

great columns can feel the tides of history rush past. The material civilization that Persia knew, centuries before Christ, has crumbled; but some of its splendor still shines. It is seen in the stately columns at Persepolis, the maturity of the faces carved in rock, the humility of Darius before his God. Darius did not come to power boastful and arrogant; he wrote in stone at Persepolis, "By grace of Ahuramazda may what has been accomplished by me appear supremely beautiful."

It is the splendor of a people that measures their greatness. The poets who write the saga of a nation and who tell of the dreams, the ideals, and the struggles of its people are one of the sources of that splendor. One who wants to know the staying qualities of a people—even on such a mundane issue as a foreign oil concession—must know their spirit. In Persia that means knowing the poets, especially Firdausi, Sa'adi, Hafiz; it means knowing the strength of Sufism; it means an understanding of the power of the Persian character that has brought a great people through centuries of foreign rule and foreign exploitation.

We of the West are inclined to go pell-mell and miss many of the important signposts of modern life. If we had known the Chinese poets and the literature of agrarian China, we would not have been so surprised at the power of Mao Tse-tung. If we only knew the Bhagavad-Gita and had deeper insight into the mysticism of the Hindus, we would know and understand Nehru better. If we had an understanding of the spirit of Persia such as is presented in this volume, we would not have been surprised at the overwhelming political victory of Mosaddegh in the recent elections in Persia.

Persia is the land where illiterate porters chant Firdausi as they carry

baggage to and from bazaars. Persia is the land where a bricklayer starts reciting the Shah Namah (the Epic of Kings) when he lays the first brick and continues until the house is finished. Persia is a land where the ancient splendor still shows in the musical tongue of the people and in their gracious hospitality. Persia is the land of delicate art, exquisite tastes, refined manners.

This book is mostly about the sights, only a little about the people and their problems. The author meets my friends the Ghashghais, but does not recognize them for the force they are; he crosses the Elburz Mountains, but does not know them, for he does not stop to chase wolves in them, nor climb their peaks, nor sleep in their basins; he travels the length of Persia, but he does not get to know the misery of the village life and the curse which absentee landlordism has placed on parts of the country. Yet Mr. Payne has a sensitive ear and has picked up from the hotels and restaurants of Persia the warnings of the social revolution that is on its way. He senses that feudalism is doomed in Persia and that it will be abolished, that the abolition will come not from Russia, not from the West, but from within Persia itself. Out of Persia may come not only leaders sufficient for that cause but leaders sufficient to give leadership to the world.

The practice of the Communists is to use the state to reduce men to puppets. Against that the author places "the sense of the perfect worth of every individual and all the potentialities of his creativeness." The latter is a Persian spiritual value, as well as an American one. We can use it—we and the Persians and most of the other people of the earth—to open an era of *creation* rather than to launch a program of *destruction*. We can do it if we have faith and belief in ourselves. We can do it if we have all of the patience that went into the making of one Persian tile.

This is the main theme that runs delicately through the fabric of the book. It is an important message for this age. It is the message that one brings back who knows the soul of Persia. The author came to know that soul largely through its art. He can be forgiven then for not knowing the Ghashghais, the goatherds, the porters, the Elburz, the Kurds, and the tough fiber of the Azerbaijanis. He can also be forgiven for overlooking what to me was perhaps the most exquisite sight in Persia—a small window in a side room at the Palace of Forty Columns, a window so softly blue it cast a spell and followed me in memory around the earth.

Story of a Shock

I WAS STALIN'S PRISONER. By Robert A. Vogeler with Leigh White. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 314 pp. \$3.75.

By HENRY C. WOLFE

IT is one of the ironies in Robert Vogeler's experience that in 1942 a fellow traveler on his staff in a Chicago factory denounced him to the FBI for making "anti-Russian" statements. Soviet inspectors in the factory, which turned out Lend-Lease telephones, constantly accused him of making "inferior" sets and he had once exploded: "They're making fools of us." Eight years later at a Budapest *auto-da-fé* Mr. Vogeler would be forced to "confess" that, among other crimes, he had joined the FBI in 1942 and headed "a network of fifty agents and provocateurs" in the Chicago factory.

What a tale of horror this man has to tell! His book is an American "Darkness at Noon," starker than a psychological shocker because it is truth and not fiction. Readers are by now familiar with the torture techniques which the Russians use to force "confessions" from innocent victims. "I Was Stalin's Prisoner" is, to the reviewer's knowledge, the first personal history in which an American citizen describes his reaction to those techniques. Thanks mainly to the efforts of his wife, his friends, and certain newspapers and organizations, Mr. Vogeler was released after serving seventeen months out of a sentence of fifteen years. The price: his friend "Karpe was dead, William Oatis was in prison, and the United States had been ignominiously forced to rescind its ban on private travel to Hungary, reopen Hungary's consulates in Cleveland and New York, restore Hungary's property in the American zone of Germany, and terminate the Voice of America's broadcasts from Germany to Hungary."

At the time of his arrest in November 1949, Mr. Vogeler was endeavoring, as Budapest representative of the International Standard Electric Corporation, to negotiate an agreement with the Hungarian government. Hungary, then in the final stage of sovietization, was about to confiscate the last of the foreign enterprises in its territory. As a loyal executive Mr. Vogeler wanted to save his firm, which was then the only American concern behind the Iron Curtain. After the



Robert Payne—"a perception."

Henry C. Wolfe is the author of "The Imperial Soviets," one of several books on foreign relations.

failure of the negotiations, in the course of which his business colleagues were imprisoned, Mr. Vogeler prepared to leave the country legally. At the border he was arrested by the Hungarian branch of the Soviet political police. He hoped to be charged only with sabotaging the planned economy, which would serve as excuse for expropriation of ISEC.

Only about a third of the material in this book has been published in magazine form. Mr. Vogeler's story of the Grand Guignol in which he was cast as villain is nightmarish, the more so because of his remarkable restraint. His very temperateness, in fact, makes it an unsensational sensation. Not that he was given the "water cure" or bastinadoed like Alex, the cellmate whose job it was to get Mr. Vogeler to confess. Alex, of peasant origin, was "uncultured." In the case of "cultured" prisoners, such psychological tortures were applied as would excite the imagination, break the spirit, and induce distraction and despair. Needless to say, the "cultured" American was held incommunicado, receiving neither news nor letters.

One of Mr. Vogeler's interrogators was the state prosecutor who had fabricated the case against Cardinal Mindszenty. Another inquisitor boasted: "If Mindszenty told me what I wanted him to tell me, so will you. . . . Even if Jesus Christ were sitting in your chair, He'd tell me everything I wanted Him to." During the three-day rehearsal of his mock trial, Mr. Vogeler discovered that the magistrates had to drug themselves with actedron in order to keep awake during the gruelling courtroom marathons. The Hungarian government refused to let their prisoner accept the proffered legal services of the famous American attorney, Morris L. Ernst, and cynically assigned a native stooge as "defense" lawyer.

It is the author's belief that Associated Press correspondent William Oatis is being held as his replacement in Stalin's campaign to destroy the last remnants of American prestige in the Russian-dominated area. Forcing the United States to ransom four captured American flyers was another move in the campaign. Mr. Vogeler recommends some specific measures—three, to be exact—for deterring Soviet affronts to our national honor. He speaks of the State Department without raising his voice, but you may have to watch your blood pressure just the same. He makes it all too clear that "I Was Stalin's Prisoner" constitutes a humiliating footnote to the history of our foreign policy.



Patriot, Rebel & Theorist

TITOISM AND THE COMINFORM.

By Adam B. Ulam. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 243 pp. \$4.

By LEIGH WHITE

THIS is the fifth of a series of volumes published by the Russian Research Center of Harvard University with funds provided by the Carnegie Corporation. The author, an assistant professor of government at Harvard, expresses the hope, which has certainly been fulfilled, that his book will "make a modest contribution toward the understanding of Communism in power." That it does little more than that is the fault, in my opinion, of his "scholarly" approach to a subject that simply does not lend itself to "scholarly" research. Mr. Ulam has spent three years studying the source materials on which his analysis of Titoism is exclusively based. He would have saved time and written a more valuable book, I think, if he had studied fewer source materials and spent a little time in Yugoslavia and, if possible, Poland and Russia—the three countries with which his book is principally concerned.

"It is often assumed," he writes, "that the 'real' story of Communist politics can never be learned or studied in the West, that the politics of an authoritarian regime provides suitable material for sensational exposes or queries, but never for a factual study." Never is a long time and, as one who shares the assumption that Mr. Ulam seeks to refute, I would

prefer to use "seldom" in place of "never." The fact remains, however, that his book will convince few readers that the assumption is wrong. For my part, I believe more strongly than ever, after reading Mr. Ulam's academic study, that the Russian Research Center and similar institutions will justify their existence only when their directors realize, as they have failed to realize to date, that Communism is a phenomenon that must of necessity be studied directly in the field.

This is not to say that Mr. Ulam's contribution is superfluous. In so far as Titoism can be understood from afar by a dispassionate political scientist who has never experienced life under a Communist tyranny, Mr. Ulam contributes to its understanding. But his contribution is unfortunately limited to what little knowledge can be gleaned from a judicious study of propagandistic source materials in which a very large percentage of fiction is inextricably interwoven with a very small percentage of fact.

Mr. Ulam, who writes warily and well, has done as good a job as could be expected within the limits of a "scholarly" tradition that prefers to study Titoism on the basis of what Titoists and Stalinists have said rather than on the basis of what they have actually done to the people who are victims of their ideological squabble. His errors, which are relatively few, are those so often made by persons who have never had their noses rubbed in the hideous reality of Communism in power.

A few months in Yugoslavia would have helped Mr. Ulam to understand why Tito's party still insists on merging its destiny with that of the so-called National Front. He would not have been allowed to visit Russia, in all probability, but any non-Communist veteran of Moscow could have told

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