

modifications of the same visuals. The movement of the man from reaction to the woman to comment on the film itself suggests further variants, such as a discussion between the producer and director, what the woman is thinking about the man's response, etc. For what we are seeing is a series of different movies, quite as different and more subtle than those of, say, *Rashomon*, or other films which tell the same story from different viewpoints. Where in *Rashomon* one has a number of subjective stories that are related to an assumed objective situation, in *The Last Clean Shirt* there is an objective situation recurring, the nature of which is completely changed by the sub-titles.

Furthermore, the point is not merely the obvious one that with sub-titles you have a diminished or distorted understanding of the picture, but rather that however complete or skilful the translation they actually change the visual meaning of the picture. This apparent aid to comprehension, an involvement through understanding, has the effect not merely of distraction but of emphasising the plane of the film and of the screen, insisting upon the two-dimensionality. The sub-titles become *part* of the film, turning it into a more aesthetic object. (They also increase our awareness of the properties that all movies have but which are usually concealed. One might consider here the effect of the titling of silent films, the time-and-place labelling that was once a feature of Hollywood historical pictures, now only employed for "documentary" purposes, and the deliberate

use for alienation of chapter-headings in Godard's *Vivre Sa Vie*.) Then again, sub-titles force us to realise that the nature of the experience has been changed even if we understand either or both the language spoken and the language of the sub-titles. One also has quite different responses to an ordinary still and a still photograph cut from the frame and retaining a sub-title.

These are just a few of the issues raised by this picture, and one could use it as the basis for an inquiry into the fundamental problems that underlie most discussions of the nature of the movie experience. These are not of course new problems, and they are ones to which an increasing number of younger American and British painters have been addressing themselves. It is unusual though to discover them being examined in such a fascinating way in the movies.

It might be considered a mark of the insensitivity of the intellectual movie audiences in London and New York that they did not respond more intelligently to *The Last Clean Shirt*. On the other hand their reaction was clearly the one that Alfred Leslie and his collaborator Frank O'Hara anticipated. And for this reason one supposes that the picture is unlikely to be shown widely, and maybe not at all, which is a pity. Still, as a critic said to me after seeing some of the London notices of the Jasper Johns' retrospective: "The old reactionary spirit is still there and it's good to see that something can still bring it to the surface..."

Philip French

A Valedictory

By Lionel Trilling

THE VALEDICTORY ADDRESS, as it has developed in American colleges and universities over the years, has become a very strict form, a literary *genre* which permits very little deviation. We all know what its procedure is. The chosen graduate begins with a conspectus of the world into which he and his classmates are now about to enter. His view of the world

is not calculated to inspire cheer, it is usually pretty grim. He speaks of the disorder and violence that prevail in the world, perhaps even close to home. He speaks of the moral and intellectual inadequacy of society, of the dominance of personal self-interest, of indifference to the welfare of others and to all ideal considerations. This constitutes the first movement of the valedictory form.

In the second movement the speaker turns his attention to the graduating class in whose name he is saying farewell to their college. He remarks on the sheltered life which the members of the class have been privileged to enjoy for four years. He speaks of the intellectual and spiritual ideals which have been instilled into

LIONEL TRILLING, who is at present the George Eastman Visiting Professor at Oxford, originally gave this text as the "valedictorian" of the recipients of honorary degrees at Northwestern University.

them and goes on to observe how these will be denied and assailed by that harsh world which is now to be the scene of their new endeavours. And then, in a concluding movement, the speaker urges his fellow graduates to hold fast to the virtues of the educated man and to try to exercise them in the hostile world which, in the degree that it opposes them, has need of them.

In short, the defining characteristic of the valedictory address is its statement of the opposition between the university on the one hand and the world on the other.

How WELL WE KNOW this opposition! For the academic person it may constitute a chief element of his sense of himself and of his position in society. It is charged with a most moving pathos from which the academic man may derive justification and courage. Surely no academic has ever failed to take heart from Matthew Arnold's famous apostrophe to his own university, of which the opposition is of the essence.

"Adorable dreamer," says Arnold to Oxford—"adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic! who has given thyself so prodigally, given thyself to sides and to heroes not mine, only never to the Philistine! home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties! what example could ever so inspire us to keep down the Philistine in ourselves, what teacher could ever so save us from that bondage to which we are all prone... the bondage of"—and here Arnold quotes Goethe—"‘*was uns alle bündigt, DAS GEMEINE*’": what binds us all, the narrow, the mundane, the merely practical.

This was, in point of fact, Arnold's actual valedictory to Oxford when he had concluded his term as Professor of Poetry at the university, and it contains the whole *mystique* of the valedictory: it gives ultimate expression to the idea of the opposition between the purity and gentle nobility of the university set over against the crassness of the world.

And what is a designated valedictorian to do if he finds that he cannot accept this established valedictory *mystique*? I am in just that situation. For some years now, it has seemed to me that the opposition between the university and the world, or at least half the world, is diminishing at a very rapid rate. Gone are the days when H. L. Mencken could laugh a book out of court by referring to its author as Professor, or Dr., or, worst of all, *Herr Professor Dr.* Gone are the days when middle-class fathers groaned and middle-class mothers wept when their sons announced their intention of making a career in the university—scholarship and teaching now appear to the parental mind as

amounting to a profession like another, and throughout the land we hear the low purr of satisfaction that accompanies reference to "my son, the one who's abroad on a Fulbright," "my son, the one who's working on genes."

PERHAPS THERE is no more striking fact in American social life to-day than the rapid upward social mobility of our academic personnel, the upward movement of the university itself in national esteem. If ever the university was the object of condescension as the place where abstraction consorted most happily with incompetence, it is now, perhaps more than any other American institution, an object of admiring interest and even of desire, as suggesting the possibility of a life of reason and order. I have the sense that the authority the university has over people's minds grows constantly. No less constant is the increase of the university's scope—it seems to be a chief characteristic of our American culture that virtually any aspect of human life can be thought of as an object of study, and that eventually the intellectual discipline that develops around it seeks to find shelter in the university. Nothing is too mundane, nothing is too instinctual, nothing is too spiritual for the university to deal with.

What is a valedictorian to do? How is he to evoke the appropriate valedictory pathos of the opposition that the world shows to the university when so much of the world is trying to crowd itself into the university? And he is the more debarred from the valedictory *mystique* and pathos if his own impression of the state of affairs is supplemented by a reading of Clark Kerr's recent book, *The Uses of the University*. Dr. Kerr is president of the University of California and thus speaks with no small authority about university affairs. He tells us that we are witnessing a *rapprochement* of ever-increasing intimacy between the university and the world.

But this puts it all too mildly. How far things have gone in this new direction is strikingly suggested by Dr. Kerr's statement—it is the statement not only of a university president but of a distinguished economist—that the university has become one of the decisive economic facts of our society. Dr. Kerr speaks of the university as being at the centre of what he calls "the knowledge industry," and he is not using a mere figure of speech when he makes that phrase. He does not mean that the university's activity and organisation may be thought of as in some ways analogous to the activity and organisation of a manufacturing or a processing industry. Nor does he mean that the knowledge that universities develop is a commodity which business men are eager to possess.

He means that the existence of our universities bears a relation to the national economy that is materially comparable to those enterprises whose achievements are noted in the Dow-Jones averages. He tells us that "the production, distribution, and consumption of 'knowledge' in all forms is said to account for 29 per cent of gross national product . . . ; and knowledge production is growing at about twice the rate of the rest of the economy." And he goes on:

What the railroads did for the second half of the last century and the automobile for the first half of this century may be done for the second half of this century by the knowledge industry: that is, to serve as the focal point of national growth. And the university is at the centre of the knowledge process.

Adorable dreamer!—is it this that you were dreaming about all these years: that some day you would "serve as the focal point for national growth"? That so much power could come into your hands?—for economic strength implies political power, and the end of your new economic strength is not yet in sight. Consider Dr. Kerr's plans for the new campus at La Jolla, where a new college to accommodate 2,500 students is to be organised and built every two years for the next twenty years: project these plans sufficiently far into the future and it becomes plain that the Governorship of California will be a mere honorary office, all real authority lying with the President of the University. Push the project yet a little further and we envisage the day when the President of the United States will call his cabinet together and will meet with the Dean of State, the Dean of Defence, the Dean of the Interior, when the Federal office commanding the greatest patronage will not be that of Postmaster-General but that of Director of Admissions.

IT IS A SPLENDID VISION. We have always said that knowledge is power, and maybe this is going to turn out to be true. The idea of Philosopher-Kings has always haunted the academic mind and perhaps, on Dr. Kerr's showing, we are now on the point of ushering in their reign. And is it not characteristic of an American dream that Dr. Kerr, conceiving a city of the mind, should be so much more catholic, tolerant, and inclusive than Plato?—Dr. Kerr tells us that the fully developed university of the future, which he calls Ideopolis, so far from excluding the poets, as Plato did from his Republic, must find an honoured place for all the creative arts. Dr. Kerr speaks of the creative arts as being "hitherto the ugly ducklings or Cinderellas of the academic world," but he is confident that this is a condition which is now to be changed.

America [Dr. Kerr says] is bursting with creativity in painting, music, literature, the theatre, with a vigour equalled in few parts of the world today. Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Russia, England, the Low Countries have had great periods of cultural flowering. America is having one now. . . . The universities need to find ways . . . to accommodate pure creative effort if they are also to have places on stage as well as in the wings and in the audience in the great drama of cultural growth now playing on the American stage.

Let us not stop to question Dr. Kerr's belief that the university *should* be on-stage "in the great drama of cultural growth"—let us only investigate what the university must do to "accommodate pure creative effort" in the arts, giving our fullest attention to literature. Let us appoint a Committee for the purpose, and endow it with very considerable powers, of which one is that of choosing its personnel from among the illustrious dead if it wishes to do so, of which another is that of considering the candidate at any point in his career it elects.

And let us suppose the Committee to be a Committee of the faculty of Northwestern University—then, without question, because of the superb biography by their colleague, Professor Richard Ellman, the members will think first of James Joyce as an especially impressive example of pure creative effort. The committee considers Mr. Joyce at that moment in his career when he has as yet published only *Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, but is on the point of bringing out *Ulysses*. The members are reassured by Mr. Joyce's academic attainments—he commands several romance languages, has a working knowledge of the Scandinavian tongues, and a strong interest in linguistics; he is adept in Scholastic philosophy, gives signs of being a powerful theorist of aesthetics. The Committee doesn't want to interfere with his writing, but it can't help thinking that, in addition to carrying on his pure creative effort, Mr. Joyce might well turn out to be useful in interdisciplinary seminars.

BUT THERE ARE CERTAIN personal circumstances which raise questions. One circumstance is that Mr. Joyce is not married to Mrs. Joyce. Maybe in spirit but not in church and not in law. Then there is the probability that Mrs. Joyce will not be happy in an academic community—she is a lady (but not actually a *lady*) of very simple education; so far from being of use to her husband in his work, like a proper academic wife, she never reads what he writes. Mr. Joyce makes inordinate demands on everyone around him, is never grateful for what people do for him, believes that he is the object of treachery, even of conspiracy. He drinks too much. It is an

aspect of his pure creative effort that he portrays actual people, including his literary colleagues, usually satirically, and using their actual names. The chances are that he will make no exception of his academic colleagues. Is this good for faculty morale? The new book he is writing, the one that is to be called *Ulysses*, is said to be a work of genius. But it is full of indecent words and scatological and sexual details. It is going to be prosecuted, condemned, burned. Early readers, even very intelligent ones, will find it harsh and cruel. To be sure, with the passing decades, nobody will be troubled by its outspokenness, and the judgment of harshness and cruelty will yield to the opinion that this is a sweet, kind, tender book, almost to the point of sentimentality. But does the university want to accommodate the decades of scandal it will cause?

With great reluctance the Committee decides against Mr. Joyce and turns its attention to another great creative personality. This one is also salient in Northwestern consciousness—it is Professor Erich Heller's "ironic German," Thomas Mann. He, too, is not only creative but learned—he is encyclopaedic in science, psychology, history, Egyptology, musicology. He is probably the world's leading authority on the work and personality of Thomas Mann—nothing would please him more than to give a course of lectures or a seminar on the development of this genius. His aptness for the academic life is suggested by his fondness for being known as *Dr. Mann*. It is pleasing to note that there can be no doubt that Dr. Mann is married to Frau Dr. Mann. No lives could be more orderly than theirs. In short, everything makes it clear that Dr. Mann should be recommended for appointment. The Committee moves fast, the Deans move fast, the President moves fast, the Trustees move fast—alas, to no avail: Harvard has got to him first. What is more, the University of California is after Dr. Mann, and is likely to snatch him from Harvard itself, for California plans to create a Mann-Goethe Institute which will be an exact replica of Weimar in 1775.

DISAPPOINTED BUT HOPEFUL, the Committee turns to André Gide, an eventual Nobel Prize Winner. There can be no doubt about it: Monsieur Gide is married to Madame Gide. And yet—alas!... It is not that the Committee wishes to exclude sexual deviants from academic life; they have been there before. But Monsieur Gide insists on making a point of it, he defends it, he urges it. What is more, he represents the family as a malevolent institution. Who would deny his right to take these positions, yet should they be taken with the university as the forum? The parents of our students cannot be wholly left out of account.

But all these adverse considerations are in a sense irrelevant. For it turns out that Monsieur Gide would not accept the appointment even if it were offered him. For he conceives it to be of the essence of his existence as a writer that he startle and shock and dismay his readers. He cannot help entertaining the idea that the university is an institution, that it is by nature conservative, although not necessarily in any bad sense of that word, and respectable, in whatever sense may be attached to *that* word, and that if his writings were to issue from the university, they would seem certified as virtuous, they would lose much—perhaps all—of their shocking force.

If not Gide, then certainly not Genet. Anyway, with his prison record he would have difficulty with the immigration authorities.

What of Jean-Paul Sartre, not only eminent as a creative but as a speculative mind? We are large-minded enough to overlook his sometimes rather odd political positions and also *his* antagonism to respectable life. But Monsieur Sartre does not want to come to us. He likes to do his writing at a table in a café. Very well, this is one of the ways the university can accommodate creative effort—we will have a café; we need one anyway; we will engage Philip Johnson or Mies van der Rohe to build one as an annex to the student Union. Monsieur Sartre is touched, but still says no thank you. It isn't only the café, it is all of Paris: all that noise, all that distraction, all those political quarrels—how is a man to write without them?

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS, when approached, returns something of the same answer. Ireland is wearing him out, tries his temper, frays his nerves. The Irish nation disgusts and infuriates him. How can he leave it? Not to mention the great houses, and the beautiful great ladies, and unforgivable England, and the language. How can the university possibly accommodate *these* necessities of Mr. Yeats' creative efforts? Rather to the relief of the Department of History, which was apprehensive that Mr. Yeats might wish to give a course on his theory of history as set forth in *A Vision*, a work which had been dictated to his wife by certain spirits whose academic background is quite vague, Mr. Yeats declines the offer.

The Committee thinks that perhaps its century is wrong. It tries the nineteenth. Dostoevsky? A genius, but his political views are not easily accommodated by a liberal university. A genius, but an utterly impossible person. Count Leo Tolstoy? Without doubt he is married to the Countess, but he is just on the point of his religious conversion and there is trouble in the

offing. Charles Dickens? Doesn't want to leave London and young Ellen Ternan.

PERHAPS, then, the art is wrong?—Cézanne stares when the Committee approaches him. Why, in the name of everything rational, should he want to leave these old hot southern rocks? As for apples, tablecloths, pitchers, he can find plenty here at home—what need for a university? What would he do there that he does not do here?—he paints and he paints and he paints: what else is there to do? Beethoven (a most deficient and maladjusted person—another *impossible* person) replies with a titanic stare, growl, and shrug. It occurs to both of them to ask, in a moment of terrifying geniality, what the Committee means by its talk of *pure creative effort*. “Pure, pure; creative, creative,” they say, “what

blague, what *Quatsch* is this?—we are not making pure creative efforts: we are telling you God's truth.” Sometimes, it appears, genius is touched with paranoia. Alas.

Our Committee retires to think things over. Like any Committee, ours will not admit that it has failed. It reports some strange, deeply ingrained resistance of the artists to the university, a resistance that is not to be in the least diminished by all that they are told about a new function the university has, which is that of serving as “the focal point of national growth.” Like any Committee, ours looks to the future, to the time when the universities will have discovered the way to rear up a new generation of artists who will be trained to find it possible to accommodate themselves to the accommodation of pure creative effort in the arts that the university will devise.

Unreal Estates

On Science Fiction — C. S. LEWIS, KINGSLEY AMIS, BRIAN ALDISS

ALDISS: One thing that the three of us have in common is that we have all had stories published in the *Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, some of them pretty far-flung stories. I take it we would all agree that one of the attractions of *S.F.* is that it takes us to unknown places.

AMIS: Swift, if he were writing to-day, would have to take us out to the planets, wouldn't he? Now that most of our terra incognita is—real estate.

ALDISS: There is a lot of the eighteenth-century equivalent of *S.F.* which is placed in Australia or similar unreal estates.

SHORTLY before his recent death, Professor C. S. Lewis recorded a discussion in his rooms at Magdalene College, Cambridge, with Kingsley Amis and Brian Aldiss, on science fiction. Lewis was himself, in addition to his critical and theological work, the author of a number of imaginative tales: *Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra*, *That Hideous Strength*, among others. Amis, besides his novels (*Lucky Jim*, *One Fat Englishman*, etc.), has written a study of science fiction, *New Maps of Hell* (now available as a *Pan Pocket Book*, 2s. 6d), and has co-edited three anthologies of science-fiction stories. Aldiss is the editor of three Penguin Science Fiction anthologies and author of many science fiction novels and short stories.

LEWIS: Exactly: Peter Wilkins and all that. By the way, is anyone ever going to do a translation of Kepler's *Somnium*?

AMIS: Groff Conklin told me he had read the book; I think it must exist in translation. But may we talk about the worlds you created? You chose the science fiction medium because you wanted to go to strange places? I remember with respectful and amused admiration your account of the space drive in *Out of the Silent Planet*. When Ransome and his friend get into the spaceship he says “How does this ship work?” and the man says “It operates by using some of the lesser known properties of—,” what was it?

LEWIS: Solar radiation. Ransome was reporting words without a meaning to him, which is what a layman gets when he asks for a scientific explanation. Obviously it was vague, because I'm no scientist and not interested in the purely technical side of it.

ALDISS: It's almost a quarter of a century since you wrote that first novel of the trilogy.

LEWIS: Have I been a prophet?

ALDISS: You have to a certain extent; at least, the idea of vessels propelled by solar radiation is back in favour again. Cordwainer Smith used it poetically, James Blish tried to use it technically in *The Star Dwellers*.

LEWIS: In my case it was pure mumbo-jumbo, and perhaps meant primarily to convince me.