REPRESENTATION OF WAR IN CONTINENTAL DRAMA SINCE 1914

by

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TO MY MOTHER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this work is to point out in European post-War drama, the attitude towards war, which developed after the World War and pervaded post-War thought until the present day.

Prior to the Great War, battle was looked upon as a noble enterprise to be undertaken for glory and gain. Death met at the hands of the enemy was considered a heroic and fitting end to chivalrous deeds. Sympathy for the opponent was sternly and righteously repressed. Whatever tragedy followed in the wake of war was accepted as a national or individual burden, rather than an international or spiritual one.

No such attitude followed the World War. The introduction of scientific machines of destruction rendered the first World War more horrible in loss of human life, economic and emotional security, than any previous one. Not a section here and there, but an entire world had gone mad, and after the wreckage had been cleared away, mankind could not proceed without the unsteady nerves which follow an emotional crisis. The resulting disillusion precipitated an over-turning of all values, never heretofore so frankly acknowledged.

Even when the world had regained its poise once more, the ground upon which it had stood was a changed soil, upon

which a new life must be planted. The present generation has felt the pulse of this life.

A critical examination of war-plays will yield, therefore, a summary of the various phases of life that were affected by this change; and the response elicited, country by country, will be found to be either a negative denial of the possibility of social betterment, or a positive anticipation of progress through an alteration in man's spiritual or institutional progress.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Four different trends of thought can be detected in the current of world-affairs from the year 1914 to the year 1929. It is not strange that such a shattering event as a world-war induced so many rapidly alternating philosophies or semi-philosophies. There is a great leap from justification of war in the name of self-defense and self-rights, to the outlawry of it in the same names. The intervening steps will be pointed out in the following analysis of these phases, which are being set forth in order that a more complete understanding of the sources and ideology of European drama, the spirit of the age in relation to one of its resultant products, may be had.

The four trends will be called (1) The Period of Disillusion (2) The Period of Hysterical Revolt (3) The Period of Prosperity (4) The Period of Depression, or Revolt Against Revolt.[1]

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[1] Compare to Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes' discussion of the post-War period:

> The period since the World War, from the standpoint of international relations, falls into three fairly well-defined periods. First came the exuberance of victory and the Armistice terms . . . There was joy in the thought that the era of destruction, death, and

Concerning the first of these arbitrary divisions, there is little to say. It was that period that covered, roughly, the years 1914 to 1919. It was not so much a domestic philosophy, as a battle-field philosophy. In fact,

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sorrow was over. People still took seriously the Entente idealism of the war period . . . This period . . . was brought to an end by the realities of the postwar treaties . . . A vindictive peace treaty was drawn up . . . This launched the Versailles epoch, which lasted from 1919 to 1931.

The new facts discovered regarding the responsibility for the World War . . . the financial dead weight of reparation payments, the world-wide depression that was directly connected with postwar international finance--all these conspired to undermine the Versailles system . . . The Epoch of Revision lay at hand. Hitlerism threatened to make it a violent process. The History of Western Civilization, II, 606-607.

and to James T. Adams':

President Wilson, after diplomatic relations with Germany had been severed [he cites], spoke idealistically about the "rights of mankind," stating the United States' altruistic attitude towards the War:

"We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war . . . We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind . . . But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things we have always carried nearest our hearts --for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free . . ." The Epic of America, p. 381.

the "loved ones at home" were the contradiction of it: while the non-enlisters kept the homefires burning, they kept the ideal of a world-being-made-safe-for-democracy before them; they wept and prayed for the noble heroes who were sacrificing themselves in a holy cause, and righteously cursed the Hun or the Poilu or the bloody British. The traditional attitude towards war--regarding it as a chivalrous venture undertaken in the name of all that is worthy and sacred--prevailed at home and among the Central Powers. The two chief tenets were (1) we are right, and therefore shall, must conquer (2) the enemy is wrong, and therefore shall, must lose. All took care to keep intact this willing state of belief; any other attitude would have been traitorous to those who were giving up their lives.[2]

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[2] Says Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes concerning this attitude:

> We now know that practically the entire body of Entente "war aims," including even the impressive and eloquent rhetoric of President Wilson, was for the most part false and misleading, setting up a verbal barrage behind which were hidden the most sordid and selfish plans of unscrupulous diplomats, foreign ministers, and international bankers . . . The German war lies gained little foothold among us. If we can but understand how totally and miserably we were "taken in" between 1914 and 1918 by the salesmen of "this most holy and idealistic world conflict," we shall be the better prepared to be on our guard against the lies and deceptions which, it may be expected, will be put forward by similar groups when urging the necessity of another world war in order to "protect the weak nations," "crush militarism," "make the world safe for democracy," "put an end to all further

Possibly this attitude of pent-up, rigidly-directed emotion was a fallow field for the next era of hysterical revolt.

In the front-line trenches it was not so easy to wrap the mind in cotton-wool. The opposite of sublimation took place; emotions were stripped to their barest, most fundamental form. What was degrading was recognized as such, and soon the majority of those who had shortly before set forth to war in traditional egoistic, manly spirit were ready to

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wars," and the like. The History of Western Civilization, p. 606.

The sentimentalism that led America, alone, to take up arms James Truslow Adams points out:

> Perhaps the most widely held [prejudice] was the purely sentimental affection for France due to the legend of the sister Republic in Europe, the State that had helped us gain our independence . . . So strong had these emotional appeals been that no action of France subsequently, however hostile, had succeeded in changing them . . .
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> As the war got under way we were deluged with propaganda, much of which was designed to appeal to the base emotions rather than the intellect, and much of which has subsequently turned out to have been deliberately false.
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> The invasion of Belgium was distinctly a crime against international law . . . Belgium was unquestionably suffering from a crime against law, but we had not been signatories of the treaty guaranteeing her neutrality, and there was no reason why we should be expected to act as policeman for the globe. The Epic of America, pp. 369-371.

admit that both national and individual tradition, egotism, and manliness were not worth the price being paid for them. There was a sad clash of the two points of view when those who returned found themselves addressed as heroes, learned that they had saved the world from some monstrous evil, that --theoretically, at any rate--nothing was too good for them; all this, when inwardly they had rejected praise and blame as of no value.[3]

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[3] Of the altered attitude towards war-guilt Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes says:

> In estimating the order of guilt of the various countries we may safely say that the direct and immediate responsibility for the World War falls upon Serbia, France, and Russia,--with the guilt about equally distributed. Next in order--far below France and Russia--would come Austria, though it never desired a general European war. Finally, we should place England and Germany, in the order named, both being opposed to war in the 1914 crisis. Probably the German public was somewhat more favorable to military activities than the English people, but . . . the Kaiser made more strenuous efforts to preserve the peace of Europe in 1914 than did Sir Edward Grey. . . . It has been declared futile, illogical, and impermissible to try to arrange the European Powers in any rank or order of guilt, on the ground that they were all involved in the morass of diplomatic squabbles and intrigues of law . . . Another good way of stating the ultimate conclusions about the crisis of 1914 would be to say that only Russia, Serbia, and France wished a general European war, under the conditions that existed in the summer of 1914; that Austria-Hungary wished a local punitive war against Serbia, but desired to avert, if possible, a general war; and that Germany, England, and Italy did not wish any kind of war, but were too stupid, dilatory, or involved in entanglements to prevent either the Austro-Serbian war or the wider conflict. . . . Some writers whose accounts of prewar diplomacy do not differ

In the interim between this period and the next one, the strange mixture of victorious patriotism and victorious disillusion gave way to a temporary magnanimity, especially on the part of the victorious Allies.[4] They considered themselves ready to conclude a fair treaty with all; they were anxious to settle down to peace, to re-assimilate the returned male population, to build up again internal industries, which suffered so much during the war years. In the era of hysteria and later, this domestic bubble of idealism, which was roughly altruistic, gave way to intense

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materially . . . have nevertheless maintained that no important responsible statesman wanted war in 1914. Upon examining their position, it turns out that they mean that nobody wanted war for war's sake alone--or wanted war in the abstract. We might go even further than such historians and concede that nobody in 1914 wanted war if he could get what he wanted without war. Probably Alexander Izvolsky can be charged with more responsibility for the World War than any other single person. Yet we have already made it clear that even Izvolsky accepted war only as a last resort in his campaign to get the Straits. . . . It is probably that only a handful of half-wits, neurotics, ultra-militarists, and the like wanted war in 1914 in preference to securing national ambitions by pacific means. . . . . It is to be explained simply by the fact that Germany was gaining its ends, selfish ends if you wish, very well indeed by peaceful means, and its statesmen knew that war might place German progress in grave jeopardy. The History of Western Civilization, II, 592-593.

[4] Frederick Lewis Allen, Only Yesterday, p. 18.

nationalism and gross materialism, in proportion as the economic effects of the War were realized.[5]

The Period of Hysterical Revolt set in, paradoxically, after the adjustment to peace had been made. A sudden apathy was felt, both by patriots and the disillusioned. The former gradually realized that flag-waving was no guarantee of national security; the latter, that security--whether it be national or personal--was guaranteed nowhere. A widespread neurosis followed; a widespread search, that began by upsetting all traditional moral codes, that was indicative of minds now long used to bitter, brutal, immediate extinction of things they hated.[6] This attitude absorbed the former, and the reaction was in full sway. Flag-worship ceased, and all were thoroughly convinced that their respective nations had gone into the War only to save their own skins. Cynically, to carry out the idea, each one tried to bring home all the spoils he could.[7] The compulsion for

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[5] Allen, op. cit., pp. 22, 23, 48.

[6] Ibid., p. 17.

[7] Ibid., p. 24. Comparing the pre-War attitude of America and the post-War, James Truslow Adams, in the Epic of America, states:

> When the news of our decision [to enter the War] reached England, a day of solemn thanksgiving was proclaimed, and the King and Queen took part in a service at St. Paul's Cathedral to give thanks "to Almighty God on the occasion of the entry of the United States

unity was forgotten; public spirit was at a low ebb; demands for new labor conditions were shouted; radicalism in economics, ethics, and art spread. There was much talk of

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of America into the great war of freedom." . . . The Allies were jubilant . . . (P. 362.)

With the sudden release of the Armistice, almost anything seemed possible, even to the opening of the heavens and the vision of the new Jerusalem . . . [but] the air of the world, our own included, was tainted with strange new unhappinesses, mistrusts, dislikes, and fears . . . The lofty idealism of Wilson's various statements as to war aims and the nature of a peace which should usher in a happier era, and if possible banish war, had seemed to make the dream hover over Europe as well as America. The psychological atmosphere was abnormal everywhere. Nerves had been strung to the breaking point by four years of the intensest strain that civilized mankind had ever been called upon to bear.

. . . . . .

In the atmosphere of Realpolitik at the Conference, the race became more and more one for spoils, revenge, security.

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Of the struggle between the old diplomacy and new idealism Professor Schevill remarks:

7 No sooner had the Paris conference opened its doors than it became apparent that the peace . . . would meet with resistance. Its most formidable opponent was the general war psychosis . . . encountered at its frenzied peak . . . Something akin to a hunger for raw meat came over the victors and prompted them to discard the Fourteen Points as idealistic and premature. At best the plenipotentiaries of the triumphant states, under the influence of the Paris atmosphere, gave them a hollow lip-service. Almost unanimously they declared themselves in favor of the political realism which had always ruled the relations of European states, and consequently, in favor of the imperialist designs which were the very root of the war. A History of Europe, p. 741.

freedom, and a feverish pursuit of it. A new war was on, with the war-philosophy, "be merry today for tomorrow we die," appropriately the battle-cry. The "hardboiled" younger generation rejected all values, blaming the chaos of the world upon the older, who, living by them, had brought the world to its present state. Sigmund Freud, who had published his first book at the close of the nineteenth century, at the close of the War became gospel. As Mr. Allen states, "Almost every human motive was attributable to it [i.e., sex]: if you were patriotic or liked the violin, you were in the grip of sex--in a sublimated form."[8] Through the agencies of radio--now coming to the fore, and the sensationalism--almost looseness--of speech and the press, this new biological plaything became important enough to shake the foundations of some of the most solid institutions of the day.

I

In Russia the social upheaval was tremendous, rooted in post-War conditions; and, as in Germany, the reverberations could be strongly felt in the fields of morals and art. Russia was ill-prepared for war: her Nicholas II was a weak ruler, influenced through his wife by the notorious Rasputin.[9] The peasantry was half-starved and mutinous.

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[8] Allen, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

[9] Walter Consuelo Langsam, The World Since 1914, pp. 592-593.

The two revolutions of 1917 did not strengthen internal unity.[10] Peace was craved in order that eyes might be turned inward. The period 1917 to 1921, the idealistic reign of Pure Communism, corresponds to the transitory, patriotic phase of unhealthy enthusiasm that France, England, and the United States enjoyed immediately after the War. The church was shorn of its wealth and power, religion being considered "the opiate of the people"; the clergy was deprived of duties pertaining to marriage, birth, and death; and "'godless societies' soon sprouted in profusion."[11]

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[10] Of Russia's role in the world conflict Professor Schevill explains that:

> . . . the Russians threatened the forts of Cracow in western Galicia and extended an indirect menace to Vienna itself. Thus matters stood throughout the first winter of the war till May, 1915. Then the Austrians, combining with the Germans, engaged in a vast offensive which pushed back the Russians at every point along the extensive battle-front and ended in their complete defeat. Not only did the central powers now drive far into Russia but they succeeded in so severely crippling the Russian equipment by the destruction and capture of war material that the great Slav empire began to show signs of approaching exhaustion . . . thereafter the army showed little fight, partly through deepening discouragement and partly because of the civil break-up behind the battle-line . . . The war had in the first instance led to a great outburst of patriotism and unified Russia as it unified, through the same patriotic sentiment, every other fighting country. But the old social and political discontent continued to stir uneasily under the surface; and when the Russian defeats followed in rapid succession, the angered public laid the blame on the well-known incompetence and corruption of the tsarist regime. A History of Europe, p. 728.

[11] Langsam, op. cit., pp. 619-620; 645.

Marriage and divorce were made easy; the state undertook to care for illegitimate children; and private schools were abolished. Women were placed on a basis of equality with men; while family ties, once a pillar of capitalistic society, were loosened.[12]

In 1921 the "New Economic Policy" (NEP) was adopted. This marks the transition from the period of intense enthusiasm to the second period of the four. In this period it was realized that economic health is as essential to a non-capitalistic country as to a capitalistic one.[13] Certain retractions were made: "We are unable to retain all the positions we have taken . . ." Communism would be upheld only "as much . . . as the exigencies of the situation . . . permit, and no more."[14]

Yet, the persecutions of the intelligentsia and professional classes continued, in spite of the serious cultural losses and the failure to abolish illiteracy uniformly throughout the Union, and in spite of the destructive effect of strict direction and curbing of creative effort. Nevertheless, some outstanding personalities in literature, art, and science were produced.[15]

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[12] Langsam, op. cit., p. 645.

[13] Ibid., p. 623.

[14] Ibid., pp. 623-624.

[15] Ibid., pp. 642-644.

II

Italy was the only country, besides Russia, which experienced a complete change of government after the War. Personal interests impelled her to enter the War on the side of the Allies. As Professor Langsam states:

> . . . there were many who, for material or emotional reasons, favored intervention. These groups, in the name of a "sacred egoism," finally brought about Italy's entry . . . in return for the offer of strongly coveted territories . . . virtual control of the Adriatic and an extension of her African empire.[16]

Sacred egoism did not, however, prevent post-War unemployment, the loss of foreign markets, and the profiteering of war-sharks. Gradually, after inflation and other budget troubles, socialism gained its foothold over the weak

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[16] Ibid., p. 369. James T. Adams rationalizes the war on this strictly socio-economic basis:

> . . . but just as in our own daily lives there are the immediate motives for what we do and the whole background of our life and character which also determine our conduct, so there were both the immediate and the underlying causes for the debacle of civilization in Europe. In much the same fashion as the American capitalists did not have the mentality requisite for adjusting economic conditions to the legitimate demands of the smaller but ambitious men, so the imperialistic nations who had all the power of overseas possessions they wanted had failed to realize that the responsibility was in part theirs to devise some adjustment of the world situation . . . The old always think the young too aggressive. The rich think the rising poor too excessive in their demands. Those who hold power yield only reluctantly a share of it to others. The situations are as old as human nature. The Epic of America, pp. 374-375.

regime.[17] Here, as in France, the revolt was predominantly economic. Professor Ferdinand Schevill makes Italy's position clear:

> One of the difficulties Italy has not mastered springs from over-population and its attendant evil, emigration. . . . expanding industry was not able to absorb all of the human increase . . . To make the situation worse, agriculture, the only important occupation of the region south of Rome, entered upon a grave crisis in the eighties . . . another factor entered into the situation. Some of the landlords, turning to the newer capitalist methods of production, introduced machinery and consequently employed fewer men. What could the increasing army of the unemployed do but emigrate? . . . In the decade and a half before the World War a half million Italians were, on the average, annually abandoning their native land.
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> Somewhat sobered [by its failure to conquer Abyssinia in 1896], the country refused for a while to sanction further colonial ventures. Without abandoning the Triple alliance the government resolved to reestablish good relations with France, and in 1902 signed a secret agreement pledging itself not to take part in a war of aggression against the republic . . . Italy clung to this association to the very eve of the World War, thereby illustrating the shifty practices, which under the increasing imperialist competition of the period characterized not only her but, in varying measure, every other European power. . . . . However, the war was not seriously waged by this enfeebled state, which, before many months had passed, recognized that it must come to terms with the aggressor. . . . None the less the Tripoli venture was enthusiastically endorsed by the Italian people. . . . This signified the revival of irredentism. It was systematically fanned into flame by its nationalist supporters and largely determined the attitude of both the government and the people of Italy at the outbreak of the World War.[18]

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[17] Langsam, op. cit., p. 371.

[18] A History of Europe, pp. 602-607.

III

In Germany, the internal dissension that wracked her before and during the War broke out afresh in socialistic movements. Equality of women, popular election of the ruler, and abolition of the church were its keynotes. And of course there was the reaction against the Versailles Treaty, which did nothing to help the horrifying financial conditions.[19] While the French revolt was directed towards the rejection and acceptance of certain economic philosophies, and was therefore of a more or less material nature, the German was widespread enough to embody reactions in the last two fields mentioned, ethics and art. The republicans

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[19] Langsam, op. cit., pp. 438-455. Germany's motives were also economic and political, Professor Schevill points out:

> In connection with her powerful army and navy and her expanding commerce and industry, her colonies had the effect of pushing Germany into the imperialist game . . . Under Bismarck, a statesman rooted in the realities immediately surrounding him, foreign policy was determined almost exclusively with reference to the hereditary enmity with France. When the restless and ambitious William II persuaded himself to disregard the enmity with France and, pursuing imperialist designs, plunged into world politics, he blazed a path which became decisive for German destiny. By reaching beyond Europe William antagonized Russia and Great Britain and drove them into the arms of France. . . . This was the precarious situation in which Germany found herself at the outbreak of the World War and for which, in large measure at least, she had the Kaiser to thank. A History of Europe, p. 626.

blamed the monarchists for their acceptance of the "Versailles Dictate"; the youth protest was levelled against the "blind stupidity" of their elders and against the mechanized order that threatened the burial of the individual in a mass culture. The church was repudiated as an outworn form. The younger generation took refuge in the metaphysics of futility and expressionism.[20] In spite of all this, there was a wholesome note that is curious and interesting to point out in contrast to the American attitude of promiscuous sexuality, all-night parties, and jazz bands. What the children of conquered Germany wanted, as an outlet for restless energy, was to return to the "free, simple life of the ancient Germans, that was the cure for despondency and national lethargy. Gymnastics, forest air, sunshine, song, these were needed to revive faith and hope."[21] Sometimes, of course, this freedom was confused with license; and the identification of youth groups with political or class groups caused the strife that is recognizable today in Nazi Germany.

IV

France emerged from the War with more economic stability than most of the other nations; she had growing industries,

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[20] Langsam, op. cit., p. 459.

[21] Ibid., p. 460.

yet her laborers were starving, and her government in the hands of radicals. What she had she wished to preserve through the Versailles Treaty.[22] She feared, and, apparently, expected another invasion, so security and disarmament of Germany were her demands.[23]

To sum up: The trend of thought that concurred with the last years of the war and the period immediately succeeding it, till the year 1921, approximately, was characterized by a release from all traditional taboos, a loss of all formal values, a neurotic, unhappy escape into "freedom,"

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[22] States Professor Ferdinand Schevill, A History of Europe, p. 616:

> The foreign policy of France between 1870 and 1914 was determined first, by her position in Europe, and second, by her colonial ambitions. As her traditional primacy on the continent had been overthrown by the victory over her by Germany, her wounded pride filled her with an unwavering antagonism toward her eastern neighbor . . . This diplomatic development . . . is briefly mentioned here to bring out the fact that France, like all the other powers, was moved in her foreign policy by two master-influences, distinct and yet related. These were nationalism and imperialism. Nationalism prompted her more particularly to set about restoring her position in Europe as against Germany; imperialism with its search for markets and colonies moved her to enlarge her control of sparsely settled and backward areas with all the energy at her command.

[23] Langsam, op. cit., pp. 204; 347.

and a materialistic philosophy of immediate power and pleasure.[24] This wave of sentiment was reflected in all

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[24] James Truslow Adams, The Epic of America, states:

> The sudden end of the war had left us, so to say, emotionally unsatisfied, whereas it had found Europe emotionally exhausted. . . . Abnormality was bound to ensue from this extraordinary situation in mass psychology. (Pp. 386-391.)
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> Some of the Great Powers adhered to our so-called Kellogg Pact to "outlaw war," though it is somewhat difficult to discern just what may have been gained by that idealistic gesture. (P. 397.)
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> Long ago we noted the beginning of the confusion . . . between business and virtue. That confusion by 1930 had gone full circle. By then it had become complete. If what was economically right was also morally right, we could surrender our souls to professors of economics and captains of industry.
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> But, having surrendered idealism for the sake of prosperity, the "practical men" bankrupted . . . both of them. We had forgotten, though no post-war leader dared to remind us of the fact, that it is impractical to be only "practical." Without a vision the people perish. The waste of war is always spiritual as well as material, and post-war decades are ever periods in which the fires of noble aims flicker but feebly. By 1930 our post-war decade and our post-war prosperity were over. (P. 400.)

Again of this period James Truslow Adams says:

> For Europe the war was an economic debacle; for us it was a moral calamity . . . Not only did most of the old problems arise again in aggravated form, but science, by completely changing the nature of war, had provided innumerable new complications without providing any solution for them. The Epic of America, p. 376.

products of the age: economic systems, social and individual mores, and the creative forms of culture.

The Periods of Prosperity, and Depression will now be discussed. They mark a turning point in thought, which is not evident at first, because periods divided arbitrarily naturally flow one into the other without sharp demarcation. Just when religious skepticism, scorn for legislation, scorn for a majority of any sort, scorn for all bourgeois respectability wore itself out; and the psychological climate abandoned the theme of futility to adopt a more optimistic philosophy, cannot be stated in a word. But there were two definite phases that were passed through. The first of these, to group them under the titles given, was really only a more positive, constructive continuation of the era of revolt, containing some measure of the enthusiasm preceding that era. The suggestion of wholesome exuberance is intended: the intellectuals of the age, especially, could not be long contented with a total absence of values. The search was soon on for others to replace the fallen ones. Born as they were from disillusion and materialism, these thinkers thrived under the laws most favorable to them. The only log left afloat was science. Implicitly they clung to it. But this was not enough; it only resulted in fresh disillusion; "love was becoming too easy and too biological to be an

object of respect," as Mr. Allen states.[25] The rejection of religion, they found, need not entail the rejection of spirituality in its more secular aspects. A great hue and cry was roused over humanism, which was not, however, without its comic aspects, since the degree to which it was acceptable could not be universally agreed upon.[26] The significance of this interest, though, indicated a renewed interest in life as a worthwhile adventure, even while desperate attempts were still being made to clutch at peace. Ultimately, they found that their basic assumption was faulty. Freedom, indeed; but, freedom for what?[27] The mania that rampaged until 1929 raged itself out. It would have done so sooner or later anyway, but the economic crisis of that year was responsible for the occurrence of its death just at this time, though two years before, some signs of abatement had appeared.[28]

The Period of Depression will not be discussed in its economic aspects here: it will be sufficient to conclude this survey of background with the philosophical phenomena which followed it. The Post-War Decade was definitely at

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[25] Allen, op. cit., p. 239.

[26] Ibid., p. 244.

[27] Ibid., p. 239.

[28] Ibid., p. 243.

an end in the year 1930: the rest may be designated aftermath. The post-War apathy in religion and politics still prevailed--"what's the use of trying" was still the slogan; yet in other fields this attitude waned. There was a decided revolt against revolt. War-time censorship had been so sharply defied for a time that defiance no longer held any spice. Open flaunting of sexual matters, concern with behavior-patterns and obscure complexes, sickened. George Jean Nathan reported in America that ". . . the hard-boiled school of drama and literature . . . [is] all too evidently on the wane."[29] And in the same country, Robert Benchley expressed boredom with sex:

> . . . I don't want to hear it mentioned ever again . . . I am sick of rebellious youth and I am sick of Victorian parents and I don't care if all the little girls in all sections of the United States get ruined . . . I am now definitely ready to [renounce] sex, as a theatrical property . . ."[30]

As Mr. Allen sums up, the "mists of distance" had begun to soften the "frustrated hopes that followed the war, the aching disillusionment of the hardboiled era . . . its spiritual paralysis, the harshness of its gaiety . . ."; and new channels were already offering their courses.[31]

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[29] Allen, op. cit., p. 349.

[30] Ibid., pp. 348-349.

[31] Ibid., pp. 356-357.

It is not too difficult to find these exact four socio-economic phases reflected in the drama of the day, often demarcated from each other by indistinct lines, yet following the general tendency.

I

As in Germany, a naturalistic drama flourished in Russia previous to the War: the stylized drama of Diaghilev and the pictorial impressionism of Stanislavski.[32] This dissolved after 1917 into the drama of psychopathic melancholy, auguring the dissolution of the social order.[33] This last period correlates interestingly with the immediate post-War expressionism in Germany, where the way was also being prepared for a new state. But as early as 1914 a political theatre, destined to mould peasant illiteracy, was winning popularity, overthrowing the internationalism that flourished until this time.[34] The October Revolution of 1917 established the "materialistic mechanistic" trend in the theatre, which amounted to socio-economic didacticism.[35]

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[32] Joseph Gregor, "The Theater of Soviet Russia," The Theater in a Changing Europe (Thomas H. Dickinson, editor), p. 54.

[33] Thomas H. Dickinson, "Recent Trends in the European Theater," ibid., p. 25.

[34] Gregor, op. cit., p. 55.

[35] Ibid., pp. 60-61.

It had two phases: the first corresponds most closely to the initial post-War enthusiasm in France; the stirring events of the revolution which surged up in a wild burst were soon reflected in fantastic imaginary revolutions that became the main themes on the stage. The high-water mark was 1917.[36] The second decade corresponds satisfactorily to the epoch of Prosperity, in that the destructive criticism of the early days of the establishment of the civic order disappeared during this era, as it did in the first era. The impress of a strong authority had to be made realistically on the people's minds. Now, instead of imaginary revolutions, historical ones served; and when the seriousness with which the Russian Revolution had been taken wore off sufficiently, it too was boldly dramatized.[37] The growth of optimism and constructivity is evident in the types of drama that followed from the years 1928 to 1935: there were (1) plays about peasants (2) industrial plays (3) plays on social problems.[38] These last often dealt with criticism of the new bourgeois society of "Nepmen" (i.e., those who, under the New Economic Policy, were temporarily allowed to carry on a limited private enterprise).[39] As a matter of

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[36] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, "Note on the Development of Soviet Drama," The Theater in a Changing Europe (Thomas H. Dickinson, editor), pp. 100-101.

[37] Ibid., p. 108.

[38] Ibid., pp. 111-119.

[39] Ibid., p. 115.

fact, to quote Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana:

> By 1929 "self-criticism" in the Soviet Union had reached a point where it was possible to write plays making fun of the overstrict narrow-mindedness of some of the communist party members and making heroes of some who were non-communists.[40]

It is rather difficult to outline the war-plays of Russia, since so many of them deal only with that country's own revolutions. Yet a few of them give an insight into the reaction towards the War and the inter-relations with world affairs. The succeeding remarks will be limited to these as closely as possible. Of the Revolutionary plays, whose application seems rather broader than that of others, there was Martinet's Earth in Revolt, which represented a civil war bringing the end of the world.[41] The Theatre of the Red Army gave commissions for the writing of plays dealing with the question, "What should be the characteristics of a good commander?"[42] Answers were doubtless found in Romashov's The Best Form of National Defense, Irtschen's The Polish Army, Evanov's The Compromise of Naib-Khan, and Ovtschino-Ovtscharenko's The Troop Commander.[43] The Kamerny

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[40] Dana, op. cit., p. 116.

[41] Gregor, op. cit., p. 69.

[42] Ibid., p. 75.

[43] Loc. cit.

Theatre offered The Unknown Soldier by Pervomaiski.[44] The Peace of Versailles, an anti-militaristic play, and one of especial value here, was offered at the Dramatic Theatre.[45] Another, taking the opposite point of view, to judge from the title, was The Lie of Pacifism, offered at the Theatre of the Revolution.[46]

A few plays, that took up present--and future--causes for war rather than actual warfare, are important in this summary: Echo by Bill-Belotserkovski, according to Mr. Dana, "represented an 'echo' of the Russian Revolution in America, when American dock-hands refused to ship munitions to be used against the Soviet Union."[47] A similar one is that based on a story by Ilya Ehrenburg, called Destruction of Europe, a far-fetched story of American capitalists who are bringing about the destruction of Europe through oppression of workers, until the bolsheviks come to its aid, eventually flying the red flag over all.[48] Tretryakov's Roar China! is similar, only the revolt is that of the Chinese coolie against the imperialistic British navy.

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[44] Gregor, op. cit., p. 75.

[45] Ibid., p. 76.

[46] Loc. cit.

[47] Dana, op. cit., p. 103.

[48] Ibid., p. 104.

An allegorical play for children was The Three Fat Men, given at the Moscow Art Theatre; the three fat men were Capitalism, Militarism, and Clericalism.[49] A play that dealt definitely with war is Michael Artzybashev's War, done more in the Chekhov style. It is a genuine picture of grief and decadence of character which follow when a family and its hangers-on are confronted with war; it might apply to any land besides Russia. In the preface to his Samson in Chains, Leonid Andreyev remarks that, although the play has no hint of war in it, it is best suited for production at war-time, after tragedy has been felt in life--when art and beauty, all things, are at war.[50] Aside from this it has no significance here. But his The Sorrows of Belgium closely resembles Maeterlinck's The Burgomaster of Stilemonde, and is as fervent a protest against the war-invasion.

Days of the Turbins by Michael Bulgakov portrays sympathetically a White Guard family and its loss of faith in the White cause, and presents the issues of the old military tradition brought to bear in a new era.[51] Presenting, as it does, both sides of a cruel war, it, like War, could apply to any country or any war. Leo Slavin's

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[49] Dana, op. cit., p. 117.

[50] Leonid Andreyev, Samson in Chains, pp. ix-x.

[51] Dana, op. cit., p. 109.

Intervention, aside from taking place in bolshevist Russia, deals with an imaginary Entente intervention, and has for its chief character a French soldier who stays behind in Russia and preaches the brother hood of man, ". . . above everything, above language, race and creed."[52] Red Rust, of Kirshon and Uspensky, has no more right to be classified here than many of the other plays that treat of the internal revolution, except that it may be considered a specimen of them and that it presents a universal study of character-degeneration brought about by the brutalizing effects of war and selfish power.[53]

Though the plays of David Pinski, The Cripples, Diplomacy, Little Heroes, The Beautiful Nun, and Poland--1919, can dubiously be considered European, since the author came to America in 1889, they are all laid in a war-invaded land, and reflect the spirit of one who has intimately experienced the devastation of his homeland. All are bitter invectives against the hideousness of war and the cruelty of those who wage it.

II

There is a scattering of war-plays to be found among

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[52] Gregor, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

[53] Frank W. Chandler, Modern Continental Playwrights, pp. 136-137.

the minor European countries. Their general dramatic history is unimportant enough to be omitted here, since they contributed little or mothing original to the theatre, generally speaking. However, several individual plays are to be noted. Starting with Czechoslovakia, there were the two plays of the D6 theatre, which show Russian influence: E. F. Burian's The Brave Soldier Svejk, which draws upon the novel of Hasek, is an exposé of Hapsburg militarism; and the anti-military play Vojna (The War), which contrasts a happy Czech village wedding with hideous post-War destruction.[54] A theatrical success was General Medek's play of unpropitious patriotism, Colonel Svec, dealing with the military advance into Siberia.[55] This subject also furnished material for Frantisek Langer, an army doctor, for his Mounted Patrol.[56] Outstanding are the dramas of the Capek brothers, Karel and Josef, whose Comedy of Insects (And So Ad Infinitum) devastatingly satirizes dictatorships and the futility of war. In the life of the insects a tramp sees reflected our foolish amorous pursuits and our greedy industrialized militarism. Ibsen influenced the work of Jaroslav Hilbert, whose Whom the Gods

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[54] Otakar Vocadlo, "The Theater and Drama of Czechoslovakia," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), p. 345.

[55] Ibid., p. 349.

[56] Ibid., p. 352.

Destroy, though set during the 1886 coup d'etat of Bismarck, could as well have taken place near Ypres in 1915, as Charles Recht says.[57]

The Polish theatre reacted to its national freedom after 1918 with wild patriotism, and later with typical disillusion.[58] Political and historical themes abound, mirroring, even before the war, in Adolf Nowaczynski's plays the nationalistic expectations. Bog Wojny (The God of War), Dymitr Samozwaniec (Demetrius the False), Fryderyk Wielki (Frederick the Great) all catch this spirit.[59] An analogy with the present, drawn against a historical background, is also undertaken in Ferdynand Goetel's Samuel Zborowski, a play of Polish nationalism.[60]

The mixture of cultures in Jugoslavia endowed it with a highly versatile drama. Ivo Vojnovich is the only contributor of a war-play. Distantly related to the Kossovo ballads, and employing both symbolism and realism, is his The Resurrection of Lazarus, which was written on the morrow

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[57] Charles Recht, translator, "Whom the Gods Destroy," Poet Lore, XXVII (1916), 361.

[58] W. Zawistowski, "The Polish Theater After the War," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), pp. 364-365.

[59] Ibid., p. 376.

[60] Loc. cit.

of the Balkan War of 1912. The patriotic aim is evident; it is an emphatic tribute to the aspirations of the Serbs for national independence and union.[61]

Three war-plays come from the Hungarian Theatre: the first is King Ladislaus, Deserted (Arva Laszlo), which places the political and social bewilderment of Hungary in a by-gone historical period; and The Bridge (A hid), in which the critical times after the War are recreated.[62] Both are from the pen of Franz Herczeg. Alexander Hunyadi's Feketeszaru cseresznye (Black Cherries) interprets the national conflicts in Hungary after the resolution of peace at the Trianon.[63]

Finally, to depart from the Balkans, four other countries, far removed from each other and from the centre of the Great War, reflected it weakly. In Spain The City of Gaiety and Confidence (La ciudad alegre y confiada), by Jacinto Benavente, performed during the World War, led him to be reproached as pro-German.[64] The Glittering Highway of

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[61] John J. Batistich and George Rapall Noyes, translators, "The Resurrection of Lazarus," Poet Lore, XXXVII (1926), 317.

[62] Koloman Brogyányi, "The Contemporary Hungarian Theater," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), p. 408.

[63] Ibid., p. 413.

[64] Enrique Diez-Canedo, "The Contemporary Spanish Theater," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), p. 291.

Enrique de Meneses, is a puerile comedy of manners, laid against a war background that serves merely as a crucible for plot and character. The Catalonian play of Angel Guimerá, Jesus Returns, a pacifist play, may be mentioned along with the Spanish.[65]

Rabindranath Tagore represents another country, with his Sacrifice. Laid in an Indian setting, this is an allegorical protest against the greed and lust for slaughter, preaching a Christian--and rather Shelleyean--doctrine of universal love. Taketomo's play Mulan is the Japanese contribution.

III

The theatre of Pirandello in Italy, perhaps more definitely than the theatre of any other country, expressed the tragic bewilderment and terrifying loss of values that followed the War. Immediately previous to the War, this proclivity was anticipated in the work of Enrico Annibale Butti and Gabriele D'Annunzio.[66] Butti was the first to react against the bourgeois, "verist," drama imported from France during the early part of the century. He felt the

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[65] John Garrett Underhill, "Note on Spanish Actors, Spanish Theaters and the Catalan Stage," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), p. 326.

[66] Silvio D'Amico, "The Italian Theater After the War," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), pp. 223-224.

impulse to emphasize spiritual problems, to look beyond the "absolute certainty" of religion and science; he asked

> . . . the apostle of the social revolution whether it is lawful to pursue the conquests of a new order through blood and crime, when after all this new order remains spiritually "Just as before, just as before!"[67]

And D'Annunzio, of the so-called "twilight school" of poetry --characterized paradoxically by its return to prosaic realism and a renunciation of life--paved the way for post-War expressionism. This art was nihilistic, despairing, cynical, and somewhat destructive. What Silvio D'Amico says of Pirandello sums up the philosophy of the time:

> Neither true nor false now remained; right or wrong no longer existed; there was no longer anything objective, anything fixed and immutable, much less anything eternal; there no longer existed a reason for this life of ours even in ourselves; law did not exist above it or in it; we were not what we believed ourselves to be. Only what we built, piece by piece . . . seemed real. Life as a whole was nothing but a melancholy farce, in which we recited more or less ignorantly our different parts, poor puppets in the hand of a blind destiny.[68]

The characters of this drama are unimportant and vulgar, the action wild and grotesque, tragic. Another group of reactionaries were the so-called "futurists," whose chief claims to modernity were rejection of tradition and humanistic culture, and glorification of speed and the machine.[69]

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[67] D'Amico, op. cit., p. 223.

[68] Ibid., p. 228.

[69] Ibid., p. 251.

It was not until after 1925 that Italian drama propounded positive social and political criticism, though two critics, Ferdinando Pasini and Italo Ciciliano acknowledged ". . . a little flame . . . of a mild goodness" in Pirandello, ". . . who does not really believe in anything, [yet] still secretly believes in goodness."[70] The leading conservative of the age was Sabatino Lopez, whose themes were dear to the bourgeois heart and who lamented the bygone moral standards of the past age.[71] Among those who also set themselves moral problems were Giannino Antona-Traversi, Salvator Gotta, and Aldo de Benedetti.[72] As for the rest, they, like Pirandello, wrote of the uselessness of experience; like Fausto Maria Martini,[73] of the breaking up of personality; like Guglielmo Zorzi,[74] of the defeat of goodness; like Dario Niccodemi,[75] of

> . . . a plutocratic society, of savage and cruel people, who pursue one another from salons to alcoves, gasping with jealous desire, and going a perpetual round of pleasure, of sex, of gold, of unsatisfied vanity.[76]

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[70] D'Amico, op. cit., p. 241.

[71] Ibid., p. 254.

[72] Loc. cit.

[73] Ibid, p. 247.

[74] Ibid., p. 248.

[75] Ibid., p. 255.

[76] Loc. cit.

In 1931 Fascism adopted the theatre when it adopted the regime. Then La Corporazione dello Spettacolo was formed, and in April, 1935, the Inspectorship of Press and Propaganda also--which proclaimed the establishment of a propaganda theatre, whose output will be limited to that purpose.[77]

Glancing at the plots of individual plays reveals few that actually deal with the War: there are several of Dario Niccodemi's that were inspired by it: La nemica (The Enemy), Il Titano (The Titan), Prete Pero (Father Pero), and La volata (The Flight).[78] Cesare Giulio Viola wrote certain little-known comedies of the War.[79] Vincenzo Tieri wrote La guarnigione incatenata (The Chained Garrison) in 1935, a war-play;[80] and Sabatino Lopez's The Sparrow is a slight story of an aviator who adopts the illegitimate son of a comrade that fell in battle. Aside from this, the War seems to have been reflected only indirectly. In Federico Valerio Ratti's Il solco quadrato, for instance, there is an ideal contrast between "justice" and "liberty," which manifests a pre-occupation with social abstractions.[81] And F. T. Marinetti's Vulcano (Vulcan), of 1926, dealing with erotic passion among

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[77] D'Amico, op. cit., p. 278.

[78] Ibid., p. 255.

[79] Ibid., p. 261.

[80] Ibid., p. 264.

[81] Ibid., p. 262.

a group of prisoners, might be considered a war-play.[82] Even Pirandello wrote no notable war drama, although his Come tu mi vuoi (As You Desire Me) is set in Berlin ten years after the War, and arouses the suspicion that, more than in his other plays of which it is also the theme, the plight of indistinguishability between reality and unreality is here a direct derivative of the War. This surmise is strengthened by the fact that some of the characters have reached their present unbalance through an actual War invasion.

Roberto Bracco contributed The Cradle, The International, and The Distant Lover.[83]

IV

Germany, too, bade farewell to a flourishing drama, which the War interrupted; it was represented by the naturalists of the 1890's, Strindberg, and Wedekind.[84] When the expressionistic drama made its appearance in the early twenties of the present century, it derived, in two different forms, from these two. There was, first, the spiritual

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[82] D'Amico, op. cit., p. 251.

[83] Chandler, op. cit., p. 545.

[84] Julius Bab, "The Theater in the German Language Area Since the World War," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), p. 143.

variety of expressionism, as represented in the works of Paul Kornfeld. A complete dualism of soul and body appeared as the basis of thought, and a mysterious representation of will. Of the Wedekindian type, there was the expressionism of pathology, particularly sexual pathology, as represented in the drama of Hermann Essig and Hannes Henny Jahn. Both reveled in horror and frenzy.[85] Descendants of expressionism also were the precursors of the revolt against intellectualism, against the half-way optimism of naturalism, which found man to be naturally good, though often shaped to evil by uncontrollable forces of heredity and environment. The plays of Georg Kaiser and Karl Sternheim, both before the War poured onto the stage satirical denunciations of the bourgeois classes and the social destiny of man.[86] Already the suspicion had been implanted that nature callously let men go to ruin, unless they saved themselves through their own personal spirituality.[87]

The crest of this tide reached its height in the years 1918 to 1923, a period which Julius Bab calls the emotional adolescence of German drama.[88] As in France, the

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[85] Bab, op. cit., p. 145.

[86] Ibid., pp. 142-144.

[87] Ibid., p. 142.

[88] Ibid., p. 146.

great revulsion against militaristic ideals and national enthusiasm plunged drama into the bankruptcy of idealism. What before had been blamed upon fate or nature now was accounted for through the corruption of man himself and the evil political systems he had built.[89] What in France had been escape, in Germany was a wild, direct flight into reality. Expressionism had become merely the outward form of a didactic, declamatory drama. When the audience became bored with expressionism, this political drama assumed a realistic form. As the year 1929 approached, the plays of class-struggle developed into a peculiar type of drama known as the "Lehrstücke," didactic plays, which were performed at gatherings of the communist party.[90]

Since the last two phases of political development in Germany showed a growth of new values which were brought about chiefly through the rise of National-socialism, it was natural that drama turned to realism to interpret them. Even Carl Zuckmayer's folk-plays and Ernst Barlach's fairy-tale plays were linked to the realistic ideal of a national culture by, in the first instance, the intellectualizing of old German legends, and, in the second, by the vivid earthiness present under his style of lyrical spirituality.[91]

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[89] Bab, op. cit., p. 147.

[90] Ibid., p. 150.

[91] Ibid., pp. 152-154.

The era of humanism, which influenced French drama, and even Italian and Russian, had only a short reign in Germany, where, quite contrarily, the dogma of restraint of all emotion, pity, pride, and anger was upheld.[92]

The rich developments in German drama, which covered two decades, and, in spite of the serious socio-economic upheavals in the second, brought forth a vigorous drama, were finally checked in 1929 by the political crisis, and broken off in 1933 by the National-socialist revolution. Almost all private theatres were closed, many authors and actors banned, and what did not serve as the vehicle of National-socialism had no place on the government-controlled stage.

The war-drama of Germany may now be traced through its individual authors: several plays were written shortly before or after the War which attempted to ferret out the causes of the great disaster. Recourse was had to certain historical documents concerning internal conditions that bear on the subject. Such a play is Emil Ludwig's The Trilogy of a Fighter, a biography of Bismarck. Containing Part I King and People, Part II Union, and Part III Dismissal, this work sums up the events which without doubt heralded Germany's part in the World War. Franz Adam Beyerlein's

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[92] Bab, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

Taps (Zapfenstreich) is a definitely anti-military play which discloses the impassable social barrier between commissioned and non-commissioned officers.[93] Its bearing on the War may be more closely understood if it is compared with Toller's Draw the Fires, for instance, which also points out similar deep-seated dissatisfactions. In Garrison of C. E. Freybe, located also in military life, is more in the nature of a personal tragedy.

A follower of Wedekind was Walter Hasenclever, whose Antigone celebrates the first great pacifist;[94] whose Death and Resurrection was written when the author was "interpreter, purchaser, and kitchen boy" in the army;[95] whose The Saviour depicts a poet dying at the hands of a bellicose war-martial;[96] and whose The Decision was suppressed during the War for its anti-militaristic inclination.[97]

In 1918 the Dresden Court Theatre played Die Seeschlacht (The Sea-Battle) by Reinhard Goering. This is an abstract, pacifistic play about sailors who, while contemplating mutiny, die in the heat of a battle. The gas masks

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[93] Franz Adam Beyerlein, Taps, p. i.

[94] Chandler, op. cit., p. 13.

[95] Ibid., p. 375.

[96] Loc. cit.

[97] Loc. cit.

that conceal their faces during the scene are a device that significantly banishes individual personalities.[98] His Scapa Flow, The First, The Second, and The Saviour likewise depict battle.[99]

Fritz Von Unruh, of Prussian nobility, who served as a lieutenant of the Uhlans, aroused attention with Ein Geschlecht (The Clan), a tragedy symbolizing, in the figure of a mother whose children rise against her, the horror of the times.[100] Offiziere (Officers), before this, was not as successful. Before the Decision, A Race, and Platz (Room) were others of his.

Typical of the revolutionary and declamatory play, which combined realistic theme with expressionistic technique, are the plays of Ernst Toller. Written in 1919 from prison, where he had been placed after partaking in the communistic uprising in Munich, was his Wandlung (Transfiguration), which in a spirit of martyrdom deals with a young German artist who goes to war enthusiastically to forget personal maladjustments, suffers disillusion at the hands of a brutal society, and eventually becomes a

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[98] Bab, op. cit., p. 147.

[99] Chandler, op. cit., pp. 396-397.

[100] Bab, op. cit., p. 147.

revolutionary.[101] The corruption of society is likewise bewailed in Masse Mensch (Masses and Man), " a fragment of the Social Revolution of the twentieth century."[102] These two contain anti-militaristic sentiments, and the impression is gained that many of the social ills exposed are direct effects of the War. There is present an active attitude of disillusion and revolt, a gloomy flavor of frustrated values. Hinkemann, Hoppla! wir leben (Hurray! We Are Alive), and Feuer aus den Kesseln (Draw the Fires), all deal more directly with the war theme. The first is a disagreeably realistic portrait of a man sexually crippled by war, containing protests against a society which first ruins its victims, then betrays them. Hoppla bitterly represents the eight years following the War, with the themes of mismanaged government and mangled personal lives tragically played upon. The last, comparable to Sea-Battle and the Russian play The Breaking of Lavrenov, dramatizes the 1917 mutiny in the German navy, and discloses socialistic theories. Pastor Hall, a modern drama of Nazi Germany, utilizes his favorite theme of universal brotherhood, and adds that of personal freedom.

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[101] Bab, op. cit., p. 148.

[102] Ernst Toller, "Masses and Man," Seven Plays, p. vii.

An author whose work combined sensuous lyricism with effective realism, was Bertolt Brecht, whose Trommeln in der Nacht (Drums in the Night) received the Kleist prize in 1922.[103] The theme of it is the anger of a man who returned from the trenches, half-mad, to find the profiteers in possession of all the good things of life.[104]

The suffering of the ignorant, who have just learned what war is--not from the priest who calls it "noble sacrifice," but from the crippled who return to die and the aged who are left to mourn--speak in Henry T. Schnittkind's Shambles. The forecast of future wars is reminiscent of Lavedan's Sunday on Sunday Goes By. Taking refuge in symbolism Hans Chlumberg demonstrates the uselessness of sacrifice made in war, in his three-act play of the resurrected dead, The Miracle at Verdun. Selfish diplomats, hypocritical clergy, and greedy industrialists bear the brunt of blame. War--A Te Deum of Carl Hauptmann exploits the same theme in a bitterly gruesome allegory of the destruction of the world, as does the one-act satire of Hans Gross, The Next War. Sasha, of J. Wiegand and Wilhelm Scharrelmann's The Wages of War, pays with his life for his refusal of military service as Jacques of Lenormand's Coward

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[103] Bab, op. cit., p. 149.

[104] Ibid., p. 149.

did. And the anticipation of a time when all will live at peace is distrusted at the end. Hauptmann von Köpenick, of Carl Zuckmayer, was banned in Nazi Germany because of its anti-militaristic tendency.[105]

One other play which early in the era pointed the way to the drama of social criticism, and which bears indirectly upon the War, if not directly, is Georg Kaiser's Gas, which seeks "to portray the social destiny of man today in large, symmetrically arranged scenes . . ."[106] The genuine, sympathetic concern for human destiny found in Toller and others is not present here, Julius Bab thinks, and no solution is offered to the problems posed.[107]

V

In France the Period of Disillusion was, at its onset, merely a desertion of the varied, magnificent era of drama that had preceded the War, lasting almost twenty-five years.[108] The psychological drama, comedy of manners and character flourished under the leadership of Henri Becque and Georges

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[105] Bab, op. cit., p. 175.

[106] Ibid., p. 144.

[107] Loc. cit.

[108] Edmond Sée, "The French Post-War Theater," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), p. 179.

de Porto Riche.[109] Immediately after the War, it expressed itself in a sort of weary contempt of all themes that dealt with war. The age was tired of itself and what it had lately suffered: it had no desire to see its anguish weakly fictionized on the stage. Attempts to shoulder guns and talk the language of the front soon had to be abandoned. This was in 1919 and 1920. The burst of vitality that immediately succeeded the War abruptly ended. Then a great problem had to be met. What, if not military subjects, social manners, or love, could be adopted for dramatic themes? The first had to be abandoned; the second did not suit an era that had just given all it had to preserve the existing order; the third seemed trivial when compared to the nation-wide sacrifice of personal interests.[110]

By 1922 the Revolt era was in full swing. A younger school of writers, posing alternately as anti-realists and anti-romanticists, or simultaneously both, appeared. What they chose to call themselves is not so confusing as it first appears: both were merely attempting different phases of expressionism, with the name "realism" pertaining to technique, and "romanticism" to subject-matter. Conditioned by disillusion--disbelief in the profit to be gained through

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[109] Sée, op. cit., p. 180.

[110] Ibid., pp. 181-182.

experience, the uselessness of effort, and apparent subjugation to environmental and hereditary conditions--they sought to escape. Depending on individual temperament, some sought, through neo-Romanticism, to portray fantastic, abstract tableaux that were a defiance of all existing order. Others, taking the opposite tack, with a bitter cynicism deliberately faced life, and through the media of their own anguished, twisted souls reflected what they saw, abnormalities, unbalanced characters and themes, with Freud as a timely authority.[111]

The two paths converged, eventually, and can be found concurring in the five distinct types of drama that appeared at this time, as classified by Edmond Sée:[112]

(1) The psychological drama and comedy of manners
(2) The modern tragedy
(3) The symbolic theatre and theatre of ideas
(4) Light comedy and vaudeville
(5) The theatre in verse.

Since this is not a survey of drama as a whole, mention will be made only of the plays which pertained more or less directly to the World War of its after-effects, in an attempt to fit them into the above scheme.

(1) Under the first heading there was Jean-Jacques Bernard, son of the humorist Tristan Bernard, who in 1921

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[111] Sée, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

[112] Ibid., p. 188.

presented the three-act play La maison epargnée, having the War as a background. A more significant work, Le feu qui reprend mal followed. This deals with a demobilized soldier, who, upon learning that his wife has had an American soldier as guest in her home, torments himself with jealousy.[113]

L'Age du fer of Denys Amiel is a war-play only in the sense that it is a denouncement of the vices and moral bankruptcy of the age following the War.[114]

Marcel Pagnol made his debut in 1924 in the Theatre de la Madeleine with Les Marchands de gloire (The Merchants of Glory), written in collaboration with Paul Nivoix. It is a brutal exposé of the non-enlisting survivors of the War, exploitors of the heroism of soldiers who gave their lives; at the centre of the action is a father who loses no time in profiting by the death of his son.[115]

To this group Maurice Rostand contributed two plays, He Who Did Not Kill and The Man He Killed. The first is a psychological study of a mother turned cold towards her younger son since the elder was taken by the War. The second play, of a soldier who visits the German family of the man he killed and stays to marry, at length, the man's

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[113] Sée, op. cit., p. 190.

[114] Ibid., p. 193.

[115] Ibid., p. 194.

fiancee, thus symbolizing the unification of the two countries.[116]

Henri Lenormand's The Coward is a rather exotic, cynical study of an artist who shirks military duty, leaving room for much philosophical conjecture on the relation of the individual to the duties of the world in which he lives.

(2) Under modern tragedy there was Paul Raynal, whom Sée ranks at the head of the new tragedians.[117] One of his chief works, Le tombeau sous l'Arc de Triomphe (The Tomb Beneath the Arch of Triumph), and four of his lesser ones, Au soleil de l'instinct (To the Sun of Instinct), La Francerie, Napoleon l'unique, and The Apotheosis of Life, reflect the World War. The first, which was severely criticized in 1924 at its first performance, and later was vied for by all countries, symbolizes the universal accusation of war and its attendant chaos.[118] Of the other four plays, La Francerie, besides giving a detailed documentation of the battle of the Marne, forms a "magnificent song of France."[119]

The harsh, uncompromising work of Gabriel Marcel includes a morbid, eccentric war-play, La chapelle ardente,

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[116] "Maurice Rostand's New Play," Living Age, CCCXXXVIII (March 1, 1930), 26.

[117] Sée, op. cit., p. 198.

[118] Ibid., p. 199.

[119] Ibid., p. 200.

which portrays a mother's bitter grudge against her officer-husband, whom she holds responsible for the death of her son; and her morbid dislike for the son's fiancee, whose life she ruins because of her own misfortune.[120]

Using the French Revolution as a background, Romain Rolland set forth a disguised criticism of the World War in the series The Fourteenth of July, The Wolves, Danton, and The Game of Love and Death. A hopeful note for the future progress of mankind is sounded, even while scorn is expressed for its little rising and toppling governments.

Reflecting the cruel tragedy of Belgium in a courageous-minded burgomaster of one of its towns is the Burgomaster of Stilemonde by Maurice Maeterlinck.

(3) In the symbolic theatre and theatre of ideas, the plays of Jean Giraudoux may be mentioned first: with great brilliance he undertakes the dangerous theme of confronting both post-War France and Germany, attempting in Siegfried, to forward a deeper understanding between them. Amphitryon 38, which created a dramatic sensation, in spite of its old classical theme, disguised allusions to the War.[121]

A. P. Antoine, in collaboration with Maxime Léry, produced at his famous father's theatre, the Theatre Antoine,

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[120] See, op. cit., p. 201.

[121] Ibid., p. 207.

L'Ennemie, which, though opening in a cemetery and having a naval officer as a main character, is only a variation of the theme of the "ravages caused by Eternal Love."[122] The intellectual cynicism is definitely post-War in character.

Maya, of Simon Gantillon, possibly falls into this group, doing so only in consideration of the extra-national altruism expressed in the character of the prostitute, who

> . . . believes herself to be devoting herself to a kind of mission of dispensing comfort and illusion. Around her crowd men of all nations, of all walks of life, seeking to find in her arms the exaltation or the soothing of their dreams, so as to forget their daily misery.[123]

The same abstract consideration must be given Jules Romains' Musse, which satirizes the ruling conceptions of the state, as well as other hypocrisies.[124]

This section may be concluded with three short plays of Andre Dumas, Hans Trausil, and Henri Lavedan. The Eternal Presence is Dumas' play: in a spirit of martyrhood it relates a mother's vision concerning her dead son, who symbolizes the ever-living memory of those who gave their lives in a great cause. The religious note is repeated and amplified in Trausil's The Wake Light (English version, In

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[122] Sée, op. cit., p. 212.

[123] Ibid., p. 205.

[124] Ibid., p. 210.

Darkness--Light!), in which Christ appears to a group of soldiers in the form of a soldier, preaching of love and faith, just before a bomb kills them all. Lavedan's Sunday on Sunday Goes By pessimistically surveys a battle-field through the eyes of a father and son, in prophecy of future battles to be held in the same place.

(4) The writers of light comedy and vaudeville contributed nothing that pertains directly enough to the War to be mentioned here.

(5) Though the theatre in verse was rather neglected by the post-War generation, Francois Porché, in his 1919 performance of Les Butors et la Finette (The Ruffians and Finette), allegorized and symbolized the cruelty of the enemy towards heroic France, representing France in La Finette, and Germany in Les Butors.[125] The Girl with Rosy Cheeks was similar in theme.

These types of drama persisted through the Period of Depression, until approximately the year 1935. During the last two phases the quarrel between pre-War dramatists and post-War harmoniously abated--and at an opportune moment--for the theatre at present is suffering a dangerous crisis, as Edmond Sée states, stabilization having become stagnation,

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[125] Sée, op. cit., p. 217.

which he defines as ". . . Surely . . . only a period of transition."[126]

To summarize: in the above superficial survey of drama certain characteristics, corresponding to the flux of historical events, can be found to have existed in what may be designated as the World War drama of all countries that were touched by war and social upheaval. These developments which grew out of the World War and conditions anticipating it and succeeding it are definitely marked as to form, purpose, subject-matter, and attitude. Form was either realistic, symbolic, or both. Purpose was in the nature of a protest against social maladjustments leading to war, war itself, and social maladjustments ensuing from war. Subject-matter was concerned with any human problem, international or individual, that pertained to that purpose. And these three were imbued with either an attitude of rebellion and disillusion toward the old order of things, or an attitude of revolution and expectation for a new order.

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[126] See, op. cit., pp. 219-220.

CHAPTER II

THE TREND IN RUSSIA

In the literature of war a discussion of war-guilt is naturally imminent at one time or another, which will, in turn, entail an emphasis or disparagement of nationalistic aims. Furthermore, the relationship of the individual to the state, is scarcely to be avoided, since national ideology inevitably at some point or another will conflict with personal conscience or sacrifice of personal desire. Thirdly: there always follows from such major events either the hope of a suitable outcome, pleasing to individual and to state; or a loss of hope and faith, which is the negative prophecy. A study of war-plays may be taken as the outline of the intellectual spirit towards war.

Russia's internal difficulties complicated the portrayal of war in literature, since the World War and Russia's internal socio-economic wars concurred. It is hard to disengage the two. Mikhail Artzybashev's play War is almost a lone specimen of a war-play not written explicitly for propaganda purposes. In fact, as Chandler notes, all his plays exhibit so drastic an individualism, that

they are banned under the Communist regime.[1]

An extreme individualist is seldom the most fervent patriot. Artzybashev is not an exception. His attitude towards war is not inspired by the nationalism that inspired Maeterlinck. He delves into the psychology of personality for his theses. The suggestion, that his portrayal of character resembles Chekhov's holds here: both sketch the follies of human nature.[2] Both hold man, the animal, responsible for the misfortunes that befall him. Only, Artzybashev is of a different age: he has heard of Freud, and his naturalism therefore has added to it that disillusion that seems to accompany biological or mechanical explanations of the universe. Passion and self-expression are the life-forces of his drama. The only sin he recognizes is repression, "rather than transgression," as Chandler remarks.[3] In War it is these selfish interests that bring about the catastrophic results. Nina loves Vladimir "so long as he is whole and sound, able to excite and respond to her passion";[4] Asya scorns Semyonov till Volodya is killed, then

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[1] Frank W. Chandler, Modern Continental Playwrights, p. 98.

[2] See Chap. I, p. 27.

[3] Chandler, op. cit., p. 98.

[4] Loc. cit.

she gives herself to the rival who has slyly induced Volodya to go to war. And, negatively, the Prince, hypocrite and seducer that he is, only evades war-service because he lives in hope that Vladimir will be killed so he may have Nina. To him war is

> . . . terrible. And yet there is a great deal of tragic beauty in it. I don't know how it is, but I feel drawn to the war myself; something pulls me to it.
>
> Semyonov (In an undertone) It seems to be a very mild form of attraction.
>
> . . . Imagine the strength of soul required to die feeling happy in the cause of one's death. It denotes the highest will power, the sublimest enthusiasm, and you have a right to be proud of your son's memory.[5]

Semyonov himself has to admit once that "War at least is life, fight."[6] Their boredom with life and with themselves--and even with the love-affairs that they consider the only criteria for living--lead them to perpetrate embroilments which other people have to carry through and suffer for. Says the Prince:

> What is life here? It is not even a game; it is just a long-drawn-out agony. We don't live here; we just exist. All our interests . . . are so trivial, so insignificant . . . But there, face to face with death, the everyday shell drops off, and man became that which he ought always to be--the tragic bearer of heroic ideas.[7]

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[5] Mikhail Artzybashev, "War," The Drama, VI (1916), 55.

[6] Ibid., p. 36.

[7] Artzybashev, op. cit., p. 56. Compare to Henry

As for the other men, they too follow the pattern of frivolity: war, is, at first, an exciting escape from the tedious round of everyday life; it is only after they are killed or wounded that they, and those at home, realize that this form of self-expression isn't, after all, what one could most desire for lifting monotony. Even the gentle father, Piotr Ivanovich, rebukes Nina with this blind argument:

> . . . I can't listen to these everlasting whinings and lamentations! Why the idea! A man is defending his country, is fulfilling his sacred duty; and what does his wife think about? Nothing but how to take away his courage and honor. She wants to keep him in the nursery and bedroom.[8]

He builds up the topic to noble heights:

> Nina: I don't want to have my life sacrificed to anybody.[9]
>
> Piotr: Only people without a country can speak that way, Nina! . . . Only Russia's enemies can speak that way. In such a time as this we have no right to speak about our own personal life. We have no right to argue and reason . . . [but] go without question, because the whole of Russia, my country, needs my life. What are

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Lenormand's "The Coward," Twentieth Century Plays:

> The Marquise: . . . but one cannot live without enthusiasm. And it is the war which has awakened enthusiasm in me. (P. 55.)

And Jacques' explanation of his attitude:

> Too much happiness turns to ennui--too great a security may produce fear--. (P. 47.)

[8] Artzybashev, op. cit., p. 57.

[9] Ibid., p. 46.

you in comparison to the destiny of Russia?[10]

Pathetically this thought betrays him and his wife, when Volodya's death reduces them to bewildered, maddened children, who understand less now than they did before--except that something terrible has happened.

> Olga: Oh, Volodya, Volodya! What is this war for? Can you tell me? . . . here we were living quietly, and all of a sudden!--But maybe they'll settle it somehow over there. They'll take a look at each other, and they'll say, "We are fools--that's what we are!" Then they'll break up and go each his own way. (P. 43.)

Of her father Nina says:

> You know, he [Piotr] never wept a tear. He just keeps quiet. And his silence is more horrible than the most fearful crying and sobbing . . . when will this war end? And will those who caused it never be brought to account for all the tears, all the misery?[11]

There is something dreadfully ironic in that last sentence. For even in the midst of these affairs, she cannot forget her own happiness. Even when she gives herself up to war-work, she really does it out of sublimation of the passion which, in Vladimir's absence, she has misdirected towards the Prince--in sheer lack of someone to direct herself at--though none of this she realizes. Exuberantly she exclaims:

> What beauty all around! See how the leaves are falling . . . I am happy, Prince. Mamma thinks me shocking for having given up mourning; she says I must have forgotten Volodya . . . But how can I meet

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[10] Artzybashev, op. cit., p. 47.

[11] Ibid., p. 71.

> Vladimir in a black dress? . . . I may be an egotist, I may be a bad woman, but I am happy . . . [12]

And in another place, having been betrayed by this happiness into a momentary compromise with the Prince:

> . . . I don't know myself what is the matter with me . . . I am a low, ugly, depraved woman.[13]

Indeed, often she seems on the point of self-questioning,[14] as when she is prompted to it by Semyonov's remark that war can never be done away with because it isn't opposed to human nature, but on the contrary quite in keeping with it: If it is as he says, she thinks:

> . . . then I think the human race ought simply be wiped off the face of the earth. It would have no right to exist . . . [15] Is it possible that after all these horrors there will again be wars and people will again die and be killed? Is it possible that the people will never come to their senses, never understand what they are doing? . . . [16]

Nervous tension is responsible for her spurts of sudden sympathy, when at times she cries:

> . . . my heart bleeds for them. Hungry, cold, always facing death and pain and misery; what sort of life

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[12] Artzybashev, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

[13] Ibid., p. 61.

[14] Ibid., p. 32. Compare Vladimir's vague questioning: ". . . let something happen suddenly, and we'll all drop what's dearest to us and go out to kill and die. Come to think of it, it's queer, isn't it?"

[15] Ibid., p. 71.

[16] Loc. cit.

> can it be! It is one continuous agony, not life. How many killed, how many maimed . . . how much wretchedness and suffering! And all this on account of one man's whim. What an injustice! What an atrocity! . . . my whole being revolts against this butchery.[17]

It is simple for her to place the blame on vague socio-economic entanglements, which at no point touch home:

> Can't you see what a terrible comedy it is? Somewhere, in some place, there is a Wilhelm, a Germany. You didn't see Germany, Daue. Neither did I. And yet we are all crying, taking leave of each other, breaking up our lives completely . . . Isn't it ridiculous? . . . What does it mean--"Killed?" It's so hard to grasp the significance of it . . .[18]

She now has safely identified her personal emotions with a "cause"; she has been afraid of herself, and she must be dramatic. But her true instincts betray her at the end, and she falls back into the Prince's arms when Vladimir is brought home legless.

Even the least selfish character in the play, the violinist Daue, Artzybashev interprets along the same plane: Although Daue realizes external duty, and does sacrifice what he loves to fulfill it, it cannot but be exclaimed of him:

> When there was talk of war last year, Daue was in despair . . . And it wasn't because he is a coward, but because for him to give up his violin is like giving up his life . . . But everyone of us has

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[17] Artzybashev, op. cit., p. 56.

[18] Ibid., p. 55.

something he holds especially dear.[19]

Harmless as this love is, in comparison with that of the others', Artzybashev somehow tarnishes it by the fact that Daue, too, goes under the compulsion of circumstance, rather than reason. This is what makes war a tragedy of futility.

Once this motive is set forth, it is easier to understand why war seems to the author so senseless; if this is what motivates these people, then the same is true of the Germans and the French and the Americans, each vaguely shifting the initial cause to someone else, and meeting the situation only in the most remunerative way.[20]

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[19] Artzybashev, op. cit., p. 32.

[20] Artzybashev's judgment of human nature is no more indigent than Rolland's or Hauptmann's. Witness the similarity of the two following remarks:

(1) Jerome: They are men no longer! They are a herd of animals, servile and cruel. All the instincts of baseness and ferocity have come to the surface. Meat for the butcher. Vile dogs crouching and sniffing the odor of blood. Wolves and hyenas prowl about this den. (P. 65.) . . . Disgust, disgust for myself. Humanity, Reason, Liberty. What a mockery! . . . Man is born for servitude. Man is born to betray. Everything people have done to render him free, everything people have attempted to lift him up only serves to reveal his bestiality . . ." Romain Rolland, The Game of Love and Death, p. 74.

(2) . . . man is a wolf and lives a life of greediness, as long as he has a single tooth left. C. Hauptmann, "War," The Drama, XVI (1916), 648.

The above analysis really covers the individual-state relationship. One point, however, can be embellished: this is to call attention to Artzybashev's hierarchy of individual reprehensibility: he blames this war on four classes of people; namely, (1) those, who, like the Prince and Semyonov, further wars for their own ends, never partaking, themselves, of any of its pain, but sentimentally feigning to consider it preferable to the "tameness" of life; (2) those, who, like Piotr and Olga, merely through lack of discernment fail to relinquish the old attitude of sentimental patriotism; (3) those, who, like Daue, are peace-lovers, yet do their duty blindly because they must, with an unthinking: "My father was a soldier; so I became a soldier, too";[21] (4) those, who, like Nina and Asya, seem on the verge of questioning the senseless run of events, yet, because of an innate shallowness, restlessness, coldness, and selfishness cannot plunge beyond the superficial to the more profound examination.

Artzybashev holds no less a pessimistic expectation of the future than Chlumberg. The two are very comparable, except that the latter stresses the result in greater detail, while the former restricts himself to the cause; the former stands off at a distance and points to the wreckage; the latter, as it were, stays at home, where, amidst everyday

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[21] Artzybashev, op. cit., p. 31.

scenes, he may point to this or that remissness and cry, Observe!

Days of the Turbins, of Michael Bulgakov, is as different from War as Russian philosophy of 1925 was different from Russian philosophy of 1914. But, though the play deals with the "romantic epoch of the Revolution--an epoch of blood, grime, sacrifice, and tragedy,"[22] there are, surprisingly enough, no Bolsheviks appearing on the stage, and so sympathetically is the expropriated Tsarist family portrayed, that, according to reports, spectators on both sides of the footlights "wept and became hysterical."[23] This humanistic lapse on the part of the Communistic author went not unnoticed. After the play was produced in 1926 it became an object of bitter controversy and was attacked as politically harmful.[24] In a sense this is odd, because never for a moment is one allowed to forget the underlying communistic propaganda. What earns for this play a place in a consideration of war-drama is the "objectionable" objectivity that permitted the author to portray the general

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[22] Eugene Lyons, "Days of the Turbins," Six Soviet Plays, p. 3.

[23] Loc. cit.

[24] Loc. cit.

events of the time in inter-relation with Russia's own. Naturally, there is a greater emphasis on this latter. Just as Russia split off from the rest of Europe to contemplate her own problems, this play averts its gaze from world-war to turn to its own war. Nevertheless, this does not invalidate it as an expression of war--any more than a French play would be invalidated for our discussion if it portrayed in France a Frenchman's attitude towards war. There is only the difference in the weaving of events which chanced to decree that France remain in the War to the end, while Russia drop out earlier for another reason.

If in Artzybashev's play individualism prevented nationalistic patriotism, in Bulgakov's play nationalism, conversely, prevents individualism. So where blame is to be prehended, it naturally falls on those out of step with the dictating power. In this case, the Tsarists bear the brunt. But with reservations, for Bulgakov is kindly and does not blame them as individuals: he concocts, instead, in the realm of social philosophy, a convenient hierarchy, just as Artzybashev did in the realm of moral philosophy. According to Bulgakov, war came about as an inevitable result of an inevitable change in government; but, had the Tsarists agreeably fallen in with the change, it need not have occurred. Yet some of the higher classes he almost absolves from blame. But there were those whom, with polite regrets, he cannot:

There is Colonel Talberg, for instance, a typically dry, cold, impeccable aristocrat, who does not scruple to leave his wife behind at the mercy of any danger, when he flees the country for his personal safety. And the Hetman, head of the Russian command, who escapes in the disguise of a German general. Possibly the former represents the personal corruptness of a decadent class; the latter, of organized corruptness. Though Bulgakov's intention was not symbolism, the outcome of both desertions is highly significant to his trend of thought--but this will wait analysis for a moment. Alexei Turbin, colonel of artillery, and his brother Nikolai, are supporters of the old military regime; yet the former's death is not ignoble, and the latter is a strong, just figure. Bulgakov can afford to be broad-minded, since he does not need to place the blame on the individual characters --but only on the system, of which they--these latter ones, not those of Talberg's calibre--are the victims. When one calls anyone a "victim," he can well afford to understand and forgive him, without relinquishing a foothold on a point of view antagonistic to that system. His classification, then, boils down to two camps: (1) those who are only unwittingly accessories before the terrible fact; and (2) those who, through deliberate selfishness, neglect the need for wide-spread reform. To the former class belongs the Turbin family, and them he is ready to forgive.

This brings us back to the symbolism mentioned above: Talberg and his faction, who are betrayed by the Germans; Talberg, who is eventually turned away by the wife he deserted--is the Russia that can be no more. The Hetman's desertion signifies the turning point in Bulgakov's trend of thought, as well as the turning point of the battle. It was after he had gone that the "Whites" realized the hopelessness of their cause, though many would not admit it. The Hetman symbolizes this political disintegration. Those, more opportunistic by nature, are ready for conversion, which is Bulgakov's solution to the whole problem. Studzinsky remarks: "You used the word Fatherland. What Fatherland remains when the Bolsheviks are in control? Russia is ended."[25]

> Mishlayevsky: . . . Fine. I'm very glad . . . I'll go and fight for them . . . I've been fighting since 1914. What for? For my Fatherland. All right. But after these Excellencies abandoned us so shamefully, shall I go back to those Excellencies? No . . . behind the Bolsheviks our godly peasants follow like a cloud of glory. And with what can I resist them? With military riding-breeches! . . . They . . . immediately answer with machine-guns . . . In front of us the Red Guards like a solid wall. Behind us, speculators and all the rubbish of the Hetman's bands . . . Thank you very kindly. I'm sick of being used like manure to fill all the holes. Let them mobilize me. At least I'll know I am serving a Russian army.[26]

This attitude he has been working up to throughout. Act II,

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[25] Lyons, op. cit., p. 79.

[26] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

scene 2 is nothing more than an exposé of the brutal, selfish, narrow-mindedness of this group at its lowest level. Elena may have blamed war on others as she does in one place--". . . those Germans, those Germans!";[27] or Studzinsky: "Never mind, never mind. Some day we'll remind them of everything . . .,"[28] but ultimately there is no escaping the real occasioner: even Alexei is disillusioned and must speak thus to his men:

> They will set you to fighting against your own people. And when your people have broken your necks, your generals will run away abroad . . . the divisions are without munitions; the cadets are barefooted while their officers lounge in cafés . . .[29] We now face something more terrible than war, than Germans . . . We face the Bolsheviks! . . . And now it is too late. Now our officers have all become café-hounds.[30] . . . Listen, my friends! To me, as a fighting officer, has been entrusted the task of throwing you into battle. If only there were something to fight for . . . but there isn't . . . I send you home because I love you![31]

If one must seek symbols in everything, then Shervinsky symbolizes the awakening to the need of a new order. Even as he fights along with Alexei, he somehow realizes that the cause is vain. He stands in no awe of the ruling class of

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[27] Lyons, op. cit., p. 66.

[28] Loc. cit.

[29] Ibid., p. 59.

[30] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[31] Ibid., pp. 59-60.

which he has been a part. Early in the action he almost precipitates a quarrel by playfully drinking to the Bolsheviks.

It is not difficult to state Bulgakov's theories regarding the relation of the individual to the state: the purpose of the play is to inculcate this. To state the generally-known Communist theories of state control over individual activities is to state the principles of Bulgakov. The entire sympathetic portrayal of the Turbin family misses tragedy in that the sympathy is a by-product rather than a purpose. That is to say, it rises only incidentally, and not from a desire to eulogize a situation that is righteously tragic. Carefully, he builds up his thesis to show that it is not one. Carefully, he shows the gradual, unconscious realization of this. Even Mishlayevsky, in the midst of his hatred for the Bolsheviks, has to admit that:

> . . . these Russians of ours are not people! They are brutes. A trade union of regicides! Take Peter the Third . . . And what harm had he done them? What, I ask? They yelled: 'War is unnecessary!' All right . . . he stopped fighting. And what then! His own noblemen hit him over the head with a bottle--Paul the First was killed by a wallop over the ear with a cigarette-case. And that other one . . . what's his name? . . . a rather nice fellow, and he thought, 'I'll give the peasants a treat. I'll give the swines their freedom.' He got blown up with a bomb for his pains![32]

Which, though he does not intend it to be, is a betrayal of the class in which he has believed. The climax of the play

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[32] Lyons, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

is the fall of the regime and the prophecy of state supremacy.

It is likewise superfluous to add Bulgakov's anticipations for the future. Like Toller, he has confidence in the ability of a society to remold its members for better or worse. But their sentiments differ notably in some interesting details: for one thing, Toller's idealism is more conjectural and evolutionary: he observes that the coveted changes cannot be accomplished through war--nor through anything, really save an evolution of the human spirit. If he does believe change can be wrought, his belief hangs only on a large "if." He is like a child dreaming a dream of perfection, which adults could carry out if they would--but--they just don't![33] Bulgakov, on the other hand, is not

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[33] The frailty of the thread upon which Toller's anticipation hung is attested by his later disillusioned discredence of it, as shown in the play Hinkemann, written in 1922, four years after Transfiguration. In this play it pains him to admit that:

> There are people you can't make happy with all your states and society and family and community . . . (P. 179.) It's war again . . . men murdering and laughing. (P. 181.) . . . And people who've forgotten it! War came and took them and they hated their chiefs and obeyed orders and killed each other. And it's all forgotten. They'll be taken again and hate their bosses again and obey orders again and--kill each other. Again and again. That's what people are. They might be different if they wanted to. But they don't want to. They mock at life . . . Making themselves poor when they might be rich . . . Round and round--for thousands and thousands of years . . . As if it had got to be! "Hinkemann," Seven Plays, p. 193.

rooted in such an agony of introspective thought. He is more external, more pragmatic, more denominational. He does not ask that men's souls first be enlightened: he asks merely a change in the social order. That spiritual regeneration may then follow is still not particularly his concern. This may have resulted from the lack of introspection, or from a less humanistic disposition towards man. All he apprehends is one class's relation to another class, not man's relation to man.

Neither does he pick a quarrel with the means to the end, in contrast to Toller, with whom both are almost synonymous. Although they are alike in considering war of secondary significance, one finds it either the root or the result of social misadjustments, while the other finds it only the latter. Again it is the pragmatism of Bulgakov that makes the difference.

And finally, Toller, for all his hopefulness in the ultimate supremacy of goodness, remains a true son of disillusion, a teller of fairy-tales, a mystic and dreamer; while Bulgakov's Shervinsky gaily gives up the clothes of aristocracy; and his Larion finally admits: "Times have changed and Petliura is no more . . . We are all together again . . . and . . . We rest, we rest!"[34]

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[34] Lyons, op. cit., p. 84. The hopefulness of both --the weak and the strong--Romain Rolland mocks at in the

To summarize: Artzybashev and Bulgakov, who represent pre- and post-Revolutionary Russian thought, are led by their beliefs and the prevailing social conditions of their respective days to take opposing stands on the war question.

Artzybashev's War is a testament to the futility of a war that springs from animal "anarchic individualism,"[35] that bewilderingly punishes the heralds of chaos without instilling in them any analization of their own guilt and uncalculated misery. He satirizes a society that thus haphazardly allows its form to emerge from its content; and he, even more than Chlumberg, despairs of even suggesting social reconstruction, which, to be effective, would necessitate a more solid consistency than that of which it is now composed.

The Game of Love and Death:

> . . . the Progress of the Human Spirit. You have never believed that, to follow its course, a few years were enough; you look forward to centuries . . . No, we, with our eyes, shall not see the Promised Land. (P. 76.) . . . one sees good people suddenly seized with a need for befouling themselves . . . (P. 80.) . . . terror, suspicion, Messianic hopes and bitter disappointments have resulted in a poisoned atmosphere. The menace of death infects every mind. Men cannot with impunity maintain themselves for years on the edge of that sword, "Conquer or die." . . . Anyone who tried to recall them to the feelings of humanity would be torn by the teeth of those tigers. (P. 84.)

[35] Chandler, op. cit., p. 98.

On the other hand, Bulgakov, the social reformer, subsidizes war to the gaining of a social end. His approval is positive in that there must be an immediate submission of those who are "wrong," which alone would avoid, to everyone's welfare, recourse to violence. This point of view is consistent with the nature of his concern, which is purely executive, and in accord with the spirit of an era of returning national consciousness and prosperity. Less skeptical is the believer in a social philosophy than one who holds none: thus it is that Bulgakov confidently prophesies, with the repudiation of out-moded forms, social renovation.

CHAPTER III

THE TREND IN THE BALKAN STATES

Josef and Karel Capek, by whom Czechoslavakian drama became known to the world, concern themselves with the themes characteristic of the era of Revolt. Much of their work is fantasy somewhat like that of H. G. Wells. Karel Capek's Krakatit and The Absolute at Large are both novels displaying the dangers of industrialism.[1] His R.U.R., well-known the world over, has the same theme. Josef, the less talented of the two, has contributed The Land of Many Names, which satirizes human folly and selfishness.[2] His interest in expressionism and pragmatism is as evident in these works as in And So Ad Infinitum (The Comedy of Insects).[3] This play, which appeared in New York in 1922, makes use of the insect-kingdom to satirize human traits, after the manner of Rostand's Chantecler. Chandler says, however, that in it materialistic pessimism replaces Rostand's humorous idealism.[4]

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[1] Frank W. Chandler and Richard A. Cordell, Twentieth Century Plays, p. 153.

[2] Ibid., p. 164.

[3] Ibid., p. 163.

[4] Ibid., p. 165.

The most vigorous part of the satire is directed against industrialism and militarism. With subtle irony the Capeks exalt man, contrasting him, in the figure of the Tramp, with the insects, in whose instinctive selfishness the audience is supposed to grasp the theme, that man is no more noble than they. In the ant-hill allegory, in particular, a vigorous protest is launched against war. First, the motives for it are examined--and found wanting: the Tramp believes he has just hit upon a truth:

> Gorblimey, if I 'aven't struck
> The truth! . . . Insec's won't work together. Man
> Will. 'E can form a general plan.
> There's something great in 'im what fights
> And perishes for the nation's rights.[5]

At once the Ant-nation bustles before him, preparing for war. The Second Engineer has a new method of "speeding up." For what? Why, the battle of peace. "We're the masters of the world," cries the Chief Engineer. "The largest Ant State! . . . The largest Democracy! . . . The world must obey us!"[6] Excitement follows; the Second Engineer echoes him:

> A World Power! . . . We are surrounded by enemies . . . We must starve them all out . . .
>
> . . . The interests of the State . . . For its majesty . . . In the interests of the whole . . . Interests of race--

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[5] Josef and Karel Capek, "And So Ad Infinitum," Twentieth Century Plays, p. 179.

[6] Ibid., p. 180.

> Industrial interests--
> Colonial interests--
> World interests--
> All interests . . .
> Interests preserve the whole.
> And wars nourish it . . .[7]

Their enthusiasm waxes, until reason is forgotten. To the Tramp's observation that they are war-like ants, there follows an immediate heated contradiction:

> He knows nothing . . . Our Ants are the most peaceful Ants . . . A nation of peace . . . A labor State . . . They only wish for world power--Because they wish for world peace-- . . . In the interests of progress . . . Peaceful competition . . . the battle of peace . . .[8]

The speech of exoneration rolls on, defying gravity, until it becomes a sort of paranoid complex: at length they have concocted an invisible enemy. The Inventor has already contrived a war machine--the "swiftest, most effective crusher of lives . . . the acme of science."[9] It cannot go to waste: "Nothing serves the State so much as Science . . .

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[7] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 180. "'Les Américains Chez Nous'--A Dramatic Tribute from Eugene Brieux," Current Opinion, LXVIII (April, 1920), specifically counsels against this abuse of industrial power. Smith, the American boasts, "We are now a great power--"

Charvet (affectionately): "Don't abuse it . . ."(P. 492.)

Compare also Carl Hauptmann's War, in which the Voices cry, "It ought to be understood that we are not human beings, but powers . . ." (P. 610.)

[8] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 181.

[9] Ibid., p. 182. See Toller's "Hoppla! Such Is Life!," Seven Plays, p. 248: "Incidentally," the Operator boasts, "this apparatus helps . . . men to kill one another in a more refined manner . . ."

Great is Science, and it will prevail--there will be war."[10] They build up provocations to support their illusion: let it be a question of prestige. Or trade. The rights of nationality![11] "Never was war more honorable or urgent . . . We have only to find a casus belli . . ."[12] They do soon enough; for a letter from the Yellow Ants desires them to withdraw their army lying between the Birch Tree and the Pine Tree between the two blades of grass.

> An insult, an insult, we shall not tolerate it! . . . At last a war is forced upon us . . . Soldiers! We find ourselves compelled to call you to the colors. A wicked enemy has treacherously attacked us . . . we are fighting for life and liberty . . . the greatness of our State . . . the interests of civilization . . . for justice, our victory, our national honor, our commercial interests . . .[13]

And the final touch of supreme egotism!: "Great god of the Ants, thou hast granted victory to thy servants. I appoint

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[10] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 182. Again on the question of science Rolland adds a few relevant remarks:

> D'Oyron: . . . Who forced you to leave your books, your work, your laboratory? What but the desire to dominate others, to wear a sword? I know what the disinterestedness of men of science amounts to . . . they always associate their own personal interests with the great aims and interests of which they believe themselves the representatives. "The Wolves," The Drama, VIII (November, 1918), 590.

[11] Capek and Capek, loc. cit.

[12] Loc. cit.

[13] Ibid., pp. 182-183.

thee honorary Colonel . . ."[14]

The motif running through this is similar to that in War, of Artzybashev; both, indeed, reduce man to his lowest level--a sadistic, egotistic animal. There is a temptation to further compare them, to point out the difference that makes one emphasize (as in the case of Bulgakov and Artzybashev)[15] the cause rather than the result. But that will not further the problem at hand much. Instead, to point out, first, another principle in Capekian thought will more opportunely accomplish the same end. Not only do the authors accuse the nations of concocting war--in the name of science, justice, or what-have-you--for their own industrial gain, but they point out this killing-motif in man's most intimate individual pursuits. The Butterflies may be cited, for instance: the philanderers of society, who "must be young--it's the fashion";[16] who can tolerate any moral corruption, as long as it doesn't bear a horrid name;[17] who spend all their time being aesthetic or indulging in vapid flirtations with someone else's mate.

Then there are the beetles--the hoarders--avaricious

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[14] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 184.

[15] See p. 63.

[16] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 170.

[17] Ibid., p. 168.

creatures who care nothing about anyone in their mad pursuit of a "pile":

> . . . Our nest-egg, our capital . . . Now we've got our little pile that we've so looked forward to, we've got to work and work and work to make another one . . . Why another one? . . . Silly--so that we can have two, of course.[18]

The crickets' egotism is as atrocious; how glad they are that a bird ate the last cricket who dwelt in the house that now they may occupy: "A godsend for us . . . Tralala!"[19] No one is very sorry that Mrs. Cricket is snatched away by the Ichneumon Fly, who carries all prey home to his hungry daughter:

> My good man, if you want to keep alive, you've got to fight your way . . . there must be a certain amount of ambition. A strong personality is bound to assert itself.[20]

The parasite's greed finds this successful philosophy trying. ". . . dirty old profiteer! What injustice!"[21] He bides no time, though in gobbling up the larva himself when the old miser isn't looking.

This is a veritable array of all the vices--all the vices, which are ultimately one: the desire to kill others

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[18] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 173.

[19] Ibid., p. 176.

[20] Ibid., p. 178.

[21] Loc. cit.

for personal gain. The Capeks' debasement of the individual imputes a like derogation of the state, for it has been shown how one is only an abstract embodiment of the other. It logically follows that the latter is able to reach no higher level than its source, the former. It follows, too, then, that the consideration of one, as instinctively evil, holds out but little hope for the other. The best attack, therefore, on the problem of individual versus state relationship, will be to detour momentarily from the problem itself and turn to the Capek prognosis. With this reversal of order a more logical progression of thought will be observed:

> If all things--individuals and the nations they comprise--tend towards self-destruction, in what can hope be placed? Life and death, the Tramp philosophizes: they're both good if we know how to treat them . . . Why can't we all live happily together? The world is big enough, and life could be happy for everyone, if we had a bit of sense.[22]

Is it in a rejuvenation of mankind--like Toller's half-faith--that inspires hope in the authors? Probably not: there is evidence to the contrary. In Act III the Chrysalis, who throughout the play is struggling to come to birth, prophesies

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[22] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 186.

that the world will soon be free.[23] She symbolizes abortive idealism. Abortive, because the Tramp listens to her predictions with pity and scorn: Ridiculous creatures! how small they look to you and me! These insects never dream of working to some general scheme.[24]

The epilogue, entitled Death and Life, strengthens this sense of scornful disillusion. The Moths cry: "Life is eternal. It cannot fail. All hail to life"--and fall dead.[25] A voice sings:

> We are struck from the dark
> And again we expire.
> Each is a spark
> Of an infinite fire . . .[26]

And a chorus adds: "And to flash from the forge for a moment, and perish, is all our desire."[27] In this last

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[23] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 179.

[24] Loc. cit. Is this not almost identical with Lenormand's remarks in The Coward?

> And the war, can you understand the war at this moment? . . . On this earth, falling through space, there are millions of men bent on destroying one another! . . . All their corpses piled together would make but a handful of mud on the face of our planet . . . The earth itself is only a grain of sand . . . And men must massacre men! . . . strikes me . . . most ridiculous . . . The importance which man attaches to his own conduct in regard to this madness. "The Coward," Twentieth Century Plays, p. 47.

[25] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 186.

[26] Loc. cit.

[27] Loc. cit.

sentence is the crux of the matter: nothing lives for more than a moment, since man is a spiritual weakling; for he can conceive of nothing large enough to survive pragmatic use-and-exhaustion. The only relationship he can conceive is material means-and-end. Obviously--to catch up the severed thread of thought--a nationalism designed on this is narrow and ephemeral, because life is so. Nor does man care to learn, the Capeks say, for all the play's conclusion: a Woman walking through the woods finds the Tramp dead:

"Here come the girls on their way to school," she cries; "Quick, Peter Wood--cover up that! They mustn't see it, poor dears!"[28]

Another section of the Balkan States, Jugoslavia, is heard from, through the voice of Ivo Vojnovich, whose The Resurrection of Lazarus reverts interestingly to the intense nationalism of Maeterlinck. This is not odd, since the play was written in 1913--the period when that attitude prevailed --just following the outbreak of the Balkan War in 1912. Its dedication reads an ardent tribute

> To the Authors of Victory
> The Serbian Mothers
> On the Altar of Their Martyrdom . . .[29]

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[28] Capek and Capek, op. cit., p. 187.

[29] Ivo Vojnovich, "The Resurrection of Lazarus," Poet Lore, XXXVII (1926), 318.

It is the key to the play. There is no attempt at disguising the patriotic aim; the author next admits in the Preface that he writes of:

> The children of their [the Serbs'] tears, of their silence and of the eternal memory in which men hold them, have set free for us the Serbian Fatherland, from the Danube to the Adriatic! Victory has come, since the soul of the Serbian people, the soul of mute martyrdoms, in its very grief is unbreakable, unconquerable. Life has thrown it on a rock, bound it in slavery, chained it to the Turk--but it has not broken it. It has buried the dead and planted flowers, it has watched the blood of its children flow and has baked cakes for the children of slaughtered children, it has groaned beneath the cross and dreamed of Prince Marko--it has been silent, silent, and has quietly girt itself with steel. It is the Mother of all Lazars --it is the avenger of Kossovo![30]

Taking characters that he remembered from his childhood, he has endowed them with the allegorical significance hinted at above. Elsewhere in the Preface he states this intention outright:

> In the Aga of the Arnauts, I have erected a symbol of the old, conquering spirit of the Osmans as contrasted to the bestiality of the Arnaut soldiers. I have made Lazar perish alone . . . and I have concentrated in one single deed of terror all the acts of tyranny and bloodshed of these last years. And . . . finally, Christ on the mount of his holy Transfiguration raises from the dead the Eternal Lazarus--our People![31]

All analysis of the play, that follows, is merely embellishment of these two statements.

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[30] Vojnovich, op. cit., pp. 319-320.

[31] Ibid., pp. 318-319.

His reaction to war is that of a patriot, as it has been stated: but this does not imply the assumption of a chip-on-the-shoulder attitude, nor of a readiness to take up arms on the slightest provocation. Neither did Maeterlinck's attitude. Both speak, only, from the pit of real oppression, in which there is no course left but to accept the role of self-defense, or death. Both consider the right to live an individual, as well as a national, right. While Maeterlinck never loses sight of the individuality forfeited with the forfeiture of nationalism, Vojnovich's approach is from the complementary angle: national rights are a guarantee of individual ones. He logically carries this out by symbolizing the aims and meaning of national feeling in certain of his characters. Maeterlinck's burgomaster really has no need to be symbolized in anything: what he stands for, in himself, is enough protest against the workers of evil aggression. The eternal struggle between the humane and just agencies against the forces of intellectual and emotional unenlightenment, that has been portrayed so many times before in plays like Antigone or The Enemy of the People, or in actual lives, such as Christ's or Socrates', numbers Van Bell as one in it. Always, in the last analysis, it has been a matter of individual conscience. To put it differently: the burgomaster, with his gentle, unbending moral valor, his fearless straight-sightedness, does not

need a war-background to have occasioned his struggle, which is so essentially individual, that he might well serve, with a few minor changes, as an Ibsenian figure, as suggested above.

These remarks are relevant here only because they seek to point out certain contrasting qualities in Vojnovich's play towards characterization, which superficially parades a seemingly analogous attitude. If Vojnovich widens the circle of human "rights," he also narrows it, for he has amassed into a heap the singleness and universality of Maeterlinck's idea. If there is in him an added breadth, then the narrowness comes in length. Yet the same general concern is the nucleus of both. Both desire a guarantee of impregnability--for Maeterlinck, of intellectual boundaries first, territorial ones secondarily; and for Vojnovich, the territorial ones first. The two overlap. What both most value has been endangered; all life, all civilization has been blocked. The time has come to take up arms, there being no alternative between acquiescence to destruction and a voluntary protest against it. This stand precludes any possible justification on the part of the enemy.

The burgomaster's triumph is a spiritual one only, the kind that, in later ages, would be appreciated only by those who usually identify themselves with martyrs. But the Lazar of Vojnovich is more than this. True, he symbolizes

the wide martyrdom of a whole people; but his loss to death is calculated to arouse more than a spiritual exultation. Time and time again the exhortation Lazar gives, on leaving for the War, is echoed and re-echoed throughout the play:

> We are fighting and dying for this hapless Serbian land, which is a twofold slave--to the Asiatic whip and to European hypocrisy. I pray the Lord that he give me the strength to bring up my children in a way that will enable them, when the time comes, to avenge you and me![32]

He is Serbia speaking, who speaks as saviour and avenger, listing its grievances:

> . . . in a short while we shall disappear altogether! They are slaughtering us, murdering us! They carry off our youth into slavery . . . the last Serbian generation![33] Arnauts hunt us as they would hunt rats! Albanians destroy us as they would destroy sheep diseased with rot! Nizams flay us . . .[34] The Turks wanted pastures; ours would not give in; so they set fire to the village.[35] . . . "The Sultan shook the hand of our envoy," and Europe winked to the hangman to continue with his work! . . .[36] Our leaders have deserted us--betrayed us. They negotiate with diplomats--kiss the hands of the hangman! The end has come! From now on each one of us is both a soldier and a leader! . . . We must strike in unison . . . We must stop this hunting of human game! . . . What can we do against the dark, infernal powers of Selfishness, Ingratitude and Satiety? . . . we, who are beggars! If they have an army to defend them, we

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[32] Vojnovich, op. cit., p. 323.

[33] Ibid., p. 326.

[34] Ibid., p. 327.

[35] Ibid., p. 329.

[36] Ibid., p. 335.

> too must have an army to crush them! Force against force! Cannon against cannon![37]

If a cursory glance seems to indicate that this is a rapacious militarism, a second will dispel the delusion. There is no desire for plunder here, or for vague commercial rights or military glory--only deprecation of it. Peace alone is wanted--but involuntarily rendered destitute of it, these people will seek from war. No price is too high to pay for the integrity of the state. Death, or freedom!

Personal freedom is gladly offered on this altar; the young renounce the love that should one day be theirs, the old--what of it that has made their youth bright and bearable should sustain them the more profoundly in age. Says Jovan:

> Some men succeed in killing affection; why can't I do so now? . . . There is only a small group of us left that are free from any passion.
>
> Lazar (calm, motionless): Because we shall not exist any longer![38]

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[37] Vojnovich, op. cit., pp. 336-338.

[38] Ibid., p. 329. Henry Schnittkind, too, prophesied this waste:

> The grandmother: "We old ones, the useless chaff, we're all that's left over . . . He, too, like his father, will be dragged away to the shambles of war when he grows to be a man. War will always be waiting for the strongest and the best, unless--"
>
> The grandfather: "Unless what?" "Shambles," Poet Lore, XXV (1914), 571.

> Jovan: It's no use! --"Discipline!" "Authority!" . . . we have given up love and have renounced the hope of future generations in order that we may preserve our strength and attain our aims as quickly as possible.[39]

> Lazar: . . . I have placed upon the altar of our cause five dear hearts that I would sacrifice without the slightest hesitation, without a single moan! I shouldn't even turn my head to gaze once more upon that small precious haven of mine . . . where I shall never, never place my foot again.[40] . . . The time has come when each one of us must sacrifice to our wretchedness the thing that he holds dearest! Who knows that these tears of yours or this misery of mine-- . . . may not be the one fatal drop that will cause the chalice filled with the blood and the curses of our races to overflow! So that then at last God may dispense his justice![41]

And, in the name of peace, Stana, the Mother, about whom Vojnovich in the Preface says, "Only the Serbian Mothers can give birth to our victory!,"[42] denies claim to her captured son:

> For the sake of all these!
> And for the sake of this blessed peace
> Of the tired slaves,
> That they, wretched beings, may be spared
> The suffering and agony of Lazar . . .[43]
> . . . let them live in peace![44]

And Kosara echoes:

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[39] Vojnovich, op. cit., p. 331.

[40] Loc. cit.

[41] Ibid., p. 349.

[42] Ibid., p. 319.

[43] Ibid., p. 388.

[44] Ibid., p. 362.

> The hurt lasts forever, forever! When the lilac is in bloom, when the harvest comes . . . Always! . . . Always! . . . For there are no restrictions, no laws placed upon human game! A man is in your way? Kill him! . . . On the crossing? Kill him! . . . In the field . . . The field is mine! . . . They hunt our offspring whenever they please, but animals only when the law allows.[45]

It is this theme of sacrifice that marks this as a tragedy of futility--but not as Artzybashev's was, where every action yielded no result. It is, rather, a temporary futility that willingly so labels itself, in hope that the future will bear a different name. Truly, Lazar cries:

> No one sees us, no one hears us! . . . We can afford to be weak now, to weep over our own selves, over our young lives so fruitlessly wasted, and over this accursed spring of ours that does not permit us to live as other free men do, in hope.[46]

But Stana, with faith, tells Aga that "Drops of water wear out stone."[47] And she tells Kosara of a time when they shall be able to put their feet on Serbian soil, kneel, kiss the earth, and say, ". . . thou mayest receive us . . . we may die in Freedom!"[48]

In the expressionistic poem suffixed to the play,

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[45] Vojnovich, op. cit., p. 362. In Toller's Man and the Masses is an almost identical statement: "Workman: International law protects the enemy's soldiers. But they can murder us like jungle beasts . . ." (P. 68.)

[46] Vojnovich, op. cit., p. 332.

[47] Ibid., p. 380.

[48] Ibid., p. 389.

Lazar, at Judgment Day, is called forth by Christ, and, amid the blowing of bugles, the waving of flags, and the choir of hosannas, the people of the world shout:

Lazarus, Our People, Hath Arisen![49]

To summarize: The Jugoslavian play, The Resurrection of Lazarus, of Ivo Vojnovich, exemplifies the play of nationalism and patriotism, as does also Maeterlinck's Burgomaster of Stilemonde, in the French chapter of this essay. In both plays the concept of war-guilt hinges upon the unfair aggression and oppression of a peaceful nation by another.

In contrast to the Capeks, who regard with disillusion all social relationships, Vojnovich maintains that the highest nobility of a man may be displayed in his readiness to sacrifice all he possesses for his martyred country.

Furthermore, what, in the Comedy of Insects, amounts to a discreditment of future adjustment, in Lazarus is a fervent belief in the future efficacy of the war-sacrifice.

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[49] Vojnovich, op. cit., p. 395.

CHAPTER IV

THE TREND IN ITALY

Since Pirandello's is the leading name in Italian drama, and his work is the consummation of post-War Italian thought, it is fitting that an analysis be made of one of his plays. As much can be gained from a scrutiny likely to be abstract, as from a more concrete one. As You Desire Me, it is true, is not a war-play, yet what it lacks in actual reference to war, it compensates for as an embodiment of war-time philosophy. Appropriately set in Berlin, this play is directly attributable to war, both in the idea which motivates it and in the chaos which carries out the idea. With this as a starting point, it may be interesting to reclassify those matters with reference to the three general points considered in the preceding discussions.

The thesis that runs through all his plays explains what Pirandello thought about war. It concerns the natural intellectual confusion that followed the sudden brutal denial of all traditional values. It concerns the attempt of the thinker to resurrect himself after that confusion and put his house again to rights. It concerns his inability to readjust to a world that is unadjusted. And it concerns, finally, the gradual clutching at an inward life

for the meaning that is obviously lacking externally. Awareness of the world never ceases to the point that a psychopathic state ensues, but the dreamlike unsubstantiality of even this subjective reality proves the morbid dubiousness of reality in any sense.

It can be shown that war--to personify it--should be morally outlawed for inducing this fantastic state of mind. Whoever is to blame for war does not concern Pirandello, outside of this. His is the intellectual, philosophical realm; he quarrels not with historical or sociological phenomena, but rather with psychological results.

Thus it is that his Strange Lady is justified in "believing" herself into the part of Cia. That she is not physically Cia, was not born of Cia's parents, was not married to Cia's Bruno, lived none of Cia's previous life, is no barrier to her spiritual occupation of Cia. She is more real than the corrupt Salter and his daughter, for they do not know who they are--and therefore are nobody. She is more real than the Demented Lady, who is not recognized by her own aunt--and therefore not what she was, not real--or at any rate, has achieved a new, unrecognizable reality. And Bruno, who at one moment believes in the Lady and at another doesn't: who is he? He is Cia's husband--just what he was before--unless he ceases to believe--and then he is someone else, and he no longer knows who, for Cia is then

lost and all of what was has ceased to be. Cia states their relationship: "and does he really think that she can be the same? . . . after ten years? After all that must have happened to her--the same? . . ."[1]

How pointless to attempt an analysis of the individual's relation to the state! Pirandello is unsure, even, of the individual's relation to himself! As the Strange Lady complains: there is no "natural law any more . . . nothing but the obscene madness that comes from not being able to find any satisfaction--anywhere--"[2] Only a mental act of courage can give back what has been reft from us. Explaining her imposition, she tells that she plays a terrible game with life, which has no regard for facts, that against all evidence asserts rules of its own--hoping to grow beyond the limitations that nature and society set for her. She explains:

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[1] Luigi Pirandello, As You Desire Me, pp. 66-67. Introversion, in a milder form, points the way to escape for many of the post-War writers. Rolland, too, recommends it:

> You will see . . . when you are my age! Ambition and love are all very fine, but they go. What remains to the end is oneself. And to save that is a sacred duty! . . . One has to choose, child, between letting others die and dying oneself. (P. 31.) I hate them, all these faiths, these nightmares of delusion that men give themselves to, as one gives oneself to a vice that devastates life. Life is there, beside us, quite simple and so sweet! . . . And they have become incapable of enjoying it. Their faith is a mania, a poison that plunges them into a furious, deadly stupefaction. They have sacrificed me to it . . . The Game of Love and Death, p. 37.

[2]. Pirandello, op. cit., p. 61.

> You surely have never known what it is, out of a real torment, a real despair, to feel the need of taking revenge on life, on life that is--as others and circumstances have made it for you--by creating another better, more beautiful one, the one that might have been, the one that you would like to have had![3]

Possibly it is not too far-fetched to accept her as a symbol of the age--that part which eternally seeks to free itself intellectually and spiritually from conditions forever fundamentally inacceptable to it. She represents our questioning of reality, to which no answer is given: she is that phase that asks itself constantly whether it will for all time remain un-integrated, and answers only that, for the time being, at least, one can only believe whatever seems best. For one must forget that part of reality which is too horrible to permit sane contemplation of it. Indicating the Demented Lady, who is a product of the past horror, she shows how we may

> . . . happen to fall into the hands of a ferocious enemy . . . and then, you have carnage . . . a fleshly carnage . . . and a mental massacre that was enough to drive her mad and bring her to what she is . . . in her madness a vengeful fury against fate . . .[4]

But no where does Pirandello state this thesis more

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[3] Pirandello, op. cit., pp. 211-212.

[4] Ibid., p. 213. Compare to Eugene Brieux's Nellie, who understands why "Life, poor cheated life, wants her revenge and she is taking it wherever she can find it." "'Les Américains Chez Nous'--A Dramatic Tribute from Eugene Brieux," Current Opinion, LXVIII (April, 1920), 493.

plainly than when he puts these words into her mouth:

> This, Uncle, is the play that we must go through with. The theme is: how I look to you, and how I look to Lena, and how one recognizes a lady who has been missing for ten years, when the whole of the enemy's army has probably walked over her! . . .[5] Dead, dead, or as good as dead, so far as the life she once led here is concerned! Dead to every memory of life, which she no longer wants to remember--if she is to go on living![6]

Highly tragic and rather brave is this escapist attempt with which Pirandello hopes to refortify himself against the world. And in it there is a kernel of unexpected wholesomeness, too: for he proposes to retain nothing that the imagination cannot digest healthily.[7] Its strength is that noblest strength of all--inward strength. Its ideal is a rebirth of beauty from horror, an ultimate triumph of everliving spiritual values over the grossest external circumstances, and finally, an ecstatic process

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[5] Pirandello, op. cit., p. 94.

[6] Ibid., p. 99.

[7] To Salter she says:

> [You are] so filthy that you can never again get clean . . . Off you go, first to Vienna . . . during the confusion that followed the war . . . then to Berlin . . . that other madhouse . . . applause . . . delirium . . . Away! away! away! . . .

Thus casting him off, she represents successful conquest over the past; while the Demented Lady represents its victory over her. All that is left of her is the one name she can remember--"You are calling--who knows from what distant moment--what happy moment--of your life--you who have been left suspended there . . ." (P. 210.)

that is emergence from a deeper self out of a lesser.

Cia denies it a scientific explanation:

> . . . science steps in to take a hand! . . . The most overwhelming of evidence . . . it may be that she [the Demented Lady] really has the mark! . . . [but] against all the evidence and even against you . . . I shall have the courage to shout that I am Cia--I . . .[8] To make myself--To make myself--to bring myself to the point where I should look as if I had "stepped down from that picture" . . .[9] Do you hear them proclaiming their rights? Accusing each other and shouting that it isn't fair! . . .[10] Oh, earth, earth! With a touch of soul, you can lift yourself for a moment, come out of yourself, up above all the horrors that Fate has been able to inflict upon you; yes, you can fly, you can recreate life within yourself; when you feel yourself bursting with fullness--up--you must climb, climb, until you bump into the facts that quench it, that trample it out, that befoul and crush it--personal interests, frictions, quarrels . . . "Here I am; I am yours; there is nothing left in me, nothing of my own; take me and make me, make me over, as you desire me!"[11]

To summarize: Classification of Pirandello's As You Desire Me as a war-play is justifiable in the light of its representative philosophy of bewilderment, introspection, and disillusion; and its implication that this philosophy is an actual outgrowth of the War. More intangibly, perhaps, than in previously discussed plays, it reveals a concern with the same problems.

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[8] Pirandello, op. cit., p. 147.

[9] Ibid., p. 205.

[10] Ibid., p. 64.

[11] Ibid., pp. 143-144.

In keeping with its philosophical bent, it seeks to brand no man or nation guilty for the War; instead, much like Toller, it regards war merely as a characteristic manifestation of Life--from which nothing better could be expected. The individual must seek to sever his relation to this universe of material causality by escaping into "self." From this recalcitration, a spiritual regeneration should succeed, that will guarantee, at some future time, absolute freedom from the shadow that cannot now be faced.

CHAPTER V

THE TREND IN GERMANY

In Germany a contrast may be made between two plays appearing relatively the same number of years apart as the two French plays which will be discussed in the next chapter. Ernst Toller's Transfiguration, which was completed in 1918;[1] and the other, Hans Chlumberg's Miracle at Verdun, of 1930. It will be seen that there is not the great difference between them that exists between the two French plays. They are both expressionistic in form, in spite of the trend away from this method during the time at which the latter was written. Toller's attitude of revolt is more or less to be expected at the time he wrote Transfiguration; the pathological violence and morbidity of the piece is just in accord with the drama of Essig and Jahn.[2] But it is stranger to find Chlumberg using the same technique, plucking the same string of bitter disillusion, still failing to acknowledge the restitution of the narrow nationalistic philosophy that completed a cycle of thought.

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[1] Ernst Toller, Seven Plays, p. 58.

[2] Julius Bab, "The Theater in the German Language Area Since the World War," The Theater in a Changing Europe (T. H. Dickinson, editor), p. 145.

The whole play of Toller is an invective against war. That physically it renders men into terrible caricatures of human beings is mockery enough. He seems to say, it is as if the gods playfully made them into one shape, then tired of this, flung them over a Bunsen-burner, snatched off a leg here and there, poked a pretty hole--and, behold! a new shape! A laboratory scene, with a child as head-professor! No excuses, no reason, no compensation! As Genevieve replies to Siegfried, in the French play: ". . . life? . . . A doubtful adventure for the living, quite pleasant for the dead."[3]

Thus Toller's philosophy of life indicates that he believes that life is capable of doing anything--has it not done it? War is only one of its many glaring manifestations, possibly the ugliest. But worse than that, is what it does to man's spirit: That small shred of soul, found in even the most wretched of beings, is done almost to death.

These wrecked creatures parade across the scene: the lunatic, who thinks he will drink his own blood;[4] the wounded who cry out against man and god:

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[3] Jean Giraudoux, Siegfried, p. 60.

[4] Toller, "Transfiguration," op. cit., p. 69.

> Your mending and your patching
> Does us no good.
> Why did you not prevent this horror?
> Why start your botching now? . . .
> Cover your faces, bow your heads;
> Forget your Christian charity,
> Or call it wretched, barren, botching.[5]

The diseased, infected by the country's "heroes":

> For our country's sake? . . . For the sake of a small handful of rich men who feast and debauch and gamble with the products of our labour . . .[6]

The poverty-stricken daughters, who become whores.[7]

> Mankind defiled! . . . For our country's sake! . . . Can a country really ask this much of us? Or has our country sold its soul, sold it to the state? . . .[8]

This last remark awakes wonder as to whether Toller believed social evils to follow from war or, conversely, to lead to it. In consideration of his revolutionary ideas, one suspects the latter is the case. Underlying his belief in a spiritual integer contained in every man--I had said "almost" done to death--there resides a disillusioned recognition of the natural frailty which undermines what would otherwise be a Rousseauian optimism. He can point out types like the nurse, who, on hearing the noise outside can still joyfully cry, as she attends the wounded: "A

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[5] Toller, op. cit., p. 80.

[6] Ibid., p. 84.

[7] Ibid., pp. 88-89.

[8] Ibid., p. 85.

great victory, God has granted us a great victory! Ten thousand killed!"[9] And the professor of armaments (instead of a head he has a skull) smugly points out to the students the "last of our achievements," whose "services to war are greatly valued"; sympathetically he remarks to Friedrich--who has fainted at the sight of mechanically rejuvenated cripples: "Poor young man, to faint in work like this! How would he fare upon the field of battle?"[10]

And Gabriele, Friedrich's betrothed, "who leaves her lover for a little plot of land."[11] And the Old Man, the anti-pacifist, who recalls: "The days when our victorious comrades swept conquering forward while the enemy ran before us like a lot of sheep . . ."[12]

All these destroyers and haters, he reviles; and the hawkers and hypocrites, too, who clothe destruction and hatred in the weeds of science or religion: the doctor who thinks to cure the economic distresses of society with castor oil or the mention of a psychosis:

> You must come and see me . . . I have just bought a nice sanatorium . . .[13]

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[9] Toller, op. cit., p. 75.

[10] Ibid., pp. 76-77.

[11] Ibid., p. 86.

[12] Ibid., p. 95.

[13] Ibid., p. 101.

The professor who mounts the dais to claim that science, the servant of the state, will make the path clear:

> The Science in whose ranks I have the honour to serve is inspired by a holy devotion. It is here to help our glorious State, to account for it as a complete ethical organism . . . Go, gentlemen, and study the laws of causality . . . grasp the law of association in regard to all phenomena . . .[14]

And the priest, who addresses men as "Brothers in Christ," and cries in Christ's name:

> In time of war did I not preach and say unto you: "Annihilate the enemy, choke him with poison gas and shatter him with bombs, destroy him ruthlessly . . . All that you do finds favour in the eyes of God! . . . For the Lord of Hosts was with you . . .[15]

Obviously Toller does not blame any abstract entity, such as the Nation, for war. With great regret, he blames

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[14] Toller, op. cit., p. 95. Post-War disillusion seemed prone to turn its bitterness against science, in which it had so shortly before placed faith. Almost all serious discussions on life involved some remark concerning it. Romain Rolland in his The Game of Love and Death adds his bit; but his attitude indicates not a lack or evilness in science itself, but rather, the misuse of it by man. Jerome says:

> Science, as you say, does without pity . . . I distrust sentimentality. But I also distrust ideology . . . I no longer have your faith in Human Progress . . . however flattering it may be to the genius of man and his ardent hope, I shall never set him up as a god on an altar to be nourished by the bloody odor of sacrifices. Nothing is sacred to me but life, the present life. (Pp. 111-112.)

[15] Toller, loc. cit.

man alone, man and the evil institutions he builds--just as does Giraudoux. Yet there is a difference between the two: Toller, the revolutionary and reformer, has the idealistic confidence in new systems creating new spirituality. He believes strongly enough in the evil in man, but, like Rousseau, he attributes it to society, a wrongly-organized society which encourages that inevitable evil, without giving it a chance to be replaced by the good that is as infallibly there. Giraudoux's philosophy, on the other hand, is more aristocratically humanistic: the masses, who might perpetrate evil if left to it, must be over-balanced in some way by those who are capable of seeing that the ways of peace are preferable. His is not a snobbish intellectualism; but, rather, an aristocracy of character.

Toller too cries for an individual awakening, but he is more confident that it can be achieved by one and all:

> . . . you must have faith in humanity. It is better for you to suffer want than to follow the precepts . . . without faith.[16] . . . you could still be men and women, still be human, if only you had faith in yourselves and in humanity, if only you would grant the spirit its fulfillment.[17]

Again and again he stresses the fact that there can be a rejuvenation, a self-realization. He sees these

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[16] Toller, op. cit., p. 97.

[17] Ibid., p. 105.

wretches as mere caricatures of themselves, distorted images;[18] and through pity he bends down to them to tell them to arise, and in pity points out the way, and in pity dies and is reborn with them.

> I know how you hate those who gorge themselves at your expense . . . I know of your nights of hot desire . . . I know of your restless seeking after God . . . Your hearts are dry and withered. The hearts of your fellow-men you regard as convenient bell-pulls which you can tug at when you feel inclined . . . Your lips shape barren laws . . . Your hands raise walls around you . . . You sow hatred in the hearts of your children . . . You build castles and prisons and set men to rule over them . . . All because you have buried alive the spirit . . . Distorted images of true humanity! . . . you are distorted images of your real selves . . . Yet . . . your eyes could be filled with the light of joy . . . You could go forward with winged feet . . . free men and women![19]

There is something paradoxical about these statements and the one regarding Toller's total pessimism towards life--the latter does not go unsupported either. Witness, for instance, the symbolism of Death-By-Peace, the character in the prologue, who tells Death-By-War that he calls "my kingdom chaos," accusing Death-By-War of being:

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[18] Compare Henri Lenormand's almost identical statement: "Charlier: 'No. It is but a caricature of social life. A cruel, grimacing caricature . . . a brief illusion.'" "The Coward," Twentieth Century Plays, p. 42.

[19] Toller, op. cit., pp. 104-105. Emil Ludwig in his "Union," Bismarck, p. 278, points out the exact opposite in attitude of the German ruling class of Bismarck's day: "Roon: 'Yesterday I got one of those democratic pamphlets. It dripped so with humanity you had to hold a glass under it!'"

> . . . a modern Death--
> A product of the times,
> Comparable to the futile living of today
> Where everything is rotten under the tinsel.[20]

Is this not a statement of life the eternal blunderer, who stalks through the ages renaming its fresh stupidities, again and again, with new names? Is not Death-By-Peace only that immutable rottenness at the core of life, that is only another sort of death, indeed no different from death?

How can these two views be reconciled? First, it is noticeable that the latter point of view ceases after Scene ix in the Fifth Station (as Toller designates his acts). From here on one attitude merges, or rather changes, into the other. Death and Resurrection arise, presumably from the Lodger, who has been ushered away by Death. The symbolism culminates in the figure of the Climbers, in Station Six, who obviously represent man's giddy ascent to betterment.[21] There is the Second Climber who is unable to reach the goal; his human prototype is Friedrich's mother, who fails to achieve the breadth of mind enabling one to call all men one's brothers. "I am too old, my life is nearly done. I don't understand you."[22] Friedrich, of course,

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[20] Toller, op. cit., p. 62.

[21] Ibid., p. 99.

[22] Ibid., p. 100. Toller's pessimism at the confusion and misunderstandings of life is evident in another play

represents the new order, which seeks: "Once more humanity must be vitalized by love . . .";[23] which sees

> . . . down the arches of the years
> The great cathedral of mankind arise;

"Hoppla! Such Is Life!," Seven Plays. A typical statement he puts into the mouth of Karl, the protagonist, who exclaims wearily: "We speak and do not hear one another . . . We hate and do not see one another . . . We love and do not know one another. We murder but are unaware of one another . . . Everything to no purpose!" (Pp. 271-272.)

And Wiegand and Scharrelmann's "Wages of War," Poet Lore, XIX (1908), 160, expresses a remarkably like-phrased remark, in a speech of Kekulin: ". . . What does one live for, anyway? If--if you are gone so suddenly as that, and know nothing of yourself."

Anushka says in the other instance:

> O God! they live and they die beside each other and never know each other. And they call one another brothers and the others enemies! . . . (P. 150.)
> . . . They are beasts. No, not even beasts are like that . . . (P. 153.)

[23] Toller, op. cit., p. 98. Romain Rolland in The Game of Love and Death surveys the same chaos and comes to the same conclusion:

> Vallee: Useless to play the comedy of society! There is no society any longer. There is nothing any longer. Nothing but you. (P. 52.) . . . Duty! In this sinister world, that word only serves to kill. In its name the great Hypocrite . . . butchers his rivals, and the baseness of friends delivers friends to the executioner. Duty! What senseless abuse we have all made of this lying word! . . . (Pp. 60-61.) Scorning yourself! In an hour like this, who thinks of scorn? Around us everything is dying, everything is destroyed, all the bonds and the laws that hold men together in society, respect for unhappiness, good faith, kindness, everything. Amid the ruins, love alone still shines. (Pp. 61-62.)

> The youth of every nation marches singing . . .
> No misery, no war, no hatred left on earth . . . .[24]

Secondly, besides this Utopian picture, there is a more or less concrete refutation, point by point, of each corruption reviled in the first sections of the play: In the first scenes the enthusiasm of the hero to go to war is later replaced by a realization of its brutality and uselessness. Let us compare two statements of Toller's proving this:

> Volunteers wanted. Release, release from stifling, barren narrowness! Oh, but the struggle will unite us all! The greatness of the times will make us all great . . . Was I half-hearted? I feel myself strong! Strong to embrace my duty.[25]

Then this:

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[24] Toller, op. cit., p. 98.

[25] Ibid., p. 66. This humane realization of the senselessness of the term "enemy" seems to be a common reaction in the post-War drama. Henry T. Schnittkind in his "Shambles," Poet Lore, XXV (1914); and Wiegand and Scharrelmann in their "The Wages of War," op. cit., XIX (1908), admit repugnance to the term. The first has the little child ask its grandmother what "enemy" means, "a wild animal?" No, the grandmother replies, a soldier is a man who tries to kill the enemy . . . just people like us . . . (P. 560.)

The second has Ivan say: "What have I to do with the enemy? Has the enemy done something to me, to you?" (P. 137.)

Sasha replies: "Life is sacred--and all have a mother and a sister who are without bread, who . . . fall victims to war." (P. 138.)

> Defiance against whom? . . . The enemy, of course . . . But who decides that there shall be an enemy? Is it some spiritual power within us that forces us to fight? . . . Or is the enemy selected arbitrarily?[26]

And this:

> For our country's sake! . . . Perhaps the State is a pimp, and our country a whore to be sold for any brutal lust-- . . . can a Fatherland that asks so much really be divine? Can it be worth the sacrifice of a single soul? No, no, no![27]

The same may be shown with reference to the revolt against traditional religion and its replacement by a more spiritual philosophy. The Diseased Woman speaks:

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[26] Toller, op. cit., p. 82. And the First Skeleton's remark:

> Today we're no more friends and enemies,
> Today we're no more black and white,
> Now we are all alike. (P. 71.)

Emil Ludwig in "Union," Bismarck, remarks the opposing, pre-War attitude. Says a French prince in this play: "Sorry? Since when is one sorry for the enemy? Have you become a pacifist?" (P. 208.)

[27] Toller, op. cit., p. 85. This attitude is even more affirmative in Toller's Man and the Masses, in which members of the working-class proclaim that the state fattens itself on them:

> Woman: Your State makes war;
> Your State betrays the people!
> Your State exploits, grinds down
> And robs the people of their rights!
>
> The Man: The State is holy . . . War insures its life.
> Peace is a phantom of weak minds.
> War is nothing but an interrupted armistice,
> In which the State continually lives,
> Constantly threatened by its foes without
> And enemies within. (P. 12.)

> God reward you for your labours, they say! But what sort of God is it that lets us rot away in misery? That mocks us with his "blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." The God of love and pity and charity bazaars! I think I see their God crowned among them, scattering confetti.[28]

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[28] Toller, op. cit., p. 84. The shock of the War produced a decided effect upon smug nineteenth century theology; God had been found to be as ineffectual as Science in averting major disasters. Toller, in Man and the Masses, as well as Carl Hauptmann and Henry Schnittkind display passages so similar to this one that they warrant quotation. From Toller's Man and the Masses comes this prison scene:

> The Handcuffed One: God is guilty! . . .
> Bring God to justice! . . .
> I accuse him! (Pp. 86-87.)

From Schnittkind's "Shambles," Poet Lore, XXV (1914), this conversation transpires between the priest and the grandmother. The priest has offered thanks to God in the name of the country:

> Grandmother: Thanks for what? For covering this little boy's mother over with earth, and for sending us back a cripple . . .?
>
> Priest: My good woman, I confess that war is horrible, and for that reason I have always prayed for universal peace. But when our superiors see fit to declare war upon another country, it is our sacred duty to encourage our soldiers to slay the enemy . . . No war is declared without the consent of Heaven.

The grandmother replies that it is enough to make war, without then blaming it on God, and that instead of sympathizing with war, the clergy had better preach against it . . . (Pp. 555-557.)

In Hauptmann's "War," The Drama, VI (1916), an Archangel proclaims:

> In God's name . . . call to war. God is more cruel than brute forces . . . God is vacant like the ether . . . God is the great incendiary . . . Only weaklings would minimize God and make Him human, would carry

But the priest, who had sought to bring the Saviour to the wounded soldiers, breaks the cross in two, enlightened:

> How dared I ever
> Think myself a priest,
> With fine-spun sophistries
> Proclaim myself God's chosen one?
> . . . I see the blasphemy
> Of empty priesthood,
> And I would cry aloud:
> Free yourselves, free yourselves from all false priests!
> Oh Christ, how are your teachings mocked![29]

Anti-pacifism and its opposite, humanism, are treated similarly. The Old Man's speech has been referred to above.[30] The Prisoner's rebuttal is this:

> . . . guilt . . . cast me into the abyss . . .
> Blasted since the day
> When man first rose against his kind
> And, hating, murdered man.[31]

But the strongest attestation of all is in the conversation between Friedrich and the Sick Man. The latter, utterly hopeless, cries out:

> . . . teach humanity that the only infallible panacea for all its ills is universal suicide. It's no good trying to cure them with love--I've tried it and I know.[32]

Him about in their pockets . . . on one side the hand-mirror in which they secretly admire themselves, and on the other side their God!--in order that He may lead their beloved self towards plenty and comfort. (P. 615.)

[29] Toller, op. cit., p. 79.

[30] See p. 99.

[31] Toller, op. cit., p. 93.

[32] Ibid., p. 102.

To which Friedrich replies, speaking not to him but to humanity:

> Go to the soldiers and tell them to beat their swords into ploughshares . . . Go to the rich and show them your heart . . . Yet be kind to them, for they too are poor, poor and straying. But the castles--these you must destroy . . . the false castles of illusion.[33]

The implication of this last is plain enough, and has been suggested above. Toller, earlier than many thinkers of the era of disillusion, believed in human progress; though the belief was rooted in an abyss of agony, an acute cognizance of the dire evildoings which humanity brought upon itself, out of itself, he also believed in the possibility of spiritual illumination that could develop from the same source. Not from "learning when the spirit is denied,"[34] or from reason, "when we must suffer in its name,"[35] but from that inward good:

> He who desires to join humanity
> Must find it first within himself.[36]

Chlumberg has much the same message, but in a sense he is more bitter. Where Toller finds an undying ember of goodness in the human heart, Chlumberg finds only emptiness,

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[33] Toller, op. cit., p. 105.

[34] Ibid., p. 97.

[35] Loc. cit.

[36] Ibid., p. 86.

forgetfulness, utter faithlessness. Frivolity is the key to it all; a dangerous lack of intellectual maturity and emotional depth that enables people to argue over the relative interest of the cemetery excursions through the Argonne and Verdun instead of trying to prevent such cemeteries at all.[37] When this malady prevails among the so-called columns of society--statesmen, scientists, and clergy--no wonder an overt demonstration such as war, is imminent. These people have not been humbled by their experiences; they still grab and plan and argue, and never for a moment remember what tears have been wept for them, what sacrifices rendered. They are impenitent to the end. Over the graves of the dead, Frenchman and German each shake a fist and faithfully swear to send others down to the same death. Witness Premier Delcampe, speaking at the Arc de Triomphe, of the "duty" to the heroic dead:

> Dear, departed France! . . . The armistice we followed up with a victorious peace! We forced the enemy to their knees, disarmed them, diminished their territory, weakened them for generations to come . . . Rich and powerful as never before--we are now <u>invincible</u>! Our army is the largest, the most powerful that was ever maintained by a state in time of peace! No

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[37] See "The Miracle at Verdun," <u>Twentieth Century Plays</u>: Vernier, the guide, points out that the hotel near here, accomodates tourists with ". . . the most modern conveniences. It has an excellent jazz band, golf courses and tennis courts . . ." And Miss Greeley is vexed at the expense of this particular tour, crying: ". . . one cemetery . . . had twenty thousand graves . . . and they gave us lunch <u>and</u> dinner." (P. 84.)

> nation in the world is so heavily armed as we! For every poilu--a machine gun! . . . Clouds of poison gas for every company! And so many airplanes that their brazen wings would darken the sun if any nation dared to arouse the enmity of France . . . Heroic dead of France! Thus are we armed, that you may rest in peace, that we may prove worthy of your heroic death and do honor to your memory![38]

Reich Chancellor Overteusch realizes that Germany's sacrifice was in vain--but only because it did not succeed in crushing the adversary:

> Heroic German dead! . . . Your sacrifice was--in vain . . . But . . . your spirit has risen from your graves . . . And because of it the future is full of promise . . . we must be silent and endure injustice. But not forever! . . . The next war will not be fought with troops . . . It will be a war--of chemistry! A war--of bacteriology! . . . we--swear with our lives --that you have not died in vain--at any cost--at any sacrifice . . . your Fatherland shall live and conquer. We swear it.[39]

With this, which amounts to blasphemy of the dead, they further their own militaristic ends.[40] The clergy

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[38] Hans Chlumberg, "The Miracle at Verdun," Twentieth Century Plays, p. 91.

[39] Ibid., p. 92. Compare this prophecy of the next war with Hans Gross's "The Next War," Contemporary One-Act Plays, in which a Man, who wishes to fight for his Fatherland, discovers, on wandering into the trenches that they are occupied by women, who take shelter there, the only safe place, since war has become a gas-warfare instead of a trench-warfare. The men, naturally, have resorted to the cities where poison-gases will not reach them as easily as it would there. The French and German women visit each other back and forth from their respective trenches, and German Conrad and Peter make friends with French Jean and Maurice. (Pp. 291-307.)

[40] Carl Hauptmann's Prince Kail is a representative of this class. His only objection to war is that it

fares no better at Chlumberg's hands. That they are incapable of appreciating an event of true spiritual significance is witnessed in their quibbling at the time of the miracle. A council has been called to determine the nature of this event, and the manner with which it should be dealt. The politicians, finding that the resurrection of the war-dead has created an unemployment problem, quickly hand over the matter to the church. Though a miracle would supposedly receive its most adequate reception there, such is not the case: Cardinal Dupin is

> . . . forced to admit, with shame and sorrow, that these resurrected do not seem in the least to be pure in heart, meek and holy . . . These resurrected aspire to earthly things . . . Their possessions! Their brides . . . let me ask you . . . Is that a miracle of God?[41]

Immediately a squabble ensues over the definition of miracle. Steppach, the scientist, distinguishes between two kinds of

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". . . would be the most senseless waste of money . . . War today would be a blasphemy against the welfare of every modern industrial nation." "War," The Drama, VI (1916), 621.

Toller's Kilman, in "Hoppla! Such Is Life!," Seven Plays, has a right to mistrust them:

> Just notice how often in every ministerial speech the words "peace of the world" and "humanitarian ideas" are mouthed, and I guarantee that just so many poison-gas factories and flying machine squadrons are provided by the secret budget. (P. 218.)

[41] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 104.

miracles, "those which it [science] has already succeeded in explaining; and those which it does not yet understand . . . ."[42] He is seated, after remarking with smug vagueness something about human nature being a source of pride.[43] Dupin, on surer ground now, furthers this trend of thought, unctuously offering a similar sentiment about the "loved ones, [who] were chosen to receive the highest grace that can come to man on earth . . . the great privilege of suffering a holy death as a sacrifice for the country . . ."[44]

Lamparenne, Prime Minister of Belgium, contributes his bit by blaming the capitalists;[45] each country, quick to take all remarks personally, rallies to its own support. Clarkson, the American Ambassador, reminds them of the expense the United States has gone to to bring European widows and mothers to and from their relatives' graves.[46]

Overtuesch is quick to claim for Germany what it

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[42] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 106.

[43] Ibid., p. 107.

[44] Loc. cit. Compare a similar passage in Romain Rolland's "The Wolves," The Drama, VIII (November, 1918), 596: ". . . we are embarked upon a holy enterprise, and the slaves of Europe tremble before us."

[45] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 109.

[46] Ibid., p. 108.

has done in a more "ideal sense."[47] England's Grathford is aware of England's sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of lives, that others might be more happy.[48]

They can indulge in sophistries with each other forever, but they cannot answer the Resurrected, who desire to know such unimportant things as, what care has been taken of their mothers and wives by the countries for which they gave their lives. There is a pause. Then: "Germany lost the war," remarks Overtuesch.[49]

"Have you a good peace?" a Frenchman asks.

"We have peace."[50] This is past believing because the Resurrected have seen fuses being made in factories.

> . . . Before the war we made cigarette holders, pipes . . . And now they're making fuses . . . grenades. What is that for, Minister? What is that for . . .? We must be sure that tomorrow or the next day our sons won't suffer the same thing that befell us . . .[51]

Useless are these inquiries: a session of nationalistic accusations is launched again. Again the Resurrected must turn away, for the answer is not here.

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[47] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 108.

[48] Loc. cit.

[49] Loc. cit.

[50] Loc. cit.

[51] Loc. cit.

The moment they arose with their limbs stiff from old wounds, they were mocked at for walking like men who are drunk.[52] When they returned to their wives and their businesses, they found other men in their places, and their children didn't know them. Their countries had likewise forgotten them. In France, Delcampe characteristically in bed with a mistress, exclaims, on being informed of the miracle: "If there was a resurrection, and the dead really rose from their grave--it would be for the sole purpose of overthrowing my cabinet!"[53]

Frau Overtuesch, of Germany, answers for her husband with a shrug: "He has nothing to do with the dead! He has a hard enough time with the living!"[54]

Lord Grathford is Britishly impassive, and his valet remarks: "Now that the Labor Party has ruled the country without anything special happening, nothing can make me lose my equilibrium, sir."[55]

They are indeed unliving, in every sense of the word. They are everywhere denied, and their passing has left no sign. "Heaven for the dead!" voices shout. "The earth for

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[52] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 89.

[53] Ibid., p. 94.

[54] Ibid., p. 95.

[55] Loc. cit.

the living!"[56] Vadinet was right when he pounded with his hammer and shrilled that the buried--are buried, and can't move and can't come back.[57] This briefly restates Chlumberg's theme: he is saying that the past errors of nations have left no imprint on their minds and souls. All that has gone before amounts to nothing--but a well-tended grave. Mazas, the tourist-guide, shows great contentment in the fact that "Absolutely everything that is possible is done for the dead!"[58] And Delcampe certifies as vehemently that "We have taken good care of the heroes' graves, at great expense! . . . The monument to the "Unknown Soldier" is a fine sight in every country!"[59]

To make a statement about Chlumberg's conception of the relation between the individual and the state, which will parallel the statements in the previous discussions, it is necessary only to emphasize more fully what has already been suggested in the foregoing observations. He, like Giraudoux, considers war a socio-economic upheaval brought about through government mismanagement resulting from human nature's blundering stupidity or selfishness. Though both writers are

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[56] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 103.

[57] Ibid., p. 99.

[58] Ibid., p. 85.

[59] Ibid., pp. 107-108.

inclined to consider it all a tragedy, there is a slight difference in emphasis, since Chlumberg recognized only one omnipresent trait as a basis for all individual ones--the mental and emotional frivolity mentioned above. Giradoux, on the other hand, recognizes only the individual ones. Chlumberg finds no room in this world for moral idealism, as Toller does; the state destroys it along with all else that is worthy, the state that, through idealism, demanded lives in vain.

All this puny civilization is mentally capable of is taking notes at heroes' graves[60] and hearing tales of the dead, as if they were fairy-tales--not even understanding these:

> What--? . . . They played cards . . . together? . . . But . . . They were supposed to fight each other! Kill each other! Why, they were enemies![61]

> The guide: Oh, no Madame. That was only in the beginning, I believe . . . The same shells killed or wounded them. They had to bind one another's wounds, share their drinking water . . . their gas masks . . . And then, because they couldn't tell the French and the German soldiers apart, they were all buried in this mass grave.[62]

And they continue to teach their children war; Henkel, wandering among the graves, drills his son with:

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[60] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 84.

[61] Ibid., p. 86.

[62] Loc. cit.

. . . what is a soldier's death?

The boy is frightened, but soon like a little parrot he replies:

> A soldier's death is the most beautiful death of all, Father . . . A soldier must meet death joyfully![63]

And their factories are again making fuses.

> My son, whom I never saw, is a soldier. The son I never touched or held in my arms is spending his youth learning to kill, to kill again.[64]

At the play's spring of action a Messenger spoke these words:

> Dead of Verdun! You have rested in this soil for nearly twenty years, by human count . . . But much longer for the living, who do not long remember their dead . . . But you are not forgotten, you dead of the great war. Not as others who die, has your transfigured memory faded pleasantly from their minds. It lives to stir their hearts anew again and again each day. But not with resignation, with terrible passion do they think of you. Because of you, the victorious are not humble, are not generous, and the defeated cannot forget your vain sacrifice and their downfall . . . The Lord gave you life which you so soon gave back again . . . But, the mad pestilence that brought upon you untimely destruction does not cease to rage on earth . . . The earth will shortly be full of misery again, and desolate, as after a second deluge . . . surely . . . oceans of blessed joy must burst forth and rise up over this work of God on earth, that all hatred will be undermined and utterly washed away . . .[65]

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[63] Chlumberg, op. cit., p. 112.

[64] Ibid., p. 101.

[65] Ibid., pp. 87-88. Eugene Brieux warned against this forgetfulness in his The Americans in Our Midst, "'Les Américains Chez Nous'--A Dramatic Tribute from Eugene Brieux,"

But the faint hope is frustrated, and the bidding to arise was wasted.

In summary, the two German plays, Ernst Toller's Transfiguration and Hans Chlumberg's The Miracle at Verdun, express a similar attitude towards war, in spite of the fact that one was produced in 1919 and the other in 1930. They both are expressionistic in construction, and both disclose the attitude of disillusion towards existing confederations. Toller goes as far as to blame war on the inadequacy of social institutions; while Chlumberg considers it a natural consequence of human greed and frivolity. Toller regrets the paradox that leads man to create institutions which at length only destroy him; while Chlumberg regrets the victimization also, but realizes that revolt of any kind is futile. This distinction springs from their separate estimations of human progress. Toller, the idealist, remains

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Current Opinion, LXVIII (1920): His Henri mourns the shame of France, for "Those tragic months have been forgotten too soon. The Dead have been forgotten too soon." (P. 493.)

Henri Lavedan's "Sunday on Sunday Goes By," Poet Lore, XXVII (1916), is nothing more than a confirmation of this forgetfulness, for, from the battlefield where father and son stand, the sound of fifes and drums can be heard, and troops of drilling peasants go by. Says the father: "Today, we can let them pass, but Sunday on Sunday is going by--" (P. 189.)

hopeful that mankind's intrinsic goodness will eventually lead him to reject all implicit and overt evil; but Chlumberg, the realist, is persuaded that man is unchanged by experience, remaining, at the last, as he was before.

CHAPTER VI

THE TREND IN FRANCE

The two French plays that most representatively display the spirit typical of the immediate reaction to the War and the later reaction, are The Burgomaster of Stilemonde by Maurice Maeterlinck, and Jean Giraudoux's Siegfried. In the former there is the national resentment of the French towards the harshness of Germany the invader; a realization of the complete breach between their two philosophies. The only outlet for the Frenchman is martyrdom. Belgium was the natural setting to draw sympathy upon the French cause; Belgium the wronged; Belgium the sufferer. The burgomaster of the small besieged town is the symbol of his country: a simple man, interested in pottering among his flowers, trusting to the justice of countryman or alien; astonished to the core at the perverse German subtlety of obedience to state through sacrifice of personal honor. To the very last he expects mercy and reasonableness at the hands of Otto, the son-in-law, who dashes in with the plundering enemy, courteously recalling past mutual memories, as if nothing had happened:

> Like the rest of us, I am compelled to obey an authority which no one can resist. I am a wheel in a machine . . . But my feeling, my affections are

just the same as they were before the war![1]

In this play of an early epoch, humanism is the instrument with which guilt is laid upon German heads. In later plays, it will be found to be, rather, the unifying force that seeks to embrace all. Maeterlinck reduces the whole problem of war-guilt to one of controversy between Christian humanism, which believes in the dictates of the individual conscience, versus bullying opportunism, which dispenses with any conscience. When a German soldier is anonymously murdered, vengeance must be exacted in order to keep the Belgians properly terrorized. Someone must give his life. Similarly, Romain Rolland's Teulier, in The Wolves, exacts the life of D'Oyron:

> True patriots have no will of their own; their will is that of the nation . . . It is not their business to see anything. Their leader orders them to conquer. Let them blindly obey![2]

It is of no concern to the Germans who shall pay; they find the major's decision ". . . most reasonable, most fair, most humane. He had the right, it was almost his duty, in fact, to put the whole town to death; and he is contented with a single victim . . ."[3] as Otto explains. He is amazed

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[1] Maurice Maeterlinck, The Burgomaster of Stilemonde, p. 40.

[2] Romain Rolland, "The Wolves," The Drama, VIII (November, 1918), 582.

[3] Maeterlinck, op. cit., p. 65. In Rolland's "The

that Van Bell is ready to sacrifice himself rather than let the innocent old man be victimized. Such individualism he fails to understand. He shrugs and remarks that this is foolish, since Van Bell is doubtless a more valuable man, and that it is Fate, after all, which has put the old man where he is. To which the burgomaster replies gently that: "It is . . . a question not of weighing the value or usefulness of a man's life, but of knowing whether or not I am to dishonor my own."[4] He might have added what the altered Teulier said:

> . . . It is for the sake of justice that the whole nation has taken up arms. The day the Nation violates justice she will be no more than a nest of tyrants . . .[5] The development of ideas is not everything; we must make sure that there is a world in which ideas can live, and we must instill them in the minds of free and truthful men.[6]

The embrace offered him by Otto, he now refuses: he will have no more of this courteous bullying. This "wheel in

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Wolves," op. cit., Quesnel almost paraphrases this attitude with, "Suffer in silence, I tell you, but save the Patrie! Have we not sacrificed everything to Her? . . . If the Patrie demands your conscience, by God, throw it away--and yourself with it!" (P. 620.)

[4] Maeterlinck, op. cit., p. 95.

[5] Rolland, op. cit., pp. 618-619.

[6] Ibid., p. 590. Toller's injunction in Man and the Masses, p. 102-103, is of the burgomaster's philosophy; one of the characters declares:

> . . . no man has the right to kill another
> To forward any cause . . ."

a machine" is no longer a friend, a relative, a man. All the laws of human decency have been violated: homes have been burned over innocent heads; innocent men have been butchered when they refused to comply with outrageous demands; and all those who had the intrepitude to defend their own lands; as the burgomaster says, ". . . they call traitors all those who do not betray their country for Germany's benefit."[7] To crown it all, logical protests have been met with miraculous subtlety descrying all blame, a bull-headed inconsistency that refuses to reason about its actions, that actually dismisses any need for reason--then childishly parrots phrases like "the incredible attitude of your fellow-countrymen,"[8] "your amazing hatred,"[9] "our most reasonable decision . . ."[10] In The Wolves, the sophistry of Quesnel is comparable to Otto's; he would put D'Oyron to death, not for what he has done, but for what he "might do."[11] And the crowning hypocrisy:

> . . . I simply can't understand it. After all, this war is no business of ours; it's over our heads; it's beyond us. However, I mustn't take it ill of you;

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[7] Maeterlinck, op. cit., p. 123.

[8] Ibid., p. 36.

[9] Ibid., p. 50.

[10] Ibid., p. 65.

[11] Rolland, op. cit., p. 619.

> and I can only say, like Antigone, "I take part in love and not in hatred."[12]

None of this! Instead Van Bell will go forth to die; of an outraged nation, a martyr to truth; he could well say of himself, as he dies, what the Stranger says of himself in The Wake Light: "I am life and truth, I die daily. My drink is death through all eternity."[13] The attitude is as innately patriotic as that of the son in The Eternal Presence, who says:

> Pity them! Ours is the better part.[14]
> . . . It was sweet to . . . think only of those whom I loved on earth,
> Those for whom--freely--voluntarily--
> I had fought the good fight.[15]
> . . . When France is in tears--I would have my share of tears.[16]

The implication is double: Maeterlinck is eulogizing two deaths, which he blends into one: that of a betrayed nation, and that of a betrayed individual. The latter dies as the first died--victimized by unreasoning cruelty, caught in the blind mesh of events. The implied fatalism is based on the philosophical denial of any other course to have been

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[12] Maeterlinck, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

[13] Hans Trausil, The Wake Light, p. 15.

[14] André Dumas, "The Eternal Presence," Poet Lore, XXIX (1918), 464.

[15] Ibid., p. 465.

[16] Ibid., p. 466.

followed. But that Van Bell was ready to die does not invalidate the injustice of his death. What is cruel is that war forces the individual to take this single honorable course, and that, because of this, justice is ultimately untriumphant.[17] What Therese says in Lenormand's The Coward applies:

> . . . war is madness . . . Philosophically, man is right to keep out of it, but he is not strong enough . . . in the face of mass-feeling. If he refuses to fall in with its aberrations, his conscience becomes diseased, he himself degenerates.[18]

It is just this that marks the play as one of the period of Disillusion; in which strong nationalistic sentiments and betrayed patriotism struggle for supremacy in thought. However, in this particular play a sort of compromise is effected: while the sacrifice is looked upon as a national and personal tragedy, it is also looked upon as necessary and subservient to a positive end.[19]

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[17] Maeterlinck here implied what Henri Lenormand more explicitly states in "The Coward," op. cit., p. 76, concerning the tragedy of the morally or aesthetically sensitive individual in an insensitive world. In this play the Old Man says, "For men such as I--dreamers, seekers, poets--there is no room in a world of that sort."

[18] Henri Lenormand, "The Coward," Twentieth Century Plays, p. 64.

[19] An interesting embellishment of this interrelation of individual to state is carried on at some length in Rolland's The Game of Love and Death, pp. 110-111, between Carnot and Jerome:

No mention can be made of Maeterlinck's prophesy for the future--no relating of his theme to social reconstruction

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> Carnot: For man to become free he must first be protected against those who enslave him. The rights of the individual are nothing without the force of the State.
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> Jerome: They are nothing when they are sacrificed to the force of the State.
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> Carnot: . . . . they will be something. We must be able to sacrifice the present to the future.
>
> Jerome: To sacrifice truth and love to the future, all the human virtues and one's own self-respect, is to sacrifice the future also. Justice will not grow in a corrupt soil.
>
> Carnot: I desire the end, no matter what price I pay for it . . . These men of guile and blood disgust me as much as they do you . . . I loathe the acts of violence . . . I keep my mind fixed on the object for which the battle is fought. The progress of humanity is well worth a certain amount of filth--and, if it must, crime.

These two might be Otto and the burgomaster speaking. It is evident, anyway, that it is Rolland himself, for in the Preface to this very play he links up the subject of it--i.e., the French Revolution--with the World War, saying:

> The Hurricane that passed over France in 1793 . . . has continued its path towards the East; it has hovered over the plains of Germany and Russia; . . . is tormenting the souls of other people . . . the tragic problem [is] present again in people's minds, of the conflict of the individual conscience with the safety of the State . . .

And the side he takes, too, is evident:

> I seize from the bottom of the pit the great wild human animal, the many-headed beast: the People, and their leaders . . . More than the individuals of a day . . . they are the Forces who have chosen their dwelling in these bodies and, since then, have taken up their abode in others . . . If, therefore, I have called this tragedy a Game, it is that of "I stake everything!" . . . My life for a lightning-stroke of illumination! (Pp. xii-xv.)

--for, typically, there is none. He is too close to the War.[20]

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[20] There is a remarkable coincidence of theme, characters, ideology--and setting, of course--between this play and Leonid Andreyev's The Sorrows of Belgium, which was written three years earlier in 1915. There is the old deaf gardener who tends his flowers and will not hear the far-off guns . . . There is the same family tenderness in the Grelieu family as in the Van Bell . . . The same utter bewilderment and courage, in the face of undeserved, unbelievable cruelty . . . The patriotic fervor is possibly even more pronounced; yet note of hope--lacking in Maeterlinck's play--brightens the end.

A few of the notable passages will be quoted here--those which concur most outstandingly with passages from Maeterlinck, or complement them:

> Pierre: . . . Yes, I was a student, and I knew certain words: Peace, Right, Humanity. But now you see! My heart is crying too, but I do not know what to call these scoundrels. Scoundrels? That is not sufficient. (P. 25.)

> Emil Grelieu: . . . Oh, yes, I had to overcome within me--my love for flowers . . . it is so hard to change from flowers to iron and blood! (P. 26.) . . . that is a terrible question for a man. I must kill, Pierre. Of course, I could take your gun, but not to fire--no, that would have been disgusting, a sacrilegious deception! When my humble people are condemned to kill, who am I that I should keep my hands clean? . . . My humble nation did not desire to kill, but it was forced, and it has become a murderer. So I, too, must become a murderer, together with my nation . . . (P. 29.)

> Pierre: . . . . Listen to me! They have already robbed us. They have deprived us of our land and of the air; they have destroyed our treasures. (Pp. 32-33.)

> Jeanne: . . . He said that there was a God and there was righteousness. That's what I believe I heard him say--that there was still a God and that righteousness was still in existence. How old these words are, Emil! . . . (P. 67.)

One must turn to Jean Giraudoux's Siegfried for this. In it humanism sounds the note of reconciliation between the

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Maurice: The scoundrels! I don't want to consider them human beings, and I shall not consider them human beings. (P. 73.)

Lagard: Yes, it is very bad. We are an honest and peaceful people despising bloodshed, for war is such a stupid affair! And we should not have had a single soldier long ago were it not for this accursed neighbor, this den of murderers. (P. 84.)

Count Clairmont: I am a peaceful man, but I can understand why people take up arms . . .

Lagard: . . . We have no other choice . . . I would prefer to see the whole of Belgium covered with water rather than extend a hand of reconciliation to a scoundrel! Neither they nor we shall live to see that, even if the entire Atlantic Ocean rush over our heads. (P. 87.)

Count Clairmont: . . . Blinded by the war, we may unwillingly, unwittingly, altogether against our will, violate man-made laws . . . We are driven to despair, we have no Belgium any longer, it is trampled by our enemies, but in your breast, Emil Grelieu, the heart of all Belgium is beating--and your answer will be the answer of our tormented, blood-stained, unfortunate land! (P. 89.)

Lagard: . . . These are our sufferings which will be transformed into joy for our children. But as a nation that loves and respects liberty above its sweat and blood and tears--as a nation, I say, I would prefer that sea waves should seethe here over our heads rather than that we should have to black the boots of the Prussians. (P. 90.)

Von Blumenfeld [of the German army] : He has a German philosophical mind which manages guns as Leibnitz managed ideas . . . Gentlemen, we are led forward by indomitable logic and by an iron will. We are as

two at war in The Burgomaster. (There is ten years lapse between the two--1918, and 1928, respectively.) As Siegfried says:

> There cannot be any sufferings so opposed to one another, any experiences which are so much each other's enemies, that they cannot melt some day into a single life; for the heart of man is after all the most powerful crucible in the world.[21]

As a character Siegfried has not the appeal of the martyred burgomaster, because he is only a symbol, and, at that, one who appeals rather to the intellect than to the emotions. For all this, he is rather likeable; though what interest he gains by being a study in double personality--as Chandler claims,[22] never fools anyone into taking him for other than a symbol. He is a man of two names--Jacques Forestier, the Frenchman; and Siegfried, the German. The play relates that he is a Frenchman who lost his memory in the War and was nursed back to health on German soil. There

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inexorable as Fate. (P. 101.)

> . . . Emil Grelieu: He is dead, Jeanne. But I swear to you by God, . . . Belgium will live. Weep, sob, . . . I too am crying . . . But . . . I can see. Songs will resound here . . . A new Spring will come . . . And mothers will caress their children . . . There will be no more bloodshed. I see a new world, Jeanne! I see my nation: . . . I see a new world, Jeanne, I see a new life! (Pp. 131-132.)

[21] Jean Giraudoux, Siegfried, p. 151.

[22] Frank W. Chandler, Modern Continental Playwrights, p. 243.

he became minister of state. But the audience knows him to be neither of these two; and towards the end he confesses it:

> I will confess that two days ago I was thinking of disappearing altogether, of seeking shelter in a third country, a country which I should have preferred as far as possible to have no neighbors, no enemies, no consecration of memorials to the dead, no dead. A country without a war in the past, or war in the future.[23]

He is a new country, built upon the ashes of the two dead. Yet "ashes" is not the right word; its connotation is of death, and it is of life that Giraudoux is speaking:

> You offer me a death with a prize attached to it, a prize rarely given to the dead, for it is life. Well, I cannot accept. There would be a full-length statue in Munich for Siegfried, and a broken column in Paris for Forestier. I should really be too useless between these dead bodies.[24]

It must be a life that is based on mutual forgetfulness, a renewed cultivation of the good in their individual cultures, and a recognition of what is evil. His sincerity is attested by the fact that he is as capable of recognizing French idiosyncrasies as German. Says Genevieve of France:

> The race to which I belong, a race of good manners, has been hewn out of a dummy of hatred, of boldness and brutality . . . We French must not persist in believing that our country has always been gentleness and velvet.[25]

Yet Ledinger, also a Frenchman, claims that France is

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[23] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 145.

[24] Ibid., pp. 150-151.

[25] Ibid., pp. 72-73.

nevertheless the only country where people are led by the inner voice of true patriotism, which, invisible and silent, is the best proof that her statesmen, who succeed one another in the rapid succession of governments, have other ambitions than merely to "do deputy for another pilot."[26] Fontlegloy, whose Protestant ancestors were driven from France, on the contrary, satirizes French despotism, speaks of the "inquisition of your slavish bureaucracy, and an everliving disgust for the tyrants, the list of whose names you still humbly recite,"[27] and ends that he and Germanized Frenchmen like him would never go back except to invade it.[28]

Giraudoux, turning next to Germany, is genuinely happy to put these words into the mouth of Eva: "After having been obliged to talk of Germany for the last three years as lost, there is some joy in being able to change the adjective for its opposite."[29] Rolland attributed Germany's brutality to its warped sophistical thinking. Giraudoux also finds it a cause of the debacle; however, he claims it an instrument which has hurt Germany as much as it has others. In the words of Genevieve, Germany has

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[26] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 148.

[27] Ibid., p. 70.

[28] Ibid., p. 71.

[29] Ibid., p. 8.

lacked the ability to see life simply, it has

> . . . yielded to the influence of a pedantic science and of over-ambitious princes, and . . . made for herself and out of herself a gigantic and super-human model, and instead of giving a new form to human dignity . . . [gave] a new form to pride and misfortune.[30]

"Germans love metaphors," Zelten states.[31] ". . . a nation made up of theories . . . without a memory or a past."[32] And Robineau:

> It is the fashion in Germany to embroider proverbs . . . This series of legendary animals and heroes which the Germans like to call into requisition for all their most ordinary daily needs . . .[33]

Siegfried, too, speaks half-tenderly of their romantic adolescent outbursts, having no basis in reason, yet rather admirably large and vital:

> . . . an explosion in a passionate and overheated heart . . . this lover's madness--this marriage of Germany with the world . . . This almost physical love of the universe, which makes Germany admire all the manifestations of nature more than any other people . . . To have the finest menageries, the most daring explorers, the biggest telescopes . . .[34]

He has sentimental faith that the true Germans "go on loving little kingdoms and great passions."[35]

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[30] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 65.

[31] Ibid., p. 105.

[32] Ibid., p. 9.

[33] Ibid., p. 48.

[34] Ibid., p. 66.

[35] Ibid., p. 101.

Not in the least tender is his comment on German militarism. The stupid Schupo, who learns military rules by heart, embodies the mechanized individual, who is owned and run by the state, like an automaton.

"Number two," recites the Schupo, "I take my stand at a distance of eight paces. I think of the grandeur of military duty. I do not shift my eyes. I shoot, even if it is my . . . brother."[36]

These brutalities are admitted, but offset always by virtues that, seemingly, are regarded as more basic. It is in this defense that Siegfried speaks of:

> . . . the vigour of this over-polished art, of the conscientious life of this great mass of people who are always called hypocrites, of the brilliant visions in the region of the soul and in the region of art, which have been seen by this people who are always supposed to have no taste.[37]

Ultimately, finding both nations equally guilty, yet in their truest selves guiltless, Giraudaux turns to the forces within each, the evil forces, that are to be held responsible. Already militarism has been mentioned as one of them. Along with this goes its usual partner, power politics: he represents the politician (who parades under the name of statesman), as nothing more than a gambler:

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[36] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 92.

[37] Ibid., p. 65.

once when Siegfried complains of being healthily tired, he adds, ". . . But not like a statesman, whose fatigue is generally that of a gambler who has played all night . . ."[38] And Zelten admits that "We politicians do not waste our hatred on any but our fellow-countrymen."[39]

There is much delicate satire concerning arbitrary national boundaries, expressed in the Customs Office scene, which opens in a frontier railway station, divided into two parts, each having its respective type of heating--the French, "separate" heating; and the German, "central."[40] And, absurdly, Pietri, the French Customs-official, warns Schumann, the German official, that he should keep the dust from his country on his own side of the imaginary line.[41]

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[38] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 94.

[39] Ibid., p. 105. Is this not similar to Köbis' accusation of a superior officer in Toller's "Draw the Fires!," Seven Plays:

> Köbis: It's you who are the enemies of Germany, not the stokers in the English ships. They're my pals. I sweated alongside of them before the war, and I shall again after the war. (P. 373.) . . . The whole nation wants peace. I demonstrated for it, and I've got to die for it. (P. 375.)

[40] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 139.

[41] Ibid., p. 141. Compare with the irony of Carl Hauptmann, whose Master-Accountant in "War" says: "Unfortunately there was made a great mistake at the beginning in the division of this stony earth . . . we must . . . reduce it shrewdly to human advantages." The Drama, VI (1916), 612.

Yet to Genevieve, he has to concede reluctantly that, if she is hungry, the German buffet serves "a specialty of bread-crumb sausages with caraway seed."[42]

And finally, after accusing Germany of accusing everyone else, Giraudoux sums up that France and Germany are "two nations . . . who have each a quite different notion of good and evil . . ."[43]

I have said above that the division of blame he has equalized. Implicitly he has, although if one were to match accusation with accusation, Germany will be found to possess the greater sum. The essential difference between Giraudoux's attitude and Maeterlinck's lies in the former's cool objectivity, his readiness to admit mutual faults; and, most important of all, his genuine tenderness and understanding of the German people. What he desires is that they correct the faults he cannot but ascribe to them; and that France correct hers--which are equally bad but not so numerous or ridiculous--so that both can derive mutual benefit from the other. In a sense this boils down to an aristocracy of intellect, for he is an individualist speaking to other individualists, reckoning on their outstretched hands to meet his own; turning his back on the small-minded,

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[42] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 140.

[43] Ibid., p. 129.

narrow-hearted masses who turned their backs first and started calling names. He is the cosmopolite, who is ready to speak any tongue, provided it be a refined, cultured one. Aside from this intellectual and spiritual understanding between peoples, which transcends national boundaries, life has no meaning:

> . . . human beings are condemned to a terrible anonymity . . . names are all . . . arbitrary . . . but the pang one feels before the unknown soldier, I feel it even more strongly before every human being. . .[44]

Not in the realm of ideas alone does he display this individualism: specifically, his characters manifest it, in their attitude towards the War. Genevieve, speaking of Forestier to Siegfried, reminds his German self that

> He was one of those who foretold the war, who would have liked to prepare France for it . . .[45] He would have loved a peaceful Germany [Genevieve continues], but he was certain of her defeat; after which he was ready for the day when he should give her back his esteem for her . . .[46] He used to say--oh, much that was good . . .[47] that Germany is a great and industrious country . . . with a great note of poetry . . .; but he said she was a brutal country, bloodthirsty, pitiless to the weak.[48]

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[44] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 59.

[45] Ibid., p. 64.

[46] Loc. cit.

[47] Ibid., p. 65.

[48] Ibid., pp. 64-65.

Here the outstretched hand is withdrawn, and with polite regret the individualist sees he must forego the enjoyment of consorting with his kind. The tragedy is an intellectual one, based on a misunderstanding brought about by mass sentiment, which draws to itself the support of those who otherwise would be bound together by more important ties than those of nationality. His underlying humanism neutralizes what might be disagreeable in his individualism. As Genevieve says: "It is just when your Germany does not speak that I begin to understand her . . . the age, the force, the language of it all."[49]

Zelten stands for the idealist-schemer, who has "an . . . instinct for encouraging high-sounding and preposterous schemes for avoiding reality."[50] Genevieve is the force that re-awakens Siegfried to the knowledge of possibilities of basic unity between the two divergent cultures. Though he, and his other self, Forestier, are the antithesis of each other, yet both are fighting the real enemies of Germany, which are within. Zelten's weapon is revolution; but Siegfried's is the evolution of understanding. The purpose for which both nations were contending in the War is unworthy of both, and their true resolves should be, as

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[49] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 49.

[50] Ibid., p. 24.

Robineau states: ". . . to bring back poetry to France, to bring back logic to Germany--the task is much the same."[51]

This brings us to a consideration of Giraudoux's concept of human progress. To begin with a general statement, he believed it to consist in the promotion of an ideology quite the opposite of that from which war springs. It must imply the opposite of narrow nationalism. Ledinger and Waldorf argue this out:

> Ledinger: War is the nation.
>
> Waldorf: That is the formula which lost the war . . .[52] War is the League of Nations . . . what it amounts to is a democratic right to war. It is universal war suffrage for every German.[53]

Secondly, progress must be based on a humanistic appreciation of man as an individual--who always underlies the monstrous disguise labelled "German" or "Frenchman," that marks off men from other men:

> Robineau: He [Siegfried] was dressed as a Zulu. I was Alcibiades. Consequently there was no national prejudice at the base of our immediate sympathy.[54]

Thirdly, it must quell the materialism which leads to war, and the sophistry which supports this:

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[51] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 30.

[52] Ibid., p. 76.

[53] Loc. cit.

[54] Ibid., p. 20.

> Waldorf: War is not only a matter of strategy, of munitions and of daring. It is first of all a matter of definition. The essential thing is its chemical formula . . .[55] That is the danger of shareholders' meetings . . . It was a piece of practical advice, a lesson in zeal and application. . . . "War is Peace."[56]

Lastly, it includes a positive philosophy of spiritual reconstruction that must, growing from the natural best in each nation, guarantee an extension of those spiritual values to include all future relationships. It is described by Genevieve as ". . . the impulse . . . rising from your depths towards the future--that impulse is your true past."[57] Or, as Zelten embellishes it with a more concrete statement:

> It is not the business of Germany to be strong. It is her business to be Germany--or rather to be strong on the ideal plane . . . Germany is not a social and human business concern, but a poetic and vital confederacy. Every time that Germans have tried to mould her into a practical construction, their work has collapsed within a generation.[58]

Siegfried at the end symbolizes the unification of both the nations; from neither does he turn away but is

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[55] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 75.

[56] Ibid., pp. 76-77.

[57] Ibid., p. 163.

[58] Ibid., p. 10. He is without doubt referring to the attitude prevalent in Germany even long before the War, as Emil Ludwig points it out in "King and People" from his trilogy Bismarck. "The more enemies the more honour," says Victoria. (P. 128.)

bound to all ". . . which suffer and need care."[59] He says further:

> I shall go back to France not as the last prisoner released from German camps and jails but as the first to have taken advantage of a new kind of knowledge or of a new kind of heart.[60]

In summary: In comparing the two plays, The Burgomaster of Stilemonde of Maurice Maeterlinck and Siegfried by Jean Giraudoux, written, respectively, in 1918 and 1928, a difference in the attitude towards the War and its causes can be detected. As to war-guilt, Maeterlinck occupies the nationalistic position of a country that believes its natural rights to have been trespassed. Years having intervened between the War and the writing of the second play, in it that attitude has softened into a humanism that admits of guilt on both sides.

The relation of the individual to the state is presented on two fronts, in the first play: On the French side it amounts to the traditional patriotism which inspires members of a nation to give their lives for it when the need arises, and to find this readiness in accord with all personal values. On the German side it amounts to an

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[59] Giraudoux, op. cit., p. 145.

[60] Ibid., p. 152.

obedience to the state also--but an unthinking, brutal obedience, which should not be in accord with humane, individual values. Giraudoux's play, on the other hand, divides both nations on the basis of the individuals it contains, which are either (1) civilized human beings, who only against their will would lift the sword against a fellowman; or (2) uncivilized human beings, who through a mistaken patriotism or greed for power would assault another human being or nation deliberately.

Regarding prognosis of the future: Maeterlinck, close as he is to the immediate tragedies of war, sees no further than the horrible injustice of an event that is capable of wrecking the most noble countries and slaying the most just and innocent individuals. Giraudoux, however, with ten years perspective, pleads for mutual understanding and a harmonizing of interests, which he hopes shall at length bring about a complete sympathy between man for man, nation for nation.

CONCLUSION

In this survey of post-War drama I have shown how in it the attitude towards war differs from that of other post-war philosophies. This point of view was rooted in a wider realization of war as an unnecessary abnormality rather than a worthy and profitable adventure; it was rooted in a deeper analysis of war and its causes; in a feverish search for, at least immediate, international and individual peace; in an earnest desire to prevent further like disasters. Dramas from representative nations have been examined, which deal with the problems of socio-economic and individual welfare, and these conclusions have been reached:

In Russia the upheaval helped precipitate a new economic philosophy; in the Balkan States and Germany a new political set-up followed not a decade later. France looked with dissatisfaction upon the outcome of the treaties; and both Allies and Germans groped, and still grope, for a settlement of the issues which lead to war.

The traditional attitude of patriotism, which preceded the first World War and immediately succeeded it, and which was widely stimulated through propaganda, was set aside as falsifying and fruitless. The desire to plunge to the genuine cause of war motivated all thought, and the drama of the time offers either the negative conclusions of

frustration, or the positive philosophy of international reconstruction through material or spiritual understanding.

In Mikhail Artzybashev's War, the negative conclusion is reached. The problem of war-guilt is based upon man's inability to attain the seriousness of mind necessary to the aversion of such disasters. Michael Bulgakov, in his Days of the Turbins, presents a reformed, organized, and therefore war-less, society.

The Capek brothers, Josef and Karel, in their And So Ad Infinitum, hold a view similar to Artzybashev's, finding the outlook dark for peace, unless man himself is capable of change. Ivo Vojnovich, on the other hand, denounces war, in The Resurrection of Lazarus, on the grounds that it is an invasion of national rights.

In Italy, Luigi Pirandello, with less overt pacifism, represents, in his As You Desire Me, the mental confusion resulting from the conflict between personal and material values.

Hans Chlumberg's The Miracle at Verdun and Ernst Toller's Transfiguration, two German dramas, attribute the hopelessness of the world's plight to man's incapacity to judge between what is valuable and what is not; Toller, however, hopes, idealistically, for man's eventual betterment through the reconstruction of human institutions.

And, finally, Maurice Maeterlinck, in his The Burgomaster of Stilemonde, and Jean Giraudoux, in Siegfried, examine the problem from the French point of view, with the result that Maeterlinck condemns war as an outrage against individualism and nationalism, and Giraudoux, as an outrage against civilization, which consists fundamentally of mutual sympathy and understanding.

An examination of these plays and others that subordinately support the same theses, should result in a more thorough grasp of the altered attitude towards war and its resulting problems.

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