

Solovyovs' ancient, dilapidated bus is rattling through the poverty-stricken, icy Lithuanian countryside. Ivan is impatient to get to Finland; sensing that war is inevitable, he wants to be on hand when the Finns, who defeated the Russians once before, again force them to their knees. Leningrad, Solovyov keeps saying, must be liberated from the Red Satan. Unfortunately, by the time the family reaches the Gulf of Finland, it is already frozen solid. They change their plans and go to Germany.

In the Nazi Reich the inevitable conflict between parents and children begins to undermine the family's entity. Although Solovyov refuses to ally himself with Hitler's brand of anti-Communism, most of his sons and daughters fall for the cheap glamour of swastika-adorned uniforms and slogans. A beaten Solovyov flees to Sweden to end his days in a wintry Gothic nightmare.

In this, his first novel, Andrew Fetler, a native of Latvia who teaches at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, carries on well the tradition of Turgenev and Goncharov, creators of the so-called "superfluous men." Who is this Russian Elmer Gantry if not a superfluous man?

I wish, though, that the author had been a bit more careful with detail. Anna could not have left the *lycée* since a *lycée* in old Russia was exclusively a boys' school, something on the order of the British public school. And I doubt that the czar's government ever accused anyone of being "a lackey of British imperialism"; the Soviet government does that. These, however, are minor errors in a well-written, interesting book. Mr. Fetler has talent that bears watching.

No-Woman at the Bar: It is hard to imagine why the late Roger Vailland, author of *The Law*, chose to write such a trite travesty on chastity as *The Trout* (translated by Peter Wiles, Dutton, \$4.50). On the assumption that the only possible interest a man can take in a woman is carnal, he attempts to show that a female who does not yield is a cheat of the most formidable nature because, being in full possession of her physical person, she is also in total control of her will, which she can employ as a powerful weapon to seek and protect her personal interests. This could have been the focus of a compelling tale but, unfortunately, the hypothesis is never proved.

The author makes an issue of the fact that he rejects the psychological novel. No analysis, he warns, only behavior will provide the clues and clarifications of character. He admits to having found his theme in *La Cousine Bette*, by Balzac, whom he dismisses as a mediocre philosopher. But in lieu of psychology Vailland offers neither philosophy nor poetry, only a rather knowledgeable ac-

count of the shady side of the international business arena, which serves as a background to the activities of his characters.

M. Vailland has an interesting way of bringing his people together and, as a lawyer at the bar, using their verbal testimonies to reconstruct their lives. The data thus gathered enlarges the surface of the novel but gives absolutely no depth. When we seek insight into personality we draw a blank; there is not a vestige of desire or emotion in any of his characters, and we have only the author's word that they are shrewd operators and intelligent beings. By the end of the book all we know of the twenty-three-year-old heroine is that she has a clear brow and an intact body. She has met all the other characters by pure coincidence, and there is no mo-

tivation for any of the relationships that are said to have occurred.

If there were satire at the bottom of these insipid encounters they might have added up to a Lolita-type novel; but Vailland brings to his brittle account of the mores of the times neither the broad dimensions nor the humorous tolerance of the satirist. He has added one more no-woman to the ever-increasing array of unbelievable heroines in contemporary fiction. Smart-sounding passages about the modern business world and the impermanence of sexual combinations are no justification for labeling this first-person commentary a novel; every character sounds unreal, but not enough so to step out of reality into the sphere of poetic truth. And where there is no truth there is no reading pleasure.

—ANNA BALAKIAN.

Marx, the Many, and the Mentors

Socialist Humanism: An International Symposium, edited by Erich Fromm (Doubleday. 420 pp. \$5.95), leans heavily on Eastern European contributors in its attempt to put Marx into proper perspective. Harvey Cox is associate professor of Church and Society at Harvard University. The author of "The Secular City," Dr. Cox has recently lectured in East Berlin and Prague.

By HARVEY COX

SOcialism and Humanism: It is hard to imagine two words more blunted into imprecision by years of cant and rhetoric. Yet Erich Fromm has dared to put them together in the title of a symposium whose publication by its very nature is something of an intellectual event, quite apart from the content of the essays. At the very moment when in the name of "humanity" we are at war with people identified as "Communists" in Vietnam, there appears a book which unabashedly refers to the founder of Communism as a humanist, and roundly denounces those who use him in any other way. This will come as a surprise to many Americans since the Socialist intellectual tradition has not made a really serious contribution to our cultural life for some time. Indeed, in this book the indefatigable Norman Thomas is the only native-born American the editor can unearth to speak for us. The other Americans—Herbert Marcuse, Paul Medow, and Fromm himself—have brought their Socialism here from

abroad. There are few followers of Eugene Debs in American philosophy today. Debs was no egghead, but the failure of American Socialism to develop a strong philosophical tradition has probably impoverished us all. This collection of essays, some very good, some mediocre, reminds us that our philosophy, like much of our cultural life, is quite provincial. The contributors give us a glimpse of a vigorous and living philosophical perspective which is Socialist and is humanistic and is well worth our attention.

A good many of the contributors to *Socialist Humanism* come from Eastern Europe and especially from Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. There are no contributors from East Germany or the USSR. Albania is also missing, which is hardly a surprise. Most of the thirty-six papers fall into one of two categories. They are either (1) clarifications of what Marx really said—or did *not* say, since there is hardly a thinker in history who has been more frequently misunderstood and misinterpreted—or (2) descriptions of what Socialist Humanism must do *now*. Some of the papers embark on constructive new work, but not many.

Clearing Marx from the horrendous misuse to which he has been put by advocates and antagonists alike is a herculean task. But in undertaking it few of the contributors have resorted to the dangerous if all too common practice of using the young "humanistic" Marx of the more recently published *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* to bludgeon the older Marx of *Capital*. Most see, correctly I think, a continuity

between these two phases. Furthermore, the contributors are refreshingly willing to differ with Marxism or to "correct" him when the occasion requires it. Many suggest that Marx must be revised in the light of things that have been written since he died. Their candidates for the sources of these adjustments reveal a lot about the diversity of the contributors themselves. Thus Eugene Kamenka, whose essay, "Crisis in Socialist Ethics," is one of the best in the collection, believes we should read Marx today in the light of Ferdinand Tönnies, whose work on *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, Kamenka believes, really describes the task Socialism must accomplish today. Some of the Eastern Europeans favor Max Scheler, whose book *Man's Place in the Cosmos* adds a phenomenological dimension to Marx's analysis. Fromm himself, of course, holds that Marx must be supplemented by Freud, while Lucien Goldmann's candidates include Beckett and Robbe-Grillet.

The collection is divided into five sections: on humanism, man, freedom, alienation, and practice. The section on alienation is perhaps the weakest; it includes only three articles. In the first, Predrag Vranicki of the University of Zagreb argues energetically that alienation is an issue for Socialism, a point which would seem to require little de-

fense. Oskar Schatz and Ernst Winter collaborate on a Christian critique on the Marxist idea of alienation, and Mathilde Niel issues the kind of indictment of technology we have become accustomed to from both Left and Right among French intellectuals ("... to speak frankly: machinery and technology have a natural tendency to enslave man...").

The first three sections are heavily weighted with Europeans, especially Eastern Europeans. They write on "Humanism and Dialectic" (Mihailo Markovic of Belgrade), "Marxism and the Existential Problems of Man" (Milan Prucha of Prague) and "Freedom and Polydeterminism in Cultural Criticism" (Rudi Supek of Zagreb) to mention a few of the most provocative pieces. There are a couple exceptions to the *Mitteleuropa* flavor. Nirmal Kumar Bose, a Bengali anthropologist, contributes a fascinating study of Gandhi as a Socialist and humanist. Léopold Senghor, president of the Republic of Senegal and the lone African voice in the book, is, like the other three or four active politicians participating, somewhat outweighed by the theoreticians making up most of the book's authorship. Still, the thoughtfulness, lack of stridency, and unhurried excellence of many of the Eastern European contributions will operate as a valuable correction to an American philosophical scene in which next to nothing is known about the present philosophy of that area of the world.

In clear contrast to the first three sections of the book, the final one includes no Eastern Europeans at all. Perhaps they have little to say about "practice." Here the British and the Italians come to the fore. There is a closely reasoned essay on welfare by Richard Titmuss of the University of London and an article by Danilo Dolci, the Sicilian reformer, in which he calls for a kind of Socialist planning that will insure the involvement of ordinary people in decision-making. In his demand for "intermediate groups," tying the individual to national policy formation, Dolci sounds very much like the community organization enthusiasts now at work in American urban ghettos. The book closes with the widely discussed American document *The Triple Revolution*, which deals with the social implications of the revolutions of weaponry, race, and cybernation now sweeping our land.

Socialist Humanism certainly banishes any lingering ideas a Western reader might have about a "monolithic" Socialism. In fact, reading this book might prompt one to ask whether things have not gone a bit too far the other way. If Socialist thought begins to merge imperceptively with various kinds of social existentialism, participatory democracy, democratic reformism, and phenomenology, it will become progressively less

useful to refer to it as "Socialist." But explorations along the borders of these other traditions must go on. As the writers represented in this book know all too well, a Marxist humanism which lives by exegesis and polemics will soon wither. Socialist thinkers will surely benefit if they continue to explore that tradition of humanist values which fed Marx himself and to which he made such a valuable contribution. They will also benefit if they cope with sciences that emerged after Marx's death. As they do so, however, they may find that Marx himself will become *one* of the thinkers, albeit a crucial one, in the development of a characteristicall twentieth-century humanism whose roots nonetheless reach back into the Greek and Hebrew well-springs of our culture. Marx will become more useful the more he is demythologized.

The lack of any Chinese contribution to this volume reminds us that even after Marx and his European followers have been welcomed back into the Western intellectual forum, there is still much work to be done before the real breaches in our world are healed.

SR's Check List of the Week's New Books

Business, Economics

THE BIG BOARD: A History of the New York Stock Market. By Robert Sobel. Free Press. \$7.95.

INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF MANAGEMENT. Edited by Dr. Karl E. Ettinger. McGraw-Hill. \$19.75.

MONETARY REFORM FOR THE WORLD'S ECONOMY. By Robert V. Roosa. Harper & Row. \$3.95.

Crime, Suspense

AIRS ABOVE THE GROUND. By Mary Stewart. Morrow. \$4.95.

THE CONCRETE KIMONO. By John Paddy Carstairs. Walker. \$3.50.

THE EXPENDABLE SPY. By Jack D. Hunter. Dutton. \$4.95.

R.S.V.P. MURDER. By Mignon G. Eberhart. Random House. \$3.95.

SQUIRE OF DEATH. By Richard Lockridge. Lippincott. \$3.95.

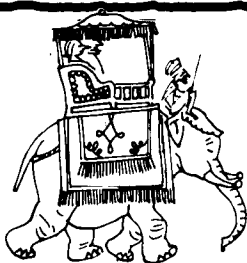
THE STORY-TELLER. By Patricia Highsmith. Doubleday. \$3.95.

WHEN LONDON WALKED IN TERROR. By Tom A. Cullen. Houghton Mifflin. \$4.95.

Current Affairs

A CITY DESTROYING ITSELF: An Angry View of New York. By Richard J. Whalen. Morrow. Hardbound, \$3.50. Paperback, 95¢.

DISCRIMINATION AND THE LAW. By Vern Countryman. Univ. of Chicago Press. \$5.



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