Daivernidad Freional Autbncma de Mixice FACULTADDEFILOSOFIATIETRAS
el teateo DEPROTESTASOCIAL ENLOS ESTADOSUNIDOS

Ettadice siote obras Impotantes Repreentativas deloscatyo Temaspriacipaleaderotesta

TESIS
QUE PRESENTA PARA RECIBIR ET GRADO DE

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ELAETMOA
Edmaxactomaby

MAYO 1951


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## TESIS CON FALLA DE ORIGEN

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al Culto de La Venta


## Capitulo Dno

IA DISCRTMINACION CONTRA IAS MINORTAS Y EI IINGHAJE

## Fase Ax the Mentr

Helle prot Thers
tha do las comtrmbree mat obviamente anti-demecriticas


 megre ge Vivia mando de vecinos hanoses pebres e iletro-



 Jo Munder al que vino titimemente hall 6 al poer ingíf, ture


 ve dementre o thrania curepan, haote al prinelpio de loa ation 20 mande la matozia prima pare ol miking pat manto and

 tode reotin venide. Gualquier diferenoin adrvit para le aim-

 quier cema, si al iector me perdona mi vocabulario de zuca




on eran parte haber pamalo, pero les reelfu venidoe y loe noeren Aleran aiende vetiman.


 nager ha side ol maree" do eant todeo do fetas parque us un
 1a parmona que maixe mife de diacrininaton.
 obra fmportente que trate da la dimeriminacion contra low ju-

 dan Ion donfa tratan de macren axemptrande una maile premiada do 13 obran cortan do Alifedo segre para al radio que mertema




 todo el pala.

 pare no en una obra de preteata, la primera de frtae on le



 mere categorla, ecerita por Panl petert y ceorge sciar. Green



In trapareda do 2945-46 incluyb true protestan contre ie
 Suith y Bex Axi the proth de James Cow I Axpaud D'Uasean. La giltisa gend al lavar del piblico. on perfuicic de las otras
 seguido molemente per una obse ahil on un afte, Frivisht, 1950, per IGnueth Mite.

Ia majer de Las protertan comtra el 21nehajo. Moile gnt
 en ent caplinalo. Fariae do Las obxram menelomalan ome pro-




 erinimatiba racial. I ai ea meainter no ixt a veria porque cabe que no hay defonaan de la discriminacibo an all teatre
 mabe to antaseno todo momas los detelles y al demeniace. sabe dal juteto moral de la cory, para no mabe oi oll legon-

Leoe es mediontragico (is viotiza de la permocuedon es venefda $y$ el phbilco tomiona al ambiente que le vence) o aile


 al eapectedor osdete a une obra te protarite en contra de la
 efon, in condemnotiba moral, la entiodpecion ocmpleta de la
 claras on la mazto.
tal enpectadar es al mojor pestile para gataztaer al bxi-
 intelectucl milmatices mentimantalea, redo se blance 7 nocrep todo es o viritud a vielopeptilice enth acuerde conte macho tiempo mean con los valoyes axpuestos en le obra.
mo al caso de que là descoripedon antezior parerea nagativa al leotor, hay que acregar que al tentro de melodrema miene man Juetificacibu. Bra el teater predilecto de low mortemericer

 Lodrams es un teatro axtrovertido. Temidin vention is macel
 que vielan al mopdice no-aboulto."

Hog on tha al phailico burguta te lom Intados vaidoa ja me

 buen 6xitos al melodreme paieolSgico, ai tiene bentante ar-
 pervi $y$ al melodrama se soct $6 n_{\text {, }}$ at se bame on actiturice o prejuiccios comunos a erandes aectores dal puohlo.

Aematos religioson, orinenes meguldos per fugm, mietarie y camtige inevitables, y la protesta en conirre de la dimeximinselfan racial aon low tren contenidos que se prestan mache

 Loe tree grupes principaiee al molodruan de Kingaley, Dead Znl, que protesta contre condiciones an 10 s barrion pobres conde la sente tione que vivir ome "cualquior andmal."

Los dramaturcos del teatro de dicaifidedo mocial han prondide de paisa que al menmaje" que mefor aproveha en al malodrame es el de la dicomiminaci6n. Los timpos han eator blecide un muevo arquetipe de equilibxie ontre la forme mion dramithea 7 wn tipo limitado to oontenido social.

 do Lea antores coineldieron con les dal pablico. misenen yeson," axa el comentario otra reacel bn oxa do eaperanse cuanto ae vila on al aconarie a lat hifan del vioje meader roacolonario tomar ia deciaion de aperar al protegonimbe necro


1at fupreciones eaponthrean meas fuertea mon provecadas por

 de aealfu en al teatro mocial contempoxknec.

Loa autores, Jumen cow y sxaud D'Uaseru maben bien Las meomitades 7 las oportunidades del malodrama 10 apovedhe
 drama de aeoita y melodruma palcolfocico.

La acefon da papp Ave the Beotio tiene 1ugar on la cama
 Le obra en tren aetom


 Mifo de Bella, que reereme del morvicio militan. Zl Sonador ontra y precurnte a Bella ad enth preveaide ol carmo parm 11em vela a la eataci 6 n . 3 h hifa monor, Ganevze, eatire diaiendo que tambion va a 20 estiaibo paza recibir a brett. supand me moleata $y$ le probibe que vayn Cuando Belle premete que Genovrin quedard on al codie, al sensior la permite 15 , de poon crala. shice, la hife mayor to inquiete un nomento cuando ne entora sel cmperiao atrevido de minemena, pere no haoe caso a la a mamedta del somador de que ella en responmable
 viene park infomerilea que ha axreglado que Brett tame la





















































































 ruchatize zohnge aonkemanfor


 I0 yrevione gue su is ha Niate vindeado dol zio con zutho












Brett, Howard se vuelve hacia filce y le afce, mpes bien. ¿Ya eatas antisfechap"

AOYO MPRCEEO: La noche del mismo dia. 3 Senador quicre alegrar a flice la cual esta mustida por la antipatia de Howard y por el hecho de pegar y encarceler e hrett. su primo Roy acongeja al senador que analten a Brett porque unaa personas de la aldea se agitan, eqpecialmente a cause de que Brett es veterano de la suerra. Roy decide, a peasar de que perderta el apoyo pilitico del Senador, pedir 61 nikmo la libertal de Brett. Bella regrees después de baber intentado, sin exito, ver a gu hijo. Con amargura dite al Senador que ya no quiere tener mea que ver con an easa, flice prezunta a au papa si realmeate Brett robb al reloj. Cuanio no contesta, dila conteata por mapartes si, lo robb.

Ilegan Genevra y Howard despuis de baber fracasado teme bien on su tentativa de ver a Brett $y$ de coneguirie un abogado: Allce lea di una sorpresa cuendo dice que le ponant en libertad durante is noche $y$ que al "cherife" ie pone are sobre wh tren que ve al Borte. A Cenevra gustaria verIo pero le atcen que no serf ponible. Decita ir imediatom mente al Morte tambien y encontrar a Brett alli por medio de sua amigoa.

Honey entra, vacilis $y$ al fin dice que el Senador le hiza decir que habia encontrado al roloj un la pleze de Brett y que no es verdad. Fide a Howard que devaelva al Senedor














 Conevich conelomio con mandota pare ivel tren y theme

















 تع































 In do lea stmias mation.






















 Ens

 oe una comalitan coctin Putcos 4




B. Gonovire empra maleto de Puilman para el Fiaje ©
 grett Gonevra en un pacie noetiurno. Plenmen que dile

 entra dosemprrade on la meda conopluactio de m padre perre mendar frumiuk cutemente a is carvel a drett.
 conevxe de un gipe a an hoxmuna mande ofrece camarye



 Ie diee ane pince conter ton ol apre de elia.

Ho en uma propendelion beatrante concina pera que le guoto





 exterter me mabe per lan pelabras de lem perfmajom.

 onl carater dranditicew as exagurndo at halla dol druma













 - 2 milotrumes




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tione que relatar.





 - teadón maxni.







 una protegite on contre de Ha pena de mante." Neciey gent






 satar.







 Cow 7 Berbenems.
 telumed on al twatzo marenfa ouxupeo dal IIX Enicis sos am-







 I wa bean mo on ol exotime mino en al apatido ocufin.



























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Smindion









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 nomet moelfon

















 sefore alla do los henotacualens












































荮 ©













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 7 regrina a oncoutrer of foven harite do balemon
C. I Ia urge to huif at puable a Sm Iraneteve ova ol
 diadeste 20 IIrvollo





















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 Y de trato calor human que of aciedi popear de alio an ion






















-apecialmente para an extravagnetry Lan strmactoses man











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Si. no acmpletemente Juate, Ia obsozverdin de Gagey ic


 44



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 montenne
















 Les Loginatreras.







Wey dorm someth in phxte


Wea tomp South in paxde
I aenat ming in aty
I afled the watto Jext jomen mat vas the une of yxumas

Ver itma geartion in mixde
(Break the heart $\boldsymbol{c}^{( }$map)
Levi is a melted theiom
on e grozed anil naiod twas.





















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rejeí.












































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 taloe Dualeos

## 

##   Priny.  Finwit  
















 2487


































 retarto

##  



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## Capitulo Dow



## Bun the pead

Bern Yenteriay

In aste capitulo ge conaideren el crupo de obrea que vam en contre de la gierra $y$ ge pueden dividir en doapartert lan olune que contionen protestes genencles antibciicus, y las ouras que proteston contran loa ubusos de loc neeocitaten de
 Vincent Pisiliay, presentada por whe Brounncetorn pluwers on
 1inga, presentade jor artinur Hoplins on 19241 pence on Zaxth




 excaleacia intistica las obral postinus antibeticaa de frchibald Bacleish para la radio.

Las orras que protastan contra la explotacion por los ciriles en ticmpo de cuarra mons zom Yentardey, de Gerson Kanin, prementada por Hax Cordon on 1946; 7 All N Sons do



 an otrail obras de menos citegoria artistica, satas noa las mas inportcintos, No mon todas de la misme calidad dremation y en la opinion del que eacribe, la mejor protesta zencrelisade
en Brax the Dands y oll mejor entudio de 100 abruco do 100 eam



 Erupo universdtario, bajo la direqelon cel maestro Farmando Wagner, poeas enmanas dempufa de mbirixe al conflicto entre.


 artiation memejante al barroen pxecortesiano. Paxa al norte-
 con sagar allen Poe, la reacolion amotiva ente la obre no Liri-
 debie o mef otre imperion asm al suntiniento do emperanca do que la gente tenge al peder de coahaesr a los militariatant otye mín exa la mogele de bren hriack, eutill on meato de todo Lo hoxribie que contradioe al juiote to atidneon acerca de la

 rarla para apreciaree on la biblioteca,

Th primer molicis farmal rovala que la obsa en de un acto en 20 episodion, del chert de la pleza, con menon mproble-




 zios a ceare de un macosdote y un rabino. al ectar mezando,
 yea maren pidionde que no. we los entiosses. in macente
 toe bombren cade alaj"

Entratiedi in capitin intenta expilear al preblema a


 es que enten muerto e vivon

 todos han addo mantras hace 40 horen finetigos coratiman lan

 ton 20 efrece de au tramen

Buinath fy foctor informa a 100 comarales que 100


 ve al otse de ecuntrela


 treiladera del amice mate a uno de ellogy 7 luoge il otroc.


 qusere ol coblearo."
gntmata 7 Ioe emerelos liogen a le tumbe une de ellea intenta convencer a Iee oudivarea que entin mumstom, 7 cuando
 sur. Travion a 6ata no hacen casa,


 2e obucuridal,






 chea macrien" no andan emberrat.











 mand"










 do and 0


marto. In Incha enth tervinada, y al conteata, wis Inoha





 ted. Comas expotane"

 Alos me matrang



 namande












 $\sum_{i \mathrm{i}}$ tumbe veedin






 unilo erpantemp


 and ciamaltagatist oope


 Tame a Les miteplader militares guionea para ovitar
 muster.

 tramatar.

 conto In mbetion ocatin in enamer.








 mantican de la aiete oberall que entudtaremome



 cal firente, xopromontado por una plataform megre gue oubse todo al soade, min alta que un houbre, con macos de arena mo


 dom thataent...

In iluatnaedion contribuyo a definis al empaio nte que
 de Ladof La iluminoodon oa Lodeasy al difloge hehla lal lolof on In acons hay montones do tioxxap 200 macos de arentic son
 20de, menoe concsetsmente me uat alor de loe eadhvares per

onte que partioipre plemomento on la acoion de la obzre recto

 mele eccenus intorsealeken.







 Les fielta aleo para mer pexmonan ta grme y hument




 todavie an al teatse contmaporinee de los Eatadon Duicocy pum sece al mejer thatine asmeriptive al que asto ewariber y prem





muchse veces 11 eva on of 10



 sacs ainos morrilimtas un toque francdsocno. inas otras obraa mu-
 bleres on al estile "ambalista, " particulameente cuando two

 bien muegtren enta tendoncia.


 cialoge en buena prome, mitural a loa pargonjesmio qua no quiese decir que mat un leagrato osiliderio. as ol hatiar
 crisis on la ovalea onth prahnarmante onajadea o uiltrajecon. Es I: alocuenola protesta de la que oa capas tode hombre y Ie cucl ar deda para expreser pocas veces durante ou vida

Zon pamajen mirieos" mustran zuchos dofectos nemejantea

 personelen dol extor qum atmirai ocmo "poesis" por lon exf-





 mancilo egtudio del arsot. I on al cemaeicalo poso estrudo do
 bicid hooleish.


 La econgaia de las requraou do lo obra gron comxlento dol tom


 Curavialemanter de Is ilusion teatrel.
 fonde y dal alalogo (io feo, lo hozrizile y 10 efmico) y en



Las antecedontes ciel tama, 13 entructuxa $y$ al amguonto




 Henan La misan mituactum bander satabos muextos no quinmu ser ontacredos $y$ ocusen um acotndolo intaragotional. Pexo Lan
 beng; pleptagonista derpiexta 7 desoribe que tode ha aido
 mata seroincionazta a La acorion disecta (3) Ia estructura

 F ea memejante a La que Jos Ifram afapt a las ooxeogratiat


 papiento de la estriction do ma comeals cantro le Ia comatian











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 dary.

Tha interyretedon Axumatioa que os simboliste en an te


 de Chejor que oopuren on obvas de estilo no atrmotigts Entat




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 oluspe.





 naral co la armatrellelarn,"














 altos cifletalos miltaren.







## 









 do mochasb Las anares proventivam










 yomera mintial.



 enitstar 26



 compuife de julio de 1937, Megaron a ma Xinitat de pactencio,


 Les clarea de la exumere muntal que tha a mpenare contro to



 "poca politica" se quith la obra mieatrad que les de odoto





 zen al mar ovindo no pueden pembar etra mamera de ovitar man

to Ia existencia conte dol paeto Hithermstailin. 31 autor an


 pachelum dses this wis an of the oanifnal tenate in

 Athen on man $x^{3}$






 den te perment Pary the rand. in a lottrar to time dram









 Te tecovir hatra gince thon wo hum beop zerope Into










 thoir achasonts in thite country weve peger pledgen and peo
 matanas






 If deal gmaxil and apriote. 1



















Young Mr. Shaw.o.liven in Brooklyn, though he was born In Manhatten... He a, been mriting radio seripta for a doteotive story continuity when the radio scouts fo und him and sent him to Hollywood. In picture land he had beon doIng football stories, having played football when he wae a student at Ereckiyn College. Hin eariy ambition, insofar as it was ansociated with the theatse, he rolates was to be "palite, palished and luxuriantily int, and to write that kind of play, none of which things has been vouchmafed me, n20 De manera que ora una aberraciion para el joven Shaw thaporada m el teatro social y que ha regreado a de donde venia.

Al lado dal cambio en el contenido de las obras de Shawy ea intereante observar la egeneracion de la calidad artistion, Sin ofrecer um juicio personal, el que esaribe no más indica Ia Iista de los fracaso deapuda de Buryy the peads Siege, 1937t the
 dierg, 1943 the Arscasin, 1945.
 de Buyy the Dosif Tuvo un éxito axtistico. Tuvo una influaneia erande on la palítica de los Zatados Doildosf era un gaóán de sagndale: era una moleatia a la izquierda ya militante, anteriormente de acuerdo xon los pacifistas, era mil olima de le moy Johnson" y le neutralided norteamericana hacie Brpafle Deade 1936 ha addo pregentado verion centenarea de vecon on loa teatros univeradtarion $\bar{y}$ de comunidad en los Eatados mides, 21

Liry una paetesta efectivar si la proteata ofices en la que exprema la conciencia, los aentimientos y las esperensaa del
 era durante lom anos de la suerra ai aceptamos que una canciba populer exprear el eapititu del pueblo. Ios doa toman prinedpa-






























 1200 de quo "Da reat mane better thing thromin chaniotry" al membe




 them:

Thorn ate whree bsechare maned Du peate zetricte are theyo
 They love their nomitery sifht or wreng.
 Thay almary wory shourtully to ary sation sell Stuile font will all orner plereo and armer that will etop cact sholl.



 eierta perppicania intuitiva eatre ia gurte perque, desde in guorra



 como of ocimerade da arrme.













 tabe pare proronar a of lecter ol popetile ciondog "I mofor oomedia















 quimac es onta in ramen per ia uni de dectice on ia comedia de ia pento






 porque ol autor no eo procupa do hacot do thary Breek vilianes kanin al
 de Barry. Pore on m moledram ol villano tione um seen a gifre un mi







 que no punde ser otro wín que fuore de in seniciat.

on la sala eontian como io hacía Atkiheon, "the sooial hostillty of the
 solo orftice sentía el caraotor antipátioc de Harry, 10 que nos obliga catelegar la obra on dos genorosi la comedia de costumbres y la obra de protesta sooial. Las intenciones del dramaturge ne doterminan ol generos Molizre ounndo esoribib le kieanthrope, como oomedia de contumbyes, no tonfa la menor idea que on ol aigle $X X$ ol públieo verfa on la obra una testamen contra de la rasa humana.

Born Yenterdey se divide on tres actos y la aeoibn tione lugar on ol salon de up espacioso $y$ costeso apartamiento de un hotel on Washington, D.O.

AOTO PRIMERO: La oamarora oetá haeiondo la limpieza ounndo llega Paul Verral, quens: busea a Harry Brook para quien eater dentinado ol apartanionto. Sate ontra preeodido de un botones $y$ de $\mathbb{E d d i}$ Brook, ou primo y sirvionte, y acemponado de au apoderado $y$ de Billie Dama, "que quita ol aliento por le bella $y$ estupida que es." EX Devory, ol abogado de Brock, antaño dentinado a la grandesa poro ahora acle ol abogado de Brock, eiompre un poquito borracho ontra y le plde a Brock que oonoeda a Ferral uma ontroviota, io oual ontonces hace Brock al mismo tionpo que lo raouran, lo arroglan las unaf, ctáters. So jaota de lon dfas de su niñon, de on oomionse on ol suoio nogooie que 10 ha heohe millonario. Devory conalgue la firma do Billio on algunas papoles de les ouales ella no sabe nada. EI y Brock ovitan que ella bebe $y$ le piden que ae ponge te mía linde ventido porque ol Sonador hodge $y$ su espesa van a vonir. Brock y el Sonador hablan de nogocios on favor de Harry come page per su ayuda al Sonador. Los pocos oomentarios de Billie son casi eiompre ein sentide 6 por 10 monos inconciontes, Devery asei eiempre está interviniendo para tapar aun neeodades. Deapube de que les Hodge han partido, Brock y Devery hablan de 10 que puode hacerse con Billie y deciden













































 (rimiteo)





 enton preducterem, George abbot.


















 asto gut en for a enrion 25







 ramatis.
 Pales:

 nes pare ebsonrata

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C. Fani ccranta las manames to amainste por parte to

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In carrocterisaction es al olmonto farmi mejar logrede de










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DETEX. Provts tonch ang grament.







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## Capitulo twe

## IA EXPTIOTACHOR DEL OBREEO

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\end{aligned}
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mate ont be ze popors extater
exameg bersentin the mento.



























 theapes Loe trimumios Loenion.






 gue elautia is companto. 4 mime obswa ne ocmpronith loe


 co heber oclopedo y mecho ariotar mat cantided onnilorebie

















fin yo you mant at
sud ho will cive it to gion

Be ehil dwe it to youp
4 meteo in par mithoett delay.
oh, he di22 ave it to rem
Che put it on the exumas.


It wi21 malme your howaye arme
Far men whe men induatwien,
I $m$ rindaing bitter thatre
ther haver mate ednot atmo

In over thisto ware, $n$ best
In ower thatry yeary
Entoretration al that tim.
In over thitron jomp
ohe patis on the drmand
apruse 14 al aroung.
Dectt ith boc.
It wid mace your elamame prom.




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op ame the dre of reetro
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sproal it ail aromit.
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It will mate yerim nomerse aren.
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 2ebrae:

 to be woted in the amele of the haiziona theatre. Whe
 Faul creen. hat aucionee, thourc atrinetad bo the eunt oppearamep of a cood pert of the avorip cempary, hot mo 17es of what wat to foriom.











 tate mantunace









 - 2411 tha Dat Mrs4








 \& rilotere do In Vida zool awe manaja ioliante fo Al.
 at drum de temay in ahra de protanta. Ia pendon que la do-










 tome col stanco de obsh de zetrempeoed in mentimatak.



Pytmer opicodto do anxitimet En ol oponario cuondo ia cortine se leventa entan 200 mimbrois do un comith to trabm-




 dice primoro que no sebe donde eot lefty pere que ambe que 12

 4.0.






 Fana travirante.


 Iaboraterio para trabajer on un quinico may fuportante; ol





 mo mabrifa gexalat begection to ainguns olam." Pare omando io


 zogutte on la beeap











 temeer so lexan onxiondo per al panille.







 Hantriento Oummintan*











































 Hoe oon 10 pormonaisum.


 pondedre prioen














 tinmatersol.

















Onatel osmesption at modol ohunge is atili mememhat

 coiver the menont of ciricocto anop of mealination and


 eom and nore mitmined conklot.



















 the merclace gleva, in





















 that an is empuing.


gencar et yempations 13






 Incy hay tramin elemontea oquvencionaies dol oatile pepminto





 - "rembintion mbegtio natrumulintar 27











 es aino un teatro poguler ef un actabado muco gue intonta










 una beade do cmantanation al Lede in In pretosta, tanto is

 mace an omtilo papilas.



 La clase obxame

 peoe mank. 39 Curman 20 2lama ma mave thpe de diklage
 Jolan Howerd Lemeont


 at the lis aftre It mogelita masm hoart, on cutracol Cucito and a moveh tomena, 20


























 se gnvar bace gutedil.










 ma 7 vertad.

































 ation te mineiestra militrateaf (3) In vietonia dez uco mane











 402 trabeye"
































## 












## 















































 mademales" 100 gomantry $y$ etroe de La pellufa provinetal










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anere portcineman are cut on atwike.


\#rese san Mace to to Kintm,
In overy mine and mil2

It ly than yondL and doe ami.
It'm than you'IL zind see Eil2."


 125







 y


 In maty HTATH Lem Jenmaxte








 trubado.











 20. Sertacon Bindur









 tontreynorthesosiceno.

 cheontal.



 2940. Devi47\%
3. Tu4 P. 256
4. Trem







12. 7. p. 252

22, 7 7 学
13. 퐁 p.249







16．Geavy 迫 起 D． 259


 wavt＂（acy

29．Tht pos． 150




2気 7nd wo．250m

27．Wartchy mont yo 264





33．Cuman，an，at po148
34．cocro s．stat po260

36．7nta． 5.265.
37．noth 59．26m，
130

Conftule Cuastro



THa Matinc Roohtma
Boath sif crieman







 atrous a a pernefter m mallisoction.
 onas to Iow pulpea to renciope Ming





















 on hurepay











 6En que prode trabejax Las inmigradon apanat maben loor y
 culdark a low nifoe mentras trebaje? Probamemente no thono

 ella y al rrabaje todo ol musdo 10 mabe bacer. Pezo no as facilif Lan horam an mpohan y largan mo hece zica con al

 on los Emtados thides, pradera hacer tocot ir a las tiemeas
 3i no 20 hamon es por eulpa aryemio expliea ia filoocila
 01 prexequinito ealvinistal has que mar meuno" para mer ince 8 telif:



 osco ya wice, el trabajo cure io tree més xiquasact

 134

































 mente rapitura.
 Ia primera grayra mundilal antember lograr un teatro de arte

























 oname on Ia noultive











 1me














 puate tede ar lo obausece.






 de Le mode $\bar{y}$ to cuvemtones trivialem, los hombses hapen m















 mboreve in is abome







































































 smefla ratariadaf la mexter lenta $\bar{y}$ expandiva la mptima





 oncuantra on los dos primaron oicios y corremponde an al prim maro a la frustadton de zero por an vida on la tiorrw y an a
 mere escona rearite ma manacion de ropulaibn contra la vilo
 mento de imotancia yo que muestra el Ixaoamo de zeso al


























 pidas de la bmal convermacton ach digpakades on oxden numers. del sel: al mon altozmando al erxpe fomentno y el manculino.
 ta alomana que Casener carneterisa come Ma astilimadion mecem nisallan in
 aunque (abtoz poeo merecen ol ncabre de caracterem ni uno nit otro entá antablectio on is escena dos, ni tanmoee in est
 ce; encuach fintosmente y hace inomaos cementarios a la biste-


 Ia escena dete que arve taicemente pars coueluir la andedoth. si we humiera maprinide la encena mais la obra estarla majer properadonadas pase en ose caco hublere nocesitado una
 Otre apluedik posible qua pudo haber perzitide "el calex" de

 (fita hubiera xequarido rundsr nupvente LaE escenas exprectoatatioas an el estilo pepriar.

Entilisticemento the Acting Moobine es une magoalansa
puinedpainonte exprentealetry $I$ per $i o$ tente dentre de le cemo


 La en zoon, $y$ on otrale partos es franomento xepresentativa cumo cumonta Canns

 pertine $2 x$ the phetrearaphie zeell of the mantiles in apto co their hacrintio treatront, they mout bo


Ia inchuencta do ormelil on plee fue ocnadorabile on 200








 real rebalde me dokicg a manartes"

2E20: mall that alnit the pelnto she pelnt in In



 Charieme

 you to tell that wers. 8 wil yourmalt togethor and caln
 cot it all 2 ixolo.






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Iat otrae obras de bice mon de entrio predeninante notum




 orpeeiaildedoc particularea han alco la olura do proteatia on
 juin, en al estile perpilan























 sellementr is confualion petiotictan



 caboman para expreber min ponamientes 7 Ievantamdelas parm










 two ohino wis




 vileciada pass expletar a Lom Lumiernation trabajadoren elu 1 ILegabon conatentemonte, al mosos hate que lan leges de 1 sm

 te, dompude do matar al patrions De alli on alolamte 61 es









 vemedio para la encheritud mumama ura la aboiloilo de la ino custris y al regreve a La agnculturap setan idean eatro loa trabajedores nocteamezheanow mon expremadae en le balala to
 Inohe oombse ia mequina $y$ pleste:
mhen Jeha Howary was about thasee day: ald sittin' ma his parpery minet Ho plaked wo hatior and a istthe piece of mbea,



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Wha Omptrin mota ts Jom, Ermoy
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Seman Brayy mse to tho Coptruln
nywtus tust tiftyty pomad hammes asommat
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Jobm Hemuy dre%e Niftean lest,
wan mberm atull onic mane min
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And me L|du down mis nemmor and ho didAcoo
Sowe my John Hemy ceme Izum Trovaty
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gut I mat beot notutug but a Toutum|ma man
Is's Iemdex of the rtan't atrin
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 nocial zeolomaba al zegremo Len idealen do La comanifad cointiana primitiva is gobloxno alemin democratameodin. teloxá a lea expreatonisten y hasta lon apasón conatiezran do man loctrinas mociales Inciennivat in otwo partide siom
 tieap mantariende qua exa coctuructive y cememperado al prom

 ye al pedricme depuis que lase on ol contrit havia
 gro Ia induutria ineleme entaba haedonde oon 100 trebofacosos inglaman En exprestorismo ne enconter mucha esparanme on Ia Iucha de 20 mampiotat, Cpocos dremme expreatonistat


 frmoeme e itallomos on la Viapera in la primara equyra madial alguiendo provios juremontes de no partiodpar on 200





 cancoisonta guazs. aivil contra une swecolon bien argenizalap


 Ios artiotas mexijomeale per ia rikarical de la alase meALa late doble ecrpieje an halla bien ilustrade on lea th-






 adture orintalimada, oontroleda on au axprosion cemeral por


 on 2a caltura. El públicio ne atomala de las buxilas y no mo




 norvar a la culturw burguem. Pase vanien escoritores franoen


 Ie ompaia de eritilea zrolonal.

Lea don corrientea paralolam ourrocaempalo hoeta la me








 ontecio printitivo mon omonefotimete al apporal oi alousader




















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 ascimal - intexmactomal. Itse par mpuento afinile al hocto
 ovitruentenes 10calem.
 pinspios por cunaquiess otre ruided del capital (miquine per



 rintitiva on ia comomentrection col capitalf Lae miquinam tionma
 © Iow hembses Vomes in La acturalided la traneformeda do

 ma Lindtrifa a ie cominotition te medorse oarth ha dico complow












 Lae donf la cal obrame mo demine todaviaf pare on alla madien Ia deronima afican cal henbre. Harta al prado on que al obsom

 ta al aime eraco at genark al coninio colse la maquina y las otraes concontraelonem ecorimican. Le tarve to hace mat Laell
 Lee nuoves reourmon on onorgen me expitalintay ol cepitul menmarde a an axplotachion vione den astacto in prohzema os Aal contral pelitice, pece parte dal obrape, de dixigientery me de arnaion.
mice vif en perte al preoene hiothrice cuanco protestt,


 ma hauta dendiner a mar ceclavea mumenem cuande on la cacena


 udion del dedo zerito del pie dasseho" zase termbin me conm vieste manquina bajo al mine psoceme per al axal al ampa tal concontredo me comvieste ca ma crun miquina que controse



 pofees do hahle eapofiolat in maquina erande come a mafoudna chrea.


 es al finice ontro loa emenftores nortromarioanon que twata


 Cuhmor llamar a tal corttoxio Ma dinifertoa anoodiag" abm










 yas mocialas,




















ontreumiento militur.
You'11 Loarri to foar tho mmilect and to hate boayty
 tall you the trivih about a great many thin na that 800
 ell the thinge 7 ca macht to mon-and aloout ail the
 than you at throngh youlin be equippel for jour IIfem





 conecertellomente o yer 20 maese Mampetalil mentrem



 Sien mat mand do they mint avhern



 rano pis in matory

3 ay onartzy the of the anet Ima ex 2inerty







 mia emposef, nos recuerdatic a $50 z 0$ espiendo a traven él pait tie a le prontitute medio vertictay zezo rehusanco ol cmor de Daiciry como no aiendo aufieientemente puritenc. zero y Wos muchachoa" han addo educacios tan cuidadomement que sen eneapcees cel tmor saxualy y for baleobth que son aqpacea de correr del puablo a cusiquiere que intente heoerla

7 nito noctoemericsno dol "óxito" me monciona de pare da como uno de 10 entionton del oredo do cuvilo tieso do Ia gra. racre su geipe terminante on el monaloge de la diaputa
 ningfonconse, wgut hoy de 10 de ser gerente do le tiendaf suqonco que ya te olvidaste de oso 0 nk " Ente herencia degm

 al empleado mello ataso y burberata au sefada por an Leber productorap $y$ lo prowe te un citas do nomalided aodial on al


 2a opertunidad pueda comverticilo tarimion a 61 en un costolio. Ente mundo tonebroso del ád to fue revaledc tembion por F. Soott Pitageral on minvela the Prest fationy,
 mentalidal cobardemente eaclava inherente a zero. MTodod Lon

 160





 clave por haber ado preato $y$ momtraido on scealevition on ves
 antitice on la oontifolin de evellame.









 cente los dian do antes de la evorron if maiguinta tonia que espocer entre velver a m trabojo bajo los thminoe del




mortidar de parte dol Ourtodio de Propieced Extrentoza, al yrocurncor amasral, al suersturio io In Harinap al socerter






 trestre.



 utef pezo afn Ia "eran matitra" no ae atuerth a acecnders



 coute y aencede votente. tha mutua coupecha sin emberge on
 jee"" machonalimo dien per eien $\bar{y}$ erimon panicmal.

 In protenta oontixe el opftril no controlado ${ }^{23}$ meropte on m



 and gintrede enctet























 tr mochal on al aide IX queda itmmente entahlecdia on al





 parece justen
noto. renchay meoement in the excealiont Curid produretion mut.e.vio ruitican intersente 25

In onve contime ma protenta que en ten vilida on ia aom


 cemo on ar primera olore exprondoniste.

Orman mea pemmen a ertahlocer al equillimple ontre al





 peoo conasommante, masele de ma carioatura sutivice oem
 tardmo

















 pocis, 2938, que partienpa temto on el entile pepular de las



 Kavifman-byoldad, tionen mprato on ventaja dentro de Las Eim Las lea zeformalores burgmen cducadom, donce allos pue

 prade participar on lae foman dal entile pepular uoades on erta perrapective inrguema milamente al coste de corrtrudeodr







 vos un move dnace mayer on al tratro muadal, y al axquetto po dell diacre meve.

The Adating Montre, que con minta de equilibrio monos obvia per laltan de foxma, ani como de contenido, os le obra

 promema moluse al hoztaentor.





 al preceso punsto al an Intry resemea al mito ceil datey


 wate hace hambse que vive en alla.




 ermalo manaja ra cocho a la mima marrac que el comerretente
 y al mime ntwore de amitionoan para la came 7 va al mime




tenarf ventajas que no tuvo 61 camo obrero. Ia nueve "opor-tunidad"-Ja no queda la explotacion ni del continente ni de los inmicrados-es rafs linitada. Ye no se puede hacerse ricon pero se puade hacorse bureues, gi se acepta el cutto de le venta.

3 proceso econbmico que origina este fenbmeno en mas o nenos reciente, empieze con el fonserafo de operacion manual y el Ford, modelo "I". La produccion en masa, eatilo laigane fhrire, ya exićia la venta an masa; la "economia de abundancian puede seguir deacrroillndose solamente si el obrero de mever sualdo estle incluido entre los consumidores. Las mercancias se amolitonan en 108 gracenes ad el obrero no gaste cada sem mana todo au saiaxio $y$ la venta en bonos tiene que sbsorbez los contavos que le sobran después de los gestos diexios. La industria de ve forzada a dar un alario burgués a elgunos de los obreros y asi el culto de la venta y el mito de la bonanca gonan otro nebfito, ansioso tel vez, pero a pestar de todo un croyente. Hasta ahore, no se le ha ocurxido il obrero que cada dia se pone 61 mís burgués $y$ que ha aceptado el culto cardinal del burgués sin seberlo. in le obre que esm tudiaremos a continuacior millones de norteanericanos-agentea viajoras, burguesen, y no obrerog-ae ven a ellos mismonic

Al lear peath of a solesmanola primere presunta que ae Ie ocurre al aritieo dol teatro nocial eat En eatoa dias on on que ol mito norteameriuno dal purneag este reaibiendo
la mes frentica y reacoionaria defene ictmo puede Arthur willer cortar impunemente la raiz principal del arbol mito16த1co nortegmericanof pero despuéa de eatudiarla pn poco más, se hace inteligible: Ia confustion dramktice y de pensam miento en Death if \& Seleman lo hao tolerable a los correligionazios del culto de la venta. Pero, la obra tiene gran tuerza $\bar{y}$ en rerdad que, entre otras cosam, corta de raiz al culto de la venta. Ia fuerra viene principalmente de la caracterizaci6n, auque ol tratimiento "pobtioo" del autor contrarie la caftica que intentaf en megundo lucar del diflogo. De menos fuerar ea la acol n , of pudieramos llamarla asi, que pertenece al tipo de "tema y variactones."

La otra reaccion esponténea sobreviene cuando el espectador ha salido del teatra Sabe que ha visto una de las obras mas potentes presentadas en los filtimos años en los Estados Joidos, pero se preguntas "Bien, y ahora ¿qué pararf?" Y no encuentra respuesta alguna. La obra pronuncia un juieio de dura moral-10 que no quivale a decir que no sea pu-tetico-sobre Willy Lomex, pero no ofrece solucion para los centenared de $\begin{gathered}\text { Plily } \\ \text { Lomax que estaban sentaditos on la sala }\end{gathered}$ Hay un rayito de eaperanza ai lo buscemos bien. Tal vez el hijo de Wlily, Biff, no siga los pasos de su padre. Tal vez encuentre un trabajo fitil. $\langle$ Soguirk siendo un no-willy, pero un holgazan? 0 bien, dle darta acaso el sistema econtmico oportumidad de realizar su utilidad?




 asenda a in pledrian do micasot, que pertruece a un cinese haoto ahera no aceptreles la tragoulantitho 0 blem, dos ma


 now de Ia obre xotisompeetivi 7 matimentel? Pere las obrace de este cinero inown mo thenta la protenalín de cectrar une rals impartin to cal mito nocteamarlcame zintencen, dquit

 coftice del drumatuage. se trata de sineren, mueve todos, pe-







 que el inctit ie levarte afuare is is esooman

 que no pudo manajar maty $\bar{y}$ me mila a cads memonto de in oarm
















 ya segremado do at viaje de negectom Linfa male al patio y
 thed que an miario manani. Willy alente que os un fraoame ecme agente Hajese pere Zinde 20 deflences.






 Gharleg $y$ will mplasen a jugar a lat cartan
 maxe de la obmeridady 7 zupiton una comvormedin de haee
















pueden haeer negeaios. ully ve vacama feliny la no sena play anando Bifi coce de sobejo dal calentados In mancara de man ave milly ha puento elli para conectaria a arritilar do gan.




 para le opsa, In entrevista de filily oon Homard Magner an Comertromaf sin mbarge, at acongeta que deje de vences



 peonate in al cual Bifi Jug cuando ext un boree del futhell cmariaeno. Deapué la escena oe trailada a la oficina de grapm ley dend wily otra ves 8 ve olligado a ix a pedir dinexe preataiog Chaviey otra veig ocm 10 ha hecho varian veen on

 de la fuventud de niff que hebia tratedo de aynara a 6ate een
 aveziguar par qu mift hahla fallado; por qué 61 habia parit-

tmátican y no pudo ontrurs on la univeratidad. Bermard le prow

 hable pextico la pelear wily eath muy rementico por ia prom fonte 7 me refponda.

 sado al tha, cimo ha empezmdo sele hozas para ver a ulver




 mily is vertad acerva de la slam is hemese qua abo que as













 ente alli, wiliy invente atvernan hiftocias pasa expilicar an



 Ia cocina dende Ininde ordena a 10 m mohachon que me masehora porque alles han cbondomado a au padre on el reatarrante.

 que hakia planeado hacer or is mafian cunale se mentia tan op timifte, otre ver willy esta hablandele a benp habiancale io
 01 axan Imperal crando ax hisos veancuintot anden tonia $\bar{y}$ qua








 cejando a a padre perglejo de ver que bift lo quierse Linda

mablando ean Ben, hanta que de repente se da cuaria de que emth malo. Trata de calmer a Iinda cuendo alla 10 11zma y tom



 carm junte a una trumai

 trater hacesis masohar. fila hakla do 10 mache que le


 un contal co comenter bitt ace, "git tonla menem equivo-
 m vara cen © poro Hsp ha decidide quedarme on la educad por


 prode cumprentor per eud an cha haka pacado ol inturo pace



 Ledar del dinemico haxmano bon y tell pamede do low hifea de









 masee la fuersa milencioes inate" 28 de quabla hathen, yem


 asa tonaín $n_{0} 129$
 lineas de acaibu. La interior eath may bion quiliinreds on lee doe axteriorea dei penado y del preante. Jo linee intom














 to in texaino: poxque las eecionea no nacon orgtnicemente to
 prisicx zoto, pezo me we riterciada currante tode al aecmido aste


La accibnjil puede conteucrae on la preponiedon de pydee,
 Io an y gue ilily as of protmgoniete de le obra:
is willy, rechamado como agente viajuro, puede eepogar un ruabo auevo o poxiry
 tualy Y otisa mife minte una kijos, ain modiricme ol ourse de au Vide.
C. peopués de aber que no ancontrart justificicion ante
 ficarse para daxile 20 buice que puedo-low 20,000 d 6 res de su p6lies de neigure de vidia.
pare a peane de lae mapoaiciones on al sentido de que la

 Uad la verdadera eccion de la obre. Ea que esto ascribe pien-

de Price.
In 10 que se refiere al ambiente de la obra lo que mexece la primera mencion es el decorado y la iluminecion de Jo Miela ziner, verdadero tour de force de teatro. is tai grado, que sobrevino una reaccion de los cxiticos contra la "iluminacion l6brega" de Mieleiner después de que en este caso llevb a la cumbre un estilo que habla cultivado varios años. il decorada es todo transparente, al extremo de que podriamos decir casi no exista. Las indicaciones del dramaturgo exigen que le casa de Willy tenga tres piezaa $y$ un patio exterior que puedan umarse simultáneamente, $y$ ademas, que las paredes para las escenas del presente sean visibles, en tanto que para las escenas del pasado los personajes pueden pasar libremente al traves de las paredes. Y eate milagro ténico lo realiz6 Mielziner, realizando otro a la vez, que el phblico no se viera distraido de Ia accion por el primer milagro ténico que, por medios introm vertidos produce un sentimiento destinado a crear el ambiente falsamente extrovertido del culto de vente, y de Filly. Es un ambiente que opera sobre la accion, para der al flimo parm lamente de Linda un sentido tragico y profundo. Willy, pagué hoy el Gitimo abono de la casa. Hoy,querido, y no habra nadie en casa...." 32

Otro efefto interesante es el del fondo musical particum lar para marcar la entrade de varios personajes y subrayar au participacion en la accion. Taifién la casa se cubre de hojas
cecal on doa ocentone para ocmpletar al mondimiente de 10 meppetivo,

Al hablar de Low perrovajos operse imodiatomente La pro-
 the para al axsmon ulterior de at oa traceata o no la obrap poxgive la cuantion ac la tracedia eate integralmento ilgade ect
 un permomaje pratuado, complejo y oembiante, a pemar do que no se zeconoet a a seme le seconoce al philico. Lianima rem condas carmeterisa a Linde y Biff, y los doe poseen tanto oer

 objetrivmente y on vistud de que mas cocisionas no alterar ia
 trasador a do Atronaionem
 Linde, que per amario, no puode apreciar au anto-engeltef y al


 que ve la lelmedad del matido de vilorea an an padse, pere





villa, la maravilla de este pais, que un hombre puode liegar al fin de su vida con billantes aqui, solamente sobre la base de ser querido. "34 Ben repreaenta en parte la misma aco titud, pero ainicamente, $y$ es un simbalo anacronico y evidente de los robber barans norteamericanos del siglo panalo.

Hestilo de la obra se sefiela por le fueraa, le tension interna, la Mreticencia" 35 Ia maita de pretensiones" 36 del Irgmaturgo. Ista hecho sobre la base de una ilusibn que no entre on onflicto con las convenciones ascenogreficas, entre ellas las convenciones radicales del tiempo, reminiscentes de La pintura futurista en ou multiplicidad. No es mas que parm cialmente simbolitta por la razon que hemos aiscutido antost que las obres que contienen simbolos particulares $y$ fuertea no pueden llegar sex simbolos integreles. Las obras que centienen partes aimb6licas vehementes son las expresionistab, no las simbolistas. 37 No hay gran contradicion en que Hiller haya mezclado los sub-eatilos expresioniata y simbolista posque los dos son romanticos, 0 cuando menos no esten menos unificados que los generos mesclados de la obra. Millar ha trabajado en aiversos estilos. En All ${ }^{[1]}$ Sons escribib una obra roméntian de "problema" dentro del subestilo naturalieta. m lenguaje de Death of g Salemen es adecuado a la obo rasi pasmos por al to la pretenaiones de trasedia. La maw nere de desembir es sencillan ${ }^{38}$ dice Nathan. El diJlogo parece natural en los personajea, galvo en una media docena de
"parlamentos de tesis" $y$ el parlamento lirico sobre Muna sonrisa $y$ el brillo de los zapatos" $y$ abunda en el sabor del habla de los grupos burgueses, semi-proletarizados, de Nueva York.

Si Bentley habla de la prosa cuando la llama "ua manera retbrica falsa del habla oído solamente en Broadway, en las peliculas, y en los discursos radiof6nicos y politicosm ${ }^{39}$ seguramente ha olvidado hasta que grado el habla del culto de 1a venta esta formado por Broadway, las peliculas, el radio y los discursos politicos. La prosa es netural al burgués de Nueva York. Si Bentley esta Ilamando "retbrica falsa" a la poesia de la obra, tiene una tesis mds firme, la cual sostiene mejor en otra parte del mismo articula:

It is interesting that critics who have never shown any love for poetry praise "Salesman" as a great poetic drema. The poetry they like is bad poetry, the kind that sounds big and sad and soul-searing when heard for the first time and spoken very quickiy within a situation that has already generated a good deal of emotion. I think it was Paul Muni who made the classic comment that in this play you can't tell where the prose leaves off and the poetry begins. You cen tell, though, that the prose is relatively aatisfactory, the poetry ham; mere rhetorical phrasing, as witness any of the longer speeches. Indeed, this kind of poetry contributes very liberally to that blurring of lines which enables Mr. Miller to write a social drama and a dragedy at the same time and thus please all. 40

El empleo por Miller de una especie "Hollywood" de poeala es probablemente intencional como medida en su intento de glorificar al vendador norteamericano, wn intento que se discutira junto con sus pretenciones de tragedia. 耳athan critica a

Thlly por mtantos exitos, wi pero eato as uno de loa poees anm reres de 2 di dreccion eqebnica máa bien que del texto. pantIay alabra a Lee Cobb por su "blida sepregentacion, bactante fuerte para sostener cualquier obra... Ie vindicact 6 a trimfan te del método del Gmoypo 42

Ea una obra pare las tablas, no para la lectura, 7 IAla Karen le inprimi 6 una direced 6 que aproveche pienamente la eacenografla de juelginer $y$ damostrb que el eal igual de ane maestroa Cluman y 3trasberg, He polide combinar aus metoden con la velocida $J$ timing de una comede de Al Vood, 7 Ia obra resultante es puro teatro, teatro magnífico. Ias ftinas nom ticias que tien al que earibe etto son au Salemen ha podim
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31 impacto emotivo prooede principalmente de la caracter
 to que encuentran on al plaliee, a pesar de que Nathan opine esu Wol ciecto final es al una depresion mental mbe menos fuerte. 43 Raraedia eato on parte wa honentidad inflexilie de sua omociones" 44 y la epperanza on los valones latentes on ol hijo Biff. El megunc impecto procede del diflogo, que on
 del tipo de "toma y variaciones, " no ocmunica gran omocion on comparacion con la que producenla oracterizachon y al aikege.

Ia pretonaion do Miller de haber escrito una tragedia,
déndonos además un resumen de su "estética" merece examen. De bu articulo publicado on ol Hen Yoxk Thmes, y reproducido en los progremas de las reniesentaciones de Death of a Salegmen, seleccionamos algunas frases que sintesizan le idea de Ia "trasedia nueva" que profesa este autor:
...tragic feelin is evoked in us when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life if need be, to secure one thine-his sense of personol dignity... The flaw, or crack in the character, is really his inherent unwilingness to remein passive in the face of what he conceives to be a challenge to his dienity, his image of his Mghtful status... from this total onsiaueht by an individual ageinst the seemingly stable cosmos surrounding us--from this total examination 0 : the "unchangeable" environment-momes the terror and fear that is classically associated with tragedy... Now if it is true that tragedy is the consequeace of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself fustly, his destrucion in the attiempte posts a wrong or an evil in his enviroment. and this is precisely the moral ity of tiresedy and its lesson... The thrust for freedom is the quality in tracedy thich exalts. The revolutionary questioning of the stable environment is what terrifies ... and if this strugele must be total and without reser vation, then it automatically demonstrates the indestruetible will of men to achleve his humanity... The possibility of victory must be there in tragedy.

Vemos poi las primeras cuatro frases que todo se basa aquí an una lucha del hombres el sentimiento tresico, el pum to debll del personaje que ocasione au cafda, el terror y el miedo, y la moraleja de la tragedia. Esta Iucha también, en la Gilima frase, "Hiuestra la valuntad indestructible....y la posibilidad de la victoria." Ademas de la iucha, tenemos en la penkitime frase "la ilibertad...que exaltan y "la duda rovolucioneriz....que espanta."
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Representative of the Four
Principal Themes for Protest


Mexico, D. F.

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## Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

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United States
Studies of
Seven Important Plays Representative of the Four Principal. Themes for Protest

## T E S I S

QUE PRESENTA PARA RECIBIR EL GRADO
DE MAESTRO EN ARTES DE LA FACUL-
TAD DE FILOSOFIA Y LETRAS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE MEXICO, EL ALUMNO:
Edward Owensby

> MAYO 1951
> MEXICO, D. F.

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The Selling Cult and the Success MythDeath of a Salesman

## Chapter 1

# MINORITY DISCRIMINATION AND LYNCHING 

Deep Are the Roots

Hello Out There

0NE OF THE MOST obvious undemocratic practices in the great American democracy, and one which wins a deep distrust for the United States in all of the non-European world, is minority discrimination. It has been chiefly directed against the negro who lived among poverty-stricken and uneducated white neighbors. He who came to America as a bound slave always caught it a little bit worse than his fellow-butt of discrimination who came as an immigrant wage-slave. The non-negro discrimination has been intimately tied to the succeeding national waves of immigration from the Old World: he who came last spoke the worst English, had to take the lowest paid jobs, became the second class citizen of his time, and was relieved to see the next national group show up as material for the "melting pot" on the heels of some new European disaster or tyranny until the early 1920's when the pot's raw material was almost cut off. The pot never worked without human waste, it was almost impartially ruthless and it left its mark on every newcomer. Any difference served for discrimination: color, race, national origin, political tradition, religion, odd dress, beards, traditional diet, anything. If the reader
will forgive my master race vocabulary, the mick, the cl:ink, the squarehead, the hunky, the greaser, the dago and the kike all had their day, but the jig always had it the worst. The discrimination against the mick, the squarehead and, to some extent, the hunky seems to have passed for the most part, but the come-latelys and the negro are still catching it.

The dramatic protests against discrimination make up a longer list than that of any of the four grounds for protest examined in this study. The negro has been the hero of nearly all of these because he makes a more theatrical protagonist, in addition to the obvious fact that he is the person most discriminated against.

Home of the Brave by Arthur Laurents, 1945, is the only major play dealing with discrimination against Jews, and the Mexican-American is defended only by James Broughton's one-act Summer Fury of the same year. All the rest of the plays are about negros, except for a prize winning series of 13 short radio plays by Alfredo Segre which deserve to be mentioned because Segre studies discrimination among many of the less widely known minority groups and the more subtle group-to-group discriminations within the minority groups themselves. "Your Neighbors" the series was called and was written for the Institute for Democratic Education and distributed nationally to radio stations on records.

The negro plays begin with O'Neill's All God's Chillun Got W'ings, 1924, which studies miscegenation but is not a protest play. The first protest is Paul Green's excellent work, In Abrabam's Bosom, 1926 It was followed in 1934 by his Roll, Sweel Chariot. by John Wexley's protest against the frameup of the Scottsboro boys, They Sball Not Die, and by the first rate Stevedore of Paul Peters and George Sklar. Green repeated on the same theme in 1936 with Hymn to the

Rising Sun and adapted Richard Wright's novel, Native Son to the stage in 1941.

The 1945-46 season was a big one for protests against discrimination and included Robert Ardrey's Jeb, Lillian and Esther Smith's Strange Fruit and James Gow and Arnaud D'Usseau's Deep Are the Roots. The last won out over the other two in the audience's favor, and it receives a detailed study in this chapter. It has been followed only by a weak one-act which was a curtain raiser to Fry's A Pboenix Too Frequent in 1950, Kenneth White's Freight.

The best of the anti-lynch protests, William Saroyan's Hello Out There, 1942, is also studied in detail in this chapter. Several of the plays mentioned as protests against discrimination also touch on lynching: In Abrabam's Bosom and Stevedore, the best of them, and Strange Fruit and Freight.

The theatre goer who buys a ticket to see Deep Are the Roots knows before he does so that the play is about racial discrimination, and if he believes in race superiority he would not have bought the ticket because there are no apologies for discrimination in the contemporary American theatre. Given these conditions, the spectator knows beforehand everything except the details and the denouement. He knows the moral judgment of the play but he does not know whether the solution is semi-tragic (the persecution victim is beaten and the audience condemns the forces which conquer him) or whether it is semi-comic (the victim surprises and confounds his oppressors) or whether it is serious and verisimilar (the victim causes admiration for his struggle with an ugly and unchanging situation). The spectator attends a protest play against racial discrimination, then, with everything previously resolved: the situation, the moral condemnation, the complete anti-
cipation of the scene a faire and the three possibilities for the denouement clearly in mind.

Such a theatre goer guarantees the success of an action melodrama. There is no "problem" nor intellectual stimulus nor mixture of sentiments. Everything is black and white, everything is either virtue or vice, the audience has agreed for a long time with the values expressed in the play.

In case the preceding description may seem negative to the reader, it is necessary to add that the melodramatic theatre has its justification. It was the favorite of the Americans of the past century, a young people, fully confident, active, crude, quick to stamp things ugly or wrong, and without "complexes." Above all, the melodramatic theatre is an extrovert theatre; it verifies the popular moral code and demonstrates an immediate punishment for all vices violating the "unwritten law."

Today the bourgeois audience in the United States is not so simple that it can enjoy all the kinds of melodrama it once could. Two modern genres survive, however, and are successful: the psychological melodrama, in the romantic style, if it has enough subtlety (read "exoticism") of the Freudian variety or if it is based on common fears; and the action melodrama, in the popular or "realistic" style, if it is based on attitudes or prejudices common to large groups of people.

Religion, crimes followed by flights, mystery and inevitable punishments, and the protest against racial discrimination are three themes very much used with the melodrama form in the United States of recent days. The action melodrama of social protest is a hybrid form using a genre of the popular style onto which are grafted foreign formal characteristics, most of them from the romantic style.

The playwrights in the theatre of social content
have rapidly learned that the "message" best adapted to melodrama is that of discrimination. Our times have established a new tentative equilibrium between the melodrama form and a single favorite theme. A magnificent exception which should be mentioned is Kingsley's melodrama, Dead End, a work of protest against conditions in the slums, where people must live like qualquier animal.

The spontaneous reaction of the audience to Deep Are the Roots was assured; the prejudices of the authors coincided with those of the audience. "They're right," was the comment. Another reaction was one of hope when on stage the daughters of the old reactionary Senator were seen making a decision to support the negro protagonist instead of their obstinate father. And, as in all good melodrama, the most powerful spontaneous impressions grow out of the action more than out of the dialog or the characters. It goes without saying that Deep Are the Roots is one of the best action melodramas in the contemporary social theatre.

The authors, James Gow and Arnaud D'Usseau, know very well the limitations and the possibilities of melodrama and they took full advantage of them in their other success, Tomorrnw the World, a mixture of action melodrama and psychological melodrama.

The action of Deep Are the Roots takes place in the home of Senator Ellsworth Langdon, in the Deep South. It is in three acts.

ACT ONE: Honey, a young negro girl, and Bella Charles, an older negro woman, both servants in the house, are getting ready to go to meet Brett, Bella's son, who is returning from the army. The Senator enters and inquires whether Bella has been provided transportation to the station. His younger daughter, Genevra, comes in to announce that she too is going to meet Brett. Her father is annoyed and forbids her
going. When Bella promises to keep her in the car, Genevra is grudgingly allowed to go. Alice, the older daughter of the Senator, is momentarily upset when she hears of her sister's rash action, but her father's accusations that she is responsible for spreading "such fine ideas" do not deeply impress her. Her cousin, Roy Maxwell, comes by to tell them that he has made arrangements for Brett to become principal of the negro school, but Alice says he cannot take the job because he is planning to work for the doctorate in bio-chemistry at the University of Chicago. Alice's plans for Brett leave the Senator quite upset. Howard Merrick, a novelist friend of Alice who is visiting the South for a few weeks, enters and tells the Senator that he and Alice plan to be married. The Senator gives Howard a gold watch which has been in the family for many years.

Genevra bursts in to announce the arrival of "Lieutenant Brett Charles." Howard offers his hand and afterwards the Senator explains to Howard that it is not the custom to shake hands with negros. After the others have gone, Genevra tells Howard about Brett-what a fine person he is and how he and she played together as children until her father forbad it. They leave and Brett comes in looking for Alice. His mother warns him to be careful of his behaviour now that he is back, but Brett tells her that he was treated fairly in England and in the army and he no longers wants to be humble. Genevra comes in with an old rag doll, and she and Brett begin reminiscing although Brett is somewhat reserved with her. As she begins to leave Fe repeats a few lines from Othello, lines which they had recited when they "played theatre" as children. She returns but Brett insists that they cannot be as close friends as they once were. Alice brings to Brett the papers to be signed for his scholarship at Chicago,
but he has changed his plans. He now wants to be principal of the little negro school. Everybody except Genevra thinks he has made an unwise choice. Finally Alice calls Roy to let him know that Brett will take the principal's job. Bella throws away the old rag doll, despite Brett's protests that he wants to keep it. Bella is suspicious of his look and reminds him not to forget that "black's black and white's white." She and Brett leave for the luncheon being given in his honor.

ACT TWO: A week later. The Senator is in a bad mood, complaining about the unromantic weding arrangements being made by Alice and Howard. Bella returns to Genevra a lipstick she has found and advises her to be less careless with her things. Howard brings in a newspaper with an editorial called "Our Negro Veterans" which he cannot quite understand. It contains the statement "This is America, our prejudices are sacred, and we're proud of them." When Genevra announces to Brett that she has been able to get him a Pullman ticket to the Atlanta conference, he seems nervous. She asks him, when they are alone, why his attitudes seem to have changed since the night before when they had gone walking along the river. He is concerned because a car went by and they may have been seen. He realizes that he has done just what negros returning from the service were expected to do: he has dared to look at a white woman. He tells Genevra he loves her, as he has for a long time and as he will for some time to come, but that he will not tell her so again. Genevra is not sorry he has spoken and she tells him she will do the only thing she can do, she will go away so that she will not be there when he returns from Atlanta.

Brett tells Alice of the mixed conference for negros and whites, and she asks him not to go because there are "many Communists" at such meetings. Brett
tells his mother that Alice disapproves of his going to the conference, and Bella urges him to leave home for good, to go to the North, because she feels he has done wrong in being so friendly with Genevra. The Senator enters, becomes irritated to find Brett sitting in his chair, and orders him away-and to take off his uniform. As soon as the Senator has gone, Alice rescinds his order and blames his flare-up on Howard's showing him the editorial. Howard calls the Senator a "relic," and Alice's resentment becomes even greater when he adds a comment about the South:

On top the flower is quite beautiful, full of grace and very delicate. But underneath are the roots, and occasionally you glimpse them, twisted and crossed as if choking each other.

When the Senator returns he notices that Howard is not wearing the gold watch, and Howard has to admit he has mislaid it. Roy comes in to report stories going around the town about Brett's behaviour, one about an incident at the library. Howard, however, happened to be at the library at the time, and he has a different version. The Senator sends for Honey because he is convinced that Howard's watch was not lost and that Brett stole it. Genevra hears her father questioning the chambermaid and sees him leave to search Brett's room. Genevra and Howard are left alone and she tells him of a lynching she saw as a child and of the unforgettable looks on the faces of the lynchers. She says she saw that look on her father's face as he left to search Brett's room. Howard tells her that she is in love with Brett, but she refuses to admit it:

> Don't you realize what happens to a woman in the South who is accused of a thing like that? Why, she's hated worse than a Negro!...I'm really very angry!

Brett brings to Alice an unsigned note which warns
her that she has been seen with Brett coming out of the woods. Alice becomes suspicious of Genevra and is horrified when Genevra says it is true, that she was with Brett, that she is very fond of him, and that, in fact, she loves him. Alice tries to get Genevra to say that Brett forced her to accompany him and that he has a deliberate scheme afoot, even to stealing the watch. Howard tries to persuade Alice to be reasonable, but she refuses. He leaves. Honey comes in to tell the Senator she has found the watch, and he forces her to say she found it in Brett's room. The sheriff and his deputies come, and Brett tries to escape. They beat him while Alice screams "No!" until Howard stops them. As they carry the unconscious Brett out, Howard turns to Alice and says, "Well? Are you satisfied?"

ACT THREE: That evening. The Senator is trying to bring Alice out of a troubled mood. She is disturbed by her alienation from Howard and by Brett's being beaten and put into jail. Cousin Roy Maxwell comes in to advise the Senator to ask for Brett's release. Some of the townspeople are stirred up, particularly because Brett is a veteran. Despite the fact he will lose the Senator's political backing, Maxwell decides to request Brett's release himself. Bella comes back from an unsuccessful attempt to see her son. Bitterly she tells the Senator she wants nothing more to do with his house. Alice asks her father if Brett really stole the watch. Getting no answer, she answers herself: he did steal it. Genevra and Howard arrive after also having failed in their attempt to see Brett and to get him a lawyer. Alice suprises them by telling them that Brett is being released that night and will be put on a train for the North. Genevra would like to see him but is told that it is impossible. She decides also to go North, immediately, and to find Brett through his friends there.

Honey enters hesitantly to confess that the Senator
made her say she had found the watch in Brett's room, and she asks Howard to return to the Senator the ten dollars he gave her. The room is empty for a short time until Brett, bandaged and dirty, comes in, as then does Alice, and she is startled by his presence. He wants to know one thing: Why did she not let him defend himself when he was accused of being a thief? She has to confess that although she wanted to be just and fair she still considered him an inferior. Howard comes in after having sent for the Senator, who appears and is given his ten dollars. He expresses his hate for Brett and negros like him, and when Alice reveals that Genevra is in love with Brett the Senator goes to his room in a fury. Alice is completely disillusioned. Brett says that he wants only to be allowed to live his own life and that he has decided "the wall is too high to climb." Howard tries to make him say that as long as he trusts Genevra he cannot feel that all white people are bad, but Brett becomes furious and refuses to hear any more from him.

Genevra comes down with her suitcase, ready to catch the train, and is happily surprised to find Brett there. She asks him to marry her so that they can go North and live together, but Brett is not certain it would be any better for them or for the world. She still feels, however, that she must leave town, and Howard goes with her to the train, promising to come back to Alice who is left alone once more with Brett. "Maybe that wall is not quite so high," she says to him. The Senator comes in, ignores Brett and announces to Alice his means for fighting the situation:

[^0]them money. I'll give them more more money. I go to join my allies.
He leaves after Alice reminds him he forgot his watch. Brett says to Alice, "We're on the same side," and she answers "Yes, Brett, yes....yes" as they clasp hands and the curtain falls.

The movement of the play would serve very well as a model for the young dramatist who wished to learn the technique of tempo and thythm used in a large part of the American commercial theater: the psychological and action melodrama, comedy, except for the romantic, and the farce-comedy. All of these genres have, as a rule, movements like that of Deep Are the Roots, and its excellence within a tradition of many years is what causes Allardyce Nicoll to speak of the "skillful technique" ${ }^{1}$ of the play. The tempo consists in a series of accelerations, a technique called "building a scene" and made up of short scenes which begin at a slow pace. The accelerations come from the introduction in each short scene of new actions, each one calmed afterwards with an arbitrary and tentative resolution. The new actions have an ascending importance and their sequence gives an open rhythm which narrows toward the curtain of each act and, especially, toward the climax in the third act. The rhythm, like that of drawing room comedy, is one of broad undulations with tense positive peaks and relaxed negative depressions. In Deep Are the Roots and in almost all the plays of the above mentioned genres which have similar movements, the majority of the new actions satisfy physical intrests, often sexual, rather than represent a logical and natural outgrowth of the preceding actions.

Precisely because they recognize the possibilities and limitations in the movement of a good melodrama, Gow and D'Usseau have given us a good example of
the technique. In the preceding generation the masters of this technique as applied to the comedy are George Kaufman and George Abbot. In the present one, the successor and disciple of Abbot in comedy is the director, and author of Born Yesterday, Garson Kanin. In another chapter of this study there is a detailed critique of his play.

Whoever expects a logical and artistic structure from the melodrama expects a lot. When Gassner criticizes Deep Are the Roots for having "some plot devices...strained too far," ${ }^{\text {he }}$ he certainly dreaming of other genres, because among the characteristics of the melodrama that of plot subtlety is missing.
'The principal structure is the illustration of the milieu of discrimination, whose roots are deep, and, in the crisis of the play, the substructure of the "ironic discovery" is used as it was used by Terence. This ironic discovery arises from the fact that some of the characters of the play, and usually the audience, are already acquainted with essential discoveries of the plot which are not known to the rest of the characters. The evening walk of Genevra and Brett, and her purchase of the Pullman ticket to Atlanta for him, produce the crisis of the play when the Senator and Alice find out what the audience already knows. The crisis is divided into two climaxes: the first, in the second act, when Alice finds out about Brett and Genevra and enters into the spiteful conspiracy which her father conceived in order to send Brett to jail for robbery; the second is the repetition of the first, when, in the third act after Brett escapes, the Senator discovers Brett and Genevra's relationship (Genevra aggravates it by asking Brett to marry her) and leaves to call the lynch mob he has helped organize and finance, while Alice is left as Brett's tentative ally in his plan to flee to the North.

Such structures based on illustration and repetition
are cited by Lawson ${ }^{3}$ as characteristic of the contemporary commercial American theatre, and he criticizes them severely; he argues for a logical and generative progression of the action in their stead.

The action consists of so many parts that several sentences are necessary in order to set it forth in a logical proposition, and this, according to Price, ${ }^{\star}$ constitutes a weakness:
A. Brett, negro war veteran, returns as a lieutenant and refuses the scholarship arranged by Alice for study at the University of Chicago. He decides to remain in his hometown as a teacher in a negro school.
B. Genevra buys the Pullman ticket for Brett's journey to a conference in Atlanta, and some of the neighbors see Brett and Genevra on a moonlight walk. They mistake her for her "liberal" sister Alice, and they send a threatening letter to Alice. When Alice finds out about the ticket and the walk, out of despair she enters into the spiteful conspiracy to sent Brett to jail.
C. Brett escapes and returns to confront Alice who is terrified. Alice is shocked when Genevra offers to marry Brett, who in turn explains to Genevra that circumstances will not permit their marriage. The Senator discovers what has happened between Brett and Genevra and leaves to call the lynch mob. Alice, who has remained with Brett, tells him he can count on her help.
It is not a sufficiently concise proposition to have pleased Price, but it is characteristic of the action ${ }^{5}$ of a melodrama.
Only the bare necessities of the action are served by the set: the rich interior of the Senator's house in the South which has been more than a hundred years in the family. Nothing is suggested of the environment outside of the house, and neither the house nor the environment participate plastically in the action; everything from outside is known through the words of the characters.

The characterization also shows the stamp of the traditional melodrama. The opinion of Nicoll of "firm handling of dramatic character" ${ }^{\circ}$ is exaggerated if he speaks of the drama in general and not specifically of the genre of melodrama. All characters are "types" ${ }^{7}$ using Usigli's term, and are two-dimensional. The entire cast of characters, with the exception of Brett, and including the negro women, forms a harmonious group; all but Brett belong to the Senator's household. The play's foundations hardly rest upon conflicts between groups of characters or upon sharp divisions within the same group of characters. Technically there is a lack of grouping of characters in forming the parties to the conflict. All conflicts are occasional, or of an intimate or familiar nature, and they are catalyzed by the arrival of the "stranger," Brett, who returns home transformed by his experiences in the war. Perhaps the unbalanced grouping was selected by the authors to emphasize the aloneness of the protagonist and win greater audience sympathy for him from the beginning. Arbitrary, yes, but so is melodrama.

The style of Deep Are the Roots is principally naturalistic, and therefore within the romantic style current, and is based on almost complete illusion. It does not resort to the conventions of the popularstyle melodrama, as known in the past century: no "aparts" or twisting of mustache on the part of the villain; no fainting of the heroine; no inevitable corporal punishment. Even so, the melodrama of today is only slightly more subtle. The style is one which has rendered its services to a long series of writers for the commercial theatre and the movies. A brief review of the Gow-D'Usseau team's career will help explain their sure handling of the melodrama:

Both men are. . .refugees from Hollywood and are bent to make the fullest use of their freedom...In 1931 Mr .

Gow entrained for Hollywood, the last resort of footloose writing men, and three years later won honors as the coauthor of the picture One Night of Love... Consequently he found himself in great demand for screen jobs involving operatic matter. In between assignments he collaborated, with Edmund North, on a stage play The Drums, Professor which.. . Frank McCoy tried out in White Plains but failed to bring to New York. Another collaboration, Rhyme Without Reason was produced by Arthur Beckhard in San Francisco during the 1937-38 season but closed after a week's run. . . Arnaud D'Usseau. . . His first successful celluloid assignment was the thriller One Crowded Night. From then on, in Hollywood's delightful manner, he was typed as a mystery writer... Messrs. Gow and D'Usseau met on the R. K. O. lot and found themselves collaborating on an original story Repent at Leisure. Gow suggested collaboration on a stage play dealing with a destructively possessive mother, How Like an Angel. After various other chores for the film industry, the two men joined forces in 1942 on another serious enterprise as they started speculating about what would happen if a Nazitrained youngster were to come into contact with the democratic way of life. The happy result was Tomorrow the World. The play was placed on the market when the authors were in the East working on a documentary film for the O. W. I.'s Overseas Motion Picture Bureau under Robert Riskin. The Theron Bamberger production, directed by Elliott Nugent, opened on April 14th, 1943. A second company started touring the play in September, 1943. The collaborators stayed together as privates in the Signal Corps Photographic Center in Astoria. Long Island, within subway distance of Broadway. Here they found an opportunity for a second successful collaboration, Deep Are the Roots, which opened on Broadway with a detonation in the fall of 1945 . $^{8}$
Their preceding work, Tomorrow the World, is of the same genre of action melodrama as Deep Are the Roots and the two plays show the authors' apprenticeship in Hollywood. Some day a student of the theatre will make an interesting study of the theatrical forms of the nineteenth century which dominate the production of movies in Hollywood.

The language of Deep Are the Roots is also characteristic of the melodrama. It is neither that of the characters, unless the director arranges it that way, nor that which establishes the authors' personal stamp. It is a function of the action which it must present, and it sticks close to it and serves it in the same way that the dialog of the American "western" story serves what it has to relate.

The play, like every good melodrama, has 1 much greater success on the stage than in the library. The strongest emotions come from the action with its provocative social suggestions and, secondarily, from the dialog which has the sole function of carrying the action forward at a swift pace. The two-dimensional characters have little interest outside of their actions and their sexual tension.

We have now said enough about the action melodrama as a traditional form in the nineteenth-century American theatre, but the first examples of the use of this genre in the social protest theatre of the present century deserve to be mentioned. The first is probably The Last Mile by John Wexley, one of the ten best plays selected by Burns Mantle for the 1929-30 season. It is a melodrama about the life in a penitenciary, although Sobel calls it a "tragedy," ${ }^{0}$ and it is a protest against the death penalty. Again Wexley was chosen for the 1933-34 selection with his They Sball Not Die a protest against the false process of a group of young negros in the South, the infamous Scottsboro case. The year 1934 is also the one in which appeared the melodrama against racial discrimination and its economic causes which many critics called the best in its genre, and which several of them named the best play of the American leftist theatre: Stevedore, written by Paul Peters and George Sklar.

Attitudes toward discrimination have changed since

1934; while Peters and Sklar could count on the prejudices necessary to the success of their melodrama only in the small workers' theatre, in 1945 Gow and D'Usseau could count on the same prejudices among the bourgeoisie in order to assure a commercial success for their protest play. This is one of the reasons why Deep Are the Roots shows a less combatitive spirit than Stevedore. Another is found in the personal antecedents of Gow and D'Usseau.

Before it appeared in the United States, the melodrama triumphed in the European middle class theatre of the nineteenth century. Usigli gives us an account of the origins of its characters in the conventionalization of the romantic theatre in France. ${ }^{10}$ Today only the psychological melodrama remains in the romantic current; the action melodrama has been incorporated into the popular style, as the psychological melodrama will be when it acquires "standard" types and a non-exotic, common sense basis.

If there is a symbolic element in the Gow and D'Usseau melodrama we find it in the final decisions of the Senator's daughters: Genevra's separation from her family and her home in the South; the hesitant, timid and still "liberal" help which Alice offers to Brett. Surely they are not revolutionary symbols, as we should think from Gassner's phrase, "they dynamited the facade of false liberalism," ${ }^{11}$ but they show at least small actions on the part of two persons of "good will," as Gassner likes to say. Another nebulous element is the veteran as the hero of the play. In the year of the atomic bomb upon Hiroshima and the return to their homes of the first veterans, the sight of the civilian still wearing his uniform (there was not much civilian clothing) with the insignia of the "ruptured duck" caused a great impression of gratitude and a feeling
in the people of responsibility toward the veteran. "War Veteran" was the magic phrase of 1945.

Upon this background, the best synthesis, perhaps, of the literal meaning of the play is that of Gassner: a protest against "surface magnanimity and rooted prejudice." ${ }^{12}$ The moral condemnation of Deep Are the Roots almost does not show in the text. The authors contented themselves with forcefully carrying forward an action which would verify the condemnation with which the spectator entered the theatre. There is a trace of the melodrama of the last century: the abusive speech of the old Senator when he exits for the last time to call the lynchers, which, in times of a more open expression of impulse, would have resulted in a hurricane of whistling and perhaps would have caused the leap from the house onto the stage of a "defender" from among the spectators, and the assault on the Senator, in spite of his age. Today we are more rational, but the old trick still serves to provoke at least an intellectual protest and hold it during a half a page until the third act curtain. When the curtain falls we doubt, perhaps, the permanency of Alice's "liberal" decision, but there is no doubt that the old man is "evil, evil as a man can be." We leave the theatre triumphant and happy.

The judgment of "skilled technique" is not so exaggerated, then, if we do not attempt to apply the values of the art theatre to the melodrama. There is no doubt that Gow and D'Usseau know their melodrama business.

The events which appeared in newspapers as a background for Deep Are the Roots in the 30's and 40's could be collected by the hundreds. The most notorious was the Scottsboro Case which we mentioned before. The most ugly one to follow it occurred in the suburbs of Los Angeles in 1946. A negro had purchased
a lot and on it built a house largely with his own hands. He paid no attention to the threats of his white neighbors. The house nearly finished and the wife and children of the negro installed in it, the white neighbors came in the midnight darkness with kerosene and gasoline, set fire to the house, and burned the negro's family inside of it. This not in the South but in the "liberal" state of California. Los Angeles is particularly "liberal" as Americans of Mexican extraction know. The play Summer Fury by James Broughton deals with the police of that liberal city and their treatment of Mexican-Americans, affectionately called "cholos" by the police.

Brett also speaks in Deep Are the Roots of the good treatment of negro soldiers by the people outside of the United States, especially in England, France and Belgium, and of the violence of white southern soldiers when they saw negros in the company of European girls. In Belgium, more than in any other part of Europe, many negro soldiers married local girls and remained in Europe to live when they were discharged from the Army. There came out in the newspapers during the war reports of increased violence in Belgium and in some of the ports of France, caused by the association of negro soldiers with white girls, but the affair was too well whitewashed by the War Department for it to be exposed in a complete investigation of the incidents.

But violence is not the most powerful weapon of race discrimination. The real weapon is economic, and it is a cause as well which spirals up feeding on itself. The segregation of racial minorities into lower paid jobs is drawing the line more tightly about the "second class citizen". which is the new "liberal" concept which attempts to shift the basis of prejudice: "It's not because you are black, it's because you don't earn enough."

This contemporary semantic evolution holds infinite possibilities to the advantage of the master race supervising the melting pot. Its goal is obvious, the social "organization" of the United States into two groups: the American of northern Euorpean extraction who will "supervise" and live in the best houses; and the rest of the Americans who will do the work and live wherever space can be found for them. Another function of vested economic power is the one which permits the owners of houses and buildings to say that second class citizens cannot rent them or purchase them. This is the same ancient European "ghetto" system based on the fact that if a man cannot live near the good jobs, he will have to take whatever pay is offered where be is. Such a segregation also permits municipal "economies" to the first class citizen, because good schools, paving, sanitary service, etc., are necessary only in the "better" part of town. This too forms a spiral because the "better" parts of every American town get better and better as the "worse" parts get worse and worse.

One of the ugliest centers for economic discrimination against the negro is Washington D. C. where the American law-makers sit. Probably the only center where whites and negros can gather socially or hold joint meetings is the clubhouse of the American Veterans Committee there. A protest at the popular level provoked by the discrimination exercised by landlords against negros is expressed in the "Bourgeois Blues" of the famous folksinger, Leadbelly. The song also reflects in one of the verses a new social trend, the increasing representation of the negro in the federal government and along with it the growth of bourgeois prejudices among negro bureaucrats against negros with small incomes:

Me and my wife, went all over town

Everywhere we go the people would turn us down, Lawd In the Bourgeois town, Heee, the Bourgeois town
I got the Bourgeois Blues-gonna spread the new; all around.
Dean Martin, he was standing upstairs
I heard a white man say I don't want no niggers up there, lawd
He's a Bourgeois man, Heee, Bourgeois town
I got the Bourgeois Blues-gonna spread the news ail aromen.
Home of the brave, land of the free
I don't want to be mistreated by no bourgeoisie, Lawd In a Bourgeois town, Heee, Bourgeois town
I got the Bourgeois Blues, I'm gonna spread the news all around.
Me and my wife, we went all over town
Everywhere we would go the colored people would turn us down, Jawd
In a Bourgeois town, Heee, the Bourgeois town
1 got the Bourgeois Blues, I'm gonna spread the news all around.
If white folks in Washington, they know how
Took the colored man and nigger just to see him bow It's a Bourgeois town, Heee, the Bourgeois tuwn I got the Bourgeois Blues, I'm gonna spread the news all around.
Tell all the colored folks to listen to me
Don't try to find no home in Washington D. C.
'Cause it's a bourgeois town, Heee, the Bourgeois town
1 got the Bourgeois Blues, and I'm gonna spread the news.
Thanks to the not completely disinterested propaganda of the Soviet Union, which continues with its project of social education of the American people about discrimination, ${ }^{13}$ all the world knows that the treatment of minorities in the United States is not merely another "black legend." Even in places where an American movie has never arrived, the people know the caprices of the "master race" in the United States. Especially among the "inferior races" of Asia this American superiority complex is well known and perhaps
affords a partial explanation for the lack of affection on the part of Asiatic peoples for the generous and smiling American soldier.

Because of this world wide propaganda, the American people felt a little bit ashamed at the end of the second World War when they saw that really there was no great difference between a Hitler and a Rankin or a Talmadge or a Bilbo or some American military commanders. Gassner speaks of this motivation for Deep Are the Roots:

> The Negro issue was, in fact, a major concern...as dramatists who had noted the crimes of the German nation turned to their own backyard. ${ }^{11}$

The American people with their strong respect for the law, even when badly administered, had tolerated discrimination and the violence of the racist minority for many years, but in the postwar period they insisted on a Fair Employment Practices Law. Another proposed law, the anti-lynch bill, met with the filibusters of the southern Senators and was not passed. President Truman ordered the Army in 1949 to begin the elimination of the old custom of placing negro troops in separate units, ${ }^{15}$ and he won the election of 1.948 largely because of his liberal promises (mostly unfulfilled because of the obstacles offered by southern politicians) of justice and equal opportunity for minorities. The Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the various states must admit negro students to their universities if there are not equal facilities in schools expressly instituted for the education of negros. The University of Texas admitted negro students in the faculties of law and architecture during 1950. In this last faculty, classes are small, and when the $n \in w$ negro student entered his first class, all of the students stood up to shake hands and introduce themselves.

Deep Are the Roots is the most important among
the plays written after the war and dealing with the "negro problem" (the author would prefer to define this theme as the "white problem," which sounds more suited and revealing). During the same period four other plays based on this problem were presented in the United States, but each one of them had a very short life if compared with Deep Are the Roots which opened September 26, 1945, and ran 477 performances during two seasons on Broadway, closing November 16, 1946. Burns Mantle, choosing this play as one of the "ten best" of 1945, compares it favorably with two others produced in the same year:

Deep Are the Roots having to do seriously with the Negro problem as it is pretty certain to rear a troubled post-war head in the Southern states, was the first and the most effective of several dramas inspired by a similar theme. Others included Lillian and Esther Smith's Strange Fruit and Robert Ardrey's Jeb. Each of these attracted adherents who were quick to protest the superiority of one or the other. Deep Are the Roots, however, proved more to the liking of the general playgoing public. It boasted a sincerity in writing and in performance that cut definitely through a certain overlay of theatricalism. ${ }^{10}$
Gassner calls it "immediately emotional and provocative" and says that it lacks little to be "memorable." ${ }^{17}$ Without hesitation, Nicoll asserts that it is "the best on the negro problem." ${ }^{18}$ The author of the present study thinks that this play is the best among the ones written in the 40's and based on such a theme; but he does not wish to compare its quality with that of Stevedore, the best play of the 30 's, according to the almost unanimous opinion of the American critics.

Certainly it is better than the previous social melodrama of the same authors, Tomorrow the World, even though Gassner liked the latter well enough to include it among his 17 best American plays of the second World War years. Also inferior to Deep Are the Roots is Legend of Sarab, the latest effort of the
team which opened October 11, 1950, and was charged with lack of originality and a substitution of ridicule for humor. ${ }^{19}$

Deep Are the Roots has a theatrical form which seems almost indestructible and treats a problem which will not be resolved in the next few years. Its protest is still valid and we are permitted to think that it is sufficiently good theatre to remain on the boards periodically for several years. It is well adapted to the important American little theatre and this guarantees it a long happy life off Broadway. Surely it will not have to remain in a dark archive waiting for actors of fantastic genius.

In 1951 the young American theatre of social protest is hardly of age, when we consider that its real life begins in 1923 with The Adding Machine by Elmer Rice and Roger Bloomer by John Howard Lawson, followed in 1925 by Lawson's Processional, or even younger if we adopt a more typically American criterion, calling the three expressionist plays "anticipations." In any case, its healthy and indigenous life, expressed by a large group of dramatists instead of only two, begins in 1929 with Street Scene by Rice, and the melodrama, The Last Mile, by John Wexley.

The experience of the young theatre now demonstrates a tentative equilibrium between form and content: the adaptability of the action melodrama to secial protest and action. I say tentative because in the melodrama no author has reached an equilibrium such as that in other genres of the social theatre (example: Waiting for Lefty). There is as yet no melodrama with an equilibrium of the quality of those which we call in this study "archetypes" (equilibriums more or less definitive between form and content which are useful for making comparisons with the partial equilibriums of similar but secondary works).

The melodrama is a non-intellectual form of theatre, and with this limitation it cannot discuss abstract problems. On the contrary, it must resolve an immediate problem with an immediate action. Neither can it be ahead of its time; it can only treat themes which are accepted social values (if newly accepted, better, for the novelty). The audience will have established the hero and the villain before the opening curtain, in accord with its prejudices.

Although Deep Are the Roots is not an archetype, it has an interesting native and tentative equilibrium to which perhaps the future will give the place of a typically American archetype in the genre of the social protest action melodrama. There are, in fact, critics who think that the melodrama genre has been the most successful one in the social protest theatre; the author takes the position of "we'll see."

Minority discrimination in the United States tcday takes for the most part the form of persistent economic attrition against the second class citizens. The days in which it flared up in lurid outbreaks of lynching are mostly past. The number of lynchings has steadily decreased each year since the peak was passed in i's: last century. This decrease has been contemporaneous and corollary to the increase in prosperity of the South, which in turn has served gradually to exterminate the rankling myth of "the abused South." As the underfed white and the underfed negro gradually found themselves side by side in the factory and later fought pellagra, company houses, and black lists together, they forgot old enmities in the recognition of a common need, unionization and a living wage, and a new common enemy, the few who try to sow hate and disunity among the many. Service in two World Wars
also helped to create a bond between the black soldier and the white one, and today liberal veterans' clubhouses without a color line are helping to break down the hate tradition in places such as Tallahassee, Florida.

Lynching is more a historical than a contemporary subject for the theatre, and it is characteristic of American liberalism that there is now before Congress a bill, which still cannot be passed, to outlaw lynching-now that lynching is almost non- existent. It is also characteristic of the caprices of William Saroyan that at such a time he chooses to write his only social protest play against an abuse which is largely past. And he chcoses a white protagonist precisely, we must suppose, because it is usually negros who have been lynched.

But Saroyan's play, which will be examined next, is better than those by men who saw more clearly the issue in protest. We can only attribute such contradictions to an excess of raisins in the childhood diet of the Fresnan, and hope that he will continue to write responsible plays in an irresponsible manner.

It seems that about William Saroyan there is no middle course; the spectator or reader is either a passionate partisan of the Californian or the mere mention of Sarojan's name is enough to start a tirade against him. In the same way Saroyan's characters seem lovable to some persons and ridiculous to others, and the char ${ }^{\text {s }}$ acters are the principal element in all the plays of the romantic dramatist from the San Joaquin Valley. Hello Out There, although it is his most naturalistic play, is pure Saroyan, and the spontaneous reaction to the characters in it is the same that his other plays cause. The situation and the action are secondary to the characters in expressing the emotion of the play. The language is beautiful but because of its novelty it evokes less emotion from the audience.

The author of this study saw Hello Out There for the first time at the Experimental Theatre of the Huntington Park Civic Theatre, near Los Angeles, directed by young Sam Peckinpah. The performance was directed by a student of Peckinpah in "theatre in the round" style with a minimum of scenery and it was a good sample of Peckinpah's mastery of the spirit of the work of the controversial dramatist from Fresno, California. It was an ideal situation for the critic: himself, the director, and the dramatist, all were from the same land of the orchards and vineyards and the devouring summer sun. For one born in the San Joaquin Valley, the romantic characters of Saroyan are not rare; he has seen them picking grapes in the Septembers before World War II, when the foremen of Anderson and Clayton had not yet begun their inspections of the work in the cotton fields from four light airplanes. Or he might have seen them more recently in one of the taverns along the Embarcadero in San Francisco, or in the Black Cat five or more years ago, before the deluge of the homosexuals upon it.

For one who has associated with migratory workers in commercial agriculture, the young man in jail in Matador, Texas, is not a romantic figure; he is an old acquaintance from one of the various dozens of jails between Fresno, California, and Matador, Texas. It is moving, but not so rare, to hear the young man say: "People are the same everywhere. They're different only when they love somebody. That's the only thing that makes 'em different. More people in Frisco love somebody, that's all." If this is a ridiculous romanticism, a good part of the people of San Francisco, and the San Joaquin Valley, in 1940 lived and died ridiculous romantics.

Hello Out There is an action melodrama in one act, the only romantic melodrama in the contemporary

American theatre, besides Robert Sherwood's Petrified Forest, known to the present writer. But before taking up a complete formal analysis we shall review the action of the play.

A young man in a small town jail cell sits tapping slowly on the floor with a spoon, then he gets up and walks around the cell, looks around and calls several times, "Hello out there." A girl's voice answers, he wonders if she is Katey, but she says no, she is Emily, who cooks there. He asks what she looks like, she says she does not know, but he decides she must be "O. K." because he "never missed yet." Whien she says, "Yeah, I know. That's why you're in jail," he tells her it was a mistake, it was not rape as they claimed. She asks why he keeps saying "Hello out there" and te says it is because he is lonesome..."Lonesome as a coyote." She appears th:en, a plainly dressed plain girl, to tell him she is lone!y too. He tells her st.e is pretty and now everything will be all right. He tells her they will be married and go to San Francisco where life will be good because they will be together. He asks if she can get a key to let him out but she tells him they can't let him out because the people from the first town where he was put in jail might come for him in the night. She goes to look fer a hammer or a broom or anything he might be able to use to get out. She starts to go to buy him cigarettes but he tells her to go instead for her father's gun because if they come for him he wants to kill them. He gives t.er money so that if anything happens to him she can go to San Francisco, the place he has been telling her about. She asks if people are different there and he says "People are the same everywhere. They're different only when they love somebody." She leaves and he paces the floor again, finally sitting down with his head in his hands, until he hears the sound of cars outside. A man enters,
the husband, and draws his pistol when the young man tells him about the woman: she is a tramp; he did not know she was married; she asked for money so he left; she began shouting she had been raped. The husband fires three times and runs away. The girl Emily returns to tell him she could not find the gun, and asks him what is wrong. He tells her again to go away, to get to San Francisco, then he falls dead as she stands nearby. The husband and two friends come in with the wife who wants to see the young man dead. The men lift his body to carry it out, the girl runs toward them telling them they cannot take him away, but the woman pushes her to the floor. They carry the young man's body out and the girl gets up slowly, looks straight out and whispers "Hello-out-there! Hello-out-there!"

Saroyan's plays are not characterized by their observance of the formal criteria of the theatre. His emphasis is more on character than on the other elements of form, so much so that several critics have taken as one of his distinguishing marks his "formlessness." ${ }^{20}$ Therefore when we make a formal analysis of a Saroyan play, excepting that of the characters, it is a relative one, we analyze whatever form there may be.

The movement of Hello Out There is based on three elements: a slow tempo which increases in acceleration after the girl is convinced (when she answers "I love you" to the boy's speech "More people in Frisco love somebody, that's all"), on an idealized sexual longing; and on a restrained rhythm which gradually opens and reaches a crescendo at the end of the play. The very slow beginning is not characteristic of melodrama and helps to concentrate from the opening curtain the interest of the audience in the characters, rather than in the situation or in the action. ${ }^{21}$

The dramatic structure is nearly non-existent. Perhaps it brings to mind a tragedy that marches inexorably
toward a predetermined and unjust end for the protagonist, or perhaps a tragedy that gives a last hope to the unfortunate victim only to remove it afterwards. Or if we place the emphasis upon the girl the structure is a modification of the classic "discovery" of Aristotle, the suggestion of a discovery, a discovery half unfolded and half understood but unmaterialized; or in terms of both characters, it is the romantic discovery of the blinding moment of finding love before the young man's death. But against the last possibility we must be warned that Saroyan's heroes do not have a single love, they have multitudes, they love everyone all at once or one at a time.

Doubt about the structure should not prejudice the reader so much as it does critics and professors, and perhaps the doubt will be counterbalanced by an unexpected logical excellence. The play easily passes the test of Price's proposition:
A. A young man falsely jailed for rape wins the confidence of the cook left alone there. She leaves to obtain a pistol so that he may defend himself from the lynch party when it comes.
B. While she is still near the jail she hears the lynch party and returns to find the young man has been shot.
C. He urges her to leave town for San Francisco with the moncy he gave her, he falls dead and the lynch party carries his body away over the girl's protests.
The place is a small town in Texas, the time is the present. There is a minimum set; Saroyan specifies only the cell. The dramatist suggests strongly in the dialog, but not in the staging, the constant restriction of small town life which is here given as the cause of hate and pettiness. The same restriction is suggested in Sherwood's Petrified Forest. This environment ras a principal role in the action, it is from it that the young
man wants to save the girl, and really it is this generalized personage rather than the husband who kills the prisoner. The young man and the girl are both outcasts in the small town; they find each other because they live in the same solitude.

The young man is a typical Saroyan character, profound, changeable, good humored and full of, and knowing, love-strikingly like Saroyan himself. The girl is one who appears many times in the Californian's plays, young, tender, on the verge of discovering love as the most important find in the world. Both characters are exotic, offer a strong contrast to their surroundings and find themselves in the minority, as any Saroyan character does. Both are "round," but the husband and the others of the lynch party are "silhouettes," in accord perhaps with the intention of the playwright to establish the generalized environment as a more important actor than the individuals of the lynch party.

Saroyan's language and dialog do not come from a world-trained ear, they come from the heart of a romantic poet. His poetry seems to be made up of about equal parts of his orwn lyricism, of argo:, and of things like the remembered line of a song. For whoever would like to study this poetry at its best, I reccmmend the leisurely examination of the third act of A Decent Birth, A Happy Funeral, and especially the open rhythm which is accentuated in more or less each tenth line with a little gem of lyric argot.

The style of the play is naturalistic only in the melodramatic situation and action. We cannot describe the characters or the other formal elements with the same term. They come from the world, fantastic if the adjective pleases, of Saroyan. The characters are clearly the expression of Saroyan himself and his beliefs, and for that reason symbols; but since love is the prin-
cipal article in Saroyan's credo we have a symbol so broad and so warm that it is difficult to think of it in the terms of the pastel symbolism we suffer from in the American theatre. Symbolism is a substyle of the romantic current, and it matters little whether Saroyan in Hello Out There is a symbolist: he is always a romantic. If we make up a check list of forms, we see that Hello deviates from the characteristics of the romantic style current only in its contemporaneousness and in the melodramatic structure and physical conflict, all three characteristic of the popular style. The mood is mixed between the romantic internal tumult and the popular social tumult. The rest of the formal characteristics are romantic: theatrical illusion instead of convention, contrasts in rhythm and tempo, idealized sexual longing, a diffuse action arising from an impulse and resolved by a sentiment, contrasting characters from an exotic minority group, a milieu apart from daily life, and lyric and abandoned language.

In a later play, Get Away Ola Man, Saroyan mixed the most naturalism with his fantasy and came off with the least success, if it be compared to his first romantic plays or to the one we are studying.

The history of the theatre shows us only slightly similar antecedents for Saroyan's work and, especially, for his extravagance. The situations are similar in spirit to those of the Italian "grotesque theatre." His tone is that of a less combatitive Victor Hug.. His enthusiasm, assurance and love of life are those of a Shakespeare not yet disciplined to form. He has much of his contemporary, Jean Giradoux, minus a bit of intellect and plus some of Rabelais' animal spirits. Among the writers of the primitive episodic novel we find the nearest parallels to Saroyan: his characters come closest to a cross between those of Jean Jacques Rosseau and those of Rabelais, but most of all l.e ap-
proaches the Shandian worla of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, with a little bit of Sterne's perversity removed.

Saroyan's themes fall within the romantic tradition. Gagey, with slight sympathy, gives us a panorama of the themes:

Eager as Saroyan is to support the rights of little people, he dislikes both unionsm and communism because of their infringements on individual freedom. Idleness and alcoholism are infinitely more commendable than the sordid practice of selling things for profit, the only reasonable metive for acquiring wealth is for the pleasure of giving it away. Formal education, particularly in College, spoils man's natural and charming ignorance. Romantic love is a beautiful and infinitely sad emotion. In family relationships, particularly between father and son and between brothers and sisters, is to be found the most tender expression of love, a motif in the plays amounting to a veritable cult of childhood. ${ }^{2}$

Even if not completely just, Gagey's observation at least indicates a part of the romantic flavor of the themes. The content of Hello Out There is romantic only in its symbolism, the literal meaning is objective. The most prominent symbol is the city of love, San Francisco, reminiscent of the founding of Philadelphia by the Society of Friends and their naming it "the city of brotherly love." But today all this is only a pretty legend in the Philadelphia of Moe Annenberg and the Biddles.

In the use of San Francisco as a symbol Saroyan chooses a truthful one because San Francisco is, among the great American cities, the one in which "more people love somebody." In Hello Out There, it is the promised land to which the young man in jail tries to send the girl he loves. For her, there is the suggestion of a happy ending if she manages to get to San Francisco. There is also the suggestion in Hello that love
might cure what is wrong with the little Texas town. But the playwright says nothing of the curative possibilities of education and economic development, things which San Francisco has in addition to love, because he does not believe in them. The young man in the play says "I'm a gambler. I don't work." Saroyan does not say how to bring love to Matador, Texas, and he suggests only the solution of emigration, a process which as a matter of fact has been taking place in the agricultural areas of Texas for several decades because th.e small farmers of Anglo-Saxon origin are not so well adapted to compete in the work of the new gigantic commercial agriculture as those of Mexican crigin.

The literal meaning of the play is a protest against lynching and in this Saroyan allows Hello to follow the naturalistic truth instead of the romantic one. Lynching is an old American custom which began during the settlement of the West when there was no security because of the absence of a fixed political organization. Lacking formal laws, the sheriffs and town marshalls obeyed the will of the established elements of the community, and sought their support when problems became too large for the "law." Many times the "respectable" elements of the community had no need for the sheriff and effected their own kind of popular rule-of-thumb justice. After the Civil War, the southerners who had lost the war found in lynching a measure for underground resistance against federal occupation troops and for vengeance against the liberated negros who in some states, such as South Carclina. had political control of the legislatures.

Naturally such bitter and impassioned means reflect a kind of pathological confusion. Probably the best concise expression in all of American literature of the feelings of men of conscience who have seen a lynch-
ing is that of Langston Hughes in his poem "Song for a Dark Girl."

> Way down South in Dixie
> (Break the heart of me)

They hung my black young lover
To a cross roads tree. .
Way down South in Dixie
(Bruised body high in air)
I asked the white Lord Jesus
W'hat was the use of prayer.
Way down South in Dixie (Break the heart of me)
Love is a naked shadow On a gnarled and naked tree.

The only dramatic treatment of lynching which can bc compared to that of Hello Out There is Paul Green's Pulitzer Prize winning play In Abraham's Bosom which was also a commercial success during the 1926-27 Broadway season. The final scenes in which the negro, driven to exhaustion, crawls across the fields with the same emotions and attitudes as those of a hunted animal is almost as powerful a plastic expression of the lynch emotions as Hughes' poem is a lyric one.

From figures given by the World Almanac we see that between 1882 and 1948, 4718 persons were lynched in the United States. From the same figures we see that Saroyan has a certain amount of justification for not specifying that the hero of his play be a negro because during the period mentioned above, 1291 white person were lynched along with 3427 negros. Perhaps Saroyan wished to make a qualitative separation of the lynching problem and the socalled "negro" problem. To the qualitative mentality perhaps they are distinct problems, but quantitatively we see that in the United States lynching has been two-thirds a negro problem.

Saroyan also has objective grounds for setting his drama in Texas which has been exceeded only by Mississippi and Georgia in the number of lynchings between 1882 and 1947:

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { Mississippi ........... } 574 \\
& \text { Georgia ................ 525 } \\
& \text { Texas .................. . } 489
\end{aligned}
$$

That the noose has become an offensive symbol to even the advocates of white supremacy is apparent in the tendency since the beginning of the second World War for race riots to replace lynchings. More negros have been killed in the present decade in riots than in lynchings. These have occured chiefly in the industrial centers of the North and California, and they reflect two social tendencies: the increasing resistance of the negro to bad treatment, and the important new immigration of poor whites from small towns in the "nigger-hating" South to industrial centers. There are some indications that even the infamous Ku Klux Klan is on its way to extinction now that it has found its way onto the Attorney General's list (strange bedfellows) of "Fascist, Communist, totalitarian and subversive organizations." ${ }^{23}$

Hello Out There reflects a greater grasp of social problems than any other of Saroyan's plays. His work has always been marked by fantasy, by generalized love of people and by the advocacy of the brotherhood of man, but he has been criticized by the Left for the vagueness of his sentiments. At other times he has expressed what approaches misanthropy in Get Away Old Man, probably his worst play, although most Americans feel that about Hollywood a writer may be as negative and as bitter as he wishes to be. Again, Saroyan's faith in people reached the same low' ebb as Shakespeare's in Hamlet when Saroyan wrote his un-
sympathetic caricature of the "Okies" in Love's Old Sweet Song. This petty answer to fellow Californian Steinbeck's great social documentary provides the grounds for the most serious questioning of Saroyan's humanistic attitudes. The present writer is inclined to consider Love's Old Sweet Song a temporary lapse in Saroyan's good will toward men.

It is almost as impossible to generalize about Saroyan's manner of thinking as it is about his style of writing. Both are contradictory but still remain within the romantic current, particularly his attitudes: protest and fantasy, imagination, originality, the reformer's zeal, a widening human horizon, contradiction of himself and the status quo, a mysticism based on love, reflection of an unstable society marked by internal conflict, solitude, individualism, Christianity, selfconsciousness, a passionate morality, and a historical, although limited, point of view. All are romantic. For better or for worse he is the youth of the summer sun and the irrigation canals of the San Joaquin Valley and of the solitary rooms and smile-ridden streets of San Francisco.

In Hello Out There Saroyan shows the hopeful confidence chatacteristic of him. In an ugly and violent situation he gives us a hope, in the girl, that she can be saved from the blind hates of her town. Perhaps in the hero, too, there are suggestions of a Christ image which make his death seem a less negative conclusion for the play. We have here a typical Saroyan premise: a young man full of love brings the certainty of love to a girl richly on the verge of it, although he is killed. In the Saroyan logic this is not a particularly pessimistic conclusion.

The importance of Hello Out There in our time has had one limitation, the commercial one inherent in the one-act play form. It has been presented hundreds
of times in the non-commercial theatre and has attracted the aticition of the critics despite the fact that it could not become a commercial success. It is the most powerful contemporary dramatic essay on lynching and it is a better play than Sartre's Respectable Prostitute in every way except for the public's failure to appreciate Saroyan's romantic characters. It is Saroyan's most important social protest, although in some future time his Sam Ego's House may be accepted as a protest. Saroyan speaks in his preface to the latter play of the critics' labels of "Communistic," but the story of the trip of a house across the town seems to dissolve in an allegorical vastness.

There is no league between the naturalistic one-act form and the romantic characterization of people confronted with lynching which would indicate a formcontent equilibrium which will serve American theatre historians as an archetype. The reason probably is that Saroyan was caught up in external events and was not quite his normal subjective self when he made his only essay in the social protest drama. Paul Green showed a similar personal contradiction in the lack of formcontent equilibrium in In Abrabam's Bosom, and the great dramatic social protest against lynching remains still to be written in the United States.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

1 Allardyce Nicoll, World Drama: from Aeschylus to Anouilh. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 1950). p. 900.
${ }^{2}$ John Gassner, Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre: Second Series. (New York: Crown Publishers. c1947). p. xxvii.
${ }^{3}$ John Howard Lawson, Theory and Technique of Playwriting and Screenwriting. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons c1936, c1949). pp. 276f., $280 f f$.

4 The most useful simple test for the logical progression of a dramatic action is William T. Price's "proposition." It is most valid in the criticism of plays in the classic and popular styles. For the plays studied here, most of them in the romantic style, the test does not often reveal a logically tight action. Price describes very concisely his proposition. "A dramatic Proposition is the brief logical statement or syllogism of that which has to be demenstrated by the Complete Action of the play. Its simplest and perhaps its universal form, so far as I have been able to discover, is a statement in three clauses: first, the conditions of the Action; second, the cause of the Action; third, the result of the Action. The third clause involves the problem and may be put as a problem." Cited in Barrett H. Clark, European Theories of the Drama: with a Supplement on the American Drama (New Yerk: Crown「ublishers. Revised Edition. c1947). p. 487.

5 A useful supplement to Price's proposition would be a classification of the situations which produce the action. Such is the pretension, but unfortunately the pretension cannot be sustained, in George Polti's The Thirty-Six Diamatic Situations. (Boston: The Writer, Inc. Reprinted 1948). Polti's "situations" really state conflicts at their peaks, and it is evident that the possible number of conflicts is closer to 37,000 . However it is clear that Polti's situations do have to do with action, and action is the heart of a play. In lieu of another classification of actions, and because a goodly number of American
commercial writers do consult Polti, I shall give for each of the plays studied here its correspording Polti situation. The classification was clearly intended originally to be applied to plays in the classic style containing a single action with beginning, middle and end. The romantic protest play usually partakes of several of Polti's situations. For Deep Are the Rcots they are number 8 B 1 , the revolt of one individual who influences and involves others, and number 28B, very secondarily, a marriage prevented ty enemies and contingent obstacles.
" Nicoll, op. cil. p. 900.

* Edward Morgan Forster, Aspects of the Novel. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. c1927) classifies characters as "flat" or "round," two-dimensional or three-dimensional. Rodolfo Usigli, the foremost Mexican dramatist, in his Itinerario del Autor Drarzatico (México, D. F.: Ia Casa de España en México. 1940) adds a third category: "characters, the most difficult because they correspond to individual and singular human values; types, which are the representatives of groups, classes, nations, etc., or silhouetts, for the cases in which no psychological or generic movement of character enters into play." p. 13.
${ }^{5}$ Gassner, op. cit. p. 598.
- Bernard Sobel, The Tlicatre Handbook and Digest of Playr. (New York: Crown Publishers. 1948). p. 478.
${ }^{10}$ Usigli, op. cit. p. 82.
" Gassner, op. cit. p. xxvii.
${ }^{12}$ Idem.
${ }^{13}$ Gene Sosin, "Art for Marx' Sake" in Theatre Arts, vol. xxxiv, no. 2. February, 1950. "The atmosphere of post-war nationalism and anti-American feeling is mirrored in plays for young audiences: 'Snowball' takes place in an American high schicol. It deals with the persecution of a Negro boy (nicknamed 'Snowball') by a fat, cigar-smoking millionaire who dislikes having his daughter attend the same classes with Negroes." p. 31.
${ }^{14}$ Gassner, op. cit. p. xxvii.
${ }^{15}$ Michael Straight (Ed.), The AVC Bulletin: American Veterans Committee, Inc., vol. vi, no. 1. January, 19,1. "TEXT

OF NATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON ARMY SEGREGATION. On September 30, 1949, the President of the United States in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief ordered the integration of all white and non-white troops in the Armed Forces. The Navy and the Air Force appear to have carried out the order of the Commander-inChief. The Army, however, has failed to do so. Although basic training in the Army of the United States is apparently conducted on both a segregated and non-segregated basis, unit activation follows the customary Jim Crow policy which was the source of difficulty, confusion and disgrace in World War II. Recent reports of racial segregation of inductees from states like Minnesota, which have prohibited racial segregation in their state National Guard units, demonstrates that the Army is in fact spreading and extending the racist doctrines..." p. 7.
${ }^{10}$ Burns Mantle, The Best Plays of 1945-46: and the Year Book of the Drama in America. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 1946). p. vi.
${ }^{17}$ Gassner, op. cit. p. xxvii.
18 Nicoll, op. cit. p. 900.
${ }^{18}$ Theatre Arts. vol. xxxiv, no. 12. December, 1950. p. 14.
${ }^{20}$ Among others, Edmond M. Gagey, Revolution in American Drama. (New York: Columbia University Press. Second printing 1948). p. 112.
${ }^{21}$ Of Polti's 36 situations, Hello Out There shares in three: number 6 C 2 , suffering an unjust punishment or enmity; 7D, the unfortunate robbed of their only hope; and 27 B 8 , the discovery that one's wife is a scoundrel or a bad character.
${ }^{22}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 118.
${ }^{23}$ But General George Van Horn Mosely continues his active and prosperous career according to The AVC Bulletin, op. cit., vol. vi, no. 1. "ATLANTA CHAPTER (Ga.) ...The chapter is endeavoring to have Piedmont College turn down an offer similar to the Jefferson Military College episode. The same George Armstrong with General George Van Horn Mosely is trying to "buy" this college on the condition it teach race supremacy ideas. The chapter has denounced Armstrong and Mosely for trying to establish a beachhead for totalitarianism." p. 7.

## Chapter 2

# WAR AND WAR PROFITEERING 

Bury the Dead

Born Yesterday

THE GROUP of plays to be considered in this chapter is the rather large one against war, and it may be divided into two parts: the general anti-war protests, and the protests against war profiteers. The first includes Edna St. Vincent Millay's Aria Da Capo, presented by the Provincetown Players in 1919; W bat Price Glory? by Maxwell Anderson and Laurence Stallings, produced by Arthur Hopkins in 1924; Peace on Earth by George Sklar and Albert Maltz, staged by Theatre Union in 1933; Sidney Howard's Paths of Glory, produced commercially with little success in 1935; the musical by Paul Green, Jobnny Johnson, presented with Kurt Weill's music by Group Theatre in 1936; and Bury the Dead by Irwin Shaw, staged by Actors Repertory Company in 1936. Also worthy of mention for their artistic excellence are the poetic anti-war plays for radio by Archibald MacLeish.

Those which protest against the exploitation by civilians in wartime are Born Yesterday by Garson Kanin, presented in 1946 by Max Gordon, and Arthur Miller's All My Sons, produced by Harold Clurman, Elia Kazan and Walter Fried in 1947. The latter play received the Critics Circle Award for the same year
(The Pulitzer Prize judges refused to select a winning play for 1947).

Although other plays of a lesser artistic category might be included, the above are the most important. Not all of them are of the same dramatic quality, and, in the opinion of the writer, the best general antiwar protest is Bury the Dead, and the best study of the abuses of the "rugged individualists" during a war is to be found in Born Yesterday. Both will be studied in detail in this chapter.

For this writer Bury the Dead had a real and immediate importance when he began rehearsing it with a university theatre group directed by Fernando Wagner just a few weeks after the beginning of fighting between American and North-Korean troops, June 25, 1950. The first impression of the play was of the ugly and the horrible, carrying along with them their own aesthetics and artistic unity. For the American whose appreciation of the ugly and the horrible stops with Edgar Allen Poe, the emotional reaction to the play is limited to a chill up the spine not clearly defined as to whether it is pleasant or not. ${ }^{1}$

Another reaction was a feeling of hope that the people have the power to undo the militarists; another was an awareness of the mixture of humor, subtle in the midst of all the horrible, which contradicts the judgment of Atkinson of the "bitterness" " of Bury the Dead. A third immediate impression is that the work is for the theatre; it is not a literary one to be appreciated in the library.

A first formal analysis reveals that Bury the Dead is a one-act drama in 20 episodes with less of "problem" or "thesis" than of protest and a call to direct action.

Episode 1: On a battlefield. Soldiers, directed by a sergeant, are digging graves for the dead. The soldiers
want to finish the burials quickly because of the unpleasant odor of the corpses, but they must wait for the services to be read by the chaplains, a priest and a rabbi. As the prayers are said, one of the soldiers hears a groan and soon all of the corpses stand up and ask not to be buried. The sergeant goes for the captain, who says he "was expecting it to happen-some day. So many men each day."

Episode 2: The captain is seen attempting to explain the situation to three generals. They decide he has been drinking and order a doctor, along with a stenographer, to inspect the corpses, to determine whether they are dead or alive, and to make official medical reports.

Episode 3: The doctor determines the cause of death of each corpse and notes that each has been dead 48 hours. Witnesses sign the six reports. One of the corpses gives one of the soldiers of the burial detail a cigarette, and the doctor gladly accepts a drink when the captain offers it from his bottle.

Episode 4: The doctor reports to the generals that all six men are dead but that they are standing in the grave refusing to be buried. On hearing this report, one of the generals decides "the whole damn army is drunk!" They caution each other not to let this get out to the newspapers.

Episode 5: Two soldiers in the lines discuss the rumor that six corpses will not allow themselves to be buried. They disagree as to what should be done with them, and a burst of enemy machine-gun fire kills one of them, then the other.

Episode 6: In a newspaper office. A reporter insists that the story be published, but his editor, after a telephone call, suppresses it because "that's the way the Government feels about it."

Episode 7: The generals arrive at the grave. One of them attempts to convince the corpses that they
are dead, and being ignored he then gives them a direct order to allow themselves to be buried. This is also ignored.

Episode 8: On a street corner. One prostitute tells another, "I'd lay 'em, all right. They ought to call me in. I'd lay 'em...Share the burden-Oh, my Gawd." Their laughter continues in the darkness.

Episode 8: The captain, sent by the generals, tries once more, using a sympathetic philosophical approach, to persuade the men to be buried. Each tells how he died and ignores the captain's entreaties.

Episode 10: A montage of the "home front." Businessmen, a priest, one of the generals, newspapermen and a radio announcer are all dismayed that their "brave dead boys" will not allow themselves to be buried.

Episode 11: The captain suggests to the generals that they send for the dead soldiers' women. "Women are always conservative. It's a conservative notion-this one of lying down and allowing yourself to be buried when you're dead." The War Department issues an appeal to the women by radio.

Episode 12: A general addresses the women, "talk to them...make them see the error of their ways, la. dies...Go ladies, do your duty. Your country waits upon you..."'

Episode 13: Private John Schelling, Corpse Two, tells his wife, "My place is on the earth, Bess. My business is with the top of the earth, not the underside." When she insists that he allow himself to be buried, he tells her, "Go home, Bess. Go bome!"

Episode 14: Joan wants to know of Private Levy, Corpse Five, whether he really loved her more than the cthers, but he thinks the point no longer important. He wants to "walk the world looking at the fine longlegged girls, seeing in them something deep and true and passionately vital..."

Episode 15: Private Morgan, Corpse Four, tells Julia Blake, "There are too many books I haven't read, too many places I haven't seen, too many memories I haven't kept long enough...I won't be cheated of them..." She shoots herself so that her name may be on the casualty lists, too, rather than go on drinking and living without him.

Episode 16: Tom Driscoll, Corpse One, hears the sister he has not seen for 15 years say, "You're dead. Your fight's over," and he answers, "The fight's never over. I got things to say to people now-to the people who nurse big machines and the people who swing shovels and the people whose babies die with big bellies and rotten bones. I got things to say to the people who leave their lives behind them and pick up guns to fight in somebody else's war. Important things. Big things. .."

Episode 17: Private Dean, Corpse Six, tells his mother, "I spent twenty years practicing to be a man and then they killed me."

Episode 18: The wife of Private Webster, Corpse Three, condemns him for waiting until he is dead to stand up for his rights, for not having stood up for his wife and the children he could not have on a wage of $\$ 18.50$ a week.

Episode 19: Now that all of the corpses have refused to lie down, the generals try in vain to keep the news from appearing in the papers, but the headlines scresm, "It Didn't Work." In a six-part montage, voices of the people dispute what the corpses have done, and the church, represented by a priest, attempts what the state failed to do, but the corpses laugh and do not lie down.

Episode 20: One of the generals orders the corpses to be shot down with a machine gun, but the soldiers refuse to man the gun. He has to do it himself, but
the corpses walk out of the grave in the face of the machine-gun fire. They walk off stage, followed by the still living soldiers and leaving the general slumped over his silent gun pointed at the empty grave.

The movement of the action is in rapid tempo, "journalistic," ${ }^{3}$ except in the six scenes with the women, which have various independent tempos derived from the sexual interest: lethargic between Bess and Schelling, blasé between Joan and Levy, frustrated between Webster and his wife, etc. There is a heightening of several of these scenes as a result of the sex wit lines. The rhythm is brusque, "staccato," " and it gives a suggestion of wide spaces.

The structure is that of an "envelope" to begin and end the play and to enclose the scenes of the women and the montages which are further unified by a "spol technique." ${ }^{5}$ The general effect is panoramic, almost cinematic.

The logic of the action, ${ }^{\circ}$ following Price's proposition, is somewhat weak, but it doesn't result in a weak play:
^. Dead soldiers do not wish to be buried and reject the military authorities who wish to avoid scandal and use persuasion instead of brute force.
B. The authorities send for the soldiers' women to come and exercise their persuasive conservative force, but the women fail.
C. The corpses pay no attention to a gencral's machinegun and leave the stage to raise the people in rebellion against war.

The internal line of action is stronger than the exterior one, and they lack the equilibrium that marks Waiting for Lefty, a protest play which uses a nearly identical technique and structure. Bury the Dead tries to achieve through mood and pictorial quality what

Lefty achieved through a passionate and contagious conviction. And where Lefty is romantically social, Bury the Dead is romantically brooding, almost individualistic and introspective. Bury the Dead and Hello Out There have the most dominant inner lines of action, and are the most romantic, of any of the seven plays we shall study.

The text carries the following directions for the time and the place: time, "the second year of the war that is to begin tomorrow night" (in the dialog the year 1937 is mentioned); place, a torn-over battlefield, now quiet, some miles behind the present lines, which is represented at the rear of the stage by a raised black platform with sandbags thrown along its edge. The forestage is bare, and the inset scenes occur there. The specific place for the action is not established. Europe? The United States?

The lighting contributes more than the scenery to the definition of space. The chief concrete atmosphere is of mud, the lighting is muddy, the dialog mentions the mud, on stage there are heaps of earth, the sandbags are dirty, the platform is black. To accompany the mud, less concretely, there is the smell of rotting bodies, established through suggestions in the dialog. It is an environment which takes a full part in the action. Everything is ugly and horrible, everything contradicts the previous "good things of the earth" of which the characters speak in the six intercalated scenes.

The characters are divided into two groups and receive two different treatments. The corpses, the captain, the burying detail, Bess Schelling, and, to a certain point, the sergeant, are "positive," warm and human. They are loved for their faults. But the institutional characters, the generals, the politicians, the ministers of the church, the newspapermen, and some
of the women, are "negative" and are treated as bidimensional types. Some are almost caricatures which fall short of being real persons.

As for its historical theatre substyle, the work is called "expressionistic" ' by Gassner, "semiexpressionistic...fantasy with the appearance of realism" "by O"Hara, and "an allegory"" by Gorelik, but only the montage episodes are expressionistic in form. Symbolism, the substyle still dominant in the contemporary American theatre, seems the best descriptive term to the present writer, and Gorelik probably meant to say "symbolism" with his term "allegory." The style like all romantic styles, is based more on illusion than on theatrical conventions, although the blackout technique deserves more study as a contemporary theatrical convention in its two uses for time and place and in the melancholy suggestion it often carries with it: ${ }^{10}$

The style of Bury the Dead, Shaw's first play, is better defined and unified than in his other work. The same symbolism and the same protest drama genre are found in his The Gentle People, but there they are beclouded by the addition of the Franciscan touch to the plot of the two moralist assassins. The remainder of his plays evidence the dangerous tendency in the American theatre toward haziness in the symbolist style, especially when dealing with situations in the day to day bourgeois life. The work of Clifford Odets, Maxwell Anderson and Arthur Miller also shows this tendency.

The dialog does not carry a personal stamp of the playwright except in the "lyric" passages where it is completely his and a little bit forced. The rest of the writing is good prose, natural to the characters-which is not to say that it is the language of the streets. It is the forceful speech of ordinary people in one of the
few crises in which they are deeply angered or outraged. It is the eloquence of protest of which every man is capable and which is given to him to express few times during a lifetime.

The "lyric" passages demonstrate many defects similar to those of Tennessee Williams. Working in symbolism, the style is broken by these lyric and personal digressions on the part of the dramatist which superficial reviewers admire as "poetry," and which even a critic like Gassner often calls "fantasy." ${ }^{11}$ This widespread mark of critical disorientation among critics and playwrights alike has its probable source in too much reading of the polemicists, headed by Maxwell Anderson, for a "poetic theatre," in too much Shakespeare imitation, in too much study of argot, and in too little study of the contemporary dramatic poems of Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost and Archibald MacLeish.

To a great extent, the symbolistic style of Bury the Dead is a good illustration of Granville-Barker's theory of the "exemplary theatre," propagated in the United States by Ludwig Lewisohn. It does not arrive at the economy of means of the popular style current in the contemporary social theatre, Brecht's epic plays and Oriental fables, nor at their conventions; it follows Granville-Barker's complete acceptance of theatrical illusion.

The strongest emotions in Bury the Dead (the ugly, the horrible and the humorous) seem to grow from the milieu and the dialog, and less from the characterization and the action (the hope for the people's moral victory over the militarists).

We find three antecedents in the history of the theatre for the theme, the structure and the plot used: (1) The general theme of the anti-war protest is ancient,

Aristophanes' Lysistrata being a good example. (2) The envelope structure to begin and end the action and to contain the internal spot scenes is the same as that of Clifford Odets' Waiting for Lefty (and similar to that adapted by José Limón to the choreographies of "La Malinche" and "The History of Mankind," presented in Mexico City late in September, 1950). It is also that of many of Walt Whitman's poems. It should perhaps be considered as akin to the "play within a play" structure used by Shakespeare, among others. The name of the Bard brings to mind The Taming of the Shrew which certainly includes the opening half of an envelope structure in the texts we know. The dramatic logic which demands another Christopher Sly scene at the end of the play is so compelling (some producers have fabricated such a closing scene) that one feels tempted to conjecture that the great showman from Avon would not have left it unwritten and that the final Sly episode must have been lost in the vicissitudes of transporting Shakespeare's work from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. (3) A final antecedent is that for the plot which is very similar to that of the Austrian Hans Schlumberg's The Miracle at Verdun. ${ }^{12}$ It is true that the two plays have the same basic situation: dead soldiers refuse to be buried and cause an international scandal. The two resolutions of this situation, however, are completely different. In Schlumberg's play, the protagonist awakes to discover that all has been a dream-much as Sly would, one supposes-but Shaw uses the situation for a revolutionary call to direct action.

With a theme from Aristophanes and a situation from Schlumberg, Shaw shows his greatest originality in selecting and taking over the structure of Odets' play of the previous year, a form which is the best
adapted to date in the American theatre to the social drama. ${ }^{13}$ Bury the Dead using the same structure as Waiting for Lefty even excells it in harmonious succession of the scenes, but Shaw's play lacks the "recognition" and the urgency which Odets ardently gave to Lefty.

A dramatic interpretation which is symbolistic in technique and unified in style does not give very much emphasis to particular symbols it might contain. It is enough to mention the powerful internal symbols in Chekov's Seagull or The Cberry Orchard which occur in a non-symbolistic style. These plays are not symbols in themselves, therefore the individual symbols within the plays are very strong. On the contrary, in completely symbolist plays such as Maxwell Anderson's Winterset or Edna St. Vincent Millay's Aria Da Capo it would be exaggerated and ridiculous to fill the play with detailed symbols. Bury the Dead, as a symbol complete in itself, shares this lack of minor symbols, except in the case of the final curtain.

The entire conception of the play is one of resistance against war but its conclusion is even more frankly revolutionary. It incites to immediate action and to a popular rebel movement when on the stage the dead soldiers leave, on their way to the people, with the live soldiers of the burying detail following them. The last of them flicks his cigarette butt at the crumpled general who had turned the machine gun on them.

The revolutionary exhortation has more symbolic than literal meaning, as is natural since Shaw, at his best, was a very theoretical revolutionary.

It is difficult to agree with Krutch when he says "the first 20 minutes present the most interesting part of the whole play." ${ }^{14}$ The symbolic ending is
the principal difference which distinguishes Bury the Dead from the earlier anti-war drama of Sidney Howard, Paths of Glory, 1935, and it is this revolutionary appeal which makes Bury the Dead last on the boards while Howard's play is no longer presented.

The literal meaning is more obvious: it is anti-war, anti-militarist and it says, "enjoy the good things of the earth during many years." In addition it gives the hope of a moral victory for the people over the militarists. Other suggested meanings are of the stupidity, brutality and uselessness of high military officials.

What is the background from contemporary history which explains such a hard attack upon the militarists? While the Briand-Kellogg Pact of August 27,1928, to outlaw war still expressed perfectly the sentiments of the American people, the Japanese invaded Manchuria in September, 1931, after the "Mukden incident" and a year later set up the puppet state of Manchukuo.

Various Americans of national importance argued for a "prophylactic war" to remove the Japanese from China, but the people did not wish more than to morally condemn Japan. Between October, 1935, and May, 1936, Mussolini conquered Ethiopia, and on March 7, 1936, Hitler won his first military gamble in the Ruhr. In November, 1935, Maxim Litvinoff and Anthony Eden's fight in the League of Nations for action against Italy died without popular support, which was limited to the customary moral condemnation. Nobody wanted preventive wars.

The American people after having fought in the first World War to "save democracy," saw it lost in the United States with the public violence of the veterans of the American Legion and with the irresponsible massacres of the National Guards under the
orders of provincial politicians on the capitalist payroll. ${ }^{15}$ The people did not want to fight in a second "war to end all wars." The writer of this study recalls beginning in September, 1935, as a freshman in a California high school where in many of the classrooms the teachers had placed large posters illustrative of the useless and anti-social costs of the first World War.

This was the moral climate, then, in which Shaw wrote Bury the Dead: pacifism and moral condemnation of international aggressors. The immediate occasion for writing the play we know was a contest patronized by a leftist theatre group. ${ }^{10}$

But times change, rapidly.
The leftists, who were an important segment of American pacifism, after the beginning of Franco's war in Spain and the full-scale Japanese attack on China after July, 1937, arrived at the end of their patience, and of their pacifism. They changed their position to insist on worldwide, militant antifascism. The "intellectual pacifists" of the universities, now faced with the clear symptoms of the second World War which was to begin within three years, also retreated from their pacifist position and argued for "neutrality" and isolation. Bury the Dead was caught in the middle of these changes. A few months previously it had received the applause of the entire left; after Franco it was an embarrassment. The play was closed while those of Odets continued their triumph in the important leftist theatre.

In the same complaisant manner that Shaw agreed to the closing of his play, he was also ready to follow the new Communist line of antifascism. The results of this effort appeared in 1939 in the fantasy, The Gentle People, about two lovable old men who kill
a mobster and throw his body in the sea when they can think of no other means to rid themselves of his threats. Naturally, this play was also "embarrassing" during the short existence of the Hitler-Stalin pact. The writer of this study cannot include Shaw in the general pardon which Gagey extends to the pacifist dramatists:

The leftist writers held out as long as possible for pacifism, since this was one of the cardinal tenets in their propaganda directed at American youth, but sooner or later events forced all dramatists to reverse their position on war. ${ }^{17}$

Among the multitude there is no cover for Shaw because he has been a turncoat, not once, but three times. After authorizing the retirement of Bury the Dead for the second World War, he looked with favor once more upon its presentation during the postwar period. After the Korean episode began, he once again prohibited its production, this time in a public statement:

Recently Mr. Shaw directed his agents to refuse permission to present Bury the Dead. In a letter to the drama editor of the New York Times, Mr. Shaw explained why he withdrew his peace play from possible production.
"...Bury the Dead...was a play which expressed the passionate revulsion against the horrors of war and the fear of another war which was so much a part of the emotional climate of the Nineteen Thirties, a revulsion which was reflected in such other anti-war plays of the time as Idiot's Delight, Ten Million Ghosts, and Johnny Jobnson.
"It also reflected a belief, which now seems impossibly naive, that by appealing to reason and sentiment war might be forever halted. Since then we have been forced into one war by men in Germany and Japan who clearly demonstrated their immunity to reason and sentiment. As a soldier I saw enough of the agony of war to make my original revulsion stronger than ever, Putting on my civilian
clothes once more, I put on again my civilian belief in the possibility of peace through reason and sentiment.
"Now five years later, the rulers of Russia have demonstrated that the gentle hopes of 1950 are as naive as they were in 1935. Invading, killing, destroying, they proclaim with monstruous cynicism that they are the supporters of world-wide peace. In a spectacle of complete. moral corruption, their adherents in this country wave peace pledges and petitions while Communist guns are killing American soldiers.
"It is to balk these double-tongued gentlemen, with whatever small means are at my disposal, that I have withdrawn my play. I do not wish the forlorn longings and illusions of 1935 to be used as ammunition for the killers of 1950. I still hope passionately for peace-but not peace that is selective, and divisible at will, not peace that is a political slogan and a military instrument, but peace that is real, general, and complete. ${ }^{18}$
We could deduce that Shaw wishes "all or nothing at all" in the way of peace, that if there is a regional war, we must turn it into a world war. Or could we deduce that Shaw believes there is a time and place for everything? He once accused the critics of a political viewpoint which "seems to be an amorphous liberalism" ${ }^{10}$ and now finds himself condemned on his own charge.

If Bury the Dead was revolutionary pacifism, The Gentle People was revolutionary advocacy of a franciscan type of war. Shaw's later plays were moderate social drama and personal reminiscences of the disintegration of the bourgeois life of his childhood. Between 1936 and 1939, corresponding to the age 22-25 of the playwright, Shaw held "radical" ideas, and then began moderating them and reconciling himself with his previous middle class background, He was young and something of an opportunist. Such a pattern is usual ameng writers who go from school
to writing without ever having done anything else, especially those who stay too long in Hollywood or with the national broadcasting chains. Burns Mantle gives us a few facts about Shaw's life before 1936:

Young Mr. Shaw... lives in Brooklyn, though he was born in Manhattan... He had been writing radio scripts for a detective story continuity when the radio scouts found him and sent him to Hollywood. In picture land he has been doing football stories, having played football when he was a student at Brooklyn College. His early ambition, insofar as it was associated with the theatre, he relates was "to be polite, polished and luxuriantly idle, and to write that kind of play, none of which things has been vouchsafed me." ${ }^{20}$

So Shaw's season in the social theatre was an aberration, and now he has returned to the place from which he came.

Along with the change in the content of Shaw's plays, it is interesting to observe the degeneration of their artistic quality. Here is Shaw's list of failures after Bury the Dead: Siege, 1937; The Quiet City; The Golden Years; Retreat to Pleasure; Sons and Soldiers, 1943; and The Assassins, 1945.

In synthesis then, what was and is the importance of Bury the Dead? It was an artistic success. It had a sizeable influence in American politics. It was a succes de scandale; it was an embarrassment to the then militant left, previously allied with the pacifists. It was of the climate which produced the Johnson Act and American neutrality toward Spain. Since 1936 it has been presented several hundred times in university and community theatres in the United States. ${ }^{2 n}$

Was it an effective protest? If the effective pro.test is that which expresses the conscience, the sentiments and the hopes of the people, Bury the Dead was effective between 1936 and 1939. It also was effective
during the war if we admit that a popular song expresses the temper of the people. The two principal themes of the play, not wishing to die as a soldier and wishing to enjoy the good things of the earth, are found, half seriously, half in jest, in a song of British and American soldiers during the second World War:

I don't want to join your f_-ing army
I don't want to go away to war
I'd rather stay at home, my bloody f-ing home
$A^{\prime}$ living off the earnings of my whore, God bless her.
I don't want to join your f-ing army
I don't want my buttocks shot away
I'd rather be a blighty, a blooming f --ing blighty,
So I could f- my bloody life away.
Yes, it was an effective protest, and it is even more so today because peace is no longer merely " $a$ fine principle of men of good will." It is a necessity, in the opinion of many, in order to avoid total extermination. Now that the atomic bomb is a world problem, Bury the Dead has a world-wide meaning. If it continues in its present position of being one of the best serious pacifist pieces, as it is in this writer's opinion, it may be staged in many parts of the world for a long time to come. For Mexico and Latin America the problem of peace, and plays like Bury the Dead, has a transcendental importance if "the United States' wars are the continent's wars," as various "panamericans" try to tell us. On Sept. 18, 1950, the President of the United States presented to the Congress of his country a "defense blueprint" which includes the support of Mexico and Canada. But since that time, Mexico's Assistant Foreign Minister Tello has won the respect of the hemisphere by insisting that Latin-American troops be used only for hemisphere defense and not for the United States'
guarrels at all four corners of the earth. Despite his committments to fight in support of reactionary cheiftans and European colonial powers anywhere on the Asiatic periphery, the President of the United States shows us with his recall of MacArthur that he hesitates to provoke a third World War immediately. But Chinese, Korean, American, French, Turkish and British Dominion soldiers continue to die in a Korean war which nobody wants to accelerate and which nobody is willing to stop.

Shaw is right, it is an inapt time for a good pacifist play.

During the 1930's while the pacifists' abstract enemy was war, their particular and personal phobia was the munitions makers. It was the time of the exposure of the deals among the Vickers, the Schneiders and the Krupps in the first World War, and sensational writers such as George Scldes "w were shoutting the slogan, "merchants of death." At that time, before a long and costly radio advertising campagn, "100 percent American," had through sheer aural exhaustion carried its point that "DuPont means better things through chemistry," the name of the Delaware powder makers had the same effect on a pacifist that a red cape has on a bull. The play, Peace on Earth, reflects the peak of the feeling against the munitions makers, as does the topical-political song by L. E. Swift, There Are Three Broibers, sung in the form of a lively, ironic, three-part round:

There are three brothers named DuPont. Patriots are they.
They make their profits from munitions in an honest way.
They love their country right or wrong.
But when yen or liras come along

> They always very cheerfully to any nation sell
> Shells that will all armor pierce and armor that will stop each shell.

Gradually, as DuPont took over credit from the silkworm for making the American woman's legs what they were, the rabidness against the death merchants metamorphosed into a new antipathy toward a more generalized group which came to have the name of the "war profiteers." Such a change demonstrates a' certain intuitive perspicacity in the people because, ever since the days of the American Civil War and the later operations of the U. S. cavalry against the Indians in the Southwest, shrewd business men have known, as Argentina knows today, that there is as much money to be made in beef contracts as in supplying munitions.

By the time the Lend-Lease Act had forecast the participation of the United States in World War II and had demonstrated through fancy wages how much the holders of "defense contracts" must have been making, the spotlight had been taken over by the new villain, the war profiteer. And by the time the war was over, Garson Kanin had written in Born Yesterday the delightful study of one of the villains who had made his pile in a very humble way, in the junkyards.

The writer of this study came to know the big junk man in Gassner's anthology of the best plays of the war period, ${ }^{23}$ and fortunately for the reader, Born Yesterday is the modest kind of comedy which doesn't need all the accoutrements of the stage to earn its laughs. In fact, such dialog often may be better read than heard chewed by the actors. The reading was enough to provoke the repeated recommendation, "the best American comedy since the war began."

Such a eulogy is not a superlative because the

## Greupia

American comedy in recent years has not been in a very happy condition. At least two intelligent critics, O' Hara and Eleanor Flexner, have each dedicated a quarter of a volume to the lamentation that the contemporary comedy, despite certain graces, has lacked the essential, that of being funny. It is all very well that the American theatre has taken itself as seriously as it has, but every important theatre has always had "comedy too." Perhaps the greatest laugh detergent in the United States has been the strain of subjectivity in certain young playwrights who are apt to give too much importance to the exquisiteness of their innermost feelings. Another has been the discovery that, if there is enough color in the set, and enough music and enough legs in the show, it can get along at the box office without laughs, or, at most, with a single vaudeville clown brought out of retirement for one of the skits.

Born Yesterday is funny, and that must be the reason it seems outstanding in the postwar comedy. Harry Brock is funny when he threatens to send the Senator back to the YMCA, and breathtakingly ignorant Billie Dawn is funny when she tells Harry he's "not couth." The dialog is funny, but the best lines and scenes are built on "the humor of character." The warmest response to the play comes from the junk man and his girl's being, not witty, but just what they are.

The genre is that of the comedy of manners, primarily because the playwright doesn't bother to make Harry Brock a villain; he assumes just as the melodramatist does that the audience will all be against Harry. In melodrama the villain whom everyone hates from the first has a scene a faire in which he plays his crookedest card and is run off. Harry never gets much of a chance to play the skunk; he just gets done
in by the girl. It serves him right, but we have not seen why. His scoundrelry on stage is minor, so it must have been something he did before the curtain went up.

This wide assumption by the playwright is what limits the protest element of the play. If the assumption is correct, it indicates a very hopeful social awareness in the American people, who, evidently, are fully capable of putting such war profiteers in their place, which is somewhere outside of society. But perhaps the playwright assumed too much if few persons in the audience felt, as Atkinson did, the "social hostility of the character." ${ }^{24}$ As long as the audience reaction is divided and only one reviewer felt Harry's hostility, we must give the play two genres: the comedy of manners, and the social protest play. The playwright's intention does not determine the genre; Moliere, when he wrote The Misantbrope, as a comedy of manners, had no idea that in the twentieth century it would be accepted as a protest-against the human race.

Born Yesterday is divided into three acts, and the action takes place in the sitting room of a large and expensive suite in a hotel in Washington, D. C.

ACT ONE: The maid is cleaning as Paul Verral, a writer for New Republic, arrives looking for Harry Brock, who is to occupy the suite. The latter enters, preceded by a bellboy and Eddie Brock, a cousin and servant, and accompanied by the Assistant Manager of the hotel and by Billie Dawn, "breathtakingly beautiful and breathtakingly stupid." Ed Devery, Brock's lawyer who was once destined for greatness but now is only Brock's lawyer, comes in a little drunk as always and tells Brock he should let Verral have an interview. Brock does so in the midst of being shaved, manicured, etc. He boasts of his childhood days, of his start in
the junk business which has made him a millionaire. Devery gets Billie's signature on some papers about which she knows nothing. He and Brock keep her from drinking and request that she wear her most dignified dress because Senator Hedges and his wife are coming.

Brock and the Senator speak of deals for Harry in return for his helping the Senator. Billie's few comments are irrelevant or, at least, unconscious, and Devery manages to cover up for her. After the Hedges have gone, Brock and Devery talk about what can be done about Billie, and they decide to ask Paul Verral if he would be willing to teach her a few things. He consents gladly and she agrees to the proposal because she "had a yen for him right off." After she beats Brock soundly at gin rummy and he leaves to go to bed, Paul returns with the morning papers for her to read and some books for her to begin her studies. She says her eyes are not very good and he asks her why she does not wear glasses. She replies that they look terrible, and then she notices that he wears them, but after they kiss she recovers with "Of course, they're not so bad on men."

ACT TWO: Two months later, a changed room. A desk, a Capehart, books, magazines and records have been added. Billie, wearing glasses, is reading a newspaper, marking the points about which she must ask Paul who soon enters. They discuss her "cultural activities" and his dislike for Harry and what he stands for. She is beginning to understand this dislike. When Harry comes in, he parries Billie's "intellectual" questions with others about the things he knows. After Paul leaves, she asks Brock to explain the business they are in together, but he informs her that she is no more than a silent partner. Senator Hedges and

Devery come to tell Brock that the Senator's amendment, which will allow Brock to take over World War II junk in Europe with no government interference, is going to take longer and cost more than they had anticipated. Brock leaves in a rage. Devery asks for Billie's usual signatures on some papers, but he refuses to answer her questions about their contents, and she refuses to sign them until she has looked them over. Brock enters, they argue, but he forces her tc sign the papers. When she begins to cry, he tells her to get out of the house, and she leaves.

ACT THREE: Later that evening. Devery, drunker than ever, and Brock are nervously waiting for Billie while Eddie is out looking for her. She comes in quietly after they have gone, and Paul follows her in. They go through the desk, and Paul takes all the papers and documents. Before he leaves, he asks Billie to marry him which, she says, she will think over. She goes to pack her things and tells Brock she is leaving him for good. He is stunned but this shortly turns into fury, and he begins looking for the papers for her to sign so that he can be rid of her. She tells him and Devery that Paul has the papers and they are greatly disturbed. Devery calls the Senator and Eddie is sent to bring Paul who is then almost killed by Brock. Brock offers Paul a hundred thousand dollars which is refused, and Billie informs Brock she will sign back to him all the junkyards still in her name-one a year-if he behaves. She and Paul leave together and the three defeated schemers try to laugh off their disaster. Devery cynically proposes a toast to Billie and Paul:

To all the dumb chumps and all the crazy broads, past, present, and future-who thirst for knowledge-and search for truth-who fight for justice-and civilize each other-and make it so tough for sons-of-bitches like
you-(To Hedges.)-and you-(To Brock.)-and me. (He drinks.)

## Curtain

The movement of the play has the rapid tempo which has marked the work of two or three veteran producers of Broadway comedy who have the highest ratios of successes over failures of anybody in show business-their prosperity has been so continuous that the more impressionable New York reviewers have accepted the "fast pace" as an absolute criterion of play construction. One of these producers, George Abbot, taught Kanin what he knows of it and its corollary, called "timing."

The tempo in Born Yesterday is rapid but not constant, and it ascends in large open cycles to a succession of rapidissimo climaxes. This rhythm is called in the comedy trade "building a scene." Although the technique many times seems evident, it is not simple and requires a long apprenticeship on the part of the director. There are perhaps a half dozen directors in the United States who handle it with dexterity. In comedy writing, one of the chief elements, often abused, for accelerating the tempo is the sexual one, and, in Kanin's play, Billie Dawn fairly radiates it.

The structure of Born Yesterday is Aristotle's wellknown "discovery," but instead of being concentrated in the last act, as Menander and Plautus used it for arbitrary denouement, it here is spread over the whole play. It is the gradual discovery of Harry's cheapness by Billie Dawn, along with her discovery of her new self, that creates both the conflict and the resolution of the comcdy. The structure might be criticized for presenting the most interesting discoveries early in the play and leaving too little to sustain even the short third act. ${ }^{25}$

The inner line of action is subordinate to the outer one, and the result is a slight unbalancing which is probably associated with the previously discussed confusion as to genre: comedy of manners, or protest play, or both. However the discord is not great, and there is a solidness and complacency about the play which radiates the cheerful extroversion so normal to Americans before their theatre became important to the world.

The action ${ }^{20}$ is logically tidy by the proof of Price's proposition:
A. Billie Dawn, mistress and silent partner of Harry Brock, is ignorant. Therefore Harry and his attorney get Paul Verral to educate her.
B. Paul shows her that the help she has been giving Harry is unethical. She refuses to sign papers, important to Harry, and Paul steals them because they incriminate Harry and his political tools, revealing "the worst swindle since-uh-the Teapot. .."
C. Paul outlasts Harry's murder threats and he and Billie leave together. Harry loses the girl and the European junk monopoly.

The hotel suite in which all the action occurs is a completely passive milieu; it does nothing for the play, which, if it had been written 50 years ago, would surely have taken place in a drawing room. The set does provide a number of contrasts of level which are of advantage to the "stage picture," the grouping of the plastic elements. However it possesses no more than the expected good craftsmanship which eases the director's problem in moving the actors.

The characterization is the formal forte of the play, with the exception of the drawing of the New Republic writer, Paul Verral, whom Atkinson, ${ }^{27}$ with good
reason, dislikes. Paul is the personification of the "men of good will," the recent ideal of Gassner who was once less abstract in his social criticism. But the flimsy characterization of Verral is not enough to draw Gassner's fire nor to dampen his enthusiasm for the play. ${ }^{2 \prime}$

The weak characterization stops with Verral. The Senator has just the right uncertainty and Devery just the right cynicism to accentuate the assertivness of Brock and Billie. The Senator and Devery remain secondary figures, flat and typed, which is exactly what the playwright desires, and yet they take their place beside the two round characters without any contradiction of style. Kanin has genially over-run the playwriting rule, "don't mix your characters with types."

Harry Brock is a "hero in the rough," one of a group in great favor in the recent American theatre which seems to have superseded the polished handsome hero for the moment. Often these "heroes in the rough" are useless, and, even if comic or semicomic, are very rarely humorous.

The role of Billie is the prize role of the play. It is one of those in which we see a character transformed into a different person before our very eyes within about three hours playing time. Granted that Born Yesterday is not the tour de force that Pygmalion is, it still has in Billie one of the best and most difficult comedy roles for women in all of the American theatre. Judy Holliday overnight became nationally known for her handling of the part; and Marie McDonald, opposite William Bendix, tried her hand at it in Los Angeles as 1950 was coming to a close. When to the simple transformation of character, not by circumstance but by education, one adds the element of self-discovery, the result is a multi-dimensional portrayal which is a credit to any playwright and the answer
to a fading actress' prayers. When the role is humorous, as well as round, we have something of a comparative miracle in the undionysian American theatre.

Most fertile of all is the suggestion of what the creation of characters like Billie Dawn can mean to the social theatre which too often has avoided being either entertaining or extravagant because of too much concern with emphasis on the "message." ${ }^{20}$

Related to the character is that extravagance of sentiment called humor which Taine implied is found at the bottom of a beer stein: "The French know it not." ${ }^{\infty}$ Without discussing the extensive literature ${ }^{31}$ on the aesthetics of the comic, we can establish that comedy has three principal forms: the comic phrase, the comic situation and the comic character. But humor comes only from persons; it is not found in wordplay or in comic situations. In addition, not all comic characters are humorous; the clown, for example, is comic but not humorous. Comedy may be around people; humor is in them. Perhaps this narrowing down of the definition ot humor as distinguished from the comic has served for little when actually the reading of Sterne's Tristram Sbandy and Dickens' novels is superior to the sum of the 10 best definitions. A final clue as to humor's hiding place is this: if you look for it, start with your uncle George, the one with the big red nose, the one whose wife thinks is not very smart. For a character to seem humorous to us, perhaps we must be able to love him.

Billie Dawn's infinite ignorance is humorous, and when she discovers it and does something about it she wins our affection as well. Harry's ignorance is humorous, but his bull strength fills us with fear and antagonism. He is a robot locomotive, free for the moment of its outside control station and operated only by a hundred internal relays which respond with perfect re-
flexes to the hundred situations vital to his continued operation. We laugh with superiority when his limited number of relays can supply only close-to-correct responses, as in the scene where Billie is giving him an "intellectual" quiz and all he can do is to parry with counter-questions from his limited store. We laugh because we are human beings and he isn't quite one, at least in the contemporary American sense. Today the accumulation of several billion human thoughts since the time of the cave and the club, and, more important, the several million thoughts since the Russian pogroms, the English war against the Boers, and the American Haymarket massacre in the last half of the nineteenth century have suggested to Americans that the first requisite of a human being is his having at least an elementary social conscience. Harry has none and as a result his character is comic in its anachronism but awesome in its sub-human strength.

If Kanin had given Harry just one or two weaknesses, of the emotions rather than of the mind, his play would have changed completely. Harry would have become the protagonist and not the villain. Winning just the frailest of our affections he would have become a humorous character, not a comic one.

But Kanin wished to present a big junk profiteer, with echoes of the big men of past "collecting" and "hunting" stages of culture, and he is too capable a director and playwright to let Harry become humorous and run off with the play.

The tried and true comedy of manners in the popular or "realistic" style, the arsenal of comedy, is accepted without subjective torment by Kanin in Born Yesterday, as is the traditional illusion of the proscenium stage. The only conventions are those for delineating the villain, which are centuries old, and those for mak-
ing him forceful and not couth, which are conventions more recent and American. Kanin makes no attempt at innovations in form, except in his characterization which still remains in large part only traditional good craftsmanship. After all, humor is not so rare in world drama; it is only rare at this moment in the United States.

The same style is used by Kanin in two later plays, The Live Wire and The Rat Race, which deflated the astronomical hopes of critics who shared the opinions expressed here about Kanin's first play. The first suffers from allowing the comic heel of the play to get off without being painted a villain ${ }^{33}$-an error which Kanin competently avoided in Born Yesterday. The second caught enough of the symbolist virus making the rounds on Broadway to ruin a good straight comedy. ${ }^{\infty}$ This virus attacks the eyes first, resulting in a sort of haze through which everything is seen. Then it affects the mind, resulting in vagueness in a primary stage and rapidly developing, if not treated, into complete banality, which the patient often calls "lyric."

Nevertheless Kanin continues to be the prime hope for American comedy and there is every reason to believe that he will now avoid repeating the symbolistic errors of The Rat Race. Moreover the fact that he is a prolific writer makes his recent failures no matter for despair.

The language of Born Yesterday is not "natural." « It is the conventional language of comedy, too busy setting up laughs to have other virtues. However it is not so dependent upon sustained brilliant wit as the plays of Bernard Shaw or Oscar Wilde. It dawdles at times and gawkily savors a piece of humorous business which may come close to farce such as Billie's reply to Paul's
proposal of marriage:You don't love me. You just love my brain.

Probably the most vivid lines in the play are to be found in a quarrel between Brock and Billie:

BROCK. I picked you up out of the gutter and I can throw you back there, too. Why, you never had a decent meal before you met me.

BILLIE. Yeah, but I had to have 'em with you. You eat terrible. You got no manners. Takin' your shoes off all the time-that's another thing...and picking your tecth, you're just not couth!

BROCK. I'm as couth as you are!
Another excellent passage is that in which Brock receives the news that the legislation Senator Norval Hedges is getting for him will require a little delay and some more money:

DEVERY. I'm sure Norval's doing his best. BROCK. Well, his best ain't good enough.
DEVERY. Don't be unreasonable, Harry. There are ninety six votes up there. Norval's just one guy.
BROCK. He's the wrong guy. What the hell? We've handled it before.
HEDGES. Things aren't the same.
BROCK. We'll make 'em the same. That's your job, ain't it?
DEVERY. Pretty tough assignment.
BROCK. What do I care? (To Hedges) And you, you better get moving or I'll butcher you-you'll wind up a God damn YMCA secretary again before you know.
DEVERY. Harry...
BROCK. I'm gonna get it fixed so I can do business where I want and how I want and as big as I want. If you ain't with me, you're against me.
HEDGES. I'm with you.
BROCK. (starting up the stairs) All right, then, you'll have to pull your weight in the God damn boat or l'll get somebody who can. You understand me?
(He slams out. There is an auku:ard pause)
HEDGES. He has quite a temper, lasn't he?

From these characters and, secondly, from this dialog come the strongest emotional reactions to the play. Third is the action which is less affective.

The literal meaning of the play is largely found in three negative characters: (1) A Senator who will get legislation passed for $\$ 80,000$ per piece. (2) An influence peddler, called a lawyer, who really is only a free lance lobbyist who buys the Senator for (3) Harry Brock who has bought legislation to his own advantage before in the U. S. Senate and who now is seeking a legal way to monopolize the surplus material salvaged after the European war.

The thesis is only implied. Harry's war profiteering has occurred before the play began and now we see his postwar projects. The direct protest is against villain Harry and only indirectly against profiteering, and bribery of legislators. Harry is a heel and everyone in the audience knows it, and anyone blinded by loyalty or affection for Harry may also be educated rapidly. as Billie was, to see what he is. Once again, Atkinson's apt phrase is revealing: The character Harry Brock is a heel because of "the social hostility of the character."

Kanin's nearest approach to a directly stated theis is found in what Billie tells Brock after she has decided to leave him and has refused his offer of marriage:

BILLIE (very simply). Well, all this stuff rve been reading-all that Paul's been telling me-it just mixed m: up. But when you hit me before, it was like everything knocked itself together in my head-and made sense. All of a sudden I realized what it means. How some people are always giving it and some taking. And it's not fair. So I'm not going to let you any more. Or anybody else.
Interestingly enough the real life counterpart of Senator Norval Hedges was found in Congressman

Andrew May of the House of Representatives Military Affairs Committee. May had "arranged" war contracts for Henry and Murray Garsson, munitions dealers, for a price. He was convicted of conspiracy to bribe along with the Garsson brothers, on July 3, 1947, after he had left Congress. On July 25 all three received federal court sentences of eight months to two years in prison.

The charges against Representative May had been semi-public since the last year of the war and certainly Kanin knew of the incidents before he wrote Born Yesterday. Another certainty is that the publicity resulting from the play helped bring the May case into a public court after a long period in which it had remained a hushed-up rumble.

Before he wrote Born Yesterday, Kanin had never demonstrated a particularly acute political awareness, and his work since his first play has not stamped him as a formidable social thinker. His mind seems to respond to "timely" events with the same liberal suspension of judgment which marks most educated Americans, and his intellectual attitudes do not reveal either consistent or radical tendencies. He is another of the lukewarm group of American playwrights who have been overhonored in receiving the sophisticated tag, "ecletic."

Doubtless he shows a strong sympathy for the underdog in The Rat Race and a strong dislike for heels and chiselers in The Live Wire, but such liberal sentiments make up a sum that is far from being a real social conscience. Perhaps, like Gassner, we should not ask more profundity from Kanin if he will repeat for us occasionally the laughs and the comic craft of Born Yesterday. He is essentially a man of the theatre (both the plus and the minus) and he is married to veteran :ctress Ruth Gordon, who also occasionally writes plays of sentimental reminiscence like Years Ago and The

Leading Lady, both of which were directed by her husband. Her Over Twenty-One, 1944, was a big hit during the meagre wartime theatre seasons. Both members of the husband and wife team have wide theatre and movie experience:

After a slow start as Western Union messenger, Macy's clerk, vaudevillian, saxophonist, and bit player, following some study at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Garson Kanin developed meteoric qualities. He did not achieve any singularity as an actor, but he came to the attention of George Abbot as a willing young man with a flair for staging. Mr. Kanin could not have had a better mentor in the field of directing than Mr. Abbot, with whom he was associated in the profitable ventures of Three Men on a Horse, Boy Meets Girl, Room Service, and Brother Rat...

Sam Goldwyn, who has a keen eye for talent and backs his judgment with conspicuous action, brought the young man to Hollywood in 1937 when Kanin was only twentyfive and gave him an opportunity to familiarize himself with motion picture technique. R. K. O. allowed him to direct $A$ Man to Remember, and Kanin became "the boy wonder" of the Barbary Coast. Subsequently, he directed the Ginger Rogers picture Bachelor Mother, My Favorite Wife, They Knew W hat They Wanted and Tom, Dick and Harry. When the war came he enlisted as a private and emerged a captain. The army was astute enough to keep him to his last, and in consequence Kanin was able to direct numerous and valuable documentary films. He climaxed this phase of his career with The True Glory. ${ }^{\text {es }}$
. . with her husband, the versatile Garson Kanin, Miss Gordon has produced two Broadway plays and written the motion pictures "A Double Life" and "Adam's Rib." ${ }^{\text {es }}$
Born Yesterday has been one of the greatest box office successes in the entire American theatre. It opened February 4, 1946, and closed December 31 1949, after 1,642 performances. It has been played in translation in most of Europe and in Palestine. In the Russian zone of Germany it was given an enthusiastic production as "anti-American propaganda." The same tag was placed
upon Miller's Dealb of a Salesman when it was banned in the American zone of Germany. Born Yesterday had a run in the Teatro Latino which was comparatively long for Mexico City.

The highly successful movie made from the play has increased its audience by millions of persons, but Judy Holliday's personal mannerisms are exaggerated and played up to the hilt for the closeup cameras so that Harry Brock becomes a mere supporting role and the movie-goer has no opportunity to become aware of Harry's "social hostility." Judy Holliday, on the strength of this one performance, will probably remain in Hollywood to play "dumb broads" for long enough to acquire several swimming pools.

Its effectiveness attested by the box office, Born Yesterday's validity continues today when once again the United States is spending billions of dollars on a war and the Harry Brocks and the Senator Hedges are once more beginning to crawl out from under the rocks.

Its social criticism has had a greater influence upon laughing audiences because of the theatrical excellence of its form which, in addition, is well equilibrated with what the play says. If it had attempted to say more it might have become the domain of the armchair critics, but as it stands it is a magnificent piece of theatre. Atkinson compares it to Moliere's Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme:" ${ }^{\text {and }}$ it is in the best of the comedy of manners tradition. This genre in the American theatre includes no play with a larger social meaning than that of Born Yesterday.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

${ }^{1}$ There is a similar feeling in Mexican preconquest baroque art. Austerity gives to the ugly and the horrible a value which it does not have in a remantic style. The anti-romanticism of Bury the Dead was what was lacking in What Price Glory?
${ }^{2}$ Brooks Atkinson, Broadway Scrapbook. (New York: Theatre Arts Inc. c1947). p. 225.
s Mordecai Gorelik, Ncw Theatres for Old. (New York: Samuel French. 1948). p. 403.

- Idem.

5 Sobel, op. cit. p. 119.
" Bury the Dead participates in Polti's situations number 1 C 1 , sunplication of the powerful for those dear to the suppliant (inverted); and number 8B2, a revolt of many.
${ }^{7}$ Gassner, Masters of the Drama. (New York: Dover Publications. c1940). p. 688.

8 Frank Hurburt O' Hara, Today in American Drama. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939). p. 263.

- Gorelik, op. cit. p. 242. Gorelik uses his terms with more historical precision than either Gassner or O'Hara.
${ }^{10}$ Eric Bentley, "Back to Broadway" in Theatre Arts, vol. xxxiii, no. 10. November, 1949. p. 13.
${ }^{11}$ Gassner, Twenty Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre. (New York: Crown Publishers. c1939). "Finally fantasy prevailed in Irwin Shaw's Bury the Dead... Although Shaw's long one-acter was somewhat wordy and disjointed, it proved that a socially minded playwright did not have to
keep his nose to the grindstone of literal realism in order to convey his meaning or purpose." p. xx.
${ }^{12}$ Sobel, op. cit. "The story recalling that of the play, Miracle at Verdun, concerns dead soldiers who refuse to be buried." p. 119. "An English adaptation of this play by Julian Leigh was given by the Theatre Guild in 1931. The drama inspired Irwin Shaw to write his one-act Bury the Dead, 1936." p. 545.
${ }^{13}$ See the detailed discussion in the chapter in this study dedicated to Waiting for Lefty.
${ }^{14}$ Joseph Wood Krutch, The American Drama Since 1918: an Informal History. (New York: Random House. :1939). p. 278.
${ }^{25}$ Excellent for this page of American history is Louis Adamic's Dynamite: the Story of Class Violence in America. (New York: The Viking Press. 1935).
${ }^{16}$ "Irwin Shaw decided to compete for a prize offered by a New Theatre League in search of social drama...'Bury the Dead' never reached the contest for which it was written, but it was given a production by the League to which it was submitted and attracted the attention of several drama critics who saw it. Six weeks later it was given a professional production and created another round of excitement." Burns Mantle, Contemporary American Playurights. (New York Dodd, Mead and Company. 1941). p. 188.
${ }^{17}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 133.
${ }^{18}$ Reprinted in the students' magazine Scholastic, September 27, 1950.
${ }^{19}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 271.
=n Burns Mantle, Contemporary American Playurights. op. cit. p. 188.
${ }^{21}$ "In the last fourteen years Bury the Dead has theen performed hundreds of times throughout the countrv by high school and college dramatic clubs and little theatre groups." Scholastic, September 27, 1950.

22 George Seldes, You Can't Do That (New York: Modern Age Books. c1938).
${ }^{23}$ Gassner, Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre. op. cit.
${ }^{24}$ Atkinson, op. cit. p. 298.
2 Edward Landberg, "Born Yesterday" in The Neurs (México, D. F.) October 23, 1950. "Unlike most plays, which are written toward a climax, 'Born Yesterday' seems to have taken its start from the material of its remarkable first act, dense enough to provide matter for a good second and a barely passable final one. The petering out of his material seems to have been felt by Kanin, for he makes his first act as long as the last two combined, and the third for all its brevity, barely manages to resolve the problems this side of boredom."
${ }^{26}$ Polti's situation number 27B7, the discovery that one's lover is a scoundrel..., fits Born Yesterday fairly closely.
${ }^{27}$ Atkinson, op. cit. pp. 297, 299.
:2 Gassner, Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre, $o p$. cit. p. xxvii.
${ }^{20}$ Gassner has argued long and hard for the light torch in the social theatre.
${ }^{\text {so }}$ Hippolyte Adolphe Taine, History of English Literature. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap. c1908). 4 vols. Translated from the French by H. Van Laun.
${ }^{31}$ The best commentary on comic theories and a gool bibliography may be found in James Kern Feibleman's In Praise of Comedy: a Study in its Theory and Practice. (New York: MacMillan. 1939). Less intellectual and universal but perhaps a better discussion of American humor is Samuel S. Cox's IV by We Laugh. (New York: Harper and Brothers. 1878). 378 pp.
${ }^{32}$ Theatre Arts, vol. xxxiv, no. 10. October, 1950. p. 11.
${ }^{33}$ Ibid. vol. xxxiv, no. 3. March, 1950. p. 9.
${ }^{3}$ Lawson, op. cit. The chapter on dialog discusses four requisites: naturalness, clarity, color, and compression. pp. 287-298.
${ }^{25}$ Gassner, Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre. op. cit. p. 182.
${ }^{3 v}$ Theatre Arts, vol. xxxiv, no. 2. February, 1950. p. 58.
${ }^{37}$ Atkinson, op. cit. p. 299.

## Cbapter 3

## THE WAGE SYSTEM

## Waiting for Lefty

> When the union's inspiration through the worker's blood shall tun There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun...

For almost a half-century these words have been sung as a prophecy, and the worker's blood has run in a fight for the right to strike as a means to bargain collectively with employers over wages and working conditions. The employer, on his side, has insisted on his right to bring in strikebreakers and thugs from the outside in order to liquidate what was once his working force. At first the fight was local, the company guards and the local police pounded and fired at the picket line and terrorized the districts of working-class homes. Then, business control of state political machines permitted the use of the state militia for the work of the Pinkertons. The forces of the federal government were first used by President Cleveland to break the Pullman strike, and since then they have sometimes brought peace in a bloody stalemate between strikers and local police or militia, and sometimes brought certain defeat of an unbeatable strike. Under the Wagner Act of 1935, the federal government, to lessen nation-wide strike violence, guaranteed the right to collective bargaining and accepted the responsibility of strike arbiter. Today 20 million organized workers once again find their right to strike removed by the federal government be-
cause Robert Taft, Senator from Ohio, had the power at the end of the second World War to turn the federal courts into the injunction-issuing agency which the local courts used to be.

The American bourgeois, and with the name is included the Broadway theatre-goer, never did understand exactly what was going on between the workers who run the machines and the men who ows them. The owners and their press had convinced him that the workers wanted to bankrupt industry when they fought for a living wage and against the company store and company houses. Even the worker often did not understand the issue clearly until it appeared in his own backyard, especially after the American Federation of Labor had the militancy knocked out of it in 1911, when the MacNamara brothers were convicted of dynamiting the Los Angeles Times. The periodic Congressional hearings of the charges against the Associated Press since the 62nd Congress have pointed out the agency by which the industrialists could keep the public from knowing what was going on at their plants during strikes. Upton Sinclair and John Reed, among others, were small voices crying out the truth against the suppression and falsification of strike news. The "big lie" thrived and continues to thrive, and there seems to be no medium of mass communications in which the worker and his union can receive a fair presentation of their side of the story. The "big lie" is exposed in a popular union song, the grimly exultant and ironic "Put It on the Ground":

Oh, if you want a raise in pay,
All you have to do,
Go and ask the boss for it, And he will give it to you, Yes, he will give it to you, my bcy, He will give it to you,

A raise in pay without delay, Oh, he will give it to you.

Oh, put it on the ground, Spread it all around, Dig it with a hoe, It will make your flowers grow.

For men who own the industries, I'm shedding bitter tears;
They haven't made a single dime
In over thirty years;
In over thirty years, my boy, In over thirty years;
Not one thin dime in all that time, In over thirty years.

Oh put it on the ground, Spread it all around,
Dig it with a hoe, It will make your flowers grow...

The men who own the industries, They own no bonds and stocks, They own no yachts and limousines, Or gems the size of rocks.
They own no big estates with pools,
Or silken B. V. D.'s,
Because they pay the working man
Such fancy salaries.
Oh, put it on the ground,
Spread it all around,
Dig it with a hoe,
It will make your flowers grow.
The first chance the American theatre-goer had to hear labor's case against the bosses was at the November 18, 1931, opening of Steel by John Wexley, the author of the previous melodrama hit, The Last Mile, which protested against capital punishment. Steel, in a revised version, was also another "first" in 1937 when it ran from January 17 to June 5 as the first play produced
by a labor union (CIO) with worker-actors. in 1935, at the peak of unemployment, there was a rash of strike plays capped by the one we shall study in detail in this chapter, $W$ aiting for Lefty by Clifford Odets. The others were Let Freedom Ring by Albert Bein, a study of the mountain farmer made over into a textile worker, and Black Pit, called by John Howard Lawson the "most important effort. . . in the field of proletarian drama." ${ }^{1}$ During 1936 and 1937 Clifford Odets wrote Silent Partner, and in the latter year The Theatre Union produced Lawson's Marching Song.

Besides the strike plays, there were two stage protests against the judicial murder of labor organizers Sacco and Vanzetti: Gods of the Lightning, 1928, and Winterset, 1935, both by Maxwell Anderson, the first in collaboration with Harold Hickerson. In 1939 came a protest against the academic repression of a professor who read Vanzetti's letters as a part of his literature course, The Male Animal by James Thurber and Elliot Nugent. We shall not study any of these last three plays because they cannot stand in comparison with W aiting for Lefty and, secondly, because too much space would have to be wasted in a useless refutation of those who insist that Winterset is far superior to Gods of the Lightning. (It is superior only in the sense of its having a higher altitude, closer to the clouds.)

If Wexley's strike play began a new kind of playwriting, Odet's Waiting for Lefty opened an era of labor theatre, complete with designers, actors, writers, directors, technicians and audience. Harold Clurman, director of Group Theatre, describes the opening night of Odet's play with these words:

Sunday night, January 5, 1935, at the old Civic Repertory Theatre on Fourteenth Street, an event took place to he noted in the annals of the American theatre. The evening had opened with a mildly amusing one-act play by Paul

Green. The audience, though attracted by the guest appearance of a good part of the Group company, had no idea of what was to follow.

The first scene of Lefty had not played two minutes when a shock of delighted recognition struck the audience like a tidal wave. Deep laughter, hot assent, a kind of joyous fervor seemed to sweep the audience toward the stage. The actors no longer performed; they were being carried along as if by an exultancy of communication such as I had never witnessed in the theatre before. Audience and actors had betome one. Line after line brought applause, whistles, bravos, and heartfelt shouts of kinship. ${ }^{2}$

Toward the end of Spring, 1935, the play had carried the entire nation ahead of it. Four new regional theatres of the Group had been founded in order to show Lefty. Clurman states that there were more than 90 simultaneous productions:

All in all, Lefty was being done in some sixty towns which had never before witnessed a theatrical performance. Thirty-two cities were seeing the twin bill of Lefty and Till the Day I Die at the same time. ${ }^{3}$

In truth it was a play which expressed the aspirations of the people, and its prestige grew with the prohibitions and arrests for "profanity" and "illegal assembly" in Philadelphia, Boston, New Haven, Newark, Dorchester, Chelsea and Roxbury, and with the beating of a California director by the Bund fascists after the presentation of Till the Day I Die. ${ }^{4}$

Lefty loses much of its theatrical impact when read in the calm of the library. It is almost certain that the intellectual, first becoming acquainted with the play through reading, would judge it "interesting, but nothing great." But if he first sees it in the theatre, he is conquered by a stage magic which makes him think during a short and pleasant lapse that the fight of the cabbies in Lefty is his fight. He does not recover his
accustomed calm until he leaves the theatre and calls a cab. Then, his madness passed, he rides home without saying a word to the real-life cabby in front of him.

The formal analysis of Lefty reveals that it has two genres: the drama of thesis, and the protest play. The passion it contains overcomes the mixture of two genres adapted to opposing major style currents and causes a dominance of the protest play genre, and with it the romantic style, over the thesis play genre. It is the best protest play included in the present study. Among its internal "flashback" scenes are included various plays (and genres) within the larger play. For example, the two scenes with women characters are of the genre of the sex problem play, and the scene between Miller and Fayette is a small action melodrama. In later works Odets has used over again all of these genres, plus that of the middle class problem drama, and he, at times, even approaches the tone of the sentimental retrospect genre.

Left $\mathrm{y}^{\prime}$ is in one act but is divided into eight episodes. There is only one curtain, after the last episode.

Opening Episode: On stage as the curtain goes up are the members of a workers' committee and the head of the union, Harry Fatt, who is addressing the audience, attempting to convince them that they should not strike. Voices from the audience answer back and ask several times, "Where's Lefty?" They want to hear from the committee members, the first of whom to speak is Joe. He tells them first that he does not know where Lefty is but he knows Lefty has not run out on them. Then he tells how his wife convinced him they should strike and the scene shifts to...

Episode of Joe and Edna: Joe comes home from work to find the furniture all gone because the payments were not made. He and Edna argue because they are
tired, hungry, and have two children to feed and clothe. She suggests that the cab drivers strike and threatens to leave Joe if he does not do something, even though it may be dangerous as he tells her it would be. He decides to go see Lefty, leaving Edna triumphant.

Lab Assistant Episode: Fayette, an industrialist, is offering Miller, a lab assistant, a twenty-dollar raise, switching him to a new laboratory to work with a very important chemist, Dr. Brenner, on poison gas. Miller is shocked and begins to think of his brother and two cousins killed in the last war but Fayette tells him the 12 million men killed and the 20 million wounded or missing were not their worry. "If big business went sentimental over human life there wouldn't be big business of any sort!" When he asks Miller to write a weekly report on Dr. Brenner's activities, however, Miller refuses, thus losing his raise and his job, and ends the interview by hitting Fayette in the mouth.

Episode of the Young Hack and bis Girl: Florence's brother, Irv, is trying to convince her that she should not see Sid any more. She and Sid have been engaged three years, but he does not make enough as a cab driver to permit him to marry. Sid comes in, they talk of their plight and the possibility of going off together, but they decide the cards are against them.

Labor Spy Episode: Fatt introduces Tom Clayton who has had practical strike experience at Philly. Clayton tells them that Fatt is right, the time is not ripe for a strike. A voice from the audience tells him to sit down, accuses him of being a company spy, and finally exposes him as his "own lousy brother," Clancy, not Clayton, who then "scrams down center aisle."

Young Actor Episode: ${ }^{5} \mathrm{He}$ is waiting to see a theatrical producer. The stenographer is sympathetic, and she urges him to say that his work in stock was work
in New York theatres. The producer emerges from a hot bath and determines that the young actor will not do because he is not the "type" for a soldier's part. As the actor is leaving the stenographer offers to loan him a dollar. "One dollar buys ten loaves of bread, Mister. Or one dollar buys nine loaves of bread and one copy of The Communist Manifesto."

Interne Episode: Dr. Benjamin (one of the committee members) is being replaced by the incompetent nephew of a Senator in the performance of a difficult operation. He is also told by Dr. Barnes that the board has found it necessary to close another charity ward and to cut down on the staff. Although Benjamin has seniority, he is a Jew, so he was chosen to go. He tells Dr. Barnes he has thought of going to Russia to work in socialized medicine but has decided his work is in America, and that he will have to get some kind of a job to keep alive-"maybe drive a cab"...

Closing Episode: Once again at the union meeting. Agate is speaking about union officers and about his union button which he cannot wear because it has burnt itself up blushing in shame. Fatt and the gunmen on the stage handle him roughly to silence him, but the committeemen protect him as he urges the workers to fight for their rights, to strike, and not to wait for Lefty. His speech is interrupted by a man who comes running in to say they have just found Lefty "behind the car barns with a bullet in his head!" Agate cries to the crowd, asks them what their answer is, and lears the workers shout over and over again "STRIKE!"

The play moves through brusque contrasts of rhythms, even more than Bury the Dead, which give a general effect of violence. In linear terms, the movement is composed of intersecting diagonals. The tempo is "swift" ${ }^{\circ}$ and, in addition, there is an even more rapid
artificial velocity which is imparted by the terrible sincerity of the characters in their "increasingly explicit statement of revolutionary protest." ' All the scenes are "prestissimo" except those of Dr. Benjamin and of the Young Hack and his Girl. In these the tempo is slower but the same urgency is dominant. The sexual emotions are those of repressed longing which only the future may define, but in the conflict of Joe and Edna there is the suspense of Edna's terrible threat which introduces the violent climate of the internal scenes.

The principal structure is an "envelope" like the one of Bury the Dead which we discussed previously. It opens and closes the play and contains the five flashback scenes divided by blackouts. A sixth internal scene which is not a flashback, but rather an added part of the envelope, gives Lefty a structural reinforcement which the anti-war play does not have. This scene, the Labor Spy episode, falls between the third and fourth flashbacks and returns the action for a moment to the union hall and the present in order to reestablish the identification of the audience with the characters.

The action ${ }^{8}$ is greatly compressed in the resolution, the final part which Price calls the "result of the action," but it can be contained, despite this fault, within Price's proposition:
A. Taxi drivers await the word of their leader Lefty in order to begin a strike even though the heads of their union are gangsters sold out to the owners and the police.
B. Flashbacks reveal the privations in the lives of the drivers caused by an economic crisis.
C. The cabbies discover a spy who has sneaked in to sabotage the strike and they discover Lefty has been murdered either by company thugs or those in. their own union. They declare the strike.

There is the combination of an interior with an exterior line of action: the outer one as extrovert as in an action melodrama, and the inner one expressive of all the doubrs of the economic system and of all the conflicts in the breast of the worker dispossessed by one of the periodic relapses of big business. The two lines seem one, thanks to the magnificent fusion given them by the dramatist's passion.

The welding of so intense an inner line to an outer action is found, so far as the present writer knows, only in some primitive rituals and in a great religious play. Several writers have noted the almost religious sense in Odets' work, among them Gagey:

Be gourself, lead your own life-he seems to say-give in to love but don't allow it to interfere with your mission; protest against poverty and social evils, and unite with others in creating a better world. Through love, self-expression, and rebellion Odets' characters are driven to personal conversion-not unlike religious conversion in its intensity-which leads to full realization or to action. This is characteristic of the reforming movement of the thirties and rather than strict ideology accounts for much of the leftism in Odets' plays. ${ }^{\circ}$

Lawson also comments on this quality in Waiting for Lefty which he considers a failing, though, at the same lime, a source of power:

Odets' conception of social change is still somewhat romantic; it is seen as a vast force, the recognition of which constitutes a personal regeneration. Thus he perceives the moment of explosive anger, of realization and conversion. Indeed Waiting for Lefty is a study in conversions. This is the source of its power. But Odets will undoubtedly go bevond this to mastery of more profound and more sustained conflict. ${ }^{10}$

In the production of Lefty there is no set; the stage copies the platform of a union hall. The text specifies
only ". . . a bare stage. On it are sitting six or seven men in a semi-circle. . . a committee of workers." The flashback scenes take place in a lighted area between the committee and the audience while the committee members remain seated in the shadows. All the technical resources are simple and economical. The atmosphere, dominated by the force and directness of the committee members, is one of violence and of just-awakening strength which adds all the more to the violence. Much of the effect of the play would be lost in a luxurious or baroque theatre. Much better is a simple and even poor theatre, and in fact the best place to stage the play is in a union hall.

The characters, except for Grady and his stenographer, Fayette, Dr. Barnes, Fatt and his gunmen, are taxi drivers and their women. Three of the drivers were previously of the middle class, chemist's assistant, actor, doctor, and only to this extent is Lawson's generalization valid:

> But here we have a militant strike committee made up largely of declassed members of the middle class. One cannot reasonably call these people "stormbirds of the working class." ${ }^{11}$

At the same time there is no reason that such people would not be found on a militant strike committee. They have been forced into work with a starvation wage after having been fairly well paid.' Two of the three men have additional grounds for holding ideas of the militant left; they lost their previous jobs as a result of race discrimination and war-mongering. The actor's motives are less clearly defined, but it must be remembered that the episode in which he figures was left out of the first popular edition of Odets' plays, which was perhaps the playwright's recognition of the weakest scene in Waiting for Lefty. The slogans which the
stenographer fires at the actor as he is leaving and the one, "Stormbirds of the working-class," at the end of the play lack a development leading up to them. They are "not cumulatively logical, not based on flesh-and-blood realities." "This however is a failure of particular bits of the dialog, and not one of the characterization in the basic action. We can reasonably expect to find the come-down romantic bourgeois on the strike comrnittee, and find him militant. We are less apt to find him eloquent or find him on the corner distributing Marxist leaflets.

The cabbies are all "positive" characters and receive life, warmth and truth from the dramatist's sympathy. Their manner of thinking is pragmatic. ${ }^{13}$

The "negative" group, among them Fatt, Fayette and the gunmen, "4 are mostly "types" rather than "characters," and Grady and his stenographer are "silhouettes," following Usigli's three-part classification.

The historical style of Lefty, naturalistic, is a substyle of the romantic, one of three great style currents, the other two being the classic and the popular or "realistic." In Lefty there are also conventional elements from the popular style. Clurman "" and Gagey "say the play was conceived by Odets upon the model of the minstrel show, one of the most popular and conventional American theatre forms. With such an economical structure, Lefty, dedicated to another end, might have ended up as conventional theatre in the popular style, but it is a protest (always romantic) and the union of the audience with the actors creates a complete stage illusion which makes the dominant style naturalistic and "romantic." "

The style of Lefl'y is the same one used by Odets in his later works, but these fall into the persistent trap of romantic American symbolism or relax into romantic
reminiscense. They get misty through a lack of the urgency and passion which unify Awake and Sing and Waiting for Lefty. ${ }^{18}$

We can note historically the progression of the socalled workers' drama from the romantic style through the popular, and it may be expected to arrive at a definite affirmation in the classic style. It began everywhere as protest drama because it came from outside the dominant social classes (Gorky's plays and stories are good examples) and in the young Soviet theatre we no longer see the romantic protest but rather a roughly finished popular drama which seeks to create social types and to approach the proverb in the pithiness of its commonsense instruction or thesis. A classic Soviet drama need not be expected as long as its leaders and artists feel their country is in danger from its capitalist and imperialist neighbors.

The American workers' theatre has been romantic during all of its protest phase, but there seems to be a tendency in that part of it which has accepted the Marxist perspective or vantage point to incorporate some few formal elements of the popular style in creating worker types and to present a "show how" thesis as well as a protest, a solution as well as a problem. There is in the labor theatre for the moment a still dominant romantic style with secondary borrowings from the popular style. A purer popular style is found in regional dramatists, mainly from agricultural areas, but there is no reason to expect such a style in the proletarian drama until the working class becomes dominant in the United States.

One of the greatest formal triumphs in Lefty is its dialog. Atkinson describes it as of "uncommon strength." ${ }^{20}$ Clurman calls it a new kind of dialog and
recognizes an antecedent for it in John Howard Lawson's Success Story:

> It was Lawson's play that brought Odets an awareness of a new kind of theatre dialogue. It was a compound of lofty moral feeling, anger, and the feverish argot of the big city. It bespoke a warm heart, an outraged spirit, and a rough tongue. ${ }^{20}$

The dialog of Lefty satisfies all four of Lawson's theoretical requisites: compression, color, clarity and naturalness. Gagey speaks of Odets" "great gift for stage dialogue-crisp, dramatic, humorous. Odets' humor is rarely contrived or factitious but arises naturally out of character." ${ }^{21}$

The cabbies in Lefty do not speak the language of the street, nor do they speak like pocts, but neither do they speak like declassed bourgeois, as Lawson maintained. They speak like very romantic workers, educated workers of conscience and refined feelings. Their passionate eloquence of words and action is rarely found in the midst of misery. They speak what must be the new and literary language of the ideal worker, the lexicon written by Lawson and the grammar by Odets.

The two formal elements of action and dialog carry the strongest emotions in the play; both are colored by the convictions of the dramatist who stands just beyond the lights. The characterization, although not weak, is less compelling.

The antecedents in theatre history for the forms used in Leffy are chiefly American: The minstrel show derives its type characters from the regional humorists following the Civil War and becomes an independent popular theatre toward the end of the nineteenth century; the envelope comes from Walt Whitman's poetry and was also used in Schlumberg's Miracle at Verdun, presented in translation in New York in 1931; the flash-
back was used for the first time in the American theatre in 1914 when Rice's On Trial was staged.

The only symbolism in Lefty grows toward the end of the play when the local strike begins to suggest a larger revolution. It becomes, in fact, a call to all workers to put down their oppressors and to seize with their own hands a decent life for themselves and their families. In this suggestion lies the power of the play. Lawson says, "The emotional tension mounts as the play proceeds: this intensity does not spring from the action, but from the increasingly explicit revolutionary protest. .. ${ }^{22}$ In the middle of a total depression, economic and mental, Lefty was received by the worker as a vision of truth and hope.

The literal meaning of the play is obvious and can be stated as a thesis: the militant worker, through the strike, and only through the strike, can hit his oppressors in the only place they are sensitive, in the pocket book, and can win fair pay for his work.

Except for its subjectivity, Lefty has much in common with the "learning play" which gives an example of an action and demonstrates the manner for carrying it out: workers win out over company spies and infiltrated gangster leaders who are sold out to the owners; once the agents of their masters are defeated, the workers go on strike to win for themselves a larger part of what they produce.

The meaning is clearer if we know that at the time Lefty opened there were strikes in nearly all of the 48 states. The "economic crisis" had become an employment crisis, and the economic ills of free enterprise which the Roosevelt administration had been trying to doctor since it came into office had reached their gravest stage. As the workers had become hungrier, the employers, police and state guards had become tougher.
in 1935 the end-point had been reached; the worker could take no less and he was willing to fight. The nation-wide fight of that year was won by labor, and from that fight came an unprecedented growth in the power of organized labor which was stopped only with Roosevelt's death.

The immediate results of the workers' victory were: (1) the Wagner Labor Relations Act in the summer of 1935 which recognized the legal status of the unions and the right to strike and which established the services of the government as a third party in disputes between industrialists and the unions, guaranteeing, at th: same time, free elections among the workers io chosse their labor organization; (2) the founding in November, 1935, of the Committee (later Congress) of Industrial Organizations which began as a cluster of militant unions; (3) the victory of the CIO over big steel in March, 1937, and later over little steel, marred by the police massacre of worker; at Republic Steel in Chicago on Memorial Day, 1937.

Lefty was born then, during the turbulent period which produced a great victory for the worker lasting until the end of the second World War when the TaftHartley law and tice patent reaction in the CIO demonstrated the new strength of reactionary industrialists. thanks to the millions of dollars they had gained during the war. Left $\}$ was directly inspired by one of the "more violent" strikes of the New York taxi drivers in February, 1935, which received a great deal of attention in the New York newspapers. It was a small fight fought in the very thick of a major battle.

Meanings secondary to $t^{t} \mathrm{e}$ strike call are found in four of the five flastiback scenes, two of the four being very similar. The first reveals the sterile life of a
married couple living in misery, and the threat of the wife to leave with another man if her husband does not get more money for his family. The second shows a chemist, an idealist, who refuses a job on poison gases and starts work as a cabby. Love which cannot be realized because of a lack of money appears again in the third scene; the young hack and his girl cannot marry until he makes more money. The last scene shows a doctor who has to leave his profession to work as a cabby because of racial discrimination and nepotism, the two aggravated by economic crisis. The four scenes express problems which were universal in the United States in 1935. Two of them, war and racial discrimination, are so important that they have received the attention of an entire gencration of playwrights of social protest and are the subject of two chapters in another part of this study. The urgency of the problem of the other two scenes, "the economic base for love," is still reflected today in a popular saying, heard in 1950, among the waitresses of California: "He's a good kid, but a dollar short."

The materials ripe in social conflict which Odets chose to include in Lefty would seem to indicate a radical frame of thinking in the young dramatist, but the term radical specifies only thinking which is "original" without excusing it from the prerequisite of being clean cut. It is doubtful that any writer of protests can qualify for the adjective. A good example, again, is Maxim Gorky, whose incurable romanticism kept him in difficulties with the young Soviet Union.

Odets took from Marxism, in many ways a romantic movement, all that a romantic and intellectual bourgeois could take in order to furnish his social "diag-
nossis", with the two principal directions which Gassner observes:


#### Abstract

his diagnostic philosophy was simple enough. It consisted of two main principles: the increasing proletarianization or awakening of the middle class and the growing insurgency of the working classes. The first diagnosis appeared in his earliest play W'aiting for Letty...The theme reappeared in...Paradise Lost. . . As for the playwright's tribute to the growing militancy of the working class, it is to be found in the general situation of $\mathbb{Y}$.aiting for Lefty which reveals several workers driven to rebellion... ${ }^{23}$


But we fall into error if we think, as many critics of the reactionary press did in the 30 's, that Odets expressed a Communist or even Marxist doctrine. Perhaps he participated in the aspirations of Marxism, as did a large part of the American working class in 1935, but he did not participate in its methods or its doctrine. Clurman explains that "Perhaps Odets privately harbored the belief that socialism offers the only solution for our social-economic problems," ${ }^{24}$ but he goes on to refute any political connection between Odets, his intimate friend, and Marxism:

Odets' work from the beginning contained "a protest that is also prophecy" ...But there was rarely any expression of political consciousness in it, no deep committment to a coherent philosophy of life, no pleading for a panacea... Odets' work is not even proletarian in the serise that Gorky's work is. Rather it is profoundly of the lower middle class with all its vacillation, dual allegiance, fears, groping, selfdistrust, dejection, spurts of energy, hosannas, vows of conversion, and prayers for release. ${ }^{23}$

Gagcy is of the same opinion as Clurman. "For all his leftist ties and sympathies Odets was by no means a complete or consistent Marxist." ": And despite Krutch's firm declaration of Odets' "definite conversion to Communism" ${ }^{27}$ after he finished Awake and Sing and
before he wrote Waiting for Lefty, no one who has read Marx can call Odets a Marxist. (Walter Winchell gave up trying to get "the party line" from Odets and decided to get it directly from Joseph Stalin).

There is no doubt that Odets in 1935 was romantically rebellious enough to warrant Luther Adler's comment after reading Lefty, ". . the Group has produced the finest revolutionary playwright in America." ${ }^{28}$ Odets was sincere, but a bourgeois, and after going to Hollywood to write for the movies he lost the association (with Group) and the purpose which had made him the hope of the American theatre. Bentley is only one of several who have lamented Odets in Hollywood. ${ }^{20}$

Odets never worked; he was a student, "invisible actor" with Theatre Guild, actor of more importance with the Group, and playwright. And with good reason, as we noted before, he returned in his later work to bourgeois reminiscences. Lefty was the happy result of the combination of a general economic crisis with an emotional crisis of Odets. Clurman speaks of some of the inquietudes confided by Odets:

He did speak to me. . .about his present state of mind, the feeling the times evoked in him. He wanted comradeship; he wanted to belong to the largest possible group of humble, struggling men prepared to make a great common effort to build a better world. Without this, life for him would be lonely and hopeless. In the Group Theatre he had frund kindred spirits, intellectual stimulation. But we -were artists. Now he felt the need to share his destiny with the lowliest worker, with those who really stood in the midst of life... He was driven by a powerful emotional impetus, like a lover on the threshold of an elopement. ${ }^{30}$
And Odets himself confessed of his first six plays that "Much of them was felt, conceived, and written out of a personal need." "In all of this there is the
verification of what Lawson sees in Odets, "a mode of thought which accepts emotional drift as a substitute for rational causation." ${ }^{32}$ Odets drifted into the Group Theatre, became a playwright, and then drifted away to Hollywood.

Denying a measure of consistency to its author does not deny the importance in its time of his best play, for Waiting for Lefly begins, without exaggeration, the period of maturity of the American social protest theatre. Clurman's comment on the opening of the play indicates its immediate effect upon the American people:
> .with a spontaneous roar of "Strike! Strike!" it was something more than a tribute to the play's effectiveness, more even than a testimony of the audience's hunge: for constructive social action. It was the birth cry of the thirties. Our youth had found its voice. It was a call to ioin the good fight for a greater measure of life in a world free of economic fear. falsehood, and craven servitude to stupidity and greed. "Strike!" was Lefty's lyric message, not alone for a few extra pennies of wages or for shortcr hours of work, strike for greater dignity, strike for a bolder humanity, strike for the full stature of man.

The audience, I say, was delirious. It stormed the stage, which I persuaded the stunned author to mount. People went from the theatre dazed and happy: a new a wareness and confidence had entered their lives. ${ }^{\because}$

Clurman's picture is impressionistic, perhaps, but so was the audience, and the effect of the play was that of an electric shock. There has probably not been a play since the opening of Hugo's Hernami which caused as much furor in the theatre as Lefly. Although Gagey criticizes it for its lack of subtlety, :" Krutch gives an unequivocal answer, "there is no denying its effectiveness in achieving all it sets out to achieve." *os The ideas of Americans were not subtle in 1935. The people waited for a work with something to say, a play
like Lefly in which "the points are made, one after another, with bold simplicity." ${ }^{*}$

Nor is there any doubt that the people learned well the lessons which Lefty and other militant plays taught. Under the Wagner Act they knew how to win the recognition of their unions and the right to strike, and in the benighted states they knew how to continue dying at the hands of the National Guard, the Cossacks and other provincial police "bought and paid for" by the industrialists. And during the second World War even the reactionaries and gangsters had learned something of Lefty's lesson. When powerful John L. Lewis and his miners dared to strike in wartime, no reactionary dared to employ the old resource of the rifle and the government uniform. Today the worker, to regain what he has lost since Roosevelt's death, will have to fight harder than ever. As long as there are industrialists, the fight against them is eternal, this we hear repeated in the union song "Joe Hill," which commemorates the pioneer workers' songwriter who died from a rifle ball, saying "Don't mourn for me. Organize." Joe Hill has become the unquiet spirit which haunts complacent union officers:

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night,
Alive as you and me,
Says I "But Joe, you're ten years dead"
"I never died" says he,
"I never died" says he.
"Salt Lake Joe, by God" says I, Him standing by my bed,
"They framed you on a murder charge," Says Joe, "But I ain't dead," Says Joe, "But I ain't dead."
"The copper bosses killed you, Joe.
They shot you, Joe," says I.
"Takes more than guns to kill a man," Saj's Joe, "I didn't die."
Says ine, "I didn't dia."
And standing there as big as life, And smiling with his eyes,
Joe says, "What they forgot to kill
Went on to organize.
Went on to organize.'
"Joe Hill ain't dead," he says to me.
"Joe Hill ain't never died.
Where workingmen are out on strikc,
Joe Hill is at their side.
Joe Hill is at their side."
"From San Diego up to Maine,
In every mine and mill
Where workers strike and organize.
It's there you'll find Joe Hill.
It's there you'll find Joe Hill."
Lejty is significant, not only in the United States, but also in the workers' theatre in the rest of the world, and there is sufficient reason to believe it will take its place as a landmark of an epoch in the history of world theatre. The impact of the play, even in translation, is demonstrated by an incident in Mexico, where it is presented occassionally for unions by the experimental group, Teatro de Arte de Mexico, directed by Lola Bravo. Although Mexico is barely beginning to be industrialized, the spontaneous and powerful reaction to the first presentation of Lefiy at a workers' meeting was reminiscent of the opening in the United States. When the Company Spy fled down the aisle, a worker leaped up and pummeled the unfortunate actor. One thinks immediately of the opening of Gorky's Children of the Sun in 1905 when the members of the audience pulled out pistols on the entrance of the armed "mob" of extras. Today Lefly is presented to workers in Mex-
ico only after a curtain talk in which it is explained that all characters are completely fictitious.

In the same way that Odets' plays can be recognized as the main impetus in the growth of the Group Theatre, these plays, especially $W$ aiting for Lefty, are responsible as well for the creation of a mature theatre of social protest in the United States. A theatre of sufficient artistic quality, with wider horizons than the agit-prop play of instantaneous communication which preceded it A theatre first theatrical and afterwards social which can show (where it is most difficult, in the boxoffice) the public's respect for the art and the content of the production.

Lefty is the best of Odets' three plays of protest. Silent Pariner also studied a strike, but with less art, and Awake and Sing showed the proletarianization of the middle class. The last of the three was the most highly praised by the critics. All are still valid and significant today, but the two which followed Lefty on stage could not repeat the illusive miracle of the first.

The equilibrium of form and content is the final proof of any great work, and it is effected in Waiting for Lefty by the use of new forms for presenting social content and by the passion of the dramatist. Krutch intelligently discusses the place which Lefty has in the American social theatre:


#### Abstract

Innumerable other "proletarian" dramatists have tried to do the same thing with far less success. Some of them got bogged down in futuristic symbolism which could not conceivably do more than bewilder "the worker"; others stuck close to the usual form of the drama without realizing that this form was developed for other uses and that their attempt to employ it for directly hortatory purposes can only end in what appears to be no more than exceedingly crude dramaturgy. Mr. Odets, on the other hand,


here made a clean sweep of the conventional form along with the conventional intentions. He boldly accepts as his scene the very platform he intends to use, and from it permits his characters to deliver speeches which are far more convincing there than they would be if elaborately worked into a conventional dramatic story. Like many of his fellows he had evidently decided that art is a weapon, but unlike many who proclaim the doctrine, he had the full courage of his conviction. To others he left the somewhat nervesu determination to prove that direct exhortation can sumehow be made compatible with "art" and that "revolutionary" plays can be two things at once. The result of his dowrrightness was success where most of the others had failed. :i

In Lefty we have an American dramatic archetype which serves as a measure of the equilibrium in other romantic plays of protest. There are similar American archetypes, cutside the theatre of social protest, for the classic style in Thornton Wilder's Our Town and for the popular style in the best of the plays about negro life, Green Pastures and Run, Little Cbillun. None of them is without extraneous stylistic elements, but for the moment they serve for making comparisons within each of the three styles in the American theatre.

Lef 1 y, perhaps, serves even as one of the points of reference for the entire romantic theatre current in the Occidental culture.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

${ }^{1}$ Lawson, op. cit. p. 284.
${ }^{2}$ Harold Clurman, The Fervent Years: the Story of the Group Theatre and the Thirties. (London: Dennis Dobson, Ltd. 1946). pp. 147f.

3 Ibid. p. 156.

- Idem.

5 This episode was not included in the play as printed in the popular Modern Library edition: Clifford Odets, Six Plays of Clifford Odets: with a Preface by the Author. (New York: Random House. 1939).
" Krutch, op. cit. p. 265.

7 Lawson, op. cit. p. 252.

* In Waiting for Lefty we find Polti's situation number 8 B 2 , the revolt of many, and number 20A2, life sacrificed for the success of one's people.
- Gagey, op. cit. p. 173.

10 Lawson, op. cit. p. 254.
${ }^{11}$ Ibid. p. 252.
19 Idem.
${ }^{13}$ Ibid. p. 249.
" ". . .the characterization is for the most part crisp... such simplicity must be paid for at a certain price. The villains are mere caricatures and even the very human heroes accasionally freeze into stained-glass attitudes, as, for example, a certain lady secretary in one of the flash backs does when she suddenly stops in her tracks to pay a glowing tribute to The Communist Manifesto and to urge its perusal upon all and sundry." Krutch, op. cit. p. 265.

1: Clurman, op. cit. p. 141.
1: Gagey, op. cit. p. 159.
1' Clurman, op. cit. p. 153.
is ...the prolctarianism of IV aiting for Lefty and (in part) of Aurake and Sing became less explicit in his later work." Gagey, op. cit. p. 173.

13 Cited by Clurman, op. cit. p. 149.
$=I b i d$. p. 150.

* Gagey, op. cit. p. 173.
"e Lawson, op. cit. p. 252.
* Gassner, Masters of the Drama. op. cit. pp. $689 f$.
-1 Clurman, op. cit. p. 151.
$=$ Ibid. pp. 150 f.
${ }^{26}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 173.
${ }^{27}$ Krutch, op. cit. p. 264.
${ }^{2 s}$ Cited in Clurman, op. cit. p. 142.
${ }^{20}$ Bentley, The Playwright as Thinker: a Study of Drama in Modern Times. (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. c1946). p. 16.
${ }^{30}$ Clurman, op. cit. pp. 141f.
${ }^{31}$ Odets, op. cit. p. x.
${ }^{32}$ Lawson, op. cit. p. 251.
${ }^{33}$ Clurman, op. cit. p. 148.
${ }^{3}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 160.
${ }^{25}$ Krutch, op. cit. p. 264.
${ }^{38}$ Ibid. p. 265.
${ }^{87}$ Ibid. pp. 265 f.


## Chapter 4

# THE TECHNOLOGY MYTH, THE SELLING CULT AND THE SUCCESS MYTH 

The Adding Machine

Death of a Salesman

THE PLAYS which we will study in this final chapter are those challenging the American myth which has two principal aspects: the machine and success. The myth is most easily recognized in its caricatured form, defended in the Hearst press and, in the Congress of the United States, by the House Committee on un American Activities. The first play which we will study, Elmer Rice's The Adding Machine, 1923, is the first attack on the "American way" and marks in many ways the beginning of the social theatre in the Uni; ted States. It emphasizes more the mechanization aspect than the success myth as does Maxwell Anderson's High Tor, 1937. The companion in the world of ideas to mechanization is "intellectualism and mechanistic science" which Anderson's Key Largo, 1939, attacked for its "failure to provide moral ideas." ${ }^{2}$ John Howard Lawson's satire on the bourgeoisie, Roger Bloomer, 1923 touches at times the success ideal but is mostly concerned with love, dreams, death and poison. The first really concentrated attack on American "success" is that of Counsellor At Law by Elmer Rice, 1931. John Howard Lawson follows in 1932 with Success Story. Both have been superseded artistically by Arthur Miller's

Death of a Salesman, 1949, which will also be studied in detail in this chapter.

The Theatre Guild, which began immediately after the first World War its attempt for an art theatre in New York, presented what its directors considered the best of foreign plays before houses sold in advance and, at the same time, tried to encourage native American writers for an art theatre. For its American plays the Guild took its cue from the active Provincetown Players, who had blessed the young Eugene O'Neill and the poetess Edna St. Vincent Millay with productions of short plays. The poetess' one-act Aria Da Capo, 1919, is probably the first outspoken play of social protest in the United States. ${ }^{2}$ This first twinge of social conscience the Guild chose to represent in 1923 with The Adding Machine of Elmer Rice. Only such a powerful institution as the Guild could have presented on Broadway a play with so many radical innovations. It was "more an artistic than a popular success." ${ }^{3}$

The first impression of the play is that its fantastic, jangled action reproduces the bedlam of the American life at the service of business. The Adding Machine bites deeply and savagely, and from the biting and the jangling come the most prominent emotions of the play. Ludwig Lewisohn describes the audience at the opening:

Mr. Rice's vision of the world may infuriate you. There were people behind me at the Garrick who first grumbled and then cursed politely. You cannot miss it; you cannot withdraw yourself from its coherence and completeness. ${ }^{4}$

The obvious form is that of a social protest play ${ }^{5}$ in seven scenes without act divisions. But for our study of form we must first know more about what occurs during the course of the action.

Scene 1: Zero is in bed and Mrs. Zero keeps up a
steady monolog to him as she prepares for bed. She complains about the movies, how she'd like to get to see them before they are censored, how she wishes she'd not married Mr. Zero because he is still a bookkeeper as he was 25 years ago when they were married. She speaks of someone merely as "she," who is not there anymore, walking around at night, someone who has evidently received a six-months sentence. "The dirty bum! The idea of her comin' to live with respectable people." As Mrs. Zero climbs into bed she warns her husband he'd best not be taking up with any other woman.

Scene 2: Zero is seen working with Daisy Diana Dorothea Devore, adding numbers in an office. They talk and each carries on his own conversation with himself regardless of what the other is saying. Daisy complains because Zero bosses her around. Zero speaks of "her," wondering what she will do when she gets out of jail. Daisy talks of suicide but can figure no way out. Zero considers killing his wife, then decides maybe she will die soon anyway. Daisy wishes his wife would die so they could get married, but Zero thinks Daisy would be as bad as his wife. He talks then of how he's going to get a raise from his boss while Daisy muses about kisses in the movies. When the whistle blows, Daisy leaves and the Boss comes in to ask for Zero. He tells Zero they are getting adding machines to do his job so that he will no longer be needed. Zero sees red, then everything blacks out.

Scene 3: In the Zeros' dining room. Zero has come home late from the office and his wife belabors him, especially since company is coming. The sound of an adding machine, which to Mrs. Zero is the doorbell, is heard so she sends Zero to change his shirt which has red ink all over it. Their friends, the Ones, Twos,

Threes, Fours, Fives and Sixes arrive and talk of the weather, fashions and such trivia. The men go into a huddle over a joke, then the women over the latest scandal concerning the Sevens and the talk goes on and on, until the doorbell rings. Zcro says. "I'll go. It's for me." At the door is a policeman looking for Zero who says he's been expecting him. Zero pulls out his collar from his pocket saying the stains are blood not ink, and he calmly tells his wife, "I killed the boss this afternoon."

Scene 4: A court of justice in which the Ones Twos, Threes, Fours, Fives and Sixes make up the jury. Zero's testimony takes up most of the scene. He tells, inserting numbers now and then, how he killed his boss with the bill file, what his years of working were like, and how he just couldn't take the boss' talking and talking after he'd fired him The jury rises as one, shouting, "Guilty." As they file out Zero asks them to stay, saying he's all mixed up with all those numbers in his head.

Scene 5: A young couple, Judy O'Grady and a young man are seen in a moonlit graveyard. They come upon a new grave, that of Zero, and Judy tells the Young Man how Zero was the cause of her being put in jail under the Tenement House Law. After they leave, Zero comes out of the grave saying he thought he had heard her voice. A loud sneeze startles him and Shrdlu, who welcomes him as a newcomer, appears. Zero finds that Shrdlu was also a murderer, but worse, because he killed his mother. Shrdlu says there'll be no rest for them, the sinners. The Head appears from another grave to quiet Zero and Shrdlu. Finally The Head throws a skull at the two talkers but they duck in time, so it yawns and disappears saying, "Ho-hum! Me for the worms!'

Scene 6: Amid pastoral loveliness Zero meets Shrdlu again. Shrdlu is concerned because he has been sent there, to the Elysian Fields, to stay until he "understands." He was all prepared to spend an eternity of funishment. Zero hears a woman's voice which turns out to be that of Daisy, who says she has been following him for days. Zero asks her what happened, if she got hit by a truck or something, and she tells him she too lost her job and just blew out the gas. She wants to talk things over with Zero; they discuss the store picnic they attended together when Zero's wife was gone and find each had wanted the other but had thought the other was unsympathetic. Daisy admits she blew out the gas because she didn't want to live without him. He wonders why he was so mean to her, bawling her out when she read the numbers too slow or too fast. She tells him to kiss her, which he does. They hear music which makes them dance until they are so tired they must rest, he with his head on her lap. They wish they could stay together in this place forever but they decide there is no chance since it is only for the good ones Shrdlu informs them they can stay but when Zero hears of all the people who are there, people who seem to waste their time on enjoyment and silly things like painting and writing songs, he decides to leave. Daisy says it makes no difference to her where she stays, "Without him I might as well be alive."

Scene 7: The curtain opens to the sound of an adding machine which Zero is seen operating in the midst of an office where he is surrounded by white paper tape. Lieutenant Charles and Joe come to tell Zero it's time to quit. They have to detach him from the machine forcefully. He's been working at it for 25 years. They tell him it's time for him to go back to earth, which Zero cannot believe as he thought he
had done his bit on earth, but he is informed that this is merely a repair station for souls to be sent back again. Z.ero is also startled to find that he has been here before many times, as many different people, from a monkey to a serf, but always as some kind of slave. Charles tells him this time he will again be a baby and will grow up to the job of running a "super-hyper-adding machine" which will record the output of each man in a mine and be operated with the big toe. Says Charles: "You're a failure, Zero, a failure. A waste product. A slave to a contraption of steel and iron. The animal's instincts, but not his strength and skill. The animal's appetites, but not his unashamed indulgence of them..." Zero begs to be allowed to stay, but Charles says he must go and tells him he can have a girl to keep him company at which Zero brightens up. Zero goes out following a woman whom he thinks he sees and whose voice he thinks he hears. At this Joe laughs causing Charles to punch him in the jaw and to tell him to get ready for the next fellow. As he drains a flask, Charles says, "Hell, I'll tell the world this is a lousy job!"

Each of the scenes has a different tempo: the first slow and free; the second slow and marked as if by a metronome; the third fast and marked; the fourth and fifth have retarded acceleration; the sixth is slow and expansive; and the seventh has the contrasting fast and slow tempo characteristic of all theater trial scenes. The overall rhythm is made up of three varied rhythmic sections corresponding to the three plays within a play. The first cycle includes the first four scenes, the second includes scenes 5 and 6 ; and the third cycle is that of the final scene. The sex interest is found in the first two cycles and corresponds in the first to the frustration of Zero's earthly life and in the second to
his individual failure in the Elysian fields. The first scene results in a feeling of revulsion against the vulgarity of Zero's wife and the second scene in a feeling of impotence as it shows Zero's failure to recognize Daisy's love. In the second cycle the sexual feelings become positive and when an abandoned Daisy and a sedentary Zero make love in scene 6 there is a charm and warmth reminiscent of Morley's middle aged couple in the novel Parnassus on $W$ heels, at least until Zero turns moralist and in refusing Daisy's love shows his now ingrained incapacity for any love.

The structure of reversals is one of which Aristotle wrote and which Hollywood uses every day. The beaten Zero revolts and with the audience's best wishes seems to be headed toward a solution. Then, when death ends his revolt and gives him the opportunity of a new life "in the sky," he fails to take advantage of it and ironically returns through "fate" or "inherent weakness" to his original futile earthly state. Zero's revolt, ${ }^{0}$ while he is still alive, comprises the first cycle which was described when we considered the movement of the play. The entire cycle has dramatic interest despite the long opening and closing monologs. On the contrary the ironic reversals of the second and third cycles, despite the excellence of the love scene in scene 6 , seem more nearly an extended anecdote or metaphor ${ }^{1}$ than a pulsing human story. We cannot help but ask: If the "sky" is a better place to be than the earth, why is Zero, who was beginning to become a man through protest and action, a more miserable figure in the "sky" than amid the frustrations of the earth? The author is taking away the hope Zero and the audience clutched at.

The logic of the play is precise, according to the test of Price's proposition.

The setting for the play is an American city, shortly
after the first World War. The scenery exists principally to create an atmosphere by expressionistic means, such as papering the walls "with sheets of foolscap" which the author specifies for scenes 1 and 3 . The newspaper and movie environment takes an important part in the action and it is mentioned in almost every scene. The tone of the play is always bitter and often ironic. Notable in this American version of expressionism is the plastic composition of scene 3 in which Zero's neighbors, One, Two, Three, Four, Five and Six and their wives come to visit. "Along each side wall, seven chairs are ranged in symmetrical rows," and when the neighbors enter "in a double column," each man takes a chair from the right wall amd each woman one from the left wall. "Each sex forms a circle with the chairs very close together. The men-all except Zero-smoke cigars. The women munch chocolate." The short machine-gun phrases of the banal conversation are usually fired in numerical order, Six through One in alternate masculine and feminine groups. This scene is a first rate example of the German expressionistic technique which Gassner characterizes as "mechanized stylization." ${ }^{\text {s }}$

The characters are all silhouettes, except Daisy and Zero, who really do not deserve the name of characters; neither is established in scene 2, nor is Zero in his trial monolog. Z.ero, in scene 5 , only listens and makes innocuous comments on Shrdlu's story. It is only in scene 6 that Zero and Daisy are persons. In this scene a new interest and emotional warmth are built up only to be disappointed in scene 7 which serves only to conclude the anecdote. If scene 6 had been left out, the play would have been better proportioned, but in such a case it would have required a stylized scene of expressionistic fantasy to replace it. Another possible solution, which
might have permitted the integration of the "warm" love scene with a concluding "judgment" scene, is the one used by Brecht in Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, but this would have required the recasting of all the expressionistic scenes into the popular style.

Stylistically The Adding Machine is a potpourri, chiefly expressionistic and therefore within the larger romantic style current. In part it is non-romantic fantasy (synonymous with an "intellectual anecdote"), it is symbolistic in its attempt to integrate and unify the play by centering it in Zero, and in other parts it is frankly representational as Gagey comments:

These plays borrowed the expressionistic technique from Eugene O' Neill or from his German models, thus departing from the photographic realism of the twenties. In spite of their imaginative treatment, they must be considered essentially realistic in purpose and effect. ${ }^{\circ}$
O'Neill's influence on Rice was considerable in those early years in which O'Neill was widely acclaimed as the saviour of the American theatre. But just as in any imitation, Rice's work which shows the O'Neill influence merely illustrates O'Neill's defects. In the last three scenes of The Adding Machine we find an absolutism more characteristic of the author of The Hairy Ape than of the author of Street Scene. The O'Neill environment of the "eternal," the "inexorable," the "inherent weakness or tragic flaw," and "fate" hangs in the air of Rice's Elysian Fields where the no-longer rebellious Zero knuckles under to his "destiny."

ZERO: Well, that ain't the point. The point is I'm through! I had enough! Let them find somebody else to do the dirty work. I'm sick of bein' the goat! I quit right here and now! (He glares about defiantly. There is a thunderclap and a bright flash of lightning.)

ZERO: (Screaming). Ooh! What's that? (He clings to Charles.)

CHARLES: It's all right. Nobody's going to hurt you. It's just their way of telling you that they don't like you to talk that way. Pull yourself together and calm down. You can't change the rules, nobody can-they've got it all fixed...

Although not of the "pie in the sky" variety, this pat scheme of things does not fit well on the Elmer Rice we know as a perennial rebel, as the man who resigned as a Federal Theatre director because he felt it was compromised by logrolling and red tape in Washington. These Elysian Fields, redecorated as a Rousseauian jungle, would be a better habitat for Yank than for Zero.

If O'Neill influences Rice, there are also traces in O'Neill's work of Rice's influence. In many ways their relationship is similar to that between Andreyev and Gorky, whose theatre touched on the same questions and offered opposite solutions during the more than 10 years they dominated the Russian theatre. Gorky, like Rice, is a writer of protest; Andreyev, like O'Neill, is a cloudbound absolutist. It is interesting to see the machine-hate of The Adding Mac:'mine transformed in O'Neill's tragedy, Dynamo, 1929, into the quite serious proposal of machine worship. Dynamo is a lifeless play which only O'Neill and Henry Adams could appreciate because its author chooses a symbolistic "style." Such abstract social patterns as machine-worship can only be represented by the shorthand of expressionism.

Rice's other plays are predominantly naturalistic in style. An exception is found in the lyric overtones of Street Scene. The genres he has used are a Hauptmann variety of naturalistic "tragedy," in We the People; the romantic problem play in Street Scene; and in fact almost all the romantic genres. His particular specialty
has been the protest play in the romantic style and the courtroom melodrama, such as On Trial, in the popular style.

The language of The Adding Machine is not particularized; it is all Rice's. Most memorable probably is the long monolog of Mrs. Zero in scene 1 which is magnificent in its vulgarity. Less interesting and perhaps too long is Zero's courtroom speech. There are several speeches in the final scene which are tiring in their length, and there are smart cracks, such as "Me for the worms!" at the end of scene 5, which might be distasteful to some persons.

Like all expressionist theatre, the play acts better than it reads, although some of the little gems of vulgarity gathered in reading are so subtle they might easily be lost on stage. Also, like other expressionist plays, it gives more importance to the action than to the character or dialog. The chief importance of The Adding Machine in the history of the American theatre is that it introduces German expressionism ${ }^{10}$ into the United States; but we should remember that John Howard Lawson also gave us an expressionistic play in March of the same year. Of the two, Rice is perhaps by temperament more at home in the expressionistic style, but Lawson produced work of greater imagination and understood more clearly than Rice the American possibilities for expressionism were greatest in pure satire, and that mixing it with naturalism or prolix symbolism of a non-vehement nature could only result in artistic confusion.

The first American attempt to differentiate plastically between the inner and outer person is found in scene 2 when Zero and Daisy are seated on high stools before their bills and ledgers, lowering their heads to express their thoughts and raising them to express what they say
openly to each other. Eugene O'Neill later used a similar technique in his Great God Brown, 1925, and Strange Interlude, 1928. The final scene of The Adding Machine shows lawyer Rice's predilection for trial scenes which begin with his first play in 1914 and continue at least through Judgment Daj, 1934. In several of them he gets at his thesis in a final scene of "judgment" of the preceding action. He establishes a tribunal either in an actual courtroom or in a less formal location. This technique is similar to that of Bertold Brecht in Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and in Der Kaukasische Kreidekreis which in turn are "somewhat in the manner of Chinese theatre." "

The symbolic elements are found principally in two characters. Shrdlu represents American bigotry and the impossibly strict moral code which can produce only hypocrisy. He also represents the legend of the "steady" man, a legend invented by Americans of privileged position for exploiting the constantly arriving immigrant workmen, at least until the changes in the immigration laws after World War I. Zero is also a symbol of revolt until he ends his revolt after killing his boss. From then on he is, naturalistically and symbolically, a slave to business and the machine. Shrdlu is portrayed with an expressionistic technique characterized by subjective vehemence, while Zero is painted in a handful of dramatic substyles and is thereby blown up to a more vague and less effective symbol.

The literal meaning of The Adding Machine is the condemnation of the machine and the slave it makes of man. The hatred of the machine has its roots in a body of semi-Christian European beliefs of the nineteenth century. Centered chiefly in Germany and Russia, the idea was held that the only solution to man's slavery was the abolition of industry and the return
to agriculture. The counterpart of these ideas among American workmen is expressed in the negro work ballad, John Henry in which the folk hero fights the machine and loses:

> When John Henry was about three days old, Sittin' on his pappy's knee,
> He picked up a hammer and a little piece of steel,
> Cried: "Hammer'll be the death of me, Lord, Lord,
> Cried: "Hammer'll be the death of me."

The Captain said to John Henry,
"I'm gonna bring that steam drill around;
I'm gonna bring that steam drill out on the job,
I'm gonna whop that steel on down..."
John Henry said to the Captain,
"Bring that thirty pound hammer around;
Thirty pound hammer with a nine foot handle,
I'll beat your steam drill down..."
John Henry drove fifteen feet,
The steam drill only made nine,
But he drove so hard 'till he broke his poor heart,
And he laid down his hammer and he died...
Some say John Henry came from Texas,
Some say John Henry came from Maine,
But I say he's nothing but a Louisiana man,
He's a leader of the steel drivin' gang...
Gorelik tells us that German expressionism "was historically a movement of insurgent liberals, with standards of abstract justice and a message of good will, but without a clearly defined program. In practice the expressionist longing for a rationally ordered socicty based on the Christian ideal of social justice' meant a return to the ideals of the primitive Christian community...The social-democratic German government tolerated the expressionists and even encouraged them, corsidering their social doctrines harmless. The other

Gcrman workers' party, the communist, was more critical, maintaining that the proposal to abolish industry is destructive and defeatist,', ${ }^{13}$ It was a negative, disillusioned, pessimistic ${ }^{11}$ solution, but there were certain grounds for pessimism after Marx, in Capital, had described from official Parliamentary reports what English industry was doing to English workmen. Expressionism did not see hope in the struggles of the Marxists, "few expressionist dramas were on a political plane." ${ }^{15}$ After the failure of the Paris Commune of 1870 and the defections of the Socialists, especially the French and Italian, on the eve of the first World War, following previous pledges of non-participation in European armed conflicts, the expressionists accepted no positive ideas nor even political ones. A study of their plays reveals that the two chief themes are negative studies of war and revolution. At the time they wrote, the only hope in the workingman's world movement was the revolution in Russia, which was still fighting for its existence in a bloody civil war against a well organized reaction.

It is easy to see why German artists were bitter and without hope, especially if, coupled to this state of affairs, the artists' sensitivity goaded by middle class vulgarity is considered. This double complex is well illustrated in the drawings and stage designs of George Grosz who influenced greatly both the expressionist and epic theatres. Grosz ${ }^{10}$ is probably the European of a spirit most akin to the disillusionment of the American voluntary expatriate artists of the 20 's and to the acid bitterness of Elmer Rice.

Such a spirit is best explained by the lack of a vantage point from which to attack the crystallized culture, controlled in its general expression by the shopkeepers and in its government and economic policies
by the capitalists. Comedy was outlawed in such a situation because it could find no vulnerable spots in the culture. The audience could only be outraged by jest and could not be made to laugh. Meredith ${ }^{17}$ complains of the lack of comedy in the solid Victorian world. Bentley ${ }^{18}$ says the problem stated by Meredith was solved in the fin de siecle comedy of Oscar Wilde and deduces that Bohemianism was at that time the only position from which to look down on bourgeois culture For several French writers of the period the only vantage point was complete decadence. It was only with the appearance of Shaw and his intelligence that a position for rational critical comedy was established in England.

The twin European currents of hate for the machine and the disillusionment with the workers' defense against it spread through the entire occidental world of machine capital. They are associated with the historical process of economic concentration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which I believe neither Rice nor many antecedent thinkers fully understood. Neither capital (in the United States "business' is the euphemism by which "capital" has always been called, even by its enemies-example: the phrase "big business") nor the machine in a primitive stage is essentially the slave driver or abuser of the workman who operates them. The problem then is quantitative rather than qualitative. A study of history shows the innocuousness of the significant amounts of flexible and controllable capital in the Italian city states at the close of the middle ages. No Harry Bridges arose at that time in the defense of the Italian sailors, longshoremen and warehousemen. Likewise, we can hardly see how Watt's steam engine worked to the disadvantage of the miners when it was put to pumping out
flooded mines．The abuse of the workman enters in the concentration of capital and machines and has its base in the obviously fictitious power of money：the possessor of any savings account knows that $\$ 50,000$ has more than 10 times the power of $\$ 5,000$ in the hands of the same man．This fiction makes any man＇s money depart from a linear function and approach multiple ones as it increases in quantity，until it at－ tains a square or cube function when it is as concen－ trated as it is in the United States today．The contem－ porary cube function，or fiction，reaches its highest multiplicity when it is able to determine legislation （such as minimum wage and fair employment practices laws as it does today in the United States）and the policies of law enforcement bodies．The＂payoff＂part， we see，of the fictitious power of money is the ad－ dition of a politico－economic power to its simple eco－ nomic one when the concentration is of national or international importance．This，of course，added to the fact that the simple economic power is non－linear ${ }^{10}$ in even local concentrations．

The money terms we have used can be replaced by any other unit of capital（machines，for example） which is after all the authentic productive concentra－ tion，money serving only as a convenience and indi－ cator in amortization and account keeping，and as a consumer of the less common metals．Nor is the ma－ chine the definitive unit in capital concentration；ma－ chines must be turned by something more powerful than men＇s arms or legs．We see today the transference of some of the most important capitals in the world to the control of the energy consumed by machines， and energy for destroying the machines of others．The machine limited to the combustion of wood or coal has been succeeded by the machine able to utilize flex－
ible and liquid sources of energy such as petroleum, electric current, hydrogen peroxide, heavy water and uranium. Man's defense against the concentration of capital is no longer directed solely against the concentration of machinery, but also against the highly concentrated, man-controlled sources of energy. These last are, in effect, the most important capital in the contemporary "total wars." National aggression prompted by irresponsible individual capitalists gambles the entire public and private capital of machines and energy; the loser, particularly the workingman, finds himself in a destituted society.

Rice saw in part the historical process when he protested, not only against the machine, but also against what machines do to men when they are omnipresent and omnipotent. He caricatures the process of machine growth to dominance over its human slaves when in the final scene he returns Zero to earth to operate "not one of these antiquated adding machines... a superb, super-hyper-adding machine...without any human effort except the slight pressure of the great toe of your right foot." Zero too becomes a machine in the same process by which concentrated capital becomes a great machine which controls or eliminates the smaller machines and the human robots who operate them. This process can be synthesized in a variation of the delightful phrase through which the "survival of the fittest" theory was popularized in Spanish speaking countries: La maquina grande come a la maquina chica.

The 28 years since 1923 help to excuse Rice's partial failure to see the workings of economic concentration upon "the paid help," and he is not alone among American playwrights treating social problems in his lack of historical perspective. Some few have mastered
a sort of contemporary criterion for viewing present day social forces and movements, and such a criterion we might call a shrunken dialectic, undynamic and ab. solutist because it has only a momentary basis. Only a wider knowledge of the history of many periods and peoples will bring a true perspective of historical processes and relations; and from the use of the word "relations" I hope it will be obvious that the only true method of historical analysis is a dynamic and relativistic one. Odets, Lawson and their equals are, at their best, momentary and absolutist in their analysis; there seems to be at this time no American dramatist with an adequate method for historical analysis of social problems.

The Adding Machine touches, in addition to the core meaning discussed above, other social abuses as material for protest. Among them is the white-collar vulgarity which is a "hand-me-down" of the bourgeois vulgarity, the same which made de Maupassant flee from the Eiffel Tower. Scenes 1 and 3 are magnificent expressionistic cinematic X-Ray photographs of the virus within its native habitat. Particularly effective are Rice's shorthand notes on the vulgarity of movie-and-newspaper-formed attitudes. It seems that today the American people ${ }^{20}$ have given up hope of correcting the vulgarity of the traditional media of mass communication and only upon the advent of a new medium do they seem to listen to protests against its prostitution, as may be seen in the current television controversy, although much of it is only a smokescreen for commercial conflicts.

American education also receives a back of the hand slap in passing. The final sentences of Rice's short condemnation suggest the absence of a wider
cultural basis in a school system as provincial and specific as military training:

You'll learn to fear the sunlight and to hate beauty. Ey that time you'll be ready for school. There they'll tell you the truth about a great many things that you don't give a damn about and they'll tell you lies about all the things you ought to know-and about all the things you want to know they'll tell you nothing at all. When you get through you'll be equipped for your life-work. You'll be ready to take a job. ${ }^{21}$
Equally telling is the short, bitter caricature of discrimination against religious minorities and the economically determined "second-class citizens" who must be "kept in their place" so that the bourgeoisie and their white-collar imitators may live comfortably, or at least "respectably":

SIX: Too damn much agitation, that's at the bottom of it FIVE: That's it! Too damn many strikes.
FOUR: Foreign agitators, that's what it is.
THREE: They ought to be run outa the country.
TWO: What the hell do they want, anyhow?
ONE: They don't know what they want, if you ask me.
SIX: America for the Americans is what I say!
ALL: (In unison). That's it! Damn foreigners! Damn dagoes! Damn Catholics! Damn sheenies! Damn Nigsers! Jail 'em! shoot 'em! lynch 'em! burn 'em! (They all rise, sing in unison.)

> "My country 'tis of thee Sweet land of liberty!"

Previously we discussed the bigot morality represented in Shrdlu, and related to it is a perverted sexual shame which is typified in the inane American small town "dirty joke." Sitting in the barber shop we may hear "the boys" reflect their wordly wisdom upon the latest front page smirk lascitivy or compare their cathouse exploits. "The boys," who have never been
lovers, not even tleir wives', remind us of Zero peeking across the court at the half-dressed whore and Zero refusing Daisy's love as not quite Puritan enough. Zero and "the boys" have been brought up so carefully they are incapable of sexual love, and by George they will run anybody out of town who tries to get away with it.

The American "success" myth is touched in passing as one of the articles of Mrs. Zero's white-collar credo. Her uppercut in the domestic quarrel monolog is that Zero has been 25 years a bookkeeper without a promotion, "What about bein' store manager? I guess you forgot about that, didn't you?" This holdover from the days of the "robber barons," whose youthful emulators were idealized in the Horatio Alger stories, gives the white-collar worker his scorn for productive labor and provides the climate of social morality in which the Costellos and Truman's "battery mates" can prosper. The "employee" holds the success myth as an inalienable right with the quiet hope that one day chance may make him a Costello too.

A final meaning which must be discussed is that of Zero's inherent cowardly slave mentality. "Why, all the bosses and kings that ever were have left their trade marks on your backside"-ever since Zero was a monkey. We learn that Zero was a slave several thousand years before the steam engine was invented.

Here Rice once again falls into the error of Eugene O'Neill's ways: Zero is a slave through some inherent human flaw which goes back to the dawn of the gods. I should like modestly to suggest to the contrary that a man acquires a slave mentality from being put into and held in slavery rather than from his gradual acquisition of attitudes requisite to his
being admitted to the condition of slavery.
What might we find in the newspapers of 1922 which might have stirred Rice into writing this bitter condemnation of the very base of American life and attitudes? A great deal. In almost every aspect of American "culture" of the time the page is dirty. "Red hunting" was at a peak; the American Legion was out with its nightsticks; the Ku Klux Klan was riding at night in most parts of the country. Sacco and Vanzetti were in jail waiting death. The increase in the cost of living still ran far ahead of the wage increases since pre-war days. The striker had the choice of returning to work on the boss' terms or being shot by someone wearing the badge of authority of state or local governments. The federal government was openly in the hands of "business, for business." Daring plundering and bribe taking by the Custodian of Alien Property, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Interior, the chiefs in the Veterans Bureau and the Shipping Board and a member of the United States Senate occurred while the country had in its ears President Harding's ironic phrase, "Business as usual." The finest writers outside of the theatre had stayed or fled abroad, and the less artistic ones who remained in the States were gathering up shouts of protest.

Rice did not need to know history to write The Adding Machine; he could get most of his analysis from the daily newspapers which were as much as ever in the service of the "big lie," as Upton Sinclair's book ${ }^{m}$ of three years before indicated, but even the big lie did not dare hide completely the moral bankruptcy of the country. The great jingo himself, William Randolph Hearst, his eyes on political office, had to stoop to a brand of Brisbane radicalism in
his papers to court the wary, and weary, voter. Mutual suspicion, however, soured this wooing, and Hearst soon returned to his 200 percenter red-baiting and crime passional.

The line followed in The Adding Machine is repeated in others of Rice's plays and reveals certain consistent attitudes. The protest against uncontrolled capital ${ }^{23}$ is repeated in his important and first rate work, Street Scene, 1929. He is still a perennial rebel in his Federal Theatre days and in the later commercially unsuccessful management of his own theatre. He will be, at his death, the logical American inheritor of Swift's epitaph:

> Where savage indignation Can no longer tear his heart.

His manner of thinking is radical but Jeremiac, and it has the limitation of being more doctrinaire than analytical. It is what might be called contradictorily a "chapter and verse" radicalism. His own suffering is apparent in his work and his biography shows us his lack of a secure vantage point from which to attack the abuses which have infuriated him. His temperamental problem as an artist is probably found in his shying away from a pure satiric expressionism in an attempt to give more human warmth to his work; but he suffers too much for it to be possible for him to acquire a positive outlook. His work is at best sympathetic rather than hopeful toward his characters.

Rice's influence on other playwrights has been greater than on the theatrical public. For the student of contemporary dramatic form the models include Rice, O'Neill and John Howard Lawson, the three most important innovators of forms in the American theatre, none of whom has written a play with enough
exterior finish to win a great popular following or to be comparable with the best plays in such traditional forms as melodrama, sentimental comedy, etc. Rice's historical importance as the author of the first important twentieth century play of social protest is firmly established in the content of his work as well as in the form.

The specific importance of The Adding Macbine resides largely in its being a "first," but the vulgarity of its first scene and the expressionistic vulgarity of scene 3 are as yet unsurpassed so far as this writer knows. Gagey's synthesis of the effect of the play in its own time seems a fair one:
not...unduly successful in the excellent Guild production bct. . . . wide critical interest. ${ }^{25}$

The play contains a protest which is as valid today as when it was written, and it is Rice's most pertinent work. In some of his other plays he is more artistic, but in none is he so immediately and directly significant as in his first expressionistic play.

When we come to establishing the relative equilibrium between the content of The Adding Machine and its form, previously pointed out deficiencies in both must be remembered. The form shows a disconcerting mixture of theatrical styles, of rhythms, of characterization and of setting and tone, which forces the conclusion that the structure is that of three inner plays, or cycles, of contrasting form. One might call it, ungenerously, a fatal mixture of a satiric caricature with a warm character study and a naturalistic thesis scene.

In the content we have seen the corruptive traces of certain O'Neill-like absolutist predilections toward "eternity" and "fate" as well as an absence of a larger
historical perspective in the analysis which Lewisohn also suggests is a requisite of expressionistic plays:

If this form of art is to be effective and beautiful, it must be very sensitive and very severe at once. Beneath it must be fundamental brain-work, thinking as resilient as steel and as clean cut as agate...You can describe fragmentarily and produce fragments of truth. Realism does not commit you to any whole. In expressionism the antecedent intellectual grasp of your entire material must be firm, definite, complete. Everything must be thought out and thought through. This is what, despite moments of highest brilliance and glow, Mr. Eugene O'Neill did not do in The Hairy Ape. This is what, in a harder, drier, less poetical vein, Mr. Elmer Rice has actually succeeded in doing in The Adding Machine. ${ }^{20}$
Lewisohn's last sentence can be accepted as valid only as a comparison of Rice's success with that of O'Neill. My personal opinion is that Lawson's work is better "thought through" than Rice's. Lawson also furnished the first sure prediction as to the forms expressionism must take in the United States, and their dedication to biting caricatures of social satire, although he did not achieve a satisfactory dramatic synthesis of these directions before he left the theatre for screenwriting. Perhaps more finished, with the incorporation of music, than any of the expressionistic works discussed here is Marc Blitzstein's The Cradle Will Rock. 1938, which is as much a part of the current of light popular-style musical satires (characterized by Gilbert and Sullivan, by the American minstrel show, and by Kaufman and Ryskind's Of Thee $I$ Sing) as it is a part of the expressionism found in Rice and Lawson. Both of the musical-playwriting teams have a vantage point within the ranks of the polite bourgeois reformers where they can write plays "funnier than the government, and not nearly so dangerous" ${ }^{27}$ with a polite anarchistic contempt.

Blitzstein can participate in the popular style forms used in this bourgeois vantage point only by contradicting the romantic style of his protest, and he has no other vantage point because the contemporaneousness of his social analysis contains a historical perspective only slightly larger than that of Rice and Lawson. Pernaps it will be in the United States that expressionism will find its vantage point, historical social analysis, which will permit its biting, shorthand satiric caricatures to be persuasive as well as economical, truthful as well as poetic.

The Adding Machine, with its lack of equilibrium rendered less obvious by shortcomings of both form and content, is the most important single work antecedent to the firmly-seated American expressionist social theatre which lies with a vehement promise just over the horizon.

In Waiting for Lefty we saw, during the "depression" years, the proletarianization of the middle class. In The Adding Machine we saw no such process among the white collar employees, and to the contrary we saw the slavish imitation of bourgeois vulgarity and the belief in the success myth. In the next play to be studied we see the opposite process to that of Lefty, we see the success myth and the selling cult in full flower, we see the growth of contempt for honest labor in the son of a salesman, and we hear a protest against what the selling world does to the man who lives in it.

Lefty's truth stood for only a short period; a far larger number of years in each laissez faire "business cycle" shows an increasing number of workers in the United States acquiring bourgeois conveniences and
with them bourgeois attitudes. The skilled worker drives the same car as the small merchant, clerk or salesman, l.e has the same furniture and the same number of household appliances, and he goes to the same movies and reads the same newspaper. He sends his son to college to study business administration and to have the "contacts" of a "good fraternity"; he accepts the success myth for his son. He may envision advantages for his son in the selling cult, advantages he as a worker didn't have.

The process is fairly recent, it begins with the Model T and the windup phonograph. Free enterprise mass production demands mass selling, the economy of abundance can expand only if the higher paid worker is included in its market. The warehouses glut if the worker does not spend every cent of his pay every week, and installment buying must absorb the surplus remaining after day to day expenditures. Industry must give a bourgeois income to some of its workers, and the success myth and the selling cult thereby gain another neophyte, uneasy perhaps but still a believer. The gain of a good wage under these circumstances brings vulgarity, greed, social isolation and a disdain for labor.

On reading Death of a Salesman, the first question which occurs to the critic of the social theatre is, "In these days, when the American myth of business is receiving its most frenetic and reactionary defense, how could Arthur Miller cut the tap root of the American mythological tree without retaliation?" But after more study, the paradox becomes more understandable: t.'e dramatic confusion and that of the thought behind the play makes Death of a Salesman tolerable to the coreligionists of the selling cult. The play does have a real impact, however, and the truth is that the root-
myth of the selling cult gets badly cut in the play. The force comes principally from the characterization, although the "poetry" of the author works against the criticism he attempts, and secondly from the dialog. Of less strength is the action, if we may call it such, which is of the "theme and variations" kind.

The other spontaneous reaction comes when the spectators leave the theatre. They realize they have seen one of the most powerful plays to be presented in recent years in the United States. They ask themselves, "All right, and what happens now?" and they are left without an answer. The play pronounces a hard moral judgment (which does not mean it is not pathetic) upon Willy Lomax, but it offers no solution for the hundreds of Willies sitting in the orchestra seats. There is a ray of hope, if we search it out. Perhaps Willy's son, Biff, will not follow in his father's footsteps. Perhaps he will find a useful job. Or will he continue being, not a Willy, but a bum? Who or what will give him the opportunity to realize his usefulness?

If there is a solution or a hope in Death of a Salesman, it is a small one and is beclouded by the deleterious elements.

A similar confusion is encountered in the formal analysis of the play. What is its genre? Its author calls it a tragedy, but if it is one, we must establish, after thumbing the pages of Diderot, a genre not yet accepted: the pathetic tragedy. Or is it a social protest play? If is, it does not have the clarity or the rebel emotion of $W$ aiting for Lefty. Or does it belong to the genre, very much in fashion today in the American theatre, of the play of sentimental retrospect? But the plays of this last innocuous kind don't have
the pretentiousness to cut the tap root of the American myth. What is it then?

It takes a part of all of these, some more, some less, and it reveals the same confusion as the critical thought of its author. All of these genres are new ones to Miller, who, in his previous play, All My Sons, wrote a melodrama complicated by the "character problem" subgenre. We have then a new genre and a mixed one.

Deatb of a Salesman is divided into two acts and a short requiem scene. All of the action occurs in the home of Willy Lomax except for the scenes at the beginning of Act II which are played in "insets" in front of the principal set. There is a short blackout in the second act to permit the inset to be lifted to the flies.

ACT ONE: Willy Lomax returns after having just started that morning on a long business trip because he couldn't continue driving, he kept going off the road. Linda, his wife, tells him he is too tired and too old to continue traveling and that he should ask his boss to transfer him to a job in New York. They talk of their sons, Happy and Biff, who are asleep in the bedroom overhead (also visible to the audience). Willy is disappointed in Biff because he has not "made anything of himself" even though as a boy in school he had been very popular. Biff wants to go back to Texas to become a cattle rancher. Willy wanders into the kitchen to get a sandwich and the light rises in th:e boys' room. They have overheard their father and are concerned about his having to drive so much. Both of them are undecided as to what they want to do. Biff tries to talk Happy into going back to Texas with him, and Hap tries to get Biff to go into some kind of selling with him.

The scene shifts back to Willy in the kitchen,
talking to himself, imagining that the boys (who appear there with him) are young again. They are polishing his car, happy that he has returned from a selling trip; Linda comes out into the yard and she and Willy talk of their many debts, the installments of which are greater than his weekly salary. Willy feels he is a failure as a salesman, but Linda defends him. The Boston woman appears, dimly seen, dressing and primping at an imaginary mirror. Willy tells her he will be back in about two weeks and asks her to come up again then. She disappears into the darkness and Linda and Willy continue talking. Happy comes downstairs in his pajamas (as the time again becomes the present), and he asks his father why he has returned form his trip. Charley, frm next door, enters the kitchen, Happy goes back to bed and Charley and Willy begin playing cards.

Willy and his brother Ben, who appears from out of the darkness, repeat a conversation they had years ago when Ben tried to persuade Willy to go with him to Alaska. Willy has since come to consider his not going the major mistake of his life. Charley leaves indignantly because Willy is paying no attention to his cards and is talking to Ben, who has been dead for two weeks. Linda appears in her nightgown and robe to ask Willy if he isn't ready for bed, but he goes off in his slippers for a walk. Biff comes down to the kitchen to talk to his mother about Willy. She reproaches Biff for being hateful to his father and asks him to stay home and be kind to Willy. Happy comes in and they learn that Willy no longer gets a salary, only a commission, after 36 years at his job. Biff says he will stay in the city although he hates it. Linda also tells her sons that Willy is trying to kill timself. Biff promises he will go to his old boss the next morning to try to borrow money so tnat he and Happy can
go into business together. Willy goes to bed happy, and the act closes as Biff takes from behind the water heater the rubber hose Willie has put there, to have it ready to attach to a gas jet.

ACT TWO: The following day. Willy, full of hope for Biff who has gone to ask for money from his old boss, goes to his own boss to request that he be allowed to work in New York instead of having to travel his New England territory. The boys and Willy are to meet in the evening for dinner. Willy's interview with Howard Wagner is disastrous, however; he is advised to quit completely for a time and to rest. Again Ben appears to tell Willy of Alaska, but Linda praises what Willy is doing. Willy's imagination takes him back to the day Biff played in an important game as a citywide football hero. The scene changes to Charley's office where Willy is forced to go again to borrow money. Charley, as he has done several times in the past, offers Willy a job, but Willy can't bring himself to accept it even though he has just been fircd. Willy talks with Bernard, who had tried to help Biff with his studies during their boyhood, and who is now a successful lawyer; Willy tries to find out why Biff lost all interest the summer after he failed high sct:ool mathematics and couldn't go on to college. In turn, Bernard asks Willy what happened to Biff that summer when he went to Beston to sce his father because from that time on Biff had lost his fight. Willy resents the question and doesn't answer.

The next scene takes place in the restaurant where Biff and Happy are to meet their father. Biff tells Hap of his day, how he waited six hours to see Oliver, who didn't even remember him. He has come to understand the false idea his family has of him and he realizes that he never worked for Oliver except as a shipping clerk and that he was fired for stealing merchandise. He is
determined to tell Willy the truth, what kind of man he knows himself to be, but when Willy arrives Biff can't speak out because Willy insists on his own imag. ined version of what happened in Oliver's office. Finally Biff brings himself to the lie that he has an appointment with Oliver for lunch the following day. Two girls Hap has picked up join the group at the table. They urge Willy to stay, but he leaves asking where the washroom is because he hears the Boston woman's voice offstage. Biff, Hap and the girls leave the restaurant as Biff asks his brother to do something for their father. The Boston woman enters, Willy following her, and the scene is that which Biff found when he went years ago to see his father in New England after he had failed in mathematics. Biff is knocking loudly at the door, so Willy finally sends the woman into the bathroom and goes to the door. When she comes out while Biff is still there, Willy makes up several stories as to the reasons for her presence, but Biff is aware only that his father, whom he had loved and respected, is a fake.

The scene fades into one in which the waiter in the restaurant urges Willy to go home and which is succeeded by a scene in the kitchen of Willie's home in which Linda orders the boys to leave because of their desertion of their father in the restaurant. Biff wishes to talk to Willie and asks where he is. Willie is out in the garden doing some planting in the middle of the night which he had planned to do that morning because he had felt so optimistic. Willie talks to his brother Ben, telling him about his $\$ 20,000$ insurance policy and t.e imagines his massive funeral at which his sons will see how many friends he has and what a man he's been. Biff goes out to say goodbye to his father, wishing to do so in a friendly manner, but Willie recriminates him with having ruined his own
life to spite his father. Biff tries to make him listen to the truth of what they both are:
"I'm a dime a dozen, and so are you!...I'm nothing, Pop. Can't you understand that? There's no spite in it anymore. I'm just what I am, that's all... Will you take that phoney dream and burn it before something happens?"
Biff goes to his room saying he will leave in the morning, and he leaves his father astonished in the realization that Biff loves him. Linda begs Willie to come to bed but he stays outside talking to Ben, until he sudcienly realizes that he is alone. He tries to calm Linda as she calls him and to quiet all the sounds which rush down upon him. He runs off, and Linda and his sons hear the car starting and then hear it speeding away. The act closes as Hap and Biff put on their jackets and Linda, in mourning clothes, comes forward with a bouquet of roses to kneel at a grave.

THE REQUIEM SCENE: Linda stares at the grave, unable to understand, while her son and Charley try to get her to leave. She speaks of how Willy liked to build things: "You know, Charley, there's more of him in that front stoop than in all the salcs he ever made." "Yeah," says Charley, "he was a happy man with a batch of cement." Biff says: "He had tine wrong dreams. . . He never knew who he was." Biff again asks Happy to come away with him, but Hap has decided to stay in the city to beat the racket, to justify Willy's dream, "He had a good dream. It's the only dream you can have-to come out number-one man." Linda still can't understand, just that day she has made the last payment on the house, "And there'll be nobody home."

The movement of the play is based on a contrast of two tempos. The scenes in the present in which the entire family appears are in a slow tempo; more rapid are the insets of the dynamic brother, Ben, and the scenes in the past of the childhood of Willy's sons. The
movement of the climactic scene, that of the restaurant and later the inset in the hotel in Boston, is more violent; the tempo is rapid and is accelerated by the sexual element. In the rest of the play the dejectedness of the characters accords with an unrealized sexual longing; Willy's only protest was expressed weakly, uncensciousIy and sexually. The rhythms are varied and contrasting. The principal one comes from the retardation of the action and the altcrnation of the present with the past, which gives an internal tension to almost all the play. This tension marks "the innate silent power" ${ }^{28}$ of which Nathan speaks, but he is mistaken when he says, in another place, "though the play, because of its basic disorganized expressionistic form, is susceptible of strained effect, little sense of strain is felt by its auditors." ${ }^{20}$

The tension results from the fact that the play has three lines of action: an internal one which is very well balanced with the two external ones in the past and in the present. The internal line is the revelation to Biff and to the audience of the falsity of Willy's values, and in this line are found the strongest emotions, introverted, of the play. One of the outer lines is found in the extroversion of Willy's daily life. The other external line is that of the past action presented, which also serves to reveal the falsity of the present, but without introversion. The audience participates in this revelation but Willy, never. Nathan says, "it touches these commonplace details with a sense of deep and pitiful recognition. . ." ${ }^{30}$

The principal structure, as in the majority of contemporary American works, is that of retrospection, and perhaps the structure is the principal source of the dramatic confusion in Death of a Salesman. It is also "illustrative" in the negative sense which Lawson gives
the term, because the actions do not depend on those which precede them. Willy's decision is evident at the and of the first act, but it is retarded during the entire sccond act without establishing any "new equilibrium," to use Lawson's phrase.

The action ${ }^{31}$ can be contained in Price's proposition, if we assume that the play is a tragedy, which it is not, and if we assume that Willy is the hero:
A. Willy, rejected as a salesman, can choose another comse or die.
B. Willy attempts various justifications of his present life and sekks another from his sons, without changing his course.
C. Ater knowing that he will not receive the justification of his sons, Willie also learns that they love him and decides to sacrifice himeelf in order to give them the only thing he can-the $\$ 2(0,000$ of his life insurance policy.

Despite the assumptions that the play is a tragedy and that Willy is its hero, the proposition is not very logical, and, worse, it does not indicate the real action of the play. The writer of this study doubts that the action can be fitted within Price's proposition.

As for the milieu of the play, first mention must go to the set and the lighting of Jo Mielziner, a real theatrical lour de force. It was so much so that there came a critical reaction against the "murky lighting" of Mielziner after this triumph in a style he had cultivated for several years. The scenery is completely transparent, to the point that we could say it almost doesn't exist. The directions of the playwright call for Willy's house to have three rooms and a backyard which can be used simultaneously, and even more, that for the scenes in the present the walis be observed and that for the scenes in the past the characters be able to pass freely through the walls. This tec'nical miracle
was brought to pass by Mielziner, along with another at the same time: that the audience should not be distracted by the first technical miracle, which through introverted means, induces a sentiment which creates the false extroverted environment of the selling cult and Willy. The environment takes a direct part in the action, giving Linda's last speech a profound tragic sense:

> Willy, I made the last payment on the house todayToday. dear. And there'll be nobody home... ${ }^{32}$

Ancther interesting effect is that of the individual musical backgrounds to prepare the entrances of some of the characters and to underline their parts in the action. Also the house is covered by fallen leaves on two occasions to supplement the sentiment of retrospection.

When we speak of the characters, the question immediately comes up, "Is Willy pathetic or tragic?"; but we shall leave the question for the later discussion of whether or not the play is a tragedy because the question of tragedy is integrally linked with that of the tragic hero. The evident is that Willy is a deep, complex and changeable character, even though he does not recognize himself as the audience does. Of the same roundness are Linda and Biff and they have equal or greater human warmth than Willy. Less round are Happy, Charley and Bernard, negative characters, but objectively presented. They are more nearly "types" because they do not alter the course of the action by their decisions.

The characters can be divided into three groups: (1) Willy; Linda, who, because she loves him, cannot see his self-deception; and his son, Happy, who says in his final line: "He had a good dream. It's the only dream you can have-to come out number-one man.

He fought it out here, and this is where I'm gonna win it for him." ${ }^{33}$ (2) Biff who sees the falsity of his father's values, but who can't make a way for himself (3) Charley and his son, Bernard, who make their way in business without making the mistake of believing in the myth of "being a success by being liked" which Willy speaks of: "...it's not what you do, Ben. It's who you know and the smile on your face!. . . that's the wonder, the wonder of this country, that a man can end with diamonds here on the basis of being liked!" a Ben represents something of the same attitudes as do Charley and Bernard, but cynically, and he is the anachronous and evident symbol of the robber barons of the past century in the United States.

Miller's style in Death of a Salesman is marked by force, internal tension, "reticence," ${ }^{35}$ and "no slightest pretentiousness" ${ }^{3 x}$ of the playwright. The play is built upon a complete illusion which manages not to break with the conventions of the set and staging, among them the radical time conventions reminiscent of futuristic painting in their multiplicity. It is only partially symbolistic for the reasons which we discussed previously: the play which contains parts of powerful symbolic detail cannot become a play which integrally is a symbol in itself. The plays of the vehement symbolic parts are the expressionist, not the symbolist ones. ${ }^{5}$ There is no great contradiction in Miller's mixture of the expressionist and symbolist substyles because they are both romantic styles, or at least they lack unity no more than his mixture of genres. Miller has worked in several styles. In All My Sons he wrote a romantic problem play in the naturalistic substyle.

The language of Deatb of a Saleman is appropriate to the play if we forget its pretensions to tragedy. "The writing is simple," ${ }^{3 s}$ Nathan tells us. The dialog secms natural to the characters except in a half dozen "thesis
speeches" and in the lyric lines about a "smile and a shoeshine." It is rich in the flavor of semiproletarian bourgeois groups of New York. If Bentley is speaking of the prose when he calls it "a false rhetorical mode of speech heard only on Broadway and in films, radio and political speeches," ${ }^{30}$ he has forgotten to what extent the speech of the selling cult is formed by Broadway, films, radio and political speeches. The prose is natural to the New York bourgeois. If Bentley is calling the "poetry" of the play "false rhetoric" he has a sturdier argument which he states better in another part of the same article:

It is interesting that critics who have never shown any love for poetry praise "Salesman" as a great poetic drama. The poetry they like is bad poetry, the kind that sounds big and sad and soul-searing when heard for the first time and spoken very quickly within a situation that has already generated a good deal of emotion. I think it was Paul Muni who made the classic comment that in this play you can't tell where the prose leaves off and the poetry begins. You can tell, though, that the prose is relatively satisfactory, the poetry ham; mere rhetorical phrasing, as witness any of the longer speeches. Indeed, this kind of poetry contributes very liberally to that blurring of lines which enables Mr. Miller to write a social drama and a tragedy at the same time and thus please all. ${ }^{\text {an }}$

Miller's use of a Hollywood brand of poetry is probably intentional as a part of his attempt to ennoble the American salesman, an attempt which will be discussed along with his pretensions to tragedy. Nathan criticizes Willy for "such a bellowing,"" but this is more a failing of the direction than of the text. Bentley praises Lee Cobb's "rock of a performance, strong enough to hold up any play. . .triumphant vindication of the Group's method." "0

The play is for the theatre, not for the library, and Elia Kazan gave it a direction which took full advantage
of Mielziner's scenery and showed that he is the equal of his maestros, Clurman and Strasberg. He has managed to combine their method with the speed and timing of an Al Wood comedy, and the result plays, it is magnificent theatre. At the writer's last report, October, 1950, Salesman was still continuing the run of some 600 performances which began Feb. 10, 1949.

The emotional impact comes primarily from the characterization, the "truth" of the characters and the sense of recognition which it produces in the audience, in spite of Natan's opinion that "its end effect is rather acute depression..." ${ }^{43}$ This last is partly corrected by "the uncompromising honesty of its emotion" "t and by the hope in the latent values of the son, Biff. Second in impact is the dialog which is rich, but not poetic except in one or two passages. The action, of the type of "theme and variations," does not carry as much emotion as do the characterization and the dialog.

Miller's contention that he has written a tragedy, stated in a summary of his dramatic theory, deserves examination. From his article published in the New York Times and reproduced in the programs for Salesman. we may select a fcw of his phrases which synthesize his idea of the "new tragedy":
...tragic feeling is evoked in us when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life. if need be, to secure one thing-his sense of personal dignity.. The flaw, or crack in the character, is really hi; inherent unwillingness to remain passive in the face of wha: tee conceives to be a challenge to his dignity, his image of his rightful states... from this total onsleught by an individual against the seemingly stable cosmos surrounding us-from this total examination of the "urchangeable" environment-comes the terror and fear that is classically associated vith tragedy...Now if it is tree that tragedy is the consequence of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly, his destruction in the attempt posts a wrong or an evil in his environment. And this is precisely the
morality of tragedy and its lesson. . The thrust for freedom is the quality in tragedy which exalts. The revolutionary questioning of the stable environment is what terrifies and if this struggle must be total and without reservation, then it automatically demonstrates the indestructible will of man to achieve his humanity...The possibility of victory must be there in tragedy.
We see in the first four phrases that all are based upon a man's struggle: the tragic feeling, the tragic flaw of the hero, the terror and fear and the morality of the tragedy. This struggle, also, in the last phrase, "demonstrates the indestructible will of man" and "the possibility of victory." In addition to the struggle, we have in the next to the last phrase "the thrust for freedom" which exalts and "the revolutionary questioning" which terrifies.

In synthesis then, Miller's definition of tragedy is that of a revolutionary struggle toward freedom. Such a definition can be applied to $W$ aiting for Lefty and to Bury the Dead better than to Salesman because the protagonists of the first two plays make a greater struggle than Willy. Despite all argument, none of the three is a tragedy, and Miller's definition perfectly fits the revolutionary play of social protest, but not the tragedy.

This discussion brings us to Willy's "struggle." Is Willy a tragic hero or simply a pathetic character? Perhaps it would be best to cite another passage from Miller's dramatic theory:

The possibility of victory must be there in tragedy. Where pathos rules, where pathos is finally derived, a character has fought a battle he could not possibly have won. The pathetic is achieved when the protagonist is, by virtue of his witlessnes, his insensitivity, or the very air he gives off, incapable of grappling with a much superior force.

By Miller's own definition, Willy is, in the opinion
of the present writer, a pathetic protagonist and not a tragic one. Another proof, then, that Salesman is not a tragedy is its lack of a tragic hero. After all, it matters little if the play is or is not a tragedy; certainly it is an excellent social drama. The critic who wishes to prolong the controversy about "the tragic" may begin with Aristotle and conclude with the article of Rodolfo Usigli in Cuadernos Americanos, number four, of last year. Also, if time permits, there are several hundred "philosophers" of idealistic aesthetics between the two authors mentioned above.

We shall not search any further in the history of the theatre for the mixed genre of Salesman now that all three genres have been previously analyzed in this study, as has the expressionistic style; but we must mention a question which Usigli raises in his article published in Novedades, Oct. 8, 1950: "Is the symbolistic style of staging appropriate to the tragedy"? We must agree with Usigli, I think, that it is not. Even if symbelism should arrive at definite forms, instead of taking over "the new stagecraft" in toto, and at a cinaracteristic content, it is still a substyle of the romantic current, in which the latest attempts at tragedy were Hauptmann's naturalistic variety and Andreyev's "symbolistic" one. The world has shown little liking for romantic tragedy from the pen of a lesser man than Shakespeare, and even in terms of Shakespeare I personally will take one classic Othello in preference to the sum of Fomeo and Juliet. Hamlet, and Macbeth.

Among the symbolic elements of the play, the most important are found in two characters: Ben, discussed previously, and Biff. The latter represents the hope of the play, he is the tormented one, he symbolizes the only escape from the "wrong or evil in the environment" that is his father's, he is searching for usefulncss. All his "thrusts toward freedom" have been frus-
trated, despite his "revolutionary questioning" of Willy's values. He represents rebellion but he offers us no soiution. Of what, then, is he a symbol? He is the symbol of a negative solution which does not demand even one positive action, and this suggests the principal fault of Salesman. What is the audience supposed to do now? Found an asylum for the pathetic Willies or order them all to commit suicide? Give a productive job to the tormented Biffs or send them all to the mythical and Chateaubriandesque Texas of the "noble savages"?

Perhaps there is more to be gained from citing the symbolic speech which includes the thesis, lirically expressed, of the play and to compare it with its antecedents:

CHARLEY...To Biff: Nobody dast blame this man. You don't understand: Willy was a salesman. And for a salesman, there is no rock bottom to the life. He don't put a bolt to a nut, he don't tell you the law or give medicine. He's a man way out there in the blue, riding on a smile and a shoeshine. And when they start not smiling back-that's an earthquake. And then you get yourself a couple of spots on your hat, and you're finished. Nobody dast blame this man. A salesman is got to dream, boy. It comes with the territory. ${ }^{15}$
This can be compared with the final stanza of a poem by Carl/Sandburg called "The Eawyers Know Too Much':

The work of a bricklayer goes to the blue.
The knack of a mason outlasts a moon.
The hands of a plasterer hold a room together.
The land of a farmer wishes him back again.
Singers of songs and dreamers of plays Build a house no wind blows over.
The lawyers-tell me why a hearse horse snickers hauling a lawyer's bones.
There are four principal literal meanings in Death
of a Salesman: three negative and one positive. The negative ones are (1) the falsity of the selling cult, its "false standards and self-deception" " (2) "being liked" is not enough among those who profess the selling cult (3) the jungle out of which uncle Ben came with his diamonds is precisely the place for him and his anachronous colleagues, the "rugged individualists." All three have been discussed previously. Nathan mentions other negative meanings of less importance:

And the point of yiew throughout, in its challenge of popular conceptions, is strikingly intelligent. The popular credos that nothing is more valuable to a man than being liked; that sincere, hard work is bound to reap its ultimate reward; that children, even if they conceal the fact, have an inborn love for their parents; that loyalty is always a virtue; and that only the incompetent fail in this worldsuch beliefs, with no show of facile cynicism, Miller punctures. ${ }^{\text {4: }}$

The positive point, that of the value of work with the hands, merits a deeper examination. It appears in many of the "thesis speeches":

A man who can't handle tools is not a man. You're disgusting. "

I don't care what they think! They've laughed at Dad for years, and you know why? Because we don't belong in this nuthouse of a city! We should be mixing cement on some open plain, or-or carpenters. A carpenter is allowed to whistle. ${ }^{19}$

Cause I got so many fine tools, all I'd need would be a little lumber and some peace of mind. ${ }^{*}$

There were a lot of nice days. When he'd come home from a trip; or on Sundays, making the stoop; finishing the cellar; putting on the new porch; when he built the extra bathroom; and put up the garage. You know something, Charley, there's more of him in that front stoop than in all the sales he ever made. ${ }^{\pi 1}$

In the American theatre, the direct antecedent for this exaltion of manual labor is found in The World We Make (1939), dramatized from The Oulward Room by Millen Brand. It concerns a mental patient who escapes from a hospital and resolves her psychological difficulties through work in a steam laundry and through the love of one of the workers there. Naturally, too, the name of Maxim Gorky comes immediately to mind as the greatest apologist for work in recent times.

The moral judgment of the play falls upon Willy and the environment which produced him and in which he falsely believes. It is a hard judgment and without pity in spite of the pathos of the character.

The condemnation of the selling cult is linked with a sentiment common to many American writers and artists of the period between the two world wars. Among them there were Carl Sandburg and Sinclair Lewis and the voluntary exiles of the twenties. But they were not a large number until the end of the second World War when a widespread reaction was revealed among veterans against the selling life. The G. I. Bill of Rights gave many of them the opportunity to drop their previous projects and educations directed toward the great advertising industry, and other similar ones, in order to make a fresh start. It is a curious group, this army of student veterans who go in varied and strange directions, but the characteristic common to all is their rejection of the selling cult. Among them are those who wish to learn the trades of artisans, the aesthetes who pursue the end of "art for art's sake," the homosexual aristocrats, the future university professors, the escapists, those who search for a "culture" in foreign lands in order to bring it later as missionaries to their savage land, the dilettantes, the future writers,
artists and social reformers of the United States. They remain for the moment a large question mark; they are just now beginning to finish their studies. It is certain, however, that they are not selling anything; those who wanted to sell returned early from their military service to the show windows and sample cases which were awaiting and calling them. Miller, although he wasn't a soldier, lived among them in order to collect material for his reportage Situation Normal, and the movie, G. I. Joe. He captured many of the deepest feelings of the citizen-soldiers, and certainly his protest against the selling life is more influenced by the citizenveterans than by the writing of the preceding generation.

Miller, during all of his writing career, has been a leftist, but his social thinking is marked more by generalized feelings than by any logical and consistent observation. He has not concentrated his fire; his attention to the timely and his lyrical and his idealistic tendencies have taken away a part of the social impact of his plays. His method has been more eclectic than radical, and his writing shows more talent than conviction. We are not impressed to learn that Miller spent two and a half years as a stock clerk saving the money to enter the University of Michigan. After graduating in 1938, he joined the Federal Theatre for a short time until it was curtailed. Then he wrote radio drama scripts, short stories, a book of reportage, and in 1945 a novel about anti-Semitism, Focus. Since then (a play in 1944, The Man Who Had All the Luck, was unsuccessful on Broadway), Miller has written almost exclusively for the theatre and has several pieces which have not been produced. Despite his writing on jobs commissioned by both the important national labor organ-
izations, and his dedication of "a few weeks each year" to an occupation to be added to the list Chapman ${ }^{52}$ gives us. Miller seems to have no real connection with the workingman's life he suggests as an alternative to the selling cult in Death of a Salesman. His solution, and to some extent Miller himself, remains a theory and perhaps only a sentiment.

The importance of Death of a Salesman since its opening in 1949 has been considerable as theatrical art, but its influence as a social protest has been felt less. It continues its run on Broadway without any indication of closing soon. It won the Pulitzer Prize, the Critics Circle Award, the Antoinette Perry Award, the Theatre Club Award, and the "Front Page" Award for the 1949 season. The first two are the most highly recognized theatre awards in the United States. The blurbs on the dust jacket of the Viking Press edition of the play contain more superlatives signed by more well-known New York reviewers than the writer of this study remembers being given to any other contemporary American play. Bentley calls it a "signal event in New York theatrical life" ss; Nathan is the only critic who has no superlatives for it.

The play is typically American in content, and perhaps we could say also that it is typical in its confusion. Certainly it is not a universal dramatic work, nor will it be until the day the selling cult is universally accepted, an improbability now that the social struggle proceeds upon other bases in almost the entire world. Could it have much meaning in Mexico? Probably not, except among a small audience in the capital. Despite certain superficial symptoms, such as the Lions Clubs, the Rotarians, the Shriners and the American Chamber of Commerce, the selling cult really has no large number
of neophytes in Mexico, largely, I suppose, because most of Mexico remains on a "non-money economy." ${ }^{54}$

Granted its confusion, Salesman, thanks to its artistic superiority, is a more effective protest than All My Sons. ${ }^{55}$ But most of its virtues lie in its theatrical form, not in what it says; it is fine theatre, not drama. When the form is so completely predominant over the content, there is no possibility of considering Death of a Salesman as an equilibrated work which might become one of the measures in the history of the theatre.

The play is very good, however, and the persistent question keeps returning, "What if Miller had concentrated on cutting the tap root of the American myth. instead of merely cutting off its foliage along with that of other myths which have long preoccupied the orthodox mind?" Ah, that would have been some-thing-something which would probably have put the name of Arthur Miller on the title page of the best American drama. As the synthetical, but not too syntactical, Alfredo Segre says, "He risked a masterpiece."

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

${ }^{1}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 133.
2 When I mentioned, to a friend who works in the theatre, the protest plays I was studying, he asked with good reason, "What about Uncle Tom's Cabin?" It was the first dramatic protest in the United States with a content both significant and widely discussed, but its form is neither dramatic nor comparable to the form of the seven plays discussed in this study. The adaptation from the novel is more cinematic than dramatic, as may be seen from the "Programme" given the audience for its geographic orientation:

ACT I-Exterior of Uncle Tom's Cabin on Shelbey's Plantation; Negro Celebration. Chorus, "Nigga in de Cornfield"; Kentucky Breakdown Dance; Innocence Protected; Slave Dealers on hand. Chorus, "Come then to the Feast;" the Mother's Appeal; Capture of Morna (Eliza); Interior of Uncle Tom's Cabin; Midnight Escape; Tom driven from his Cabin; Search of the Traders; Miraculous Escape of Morna and her Child. Offering Prayer; the Negro's Hope; Affecting Tableau.

ACT II-Family Excitement; Dark Threatenings; Ohio River Frozen over; Snow Storm; Flight of Morna and her Child; Pursuit of the Traders; Desperate Resolve and Escape of Morna on Flowing Ice; Mountain Torrent and Ravine; Cave of Crazy Mag; Chase of Edward; Maniac's Protection; Desperate Encounter of Edward and Traders on the Bridge; Fall of Springer down the Roaring Torrent; Negro Chorus, "We Darkies Hoe the Corn;" Meeting of Edward and Morna; Escape over Mountain Rocks.

ACT III—Roadside Inn; Advertisement Extraordinary;
> the Slave Auctioneer; Rencontre between Edward and Slave Dealers; Interposition of Crazy Mag; Arrival from the West Indies; Singular Discovery. Mountain Dell; Recog. nition of Lost Mother; Repentance and Remorse; Return of Tom; the Log Cabin in its Pride; Freedom of Edward and Morna $\&_{c}$.

The titles of two plays of the first decade of this century have been mentioned in lists of early American stage protests: The Witching Hour by Augustus Thomas, and The Great Divide by William Vaughn Moody. The first reveals, in the first act that Jack's gambling house in Louisville has had police and judicial protection and thereafter leaves the question for the more fantastic kinds of psychic phenomena. The second play, by a playwright better known as a poet, is a serious piece of social criticism, but it is too generalized to be called a social protest. It is rather a play which belabors orthodoxy in favor of heterodoxy, as did Shaw's, according to Henry L. Mencken, George Bernard Shaw His plays. (Boston and London: John W. Luce and Co. 1905).

We have no other choice but to take Aria Da Capo as the frrst real American protest in a finished artistic form and The Adding Machine as the first important protest play to appear on Broadway. Naturally such isolated "firsts" do not make up a theatre movement, and the thriving social protest theatre did not appear until the end of the "chicken in every pot and a car in every garage" era.
${ }^{3}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 152.
4 Ludwig Lewisohn, "Creative Irony: Mr. Rice's The Adding Machine" in Montrose J. Moses and John Mason Brown, The American Theatre as Seen by its Critics 1752. 1934. (New York: W. W. Norton and Company. c1934). pp. 196 f.
s The mixture of styles in The Adding Machine helps produce a similar confusion among critics as to its genre. Sobel, op. cit. surpasses all his colleagues for faulty vision when he calls it a "fantasy-tragedy." p. 36.

- The first cycle of The Adding Machine corresponds to Polti's eighth situation, revolt, but the second and third cycles correspond to none of the 36 situations of Polti. We might invent a thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth situation, rejection for the first cycle, and condemnation for the third cycle.

7 "Elmer Rice is less at home in the fantasy than in the earlier, more realistic scenes..." Gagey, op. cit. p. 151.
${ }^{8}$ Gassner, Masters of the Drama. op. cit. p. 485 f.

- Gagey, op. cit. p. 150.
${ }^{10}$ What appears to be confusion among the critics as to the forms used in expressionism results from the meagreness of their descriptions and a failure to separate form from content. Formal elements may be fished one or two at a time from the intelligent but limited discussions of Gorelik, Gassner, Barrett H. Clark, Bernhard Diebold and Usigli. What the forms were aimed at, not what they were, is best summed up by Lewisohn, op. cit. p. 196: the inner life objectified, the outer life synthesized. The most satisfying approach is to work from the content to the forms found in the plays themselves, but a more rapid overall picture can be obtained from an analogy in the plastic arts: four great caricaturists, Hogarth, Goya, Daumier and Jose Clement Orozco. Their inferior, George Grosz, should be studied for his direct connection with the local conditions which produced German expressionism in the theatre.
${ }^{11}$ Bentley, The Playwright as Thinker, op. cit. p. 263.
${ }_{12}$ Text from The People's Song Book. (New York: Boni and Gaer. c1948). p. 8.
${ }^{13}$ Gorelik, op. cit. pp. 251 f.
${ }^{4}$ Gassner, Masters of the Drama. op. cit. p. 489.
${ }^{15}$ Gorelik, op. cit. p. 252.
${ }^{10}$ George Grosz, A Little Yes and a Big No: the Autobiography of George Grosz, Illustrated by the Author. (New York: The Dial Press. 1946).
${ }^{17}$ George Meredith, An Essay on Comedy: and the Uses of the Comic Spirit. (London: Constable and Company, Ltd. 1915). pp. 23-30, 62f., 69 , and $85-88$ contain a maximum of theory and a minimum of rhetoric.
${ }^{18}$ Bentley, The Playwright as Thinker. op. cit. p. 177.
${ }^{10}$ Notwithstanding Marx's error in giving a non-linear multiple power to concentrations of laborers because of their "social enthusiasm," the simple economic power of concentrated local capital leaves off a linear function and approaches that of the square. The difference is obvious: 50,000 workmen under a single boss do not all "think like" the boss, but 50,000 dollars in the hands of a single man are in complete agreement with him.
${ }^{20}$ A notable recent exception, Gilbert Seldes, The Great Audience. (New York: Viking. 1950).
${ }^{21}$ Elmer Rice, "The Adding Machine" in The Theatre Guild Anthology. (New York: Random House. c1936). p. 269.
${ }_{22}$ Upton Sinclair, The Brass Check: a Study of American Journalism. (Pasadena, California: Published by the Author. 1920).
${ }^{29}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 149.
${ }^{24}$ Leslie Stephen, Swift. (London: MacMillan and Company, Ltd. 1927). p. 209. "He was buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral, and over his grave was placed an epitaph, containing the last of those terrible phrases which cling to our memory whenever his name is mentioned. Swift lies, in his own words-

Ubi saeva indignatio
Cor ulterius lacerare nequit."
${ }^{25}$ Gagey, op. cit. p. 151.
${ }^{26}$ Lewisohn, in Moses and Brown, op. cit. p. 196.
${ }^{27}$ Brooks Atkinson, "Of Thee I Sing" in Moses and Brown, op. cit. p. 300.
${ }^{28}$ George Jean Nathan, The Theatre Book of the Year 1948-1949: A Record and an Interpretation. (New York: Ailfred A. Knopf. 1949). p. 281.
${ }^{25}$ Ibid. p. 280.
${ }^{30}$ Nathan, op. cit. p. 282.
${ }^{31}$ Of Polti's 36 situations, Death of a Salesman corresponds to number 33, erroneous judgment, and to number 21, self-sacrifice for kindred.
${ }^{32}$ Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman, (New York: The Viking Press. 1949). p. 139.
${ }^{39}$ Idem.
${ }^{34}$ Ibid. p. 86.
${ }^{25}$ Nathan, op. cit. p. 281.
${ }^{38} \quad$ Ibid. p. 280.
${ }^{37}$ Gorelik, op. cit. p. 248. "But on the whole the distinguishing feature of Expressionism would seem to lie else-where-in a symbolism notable for the vehemence of its symbols."
${ }^{38}$ Nathan, op. cit. p. 279.
${ }^{30}$ Bentley, "Back to Broadway" in Theatre Arts, vol. xxxiii, no. 10. November, 1949. p. 13.
to Idem.
${ }^{41}$ Nathan, op. cit. p. 281.

22 Bentley, "Back to Broadway" op. cit. pp. 12 f.
${ }^{43}$ Nathan, op. cit. p. 280.
" Idem.

* Miller, op. cit. p. 138.
${ }^{18}$ Nathan, op. cit. p. 280.
47 Ibid. p. 284.
${ }^{48}$ Miller, op. cit. p. 44.
${ }_{4}$ Ibid. p. 61.
sn lbid. p. 72.
${ }^{51}$ Ibid. p. 138.
${ }^{5 z}$ John Chapman, The Burns Mantle Best Plays of 1948. 49: and the Year Book of the Drama in America. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 1949). p. 368.
${ }^{53}$ Bentley, "Back to Broadway" op. cit. p. i2.
${ }^{54}$ Seymour E. Harris (Ed.), Economic Problems of Latin America. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1944). p. 373.
${ }^{55}$ Nathan, op. cit. p. 283.


[^0]:    you're lost-lost. Fortunately, there are others who see the danger, there are men in this very village, armed and awaiting the day. Not Cousin Roy and his colleagues, but others, they are ready to fight and kill. They have their arsenals-they have their guns. I have already given

