "The Ashtray Controversy" which is included in this issue. In answer to the author's remarks two poems were written and read. Other questions, such as Art and Morality, The Place of the Artist in Society, and The Creative Process and Its Disciplines have been discussed at various times. Unfortunately, no written account of the proceedings can even suggest the vigor and heat of these discussions.

In the course of the meetings we have listened to recordings of Dylan Thomas reading his own poetry and have read George Bernard Shaw's St. Joan aloud.

Much of the material in this issue was read and commented on at the meetings. While critical opinion has varied, the editors feel that the material included represents the best being written on the campus at present. For the reader we have included a prize-winning historical essay, short stories, a piece of satire, a one act play and several poems. The Society and the Review are machines run by the students. Both are open to anyone interested, the latter, however, having requirements for membership. But what the machine eventually produces depends upon its operators and the material with which it must work. With these remarks as our apologia the editors offer this issue to the readers.
The Ashtray Controversy

One can write a poem about an ashtray. One cannot write poetry about an ashtray. Yet one can use an ashtray in poetry.

More explicitly, you cannot write poetry about a radiator, a hairbrush, or a cement truck. But one can use an ashtray as a symbol.

Poetic is an adjective referring to literary technique and compression of thought. Poetic results are evocative.

A poem is a series of lines, often rhymed, often written in regular rhythms meant to convey experience. A poem is a vehicle.

Poetry is what a poem becomes when the writer has drawn from his subject what beauty is there. Poetry is what a good poem carries.

Many insist that a poem about an ashtray can be written. Yes, one can. In an ashtray is a cigarette. On the cigarette are lipstick stains. The lipstick was on a pretty mouth. The mouth belonged to a pretty girl. The girl is she whom the would-be poet loves. And whenever he sees the ashtray he thinks of her. The fellow tries to write something. The result? maybe a poem.

The ashtray is made of metal. Metal comes from ore. Ore comes from the ground. The ground was once covered with a blanket of pine trees Wordsworth and God were hiding behind every one. (Courtesy of a professor.) Ain’t nature grand. Ain’t love grand.

Sure they are, but what have they to do with an ashtray. Poetry can only be written about those things which from the Well of Universal Beauty have drawn their beauty.

Love — death, sorrow, hate, joy, ecstasy, rapture, disgust; time, the universe, the cosmos, God. These are beautiful.

Flowers, nature, man. These are beautiful.

A rug, a fence, a barn, a building. These are beautiful, but it is less easy to experience their beauty.

Light, darkness, heat, cold. These are beautiful.

The poet is a maker, but what does he make? He makes poetry, not poems, for he is equipped with the best vision in the world. He sees into what he sees. If there is nothing there for him to see, he can still write a poem. When there is something, then he writes poetry; that is, if he has mastered his trade.

A poet has insight. Insight into the fundamental beauty of the universe.

The poet never projects into. He takes from. When he writes, he communicates his epiphanic experience. That is his job.

The poet’s vocation is to help men see. Not what they will see, but what there is worth being seen. The man who sees nothing tries to fool his readers’ eyes and ears. What the poet does is show what he has experienced in terms he and his audience can both most clearly understand. “Understand” is not a restricted word; intelligence and intuition are at work here.
That is why when there is nothing to be taken from a thing, the poet cannot write poetry of it.

But, you say, look at the form of an ashtray. Isn’t that one symmetrical? Yes, that’s fine, too. But can you write poetry about a symmetrical ashtray? It is visually pleasing. But what would you write about? A symmetrical ashtray? or symmetry. Symmetry is beautiful.

Why are things beautiful? See Plato.

At a certain moment we grasp that which we perceive to be beautiful partaking of Beauty. And if we were all capable of fashioning poetry, we could communicate our perception or insight.

Man is beautiful; very few of his artifacts are. Golden Byzantine birds and Grecian urns are beautiful, they have a sense of timelessness. Ashtrays are utilitarian.

Beauty can only be experienced. Seeing plays an absurdly small part. Truth is beautiful, but Keats said it first in poetry.

There is also a Well of Ugliness.

“(Poetry) is the achievement of beauty.”

M. Rewa

On the River Road

I pass

a barbed rusty wire fence leaning to
a whichever angle
soft looking brown just been plowed earth
with about a week ago broken corn stubs
a black boned tree —
with a shroud: bits of yellow, red,
a field filled with tobacco poles
and white, shredded and dangling from wire
a weather eaten bent barn holding
some wrinkled hanging to dry tobacco leaves
a half turned part burned maple
contrasted against one of the palest skies
an open today fruit stand with pyramids
and columns of two for twenty-five pumpkins
a brook — not moving much —
a few leaves on it. . . .

Douglas L. Frost
THE TRINITY REVIEW

From THE PYGMAION

(The following is an excerpt from R. Winter's novel THE PYGMAION. The main character, Pygmalion, believes himself responsible for a death through abortion. A guilt-driven young man, he becomes self-exiled. Because of shame, he forced the drive of desire into a drive of expression free from sexual revilement. On an unimportant island, he uses his ability as a sculptor as an instrument of this expression and plans his atonement by carving the statue of a woman to be the idealization of love and beauty sans lust or shame.

Since his love is directed only towards his work, he fails to notice his model, the one element of humanness in his life, fall in love with him. When the statue is completed, she, tolerating no more, makes a useless stand for recognition. Such is this scene in which his world of self-convinced genius becomes doubted for the first time. In one brief moment, his virgin work breaks; in one brief moment, one year's denial of sexual expression and two months of intense sublimation, so needed to produce his statue, is destroyed. However, he is beyond help. The element of natural expression has left him, and all that remains is cold, comfortless stone.)

It was quiet once more, but the air was already chilled and fixed with a feeling of expectation. Why did she have to come this of all nights? The emotional winds filled the trees and settled with them, became nestled in the leaves and rocked them gently, until too burdened they broke away and fluttered down with the October winds. In the quest of eternal rest those dead, unfed leaves, masses of isolated blazing colors and blackened silhouettes, dangled lifelessly until ripped from the quality of life that once nurtured them; they fluttered down with the October winds. Impressive night crept in between the worlds of coming and going, while life stopped and stood still.

Her eyes were cooled now, once wet with the dews of emotional sentiment which gave way to substantial love. I guess I'm sort of sorry for her being a child, and yet, tonight almost for the first time she appears to be a woman. No, she isn't really. She is the same girl who danced with the whim of displaying her demure beauty, who once was so intrigued with modeling that she would have posed unashamedly for a dozen Venus's. She had the antics of a young girl, a plaything, delightfully defying de Medici and de Milo, and complaining that men should not worship the beauty of a statue thousands of years old, while her yet untold beauty was before its prime. But tonight, she looks a dozen years older. Has she come all this distance for this nonsense, fawning like a love-sick puppy—but for what? Well, why doesn't she say what she has to say and leave, instead of fishing for words with dead bait and floundering? What do you want of me, Marianne, an apology? for what? for being a wild, weak-willed woman, diluted in
love by that watery stream of heart-poured affection. It’s sickening. Dam those damned impetuous, thin waters of affection and learn how to love. 

Oh, so I have trampled over the affections of others, have I? I, cruel? I who have brought no one into my life, nor asked to become a part of another person’s living? Confusion, my lady, is your glory; I beg incapability and care less to toy, as you put it, to toy superficially with superficial love. Well put, but nothing you say will detain me? How will I convince you? As if you could not see the greatness of that statue, and how much it means as my entrance into that society I once lost. No, woman, there is too much to explain. How can you fall back on that first night we met and blame me for building a great romance around you? It was you who were foolish about being in love with me, afraid of growing out of that infantile infatuation. Do you want me to tell you that you were a damn fool, or do you persist in finding out for yourself? Swallow your own pride; I wanted nothing from this island, nothing from those on it, and least from you, beyond your borrowed beauty, and that only to feed my statue until it could be nourished without you. Damn it! Leave!

And then those words of undirected pleading gathered meaning enough to force their way into the Pygmalion’s conscious. He had denied her presence too long, two months too long, dragging out of one night a passion that withered with the morning sun; and she, she had loved one night and more the next, and silently, faithfully, forgivingly more the next. He no longer could deny her presence.

She spoke: “But it wasn’t one night; it was week after week. Why did I pose for you, only to watch you fall in love with a piece of stone, stone-blind to sensibility and senseless to that quality of warmth which separates humans from stone?”

“Marianne!”

“It’s true,” she retorted sharply. “I had to stand there and listen to you praise and worship something you called idealism, a fleshless dream of nothing, nothing to look at, nothing to praise, to love, to want.” She suddenly stopped, afraid and ashamed.

The Pygmalion pleaded magnificently how a love affair would have been a mistake between them; how they were two different people and the results of two different societies, made incompatible by different goals and qualities of human treatment. Oh anything, any lie to rid himself of her. Suddenly, he brightened. “The statue is done! Marianne, at last it’s done, as beautiful as you wish and every inch attesting the quality of your beauty. Come, take a look at it.” The poor girl could be contained no longer, but blazed, burned in a crucified blush with her rival thrust before her eyes. “No! Never! I don’t ever want to see it. That’s all you think of — the statue! the statue! If you love me instead, what would a horrible piece of grayed and blistered white marble mean? If you are so bent on loving
statues, refuse me, run to her, and see if her lips are blushed and her veins pitying. And if her eyes don’t love, find any that will. Your conceit, your mirrored vanity which you so praise, will not so much as sympathize with you.”

The Pygmalion was struck. On the very completion of his greatest masterpiece he should hear the dissonant melody of defeat, the strands of conceit slacked, snapped. To be slated, berated and belittled — it was inconceivable! Oh conceit, you are much stronger! Aren’t you? aren’t you?

He was at a loss for words, inexpressible and left pent-up in excitement of having completed his first great work. Why couldn’t everyone see that it was the greatest masterpiece in the world, that it was unique? Why isn’t everyone as excited as I am?

Marianne was horrified at what she said, repentent as she stepped forward and placed her hand on his shoulder. He did not so much as sense it. “You wanted to take me away before,” she pleaded. “I’ll leave. I’ll leave any time if you’ll only take me away. I didn’t really mean a word I said, and I’ll take it all back if you’ll forgive me. Doesn’t love mean anything to you? Take us both back, but don’t leave me, please don’t!”

The Pygmalion glared at her, with the intensity of anger, but of cold intensity as if anger were frozen tempered, tensed upon that excitement, seething and insensed. She? What sanity in this mistress of insanity. She? Good God! Is there room enough for her and my statue, this my genius and she my folly, in this microsignificant world to rival and not to be rivaled? She felt his stone-cold facial features laughing at her, and her search for some encouragement only uncovered her disappointing humiliation. The absence of his sense of humiliation, too, embittered her as her woman-kindness slid through the fingers of her open and pleading palm.

“Is that how you want it? If you take her back alone you are returning alone, futilely drawing two different breaths from one mouth.”

He hated her. He hated her with a disgusting cruelty. He hated her with all the contempt he had known of women, and with that dispite left undisguised upon his face he stared and melted all her humanness with his inhuman glare. She heard only her heart beating. “Wouldn’t you even answer me? My God! you could have been helped, but now look at you. Contempt and worthless; there’s not so much as a strand left to cling to, not one bead left for prayer. How could any human be so low? I’ll hate the day that I shall ever have to see you again!” And with tears half extinguishing the warmth of woman in her, drowning the sympathy of her soul, she fled through the doorway. The Pygmalion stood solid, but defenseless, helpless and even crushed by this sudden shock. She didn’t even want to see the statue, imagine that? She didn’t even want to see the statue. Maybe? No! no, I couldn’t have failed; it was only she, wasn’t it? That magnificent solidity began to totter so slightly while those pillared legs
of consciousness doubted, weakened and doubted for only a moment. Of course it was only she.

A sudden rush of dark struck his body. Night forced its way in, tightly surrounding him and drawing him out of the real world into some unconscious space of nothing conceivable. An inaudible thundering rang behind his tightly closed eyes, and the squeezing of life out of himself rose to a crescendo of full orchestra and to a soprano wailing of lone and lonely night. Disdainful, painful, heavy-hearted island of crowded life rising in vain out of the mist of a nothingness, but surrounded by all the values of living, by the tides of the rising and falling in this inlet of life, weary and warm, with the wild blood beating incessant patterns to the echoing of — we must live for something! Take me away to anywhere. Four black walls closing together: hate and love, dying and birth, these four-walled waters whose tongue-tides lick this lifeless sand, enclosed and empty. The clouds gathered their heavy skirts around them and slid past the night lights. There were no stars, no star-like light, no enshadowed earth, no monument of time to mark off days and hours on this sea of stagnant idleness. No check, no change, no chance to range beyond this wreck of human incompassion, ill-fashioned of man — a strange speck.

Unaimed, he walked and found himself within that room which en¬tombed that inhuman woman called perfection. The shrouded statue stood secreted in a small room facing out into the garden and was lighted only indirectly from the gas-lighted garden. The inconvenience of electricity seemed to have denoted a hollowness in this vague lighting of the island at night, a vagueness which poorly imitated day, and, like the attempts of man, refused to fully acknowledge the setting of real daylight.

Soft, orange gas lights flooded the room, bathing the statue in counterfeited light — holy, man-created woman, separated thinly from being a grotesquery of imagination, but still woman created by man. He was nervous, shaking as he mechanically slid the cover off the statue. He held the cloth in his hand and looked up into her face, dragging the vestment on the floor until be released it and it fell dropped into a heap. Bunched tightly, the folds clung firmly to each other and slid into a complex merged pattern.

Their eyes did not meet, and in that void created by distrust of each other, half choked and chilled from her response, he asked; oh, one word of assurance, one answer to grant me life, make me alive. If only you were flesh and blood, he whispered with a composed, idolatrous compassion upon his lips, until composure liquidized and drained from him. I have breathed my life into you, and you do not live yet — when? holy deceiver, my goddess. Live for me now. But still she gazed modestly at a world of her own in a darkened corner of the room. He knelt before her. Live for my love as my love lives for you, and let this living, which in love we call life, in life become that love we live for and call living. Can I not convince you
with words? with love? What is left? With what shall the heart speak? Lady, I plead with you, tell me I am right, convince me of genius lest I fear I fail. Now he stood silent before the statue. It was life-sized, raised on a base, standing relaxed. The hands were expressively close to the body, one touching her shoulder and drawing upward the folds which covered one breast, her eyes still demurely drawn away in a detached modesty. He was wrapped in her charm, in her enchantment; her completely alluring luster coiled about his masculine will. Like a bolt of ice wind his warm eyes turned cold, then blazed with a strange inward heat, unable to turn from her, unable to wish to turn away. His lusty vision stared almost fixedly as if to pierce her stone breasts to see if a heart was sheltered within, but he saw only marble; piercing deeper, he saw only marble. Wrapped in a fantasy tinged with thrill, his shuddering insides were sucked up within him tightly, then suddenly released, dashed against the outer wall, but then drawn up once more. His lips were slightly parted. His jellied heart beating sounded those fated words — desire, possession. I must have, rang through his mind; a desire to draw flesh next to his until the two become fused into one breath, wept through him. And then that same tune of lone and lonely night.

From far off came the cries and shouts of laughter from the houses burning orange with lights, telling that life, hell-bent or blessed, was burning there where other bodies were being shared. Their music drifted this way, then faded back in the stirring stillness. The Pygmalion turned away towards the window, and into the blackness he wondered: how many newly-weds are enjoying their first nights, how many teenagers are exploring each other under the blanket cover of darkness? How many men are possessed with that uncontained sickness to rape, to brutally beat and hate themselves, and to commit crime again? Out of the muddled blackness of night comes this revelation of how weak a human can be. I was that way once, being younger and more prone to this night-weakness. We used to drink our way out of this unimaginative world, get so drunk that in the dizziness of nausea forget that there is any need for this world. We solved the problem of evil and sin in one night, until — until sin-solved sin resolved itself into death, and we found one touch of us had likewise died. The cruelty of being sober was to see rapes, homos, sex-murders, whores, love for the sake of sex, prostituted marriages and beg answer to the question — is there more direction in this poorly satisfied world?

"Galatea," he shouted out loud as he swung around suddenly, stopping dead in his step and staring at the beauty of her bare breasts. There must be something more in this world, something elevated, something noble and untouched, something like my Galatea. He approached her, reaching out with an emotion that fell back unrequited. It must be worshipping God to worship her, placing faith in something before me and hearing no answer. But I must believe, and in that power which binds us, find a redemption —
myself. Why don’t your eyes wish to meet mine? Why do you turn from your creator? With a cold and stiffened composure he placed his hand on her shoulder, rubbing the back of his hand along her chin. The cold, damp marble was very smooth, but the stone was hard and dead, and no breathing on its porous surface would ever bring life into it. But it was the feel of a woman, though a feigned sensation, delicate and magnificent, and in imagination, not far from the satin-smooth female skin which gives way under assertive masculine hands, and seductively still holds its ground. His hand slipped down to where the base of her neck blended softly with the firm thin shoulder bones. The unemotional statue did not so much as quiver encouragement to the scarcely noticeable shaking of cool and warm hand which paused only long enough to say: I must. The breasts rose from the fine and solid shoulders, and fell well-formed and firm, proportioned to the figure and modest in the supple orange light, which held a burning power upon her, firing her modesty. Real life was so long ago; I had forgotten. What was a woman? Why should sex life, the first strength of life, begin here? Unsatisfied, his hand dropped, his arm hung loosely at his side. Though as creator and his creation we are inseparable, Galatea, you are no more fleshed woman than Marianne was stoned flesh. Let it be, if I am so denied the beauty of something which slipped through me . . . but that’s just it; nothing has slipped through me. You, my love, are real. You, my genius, untouched by any other person, you are my immortality. He quickly covered the statue. Suppose no one will ever look at her, or dismiss her as just another Greek imitation. But it has to be this statue; my greatness must lie in it if ever I am to return to my own world. I cannot begin again. All this idealism which has kept us young and old together, even foolish and wise together, would be lost, and we would have nothing else to live for but death. This golden-laurel dream and the leaden-casket reality are at two distinct ends resolved into the same solution — what in life is direction?

One more look at her. No. she must remain covered. Though she be realism to perfection, romanticism in her uttermost charm, surrealistic in the lifeblood that created her, and abstract in the final meaning which suggests life to myself, she, my unlived goddess, is my second master.

R. A. Winter
On Looking Into
THE EDUCATION OF HENRY ADAMS

Flickering light on sandstone's formed face,
The chimes of learning in their proper place.
Virginity's eagerness to know a way,
Heralding unity's soothing sway.
But then,
The groping branches barren of leaves,
reveal only a mind that grieves.
No Education here.
Towerling trial in the ring of the matador,
where the bottchi and meaningless bravos soar.
There demanding one thing of fate,
the why for the matador moving his cape.
And then,
Misjudging the information she gave
sending the matador to his grave.
No Education here.
Diving for pearls from the shore of the sunless sea,
Finding none, yet assuming bottom to be.
Bottom proclaimed by the Virgin at Lourdes,
reflecting power in conquering hordes.
Yet in her womb the seeds of defiance
even then giving birth to the bastard Science.
No longer Unity here.
Quickening hope in these man made mechanics,
reducing all to equations, dynamics.
Meaning in measure of motion and mass,
no longer absorbed in opaline glass.
But then,
That which had promised Order, Unity,
proved to the convert, Chaos, Complexity.
No Unity here.
No search from the shore of the sunless sea
for pearls or a bottom that have to be.
Recline and review the bleak ebb and flow
all the while professing devoutly to know.
Chaos was Nature's destined plan;
Order the dream only of man.
Education here.

David Leof
The Scene: Waiting room of a railway station. Stage right a long waiting bench sits in use by a few patrons. The door to the waiting room is stage right. The backstage right wall is lined with various ticket booths and posters. Against the upstage left wall sits a short order booth. Tables are scattered about from up to down left. There are five tables . . . filled except for the downstage left table. Mrs. Spencer a fifty-five year old lady sits there mulling over her coffee. She expresses the mood of the whole station. Used, dark brown and green tones, sombre. All parts of the station are dimly lit with the exception of the one downstage table. Mrs. Spencer sips her coffee . . . puts it down and muses. She is then interrupted by another lady . . . similar age. . . . She is Mrs. Delino. It is 1952.

Delino: Do you mind if I sit with you?
Spencer: No, not at all (she is seated).
(They sit quietly for a moment sipping their coffee.)
Delino: Are you waiting for someone or are you taking the train?
Spencer: No, I'm waiting . . . for someone.
Delino: Oh? So am I . . . for my son. He's coming in on the three ten. . . . Just getting out of the army. . . . And you?
Spencer: My son's coming too. He was in the army . . . just getting out . . . a fine boy.
Delino: I'm sure. Isn't it wonderful when they get out. I haven't seen mine in almost a year. He's been in Korea . . . all that time.
Spencer: Your boy? . . . Mine was there too. Korea. A horrible place. . . . I got so many letters from him . . . horrible place. . . . He was there two years.
Delino: My . . . two years!
Spencer: Yes, it's been a long time. And I've been so lonely. He's my only boy, and with my husband gone . . . why it's been lonely. Livin' alone in our house. It seems like such a big house when you're alone. The radiators hissing and the walls creaking. And havin' to cook all for yourself in that house. I've been waiting a long time for him to come home.
Delino: Well, I've got a little daughter. She's off and married though, but I do baby sit. I did miss my son though . . . and his letters were so wonderful . . . about all those strange people over there and all the horrible things.
Spencer: Yes, horrible. My son could write letters! When I was lonely I would get a letter and it was almost like him bein' there with me. It's never been quite the same without my husband though. He was quite a man. He was a man of success you know.
Delino: Oh?
Spencer: Yes, he was a man of success. He was going to own his own company someday, and then, he was taken. And my son took over keeping us alive.

Delino: Sounds like a fine boy. What's his name?
Spencer: Stephen ... Stephen Spencer, Stephen Spencer the second, his father was Stephen ... and his grandfather.

Delino: My boy's name is Paul ... Paul Delino. ... Oh, I'm Mary Delino.
Spencer: Ethel Spencer. (They nod to each other.) Paul is a very nice name.

Delino: It'll be grand seein' him again. ... We'll have a real party for him. He's going to have a party.
Spencer: Oh, I don't know if we'll have a party ... I should though. My boy's a hero ... you know that, a real hero.

Delino: Oh really? Was he in the infantry?
Spencer: Yes ... yes ... the infantry. He was an infantry hero.

Delino: What did he do over there?
Spencer: Oh you won't believe it 'cause it's quite a thing. He got medals for it ... and the purple heart. He was injured.

Delino: Oh, thank God my boy wasn't injured. What happened to your boy?
Spencer: Well ... ah ... he was injured ... ah ... in the leg ... and the chest. He was sent out at night to find out where the enemy was, and there was only a few men with him and ... and it was dark ... and they was trying to find the enemy. Well, my boy found 'em. All of a sudden there was an explosion and Stephen was injured ... in the arm and the chest ... and all of his men ran for cover ... and he was there alone. So he took his gun and he fired at the enemy the best he could ... and he killed ... quite a few. I don't remember exactly ... but he scared 'em off ... and he was there ... bleedin' too.

Delino: Oh my ...

Spencer: Well, he crawled for a way and finally his men came back and got him and the Captain said that he saved his company from a surprise attack, and he got all kinds of medals.

Delino: My, it must be wonderful to have a boy like that. It's a shame you can't have some sort of a party for him.

Spencer: We may do something. He's quite a boy ... a good boy ... always was.

Delino: I can say that for my son too. He was goin' to try to go to college when he was called to the war. ... Now he can come back and go to school all paid for. It's a wonderful thing, now, being able to go to college. It'll be so nice to see him again. And we'll talk about old times. But I don't think we'll talk about the war.
Spencer: No . . . a true hero never does. Never talks. Why, Stephen never even mentioned any of this to me. Not in any letter. I got a letter from the government and they says about Stephen . . . that he’d been awarded some medals. And I wrote to Stephen and I asked him all about it. It was only then that he finally told me all about it.

Delino: That’s wonderful. And you got a letter from the government.

Spencer: Yes . . . When I saw it, I was scared something awful. Why I thought he’d been killed or something . . . and I was so afraid to open the letter . . . I was . . . So I called over my neighbor Clara Bilkins and told her, I says, “read it to me.” Well, she did . . . and when I heard all about how brave Stephen was, I just wept . . . wept for joy.

Delino: That’s wonderful . . . Why it is . . . I know I cried when Paul said he was coming home. How you must have cried . . . having a hero.

Spencer: Yes . . . and Mrs. Bilkins said, she says, “Stephen was always a good boy,” and I said he was and we talked about how he was . . . about all he did . . . when he was younger and how he helped, and when his father was gone. And then, he left . . . I was thinkin’ of movin’ you know. To a smaller place. But movin’ costs money. Why you know, I’d be upstairs in my room and I’d sit in my room, with a picture of Stephen right beside me and I’d read his letters over and over. Read ’em out loud, louder than the radiator. Those letters.

Delino: It’s wonderful to have a good son. I guess we’re both very lucky. I know my boy wanted so much to go to college and do a lot of studying . . . and he would sell papers when he was younger and he would work in a grocery after that, and come home and read a lot. And on top of that, he even used to play football . . . always busy. It broke his heart, goin’ to war. He was goin’ to go to college and play football and be a real scholar, as soon as he’d earned enough money, but he told me, he says, “I’m comin’ back and do it yet, and Uncle Sam will help me.” It’s wonderful he’s comin’ back . . . wonderful.

Spencer: It is. It is. My boy never thought about college too much. He says he wanted to go into business and be a big success, and do what his father wanted to do. He was smart in school though . . . right near the top of his class. And he liked those sports too. He played a lot of them when he wasn’t workin. He always used to come back after the big game and tell me all about them. But he told me, he says, “I’d rather be a big success than a big football player.” Now isn’t that a fine boy for you. Well, he started workin’ nearly full time and I’d say, if the war hadn’t come along, he’d be nearly runnin’ a business by now. . . . He would.

Delino: Why, what was he in?

Spencer: Oh . . . he was . . . in electricity. He was in the electric business and he was a smart boy. He was in with them TV’s and he was doin’ a fine business and movin’ up. . . . But the war came. He won’t have much trouble
gettin’ that job now though. . . . He’ll probably even go for something bigger now that he’s a hero . . . like sellin’ cars . . . you know . . .

Delino: It sounds like a fine chance for him. . . . It sure does.
Spencer: Yes, he’ll be a real success. . . . Good lookin’ boy. That helps, you know. It helps you get along. He’ll find himself a good wife and you watch. . . . Why no one ever thought he’d be a hero. He never liked to fight, you know. So when he went off to war I thought for sure he’d be just another soldier fightin’ for his country. . . . But look what happened.

Delino: Isn’t it wonderful. I’m so happy about my boy’s returning. He told me in his last letter that he had everything planned out. He was goin’ to college . . . and get married, and get himself a good position. So I guess war is terrible . . . but it ain’t so terrible.
Spencer: That’s it, it ain’t so terrible.
Delino: Why it makes some people heroes and gets them jobs.
Spencer: Yes . . . that’s what it does. . . . It makes some people heroes.
Delino: It’s a shame you can’t have a party for your boy.
Spencer: Well, we’ll try and celebrate in some way. . . . I guess we should.
Delino: Tell you what. Why don’t you bring your boy over to our house tonight . . . why we’ll have sort of a joint party . . . I think that would be wonderful.
Spencer: Why, no, I don’t think so.
Delino: Why, goodness . . . two boys . . . back from the war . . . it’d be just the thing to have a nice party for them.
Spencer: No, really, I . . .
Delino: And maybe your boy and my boy could get to know each other. I think that would be wonderful.
Spencer: I’m afraid not Mrs. Delino . . . but . . . I think we’d sort of like to be alone.
Delino: I can understand that. . . . But it sure would be an honor to have a hero to our house. . . . And I’m sure the boys would get along. . . .
Spencer: Thank you. I’m sure they would, but I think Stephen and I would like to be alone on his first night in.
Delino: I guess you’re right. But look, here’s my address and phone number and I want you to call me some time . . . and our boys will get together (she writes it out). That’s Lampanack Street . . . lampanack . . . here . . . (gives her slip of paper). . . . Now we’ll have to get together.
Spencer: Yes . . . we’ll do that.
(Station master’s voice booms over loud speaker.)
Delino: Well that’s his train. . . . I guess I’d better run up and meet him. Isn’t your boy on this?
Spencer: Oh . . . no . . . the Next one. . . . The Next train in. . . .
Delino: Well I would have liked to have seen him. Now don't forget to call. You got my number? I'm off to meet my boy. It was nice meetin' you. Say hello to that fine boy of yours. . . . Your wonderful boy . . . wonderful.
(She exits to platform.)
Spencer: (Sits mulling over coffee awhile.)
(She is disturbed by another lady who comes to table. Mrs. Elfred.)
Elfred: Taken?
Spencer: No . . . go right ahead.
Elfred: Thank you. Waiting for someone?
Spencer: Yes . . . I am . . . you?
Elfred: Yes . . . I'm waiting for my daughter. . . . She's just coming in from the coast. She's been out there on a business trip. . . . A real business woman . . . and she's only twenty-three.
Spencer: The coast? She sounds like a fine girl.
Elfred: You waiting for someone?
Spencer: Oh . . . my daughter's comin' in too.
Elfred: Really?
Spencer: Quite remarkable girl. . . . She's been traveling around out west, visiting all those big states on a special tour for this company she works for . . . a beautiful girl. . . . Well she is . . . and she's mine. . . . Won all sorts of contests and she is beautiful . . . and smart . . . and she's taking this trip. . . .
(SLOW CURTAIN AS MRS. SPENCER RAMBLES ON)
. . . all over to promote business for the company. Her boss came to our house especially to tell me how proud he was of her and how in a few years she'd be . . .

Lee H. Kalcheim

Pearl's Toys

The poet plays upon a shore,
Sends leaves around the world,
Ships cargoed with imagination;
May pick the whitest foam
From the running tide
And give it to the breeze.
But the sea absorbs his ships
And the wind plays a woman
With his summer snowflakes.

M. Rewa
I see the severed candles, now,  
of autumn deaths.
No torches by the cinder groves,  
but pale leaves
When whisper-trees appear to say:
"To fear the germ of day
But in the night to climb away,
Untrodden paths to seek; and then
With dirt-filled hands create a tone,
Grasp a star alone with song
—or first the nearer moon.
Run, run the lonely hills.
With airy wings of night-harp trills,
Touch and build a smoky sound—
For one perfected triumph found.
"Beauty draughts defy Eternal strains
And leave the fools to perish in
Their billowed blood and plant,
Drunk with art or wine-life cry;
A doom to ponder rusted fields of hay,
See empty hills of velvet green
In moments of a melancholy, tomorrow to today;
Or even thrill in tragedy, and listen in
The night for hard rains brushing,
crushing leaves.
Youth dumb from twangs of wisdom
Shall hear nostalgia gentle of the
Saddened waves; revisitation to the woods
by Grecian seas."

Lou Renza
Night Symphony

Night water in trickling sounds and darkness, in half-spent images, bent images engaged in meaning in themselves.

Overhead, the moon in hazed whiteness dispelled light, the soft light, intense-sensed soft light, scintillating moonlit light which in numbered strands slid swiftly earthbound round branches, boughs, brambles down, downward, down in bless'd rest.

They were symbol-sensed sounds, hushed rebounds of insect echoes, echoing to rippling trickling chimes of water touching cling rock.

White fingers and silver broaches was the bubbling brook, diamond clasped, pale-ridden ghost-like incandescent spectres in their sensitive breathings and lyric love makings — love lipped in concessive confession blended into a splendid symphony of sound, of night sound: in cadence chided with cricket chirping in constant chanting while the sleepless ceaselessly singing cicadas sang the world to sleep, their voices sounded, swiftly circling skyward, upward, round and rounded, settling down, bounded to the ground, founded, till there came no break from the sighing, swaying whispering willows dreams of gem-streamed leaves and leaf-crowned streams, settled and sensed of something supreme.

*Robert A. Winter*
Paul kept looking at the clock on the light yellow wall wishing the hands would move faster. He impatiently watched the small, black hand stop at every minute and the thin, red second hand move slowly around its perfect circle. He tapped his feet restlessly under his desk for he had a great urge to run out into the light June air. The last day of school. Besides Christmas and his birthday this was undoubtedly the best time of the year. No books or teachers, two whole months of freedom. "Come on clock," he said to himself, "only two more hours." He tried concentrating on the teacher and wouldn't look at the clock for the longest time, but that never seemed to do much good.

What seemed like an eternity finally passed, and by three o'clock he had said goodbye to his teacher, cleaned out his locker, and was walking and running home, his feet hardly touching the pavement. He was glad Sam hadn't come to pick him up as usual. He always felt self-conscious when the tall negro stood waiting at the curb. Paul wished his mother wasn't so fussy over him. She was hesitant about his walking home, but since she had one of her repeated headaches she wasn't in a mood to argue. She'd walk around the house all day with her hand on her forehead and let out short agonizing sighs as if she was about to die. For Paul, summer was the best season since there was always more to do, especially this year when father had promised he could take the sailboat out whenever he wanted. Of course, he'd have a friend along but still it would be different without father constantly telling him what to do. His mother had protested for a long time, but Paul's continual nagging, and the coming heat had finally weakened her.

"Maine will sure be fun this year," he said to himself as he trudged up the long driveway, neatly edged with rich grass and large azalea bushes. Paul opened the large front door and entered the spacious, elegant hall. "I'm home mom, I'm home." Elizabeth, the family maid, bustled into the hall, her ample frame shaking with every step and small beads of perspiration gathering on her brow.

"Now don't go waking your ma. She's tired by the heat and's restin' for the Adams' tea later on . . . you mind me." Elizabeth always said "you mind me." Paul never knew why. "Go on out and play, I'se got a lot of work to do and can't be bothered."

"No more school Liz! How about that. Pretty good."

Elizabeth had waddled back to the kitchen and a look of dejection spread over Paul's face. No one seemed to enjoy his excitement of getting out of school, and a sudden loneliness crept over him. As he quietly mounted the large stairs and threw himself down on the bed, he felt like a small boy again. But the excitement that school was over was still with him, and he quickly changed his clothes and went outside, running down the large back
lawn and into the woods to play in the stream. "If dad isn't late again from the office, we can plan the trip to Maine," he thought as he wandered back with the sun slowly setting behind him.

"When are we going to Maine, dad," Paul asked after grace had been said.

"Well, Paul, as soon as this mess clears up at the office. I suppose we could leave in a couple of weeks, of course it all depends on your mother," spoke Mr. Allen as he drained the soup through his reddish-brown, wire mustache. His thin face was accented by his high cheek bones and a sharp chin that jutted out at an angle. His light red hair was gradually receding from his forehead. If age was telling on his face, it was failing in his spirit for he still had a vigorous mind and body.

"The sooner the better," Mrs. Allen said as she sipped her iced tea. The cool night had revived her somewhat languid spirits. If Mr. Allen was the pole of vigour, his wife was at the opposite extreme for she couldn't keep up with him, both physically and mentally. Although she had taken advantage of a good married life by eating well, she was not by any means rotund or portly, just medium rounded. Much against her husband's advice she continually had a cigarette in one hand, and when the hot weather came the other hand held a drink of some kind. "I suppose you'll want to sail with a friend this year. I still think it's dangerous, why what if a sudden breeze came up or the boom hit you on the head and you fell overboard?"

When she and Mr. Allen were first married, she would go sailing quite often, but a few years and stiff winds quieted her sporting instinct.

"I can handle the boat all right mom," Paul said enthusiastically. "I did pretty well last year and dad didn't do anything. Besides he didn't when he was my age. Anyhow I wouldn't go out with just anyone, Ben Harris will be with me."

At the name of Ben Harris, Mrs. Allen stopped eating and glared across the table at her husband who had bowed his head, knowing full well a volcano was about to erupt.

"John," Mrs. Allen spoke sharply, darting her words at her husband, "This episode of Paul and Ben Harris has got to stop for the last time. For years I have had to put up with this gross relationship and it's all I can stand. He's a filthy man—crude, dirty . . . well you know how I feel."

"Aw mom," whinned Paul, feeling hurt and sorry for himself and Ben. "He's not dirty and I want to sail with him, I don't care what you say!"

If the name of Ben Harris was bad, Paul's sudden insolence was even worse, and Mrs. Allen, easily excitable at the slightest provocation, made him leave the table and go to his room. Paul felt degraded and humiliated as he raced to his room and slammed the door. There was a long uneasy silence before Mr. Allen spoke.
“Martha,” Mr. Allen’s voice was hesitant and soft, “I know how you feel, but I think you ought to look at Paul’s position. He’s too young for the older group of children, and there are none his age.”

“What about the Jeffreys’ boy,” Mrs. Allen spoke sharply, afraid of being defeated.

“The Jeffreys’ boy happens to be five years younger than Paul. Now Paul and Ben Harris have been going together ever since we’ve gone to the island. Perhaps he shouldn’t go around with him, but since I’m back and forth at the office who is he going to pal around with.”

“John, I have nothing to say except that he is not going to associate with that man again.” Mrs. Allen spoke her last words, and the argument was over, for she knew that if it was prolonged any longer her husband would win.

“Well, we’ll have to work something out. I’ll go up and speak to Paul.” Mr. Allen rose from the table and mounted the carpeted stairs and entered Paul’s room. “Well, Paul, how’s my sailor?” spoke Mr. Allen in a fatherly tone but with undercurrents of the business executive. Paul tried to wipe away his tears so his father wouldn’t know he had been crying. Here was the beginning of summer, and it had started in utter ruin. He was old enough to take care of himself. Why did his mother always prevent him from being on his own? Paul sat on the edge of the bed and stared at the box of toys he hadn’t used for years and wondered if everyone suffered such bitter disappointments in growing up.

“Do you think you can sail the boat this year?” Mr. Allen said encouragingly. “Why, I’ll be up for the week-ends and we can take it out together. We’ll sail out to Mark Island, that’s a good trip.”

Paul spoke through a lumpy throat, “Why can’t Ben and I go out? All I’d do would be to sit around all week until you came. Gee dad, he’s not such a bad person.”

“Well, I know, Paul, but your mother thinks it’s best not to go with him. I’ll talk with her in a few days, and maybe something can be arranged. You come down to dinner.”

Days dragged and when they were about to go, Mrs. Allen still held firm. The excitement of getting ready had lessened the pain of disappointment, but Paul still felt deeply hurt as he would wander through the large, cold rooms with the furniture covered with sheets and newspapers. He couldn’t sleep the night before they left, and he was the first one down and raced into the kitchen to see if Elizabeth was excited as he about going.

“Now don’t go gettin’ in my way,” spoke Elizabeth in a light serious tone. “I’se got a lot of work to do and you father wants to leave by six . . . you mind me.” She shuffled back and forth in her worn slippers. But Paul knew she was excited for her wiry hair was neatly combed as it gave off a silver luster in the light.
The trip was the same as usual with Paul asking the same questions. Everyone was in a jovial mood, and when they had reached the island that evening and the car had been unloaded and Paul had gone to bed he knew he would be able to see Ben. "I'll go down there to see him before mother wakes up, and we can think of some plan," he thought as he slipped in between the cold sheets.

Morning broke through the window with a warm sun, and Paul gazed at the familiar scene; the yellow barn stood on the hill overlooking the cove, and far out in the bay were the same group of islands that looked like sponges with the pine trees covering them. The sky was a brilliant blue with the sun dancing off the water. It was a beautiful day with a northwest wind gently blowing across the bay. A good day for sailing. Paul quickly dressed and raced down to see Ben. It was only six o'clock, and mother and father wouldn't be up for at least two hours. That was plenty of time. He cut through the fields with the farmers scything, ran behind the weathered post office and down the steep hill to Lowell's cove. There was Ben's house on the other side with the white clapboards, green shutters, and gray shingled roof. Paul thought Ben would be on the water bailing out his punt, but he wasn't there and so he climbed up the short steep hill and knocked on the door. "Ben... Ben, where are you? It's me, Paul." But there was no answer so he knocked again, this time a little harder. Presently a gaunt woman with a faded colored dress appeared at the door. Paul didn't know her. "Is Ben Harris in?"

"Why, didn't you know?" the woman said rather surprised. "Ben done get sick this winter and died in February. Most folks known about it except some of the summer people. He's buried in the graveyard opposite the school."

A sudden chill followed by a strange, nauseous feeling in his stomach swept over Paul, and it was all he could do to say, "thank you." He turned and walked slowly down the steps toward the cove. "Ben was dead." "Ben was dead." He couldn't believe that he was gone, and he'd never see him again. It was so unreal. Not to see Ben. It couldn't be true. All the stories, fishing trips for mackerel, the hauling of traps, all this was gone... Ben was dead. Paul felt a great heaviness sweep over him and his legs were weak as he began to sweat. He felt confused and lonely. He could hardly see where he was going as his eyes blurred with quiet tears. "I guess I'll have to go sailing by myself after all," he said to himself as he shuffled the dirt with his feet. A small breeze stirred in the trees as he slowly walked up the hill, and suddenly he had a strange feeling that he never had before. "I could do it, Ben always said I could," he murmured. He felt greatly relieved and excited and began to run home for he was hungry, and Elizabeth said there would be hot cakes for breakfast.

Charles Arndt
Rhythm

Yellow ribbons slipping gently in a lapping breeze,
cooling green-scented shadows
and pine needles brown on tarnished grasses
and smelling roses fading, flowers in gray worn jackets,
not green;
no more stain glow
and blue mist white-laced
but gold not pure, no more bright,
and orange burnt in ashen beds.

from the North, the chill pertinacious wind
winding columned oaks with empty howls . . .
no summer sounds there
but hollow tones
and silence, heavy, weighing deep,
pressing dead lips, crimson no, yellow decay.
What was, all gone—to dried wrinkled leaves,
brown parchment hands, leather veined, chapped and cracked.

Thirsty, Crumbling, Falling, Floating in wet sighs
and choking the earth, soggy, by rain a paste.

now gray the cloak and cold, stinging tongue, sharp,
biting through to numb fingers, red, blue blood hot.
crisp smell of coming cold licking brown petals
not willing to sit and soak into mud—too late.

... dull, gray, blank. sloppy, and rain . . . dull wet, no end, coming wet . . . cold, rude on faces, tears, no salt—everflowing showers
cascading down no falls but falls down,
down . . . down to bottom and sink deep.

the rush of end, final close . . .
leaves lie here, no flight, no shade, still...
and the white petals picked in multitudes falling gently,
gently down on brown to bed; virgin kisses touching clean.
a blanket, new wool, soft, covering, hiding.
petticoats full and lumpy. stillness. a veil, a vale,
wet and soft. fresh smile, sharp cold.
silver sun somewhere, gray orb, glowing haze.

the defiling of purity; slush and tarnished snow dropping,
slipping, sliding on gray ice, hard, hot.
water turgid, flowing, melting,
rushing to meet the sun, Gold and Clear.
green grasses from earth womb popping through heavy quilts,
piles of natural lace. popping, pop . . . green through . . . pop . . .
vernal green gowns dancing . . . pop, pop . . . popping.
hush, some sleep. Wake!
buzzing new earth, rich black heavy blood.
frragrant mists stroking hairless heads.
heavy winds carrying seed, impregnating, and a midwife too;
and rains soaking down to new roots, nursing, sucking, growing.
... green, red, orange, yellow ... pop ... symphony of restless moods.
shining, dancing, wild in fury, soaring, diamonds glistening ...
a piercing melody of vibrant hues, hurrying, hurrying,
reckless bounding. lunatic arrays spread on fields of daises,
staring, one-eyed, speechless, bending.
and overhead a golden ball blazing, blinding, drying, choking.
a more somber crop, a sturdier song, better built to last.
peach fuzz floating, hot sickly-sweet odiferious trees
and subtle flowers holding high knowing heads, delicate
and strong.
bees, honey drones, catacombs, buzzy buzzing, dew and nectar
sweet and heavy, dripping.
... roses full and petals falling down, down ... down ...

Paul Briger

Brevities

CONSIDERING FOLLY
Were I as old as stone
I'd be as wise as one.

DANDELION
The sun, in June;
In July, the moon.

RECONCILIATION
When all our odds were even
We saw the stars in heaven.

INCIDENT
I put the starfish back into the sea
As I'd replace a star in its galaxy.

VIGIL
All night I heard the blizzard drift. A morn
I saw the snow-made roses on the thorn.
PLATFORM
A *status quo*
For the rainbow.

ON OBSERVING A SNAKE, DEAD
BESIDE A TWISTING STREAM
I watched the water gliding past the snake
In currents smooth as those he used to make.

A PUDDLE LOOKED INTO
The puddle looked as deep as the sky is high
Until the gull waded where he could not fly.

*John Fandel*

What is summer that it
opens up men’s hearts
and women’s
to be convinced
and wooed
so easily?
What is in the heat
and the stillness of
a summer night
that makes us forget
tomorrow
so willingly?
Passion
Heavy
Tan
Let the muted trumpets cry
While we lie and lie, and lie
Tan
Heavy
Passion
What is December that it
Makes such a fool of July
and yet sometimes
saves us for truth
and love
so poignantly?

*Lee Kalcheim*
PRISONERS

I.

God Rest Ye Merry, Prostitute

The young girl awoke to hear a scratchy recording of Joy to the World somewhere behind the partly opened door of her cubicle. She lifted her blond head from the mascara-smeared pillow and looked around. The pillow next to her was crumpled, and the sheets and thin patched blankets ruffled back.

The girl looked through the bars of the footboard to the small dresser. It was covered with a yellow towel and lined with cosmetics. A lipstick-stained man’s handkerchief was draped over a box of Kleenex. Above, the dirty mirror was cracked and a nativity scene Christmas card was pinched into one corner.

A wash basin stood next to the dresser. Upon its ridge was a brown water glass and a white enamel pitcher. Beneath the basin rested a large porcelain bowl and a bottle of vinegar.

The bed itself stood against one of the yellow-papered side walls. Hanging over the back of a chair next to bed were pink undergarments, a pair of stockings, and a green cotton robe. On the seat of the chair was a small package wrapped in red ribbon. The card on top said, “To Tina: Merry Christmas from all the girls”.

II.

The Sentinel

A cold steady rain pounded through the bare birch tree branches, turning the barren soil below to mud. Soggy gray leaves pasted themselves to the sunken plot of earth that housed the grave. And silhouetted against the darkening sky, a single tombstone stood . . . dirty white, chipped and worn, well mapped with glossy silver trail of snails. Within an etched-out “D” upon the stone, a moth of slender body hid, protected from the pouring rain.

John E. Parnum
Dear Miss:

You ask perfection. Resigned to less you will not be. You narrow steady eyes to mark a tiny fault in handsomeness, and will have naught to do with compromise. You tell me, then, one faint freckle marred the rose-complexioned Helen, and do find (no doubt), the Golden Apples specked and scarred? How can a scarecrow saint, you ask, be kind? You doubt that one as plain as Socrates was worth in wisdom what he lacked in grace? —It is too sharp an eye, dear, that never sees some truth to recommend a homely face; such cunning eyes, however bright their hue, disfigure two of us. The hell with you.

Ray Loven

Dear Sirs:

Psychologically, yes, they're only elves who have no bio-social selves. Those first few years of life, as you say, relate the later personality. Yes, our personas show society what our shadows never may cathexes embarassing the head are often better solved in bed, and he who thought life buried precursed the Viennese surmise of what fair Basel labelled compromise; Still, like Victoria's inspector, I'm worried, when human faces seem to stare through veils too thick to tear.

Ray Loven
I died two days ago! Please don’t let this alarm you, however, for that would be my last desire; but rather I beg your forgiveness for my lack of self control in relation to my sense of humor, for it has obviously failed to cooperate with the succumbing of this tired, wrinkled body. The reason for my “waking” once again, if you will pardon the inappropriate expression, is my burning desire to relate to you not the great mysteries beyond the gigantic, earthly play of which I used to be an insignificant contributor — heaven forbid, nor is there any compelling urge on my part to apologize for my lack of purpose and ambition on its warped, rickety stage, but it is to expose the amusing proceedings being conducted for my benefit, as well as society’s, as an example of pleasant decorum on humanity’s part.

Last week, before the common, unexpected event took place, I had no idea of just how pleasant human nature could be; in fact, life was serious sobriety lacking the slightest bubble of that somewhat obscure intoxicant labeled “Happiness”. Be that as it may, through the medium of this pleasant nap in which I find myself indulging, I confess that I have sensed with utmost delight all happenings from the bald doctor’s well-practiced frown to this heart-warming and laugh provoking wake of which I think, naively perhaps, of myself as the honored guest. Realizing that I must not get carried away-again, excuse me for careless terms — with my description and acknowledging my limitation of time, I commence.

Having undergone a truly sorrowful scene of my wife’s anguish provoked by the forementioned professional nod and having listened to a number of hurried telephone calls, I was forced to face a tribal onslaught of those unscrupulous, grave-looking gents commonly referred to as morticians; but whom I had always called undertakers. Although my term is colloquial and less prudish, it is perhaps more correct, because those fellows undertook just about everything that lies within the realm of imagination, and, at times, scraped beyond. The final result of a number of, may I say, very embarrassing sequences of fuss, arrangement and rearrangement was a sweeter smelling, pleasanter smiling, and, beyond doubt, a much more presentable me. In fact, I looked downright sharp, but then self-appreciation always seemed to dominate my rationale! As long as it is permitted, this elevated, velvet-lined kyack with its silk padding will nourish an eternal chuckle within my soul. Many of the flowers by which I find myself encompassed were not chosen with me in mind, for as my best friends know, I am allergic to them. Forgiving my former comrades for their hustle and bustle in selection, I must now warn you we are at my wake. Quiet! Bear with me then, for my audience is about to commence its performance.

A tall, distinguished, darkly-clad apprentice to the happy trade walked methodically to the door, opened it with admirable precision, and tossed a mechanical smile to the bewildered guest who slowly brushed past my
acquaintance of two days with the look of a hurt puppy. Slipping off his coat, I feared — ah yes, black was the prescribed color for such occasions and no one would dare tread the sphere of unconformity on such a solemn, sober, and dark gathering as this. We all must act our parts well! Failure to comply with etiquette’s request would obviously provoke frowns toward such an abominable display of bad taste and deliberate out-of-place show of individualism.

While his back was turned to me, I was witness to his going through the motions of hair slicking, tie adjustment, and a number of nervous, conventional actions which are customary for an actor to accomplish before his cue, and which I shall fail to describe on the basis of my assumption that you are already familiar with them, and for the sake of ridding ourselves of that wretch, Boredom. The stranger, I term him such, for I fail to recognize the man, turned and started toward me with a look of sincere repentence caused by something which was obviously gnawing away at his conscience. That walk, that slight slump of the shoulders, that downcast look, that emphasized swing of the right arm — well, Charlie Neglect, you old rascal, where the hell have you been since college? I thought you promised something about coming around to see this buddy every once in a while — you dog! Chas, don’t look like that; I forgive you. I can see what you’re thinking, but forget it. Chas, this is your old buddy, “One-Can”! Come through to me, boy; just don’t stand there like a six year old who’s broken some neighbor’s window. The red of Charlie’s eyes resembled criss-cross streaks of a road map which were encased by films of liquid glass. Some droplets had escaped their encasements and filtered through Charlie’s tie. That was all — Neglect turned and penetrated the flock of chairs to seek refuge in meditation, or was he. God, it was good to see him again!

Following my buddy, a number of the cast arrived in singles, in couples, in herds. They donated the customary weepish looks, sighs, and each had his try at that ever-popular phrase, “I knew him well, everyone loved him.” They then contributed their share to that growing clamor emanating from the numerous rows of uncomfortable chairs. I wanted to thank them, to show my appreciation, my admiration for their performance but . . .

“Horace, we can’t stay long because I still have some baking to do this evening. After we have paid our respects and sat down for a moment or two, we’ll leave,” whispered a woman, whom I knew unquestionably to be Mrs. Gabble, to her submissive object of affection. Yes, yes it was she, bless that woman’s soul! What would the stage be without some element of spicy farce? Mrs. Gabble charged my outpost dragging Horace with her. She searched for some written message in my countenance, and then as if her mind — if she might be thought of as possessing such a gift — had discovered the answer to all Creation, she let escape a brief wink and a warm smile. She then hustled Horace to what she must have thought to be
her supporting cast and mingled with an exciting air of professionalism. The buxom, domineering but sweet catalytic agent incited the others to increase the overall volume of the stock-market to fisherman's conversation in competition with her. In the future, when I reflect on this scene, I'll ask myself, what would this play have been without Gabble's babble?

To the already varied aggregation of actors came humanity's blessing to the business field of money harvesting. Prosperous Mud M. Mundane, undoubtedly having received his cue from the local newspapers, decided to cheer us all, himself not excluded, with his precious, much-in-demand presence. Friend Mud, usually stingly with bitter cynicism, felt pleasure in charitably brilliant arrogance. He chose to honor his valuable character through an exterior advertisement. Here is a man, I am proud to confess, who knows the meaning of a sacrifice to charity, consequently has often donated, publicly, for all mankind to witness, and of course, stand in awe of, bewildering surds of that tax-reductible evil. Apparently, his whole life was motivated by the belief that virtue is rewarded.

His calculating eyes scanned the proceedings, room, and me with careful appraisal; then he and his interests blessed the buzzing stage and its characters with sincere aggressiveness.

The cast's manager, The Reverend Ethereal Honor, floated across the room warmly grasping hands with some while casting assuring smiles to others. How often have I breathed in his sermonic, nebulous clouds of wisdom before they floated from the congregation to the rafters of illusiveness.

The Reverend then plunged amidst the roaring sea of conversation submerging at times, nearly drowning at others, depending upon the size of the splashing waves in which he bathed.

My mind then concentrated on the one being whom I truly loved, do love, and, if permitted, will love. Weary, worn, smiling with tear in eye, she was forced to be the directress to all this madness. She spoke to each of the players and thanked them for coming, for, as she told them, she knew I would have appreciated it.

Oh Karen, I am enjoying it, can't you see?

The play reached the climax and conclusion, the players filtered out, the ushers picked up house, the lights were turned off, and, finally I was left alone to contemplate all I had heard and seen. Yes, "Vanity's Humanity" was successful.

George Backman
Domestic Chore

Flame-imaged mirror-walled salon
Eternity's great room,
Cluttered with unnumbered silences of pain,

Dishevelled space reechoed in the stars,
Swept out by domestic love,
A burning match,
Burning in the fertile dampness
Of two lonely minds.

Struck, the flame puffed out;
Tables dusted; fogged, the mirrors polished
By its butler's breath.

Chilled days of grey,
Greyer than a papal death-mask,
Greyer than thought, than uselessness, than apathy;

Bleak sunless days,
With light and movement hung
On spider-leg thin threads;

Days of dying,
Mournful days, banded in black.
In reverence of things dead,
Born in surging glory
Only seconds in time past,
The trees raise a catafalque sky.

Slow coffin-bearers tread the earth:
Leaves chorus tragically
As Fall gives up its soul,
Broken falling from its mother's limbs
And given to the grey, grieving ground
From whence she came.

K. Michaels
THE TALMUD AND SOVIET POLICY

I.

The period of Diaspora, or dispersion of the Jewish People, began in the year 70 A.D. when the Romans conquered Palestine and destroyed Jerusalem.1 There was a general outpouring of the Jew from his decaying civilization in Palestine and Mesopotamia to the fresh and more vigorous lands of the West. By the year 1004 fairly large Jewish colonies were on the Italian coast; it was not too long before these spread to France, Spain, Germany, and England. In these countries the plight of the Jew was not always a happy one, and frequently he was the victim of numerous medieval persecutions. Driven out of country after country in the West, he turned toward the East; the pendulum made its return sweep, carrying the Jew from Europe into Russia.

His life here was not always more secure. The Czar followed the political maxim of “divide and rule”2 and implemented this doctrine with painful results. The Czarist regime fomented strife between Turks and Armenians, Poles and Ukrainians. It incited one against the other and all against the Jews. It charged the Jews with “ritual” murder, the use of Christian blood in Jewish religious ceremonies; it made the masses believe that the Jews were the authors of their hardships and miseries. Jews were made scapegoats in times of famine, pestilence, and military defeat. The populace, inflamed to a frightening pitch, was led into their quarters to slay, pillage and burn;3 however, these actions were by no means prevalent in the whole of Russia and could not be considered organized and coordinated.

The year 1881, however, marked the beginning of a systematic war against the Jews.4 Judaeophobia assumed a most malignant character in highest government circles. A manifestation of this frame of mind may be found in the words of the Czar which he penned in the margin of a report submitted to him in 1890 by a high official. This report described the suffering of the Jews and pleaded for the cessation of oppression. The Czar’s note in the margin read:

“But we must not forget that it was the Jews who crucified our Lord and spilled his priceless blood.”5

This Judaeophobia was further evidenced in the actions and words of Pobyedonostsev, Procurator of the Holy Synod. He advocated, and did his best to implement, a policy that would:

“Convert a third of the Jews to Christianity, destroy another third by starvation, and drive the last third into emigration.”6

Such hate was quickly incorporated into an effective policy designed to “put the Jews in their proper Russian position”. They were not allowed to own or lease land, to be officers in the army, or to enter branches of
government services. On a very limited quota basis their children were admitted to the schools; Jewish girl students sometimes resorted to the "yellow passport" of the prostitute in order to reside in the university towns.

In 1892 the "Municipal Regulation" publicly proclaimed Jewish disfranchisement. The new law deprived the Jews of their right of passive and active election to the municipal Dumas. Even where the Jews formed sixty and seventy percent of the urban population, they had no effective representation, however little this might have helped.

In 1893 the law "Concerning Names" was passed. It threatened with criminal prosecution those Jews who in their private lives called themselves by names differing in form from those in the official registers. The practice of many Jews to Russianize their names could now put them in jail.

The "New Passport Regulation" was passed in 1894. Jewish passports were made more conspicuous by marking on them the denomination of their owner in red ink. With the death of Alexander III these many hostile acts were culminated with mass expulsions of the Jews. The reign of terror had begun with pogroms and these were followed with expulsions. It appeared that force had effectively crushed or silenced the Jewish will. Simon Frueg, a Jewish poet writing at this time, sang:

Round about all is silent and cheerless,
Like a lonesome and desert-like plain.
If but one were courageous and fearless
and would cry aloud in his pain!
Neither storm, wind nor starshine by night,
and the days neither cloudy nor bright;
O my people, how sad is thy state,
How gray and cheerless thy fate!

Though perhaps there was not a Russian Jew to "cry out aloud" in protest, Jewry and liberal minded humanitarians throughout the world evidenced their great displeasure with the czarist regime's policy of persecution. The voice of protest was especially strong in England. The London Times assailed in violent terms the reactionary events in Russia, and a special organ, called "Darkest Russia", staffed primarily by Russian political refugees in England, was published for this express purpose. The London Times of November 5, 1898 published a letter of protest from which the following is extracted:

This is the sentence of death that silently, insidiously, and in the veiled language of obscurely worded laws has been pronounced against hundreds of thousands of human beings. . . . Shall civilized Europe, shall the Christianity of England behold this slow torture and bloodless massacre, and be silent?
Christians in England did not remain silent, for represented by their counymen in London, they prepared an indignant protest to be sent to Russia. London Jewry and Christianity united to bring their demands to the Lord Mayor of London. After many delaying excuses the Lord Mayor, "in behalf of the citizens of London and that of all Englishmen implores the Tsar to cease the persecution of the Jews." The Lord Mayor never received a direct reply to his petition. Instead the mouthpiece of the Russian government abroad, the newspaper *LeNord* in Brussels, declared:

The Semites have never yet had such an easy life in Russia as they have at the present time, and yet they have never complained so bitterly. There is a reason for it. It is a peculiarity of Semitism: A Semite is never satisfied with anything; the more you give him, the more he wishes to have.

The heated sentiments of the American people were voiced less guardedly than those of their British cousins in a resolution passed by the House on July 21, 1892:

Resolved, that the American people, through their Senators and Representatives in Congress assembled, do hereby express sympathy for the Russian Hebrews in their present condition, and the hope that the government of Russia, a power with which the United States has always been on terms of amity and good will, will mitigate as far as possible the severity of the laws and decrees issued respecting them, and the President is requested to use his good offices to notify the Government of Russia to cease the intolerable persecution of the Hebrews.

The many protests from around the world did not appear to have any effect on the Czar or his policy. Oppression and persecution continued. American Jewry enlisted the aid of their fellow citizens in generating a growing contempt for the Russian government; and, in 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt supported the Japanese in the war against Russia; although in the Peace of Portsmouth he prevailed upon them to mitigate the harsh terms imposed upon the defeated Russians. Millions of Russians were continually pouring into the United States. Their tales of oppression and pogroms aroused feelings of revulsion and protest. Such feelings were factors, however small, in President Roosevelt's decision to support Japan.

The lot of the Jew in Imperial Russia, was not a happy one. The official policy of hate generated or reflected by the Imperial Czar drove the Jew more and more into the confines of the Jewish Pale or ghetto section. He remained here oblivious to the acts of repression; a will somewhat crushed
to be sure, but constantly strengthened by the ever-present comfort of the Talmud.

II.

In the First World War, large sections of the Jewish pale became theatres of military operations. The war made major breaches in the walls of the ghetto. Waves of Jews, ironically tasting the air of freedom in the fumes of chaotic modern war, swept beyond the frontiers of the Jewish pale. Disruption of normal supply channels and wartime shortages created loopholes through which daring Jewish enterpreneurs and middlemen began to infiltrate hitherto inaccessible spheres of economic activity. These were mere trickles, however, as long as the Czarist regime remained in power. Many such rivulets combined into a quite powerful current when a Provisional democratic government was established in March 1917, and all Jewish restrictions were removed.

The removal of all such restrictions was not entirely altruistic. The wealth of the Jewish bourgeoisie had grown rapidly, and in 1914 there were some prominent Jewish members in practically all branches of commerce and industry. These Jews who were connected with the banks and other forms of semi-official capitol were clearly linked with the growing bureaucracy; but other Jews, the vast majority by far, were more or less Radical and anti-Monarchist. The Liberal opposition, as well as the revolutionary parties, all contained a high proportion of Jews. That these persons made themselves felt in advocating the removal of anti-Jewish measures is obvious.

From this point on, the tremendous economic dislocations of the Civil War opened new areas to Jewish commercial enterprise, although these were of an unstable and short-lived kind. In addition, a small number of Jewish intellectuals, commercial employees, and jobless youths, entered governmental organizations of the new state. Jewish welfare organizations were rapidly increased. It appeared that the Jews could now successfully attempt to establish an autonomous Jewish community within the confines of Russia. The Socialist-Revolutionary Party, and even the Menshevik Social Democrats endorsed such a program; a majority at the Constituent Assembly were in favor of such a program. However, as the assembly lasted only a few hours, nothing was done about the question of autonomy.

It is well to enter into a discussion of Jewish autonomy because of the insight it provides in an examination of the official Soviet position in regard to the Jew.

Lenin, in an article in "Ikra", a Social Democratic periodical of October 22, 1903, examined the Jewish question:

The Jewish question is this exactly: assimilation or separation? And the idea of a Jewish "nationality" is manifestly reactionary, not only when put for-
ward by its consistent partisans, but also when put forward by those who try to make it agree with the ideas of Social Democracy. The idea of a Jewish nationality is in conflict with the interests of the Jewish proletariat, for directly or indirectly, it engenders in its ranks a good hostile to assimilation, a "ghetto mood".

According to Lenin, the Jewish group is neither a nation nor a nationality; but a caste; and in the interests of social progress, all castes must be inexorably destroyed. Insofar as the Jewish question is one of oppression and discrimination, the establishment of racial and national equality will solve the problem. Therefore, the policy of the Soviet Union toward the Jew can never be one of oppression.

Stalin was in basic agreement with Lenin and only echoed the former’s position when he stated:

Attempts to provide Jews with guarantees against assimilation must of necessity disorganize and demoralize the labor movement, and foster national narrow-mindedness and the unwarranted spread of prejudice. This we cannot tolerate.

So, the Soviet Jew was not to be officially persecuted. In line with this policy the Commisariat for Jewish National Affairs was established in January 1918, as a special section of the People’s Commissariat for National Affairs. This latter group was headed by Stalin, then a relatively unimportant figure in Soviet affairs. This newly formed commission was not an agency to deal with specific social, economic, or cultural matters; it was an instrument for the governmental indoctrination and assimilation of the Jewish masses.

At this time in Russia, Lenin had instituted the New Economic Policy, or NEP. During this period Jewish merchants thrived. When the NEP came to an end, however, the economic position of the Jew became precarious. Cominoviv Dmanshtein, at the First All-Russian Conference of Jewish Commissaraiats and Jewish Sections, declared that it was now time: to organize Jewish farm labor communes and call Jewish farmers into existence; to build a Palestine in Moscow. We must wipe out the bourgeoisie mentality of these people who have proletarian pocketbooks.

The Jews, who had always followed urban economic activity, had become quite unfamiliar with agriculture, an occupation that had long employed their brothers in Palestine and Mesopotamia in the past. Their basic hope for survival now was to turn once again to the land. In 1924 the Soviet government, with the establishment of the KOMZET, began seriously to promote the settlement on the land of destitute town Jews. In
1926 it was decided to give 100,000 Jewish families, or roughly one half of a million individuals, an opportunity to settle in Jewish rural communities. Such action on the part of the Soviet government was dictated by practical, rather than altruistic considerations, for the Soviets had a pressing desire to bring new land under cultivation to support the ever-increasing factory workers. The Soviet Union was also interested in enlisting foreign Jewish capital. The establishment of Jewish rural communities would be valuable propaganda for world-wide Jewry. Since there was an excess of unemployed in the cities, and the Jews contributed to a large degree to this urban problem, their removal would considerably alleviate it.

Whenever one had spoken of autonomy for the Jews, he had spoken for an entire group made up chiefly of non-proletarian classes opposed to the dictatorship. There was no place in Soviet Society for such a group. If, however, the Jewish People should build a socio-economic structure like that of the Soviet system, i.e. a Jewish population of industrial wage earners and small farmers, then this "healthy" Jewish group might even be considered worthy of territorial autonomy.

Such considerations were important factors in the establishment of Jewish farm and industrial areas. The Jews were placed in these areas not to set them apart, but to industrialize and aid them in their assimilation. The era of the Five-Year Plans was about to begin, and at a time when all the resources of the country were devoted to industrial construction, the only acceptable "national" policy for the Jews was the concentration of all of their efforts into transforming themselves into a people of small farmers and proletariats. We read in a government news release of 1927 that:

We decide all practical questions of our work among the Jewish masses not according as they contribute to the preservation of the Jewish nation, or any other national ideal, but according only as they assist the Jewish masses to take part in the building of socialism. 22

The Jew was to become a true Soviet proletariat. He was scattered across the Soviet Union; his family and communal ties were broken. He was thrust, in many cases, into an alien cultural and linguistic environment. This was just what the Soviets desired to hasten his assimilation. He then started to lose his cultural and religious identity. Assimilation stifled the Soviet Jewish Schools. The Russian Jew had once stood at the forefront of Jewish intellectual and scholarly endeavor throughout the world. The Jewish theatre had been one of world renown. Jewish journals and newspapers rapidly declined in number and importance. In short, assimilation was resulting in general Jewish cultural stagnation with the result that assimilated Jewish endeavor became no longer important or significant.
The effectiveness of the Soviet assimilation process depended, in large measure, upon the proletarianization of the Jew; if we may rely upon earlier published Soviet statistics, it has been highly successful. In December of 1926 there were 394,000 Jewish wage and salary earners. This was increased to 562,000 by 1930 and to 787,000 by 1931. As of January 1, 1933, there were 900,000 workers, of whom no less than fifty percent were manual workers. And as early as 1935, Jewish wage earners were said to exceed 1,100,000.23

The Jew had become a proletariat and had become dispersed throughout the whole of historic Russia. The Second World War accelerated this process, and the Jew could now be found scattered in all corners of the Soviet Union. However, the provinces that came under the heel of the Wehrmacht soon after the beginning of hostilities in June 1941, were the very ones in which vestiges of the Jewish community and culture still existed. The holocaust in these areas not only physically destroyed the least assimilated sections of the faint Jewish community, but also eliminated the only effective surviving centers of Jewish life. This weakened considerably what very little remained of the cohesion and cultural allegiance of Jewish groups in other parts of the Soviet Union.

From all indications it has now become apparent that neither a Jewish culture nor a Jewish community was revived in the years that followed the end of the war.24 No Jewish villages or town Soviets have been restored either in the Ukraine, the Crimea, or White Russia. The five Jewish national districts of the Ukraine and the Crimea have disappeared without a trace; even their names have been obliterated. There are no Jewish schools, newspapers, or in short, no manifestations of Jewish cultural activity.

Yet, the Soviet Jew is not persecuted as was his Imperial brother. No longer is it necessary for persons in England and the United States to protest to Russia about anti-Jewish action and persecution. All legal restrictions previously imposed upon Jews in Russia have been abrogated. The Jew now enjoys full equality before the law. Such conditions have led many to call the Soviet Union, a “Paradise for previously persecuted peoples”, a true liberal home, free from intoleration and prejudice.

III.

In the course of this essay we have examined many acts of overt antisemitism under the Imperial reign of the Czar. We noted how antisemitism was closely associated with official policy; it was further the official creed of a part of the aristocracy, was supported by the entire body of the state officialdom, and in some places had even penetrated to the urban middle-classes. It had, however, found little real response among the vast majority of the common people. Antisemitism was an official, rather than a common movement. There were numerous instances when it acted as a stimulus to the masses; however, it did not, in the main, originate with them.
Antisemitism in the Soviet era, on the other hand, has been neither instigated nor countenanced by the government. On the contrary, it has been officially outlawed. Yet this is not to assume, as so many Soviet historians have, that the Soviet Union is free from antisemitism. It has certainly not become a liberal heavenly home attained on earth where the notion of intolerance has not existed. For a long while, intolerance in the Soviet era was to spread from an official to a popular movement.

In the battles of the Civil War antisemitism was a weapon that served the counter-revolutionary forces well. It was thus strongly impressed upon the Soviet government that antisemitism was a dangerous enemy of the state, threatening even the preservation of Soviet rule. In the Soviet Union both legal repression and political education were used in an attempt to fight antisemitism. These two methods did not prove effective. We have seen how the Jew benefited from the relaxed control of the NEP period. When his status was considerably enhanced in the NEP period, natural resentment was aroused in his Christian and heathen neighbors. In a public discussion in Moscow on December 2, 1926, a Soviet Professor, Jurrie V. Klyuchnikov, declared:

You can see how all over Moscow small bread and sausage booths, run by Jews, have been set up. Here you have the main source of dissatisfaction. Here we are in our own city, and along come people from somewhere else crowding in on us. . . . We have a severe housing shortage in Moscow, but crowds of people are jammed together in places where one just can’t live, and at the same time you see people from other parts of the country coming here and taking up our apartment space. They are out-of-town Jews.25

We have noted how a great section of Russian Jewry was counted among the great proletariat. It was therefore to be expected that the Jew would feel the manifestations of antisemitism while at the plant. That this was so has been documented in an official Soviet report of 1929. A “rare survey of antisemitism among trade union members” was made by the Moscow City Trade Union Council for the month of February 1929. It read in part:

Antisemitic feeling among workers is spreading chiefly in the backward section of the working class that has close ties with the peasantry, and among women. . . . Often workers heard to make antisemitic remarks fail to realize the counter-revolutionary meaning of antisemitism. Many facts reveal the presence of Komsomol and party members among the antisemites.26

40
Few reports such as this reached an outside world which believed that antisemitism had disappeared when it lost its official sanction. About this time a strong statement, quoted by newspapers all over the world, helped to further this myth. In January 1931 these articles quoted Stalin as saying:

Antisemitism serves exploiters as a lightning rod to protect capitalism from the attacks of the working people, a wrong path to divert the latter from the right one and lead them into a jungle. As consistent internationalists, Communists cannot therefore be but irreconcilable and sworn enemies of antisemitism. It is most strongly repressed in the USSR. Under the laws of the USSR active antisemites are subject to capital punishment. 27

The free world read such excerpts in its free presses and believed what it read; antisemitism must not be prevalent in the Soviet Union. To be sure, at the beginning of the thirties it was on a decline, but not for the reasons that the outside free world believed. The reason for the rapid decline of popular antisemitism was primarily two-fold. First, with the introduction of the Five Year Plan jobs were now widespread. There was now no need to resent the Jew and his sausage booths; all had jobs and therefore had no reason to resent those who did. Secondly, the Jews had once been associated with the NEP tycoon. As these tycoons had been done away with, the general offensiveness of the Jew decreased. The antisemitic tide might not have receded when it did, had not the abruptness, speed and ruthlessness of industrialization disrupted the traditional modes of thinking, feeling, and reacting, replacing them with new ones. This, of course, did not spell the end of antisemitism in Soviet society, for an older kind was replaced by a new.

The antisemitism now became directed toward the Cosmopolitan Jew. A new party and government beaurocracy had been created. The Jew succeeded in advancing quickly through the ranks by virtue of a persistent ambition, enhanced by a long depressed driving motivation. The unusual success of many Jews aroused a natural resentment on the part of many of their fellow beaurocrats. This resentment had become considerable and had been partially released in the trials of 1936-38. The exact reasons for these purge trials does not lie within the scope of this essay. Suffice it to say that many leading Jews were eliminated from the government scene, i.e. Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Radek. One of the many reasons for these purges was to placate a resentful beaurocracy and thus enable them to release their pent up hatred of the successful Cosmopolitan Jew.

Antisemitism seems to have waned considerably after the purges, and if it did not, we have no available indications to contradict this belief. The calm was a relatively short lived one, for at the outset of the Second World
War antisemitism was on the upswing. That this is so can be seen by the Soviet reaction to the very many German atrocities.

On June 30 the Hitlerite bandits entered Lvov, and on the very day staged an orgy of murder under the slogan: “Kill the Jews and the Poles”. Having murdered hundreds of people the Hitlerite bandits held an exhibition of the corpses in the city arcade.28

The German atrocities continued, numerous and ever more inhuman. In November 1941, some 20,000 Jewish inhabitants of the city of Kharkov were moved under Gestapo orders from their apartments in the city to barracks in the area of the Kharkov Tractor Works. Later on, they were taken in convenient groups of 200 and 300 to the nearby scrap yard where they were shot.29

The above are just isolated examples of many such events that took place at the hands of the German troops in Russia. And what was the official Soviet reaction to these atrocities? The press did not comment upon one of them, and in so doing gave its subtle approval.

Since the conclusion of the war, evidence of overt actions of antisemitism in the Soviet Union have been very slight. What has occurred in regard to the Jew may best be understood in terms of Jewish nationalism, a not unfamiliar subject. Stalin provided us with a perfect Soviet definition of a nation, which he formulated in his “National Problem and Leninism”:

The Russian Marxists have for a long time had their own theory of nationality. According to it, a nation is a firmly established group of people which has been created throughout centuries and which arose out of the community of four common factors: community of language, community of territorial habitat, community of the economic life, and community of mentality, which has been reflected in the whole complex of particular peculiarities of the national culture.30

Stalin teaches that only a complete combination of these above four factors is sufficient to have a group designated a nation. The absence of any one of these four factors is enough for a nation to cease to be a nation. The community's lack of territorial habitat makes the Soviet Communists refuse to Russian or satellite Jews the right to call themselves a nationality.

This colonial or nationality outlook of the Russian communists may largely explain the recent anti-Jewish outbursts of the Soviet press. With the Jews the problem is more complicated than those of other nationalities, or nationality pretenders. For the Jewish question there are present two
basic evils: (1) the "bourgeoisie" materialism of the Jews, and equally important, (2) his sympathy with organizations beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union, and thus outside of party control. The Israeli State and Zionism are two such organizations. However, no Soviet citizen is permitted to have such ties with foreign centers. This point was clearly emphasized in "Literaturnaza Gazeta":

In whatever clothes it is arrayed, whatever its pseudonym, whether the guise be Pan-Americanism, Catholicism, Zionism, or any other name, cosmopolitanism actively serves the interests of imperial reaction and hence has no place in the USSR.\textsuperscript{31}

The Party has attacked Russian Jewry because of its "imperialistic" cosmopolitan character. Antisemitism in this official level has not encompassed the wider religious or racial sense.

The Ministry of State Security in January 1953, accused several doctors with speeding the deaths of A. A. Zhdanov and A. A. Shcherbakov, and of endangering the lives of several marshals and generals by their faulty treatment. Several doctors were Jewish. They were attacked in Pravda, not for being Jewish, but for being allied with "foreign Jewish bourgeoisie Nationalist organizations". Yet, Jews throughout the world thought that the Soviet Union was thereby officially advocating antisemitism and persecuting the Jew as a Jew. This could not be further from the truth. They were merely attacking the bourgeoisie appendages of the Jew, which could not be tolerated in a Socialist society. These appendages of nationalism and imperialism would have been attacked regardless of the religious affinity of the enemy of the State. Thus, from all available indications, the Soviet Jew lives free from persecution and overt antisemitism.

No longer do the people of the world protest the Jewish persecution of the Russian State; there is no persecution. We have seen how assimilation, rather than persecution is the official policy. This concept was established in the works of Lenin, echoed in those of Stalin and adopted by the present regime of Soviet leaders.

No longer do Jewish poets such as Simon Frueg sing of an oppressed people; there are no Jewish poets. With the Soviet policy of assimilation has come a rapid decline in traditional Jewish culture, in religion, literature and social custom, to the point where there are few, if any, cultural leaders.

No longer do we hear lamentations of an oppressed Jewish Will; there is no Jewish Will. The Soviets appear to have been more successful than their Czarist predecessors. They appear to have extinguished with subtle policies what the Czarist regime could only attempt to crush with force. The Jewish Will or spirit, the Jewish essence or flame, appear to have been extinguished. The ultimate truth of this can only be judged by History. At the moment they appear to have succeeded. This apparently is due to the
fact that the Soviet Jews, finally living in full equality, with racial discrimination ended, and having become part of a new movement, in considerable numbers no longer feel the urge to preserve their special identity as a people, and to maintain in their daily lives the historic characteristics of Jewry.

If this is the case, and our limited information from the Soviet Union indicates that it is, the Soviets have discovered a potent and quite subtle antisemitism. The antisemitism of the Soviets is not one of persecution and physical destruction. It is more insidious, for it destroys totally the whole of Judaism and permits a new type of man to roam the Soviet Union and be called a Jew. He might be called as well, Infidel or Comrade, for he is not a Jew.

No longer do we hear the cries of Russian Jews; there are no Russian Jews, rather New Soviet Jews. Their only similarity lies in their once proud though oppressed name. The Russian Jew was a creature of the TALMUD; the new Soviet Jew is a creature of SOVIET POLICY.

David Leof

3 Ibid., p. 23.
5 Ibid., p. 379.
8 Ibid., p. 427.
9 Ibid., p. 428.
10 Ibid., p. 471.
11 Ibid., p. 381.
12 Ibid., p. 388.
13 Ibid., p. 391.
14 Ibid., p. 393.
15 Ibid., p. 409.
18 See Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, p. 29, for an account of the liberal Jewish reforms suggested in all Kadet political programs.
20 Ibid., p. 55.
21 Ibid., p. 117.
22 Ibid., p. 128.
23 Ibid., p. 169 for Table.
24 Ibid., p. 286.
25 Ibid., p. 249.
26 Ibid., p. 249.
27 Ibid., p. 292.
28 Ibid., p. 334.
29 Ibid., p. 335.
Consider:
Glass in heat or
to a jazz beat,
the Eastern mountains moving over the waves.
Who is Buddha?
Ah Budd
It's almost one o'clock
I must hurry
why do I hurry to bed to
sleep to wake to eat to
do to don't do
My mouth feels funny
cigarettes, filters
lighters — she was a nice kid.
My mother said college is a great opportunity.
That is chance.
Correlate courses.
Birdland, blue people, black notes
beer costs a lot there . . . purple lunches
Vacations and dates . . . ugly
they always like Scotch
The most unusual thing
happened the other day
I enjoyed it.

Douglas L. Frost
Mrs. Craig began to open a can of green peas. She fumbled for a while with the opener, but with perseverance, a natural trait she called it, she finally managed to open the can and dump the peas into the sauce pan with a professional twist. None of the juice was spilled. Soon, she thought, Harry will be home from work. Mrs. Craig didn’t have to look at the clock to tell when Harry would be home; she was able to sense it. They had been married for fifteen years. Certainly after fifteen years, she used to think, if you didn’t know when your husband was coming home after he had been coming home at the same time for fifteen years, something must be wrong.

The peas stewed gently in the pan. The leftover meat loaf would be done by now, and Mrs. Craig tilted the oven door down low enough to see the loaf beginning to take on a rather crusty look. Bang went her apartment door.

“Harry, is that you?” she shouted.

“Who else d’you suppose it was?”

Mr. Craig, a corpulent man of forty, rolled silently into the tiny kitchen, like a marble on a slight incline. He bent over and gave Mrs. Craig a peck on the forehead.

“Well, will you look at him?” Mrs. Craig said. “What happened to you today? You stopped doing that a long time ago.”

“What d’ya mean, what happened to me? Can’t a guy give his wife a kiss now and then?”

Mrs. Craig glanced at him as if she was looking at a person she thought she knew, but would not draw attention to herself by staring until she was sure of her home ground.

“Harry, you know I like to be kissed, but every time you kiss me I know you either done somethin’ you weren’t supposed to, or you want to borrow from my shopping money.”

Harry put his hands on his hips and looked at her in a rather shocked amazement.

“Now,” he said, “I ain’t that way all the time, and it just so happens that I didn’t kiss you for either of those things. I just love you, that’s all.”

“C’mon now,” she said, “set the card table up in the living room, and make the coffee.”

“Just a minute, Gladys, I want to tell you why I kissed you.”

“You did tell me,” she said, “You told me it was love. Now, stop stalling and get this food on the table, will you? I don’t have all night, you know. Today’s Tuesday, and for me that means bowling night. I don’t stop you on Saturday when you go over to what’s-his-name’s place. I got to get ready. Lily is picking me up at seven-thirty, and I gotta be ready.”
“OK, OK. You just wait and see. I take back everything I said about you. I don’t love you. You are the last woman on earth I’d love.” He snapped the legs of the card table taut.

“Today’s Tuesday, today’s Tuesday,” he murmured.
He caught hold of the platter, and threw it on the table.
“I ain’t stalling a bit. All I wanted to tell you was why I kissed you. I can set the table and talk at the same time, you know.”

Gladys came into the living room carrying the peas and mashed potatoes and sat down at the table.
“Now, Harry, I didn’t mean to shout. I was only kidding you. I didn’t think you were serious.”

“Well, I was!” said Harry.

“I am sorry. Go ahead and tell me why you kissed me.”

“I don’t think I will. You ain’t so interested,” he said as he helped himself to some meat loaf and gave the platter to Gladys.

“Look, Harry, if you’re gonna play games . . .”

“I ain’t playing games; it’s just that this old guy that works down at the shop as a bookkeeper showed me this little silver ash tray. It was no bigger than the size of your hand, but it was beautiful. It cost fifty at least.”

“You kissed me because you saw this guy’s silver tray?” Gladys interrupted.

“Will you let me finish? It so happens that it was his twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. That guy had been married to the same woman for twenty-five years. Do you know what that means?”

“We’ve been married for fifteen years,” she said. “Harry!” Gladys got up from the table and delicately kissed him on the cheek. “Harry, today’s our anniversary, isn’t it?”

“No! Today’s not our anniversary. It is two months from now. You know that.” Harry disconcertedly looked down at his empty plate. Gladys began to clean the table.

“You still won’t let me finish telling you,” he said.

“I am listening.”

Harry struggled on, “That guy had been married for twenty-five years.”

“And we’ll be married for more than that,” she added.

“I know we’ll be, but that doesn’t count. Now, keep quiet and let me finish. He said he had been married twenty-five years, and he was going to give this tray to his wife as a present. It was pure silver, and it said ‘From William to Helen on their twenty-fifth.’ We stopped giving anniversary presents to each other after the seventh year.”

“And whose idea was that? You said that was silly. That we had each other and no present could replace that gift. Those were your very words, Harry Craig!”
"I know I said that, and I was right too, but that tray sorta meant something more to him and her than it just being silver. It was a sorta symbolic to him, you know."

"So you decided to skip the silver and give me the meaning, is that it?" she laughed.

"That's very funny, Gladys, but that's just what we've done for the past eight years. We've skipped the silver and tried to give meaning to our marriage, but we finally gave that up."

"Harry, that isn't my fault alone. It's as much yours as it is mine. Besides I still love you the way I did before our marriage but in a different way. I make your meals, clean the apartment, help you along when you're sick. You help me when I feel bad; we love each other."

"But, Gladys, it should be different than that. We should love each other even more than that."

"We do, we do."

Harry moved towards her and put his hands under her chin, and said, "I love you, Gladys."

She gently pushed his hands away. "Harry, stop making love to me. You look at me like a beaten up puppy dog."

The apartment buzzer rang.

"C'mon, Harry, get the door. It's Lil. We're going bowling tonight. It's Tuesday, remember?"

"Yeah, I remember. It's Tuesday, bowling night." Harry opened the door.

"Hello, Mr. Cornin," he said.

"Well, here it is, Mr. Craig, just like you ordered. I thought I would deliver it to you myself."

"Who's that, Harry," shouted Gladys from the kitchen.

"Just a friend of mine," he said.

"Well, tell him to come in."

"Mrs. Craig sounds very happy. I see you told her about the cup."

"No, I haven't told her yet. It's a surprise."

"I am very sorry it wasn't ready when you came in, but I did keep my promise."

"Thank you, Mr. Cornin."

"I know she will be pleased with it. Well, good-bye."

"Good-bye."

He began to shut the door but in walked Lil.

"Hello, Harry. How's tricks?" said she.

"Hello, Lil," said Gladys, "I will be with you in a moment. I gotta dry these dishes."
"Oh, Harry will do those, won’t you, Harry? Play the role of a loving husband for a change." Harry stood in the kitchen door looking at the two women. No one spoke for a moment, then Harry grabbed the dish towel from his wife’s hands and began to wipe the dishes in fevered emotion.

“Careful, Harry, you’ll break those dishes.”

“What’s the matter with you Harry; you’d think your life depended on it” said Lil. Harry said nothing and continued to dry the dishes.

“Oh, come on, Lil. Let’s leave him alone.”

Gladys went into the closet, put on her coat, grabbed her bowling bag, and they went out the apartment door. They walked down the long corridor and waited for the elevator.

“What’s eating Harry, Gladys? You two had a fight?”

“I don’t know, Lil. I personally think he’s had one too many, and he’s never done that before. He came in tonight, kissed me and said he loved me.”

“Well, is that bad?”

“Listen, any time Harry Craig kisses me, watch out!”

“Well, I wouldn’t blame a guy for kissing you just because he wants something; most husbands wouldn’t bother with the preliminaries. Take Joe, for instance. He needs two-forty to pay a poker debt. I nearly thought he was goin’ to clobber me when I told him he couldn’t have it.”

Harry threw the wet dish towel on to the cupboard and walked into the living room. He wedged himself into the armchair and stared at the brown package before him. The package seemed to stare back.

Confidently, he undid the wrapping and slid his fingernails along the tape on the top. He carefully put the excelsior on the coffee table and gently lifted a silver cup from its sock. His reflection was grotesquely bent around the cup. Across his image’s forehead he read: “To Gladys from a loving husband” and just under the nose he saw: “April 24, 19...”

Maybe she would have been pleased with a bowling ball, he thought. She really didn’t need the cup. But they hadn’t loved each other for so long. Each had lived his or her own life separately. Yes, there were moments when they were selfish in a way.

They had been with each other for fifteen years, but they still lived separately. Harry thought of where he could put the cup so Gladys would see it when she came in. Should he put it in the kitchen? She’d surely go in there to find out if he had finished the dishes. How about in the bedroom by the night table? No, he had to be asleep when she found it, and she never turned on the light if he were asleep. That left the bathroom and the living room. The bathroom was the place. Right on top of the sink.

He laughed to himself. “Two hundred bucks right on the sink.”

He lightly placed the cup on the sink with a crystal ting as the base ticked against the porcelain top. Facing the engraving towards the door, he stepped back out in to the hallway and evaluated his craftsmanship.
He decided to leave the bathroom light on. Everything was set. Harry rolled into the bedroom, undressed with comfort, turned on the television set, and pulled the bed covers up to his chin. His mind wouldn't stop wandering about the possibilities of what Gladys would say. He pictured her glaring at the cup, grasping it up, and reading the engraving. Perhaps she wouldn't see it at all, and he would have to show her the cup. Oh, he thought, she'd see it well enough. She would find it. But suppose she did find it and wasn't surprised. That wasn't possible. I won't tell her how much it cost. But she'll have to find out. Maybe I'll tell her it cost about fifty bucks. If I hold her it cost two hundred bucks she'll hit the ceiling. But I can't lie about the cup, that would be cheating its meaning. I gotta be honest. Maybe she won't ask me at all. No, she'll ask all right.

Harry got up and sat at the edge of the bed. Maybe she'll say that I could have given her the money to use around the house instead of getting that cup, he thought. She doesn't like those sort of things anyway. She doesn't care for the nice things. God, that cup cost me two hundred bucks! She ought to like it, but maybe she'll think it extravagant. I could have just given her the money like it was my yearly bonus. But won't she be surprised when she finds that on the sink! When she sees that cup glittering on that sink she will really be surprised. Maybe she'll think that I was being stupid leaving that cup on the sink where anybody could take it. After all with the bathroom light on. Anybody who broke into the apartment could see that standing there.

Harry walked to the bathroom and picked the cup up by the base so no finger marks would show on the top. Again he read the inscription, "Apr. 24, 19...." right under his nose. Maybe, he thought, he could have that changed.

Harry went into the living room and put the cup into its sock and placed the piece into the back corner of his bureau's bottom drawer. He then picked up the box and stuffed excelsior into its middle making sure none of the packing was left on the floor.

Placing his rubbers over the box in the hall closet, he decided he'd get rid of the box in the morning.

He padded through the living room and went to bed. He lay there thinking to himself. I'll give it to her when she's in a better mood, maybe next week. He rolled over and waited for morning.

C. J. Long
reflection on early november

have you ever felt motion stop
and time become suspended, marked
in its breathing limbo with no progression,
no retrogression? but stood patiently
and watched the leaves rock in black
silhouettes against barren frames until
other forces than their decayed power
loosened them, and they fell?

felt that days were meant to accomplish
nothing, breathe nothing, bless nothing,
and be not blessed within themselves?
watched skylight burning itself out,
seen thin stretched out winds howl
through solitary trees, hungrily searching
among forsaken, unnourished black twigs,
half-burnt leaves and cold stagnant pools?
while its bleak breath howled incessantly with
a dull incessant howling? pathetically watched
natural life escape to an artificiality of warmth,
then to turn your back, caring for motion
to move, caring for matter to have meaning,
substance to have spirit, and living to have more than
indifference?

Robert A. Winter