

# Pioneers of Statecraft

By Emil Lengyel, *professor of history at Fairleigh Dickinson University, a student of Africa.*

**R**EPRESENTATIVES of "new Africa" south of the Sahara comprise the majority of the dozen-odd men whom Thomas Patrick Melady sketches briefly in "**Profiles of African Leaders**" (Macmillan, \$4.95). Some of these leaders have achieved great fame, like, for instance, Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana, and a potential Simon Bolívar of the continent. Several others have broken into headlines more recently: Leopold Senghor, who writes poetry in French besides being the President of Senegal, and Felix Houphouët-Boigny, agile politician of the Republic of Ivory Coast. Among others limned in this book are the President-Premier of Guinea, Sékou Touré, a "controversial" leader because of his flirtations with the Communist bloc; the youthful Tom Mboya, who achieved international fame before thirty and whose Kenya African National Union has just won a great election victory in an explosive area, and Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika, whose learned lectures at American colleges have made a good impression.

Dr. Melady writes as well about the leaders of the old-established countries: Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and President William V. S. Tubman of Liberia. In his profile of the "Conquering Lion of Judah, King of Kings, Elect of God," the Emperor of Ethiopia, the author features the monarch's role in international affairs and particularly his dramatic appearance before the League of Nations at the time his country was invaded by Mussolini's soldiers. Liberia's perennial President is shown in this book as a hard-working and public-spirited executive leading his country out of the darkness of the past into the light of modern times.

Lesser known African figures have also gotten their names into Dr. Melady's book, such as, for instance, the Prime Minister of Togo, Sylvanus Olympio, whose scraps with his neighbor Nkrumah have made exciting newspaper stories, and the President of the Republic of Cameroun, Ahmadou Ahidjo, whose country has been ablaze with disaffection. Due, no doubt, to the occupational hazards of writing about

current African events the Congo occupies less than a page in this book and only two sentences are devoted to the most headline-emblazoned persons on the continent: "The government of Prime Minister Lumumba was in and out of power. The role of President Kasavubu was not clear."

Surveying the scene, the author believes that the African leaders "have walked onto the world stage with poise, self-assurance and steadfast dedication to their goals." But he is not quite sure about the chances of democracy. On the contrary, he foresees that, having learned from the sad example of the French Fourth Republic, some African leaders will try to avoid the pitfalls of the multiparty system.

Dr. Melady's idea of collecting the profiles of sub-Saharan African leaders was good. However, the execution of his plan has been less successful. The Ethiopian Emperor and the Liberian President are no newcomers to the African scene. Why not write about some of the other African leaders, especially

about the colorful and dynamic Modibo Keita, Chief of State of the Republic of Mali, and the "strong man" of the Republic of the Sudan, General Ibrahim Abboud, an important man in a strategic position?

Also, the reader of this book should be on his guard against errors. There is no "City of Ifni" in the Sahara. There is a "Sidi Ifni." The Yorubas are not a "political group" in Nigeria, but an important tribe. There is no "Republic of Cameroons," but there is a Republic of Cameroun, a former French trusteeship, and there are the "Cameroons," a former British trusteeship. The author writes that the present Prime Minister of Nigeria, Alhaji Abubakar Tafewa Balewa, was given a warm welcome in the United States, and then he adds: "He noted that peoples of all races, colors and creeds live together as equal citizens all under the same Constitution, all with the same citizenship responsibilities, duties and privileges." The distinguished visitor, one might recall, saw also parts of the American South. Many of the people discussed in this book are new leaders representing new countries in an explosive setting. The opportunity presented itself to draw them plastically, and in depth, with some psychological insight. The sketches, however, are uncritical; some of them, in fact, read almost like publicity releases.

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## The Cannibals

By George Cuomo

**T**HE abandoned car was a fifty-eight Plymouth,  
With no dents, no marks, metal skin glistening.  
It remained at our curb almost a week, untouched  
Before the wandering kids began exploring,  
Jimmying a vent, opening doors, climbing  
In and out of windows, fighting for possession  
Of the driver's seat, for pilot's privileges.  
Although the cops, we knew, should have been notified,  
No one felt the direct responsibility.

Late on the tenth night, another car came up  
Without lights and stopped alongside. A man got out  
And worked quickly in the dark, then drove away,  
Still without lights. Only when he passed the lamppost  
Could we see what kind of car he drove.  
Others came, always at night, without lights,  
Almost in order, as if around the corner  
Somewhere someone stood directing them,  
Some tribal chief, some wily cabalistic god.

On the fourteenth day, a sanitation truck came  
To cart away the shell, the rest devoured, raped,  
Everything gone: battery, tires, fuel pump,  
Carburetor, cushions . . . and then the wraith-like  
Midnight rendezvous of fifty-eight Plymouths ceased.

# Democracy in Steel and Stone

***"The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History," by John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown.*** (Atlantic-Little, Brown. 508 pp. \$15), tells America's swiftly moving cultural story and relates it to architectural expression. Albert Christ-Janer is dean of the Art School at Pratt Institute.

By Albert Christ-Janer

**H**OW THE authors of this ambitious study of American culture managed to pack into it so much detailed, pertinent factual material about its art expressions is explained in the acknowledgments at the very end, long after the reader has passed the point of amazement.

To fulfill the assignment of the executive director of the American Institute of Architects in 1955 to write a centennial book on "the impact of our changing society on the profession and the resulting architecture" since the AIA was founded in 1857, MIT's Dean Burchard requested that his colleague, Professor Albert Bush-Brown, be his co-author. He also asked for assistance from some thirty qualified advisers who had "in their own work dealt with the whole of our subject or a significant part of it or with relevant historical materials in other fields." And he consulted architects from coast to coast, who arranged an educational itinerary for him as he traveled about the country inspecting various architectural monuments, thus supplementing his own considerable knowledge.

The result is this challenging book, the work of five years. Rich in material that is daringly interpreted, the volume attempts a coordinated history of the complex, wayward, yet interwoven development of our democracy with illustration of its expression in architecture and other arts. Under the demanding circumstance of justifying a formidable trust, the authors, understandably, seem consciously to be striving with the magnitude of their assignment. But, on the whole, the task is accomplished with an urbane scholarship that does not mistake pedantry for profundity.

Although only forty pages long, the prologue, entitled "The Nature of Architecture," is replete with definition

and exposition, providing an important chapter in the field of architectural theory. After examining basic qualities of building and its manifold influences, it closes in a barrage of questions concerning ultimates—values, conditions, and forms—which the authors certainly never hoped to answer. They are aware, however, that it is often more important to ask the right questions than it is to answer them.

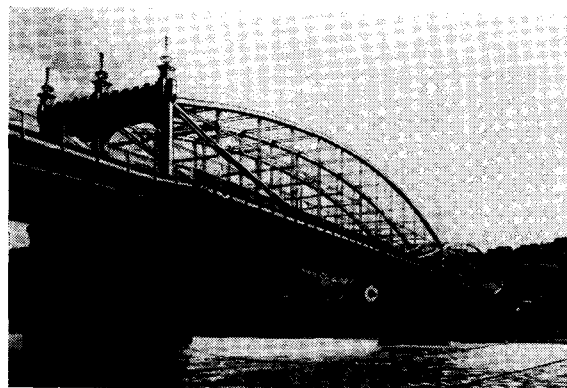
The great American architectural questions [they write] have never quite been answered. . . . They have arisen from fundamental conflicts in the American personality. They involve the struggle between the desire to be gay, hedonistic, expansive, even extravagant, and the restraints imposed by caution, frugality and the sense that in the worship of beauty there may be sin; between the instinct to wipe out the past and the nostalgia to preserve it; between the notion that cultivated taste does deserve to be heeded and the egalitarian idea that the people can judge as wisely in the arts as they are presumed to be able to do in politics; between a love for

the machine and a fear of it; between the admiration for the expert and a distrust of him; between the sense that man must conquer nature and alter it to his will and the reverence that argues rather that man should accommodate himself to nature.

Before there were any questions there was the land. This land, seen by the discerning eyes of discovery, seen by the early voyagers and travelers who set out to cross its vastness, is described in the words of the first explorers who set down their impressions on paper. A continuing flow of voices urged how it should be used, what should be built upon it, and how what was built should look. What was built by the literate looked like what was said; what was said was mostly so much nonsense.

The varied answers that builders offered during the decades from 1860 to 1933 are reviewed: the practical and the esthetic, the mundane and the spiritual, the simple and the monumental, the staid and the adventure-some, the intimate and the impressive, the cheap and the permanent. A variform mess, served up by the most ignorant of carpenters and by muddled followers of John Ruskin, covered this land from Maine to California. By the time FDR took over, the wildest eclecticism had malformed city and village.

The stirring years since 1938 have not been better recollected since Fred-



Smithfield Street Bridge, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



Grand Central Terminal, New York

Reproduced here from "American Building Art," by Carl Condit (Oxford, \$12.50), are three examples of metropolitan architecture. Below is the Empire Building in lower New York in the process of construction.

