

André Malraux: Literary Critic

by

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A Thesis
presented to the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of French and Spanish
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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ANDRE MALRAUX: LITERARY CRITIC

BY

LINDA-MARIE K. KOWALSKY

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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TO MY HUSBAND, KENNETH

ABSTRACT

Although many books have skirted the subject of Malraux as a literary critic, this dissertation is a systematic and thorough examination of Malraux's own critical writings and particularly, Malraux's ideas about other writers, about literature in general and about his own purpose and procedures as a novelist. The thrust of critical studies has been to treat André Malraux's fiction as separate from his art studies and his political life. Rather than dividing Malraux's creativity into distinct periods, this study considers Malraux, the man, the writer and the critic to be one and the same person whose thoughts evolve continuously throughout his lifetime.

Malraux's critical writings cover a period of over fifty years (1919-75) and bear witness to the evolution of a singular mind. Our division of the material into ten chapters corresponds with what we perceive to be the principal periods in Malraux's literary career as marked by the publication of his major fictional works. Thus the Introductions to Chapters Two to Ten contain a brief discussion of the creative work that dictated the choice of books reviewed and coloured the interpretation of these books. Chapter Two: The Pre-Indo-China Years begins with Lunes en papier (1921) before examining the 1922-23 critical writings; Chapter Three: Indo-China and After refers briefly to La tentation de l'Occident (1926) and D'une jeunesse européenne (1927) before analyzing the 1927 reviews; Chapter Four: 1928: A Banner

Year deals with Les conquérants (1928) and Royaume farfelu (1928) in relation to the 1928 critical writings; Chapter Five: The Road to the Prix Goncourt presents La voie royale (1930) before the 1929-32 critical writings; Chapter Six: The Controversial Thirties opens with comments on La condition humaine (1933) and Le temps du mépris (1935) before it examines the final reviews dating from 1933-35; Chapter Seven: The Second World War introduces L'espoir (1937) and Les noyers de l'Altenburg (1943) before the essays of that period; Chapter Eight: The Post-War Period briefly mentions Malraux's film and art works before examining five prefaces to works written in the 1950's; Chapter Nine: The Final Years (1970-75) deals with the Oraisons funèbres (1971) and the Antimémoires (1967) before analyzing the final five prefaces and Chapter Ten: Malraux's Posthumous Works (1976-77) deals with Le miroir des limbes (1976) before it focuses on "Néocritique" (1976) and L'homme précaire et la littérature (1977).

Criticism was simply an extension or annex of Malraux's creative activities and as such an important factor in his quest for transcendence and his search for a literary technique appropriate to his goals and aspirations. A better understanding of Malraux the critic leads inevitably to a better understanding of Malraux the man, the novelist and the changing world to which he bore witness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this study, which required many years of research, was achieved through the dedication and moral support of certain people in particular.

My deepest appreciation for encouragement and critical evaluation is due to my thesis advisor, Dr. E. Marantz, who showed patience in reading and in correcting the manuscript. Dr. Marantz's guidance, suggestions, counsel and most importantly, her enthusiasm for this project, proved invaluable.

I wish to express my grateful appreciation to the other members of my committee, Dr. C. A. E. Jensen, Professor A. Joubert and Dr. H. Heller, Department of History, who accepted to read this work and give their comments. I thank Dr. Robert S. Thornberry, Department of Romance Languages, University of Alberta, who was the external examiner, for his critical appreciation of my dissertation and for his dedication to the study of André Malraux.

Above all, I wish to acknowledge my husband, Kenneth, for his constant encouragement and loyal support and my son, Kenneth Junior, for providing a vibrant, sometimes chaotic but always happy environment.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following is the list of works which have been abbreviated in parenthetical documentation in the order in which they appear in the text:

André Malraux's article, "Des origines de la poésie cubiste," La Connaissance 1 (janv. 1920): 38-41, is indicated in the text by C.

--- review, "Trois livres de Laurent Tailhade," La Connaissance 2 (fév. 1920): 196-97, is indicated in the text by T.

--- article, "La genèse des Chants de Maldoror," Action 3 (avr. 1920): 33-35, is indicated in the text by M.

--- review, "Les champs magnétiques par André Breton et Philippe Soupault," Action 5 (oct. 1920): 69, is indicated in the text by CM.

--- reviews, "La négresse du Sacré-Coeur par André Salmon," Action 5 (oct. 1920): 69, and "L'entrepreneur d'illuminations par André Salmon," Action 9 (oct. 1921): n. pag., indicated in the text as N and E respectively.

--- article, "Aspects d'André Gide," Action 12 (mars-avril 1922): 17-21, is indicated in the text as A.

--- review, "L'abbaye de Typhaines, par le Comte de Gobineau," N.R.F. 106 (juil. 1922): 97-98, is indicated in the text as AT.

---. "Art poétique, par Max Jacob," N.R.F. 107 (août 1922): 227-28, is indicated in the text by AP.

Max Jacob's book, Art poétique (Paris: Emile-Paul, 1922) is indicated in the text as JAP.

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André Malraux's article, "Ménalque," Le Disque Vert 4-6 (fév., mars, avr. 1923): 19-21, is indicated in the text as ME.

--- review, "Malice, par Pierre Mac Orlan," N.R.F. 116 (mai 1923): 836-37, is indicated in the text as MOM.

--- introduction to Charles Maurras' Mademoiselle Monk suivi de Invocation à Minerve (Paris: Stock, 1923) 7-9, is indicated in the text as MM.

--- review, "Histoire de la bienheureuse Raton, fille de joie, par Fernand Fleuret," N.R.F. 163 (avr. 1927): 550-51, is indicated in the text by R.

---. "Défense de l'Occident, par Henri Massis," N.R.F. 165 (juin 1927): 813-18, is indicated in the text as D.

---. "Bouddha vivant, par Paul Morand," N.R.F. 167 (août 1927): 253-55, is indicated in the text as BV.

---. "Histoire comique de Francion, par Charles Sorel," N.R.F. 170 (nov. 1927): 686-88, is indicated in the text by F.

---. "Où le coeur se partage, par Marcel Arland," N.R.F. 173 (fév. 1928): 250-52, is indicated in the text by O.

---. "L'imposture, par George Bernanos," N.R.F. 174 (mars 1928): 406-408, is indicated in the text by LI.

---. "Contes, Historiettes et Fabliaux (Kra); Dialogue d'un prêtre et d'un moribond, (Stendhal et C^{ie}), par le marquis de Sade," N.R.F. (juin 1928): 853-55, is indicated in the text by S.

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--- "Introduction," Commerce 17 (automne 1928): 7, is indicated in the text as LPJ.

--- review, "L'enfant et l'écuyère, par Franz Hellens," N.R.F. 179 (août 1928): 291-92, is indicated in the text by EE.

---. "Battling le ténébreux, par Alexandre Vialatte," N.R.F. 183 (déc. 1928): 869-79, is indicated in the text by B.

--- speech, "La question des Conquérants," Variétés 6 (15 oct. 1929): 429-37, is indicated in the text as Q.

--- review, "Journal de voyage d'un philosophe, par Hermann Keyserling, traduit par Alzir Hella et Olivier Bournac," N.R.F. 189 (juin 1929): 884-86, is indicated in the text by J.

---. "Pont-Egaré par Pierre Véry," N.R.F. 195 (déc. 1929): 838-39, is indicated in the text as P.

Leon Trotsky's article, "La révolution étranglée," N.R.F. 211 (avr. 1931): 488-500, is indicated in the text as RE.

André Malraux's reply, "Réponse à Trotsky," N.R.F. 211 (avr. 1931): 501-507, is indicated in the text as RT.

--- "Introduction," along with the articles in "Jeune Chine," N.R.F. 220 (janv. 1932): 5-26, are indicated in the text as JC.

--- article, "D.H. Lawrence et l'érotisme: A propos de L'amant de Lady Chatterley," N.R.F. 220 (janv. 1932): 136-40, is indicated in the text as DH.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

--- review, "Documents secrets, par Franz Hellens," N.R.F. 224 (mai 1932): 915-16, is indicated in the text by DS.

Franz Hellens' book, Documents secrets: 1905-56. Histoire sentimentale de mes livres et de quelques amitiés (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1958) is indicated in the text as HDS.

André Malraux's review, "En marge d'Hyménée," Europe 114 (15 juin 1932): 304-307, is indicated in the text as EMH.

--- "Préface à Sanctuaire de W. Faulkner," N.R.F. 241 (nov. 1933): 744-47, is indicated in the text as SF.

--- review, "Les traqués, par Michel Matveev," N.R.F. 249 (juin 1934): 1014-1016, is indicated in the text as TM.

---. "Journal d'un homme de quarante ans, par Jean Guéhenno," N.R.F. 256 (janv. 1935): 148-51, is indicated in the text as GJ.

---. "Sans reprendre haleine, par Ilya Ehrenbourg," N.R.F. 266 (nov. 1935): 770-72, is indicated in the text by IE.

---. "Les nouvelles nourritures, par André Gide," N.R.F. 267 (déc. 1935): 935-37, is indicated in the text as NN.

--- "Préface," to Andrée Viollis' Indochine S.O.S. (Paris: Gallimard, 1935) vii-xi, is indicated in the text as SOS.

--- article, "Le sens de la mort," Marianne (20 nov. 1935): 4, is indicated in the text as SM.

--- "Laclos," in Tableau de la littérature française: XVII^e-

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

XVIII^e siècles (Paris: Gallimard, 1939): 417-28, is indicated in the text as L.

--- essay, "N'était-ce donc que cela?" Liberté de L'Esprit 3, 4, 5 (avr., mai, juin, 1949): 49-51; 86-87; 117-118, is indicated in the text as TE.

--- "Préface," to Qu'une larme dans l'océan de Manès Sperber (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1952) ix-xxi, is indicated in the text as MS.

--- "Lettre-préface", to Chimères ou réalités: Essai de stratégie occidentale du Général Jacquot (Paris: Gallimard, 1953) vii-xvi, is indicated in the text as PJ.

--- "Préface," "Sur Le pays d'origine," Botteghe Oscure 12 (1954) 11-19, is indicated in the text as DP.

--- "Préface," to Albert Ollivier's Saint-Just ou la force des choses (Paris: Gallimard, 1954) 11-29, is indicated in the text as SJ.

--- "Préface," "Texte liminaire" to Israël (Lausanne: Editions Clairefontaine, 1955) 7-11, is indicated in the text as I.

--- "Préface," to Louise de Vilmorin's Poèmes (Paris: Gallimard, 1970) 9-16, is indicated in the text as LV.

---. "Préface," to Les cahiers de la Petite Dame: Notes pour l'histoire authentique d'André Gide (1918-1929) (Paris: Gallimard, 1973) ix-xxxix, is indicated in the text as MR.

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---. "Préface," to L'enfant du rire par Pierre Bockel (Paris: Grasset, 1973) 9-23, is indicated in the text as PB.

--- "Préface," to Bernanos' Journal d'un curé de campagne, which was published under the title "Bernanos, le dernier témoin de la pitié sacrée" in Le Figaro Littéraire 1480 (28 sept. 1974): 1, 11, is indicated in the text as GB.

---. "Préface," to L'indépendance de l'esprit: Correspondance entre Jean Guéhenno et Romain Rolland (1919-1944) (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1975) 5-13, is indicated in the text as CGR.

Jean Guéhenno's and Roman Rolland's letters in L'indépendance de l'esprit: Correspondance entre Jean Guéhenno et Romain Rolland (1919-1944) (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1975), are indicated in the text as JG and RR respectively.

André Malraux's work, L'homme précaire et la littérature (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), is indicated in the text as L'HP.

INTRODUCTION

The boy from Bondy, the "chineur" on the boulevards of Paris, the adventurer of Banteay Srei, the revolutionary journalist in Saigon, the champion of artistic freedom in Russia, the leader of the International Air Force that fought in the service of the Republicans, the Resistance fighter, the colonel of the Brigade Alsace-Lorraine, the novelist, the art historian and the minister of culture--each distinct role represents a different facet of the life of André Malraux. From his birth in 1901 to his death in 1976, his life covered the greater part of the twentieth century. He was a mirror of our civilization, likewise fragmentary in nature, and witnessed, in less than fifty years, such revolutionary changes as the passage from the horse-drawn carriage to the space shuttle. The first question which comes to mind is "For which one of his many roles will he be remembered?"

We had first read La condition humaine in under-graduate school. We focused, at that time, on what made Malraux a "modern" novelist. With the exception of such innovations as beginning his novels "in medias res," "splicing" the series of cinematographic scenes together instead of using continuous narration and presenting characters who were little more than symbols of his ideas and, as such, were devoid of any real inner life or human substance, Malraux's novels contained no radically new approaches to the art of novel-writing. They in no way reflected the practices of Gide, who, in Les Faux-Monnayeurs, had refused "d'écrire un roman comme les autres" or foreshadowed

Robbe-Grillet, who, in the 1950's, attacked the traditional Balzacian approach to the novel point by point to create a new form of novel or "anti-novel" as it was then called. In graduate school, we were still interested in the stylistic approach to Malraux and prepared a paper on his aesthetics in L'espoir. The thought that it might be time to take another look at Malraux's writings first occurred to us when we were in France in 1973-74 and read Gaëtan Picon's Malraux par lui-même. Malraux's marginal annotations and particularly his remarks about literature were fascinating. Since we wanted to work on a significant author of the twentieth century for our doctoral dissertation and since, Malraux was, for us, a familiar and admired writer, exemplary in his concern for questions of the broadest human significance, he seemed a logical choice. However, how could one discover a fresh field to explore when so much had already been written about him?

After examining all of Malraux's writings (books, essays, prefaces, speeches, articles and correspondence) and those of his critics, we discovered that the structure and style of the novels had been adequately analyzed in Denis Boak's André Malraux (1968), Jean Carduner's La création romanesque chez Malraux (1968), Brian Fitch's Les deux univers romanesques d'André Malraux (1964), Geoffrey Harris' A. Malraux--L'éthique comme fonction de l'esthétique (1972), Lucien Goldmann's Pour une sociologie du roman (1964), Stéphane Morawski's L'absolu et la forme: L'esthétique d'A. Malraux (1972) and William Righter's The Rhetorical Hero--An Essay on the Aesthetics of A. Malraux (1964). The philosophical approach had been thoroughly examined in works such as Charles Blend's André Malraux: Tragic Humanist (1963),

Wilbur Frohock's André Malraux and the Tragic Imagination (1951) and Joseph Hoffmann's L'humanisme de Malraux (1963). Janine Mossuz in André Malraux et le gaullisme (1970) and David Wilkinson in Malraux--An Essay in Political Criticism (1967) had dealt fully with the political dimension of Malraux's life and works. More recently, critics have focused their attention on Malraux and literature. André Vandegans had dealt with his early, whimsical writings in La jeunesse littéraire d'André Malraux (1964) and volume three, Influences et Affinités (1975), of the André Malraux Revue des Lettres Modernes series had examined the relationship between Malraux and writers such as Bernanos, Gide and Hemingway, as well as the influence of Germany and the Orient on Malraux.

By the process of elimination, we discovered that a systematic and thorough examination of Malraux's own critical writings had yet to be written. In fact, although many critics had alluded to or quoted from the articles, prefaces or reviews by Malraux to support their arguments, we found only one article which dealt exclusively with the topic, namely: "The Concept of Literary Creation in the Critical Writings of A. Malraux: 1927-35" by Margaret Groves. Various critical studies contained useful information about the relationship between Malraux and another author or a detailed comparison of their similarities and their differences but no one had yet examined Malraux's ideas about other writers, about literature in general or about his own purpose and procedures as novelist. The posthumous publication of L'homme précaire et la littérature (1977) helped us to decide to focus our attention on Malraux as literary critic. We related our intentions to Walter G.

Langlois, one of the foremost specialists on André Malraux on this continent, and he replied:

I was interested to learn of your planned doctoral dissertation on Malraux as a literary critic. Although many books have skirted this subject, so far as I can recall no one has dealt with this topic specifically and in any depth, so your contribution should be most welcome. . . .

Your subject is a very good one, and quite original, and I wish you good luck in working on it.¹

Foremost in our minds were such questions as: What sort of criticism did Malraux write? What kind of critic was he? and What did literature ultimately mean to Malraux? When he spoke out frankly as he did in a letter written to his friend, Eddy du Perron, on April 20, 1929, Malraux showed how much the professional novelist's position differed from that of the professional critic.

Pour les critiques (je parle de ceux qui ne sont pas idiots de naissance), he observes, la vérité vraie est qu'ils aiment les romans et que nous ne les aimons pas. Plus ça va, et plus je me rends compte de notre indifférence foncière à l'égard de ce que ces bonnes gens appellent 'l'art du roman'. Adrienne Mesurat est un chef-d'oeuvre, vous dit-on. C'est peu probable, mais si c'était vrai, ça me ferait le même effet. . . . Il y a des gens qui ont quelque chose à exprimer, et qui ne font jamais des chefs-d'oeuvre (Montaigne, Pascal, Goya, les sculpteurs de Chartres) parce qu'on ne domine pas une passion qui attaque le monde; et il y a ceux qui 'font des objets'.

Mais le critique, au fond, c'est un homme qui aime 'les objets'
et non l'expression des hommes.²

It is clear that when Malraux divides novelists into two categories: those who express passionately-held ideas or strong feelings and those who create "objets d'art," his sympathy is entirely with the former. As a writer, Malraux is not interested in "art for art's sake" as Flaubert or the Parnassians were, but instead, in content. Malraux maintained this position throughout his lifetime. When he stated in the 1952 Frank Edgar interview: "J'ai écrit des romans, mais je ne suis pas 'un romancier,'"³ he meant that for him the novel was a vehicle for expressing his ideas and not an art form or what he called "le roman en tant que roman." In an interview with Michel Droit fifteen years later, he repeated the same idea in other words. "En définitive," he said, "je n'ai jamais écrit un roman pour écrire un roman. J'ai poursuivi une sorte de méditation ininterrompue qui a pris des formes successives, dont celle de romans."⁴ It is in this sense only, that one can call Malraux an "ideological" novelist for, like many novelists of the thirties and forties, Saint-Exupéry, Bernanos, Sartre and Camus among them, he turned away from "aesthetic" novels in the Symbolist tradition to express his convictions in "romans philosophiques." His position as critic is consistent with the stand he espoused as a novelist. Content, not form, was what counted.

What is more, during his lifetime, Malraux was steadfast in denouncing the futility of literary criticism. Roger Stéphane recounts a 1967 interview in which Malraux stated:

Malgré toute mon admiration pour Proust, je trouve que la

phrase de Claudel: "Il y a dans le monde autre chose que ces oisifs et ces domestiques" n'est pas une critique sans force. Seulement en même temps, elle m'est indifférente parce que j'ai là-dessus un sentiment fondamental: en littérature, toutes les critiques sont absolument vaines. Exemple: Balzac et Sainte-Beuve. Sainte-Beuve attaquant Balzac a raison neuf fois sur dix, mais ça ne fait rien. . . . La critique de Claudel sur Proust est juste, mais n'a aucune importance.

J'aime assez cette application à la littérature, ou plutôt à la critique, du vieil adage: "Les chiens aboient, la caravane passe." . . . Comme seraient plus agréable la vie et les rapports humains si chacun accordait un petit peu moins d'importance à ses jugements: Ca n'a aucune importance.⁵

Moreover, for Malraux, when novelists set about providing theoretical and critical formulations of their own works, more often than not they invented them "a posteriori" to bolster up their works and were frequently at odds with themselves. Novelists were often no better critics than non-novelists.

Malraux's cavalier attitude to literary criticism in no way prevented him from devoting the greater part of his life to the study of the plastic arts and from engaging in a form of art criticism uniquely his own, particularly in La psychologie de l'art (1947-49) which he later revised and published as Les voix du silence (1951) and in La métamorphose des dieux (1957). As was the case in his comments on novels and novelists, Malraux's pronouncements on art contain keys to his approach to literature. In the introduction to La métamorphose des

dieux, Malraux clarifies his intentions as follows:

Je tente ici de rendre intelligible ce monde et le pouvoir, peut-être aussi vieux que l'invention du feu et celle du tombeau, auquel il doit l'existence. Ce livre n'a pour objet ni une histoire de l'art--bien que la nature même de la création artistique m'y contraigne souvent à suivre l'histoire pas à pas--ni une esthétique; mais bien la signification que prend la présence d'une éternelle réponse à l'interrogation que pose à l'homme sa part d'éternité--lorsqu'elle surgit dans la première civilisation consciente d'ignorer la signification de l'homme.⁶

Thus, the work was meant neither as a history of art nor as a treatise on aesthetics. There was to be no effort at discovering the origin of art. A phenomenologist by nature, Malraux attempts to understand the creative process. Since Malraux believes the essence of life to be in the creative process, the artist resembles the heroes of his novels in that he is the "exemplar," the epitome of man's possibilities. It was Malraux's quest for the meaning of the human adventure that was at the source of his lifelong passion for the arts and civilizations of the world. His approach was comparative, inclusive, eclectic; his mode of thought remained interrogative.

Malraux's passionate interest in the arts did not precede his equally fervent concern with literature but rather grew out of it and completed it. It is all the more important then to understand the nature of Malraux's literary criticism for, without this understanding, we cannot hope to assess his work as art historian and critic if,

indeed, these terms can be used to define his writings on art which are outside the realm of the present thesis. Even handling the literary criticism alone, problems of selection and method abound for, as Henri Peyre has observed:

His [Malraux's] reviews, done mostly between 1927 and 1936, and his subsequent addresses on political and cultural topics . . . would make up one of the most impressive volumes of minor pieces by any French writer of this century, at least equal to the best of Valéry's Variétés ("Varieties") or to Sartre's Situations. The maturity, the quiet and lucid wisdom of Malraux, then in his late twenties, reviewing for the Nouvelle Revue Française of June 1927 and June 1929 the books by Massis (Defence of the West) and by Keyserling (Travel Diaries of a Philosopher) are astonishing. They illuminate his early thinking on India and China. They also sketch, before any of Malraux's novels had received acclaim, the deepening that might accrue to fiction and the probable metamorphosis of that genre. . . .⁷

In order to avoid repetition of completed studies and to keep our work within a manageable scope, we excluded, along with Malraux's art criticism, any writings which are solely political. However, since Malraux's political and literary life were so often interrelated, we have included articles dealing mainly with historical or political issues but which also inform us of his literary ideas. The twenty-four reviews, eighteen prefaces and introductions, five articles, two essays and one book which constitute the "corpus" of the present study cover a

wide range of genres: poetry, prose fiction (novels of fantasy, novels of the fantastic, novels of religious mysticism, novels about socialism, novels of social realism and fictional memoirs) and non-fiction (diaries, correspondence, autobiographies, historical and political works). They deal with famous writers like Gide and virtual unknowns like Fernand Fleuret and Louis Chevasson and, while mainly devoted to contemporary works, occasionally delve into the past as is the case with Laclos and the Marquis de Sade. The works concerned were either recently published, reissued or published posthumously; the later essays cover a wider range. On the whole, Malraux's criticism has two distinctive features: the attention paid to foreign writers (T. E. Lawrence, D. H. Lawrence, Faulkner, Du Perron, Matveev, Ehrenburg and Sperber) and, more importantly, to controversial writers (T. E. Lawrence, D. H. Lawrence, Faulkner, Lautréamont, Laclos, Breton, Max Jacob, Massis, Bernanos, Trotsky).

What then are Malraux's qualifications as a critic? Not his formal education for, as Roger Stéphane remarks in "Les études de lettres de Malraux," "Au sens universitaire du mot, Malraux ne fit aucune étude: à dix-sept ans--en 1918--il quitte ce que l'on appelait alors une école primaire supérieure, n'est pas admis au lycée Condorcet, renonce au baccalauréat et décide de poursuivre seul sa formation." Yet he had all the brilliance and originality of a first-rate scholar according to Stéphane who continues: "Une application formidable de son esprit parmi [sic] à Malraux, introduit deux ans plus tard dans les milieux littéraires et artistiques de Paris, d'y briller et d'y surprendre."⁸

Even Malraux's inability to read foreign languages did not deter him. Although, according to Georges Soria: "Malraux parle mal l'anglais et l'allemand, et ni l'espagnol, ni l'italien, ni le russe, ni le chinois,"⁹ he nevertheless was able to write sensitive and perceptive studies on a wide variety of foreign authors whose works he of course read in French translation. In fact, his lack of familiarity with the language in which the original was written seemed to make him all the more aware of its essential qualities.

The literary tradition in which Malraux was nurtured is the first key to his literary attitudes and criticism. His writings and his interviews reveal a young man who, immediately after World War I, admired Baudelaire and the Symbolists, Proust, Valéry and Gide. Contemporary critics of these writers probed into the secrets of their artistic creation and, in so doing, rejected the personalist and positivist critical approaches of nineteenth century critics but not their basic aesthetic tenets.

The most influential of the preceding generation of critics were Sainte-Beuve (1804-79) who conceived of literature as springing exclusively from the writer's personality and who, therefore, judged books on the basis of their author's social and moral positions and Hippolyte Taine (1828-93) whose theory of "race, milieu et moment" reduced the work of art to a product of biography, society and history. They were reviled by Proust, Valéry, Gide and other proponents of "artistic creation" whose favourite particular target, among the older critics, was however Ferdinand Brunetière (1849-1906) who codified nineteenth-century positivism to give it the appearance of a science.

Even such eminent professors of literature as Gustave Lanson (1857-1934) were marked by their training in the Sainte-Beuve-Taine-Brunetière brand of personalism and positivism which critics outside the academy and the Sorbonne refer to as nineteenth century "traditional" criticism. Modern critics both inside and outside the "academy" have turned their backs on them for theoretical reasons but Malraux was unmoved by such quarrels. His interests, as we have seen, lay elsewhere.

The Symbolists, who are in one sense the originators of the "new criticism," nevertheless admired Sainte-Beuve and Anatole France and their particular combination of realism, classicism, and sentimentalism. Proust bridges the gap between the old and the new for his criticism is, at one and the same time, a coherent summation of the aesthetic ideas emanating from the Symbolists and, in the Contre Sainte-Beuve, a passionate condemnation of his precursor's methods. To combat the rigid conventional literary genres established by the "traditional" critics, Valéry in his "Tel Quel" offered a "fragmentary" world of literature through the destruction of the old barriers between fiction and non-fiction, prose and poetry. Thus, although the disintegration of the canon had begun with Symbolism (Mallarmé, Baudelaire) and been pursued by Gide in his "récits," it was the establishment of the N.R.F. as principal arbiter and maker of taste which gave legitimacy and supremacy to new experimental forms in literature and criticism.

The young Malraux participated in this regeneration and renewal and shared a number of the N.R.F.'s literary views to the extent, that is, that the N.R.F. had a viewpoint. Rather, the N.R.F., which was anxious to maintain a complete "disponibilité," exercised a moral neutrality

and refused to represent "one" school of literary thought to the exclusion of another, with one exception, however. The N.R.F. defended literature against incursions such as Dada and Surrealism which, in their desire to effect the total destruction of a decadent society, seemed to them to constitute a special threat to literature. By its tenth birthday in 1919, the N.R.F., which had been a force for freedom, was characterized by its distaste for the excesses of romanticism and nineteenth-century values, its quest for a renewal of classical traditions (discipline, tempered style, a respect for classical authors) and by a certain nationalism. They were however exempt from the chauvinism of the Action Française and of such defenders of the French tradition as Barrès, Charles Maurras and Léon Daudet or of Henri Massis who, in L'Esprit de la Nouvelle Sorbonne, denounced the Sorbonne as being the fortress for Durkheim's sociology and Lanson's method of literary history. The result was the N.R.F.'s espousal of humanism.

In a 1973 interview with Grover, Malraux described the general procedure followed by the N.R.F. as follows: when manuscripts were sent to the N.R.F., the editors (Rivière, Paulhan, Gallimard) passed them around to various authors and reviewers (such as Benjamin Crémieux) who, in turn, gave them their opinion of the work in question and then the editors made the final decision as to whether the work would be published and who would write the review of it.¹⁰ A 1975 conversation between Frédéric Grover and Malraux addressed the manner in which the reviewers were chosen by the N.R.F. When Grover inquired: "Mais avant cela (1934), encore à vos débuts, vous aviez donné des Notes dans la revue. Avaient-elles été sollicitées par Jacques Rivière ou par

Paulhan?", Malraux replied:

J'étais en rapport avec des amis qui écrivaient déjà à la revue comme Marcel Arland. Et eux étaient en rapport avec Paulhan. Paulhan et Rivière travaillaient dans le même bureau mais je n'ai jamais vu Rivière sans Paulhan. Ma sympathie se portait sur Paulhan. Du moment qu'on écrivait des choses avancées, il valait mieux avoir affaire à lui car il encourageait tout ce qui était audacieux, tout ce qui était découverte. . . .¹¹

The above answer by Malraux implies that, although suggestions from reviewers were encouraged, the choice of material was ultimately made by the editor. In the late 1930's, when Malraux no longer reviewed for the N.R.F., he selected the material for his articles, essays and books about literature himself and he accepted or offered to write prefaces to works by his close friends.

L. Morino describes the direction of the post-war N.R.F. as follows:

Après la guerre, la Nouvelle Revue Française a fourni à la critique des intelligences très diverses. Benjamin Crémieux d'abord, le critique objectif par excellence; depuis 1920, sans jamais prendre toutefois de position très personnelle, et tranchante, il s'y est imposé peu à peu par son bon sens perspicace et par son goût très sûr.

Edmond Jaloux y a représenté une forme de critique où le classicisme de la forme s'associe à un romantisme invétéré du fond. André Suarès y a paru puissant et original par son investigation des idées et des moeurs, beaucoup plus que des

hommes. Alain enfin, type du radical, de l'intellectuel-paysan, et grand pédagogue prétend "serrer la réalité d'aussi près que possible." Enfin les critiques "à idées" y ont tenu une place prépondérante, tels Albert Thibaudet et aujourd'hui encore Julien Benda, Ramon Fernandez et Jean Prévost. Avec des tempéraments divers, et d'ailleurs tous brillants, ils représentent dans la critique de la N.R.F. les diverses formes de la critique philosophique.¹²

It evolved still further when Jean Paulhan was named editor in 1925 for his aim was to establish a truly aesthetic criticism (that is, neither historic nor pseudo-scientific) in which the critic's primary task was to create values through the exercise of judgment. It is hardly surprising that the same Jean Paulhan was the editor with whom Malraux preferred to have dealings and who, by virtue of his intelligence and discriminating taste, had a considerable influence on the younger critic.

In his art criticism and his literary criticism, Malraux is thus not a professional critic or a proponent of a specific philosophy or critical method. He falls into a category one encounters frequently in French literature, that of the creative writer who is also a critic. Like Baudelaire, Proust, Valéry and Gide, he rejected "traditional" critics like Sainte-Beuve, Taine, Brunetière and academics like Lanson. In both his art criticism and his literary criticism, he was mainly interested in the creative process. A true "Renaissance" man, Malraux was an "impressionistic" critic, that is, a critic who had no theoretical "axe to grind," no unbending scale of values, no inflexible

method but who, like the critics of the 1920's at the N.R.F., were more book-reviewers than professional critics. Perhaps Wallace Fowlie defines their art better than anyone else when he says:

At its simplest and most unpretentious level, literary criticism aims at informing the reader concerning the book in question, and then elucidating difficulties and obscurities that may be in the book or in the writer. On a slightly higher level, the critic, if he is favorably disposed toward the book, will attempt to stimulate interest in it, to account for the stimulation he felt on reading the book, to communicate something of the pleasure he derived from it, and to analyze the reasons for this pleasure. Beyond the goals, which are useful and admirable in themselves, is the conviction, to be reaffirmed by the critics and substantiated by them, that literature is the revealer of man's consciousness at its highest level of self-knowledge and self-awareness. Literature is the communication to the reader of the writer's experience of his imagination. In order to analyze and judge this communication, the critic has to compare it with other communications.¹³

Although Malraux's criticism is, for the most part, addressed to readers already acquainted with the author in question and does little to give the general reader a comprehensive view of the book or its writer, he never fails to communicate his admiration for the work. "Le contre n'existe pas," he observes frequently. In addition, Malraux does try to explain, although not always with the same success, the workings of the

writer's imagination. Most importantly, Malraux's analysis and judgment are based on his own literary criteria. Unlike his predecessors Proust and Gide, he valued a writer's convictions more than his aesthetics. In his history of the N.R.F., L. Morino describes Malraux as "the most representative of the new wave" of writers in 1930. "André Malraux est écrivain d'instinct," he notes and adds: "Chez Malraux le souci de l'écrivain est subordonné à celui d'être avant tout un homme; et c'est par là, je crois, que la révélation de son talent dans la Revue [N.R.F.] a été une source de bienfaits immenses et féconds: André Malraux y avait apporté sa flamme."¹⁴

Thus the main thrust of this dissertation is not the reviews, the articles or the prefaces "per se" for many of them concerned ephemeral publications which today do not excite much critical interest, nor is it a study of a new theory of literary criticism. What interests us primarily is the fact that these reviews, articles and prefaces constitute a diary--written by a man who refused to write diaries--of a very special sort, a diary by a novelist writing about literature less to inform his reader than to discover how to write a novel.

These critical writings cover a period of over fifty years (1919-75) and bear witness to the maturation and evolution of a singular mind. Our division of the material into ten chapters corresponds with what we perceive to be the principal periods in Malraux's literary career as marked by the publication of his major works. For, as we analyzed the critical writings, it soon became clear that before Malraux wrote a creative work, he sought direction by reading authors who had dealt with similar concerns and then, after he

had completed the work, he elaborated on it and defended it indirectly in a new series of articles whose subjects depended on Malraux's current preoccupations as novelist. It therefore seemed necessary to include in the Introductions to Chapters Two to Ten a brief discussion of the creative work that dictated the choice of books reviewed and coloured the interpretation of these books. In this way Chapter Two: The Pre-Indo-China Years begins with an assessment of Lunes en papier (1921) and then examines the critical writings from 1922-23; Chapter Three: Indo-China and After refers briefly to Malraux's Indo-China writings, La tentation de l'Occident (1926) and D'une jeunesse européenne (1927) before analyzing the 1927 critical reviews; Chapter Four: 1928: A Banner Year deals with Les conquérants (1928) and Royaume farfelu (1928) in relation to the 1928 critical writings; Chapter Five: The Road to the Prix Goncourt presents La voie royale (1930) before the critical writings from 1929-32; Chapter Six: The Controversial Thirties opens with comments on La condition humaine (1933) and Le temps du mépris (1935) before it examines the final reviews dating from 1933-35; Chapter Seven: The Second World War introduces L'espoir (1937) and Les noyers de l'Altenburg (1943) before the essays of that period; Chapter Eight: The Post-War Period refers briefly to Esquisse d'une psychologie du cinéma (1946), Saturne, essai sur Goya (1950), Les voix du silence (1951), Le musée imaginaire de la sculpture mondiale (1952, 1954), La métamorphose des dieux (1957), Le musée imaginaire (1963) and then examines five prefaces written in the 1950's; Chapter Nine: The Final Years: (1970-75) deals briefly with the Oraisons Funèbres (1971) and the Antimémoires (1967) before

analyzing the final five prefaces and Chapter Ten: Malraux's Posthumous Works: (1976) deals with the fictional work Le miroir des limbes (1976) before it focuses on the critical works: "Néocritique" (1976) and L'homme précaire et la littérature (1977).

The length of each chapter varies according to the length, number and importance of the reviews, articles or prefaces under consideration. In addition, since Malraux's critical writings are so unacademic, we found it necessary to begin our comments on each with brief notes about the author in question and his relationship to Malraux. However, in the case of well-known authors (Apollinaire, André Gide et cetera) whose works Malraux criticizes, we have placed any biographical or bibliographical information in the endnotes. Frédéric J. Grover's Six entretiens avec André Malraux sur des écrivains de son temps (1959-1975) (1978), Roger Stéphane's André Malraux: Entretiens et précisions (1984), Guy Suarès' Malraux, celui qui vient (1974) and the six volumes of Clara Malraux's memoirs, Le bruit de nos pas (1963-76) (particularly volumes two, three and four) were most helpful in this respect. In each case the introduction to the author and his work is followed by a short resume of the book under review, an analysis and evaluation of Malraux's critical piece and a brief conclusion which addresses the possible influence of the work in question on Malraux's own literary development and career.

The purpose of this long and detailed study of Malraux's literary criticism is not only to assess the nature and significance of Malraux's criticism but also to discover the use which Malraux the novelist and creative writer made of literary criticism. We hope to show

conclusively that, far from being a distinct and separate activity, criticism was simply an extension or annex of Malraux's creative activities and, as such, an important factor in his quest for transcendence and his search for a literary technique appropriate to his goals and aspirations. A better understanding of Malraux the critic leads inevitably to a better understanding of Malraux the man, the novelist and the changing world to which he bore witness.

Notes

¹ From a letter dated 7 September 1982 to the author of this thesis and signed Walter G. Langlois, The University of Wyoming, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Box 3603, University Station, Laramie, Wyoming 82171.

² André Malraux quoted in Edgar du Perron, Cahiers Van Een Lezer in Verzameld Werk (Amsterdam: G. A. Van Oorschot, 1955) 163-64.

³ André Malraux, "L'état n'est pas fait pour diriger l'art mais pour le servir," Carrefour 393 (26 mars 1952): 1, 5.

⁴ André Malraux, "Malraux parle . . . II: Un entretien exclusif avec Michel Droit," Le Figaro Littéraire 123 (23-29 octobre 1967): 13.

⁵ André Malraux in André Malraux: Entretiens et précisions avec Roger Stéphane (Paris: Gallimard, 1984) 66-67.

⁶ André Malraux, La métamorphose des dieux (Paris: Gallimard, 1957) 35.

⁷ Henri Peyre, "André Malraux and the Metamorphosis of Literature," André Malraux: Metamorphosis and Imagination, eds. Françoise Dorenlot and Micheline Tison-Braun (New York: New York Literary Forum, 1979) 30.

⁸ Roger Stéphane, "Les études de lettres" in André Malraux: Entretiens et précisions avec Roger Stéphane 13.

⁹ Jean Lacouture, Malraux: Une vie dans le siècle (Paris: Seuil, 1973) 221.

¹⁰ André Malraux in Frédéric J. Grover's Six entretiens avec André Malraux sur des écrivains de son temps (1959-75) (Paris: Gallimard,

1978) 92.

¹¹ Malraux, Six entretiens avec Grover 146.

¹² L. Morino, La "Nouvelle Revue Française" dans l'histoire des lettres (1908-37) (Paris: Gallimard, 1939) 202-203.

¹³ Wallace Fowlie, The French Critic: 1594-1967 (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern UP; London and Amsterdam: Feffer, 1968) 74-75.

¹⁴ L. Morino, La "N.R.F." dans l'histoire des lettres 194.

CHAPTER I

MALRAUX'S INITIATION INTO THE LITERARY WORLD

André Malraux spent most of his childhood and youth in the town of Bondy which is located eight miles from Paris on the main road to Lorraine. He attended a small private school with his friend Louis Chevasson. In addition to Alexandre Dumas, the young Malraux read Flaubert, Hugo, Balzac and the French translations of Shakespeare's Macbeth and Julius Caesar. In 1915, Malraux was admitted as a scholarship student to the Ecole Turgot, a primary school on the Rue de Turbigo in Paris. Although Malraux may have studied for a few months at the Lycée Condorcet and he may have attended a few classes at the "Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes," the "Faculté des Lettres de Paris" and the "Ecole du Louvre," there is no actual record of this.¹ Despite the fact that Malraux's formal education came to an end at some time in late 1917 or early 1918, his interest in literature increased as time passed for, like the young Rimbaud, he was talented and wanted to be a writer, but he was both anti-traditional and rebellious. In an interview with Emmanuel d'Astier, he summed up his literary aspirations as follows:

Cependant, bien avant seize ans, je voulais devenir un grand écrivain. Mais nous étions persuadés, mes amis et moi, qu'un grand écrivain, comme un grand peintre, devait être maudit. Il fallait qu'il crève de faim, dans la tradition du Symbolisme et de Baudelaire. . . . Dans mes espoirs, le sentiment de la révolte l'emportait de loin sur une aspiration à la notoriété.²

The following excerpt from the same interview explains Malraux's literary predilections:

Nous [mes amis et moi] admirions d'abord Apollinaire. . . .
Après, ce fut Max Jacob. Valéry m'intéressait prodigieusement:
il me donnait l'image d'une pensée invulnérable.

Il y avait en moi deux personnages: un écrivain
pré-surréaliste, et un homme formé par le classicisme et par
Nietzsche irrationaliste. Je ne sais pas comment ces deux
personnages ont pu se rencontrer.³

Then, when he was not quite eighteen years old, Malraux became acquainted with a number of intellectual and literary figures in Paris. Many of these individuals were from the older generation of Symbolists or their successors, among whom Jean de Gourmont, Laurent Tailhade and Anatole France were the most significant. However, Malraux was also drawn to a group of artists and writers loosely linked to the Cubist school, particularly those who were associated with Max Jacob. In addition to poets like Gaborry and Reverdy, they included André Salmon, Blaise Cendrars and Philippe Soupault.

In 1919, three men played a prominent role in launching Malraux's literary career, namely: René-Louis Doyon, Lucien Kra and Florent Fels. René-Louis Doyon, a bookseller, hired Malraux as a "chineur," that is, a very knowledgeable book and manuscript hunter. In his memoirs, Doyon notes that:

En 1919, un grand jeune homme blond, distingué, vêtu simplement mais avec beaucoup de correction vint se proposer comme approvisionneur de livres rares et d'éditions originales, et il remplit cet office avec ponctualité et intelligence à notre satisfaction commune pendant deux ans aux moins; c'était André

Malraux.⁴

Doyon describes the development of their relationship as follows:

Peu à peu, nos rapports furent moins stricts; des conversations s'engageaient, des idées s'échangeaient. Il [Malraux] avait des opinions littéraires arrêtées et ne manquait pas de sarcasmes dans ses jugements. Son concours m'était bien précieux puisqu'il me délivrait d'un souci et me permettait de me donner à d'autres travaux.⁵

Doyon had great admiration for Malraux's literary knowledge and taste and it is not surprising that when, late in 1919, he decided to create a literary review, he invited young Malraux to become a contributor. The purpose of the review La Connaissance was, according to Doyon, to:

. . . recueillir, noter, synthétiser, jeter des idées, en défendre, peut-être en combattre; l'ère qui s'est ouverte demande du travail; on n'a presque plus le goût de rire, mais le devoir d'agir, de créer, si l'on veut avoir le droit de vie dans un monde où tout doit être reconstruit, réédifié, pacifié. L'heure des constructeurs a sonné.⁶

The first number of La Connaissance contained an article by Malraux on contemporary poetry: "Des origines de la poésie cubiste" and the second issue of La Connaissance included Malraux's review of several books by the neo-Symbolist writer, Laurent Tailhade. Doyon remarks that, in addition to suggesting that he publish three of the most striking visions of the German stigmatic and mystic, Anne-Catherine Emmerich, Malraux offered to supply him with hitherto unpublished texts by the neo-Symbolist poet Jules Laforgue, by Tailhade and by Jarry.

Doyon acknowledges Malraux's expertise in preparing these volumes and his own willingness to publish the Malraux editions. "J'étais tout à fait novice dans ce genre de travaux où je devais par la suite acquérir une certaine notoriété," he wrote, "J'acceptai donc son travail, sa présentation, en mettant son nom dans le justificatif."⁷ Doyon fully understood that La Connaissance which served as a stepping-stone to Malraux helped to launch him on his literary career. As he saw it:

. . . la bibliophilie ne fut pour lui qu'un échelon, l'édition un stade. . . . On devinait à chacun de ses essais que Malraux cherchait d'autres moyens de se réaliser. D'une part, il avait un esprit spéculatif, très naturel, très probe. D'autre part, il rêvait grand, voyait beau. Il y avait certainement en lui un cumul d'artiste et d'homme action.⁸

Sometime in 1919, in addition to working for René-Louis Doyon, Malraux also became affiliated with Lucien Kra, whose father Simon operated a modest shop dealing in autographs, manuscripts and rare old books. When Malraux informed him that he had located a number of virtually unknown Symbolist texts originally published in little reviews in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as several unpublished manuscripts, Kra did not hesitate to arrange for their publication. According to Walter Langlois:

Young Kra was impressed. He decided not only to bring out the texts but also to give Malraux a major role in organizing their publication. The Editions du Sagittaire was a very modest undertaking during the first two years of its existence numbering only three or four employees. It was nevertheless a

highly interesting enterprise because it closely reflected the ideas and tastes of the young Malraux.⁹

The first such series entitled the Editions du Sagittaire was Symbolist in orientation. It included Remy de Gourmont's Livret de l'imagier (illustrated by Daragnès), Baudelaire's Causeries (with woodcuts of drawings by Constantin Guys), Laurent Tailhade's Carnet intime (with woodcuts by Kharis), Alfred Jarry's Gestes suivis des paralipomènes d'Ubu (etchings, marginal decorations and woodcuts by Georges Drains) and Remy de Gourmont's Patience de Griselidis (illustrated by P. A. Moras). Jean de Tinan's Annotation sentimentale and his Aimienne ou le détournement de mineure and several volumes of erotica prepared by Malraux were also published by Kra and sold under the counter.

Encouraged by the success of the first series, early in the autumn of 1920 Lucien Kra authorized the eighteen-year old Malraux to begin to organize a second and somewhat more daring series. Since Malraux was particularly interested in the whimsical aesthetics of some Cubists, he chose to edit Gabory's Coeurs à prendre (illustrated by Galanis) and Reverdy's Etoiles peintes (illustrated by Derain) which appeared in April of 1921 and were followed in early June of the same year by Jacob's Dos d'arlequin. Malraux's second Kra series was abruptly terminated because, although the undertaking was unquestionably an artistic success, it was not financially viable.

Florent Fels, editor of the little avant-garde magazine Action, was the third publisher to influence the young Malraux. Only twelve issues of Action appeared between its birth in November 1919 and its demise in June 1922.¹⁰ Fels, who was in contact with several somewhat different

literary cliques in Paris, initially turned to friends in these groups for contributions to Action. These included the intellectuals who were his associates in the Individual Anarchist movement, notably Han Ryner, Maurice Wullens, Gabriel Brunet, Marcel Martinet, Laurent Tailhade, Francis Vaud and the avant-garde writers of Max Jacob's coterie and of other Montmartre-Montparnasse literary circles who could be broadly characterized as "literary Cubists." Previously they had published mainly in such reviews as Nord-Sud and Sic which are famous today for having brought Jacob, Cendrars, Cocteau, Gabory, Reverdy, Salmon, Radiguet, Artaud and Malraux to the public eye. Finally, there was the older generation of artists, art critics, gallery owners and collectors who were represented in the first number of Action: Cahiers Individualistes de Philosophie et d'Art by an article by Gabriel Brunet, "La conception stendhalienne du héros: Julien Sorel." Most of the remaining poems and prose works in the issue, those by Marcel Millet, André Salmon, Max Jacob and Georges Gabory bear witness to the individualist ideology of the editor but the translation of an article on Stravinsky's ballets by Leigh Henry with original drawings by André Derain, A. Domin, Galanis, Max Jacob and the reproduction of paintings by such modern artists as Braque, Picasso and Vlaminck expressed the resolutely eclectic stance of Fels whose "prière d'insérer" clarified the orientation of the review. "Nous avons voulu unir des écrivains choisis pour l'originalité de leur esprit et de leur forme," he says, adding that they are all "individualistes en ce sens qu'ils n'appartiennent à aucune école."¹¹ Thus, for Fels, to be an individualist meant to be eclectic in the broadest sense of the term.

Action's eclectic aesthetic credo was as far from the irrationalism and gratuitous pleasantries of Dada as it was from the irrational and destructive spirit of André Breton's Surrealism, then a doctrine in the making.

Although Malraux's presence was noted at a Dadaist meeting in 1920,¹² he remained loyal to Florent Fels. In the tenth and eleventh issues of Action, Malraux was listed as a member of the Comité de Rédaction and he became a co-editor of the last number of the review. Five of the eight works that he contributed to Fels' magazine were critical writings: an article on Lautréamont entitled "La genèse des Chants de Maldoror," a review of the new André Breton and Philippe Soupault work, Les champs magnétiques, two reviews of André Salmon's most recent whimsical works: La négresse du Sacré-Coeur and L'entrepreneur d'illuminations and an article entitled "Aspects d'André Gide." The remaining three were Malraux's first creative writings, namely the whimsical prose-poems "Mobilités," "Prologue" and "Journal d'un pompier du jeu de massacre."¹³ "Prologue" was in turn revised and included in Malraux's first book, the Cubist-inspired fantasy Lunes en papier, dedicated to Max Jacob and illustrated by Fernand Léger, which was published April 12, 1921 by Kahnweiler.

By far Malraux's most important encounter of this period came as a result of his work for Action. At a dinner celebrating the launching of the April 1920 issue of the magazine, he met Clara Goldschmidt, the daughter of an affluent Franco-German Jewish family, whom he subsequently married. Clara herself had literary aspirations and in addition was well-read and quadrilingual (German, French, Italian and

English). Not only did she share her enthusiasm for Nietzsche and the German Romantic poets with her companion, but she proved to be a perceptive critic of Malraux's early works. Speaking of Lunes en papier for example, she ties it to the climate of the times.

Plus concrètement, she writes, j'avais dès après nos premières rencontres regardé de près Lunes en papier: habituée à la littérature d'avant-garde, à la revendication du poème-objet, aux théories de Max Jacob sur la nécessité pour l'écrivain de créer quelque chose qui existât indépendamment de son auteur, à l'importance de l'élément surprise, l'oeuvre ne m'avait point étonnée. J'en aimais la désinvolture, la poésie sèche. La place qu'elle donnait aux odeurs, aux contacts avec les diverses matières, à leur douceur ou à leur rugosité me frappa. Mais il me semblait sentir, au-delà des apparences de ce qui se voulait une fantaisie, le besoin de minimiser l'aventure humaine telle qu'elle est vécue par le plus grand nombre. L'homme véritable n'était pas présent, dans ce conte de dérision que l'on pouvait sans trop d'effort considérer comme essentiellement chrétien: si on n'y parlait guère du porteur d'âme, celui-ci n'était pas loin mais devenu lui aussi marionnette, tant se montrait dépourvu de grandeur ce à quoi il devait s'affronter.¹⁴

All told, Clara considered Malraux's critical articles more important than Lunes: "Reste que je ne croyais pas que mon compagnon eût trouvé là [Lunes] son mode d'expression. Plus proches de lui me semblèrent dès cette époque ses quelques articles de critique. Quant au romancier

qu'il devait devenir, je ne le pressentais en rien."¹⁵ My analysis of the early writings inevitably leads to the same conclusion.

I.1. "Des origines de la poésie cubiste"

"Des origines de la poésie cubiste" by André Malraux was published in the first issue of La Connaissance in January 1920. This short article of five and a half pages discusses the development of Cubism, examines briefly the poetry of Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Pierre Reverdy and Blaise Cendrars and assesses the contribution of these poets to the Cubist movement.¹⁶

It is not unusual that Malraux should begin his literary career as a critic of poetry for his very first creative work was poetry. In addition, Malraux, at that time, was most interested in the aesthetics of Cubism and poetry, together with painting, was the movement's major form of expression. His choice of poets was based upon the ones who were the most famous and the most representative of the new movement. Guillaume Apollinaire and Blaise Cendrars were at the head of the literary avant-garde since before World War I. In addition to being close friends of Max Jacob and Pierre Reverdy, Malraux was aware that by 1920 they were being recognized among literary connoisseurs as outstanding poets and theorists of literary Cubism.

According to Malraux's article, Symbolism as a literary movement came to an end with the invention of a new aesthetic by four contemporary poets: Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Reverdy and Blaise Cendrars.¹⁷ For Malraux, as for all other critics, Apollinaire's basic contribution to the new movement was the reaffirmation of Rimbaud's lesson in Une saison en enfer (1873), namely that a poem was both

gratuitous and autonomous. "Apollinaire instaurait une poésie fantaisiste et moderniste," he says, "dans laquelle l'objet, (au lieu d'exister en fonction du poète), devenait parfois autonome" (C:38). Such cursory treatment of Apollinaire shows that Malraux had little new to say about the poet and that he was more interested in his successors.

Malraux seems much more familiar with Max Jacob's poetry than with Apollinaire's for, not only does he mention an obscure and personal poetic work like Les oeuvres burlesques et mystiques de Frère Matorel, mort au couvent de Barcelone, but he also quotes from its preface as well as quoting from the prose-poems and the maxims of the first volume of Le cornet à dés. He sums up Jacob's poetic theory in the following quotation which is as accurate as it is succinct: "La dimension n'est rien pour la beauté de l'oeuvre, sa situation et son style y sont tout. Le style est la volonté de s'extérioriser par des moyens choisis. L'oeuvre d'art doit être éloignée du sujet. Le poème en prose est un bijou" (C:39). According to Malraux, in addition to "irony," "mysticism," the "bizarre" and "the destruction of the logical order of facts," Max Jacob's poetry expresses the "patterns evoked by his imagination" (C:39). Thus, for Malraux, Jacob's aesthetics supported the Cubist idea of the autonomy of the poem and underlined the belief that an artist must reveal the underlying reality which is hidden from the eye by mere appearance and which is so often at odds with reality.

Reverdy, the third poet mentioned by Malraux, represents another aspect of Cubism. He achieved his goal by a synthesis and concentration of effects and in this respect, Malraux remarks, was not unlike his predecessor, Mallarmé. Choosing appropriate examples from La guitare

endormie, Malraux demonstrates that Reverdy's technique could be likened to a "surgical operation" that "stripped" his vision of all exterior elements (C:41). However, Malraux notes, Reverdy's influence was less widespread than that of Cendrars whose work was characterized by "un modernisme bréloqué d'humour mais d'expression aigue" (C:42). Malraux's view of Cendrars' poetry is still considered valid today,¹⁸ for he sums up the young poet's contribution to Cubism as follows: "On y dénichait des trouvailles de vision et, surtout, une expression paroxyste de la vie moderne obtenue sans verbalisme" (C:42). In short, for Malraux, the new aesthetic known as Cubism was an amalgam of the modernism, humor and concentration which characterizes the work of these four poets. Malraux concludes by contrasting Cubism's obsession with what is, to Symbolism's metaphysical quest: "Les amoureux d'art savent qu'il existe là plusieurs poètes qui ont remplacé une esthétique cherchant la beauté hors la vie par une esthétique cherchant la beauté dans la vie" (C:43) and this formula, for all its simplicity, is essentially true.

In addition, Malraux notes the general lack of comprehension of and sympathy towards Cubism and ridicules the traditional professors, critics and members of the Academy who, clinging to the dead Symbolist movement, reject the new movement as outrageous. He asserts:

Les ouvriers de portières, ingénieurs et garçons bouchers qui 's'intéressent à la littérature' expliquent qu'il produit des artistes qui, lorsqu'ils n'arlequent le subjectile de traits ou de teintes dirigeant vers le cercle indifférent la pointe des angles agressifs, vagissent des vers de ce genre:

Le pharmacien vert nage entre deux au-Topsies. (C:43)

The slang is unambiguous. In the battle between the retrograde Symbolists and avant-garde Cubists, Malraux is on the side of the Cubists and against all those who refuse to move with the times. His stand is less a question of hostility to Symbolism than rebellion against authority.

The article in question is written in a somewhat pretentious style with sarcastic overtones. It is well-informed and contains valid judgments about the four Cubist poets whom he discusses. It is neither scholarly nor ponderous but it does tend to excess in the attack against the traditionalists and the defenders of Surrealism. This brief explanation of the origins of Cubism is interesting for two reasons: firstly, for its choice of four poets whose work has endured and secondly because it is an indication of the state of mind of young French intellectuals after the first World War. Cubism expresses their refusal to be bound by the past and their desire to discover the truth about the world. For Malraux, the most salient characteristic of the Cubist aesthetic was its belief in the art object as an aesthetic re-creation of ordinary reality, and however unartistic Cubist works may have seemed to some, Malraux not only saw beauty in them but he allowed for the existence of different types of "Beauty".

Malraux's article on Cubism did not go unnoticed and less than a month later, on February 20, 1920, J. Valmy-Baysse, a conservative literary columnist for the important newspaper Comoedia, spoke out against Malraux's views. He accused Malraux of attacking and denouncing Symbolism which, according to him, was important in its role as a liberator of literature. "Le symbolisme avait été le grand libérateur

du vers et de la poésie poétique . . . " he said. "Les symbolistes ont multiplié nos moyens d'expression et élargi la vision du poète."¹⁹

Valmy-Baysse's article elicited the following reply from Malraux:

Je n'ai nullement attaqué le Symbolisme, he contends quite justly. J'ai pour ce mouvement, l'un des plus beaux, et, à coup sûr, le plus artiste des mouvements littéraires français, une loyale admiration qui s'est manifestée par de longues recherches concernant les oeuvres perdues de Jules Laforgue--que j'ai retrouvées en partie, et qui paraîtront sans doute dans quelques mois--et les oeuvres inconnues de Stéphane Mallarmé.²⁰

In response Valmy-Baysse concludes his second commentary by stressing his only remaining point of contention, namely the question of the actuality of Symbolism:

Et c'est seulement sur ce point que je ne partage pas l'avis de M. André Malraux; le symbolisme n'est pas mort; il suffit, pour s'en convaincre, de lire, dans les combatives revues des jeunes générations, certains poèmes qui sont parmi les plus beaux et les plus caractéristiques de l'heure présente.²¹

Malraux had no need to respond and it is now obvious who was right and who was wrong. From the beginning then, Malraux took his position against the traditional critics and set the tone for his future role as an anti-establishment writer.

I.2. "Trois livres de Tailhade"

In February 1920 the second issue of René-Louis Doyon's magazine La Connaissance devoted two pages to a review by André Malraux of three books by the neo-Symbolist writer Laurent Tailhade. Born in 1854 in Tarbes, the French poet and lampoonist, Laurent Tailhade, attended high school in Pau. He abandoned his law studies in Toulouse to go to Paris where he began his literary career in the company of Verlaine, Moréas, Barrès, Cros and Wiede. He wrote biting sarcasm attacking the bourgeoisie which earned him the nickname "serpent à sonnets."²² L'Echo de Paris, Le Décadent, La Plume and Le Nouveau Mercure de France were among the many literary reviews and newspapers to which Tailhade contributed and he is best known for such polemic works as: Jardin des rêves (1880), Un dizain de sonnets (1882), Vitraux (1891), Au pays du mufle (1891), Poèmes aristophanesques (1904), Imbéciles et gredins (1900) and La noire idole (1907). His violent anticlerical and anarchistic politics earned him a brief stay in prison in 1901. Tailhade later became disenchanted with politics and decided to devote himself to "Art" and "Beauty," and died poor and forgotten in Coombs-la-Ville in 1919.

Malraux chose to write about Tailhade for two reasons. Firstly and most importantly, he shared many of his views and secondly, three minor works by Tailhade had been published posthumously in 1919 and were attracting considerable attention. The first work of fifty pages entitled Petit bréviaire de la gourmandise is a humorous examination of

the role of cooking in literature. The second work is more serious and consists of two articles; one a twenty-nine page study, La douleur, dealing with the expression of sorrow in poetry and the other, Le vrai mystère de la passion, a thirty-seven page analysis of the representation of death in poetry. It covers an immense span, dealing first with the death of the pagan gods in the poetry of antiquity and then with the theme of the crucifixion in poetry from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. It focuses in particular on several versions of a religious play, Le vrai mystère de la passion, including the best-known one by the fifteenth century French playwright, Arnoul Gréban. The last and lengthiest of the three posthumous works by Laurent Tailhade, Lettres familières, is a collection of thirteen letters of well-turned invective addressed to fictitious individuals whose identity was more than likely obvious to his contemporaries. In all, the works form a most curious but representative sample of Tailhade's literary production.

In his review of these three works, Malraux neither speaks of Tailhade the man nor mentions the political significance of his works. Instead he praises and/or criticizes them to the extent that they correspond to his own likes and dislikes. He is justified in underlining the beauty of Tailhade's style (T:196) but he surely exaggerates when he compares it to Mallarmé's and the superior, pretentious and sarcastic tone he employs is the same one he used in his first article on Cubism. Malraux criticizes the Petit bréviaire and La douleur for being too scholarly and conventional and, according to him, Tailhade should have placed more emphasis on the version of Le vrai

mystère de la passion by the Franciscan monk, Jean Michel, whose poetry Malraux considers equal to that of Villon. In true scholarly fashion he quotes a passage from the Jean Michel version to prove that it is superior to the mediocre versions by Gréban and by Tourasse and Taurines (T:196). Although Malraux's opinion about Jean Michel's poetry may well be sound, it can be said in Tailhade's defence that his purpose was to study the theme of the crucifixion in dramatic poetry not to give a thorough analysis of the most successful version.

Although Malraux's praise for Tailhade's poetic style goes against popular judgment, he appreciates the biting irony of Tailhade's Lettres familières in much the same way as most modern critics do. Jean-Pierre Rioux, for example, says that:

Par-delà la minutie parfois lassante des allusions à d'obscurs contemporains, le lecteur recevra le choc d'un grand pamphlétaire. Ce poète emphatique et nourri de rhétorique survit par ces flèches rapides décochées, jour après jour, en pleine mêlée. Sa jonglerie verbale, peu supportable en vers, donne à sa phrase un savoureux mordant. L'invention d'où sort une laborieuse poésie de cuistre combine en prose une fascinante verroterie de mots. C'est que toujours, pour ce Méridional batailleur, 'l'invective est joie syllabique.'²³

Without formulating such neat distinctions between Tailhade's prose and poetry, Malraux praises the appropriateness of Tailhade's style to his theme and quotes extensively and with enthusiasm from one of the letters, "Dom Tiercelin à Corax-le-Noir" (T:197). In this letter dated 1916, Tailhade satirizes one of his professors (André Thérive) for his

traditional ideas about honour, patriotism and war heroes and Malraux, like Tailhade, considers Thérive's beliefs to be barbarous. Malraux's view was widespread in English poetry and French literature (Romain Rolland, Martin du Gard et cetera) after the slaughter of World War I. However, although pacifism, as a political and philosophic stance, represented a refusal, it was neither a solution nor a literary doctrine. The conclusion of the review (T:197) expands the attack to include all the traditional wisdom of professors and critics of the preceding generation.

René-Louis Doyon was much impressed by Malraux's review as the following appraisal of it indicates:

Dans le No. 2 de ma revue, Malraux consacre 2 pages à 3 livres de Laurent Tailhade, he writes. C'est une analyse très perspicace, notamment à propos de Le vrai mystère de la Passion. . . . André Malraux reproche à Laurent Tailhade une évidente facilité mais non sa perfection d'écriture. . . . C'est un Malraux qui sait attaquer et même pourfendre d'un stylet affilé.²⁴

From the beginning Malraux, who had proven himself quite capable of objective and measured analysis, preferred the role of polemicist to that of detached observer and, although he was much impressed by Tailhade's style, he was much more concerned with the content of his works. As Doyon says, Malraux excels in the art of attack.

I.3. "La genèse des Chants de Maldoror"

Malraux's article, "La genèse des Chants de Maldoror," appeared in the third number of Florent Fels' Action in April of 1920. Its author, the Comte de Lautréamont (pseudonym of Isidore Lucien Ducasse), was born in Montevideo, Uruguay on April 4, 1846. Lautréamont's father, a chancellor in the French consulate, had the reputation of an eccentric. In 1860, Lautréamont was sent to school in France where he attended first the lycée in Tarbes and then the one in Pau. He moved to Paris in 1868 where he disappeared into obscurity until his death on November 4, 1870. The works which have made him famous were, for the most part, published in the last year of his life or posthumously: Poésies (1870) and, although there had been a printed version of the first Chant in 1868, the complete work, Les chants de Maldoror, was published much later (1874; 1890). Les chants is a violent poem about the forces of evil in which Lautréamont juxtaposes startling images to produce his most disquieting and ferocious effects. This savagery of protest turns the revolt against the human condition into a work verging on blasphemy. However, when we examine Les chants in the light of the Poésies, we see that all is paradox in this extraordinary work and that nothing is what it appears to be. Lautréamont uses romantic imagery to disinfest Romanticism and his proclamation of revolt is intended to undermine the dogma of revolution. In other words, he is rebelling against rebellion and his rhetoric, which appears to be out of control, is, in fact, precisely articulated. For Lautréamont, literature had become a

succession of meaningless eccentric "tics" and he willed its destruction so that poetry could once more express the universal and be made by all.

Les chants remained unnoticed until the Surrealists discovered it in the 1920's and adopted the author as one of their models. In his book on Lautréamont, Wallace Fowlie informs us that:

. . . 1920 was the turning point in the fortunes of Lautréamont. Poésies appeared in book form with a preface by Philippe Soupalt [sic]. A new edition of Les Chants was brought out in Paris by Les Editions de la Sirène, and André Malraux published in Action the "variantes" of the first canto.²⁵

Thus, Malraux had, by the time he wrote his third literary article, become an avant-garde critic whose taste coincided with that of the younger generation of poets.

In his short article of two pages, Malraux gives us a certain number of details about Lautréamont's life and the literary influences on his work and then goes on to examine the content and the style of Les chants. Like the academics he decries, he compares various versions of the text but less out of scholarly zeal than to discover the secrets of Lautréamont's poetic technique. His comments suggest that he is very familiar with Les chants.

Malraux dedicated the article to "Monsieur Jacques Brimeur," the owner of a bookshop, who gave him access to certain letters by Lautréamont which Malraux consulted to document his biographical notes (M:33). From our examination of these letters which have been included in the appendix of every edition of Lautréamont's Oeuvres complètes

since 1963, it appears that Malraux fabricated certain details about Lautréamont's life in order to explain the poet's works more easily. Malraux invents Lautréamont's hatred for his family and exaggerates the poet's abuse of drugs in order to create the myth of Lautréamont as a decadent Baudelairian poet and fit him into an accustomed mold (M:33). Apart from these pure inventions, Malraux quotes verbatim from the letters or paraphrases them so that in the long run his description of the influences on Lautréamont's works as well as of the themes and style of the lyrical anecdotes is a curious mixture of borrowings and invention, of truth and falsehood (M:33). Thus, Malraux is actually doing a Sainte-Beuve in reverse, that is, he is inventing a life that corresponds with the work.

With the use of numerous examples from the text, Malraux attacks Lautréamont's stories for being childish, unoriginal and hackneyed. He remarks that:

Ce sont même quelquefois des anecdotes au sentiment fabriqué: le conseil de protéger ses ongles pendant quinze jours puis de les enfoncer avec jouissance, bave et lenteur dans la poitrine d'un poupon glapissant est d'un sadisme enfantin, d'un baudelairisme d'employé de la Compagnie des Chemins de fer; et la scène de famille . . . est visiblement façonnée: "l'enfant qui souffre" ayant été utilisé déjà, comment le présenter à nouveau sans qu'il semble un peu usé aux coudes? En le fanfreluchant d'une famille, d'une sensible famille de figurants qui va souffrir aussi. Les figurants se tiennent mal, et ne vagissent que des expressions sans nouveauté, mais

une scène est écrite. Cependant ces traînées de candeur sont rares dans le livre. (M:33).

For Malraux, Lautréamont invented these macabre fantasies to enhance his work but Wallace Fowlie comes closer to the truth when he explains that Lautréamont's intentions were quite different: "At times," Fowlie says, "his [Lautréamont's] fictional narrative seems grimly serious, but then he intervenes in his story in order to deride his fiction and to deride all fiction, for that matter. Whatever Lautréamont takes seriously, he makes fun of."²⁶ If Fowlie is correct, then Malraux had not understood Lautréamont at all.

Malraux's analysis of Lautréamont's technique is an interesting demonstration of the birth of a style, citing cases in which certain names and engravings from the 1868 version of the first Chant had been changed and replaced in the 1874 text. Malraux observes that: "Lautréamont remplaça toutes les abstractions par des noms d'objets ou, de préférence, d'animaux n'ayant avec les poèmes aucun rapport logique" (M:34). Modern critics credit Malraux with being the first to record and interpret these variants. In his notice accompanying Lautréamont's Oeuvres complètes, Hubert Juin remarks: "La même année [1920] encore, dans Action, André Malraux établit, pour la première fois, les variantes qui existent entre le texte du Chant premier imprimé par Balitout (1868) et le texte définitif des Chants de Maldoror chez Lacroix (1874)."²⁷ Indeed, Malraux's textual analysis was a very early attempt at what we now call genetic criticism.

Malraux, nevertheless, concludes his remarks with an unfavorable opinion of Lautréamont's writing techniques. He gives him some credit

for original anecdotes (M:34) but, he says, he did little more than paraphrase the "satanic" stereotypes typical of pre-1832 Romanticism:

Mais n'importe quel gilet-rouge français, avant 1830, avait employé Satan à arracher les yeux d'un nombre long de pâles jeunes filles. . . . Lautréamont, le premier, raya Satan et âme, et écrivit au-dessus Dieu et cheveu. Mais, même lorsqu'il donne des résultats aussi curieux, quelle est la valeur littéraire d'un tel procédé? (M:35)

Thus Malraux fails to discern the literary significance of Lautréamont's work. He grasps neither the essential parody at the heart of this kind of "satanic" literature nor its presurrealistic potential. But, in spite of its obvious shortcomings, the article on Lautréamont is noteworthy for three reasons. Firstly, Malraux's tone is less sarcastic and less pretentious than in his first two critical writings, his adolescent pose of superiority is gone. Secondly, his omission of relevant dates and his fabrications about Lautréamont's life suggest that precise scholarship is not his "forte" or even his goal, that he is more concerned with the text than the man. Thirdly, and however much this may invalidate his critical authority, Malraux believes that "sincere scenes" are important in a work of literature. With hindsight, we can see the potential novelist at the critic's elbow, pushing him to deal with matters which will help him write a work of fiction.

I.4. "Les champs magnétiques"

The fifth issue of Florent Fels' magazine Action which appeared in October 1920 carried a brief review by André Malraux of André Breton and Philippe Soupault's work Les champs magnétiques. The first poems by André Breton, who was born in Tinchebray, Orne on February 19, 1896, reveal the influence of the works of Baudelaire and the Symbolists, Mallarmé and Huysmans. In addition to reading the works of Rimbaud, Jarry and Lautréamont, Breton had befriended two young avant-garde poets, Aragon and Apollinaire, who were to rank amongst the most important of their generation. In 1916, Tristan Tzara had founded a short-lived nihilistic movement in art and literature known as "Dadaism," a term which was meant to signify everything or nothing or total freedom, hence the attack on all rules, ideals and traditions. Although the expression "super-realism" had been coined independently by Guillaume Apollinaire, it was not until 1924 that André Breton, shortening it to Surrealism, issued the first of three manifestos which went beyond the purely negative tenets of Dadaism to recommend that not only should the mind be liberated from logic and reason, but that it should replace them with instinct and intuition.

Breton, a trained medical doctor, had been influenced by Freudian analysis and had experimented with automatic writing under hypnosis. He interested his followers, the Surrealists, in the study and effects of dreams and hallucinations and also in the interpenetration of the sleeping and waking conditions on the threshold of the conscious mind.

In their art and their literature, they attempted to imitate the workings of the unconscious mind which the conscious mind would organize but not invent. In addition to Breton, the "father of Surrealism," who devoted himself to the movement until his death in Paris in 1966, the main writers associated with the movement were: Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, Benjamin Péret and Philippe Soupault. None of them achieved the pre-eminence of such Surrealist painters as Chirico, Max Ernst, Picasso and Salvador Dali, not because they were less talented but because the verbal arts were less well-suited than the plastic arts to the expression of the unconscious.

André Breton wrote numerous articles about Surrealism in such avant-garde reviews as: Nord-Sud, Sic, Commerce, Minotaure, Le Libertaire and Arts. He was also instrumental in founding Littérature (1919), La Révolution Surréaliste (1924), Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution (1930), VVV (1942), Le Surréalisme Même (1956) and La Brèche. Of Breton's creative works, both prose and poetry illustrate his theories.²⁸ Les champs magnétiques (with Philippe Soupault) (1920), one of the earliest, is also one of the most important. His collaborator Philippe Soupault, who was born in Chaville in 1897, was a convert from Dadaism who joined Breton in creating the review Littérature in 1919. Although his early poetry and his collaboration in Les champs magnétiques proved his loyalty to Breton, Soupault's multiple interests in extra-literary subjects such as painting and cinema coupled with his eclectic nature led him away from the Surrealist movement by the late 1920's.²⁹ His co-authoring of Les champs magnétiques marks a moment in his life and, as a joint production, the book is of special

interest.

Published in May 1920, Les champs magnétiques is the result of a one to two week experiment in which André Breton and Philippe Soupault collaborated in the writing of a series of "automatic" texts and poems. In addition to eleven short passages entitled: La glace sans tain, Saisons, Eclipses, En 80 jours, Barrières, Ne bougeons plus, Hôtels, Trains, Lune de miel, Usine and Gants blancs, the work includes a two-part section on poetry, La pagure dit which contains the following brief compositions: I, J'ai beaucoup connu, Rideaux, N'a jamais eu de commencement, Grand luxe, Délivrance, Tempête dans un verre d'eau, Détour par le ciel, Les jeunes pousses, Terre de couleur, Tout ce qu'il y a de mystérieux and II: Les sentiments sont gratuits, On applaudit, Règlements, Les modes perpétuelles, Bulletins, Les manufactures, L'Eternité, Commandements, Au seuil des tours, Les masques et la chaleur colorée and La fin de tout.

André Breton chose the titles and organized the texts which by 1930 he severely condemned as being too romantic. The two collaborators agreed that the content and the style of each passage be chosen arbitrarily and that the content should have little, if anything, in common with its title. Although in the edition the two writers signed each of their contributions to the text, they had hoped that a complete surrender to their unconscious would eliminate all traces of their individuality. Some of the texts and poems, which are often in broken syntax, are in the form of conversations and of reminiscences. Others are descriptions of dreams and experiments in hypnotically-induced sleep. Les champs magnétiques demonstrates that Surrealists, unlike the

Cubists, neither invented nor crafted coherent works. Like mediums, they transmitted images which forced their way into their consciousness and begged to be released.

Although Malraux preferred the company of Max Jacob and his fellow Cubist artists and writers to that of the ex-Dadaists who were grouping around André Breton, Breton and Soupault's joint work was too important to be ignored. His review of it stresses the historical importance of the work which he calls: "Un livre très important, puisqu'il crée un poncif. Le livre que citeront les critiques de 1970 lorsqu'il sera question de l'état d'esprit des artistes en 1920" (CM:69). Nevertheless he takes a firm stand and says that, however interesting automatic writing may be, it is not literature (CM:69). In a sarcastic and whimsical tone, Malraux draws a parallel between Breton's practice of aesthetics and playing a game that is fixed at the fair. He writes: "Il y avait un jour, à une fête foraine, des gens qui jouaient à massacrer la noce et presque tous murmuraient parce que c'était toujours le même qui gagnait les macarons. On s'aperçut que, comme les personnages étaient cachés, le malin ôtait la mariée lorsque ce n'était pas à lui de frapper" (CM:69). This comparison implies that Breton wins by making his own rules.

In conclusion, Malraux, while recognizing the work's historical importance, is obviously not won over by the theory of Surrealism nor its practice. As Walter Langlois says:

Clearly, the young man felt that the work [Les champs magnétiques] pointed in a direction which was essentially sterile, and during the next two decades when Surrealism was at

its height he maintained a rather aloof attitude toward the movement. As far as he was concerned, there were certain other possibilities being put forth at the time which would ultimately be more fruitful than the one being formulated by Breton and his followers.³⁰

I.5. "La négresse du Sacré-Coeur" and "L'entrepreneur d'illuminations"

In contrast with the negative review of the Breton-Soupault work, Malraux's two reviews of André Salmon's latest works: La négresse du Sacré-Coeur and L'entrepreneur d'illuminations were full of praise. The first review was published in the same issue of Action as the Les champs magnétiques review, that is, in October 1920 and the second one appeared one year later, in October 1921, in the ninth issue of Action.

André Salmon, French essayist, novelist and poet, was born in Paris in 1881. After completing primary school, he frequented the Symbolists and the Parnassian poets and began writing poetry. With Apollinaire and Max Jacob, he founded the monthly review Le Festin d'Esopé in 1903. In addition to being a close friend of Picasso, Salmon admired and promoted Cubism in his art criticism. Five years before his death in 1929, Salmon received "Le Grand Prix de Poésie" from the French Academy.³¹

Written between December 1917 and September 1919, his novel, La négresse du Sacré-Coeur, has as a setting pre-1914 Montmartre. It is devoid of plot, but abounds in comic, exotic and picturesque descriptions of the lives of the local eccentrics, notably Médéric Bouthor, the "Planter," his black slave, Cora, the sultry dancer and the two poets, Septime Febur and Florimond Daubille. Salmon allows his imagination free play with images of a savage voluptuousness and his nostalgia for the past is not unlike that found in some of the poems of Apollinaire.

The second novel, L'entrepreneur d'illuminations (October 1919 to

September 1920) is a sequel to La négresse. From Paris, Salmon moves to pre-1914 Alsace and a rural town of ten thousand inhabitants which he calls Chateau-Briard. Salmon makes fun of the "pious" country folk in his humorous and picturesque portrayals of their history. The protagonist, Théodore Marat, is "L'entrepreneur d'illuminations," that is, a junk collector who is in charge of decorations and entertainment on all festive occasions. Modern poems and songs are interspersed in this colourful tale about characters with such suggestive names as Mlle Ricouart de la Frissure, Marquis du Hocqueton, the poet and shoemaker, Tabouret and ex-Corporal Jésus-François Farrigou. Since Chateau-Briard is only a one-hour train ride from Paris, Salmon is able to incorporate characters from his earlier novel La négresse into the plot of L'entrepreneur d'illuminations. Salmon's novel is essentially a satire of the traditional literary and political views of groups such as "Le Club des Jacobins," "Les Agriculteurs" and "Les Fonctionnaires."

Malraux was a good friend of André Salmon and an admirer of his poetry. As Vandegans notes: "Sa fantaisie et sa poésie l'enchantaient."³² His reviews abound in references to Salmon's previous works. Malraux's comments are directed to readers who are already familiar with them. Both reviews are short and impressionistic and, eschewing the traditional approach (background, plot summary et cetera), deal with what are, to Malraux, the basics. Speaking of La négresse, he underlines the originality of approach. "La fantaisie gagne beaucoup à n'être pas accompagnée," he says. "Chez Hoffmann, elle est un pickle [sic] narratif et sert à 'faire passer' des histoires de brigands. Ici, elle est le 'sujet' lui-même. . . . Il semble qu'André

Salmon ait inventé un nouveau sens littéraire" (N:69). The distinction is an apt one, for, unlike Hoffmann who used fantasy as a means to an end, Salmon was interested in fantasy for its own sake. Salmon, Malraux says, makes fantasy totally convincing by a technique he calls "ciselure" (N:69) and he shows how "Salmon a du vrai raffinement" by quoting the phrase "Secouer des colliers faits de bagues perdues" (N:69). Thus, Malraux seems more interested in Salmon's tone in La négresse, in the fantasy he deploys to describe ordinary reality, than in the reality thus described.

As for L'entrepreneur d'illuminations, Malraux, like more recent critics, finds the work noteworthy for the poetry of its picturesque nostalgia (E). His conclusion, which compares Salmon's works to those of the painter Henri Rousseau, "Le Douanier," (E) shows Malraux's particular genius in seeing the relationship between painters and writers at a time when a single aesthetic (Cubism, Surrealism) bridged the gap between the two. What is most interesting however is that Malraux clearly prefers the free play of Salmon's imagination and the escape it affords the reader to Breton's dogmatism and aesthetic rigidity. In fact, he did not then or at any future time prostrate himself at the feet of any "maître à penser."

I.6. "Aspects d'André Gide"

Malraux's eighth and final contribution to Florent Fels' avant-garde magazine Action, "Aspects d'André Gide,"³³ was published in issue number twelve in March 1922. The words "à suivre" at the end of the article suggest that Malraux had originally planned a sequel to this study but it never materialized.

Be that as it may, Malraux felt a genuine admiration for Gide and his works. As he confided to Lacouture during an interview in June 1972: "En fait, pour nous, au lendemain de la guerre, les trois grands écrivains français, c'étaient Claudel, Gide et Suarès."³⁴ Malraux did not yet know Gide personally in 1922 and Denis Boak even suggests that Malraux's praise for Gide and his works was motivated by his desire to establish a contact:

Il est probable, he writes, que l'amitié entre Gide et Malraux est née peu de temps après la parution de l'article de celui-ci, "Aspects d'André Gide," dans la petite revue Action, au printemps de 1922. C'est bien entendu un procédé quasi classique: le jeune écrivain ambitieux fait un article d'éloges sur un aîné célèbre, article qui pourrait provoquer le contact personnel et le soutien. Cela est parfaitement légitime, pourvu que l'article soit sincère--comme c'est clairement le cas ici. . . . N'oublions pas qu'à cette période, bien que Gide eût presque atteint l'apogée de son prestige, il n'existait que relativement peu d'études sur son oeuvre.³⁵

André Vandegans corroborates Boak's hypothesis and speaks of an answer in which: "Gide avouait avoir lu avec le plus grand intérêt la première partie de l'étude du jeune critique, et déclarait attendre la seconde avec une vive impatience. Gide voyait dans l'article la marque d'une pénétration et d'une perspicacité singulière."³⁶

Malraux's high regard for Gide stemmed from Gide's revolt against traditional ideas, a revolt which had occasioned much opposition according to Germaine Brée.

When the war ended and literature once more became a major journalistic attraction, she writes, Gide became the subject of violent attacks that only served to enhance his fame. Lafcadio's Adventures had provoked the disapproval of Paul Claudel and of the doctrinaire reactionary critic, Henri Massis. . . .

In 1921 Henri Massis fired a new volley in the Paris press denouncing Gide's "demonic" influence. Shortly before that, Henri Béraud, a journalist and not overscrupulous polemicist, had attacked the "snobbery of boredom" emanating from the N.R.F. group, particularly from Gide. Painful as these attacks may have proved to Gide's self-esteem, they helped make him one of the more notorious literary figures in post-World War I Paris. . . .³⁷

In particular it was Henri Massis' second attack on Gide published in the Revue Universelle on November 15, 1921 which aroused Malraux's ire. Massis had called Gide's work "démoniaque" and considered the publication of La porte étroite after the Nourritures terrestres and

L'immoraliste "déconcertante." He had obviously failed to grasp the sense of the characteristic Gidean paradox whereby much vaunted freedom from social and moral taboos can lead not only to untrammelled joy (Les nourritures terrestres) but also to irresponsibility and cruelty (L'immoraliste). The moral question debated by Gide in these first two works and then restated from a different vantage-point in La porte étroite upset Massis who could not accept the notion that any exclusive devotion of one's talents and energies to a single purpose ends in the same manner, that is, in destruction.

Malraux's article, which is a sound rebuttal of Massis' assertions, demonstrates his familiarity with Les nourritures terrestres, L'immoraliste and La porte étroite. He explains their continuity and cohesiveness as follows: Il [Gide] ne veut pas être retenu: il veut être toujours susceptible d'aller plus loin qu'il n'est encore allé. Par cela, ses livres se ressemblent. . . . Ce ne sont pas des oeuvres d'ordre différent; elles manifestent le même désir d'atteindre un bonheur. . ." (A:17). This description of Gide's rebellion only reiterated what had been said in the Parisian press since the publication of Les caves du vatican in 1914 but serves its purpose in demonstrating to Massis that there was a great difference between Gide's rebelliousness and Satan's. Supporting his argument with examples drawn from the three texts, Malraux shows their underlying unity: "Qui pourrait dire, sans se reporter aux textes, laquelle [des phrases] est tirée de Nourritures terrestres, et laquelle de La porte étroite?" (A:17) he asks rhetorically, once again using stylistic analysis to support his argument.

Massis laid to rest, the greater and better part of "Aspects d'André Gide" focuses however on Gide's receptiveness to foreign influences. According to Malraux, Gide's open-mindedness made him: "le critique le plus suivi de notre temps . . . Un homme qui crée l'état d'esprit d'une époque . . . Le plus grand écrivain français vivant . . . L'un des hommes les plus importants d'aujourd'hui" (A:18-19,20,21). Malraux recognizes that this receptiveness has its advantages and its disadvantages. Speaking of the influence of Nietzsche and Schwob on Gide, he observes that: "Sans doute, la connaissance des esprits étrangers a-t-elle un grand avantage: elle fait connaître profondément l'esprit français, celui-ci n'existant qu'en fonction de celui-là. Nous nous découvrons à travers la littérature de l'Est. . . " (A:20). Malraux does admit nevertheless that the convergence of many influences can result in confusion in the reader's mind: ". . . ses livres [ceux de Gide] qui sont fort beaux, sont quelquefois considérés comme des preuves de la valeur de théories dont ils sont presque, artistiquement, la réfutation. . . " (A:19). Malraux is correct in judging the possible impact of the Gidean dialectic and the fact that he defends Gide by paraphrasing Gide's own ideas shows the extent to which he had immersed himself in Gide's critical writings and particularly in Prétextes. Had Gide himself not written in one of his Lettres à Angèle: "On ne produit qu'à condition d'être riche en antagonismes?"³⁸ In addition, Malraux clearly based his discussion of the effect of "influences" on Gide's own 1900 lecture "De l'influence en littérature" where Gide had said:

J'ai lu tel livre; et après l'avoir lu je l'ai fermé; je l'ai remis sur ce rayon de ma bibliothèque,--mais dans ce livre il y

avait telle parole que je ne peux pas oublier. Elle est descendue en moi si avant, que je ne la distingue plus de moi-même. Désormais je ne suis plus comme si je ne l'avais pas connue.--Que j'oublie le livre où j'ai lu cette parole: que j'oublie même que je l'ai lue; que je ne me souviennne d'elle que d'une manière imparfaite. . . . n'importe! Je ne peux plus redevenir celui que j'étais avant de l'avoir lue.--³⁹

Clearly the distinction between the blind adoption of others' ideas and the enrichment of one's own mind is the question at point here.

For Malraux, the content of Gide's works is more noteworthy than their style and he distinguishes clearly between Gide's depiction of the inner turmoil of the young in his role as "directeur de conscience," and that to be found in Barrès' novels where the author's political and religious commitments are the main message.

Mais, alors que Barrès n'a su que donner des conseils, Malraux explique, Gide a montré cette lutte entre nos désirs et notre dignité, entre nos aspirations et notre volonté de les dominer ou de les utiliser que j'appellerai le trouble intérieur. . . . A la moitié de ceux que l'on appelle "les jeunes" il a révélé la conscience intellectuelle. (A:20-21)

In this, he is absolutely correct.

Yet Malraux is not necessarily in agreement with Gide and he supports Maurras' and Barrès' group-oriented views in preference to those of Gide "qui propose toujours à l'artiste de se différencier" (A:20). Likewise, when it comes to style, Malraux thinks a French writer should "se plier à une discipline française" (A:20). It is

obvious that Malraux is thinking of Gide's early quarrel with Barrès and Maurras, both proponents of exclusively nationalist, even regional literature, an attitude which Gide had questioned in "A propos des Déracinés" (1897) and "La querelle du peuplier" [Réponse à M. Maurras] (1903) as well as in his two essays on "Nationalisme et la littérature" (1909). However, Malraux was still young and very open to all kinds of opinions and influences--even contradictory ones--as Vandegans explains:

Mais il ne faudrait pas voir dans ces textes l'expression d'un étroit nationalisme littéraire, he says. Si Malraux est très attaché à la tradition française, s'il éprouve intérêt et sympathie pour ceux qui la défendent, il ne lui confère aucune pré-éminence; pas plus qu'il ne découvre son essence dans telle phase de son développement historique. . . . En fait, Malraux recommande l'adoption d'une discipline nationale parce que, le choix d'une règle étant la condition de l'expression artistique, il est plus aisé, pour l'écrivain français, de choisir un ordre français, et donc accordé à lui-même. Peut-être verrait-on ici aussi la première manifestation d'un réalisme dont Malraux fera toujours preuve.⁴⁰

Finally, Malraux's analysis of Gide's open-mindedness does foreshadow what critics would later refer to as Gide's "disponibilité."

As Justin O'Brien remarks:

Gide always read with an open mind, free of prejudices. Some of his keenest critical remarks are found in a little volume he entitled Un esprit non prévenu (An Unprejudiced Mind) (1929), which opened with the statement that there is nothing rarer

than such a mind ("or one that has managed to get rid of its prejudices"). It was this quality that allowed Gide to note the flaws of his close friends Jammes, Ghéon, Claudel, and Rivière, and the virtues of those he did not in general admire. It was this that kept the N.R.F. from ever becoming the organ of a school, because it chose its contents according to their quality rather than according to tendencies they manifested. Claudel could fulminate periodically when he found his contribution beside one that he considered shockingly revolutionary by Proust or Valéry or Léautaud, but the review continued to maintain its eclecticism by just such juxtapositions.⁴¹

Thus, although Malraux's critical technique remains unsystematic and his stance partially guided by self-interest, he clearly has learned an important lesson from Gide, namely that the writer has much to gain from studying works from other cultures and that he should not fear the apparent contradictions which may ensue. To express the Gidean lesson, Malraux created such memorable aphorisms as "Un livre est presque toujours le résultat d'une contradiction" and "Nous nous découvrons à travers les littératures de l'Est." These early expressions of his disaffection with western culture suggest the direction he will soon take in La tentation de l'Occident (1926) while the style in which they are cast is that of Malraux's most famous works.

* * *

As his first three articles and four press reviews show, Malraux was in tune with the times, reading new works and aware of important new developments in painting and film. His preference went to writers who were disrespectful of the establishment, notably Tailhade, Lautréamont, Breton and Gide and he also understood the importance of the new literary revolution. What he wrote about four great poets: Apollinaire, Jacob, Reverdy and Cendrars and about André Gide shows his critical acumen and, even though he wrote briefly and impressionistically, he was able to communicate his pleasure and define the originality of the author in question.

In his criticism, Malraux was trying to discover the answers to questions such as: How does one write an original work? How does a writer forge a literary style? and How does he treat the great literary themes anew? Malraux prefers to discuss the content rather than the style of a work. His two primary interests seem directly opposed: Cubist poetry and tales of the fantastic on the one hand and political and moral issues on the other. His first literary efforts, the poems "Mobilités" and the satirical novel, Lunes en papier, illustrate the influence of the former for, in them, he practises the techniques learned from Max Jacob and Lautréamont. Then when he realized that his Cubist fantasy Lunes was not a literary success, he looked in the other direction, the one followed by Tailhade and Gide. Whether the critical articles influenced his ultimate choices or his choice of works to

criticize was determined by his own preferences and dilemmas as a creative writer, it is clear that Malraux the critic and Malraux the novelist had much in common from the very beginning.

Notes

- ¹ See André Vandegans, "Malraux a-t-il fréquenté les grandes écoles?" Revue des Langues Vivantes 26 (1960): 336-40.
- ² André Malraux and Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, "Dialogue," L'Événement 19-20 (sept. 1967): 58.
- ³ Malraux and D'Astier, "Dialogue": 59.
- ⁴ René-Louis Doyon, Mémoire d'homme (Paris: La Connaissance, 1953) 76.
- ⁵ Doyon, Mémoire d'homme 77.
- ⁶ Doyon, Mémoire d'homme 77.
- ⁷ Doyon, Mémoire d'homme 78.
- ⁸ Doyon, Mémoire d'homme 79.
- ⁹ Walter G. Langlois, "The Debut of André Malraux, Editor (Kra, 1920-1922), Publications of the Modern Language Association of America 80 (1965): 112.
- ¹⁰ See Walter G. Langlois, "Anarchism, Action and Malraux," Twentieth Century Literature 24.3 (Fall 1978): 272-89.
- ¹¹ Florent Fels, "Prière d'insérer," Action 1 (1919): 1.
- ¹² See André Germain, "Les cinq grands M.," La bourgeoisie qui brûle: Propos d'un témoin (1890-1940) (Paris: Sun, 1951): 266.
- ¹³ See André Malraux, "Mobilités," Action 4 (juillet 1920): 13-14; "Prologue," Action 5 (octobre 1920): 18-20; "Journal d'un pompier du jeu de massacre," Action 8 (août 1921): 16-18.
- ¹⁴ Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans: Le bruit de nos pas 6 vols. (Paris:

Bernard Grasset, 1963) vol. 2: 242.

¹⁵ Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans 243.

¹⁶ The French poet Guillaume Apollinaire (born Wilhelm Apollinaire de Kostrowitzky) was born in Rome on August 26, 1880. At the age of twenty he went to live in Paris where he became acquainted with young writers like Paul Fort, Jean Moréas, André Salmon, André Billy, Paul Jean Toulet, Léon Paul Fargue and young painters who were to become even more famous than the writers; namely Maurice de Vlaminck, André Derain, Raoul Dufy and Pablo Picasso. After early works like the poetic prose of L'enchanteur pourrissant (1909), a collection of whimsical and fantastic stories in L'hérésiarque et Cie (1910) and a collection of short poems, Le bestiaire ou cortège d'Orphée (1911), he published his poetic masterpiece, Alcools in 1913. This is the only work by Apollinaire that Malraux refers to in his article although, before his premature death in 1918, Apollinaire also wrote a symbolic story, Le poète assassiné (1916) and a new collection of poems, Calligrammes (1918).

The writings of the French poet Max Jacob are the product of a complex amalgam of Jewish, Catholic, Breton and Parisian influences. Born in Quimper, Brittany on July 12, 1876, Jacob moved to Paris in 1894 and became an important figure in the formative years of the Cubist movement. The most outstanding of his voluminous works are: Les oeuvres burlesques et mystiques de Frère Matorel, mort au couvent (1912), Le cornet à dés (1917), Dos d'arlequin (1921), Le laboratoire central (1921), Art poétique (1922) and Sacrifice impérial (1929). Jacob's Poèmes de Morven le Gaëlique (1953) and his Correspondance (1955), which

were published after his death on March 5, 1944 in the concentration camp at Drancy, show the unrelenting self-examination and emotional conflict that give his works their unique tone.

Born in Narbonne in 1889, the poet Pierre Reverdy went to live in Paris after he completed his college studies in 1910. He founded the review Nord-Sud which published works by painters such as Picasso, Braque and Matisse and writers like Max Jacob and Apollinaire. His first collections of poetry include: La lucarne ovale (1916), Les ardoises du toit (1918), La guitare endormie (1919), Coeur de chèvre (1922) and Les épaves du ciel (1924). In 1925, he retired to the Abbaye de Solesmes where he continued to write numerous volumes of poetry: Ecumes de la mer (1926), La balle au bond (1927), Flaques de verre (1929), Pierres blanches (1930), Ferraille (1937), Plein verre (1940), Plupart du temps (1945), Le chant des morts (1948) and Main d'oeuvre (1949).

Blaise Cendrars (the pseudonym of Frédéric Louis Sauser) was born in La Chaux-de-Fonds on September 1, 1887. He is best known as the creator of a new poetic language adapted to the needs of a new world. He began his literary career as a poet [Pâques à New York (1912), La prose du transsibérien (1913), La guerre au Luxembourg (1916), La fin du monde (1919), Kodak (1924) and Feuilles de route (1924)] and then turned to fiction [L'or (1925), Moravagine (1926), Rhum (1930), Histoires vraies (1937), La vie dangereuse (1938), D'outremer à indigo (1940)] and semi-autobiographical works [L'homme foudroyé (1945), La main coupée (1946) and Bourlinguer (1948)]. Before his death in Paris in 1961, Cendrars also wrote studies on Africa, on films and on photography.

¹⁷ See the Appendix of this thesis for the list of articles by André Malraux which have been abbreviated in parenthetical documentation within the text.

¹⁸ See Jay Bochner, Blaise Cendrars: Discovery and Re-Creation (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1978) 95.

¹⁹ J. Valmy-Baysse, "Il ne faut pas l'oublier," Comoedia (20 février 1920): 2.

²⁰ André Malraux, "Mise au point," Comoedia (26 février 1920): 2.

²¹ J. Valmy-Baysse, "Mise au point," Comoedia (26 février 1921): 2.

²² Jean-Pierre Rioux, éd., Laurent Tailhade: Imbéciles et gredins (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 1969) 11.

²³ Jean-Pierre Rioux, Laurent Tailhade 24.

²⁴ René-Louis Doyon, "A. Rimbaud, Jules Laforgue, A. Malraux," Livrets du Mandarin 6.8 (sept. 1962): 8.

²⁵ Wallace Fowlie, Lautréamont (New York: Twayne, 1973) 89.

²⁶ Fowlie, Lautréamont 87.

²⁷ Hubert Juin, éd., Lautréamont: Oeuvres complètes (Paris: Gallimard, 1973) 393.

²⁸ André Breton's most important writings include: Mont de Piété (1919), Les champs magnétiques (with Philippe Soupault) (1920), Clair de terre (1923), Les pas perdus (1924), Manifeste du surréalisme suivi de Poisson soluble (1924), Nadja (1928), Second manifeste du surréalisme (1930), Le revolver à cheveux blancs (1932), Les vases communicants (1932), L'amour fou (1937), Arcane 17 (1944), L'art magique (with Gérard Legrand) (1957) and Constellation (1959).

²⁹ Of Soupault's numerous essays, novels and works of poetry, the

most significant are: Aquarium (1917), Westwejo (1922), Guillaume Apollinaire (1928), Lautréamont (1929), Charles Baudelaire (1931), Moribonds (1934), Odes (1945), Chansons (1949), Sans phrases (1953), Alfred de Musset (1957) and Profils perdus (1963).

³⁰ Walter G. Langlois, "Anarchism, Action and Malraux," 272.

³¹ Among André Salmon's works, the most noteworthy collections of poetry include: Poèmes (1905), Féeries (1907) and Le calumet (1910). His most important novels are: Tendres canailles (1912), Monstres choisis (1912-18), La négresse du Sacré-Coeur (1920) and Un ogre à Saint-Pétersbourg (1923). His most distinguished art studies are: Cézanne (1923), L'érotisme dans l'art contemporain (1931) and Le vagabond de Montparnasse: Vie et mort du peintre A. Modigliani (1939). Salmon's memoirs, Souvenirs sans fin (1955-61) emphasize his debt and his devotion to the Montparnasse artists.

³² See André Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire d'André Malraux (Paris: Pauvert, 1964) 44.

³³ André Paul Guillaume Gide, essayist, critic, novelist and dramatist was born in Paris on November 22, 1869. He was educated at the Protestant Ecole Alsacienne in Paris and, for one term only, at the Lycée Henri IV, where school contacts introduced him to members of Symbolist circles.

Gide's writings can be divided into three groups. His youthful works were influenced by Symbolism. They include: Les cahiers d'André Walter (1891), Traité du narcissisme (1891), Les poésies d'André Walter (1892), La tentative amoureuse (1893) and Le voyage d'Urien (1893). A second group comprises works written between 1896 and 1914. In 1909

Gide helped found the Nouvelle Revue Française and, through his association with the review, he exercised a considerable influence on avant-garde literature. The most noteworthy works of this period are: Paludes (1896), Les nourritures terrestres (1897), Philoctète (1899), Le Prométhée mal enchaîné (1899), L'immoraliste (1902), Le roi Candale (1904), Saül (1904), Amyntas (1906), Le retour de l'enfant prodigue (1907), La porte étroite (1909), Nouveaux prétextes (1911), Isabelle (1911) and Les caves du vatican (1914).

After 1918, Gide was considered to be one of the foremost representatives of the modern literature of introspection, self-confession, moral and religious uneasiness. The third group of his works include: La symphonie pastorale (1919), Dostoïevsky, articles et causeries (1923), Incidences (1924), Corydon (1924), Si le grain ne meurt (1926), Les Faux-Monnayeurs (1926), Voyage au Congo (1927), Le retour du Tchad (1928), Essai sur Montaigne (1929), L'école des femmes (1929), Robert (1930), Oedipe (1931), Pages de journal (1934), Nouvelles nourritures (1935), Retour de l'U.R.R.S. (1936), Geneviève (1937), Journal: 1889-1939 (1939), Thésée (1946) and Journal: 1939-42 (1946).

In June 1947, Gide received the degree of Doctor of Literature from the University of Oxford, and this was followed in November by the Nobel prize for literature. In 1949, he published reminiscences and some essays in Feuillets d'automne. The last volume of his Journal: 1942-9 followed in 1950. After his death on February 19, 1951, two works were published posthumously under the titles: Et nunc manet in te (1951) and Ainsi soit-il, ou Les jeux sont faits (1952).

- 34 André Malraux in Jean Lacouture, Malraux: Une vie dans le siècle
22.
- 35 Denis Boak, "Malraux et Gide," Revue des Lettres Modernes 425-31
(1975): 34.
- 36 Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 35.
- 37 Germaine Brée, Gide (New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1963) 194-95.
- 38 André Gide, Prétextes: Réflexions sur quelques points de
littérature et de morale (Paris: Mercure de France, 1923) 169.
- 39 André Gide, Prétextes 13-14.
- 40 Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 92-93.
- 41 Justin O'Brien, ed., André Gide, Reflections on Literature and
Morality (London: Meridian Books, 1959) 13-14.

CHAPTER II
THE PRE-INDO-CHINA YEARS

In 1922, when Florent Fels' Action ceased publication largely as a result of the increasingly crushing predominance of Breton's Surrealism, Malraux emigrated to the Nouvelle Revue Française. Malraux had made his admiration for the literary review clear in his previous articles where he had commended the N.R.F. for being receptive to Cubism and praised André Gide, one of its founders and the moving spirit of the group. Malraux was introduced to members of the N.R.F. by Arland and Jacob, both of whom had close links with the Gallimard publishing firm. As Clara Malraux explains in her memoirs:

Vers 1922 commencent nos rapports avec la N.R.F., encore dirigée par Rivière, qui semblait ne pas goûter exagérément le brillant un peu agressif de mon compagnon, à qui il refusa quelques proses, prétextant qu'un jour, quand leur auteur aurait à son actif des oeuvres de poids, il regretterait d'avoir livré au public ce qui n'était que fantaisie sans conséquence!¹

Although there is no record of which works by Malraux Rivière refused to publish, the fact that Clara describes them as "fantasy" works suggests they were his early prose-poetry which appeared in less well-known reviews.² No doubt, Malraux, who later refused to have them re-issued, would have eventually conceded that Rivière's judgment was sound.

The principal centre of literary activity in France between World Wars I and II, the N.R.F. was the rendez-vous of such great authors as Claudel, Artaud, Proust, Aragon, Malraux, Joyce and Faulkner. Founded in 1909, the famous review of twentieth century French literature and

the other arts, which soon became a famous publishing house, was directed by Jacques Rivière until his death in 1925 when he was succeeded by Jean Paulhan. The N.R.F. upheld the importance of literary method, of sensitivity and of what it termed "esprit," all of them enduring qualities independent of intellectual and moral prejudices or of fashions in writing. Devoted to the motto "rassembler et découvrir," the members of the N.R.F. were anxious to encourage new trends and unknown authors of talent.

The influence of the N.R.F. was particularly strong in the fields of criticism, theatre and the novel. In La "Nouvelle Revue Française" dans l'histoire des lettres, L. Morino describes the nature of the N.R.F.'s criticism and its goals:

La N.R.F., he says, n'a jamais eu la prétention d'embrasser par sa critique l'ensemble de la production contemporaine; mais dès maintenant, plus que jamais, elle se propose de faire un choix très réfléchi et ne s'impose aucun compte rendu de pure courtoisie. Ses notes ont toujours eu pour but, et elle le précise à partir de 1919, soit de définir et de classer brièvement une oeuvre que l'actualité ou sa propre valeur mettent au premier plan, soit de marquer à propos d'un livre ou d'une manifestation artistique, qui peuvent être parfois de second ordre, un point de vue ou une idée dont ses collaborateurs sont pénétrés.³

Malraux's career at the Nouvelle Revue Française began with the publication of three "notes critiques," namely, a review of Le Comte de Gobineau's historical novel, L'abbaye de Typhaines, a note on Max

Jacob's Art poétique and one on Pierre Mac Orlan's Malice. The change of focus necessitated by his move from Action to the N.R.F. spurred Malraux on the path of self-discovery.

In addition to his contributions to the N.R.F., Malraux wrote a second article on the influence of Gide and of his works on French youth after World War I. Entitled "Ménalque," it was published in Le Disque Vert in 1923. Le Disque Vert was a Belgian magazine which, under its preceding title, Signaux de France et de Belgique, had published one of Malraux's early works, "Les hérissons apprivoisés" in 1921. The Signaux, Vandegans informs us, was:

. . . une nouvelle 'revue mensuelle de littérature' que dirigeaient, en France, André Salmon, et, en Belgique, Franz Hellens. On y voulait 'tout ramener à des limites humaines sur un plan plausible,' être attentif 'aux signaux qui nous seront adressés de n'importe quel point du monde, pourvu qu'ils soient clairs, humains;' on promettait 'cordial accueil . . . aux talents jeunes, encore obscurs.'. . . Pendant un an environ, on trouva aux sommaires de Signaux: A. Salmon, J. Paulhan, P. Morand, O.-J. Périer, Max Jacob, F. Hellens, J. Cocteau, G. Gabory, I. Ehrenbourg, Mařakovsky, Neel Doff, A. Baillon, B. Cendrars, P. Pia, P. Mac Orlan, etc. Puis la revue s'éteignit.⁴

As for Florent Fels, after the demise of Action, he set about editing a low-priced, pocket-sized collection of interesting texts called Les contemporains: Oeuvres et portraits du XX^e siècle which was published by Stock. Each volume in this series had a portrait of the

author in question and a preface by a rising young writer. Fels asked Malraux to contribute an introduction to a reprint of Charles Maurras' Mademoiselle Monk suivi de Invocation à Minerve originally published in L'avenir de l'intelligence in 1905. Malraux's brief essay is interesting for it reveals his sympathy with certain elements of Maurras' philosophy. This preface was the last text that Malraux wrote before he left on his archaeological expedition to Cambodia in November of 1923.

II.1. "L'abbaye de Typhaines"

Malraux's first N.R.F. review, dated July 1922, examines the Comte de Gobineau's historical novel L'abbaye de Typhaines. Joseph Arthur Gobineau, a French writer and diplomat, was born in Ville-d'Avray near Paris on July 14, 1816 and died in Turin on October 13, 1882. Educated by private tutors and at a college in Switzerland, he settled in Paris where he was received into the aristocratic circles of the Faubourg St. Germain. He wrote several novels which were serialized in the press and then embarked on a diplomatic career during the course of which he continued to write more serious works. The most famous of these is the Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines (1853-55) in which he states his belief that the white race, notably the group labeled "Aryans," is superior to all others. In addition, he wrote Traité des écritures cunéiformes (1864), Histoires des Perses (1869) and Souvenirs de voyage (1872) and, in his later years, Les nouvelles asiatiques (1876) and La Renaissance (1877). Gobineau's best-known novel, Les Pléiades (1874) was inspired by his experience of Persia and The Arabian Nights.

L'abbaye de Typhaines appeared in Le Conservateur in 1847, in L'Union in 1849⁵ and then was edited in book form by Maillet (Paris) in 1867.⁶ It is a historical novel dealing with the rise of the communes in the twelfth century and their rebellion against the church. Malraux's review, a "choix de circonstance," heralded the publication of a new edition of the novel by the N.R.F. to mark the celebration of Gobineau's centenary which had been delayed by the war. Vandegans

remarks that "Malraux commençait seulement de le [Gobineau] découvrir"⁷ at that time and it appears that Malraux was neither more or less knowledgeable about Gobineau than Emile Henriot,⁸ Charles Régismanset,⁹ Georges Bergner,¹⁰ Arrifo Calumi,¹¹ Paul Colin,¹² and R. Aldington¹³ who wrote about various events marking the centenary.

Malraux's brief review of the novel contains no details concerning the novel's plot or its historical setting. He discusses both the style and the content and his remarks show that, in addition to L'abbaye de Typhaines, he is familiar with Gobineau's Essai. Malraux notes that the novel, written when its author was young and impecunious, was neither a literary nor a financial success (AT:97). For Malraux, this failure was mainly the result of Gobineau's lack of imagination, vigor, and style. "Gobineau n'avait ni la verve d'Alexandre Dumas ni l'imagination épique, volontiers cruelle et sadique d'Eugène Sue," (AT:97) he wrote. Yet the content of Gobineau's novel interests Malraux and, in particular, what he calls the racist attitude which already foreshadows the thesis of the Essai sur l'inégalité. . . . He asserts that: "Gobineau, dans l'Essai, ne fera que justifier les sentiments qu'il montre dans ce roman. . . . Ces sympathies et ces antipathies forment une critique presque sentimentale de l'établissement des Communes écrite avec une rare mauvaise foi" (AT:97-98). In Malraux's view, not only is Gobineau's bad faith a result of his being a writer "à système" but it is reprehensible because the "system" itself is reprehensible.

Gobineau écrivit pour trouver dans son oeuvre de nouvelles preuves de la supériorité sur les autres races d'une race qu'il aimait, he says. Il ne cherchait pas s'il était raisonnable de

croire ce qu'il croyait, mais seulement à réunir les arguments qui pouvaient faire croire que cela était raisonnable. (AT:98)

Although Malraux himself was not always immune to supporting a "system," he rarely if ever did so in "bad faith."

Malraux's conclusion that L'abbaye de Typhaines is an inferior Chartreuse de Parme and that Gobineau shared Stendhal's cult of energy and his opposition to the romantic form (AT:98), is astute. "Avant tout," he says, "Gobineau et Stendhal, beylisme et gobinisme se ressemblent par cet individualisme foncier, disons mieux, par cet égotisme, et par ce culte de l'énergie qui sont à leurs yeux les marques de la 'vertu'."¹⁴ When we consider how much Malraux admired Stendhal, it is clear that he saw the dangers of some forms of "beylisme." On the whole then, although Malraux's comments, for the most part, reiterate the many ideas expressed in the numerous centenary articles, his reservations are important keys to the political and moral convictions which will guide him in his later years and form the substance of his creative works.

II.2. "Art poétique"

On August 1st 1922, the N.R.F. published a review by André Malraux of Max Jacob's Art poétique. In the following passage Vandegans discusses the qualities that attracted Malraux to Max Jacob¹⁵ when they met in 1920:

Malraux put apprécier en lui un maître incomparable de non-conformisme, doué d'une inépuisable imagination, mais aussi un artiste épris de conscience et de perfection technique; enfin, un amateur curieusement averti des formes littéraires anciennes qui exploitent le bizarre, et des maîtres de la fantaisie et du fantastique. Liquidateur ironique du passé, créateur d'avenir, défenseur tout en même temps de l'invention et des disciplines, Max avait beaucoup pour plaire au premier Malraux.¹⁶

Clara Malraux also makes note of Malraux's high regard for Max Jacob when she writes: "Il [Malraux] me dit un jour: je ne connais qu'une personne qui soit aussi intelligente que vous: Max Jacob."¹⁷ Malraux was familiar with Max Jacob's works. In his article on Cubism, he had discussed Max Jacob's "Saint Matorel" and his Cornet à dés. Malraux had published Max Jacob's Dos d'arlequin when he was working as editor for Lucien Kra of the Editions Sagittaire in 1921. In addition, Malraux had dedicated his first book Lunes en papier (1921) to Max Jacob.

Max Jacob's Art poétique consists of one hundred and ninety aphorisms which attempt to define Jacob's anti-traditional ideas about

"Beauty," under the following categories: "Art poétique," "Poésie moderne," "L'hamletisme," "Fréquentation des Grands Hommes" and "Art chrétien." Semi-familiar, semi-serious, Jacob's tone is never didactic. For example, he remarks: "L'art est un mensonge, mais un bon artiste n'est pas un menteur" (JAP:9). The originality of the work lies in Jacob's use of striking turns of phrase to capture the reader's attention. In "Fréquentation des Grands Hommes," he observes: "Ce n'est pas qu'ils manquent d'un bel extérieur, mais ils ont l'esprit si commun qu'il en reste de la vulgarité sur tout ce qu'ils font" (JAP:48). His constant concern is to denounce excessive ideology in literature, emphasizing the "Suppression dans toute poésie (même non moderne) du style critique cérébral, philosophique, journalistique" (JAP:33). The section, "Art chrétien," underlines Jacob's view of the artist as "miraculously gifted," "On naît avec un chef-d'oeuvre en soi; on le manque pour l'avoir voulu" (JAP:57). Largely unrecognized by his contemporaries, Jacob's Art poétique is a treasure of critical wisdom about the nature of art.

Malraux's review was written to mark the publication of Max Jacob's Art poétique by Emile-Paul. In his brief one and a half page commentary, Malraux observes that, although the work appears to be a collection of aphorisms, it is in reality a book of criticism and, in particular, a criticism of earlier approaches to the subject: "Les Arts poétiques, celui de Boileau comme celui de Jacques Pelletier du Mans, sont, à proprement parler, des suites de conseils nécessaires à créer une belle oeuvre; celui de Max Jacob est plutôt une critique du beau" (AP:227). For Malraux, Jacob's method and subtlety make the work

original (AP:227) but he does criticize Jacob's arbitrary choice of sections and subtitles and proposes a different division of the material: "Psychologie de l'artiste" and "Psychologie du sentiment artistique: L'art moderne, L'art chrétien" (AP:227).

Malraux commends Jacob for his remarks on modern poetry which, in comparison with those of his contemporaries, Pierre Reverdy and M. Epstein, "constituent la meilleure justification du mouvement littéraire dit 'cubisme' que l'on ait écrite jusqu'ici" (AP:228). As Vandegans notes, Malraux "songe sans doute aux articles de Reverdy 'Sur le Cubisme' (Nord-Sud, no. 1) et 'L'Emotion' (IBID; no. 8) et au livre de Jean Epstein sur La poésie d'aujourd'hui où le Cubisme était rangé parmi les aspects d'un nouvel état de l'intelligence."¹⁸ He wisely excludes his own slight article on Cubism from the list.

Malraux devotes most of the article to a criticism of Jacob's remarks on "Art chrétien." He disagrees with Max Jacob on two points. Firstly, unlike Jacob, Malraux believes that Christian art does not condemn passion. As he explains:

L'art chrétien réproûve les passions humaines, et non la passion; car il la sollicite lorsqu'elle n'a pas d'autre objet que Dieu. Ce n'est pas la passion même qu'il réproûve, mais bien l'indignité des objets sur lesquels elle s'exerce d'ordinaire; et comme, jusqu'au XVII^e siècle, l'art chrétien fut seulement un art religieux, il fut passionné. (AP:228)

The point is well taken, particularly when Malraux adds: "Max Jacob veut donc que l'art chrétien ne soit pas l'art créé par l'artiste chrétien, mais un art possédant certaines qualités définies" (AP:228).

According to Malraux, Christian art is created by all Christians writing in the Latin tradition whether they have been influenced by the pagans in Greece or the Albigeois heretics (AP:228) and hence much less bound by the official teachings of the church than Jacob would concede.

Malraux's review of Art poétique is much more methodical than usual, perhaps because he examines only this one particular work and does not discuss it in relation to the author's other writings. It is an excellent criticism of the strengths and the weaknesses of the work and the observations about the psychology of art indicate Malraux's own growing interest in the subject which culminated in his own La psychologie de l'art in 1948 [later rewritten as Les voix du silence (1951)], Le musée imaginaire de la sculpture mondiale (1952-54) and La métamorphose des dieux (1957). The latter was substantially revised, expanded and published as Le surnaturel (1977). Le surnaturel, along with the two additional volumes, L'irréel (1974) and L'intemporel (1976), constitutes the first part of the trilogy called La métamorphose des dieux.

II.3. "Ménalque"

Malraux's second article on Gide,¹⁹ "Ménalque," published in Le Disque Vert in the beginning of 1923, may well have been an adaptation of the planned second part of "Aspects d'André Gide" written a year earlier. Brief as it is, the two and one half page article is the least methodical of Malraux's critical writings. By addressing one of Gide's fictitious characters in this way, Malraux imitates Gide's own technique in Les nourritures terrestres and, in so doing, engages in a dialogue with Gide. Musing about Gide, his works, his religious ideas and his influence on his contemporaries, Malraux does not discuss any of the novels in detail nor does he situate any of the characters named. Yet despite the apparent lack of order and surface flattery, there is much serious and subtle criticism.

Malraux begins by stating what is now obvious to everyone, namely that Gide's L'immoraliste is an overt criticism of his earlier work, Les nourritures terrestres (ME:19). At the time, however, Michel had a negative influence on Gide's readers that, according to Malraux, Gide had not intended:

Il [Michel] a plus troublé les hommes que vous [Gide] ne l'avez fait vous-même. Et peut-être ne le prévoyiez-vous pas, vous qui l'avez quitté, non lorsqu'il commençait à souffrir, car sa vie fut une longue souffrance, mais lorsqu'il commençait à connaître le désespoir. Je voudrais montrer que ce sont les souffrances de Michel qui ont donné à vos enseignements la

force qu'on leur voit aujourd'hui. (ME:19)

The comment is double-edged. Either Malraux is implying that Gide was too subtle for his readers and should have stated his opinions more clearly or that the readers failed to understand Gide as he did. Actually both interpretations are true and important in the history of the reception of Gide's works in the early twentieth century.

The second part of Malraux's article examines the origins of the moral conflict at the heart of all Gide's work. While Malraux is correct in stating that, on the one hand, Gide is a religious mystic and, on the other hand, an atheist (ME:19-20) whose essential dilemma is that of Saül (1903), Ménalque and Michel, who are dominated by erotic and religious drives, Malraux does not go as far as Thomas Cordle who explains the conflicting forces at work in Gide so well. For Cordle, Gide is:

. . . a great erotic who has submitted his desire to the judgment and control of a Puritan moralist, an evangelistic enthusiast who is held back from the leap into mysticism by a skeptical critic, and finally a Dionysiac poet who has subordinated his voice to that of a severe, self-effacing classicist.²⁰

In Malraux's view, the content and the form of Gide's works together have been influenced by his religious ideas alone. Malraux remarks, still addressing himself to Gide: "Je sais que, si la psychologie de l'homme qui déchoit vous est particulière, le goût que vous en avez est biblique et que 'chaque livre n'est qu'une tentation différée'" (ME:19) and, he adds:

Si vous n'avez terminé ni les Nourritures, ni L'immoraliste, c'est parce que les drames que vous aviez l'habitude d'observer existaient en fonction de leur dénouement, qui était mystique, religieux. . . . Peu à peu, vous vous êtes désintéressé du dénouement pour ne plus vous intéresser qu'au drame. (ME:20)

The result, which Malraux couches in reproachful terms is that:

Vous n'avez montré ni un but, ni des moyens d'atteindre un but, vous avez proposé une manière d'être. Ainsi, vous ne fixiez pas de limites à votre action. . . . Votre méthode, qui diffère de celle de vos devanciers en ce qu'elle fixe, non un point d'arrivée, mais un point de départ, n'avait de valeur que si vous suggériez le désir de partir. [C'est Malraux qui souligne.] (ME:20-21)

For Malraux, Gide was a dangerous teacher who made young French intellectuals slaves to a "nouveau mal du siècle." Instead of proposing solutions to the problems, Malraux suggests Gide indulged in a form of "intellectual masochism" which thoroughly demoralized his followers. Malraux concludes the article by criticizing Gide, who, "armé d'un grand porte-plume," did not seem to have been concerned by the despair he engendered (ME:21).

In comparison with "Aspects d'André Gide," the much more subtle and more important "Ménalque" shows a great change in Malraux's ideas. Gide, whom he formerly called "le plus grand écrivain français vivant," has now become a negative influence who, in his rôle as "moral" and "cultural agitator," only increased "le trouble intérieur" of the young.

Denis Boak explains this overt criticism in terms of Malraux's

rejection of the bourgeois aestheticism of Barrès and Gide:

L'énergie est autrement impressionnante chez Malraux que chez Gide et Barrès: la fameuse disponibilité gidienne est curieusement passive, composée en réalité d'une attente continue de stimulation de l'extérieur, "une disposition à l'accueil" (OEC,II,73), et, malgré ce qu'en ait voulu Barrès, le "ton" véritable de L'Homme libre est peut-être plus languissant qu'énergique. . . .

Barrès n'avait que sept ans de plus que Gide, mais il s'était établi tôt dans la littérature, et il a servi à l'auteur des Nourritures terrestres non seulement de maître à penser, mais aussi de modèle de vie libre et sensuelle. Ce dilettantisme esthétique, teinté de dandysme, ce désir de faire de sa vie une oeuvre d'art, c'est exactement le Malraux d'avant l'Indochine.²¹

This questioning of the Gidean-Barresian ethic in "Ménalque" indicates that Malraux is outgrowing his own dilettantism and preparing to break with a certain civilization and a certain art. Malraux, alone of the three, would heed the call to action and in his later novels: "traduit l'égotisme--esthétique et artificiel chez Barrès, vitaliste mais non moins artificiel chez Gide--en une réalité sociale révolutionnaire."²²

II.4. "Malice"

On May 1st 1923, the Nouvelle Revue Française published a "note critique" by André Malraux on Pierre Mac Orlan's Malice. Malraux knew Mac Orlan, who, like Malraux, had been a contributor to Signaux de France et de Belgique in 1921-22. Mac Orlan, born Pierre Dumarchey, in Péronne in the Somme in 1882, moved to Paris where he began his literary career in 1914 by writing humorous short stories for Le Journal. Under the cover of his adventure novels lies an inner adventure and Mac Orlan excels in his sensitive portrayal of the misery and the solitude of people on the fringe of society. Many of his novels which appeared between the two World Wars were adapted for the cinema as, for example, the classic Quai des brumes (1927). A prolific author, he wrote essays, prose-poems, songs and memoirs.²³ Mac Orlan became a member of the Goncourt Academy in 1951 and died in Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin in 1970.

Malice is a short novel of eighty-two pages in which elements of melodrama, fantasy and sentimentality combine to produce a totally unbelievable plot. Dedicated to André Salmon, it was published first by Crès, then by the N.R.F., in 1923. Malraux's review makes light of what he acknowledges to be one of Mac Orlan's most mediocre novels (MOM:836) and devotes considerable space to two of Mac Orlan's other works: Le Nègre Léonard et Maître Jean Mullin and La cavalière Elsa. Malraux is mainly interested in comparing Mac Orlan's use of the fantastic to that of other practitioners of the art and in particular the nineteenth century French poet, novelist and critic, Pétrus Borel.²⁴ Malraux

aligns himself with the critics who consider Mac Orlan as a writer of "romans fantastiques" and not of "romans d'aventures." However, according to Malraux, Mac Orlan's approach to the fantastic is quite untraditional: "Les deux éléments du fantastique, le pittoresque et cette émotion particulière, étrangeté ou terreur, qui donne la vie au conte, que nous trouvons d'ordinaire réunis, sont chez lui singulièrement dissociés: ils se superposent et se séparent tour à tour" (MOM:836). Perhaps this is why in reading Malice we feel little fear.

For Malraux, Mac Orlan does more than simply imitate Romantic tales of the fantastic, he updates the old clichés, endowing them with distinctly modern touches (MOM:836-37). His "perpétuelle confrontation de personnages modernes et de personnages légendaires" has, as an effect, that "les premiers en deviennent fantastiques; et, autour d'eux, la ville se transforme" (MOM:837). Thus, "le fantastique de Mac Orlan n'est pas uniquement d'imagination; il est aussi de transposition" (MOM:837). By the word "transposition," Malraux simply means "transformation" or "change," that is, "le fait de faire passer dans un autre domaine--la transposition de la réalité dans un livre," or, in this case, using a nineteenth century genre to record twentieth century reality. As Malraux would have it, Mac Orlan begins with, "cette population dédiée au mal sans arrière-pensée" and transforms these people into fantastic characters. Raymond Queneau confirms Malraux's interpretation when he notes:

Combien de personnages de l'oeuvre de Mac Orlan se dédient ainsi au mal "sans arrière-pensée." Ils agissent non avec une méchanceté constante, mais naviguent vers la perdition en

maintenant fixe leur boussole. Le fantastique social va s'incarner en des individus qui ne sont ou ne valent guère plus que des vessies de porc ou des pantins de feutre--pantins qui finissent par se dissoudre dans des brouillards spongieux et maléfiques ou par se faire étrangler par leur propre ombre.²⁵

As is always the case with Malraux, he does not, in his short review, give a summary of Malice or even say anything specific about the book or its techniques. On the eve of writing such works as "Journal d'un pompier du jeu de massacre" (1921) and "Ecrit pour une idole à trompe" (1924), he was interested in only one thing: how to produce a similar work. As Vandegans observes:

Malraux a transposé dans un climat expressionniste des éléments que lui fournissait la scène bien venue de Mac Orlan: cadre fantastique, dialogue d'un narrateur étonné, là avec un Diable d'une nature inattendue, et singulièrement désabusée sur le train actuel des choses, ici, avec des serviteurs du Malin qu'attriste son irrémédiable décadence; interlocuteurs satisfaits, dans les deux textes, de trouver une âme où épancher leurs regrets.²⁶

To this extent then, Mac Orlan had a considerable influence on the early works of Malraux and, even though Malraux later realized that the genre was ill-suited to his purpose, he did have Mac Orlan to thank for the impetus to begin writing works of fiction.

II.5. "Charles Maurras"

Malraux's article on Charles Maurras is an introduction to a 1923 reprint of Maurras' Mademoiselle Monk suivi de Invocation à Minerve. Maurras, a French writer, political theorist and one of the major intellectual influences in Europe during the first half of the twentieth century, was born in Martigues, Provence on April 20, 1868 of a royalist and Catholic family. While studying at the Collège du Sacré-Coeur in Aix-en-Provence, he lost faith in the religion of his parents and, soon after his arrival in Paris in 1891, Maurras, along with Jean Moréas, founded a group of young poets, later known as the "école romane," who opposed the reigning Symbolists. In the ensuing years, he elaborated a system of political philosophy based on the ideas of Greek harmony, Roman order and modern positivism which in turn led him to found L'Action Française (June 1899), a review devoted to "integral nationalism." As the organ of the royalist party, L'Action Française, which became a daily newspaper in 1908, exercised a considerable and questionable influence. Although Maurras was received into the Académie Française in 1939, he was expelled in January 1945 after his arrest and imprisonment for his collaboration with the Germans and his support of the Pétain government. In 1952, he was released from the prison at Clairvaux and entered the St. Symphorien Clinic in Tours where he died on November 16. His most noteworthy works include: Le chemin du paradis (1895), L'enquête sur la monarchie (1900), Anthinéa (1901), Les amants de Venise (1902), L'avenir de l'intelligence (1905), La musique

intérieure (1925), Barbarie et poésie (1925), Au signe de Flore (1931), La balance intérieure (1952) and Le bienheureux Pie X, sauveur de la France (1953).

When he was questioned about the Maurras text in an interview in 1970, Malraux replied that "fifty years had passed since he wrote it," that "people sent him bibliographies that were far more accurate than his memory" and that "the Maurras text isn't much."²⁷ When Jean Lacouture pressed him on the issue in 1972, Malraux, obviously uncomfortable, replied: "Ne vous occupez pas de cela, aucun intérêt. . . . Florent Fels cherchait un auteur, si possible jeune, pour préfacier ce livre. J'ai accepté de rédiger ce texte comme on se livre à un exercice. J'aurais aussi bien écrit sur Hegel."²⁸ Nevertheless Malraux's interest in Charles Maurras seems to have been greater than he later admitted for Clara Malraux notes in her memoirs that in 1921 they both read Anthinéa and that, in spite of Maurras' anti-Semitism, "l'homme qui a trouvé 'Salut, belle guerrière!' ne saurait être mon ennemi que par erreur."²⁹ However, she adds that she still had her reservations about Maurras when Malraux agreed to write the preface, but that she overcame them, as did her husband:

L'une des allées et venues de mon escarpolette intérieure accompagnait la décision que prit mon mari de rédiger la préface d'une Mademoiselle Monk qui devait paraître dans une collection dirigée par Florent Fels--juif. Le souvenir de ma joie devant certaines pages d'Anthinéa renforça mon désir de me prouver à moi-même que je n'avais pas de préjugés.³⁰

Anthinéa contains a collection of Maurras' travel notes relating to

his visits to Athens, Corsica, Italy and Provence and, although the book is essentially a meditation on aesthetics, Maurras' political philosophy of "Nationalism" has its roots in Anthinéa. However, what likely struck Malraux most was the comment Maurras made on gazing on the ruins of the Parthenon: "Les meilleurs ont ici imprimé le meilleur d'eux-mêmes. Ce n'a pas été éternel."³¹ Many years later, Malraux was to cite Valéry: "Nous autres, civilisations, nous savons maintenant que nous sommes mortelles."³² For Maurras, the absurd and death provoke and challenge man and force him to overcome his limitations. When Maurras remarks: "Sans doute Ulysse persista et le héros supérieur aux circonstances par la sagesse éleva son triomphe sur l'inimitié du destin,"³³ Malraux echoes the thought, then negates it when he writes:

L'homme a envie d'être plus qu'homme, dans un monde d'hommes. Echapper à la condition humaine, . . . Non pas puissant: tout-puissant. La maladie chimérique, dont la volonté de puissance n'est que la justification intellectuelle, c'est la volonté de déité: tout homme rêve d'être dieu.³⁴

Thus, when Maurras contemplated the triumph of human art over death in the ruins of Greek antiquity, he sounded the theme of all Malraux's art criticism: "L'art est un anti-destin."³⁵

Malraux's short preface does not mention anything about Mademoiselle Monk nor L'invocation à Minerve which accompanied the former, but is based on the ideas Maurras expressed in other works, particularly Anthinéa (1901), Les amants de Venise (1902) and Auguste Comte (1905) as well as on his public career. For all their political differences, Malraux's curiously prophetic remark that Maurras had not

led a life of contradiction since "Aller de l'anarchie intellectuelle à 'l'Action Française,' n'est pas se contredire, mais construire" (MM:7) shows that Malraux, too, was committed to change and that like Maurras, he was to move from the left to the right of the political spectrum, though never as far right as Maurras. In addition, Malraux admires the "man of action" in Maurras: "Je l'imagine surtout au Moyen-Age, prêtre fervent, confesseur de grands, architecte de cathédrales et organisateur de croisades" (MM:7). Again, although the parallel is obvious, the point of cleavage is clear. Maurras believed in the Greek concept that one's life and philosophy should be in harmony and that beauty was the product of order and harmony (MM:8). Malraux, in rejecting the Greek ideal, rejected Western philosophy in favor of the teachings of the Orient, temporarily at least.

Here, as in his article "Aspects d'André Gide," Malraux is sympathetic to the difficulties involved in the writer's role as "directeur de conscience." Malraux asserts: "Parler de Comte comme l'a fait Maurras; proposer la soumission de l'individu à une collectivité particulière, n'était point facile; la séduction des différentes anarchies qu'il combat aujourd'hui est profonde et le rôle de directeur pénible souvent et parfois douloureux" (MM:8). For Malraux, man and writer, thinker and stylist were one so that Maurras' nationalistic doctrine was inseparable from his aesthetic ideals. As Malraux explains: "Si sa doctrine ne pouvait exister sans une grande admiration de la France, et surtout sans une préférence pour tout ce qui fut créé par le génie français, c'est que cette admiration était dès l'origine, dans l'ordre esthétique, si profonde en lui qu'il n'eût pu établir un

système qui ne reposât point sur elle" (MM:8). Malraux might have regretted his conclusion, "Charles Maurras est une des plus grandes forces intellectuelles d'aujourd'hui," (MM:9) but his belief in the primacy of conviction in matters artistic never varied.

Malraux, who had stated unequivocally a year earlier that Gide was "le plus grand écrivain français vivant," seems to have changed either tactics or philosophies for Gide's anarchy and Maurras' order are completely antithetical. Malraux's second article on Gide, "Ménalque" (1923), did mention the fact that Gide posed abstract moral questions but gave his readers no practical guidance, whereas the elements in Maurras which appeal to Malraux are precisely his "dépassement de l'individu" and his ability to "vivre ses idées." As Walter Langlois explains:

Evidently, for Malraux . . . Maurras was . . . a worthy successor to the Greek thinkers of old, precisely because his philosophy was more than the abstract, rationalist structure of an ivory-tower thinker. It represented an inner commitment to values that had real meaning for life as it was experienced by the young generation in Europe.³⁶

Like Maurras, Malraux felt the need to act according to a philosophy which was founded on the relationship between the intellectual, emotional and aesthetic needs of man, but Maurras' way was ultimately not to be his.

* * *

The pre-Indo-China years showed a marked development in Malraux's thought and his literary tastes. From his review of Max Jacob's Art poétique on, his interest in Cubism became secondary to his interest in the psychology of art. His review of Mac Orlan's Malice shows how his fascination with works of fantasy and the fantastic was now motivated by his desire to learn more about the art of the novel. The second article on Gide, "Ménalque," marks a tremendous evolution from his earlier position in "Aspects d'André Gide." In "Ménalque," Malraux distances himself from Gide's anarchy and brings him to task for his "dilettantism" and his "betrayal" of the younger generation. He stresses the importance of "commitment" and of the search for a viable solution to man's present problems. The Gobineau review and the Maurras preface, although both dealing with writers of the extreme right, indicate less an approval of their political stance than a new dimension in Malraux's own interests as he examines other ideologies. Thus, although Malraux is not in agreement with all of Maurras' views, he is definitely impressed with his role as a "man of action." Prior to his departure for the Orient then, Malraux was acutely aware of the European dilemma. As Walter Langlois explains:

The 1923 Maurras essay clearly indicates that even before his journey to Indochina, Malraux correctly understood the metaphysical impasse in which his generation found itself. Disoriented, discouraged, anarchistic, with an acute awareness

of the enormous gap that separated what they felt from what they knew--their emotional from their intellectual existence--the young people of the early post-war years did not know how to redeem their lives so that they would be worth living, nor how to reorganize their world so that it would be meaningful. . . .³⁷

However, no writer would teach Malraux what stand to take in life before he had actually experienced the issues at firsthand and in person. Indo-China was to be his proving-ground.

Notes

- ¹ Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans 2: 251-52.
- ² See André Malraux, "Les hérissons apprivoisés," Signaux de France et de Belgique 4 (8 janvier 1921): 171-77; "Des lapins pneumatiques dans un jardin français," Dés 1 (avril 1922): 25-27; "Ecrit pour une idole à trompe," Accords 3-4 (oct.-nov. 1924): 56-61.
- ³ L. Morino, La "N.R.F." dans l'histoire des lettres 109-110.
- ⁴ André Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 143.
- ⁵ See Maurice Lange, Le comte Arthur de Gobineau: Etude biographique et critique (Strasbourg: Librairie Istra, 1924) 66.
- ⁶ See Arnold H. Rowbotham, The Literary Works of Count de Gobineau (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1929) 159.
- ⁷ Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 58.
- ⁸ Emile Henriot, "La résurrection de Gobineau," Europe Nouvelle (26 nov. 1921): n. pag.
- ⁹ Charles Régismanset, "Toujours l'exotisme: De Gobineau à Batouala," La Dépêche Coloniale (14 fév. 1922): n. pag.
- ¹⁰ Georges Bergner, "Le musée Gobineau à Strasbourg," Le Gaulois (23 fév. 1922): n. pag.
- ¹¹ Arrifo Calumi, "Gobineau et Almi," Libri del Giorno [Milan] (mars 1922): n. pag.
- ¹² Paul Colin, "A propos d'un centenaire: Arthur de Gobineau," L'Humanité (20 mars 1922): n. pag.
- ¹³ R. Aldington, "The Revival of Gobineau," London Times Lit. Sup.

(Oct. 12, 1922): n. pag.

¹⁴ Lange, Gobineau 261.

¹⁵ See endnote number 16 of Chapter I, pages 74-75, for a biography and a bibliography of Max Jacob.

¹⁶ Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 42.

¹⁷ Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans 205.

¹⁸ Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 83-84.

¹⁹ See pages 62-63 of this thesis for an analysis of Gide's relationship with Malraux at that time and endnote number 33 of Chapter I, pages 78-81, for a biography and a bibliography of Gide.

²⁰ Thomas Cordle, André Gide (New York: Twayne, 1969) 32.

²¹ Denis Boak, "Malraux et Gide" 37-38.

²² Boak, "Malraux et Gide" 38.

²³ Mac Orlan's social novels of the fantastic, which were influenced by Barbey d'Aurevilly's expressionism and surrealism, are representative of the imaginary works of the "années folles." His main works include: Le chant de l'équipage (1918), his first success, La cavalière Elsa (1921), Le quai des brumes (1927), La bandera (1931), Masques sur mesure (1937), Villes (1966), La lanterne sourde (1953) and Le mémorial du petit jour (1955).

²⁴ Pétrus Borel was one of the most notorious of the young writers of the 1830's whose works, which belonged to the period of horror and melodrama, foreshadowed and inspired Baudelaire.

²⁵ Raymond Queneau, "Préface," Oeuvres complètes de Pierre Mac Orlan (Genève: Gilbert Sigaux, 1971) xiii.

²⁶ Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 180.

- 27 André Malraux, "Documents: A Conversation with André Malraux,"
Anon 1 (Dec. 31, 1970): 10.
- 28 Jean Lacouture, Malraux: Une vie dans le siècle 36.
- 29 Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans 225.
- 30 Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans 273.
- 31 Charles Maurras, Anthinéa: D'Athènes à Florence (Paris: Flammarion, 1912) 44.
- 32 André Malraux, L'homme précaire et la littérature (Paris: Gallimard, 1977) 329. Malraux is quoting the well-known statement made famous by Paul Valéry in "La Crise de l'esprit," Variété, Oeuvres, 1919 (Paris: Pléiade, 1957) I:988.
- 33 Maurras, Anthinéa 21.
- 34 André Malraux, La condition humaine 1933 (Paris: Gallimard, 1946) 186.
- 35 André Malraux, Le miroir des limbes (Paris: Gallimard, 1976) 949.
- 36 Walter G. Langlois, "Malraux and the Greek Ideal," The Persistent Voice, Essays on Hellenism in French Literature since the Eighteenth Century (New York: New York UP, 1971) 196.
- 37 Langlois, "Malraux and the Greek Ideal" 196-97.

CHAPTER III
INDO-CHINA AND AFTER

Malraux, his wife Clara and his friend Louis Chevasson, who were deeply interested in archaeology, went to Indo-China in December 1923 to mount an expedition to the temples and ruins of Cambodia in search of treasure. In their possession, they had an official document proclaiming that they had received permission to embark on an archaeological mission which was never clearly defined. In addition, the document announcing that they were "chargés de mission" only gave them authority to requisition bullocks and carts.¹ Shortly thereafter, Malraux and his companions were arrested for the theft of archaeological materials from the temple of Banteay Srei, a ruin in the jungles of Cambodia some distance from Angkor. René-Louis Doyon, André Breton and Marcel Arland and a number of French literary figures came to Malraux's defence, writing letters and signing a petition on his behalf.² During the year which Malraux spent awaiting trial, he witnessed at first hand the oppressive nature of French colonialism. He protested his innocence in letters to L'Impartial and to the Courrier Saigonnais, both of which were endorsed by the corrupt government of the Governor, Maurice Cognacq. On October 28, 1924, the Appeals Court reduced Malraux's three-year sentence to a suspended sentence of one year of imprisonment and that of Chevasson from eighteen months to an eight-month suspended sentence. Malraux and Chevasson, who were dissatisfied with a verdict that made them into criminals, appealed their case but were never to obtain a conclusive decision as the Cour de Cassation in Paris ordered a technical retrial before three different judges of the Saigon Appeals Court.

After a brief visit to France in the winter of 1924-25, Malraux returned to Saigon accompanied by his lawyer friend, Paul Monin. Their aim was to set up an opposition newspaper and reveal the machinations of a small group of greedy French colonials who were shamelessly exploiting the native peoples. The short-lived Indochine: Journal Quotidien de Rapprochement Franco-Annamite and its successor Indochine Enchaînée supported the Vietnamese Nationalist party, 'Jeune Annam.' In addition to dealing with the political and social conditions in the colony, the articles by Malraux in these two papers reveal a deepening concern for social problems and a commitment to fight the establishment on these grounds rather than by espousing revolutionary aesthetics.³

During his trip back to France in February 1926, Malraux wrote letters about the Asian vision of the world to Marcel Arland, then a full-time editor at the N.R.F.. These letters, previously promised to the publisher Bernard Grasset as the first book of a three-book contract, were published under the title La tentation de l'Occident in 1926. Borrowing the formula of Montesquieu's Lettres persanes, Malraux attempted to define the difference between Eastern and Western cultures in an exchange of letters between two fictitious intellectuals, a cultivated Frenchman, A. D., and a Chinese scholar, Ling. A year later, Malraux wrote an essay, D'une jeunesse européenne, which appeared in Les Cahiers Verts in 1927 and in which his indictment of Western civilization is spelled out unambiguously. For Malraux, all the abstract absolutes--nation, justice, greatness, truth and the Cross--were human inventions which had turned against the great mass of humanity. Malraux's essay offers no hope, no certainties; at best, he

suggests that one day men may be able to solve some of the problems which face his generation.

Upon his return from the Orient in 1926, Malraux and Louis Chevasson set up a publishing firm called A la Sphère to produce luxury editions of works by contemporary writers. Before the firm encountered financial problems, they published Orages, a collection of poems by François Mauriac, Rien que la terre by Paul Morand and reprinted Albert Samain's 1901 Polyphème. Undaunted by their failure, Malraux and Chevasson organized a new firm called Aux Aldes. Before Aux Aldes was absorbed first by Grasset in February 1928 and then by the N.R.F. in July 1929, it gave proof of its discernment by publishing Paul Valéry's Odes, Jean Giraudoux's Provinciales, Valéry Larbaud's Allen, Gide's Le roi Candaule, Paul Morand's Siam, Pierre Loti's Pagodes d'or and Stendhal's Souvenirs d'égotisme. The sureness of taste of the young publishers could not be questioned.

Perhaps this was why the N.R.F. invited Malraux to become a "directeur artistique" in 1928. Malraux was very active in his role as editor of the luxury and special editions put out by Gallimard, the N.R.F.'s publishing house, until about 1936. From that date on, he continued to be responsible for the design and production of a large number of books but on an intermittent basis. Malraux had also resumed his job as book reviewer for the N.R.F. and, in 1927, he published reviews of Fernand Fleuret's satire about eighteenth century eroticism, Histoire de la bienheureuse Raton, fille de joie, Henri Massis' nationalist and pro-Catholic political essay, Défense de l'Occident, Paul Morand's Bouddha vivant, a novel about the Orient and Charles

Sorel's picaresque novel about seventeenth century French society,
Histoire comique de Francion.

III.1. "Histoire de la bienheureuse Raton, fille de joie"

Malraux's review of Fernand Fleuret's Histoire de la bienheureuse Raton, fille de joie was published by the N.R.F. on April 1st 1927. Fernand Fleuret, who was born in 1884 in Gondrecourt, Meuse, wrote poetry, novels, short stories and in particular, essays and pastiches of sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century erotic and libertine works. He also assisted his friends Guillaume Apollinaire and Louis Perceau in producing L'Enfer de la Bibliothèque. Like Malraux, Fleuret had contributed to Florent Fels' Action from 1920 to 1922 and, in addition, would write the preface to Stendhal's Souvenirs d'égotisme which Malraux published in a luxury edition in the spring of 1928.

Malraux's brief critique of Fleuret's Raton is his first discussion of an erotic work, but he had prepared several volumes of erotica for publication by Kra in 1921, among them L. de Gonzague-Frick's collection of erotic poems entitled Le calamiste alizé.⁴ In his review of Raton, Malraux begins with a substantial quotation from the original eighteenth century version of the tale (R:550) and then compares Fleuret's techniques to those of Voltaire. "Voltaire en eût fait un conte," he says, "M. Fleuret n'en fait point un roman, mais une histoire. Il ne dispose pas ses personnages autour de la camériste Raton; il nous montre la transformation qu'elle impose aux milieux qu'elle traverse" (R:550). For Malraux, Voltaire's novels and philosophical tales are social, religious and political commentary and satire and pay scant attention to plot and character-building whereas Fleuret's Raton, which is less

critical, represents society in a certain light and focus by using the central character as "point de vue" or lens, a technique which Malraux used frequently in a novel like La condition humaine.

Malraux remarks that depicting erotica verbally is less shocking than doing so visually, thereby minimizing the impact of the many scabrous scenes in Raton. In actual fact, eroticism was one of Malraux's constant temptations as the publication of a fragment deleted from the final version of La condition humaine shows.⁵ More importantly for Malraux, Fleuret excels at capturing scenes from Renaissance drawings and bringing them to life: "De Fragonard à Goya," he says, "ce livre ne cesse de chercher--et de trouver--sa vérité dans des évocations rapides d'une remarquable précision" (R:551). Critics have noted of Fleuret that his only originality lies precisely in his picturesque style which owes so much to his interest in art and, although Malraux rarely used art in this fashion, he was most impressed by Fleuret's singular gift.

III.2. "Défense de l'Occident"

On June 1st 1927, La Nouvelle Revue Française published André Malraux's six-page response to Henri Massis' Défense de l'Occident (Plon, 1927), in which the noted neo-Catholic critic had taken him to task for the views he had expressed in La tentation de l'Occident and D'une jeunesse européenne. Henri Massis, who was born in Paris in 1886, had been associated with Alfred de Tarde, editor of L'Opinion where he published Les Jeunes Gens d'Aujourd'hui (1911). Then he joined Jacques Bainville to found La Revue Universelle in 1920. Before the publication of his Défense de l'Occident, he had written two other works in which he expressed his neo-thomist convictions: La vie d'Ernest Psichari (1916) and Jugements (1923). Défense de l'Occident shows to what extent his key ideas were akin to those of L'Action Française, the ultra right-wing group founded in 1908 by the staunch Catholic Charles Maurras. In addition to Maurras and Massis, the movement attracted such brilliant intellectuals as Léon Daudet, Jacques Bainville, Georges Valois, Jacques Maritain, Georges Bernanos, Pierre Lasserre, Henri Martineau and Louis Dimier.

Défense de l'Occident is basically a warning to the French against the dangers menacing Western civilization. Massis remarks that since World War I, Oriental doctrines have been undermining Western civilization and its Greco-Latin culture. He examines the position of the Germans who, under the influence of Oswald Spengler, declared that they preferred to look to the East and to Asian cultures for wisdom.

According to Massis, Communism marks Russia's return to its Asian origins and Bolshevist proselytes are working their way through Asia to head local movements of independence and liberation. Massis suggests that a tenacious complicity exists between Bolshevist Russia and Germany and that both are aiming for world hegemony. The Pan-Asiatic League's conference in Nagasaki, Japan in August 1926 should be construed as a warning that the West risks losing all its colonies. According to Massis, it is time for the West to defend its economic and political supremacy by defending its spiritual values against such leaders and enemies of the West as Gandhi and Tagore. Massis' solution, that the Catholic church is the best possible defender of Western civilization: "Il faut rechristianiser l'Europe et le monde," he says--is curiously retrograde but his rhetoric, his anti-Rousseauism and his resolute anti-spiritualism had a powerful impact on certain segments of the population.⁶

Malraux's review of Défense de l'Occident is his first critique of a non-fictional work and a masterly defence of his own very different views. He examines Massis' "idées forces" as expressed in this and previous works, discusses whether the East really poses a political and moral threat to the West and whether Massis' Catholic solution is a viable one. The review is methodical, logical and well-organized and bolstered by his knowledge of earlier Massis texts. Malraux finds in the title of the work the key to all of Massis' works thereby paralleling Massis himself who had said in De l'homme à Dieu (1959): "Le titre de Défense que j'ai donné à mon livre sur l'Occident conviendrait sans doute à tous les ouvrages que j'ai publiés."⁷

Referring back to Massis' earlier work, Jugements, Malraux says that even there, "M. Massis s'y trouvait accusé dans la mesure où il représente et exalte non point, comme il le dit, la notion de l'homme classique qui n'est qu'à demi en cause, mais bien toute notion fixe de l'homme" (D:813) and specifically the Catholic view of man. Thus his portraits of Renan, France, Barrès and Gide are all unfavorable because they are enemies of the Christian faith. As in the later Défense, Massis' bias vitiates the whole argument.

This said, Malraux remarks that in actual fact Massis' book does not so much "defend" the West which is already hopelessly compromised, as promote "la possibilité de le régénérer à l'aide de la tradition catholique romaine et de sa philosophie: le thomisme" (D:814). Then, taking an even firmer stand, he says it is not the West which needs protection from the East but the East which needs protection from the West. Citing the case of India whose people should be protected from the English government, Malraux speaks out strongly against European imperialism and condemns Europeans for trying to impose their value systems on passive, non-materialistic Asian races (D:815). "La grande imprudence européenne," observes Malraux, "c'est dans l'aide que nous n'avons cessé de prêter à la destruction de l'autorité traditionnelle qui, dans toutes les contrées d'Asie, était liée à la culture" (D:815). While Malraux agrees that the Asians will use their newly-acquired strength to turn against the European colonists, he considers this desirable. Instead of considering the Soviets "archvillains" as Massis does, Malraux responds that the danger is not imminent. Russian Communism as an ideology is in retreat in the Far East as

Chang-K'ai-Shek's defeat of the revolutionary leaders in China proves. In this latter matter, he was right in the short run but not in the long run.

Thus, Malraux's review is actually a "Défense de l'Orient" and an implicit criticism of French colonialism which the two years he spent in Indo-China (1923-24 and 1925-26) had given him ample opportunity to observe at first hand. Massis had never visited the Far East, he comments, and his views were based mainly on hearsay and right-wing propaganda. A telling thrust, but still not his main concern which is the moral influence of the East on the West. Malraux quotes the following key passage from Massis' introduction:

Sous prétexte d'apporter à l'âme de l'Occident ce dont elle a besoin, c'est à la dispersion définitive de l'héritage de notre culture, de tout ce qui fait que l'homme occidental se tient encore debout qu'un certain asiatisme nous dispose. Personnalité, unité, stabilité, autorité, continuité, voilà les idées-mères de l'Occident. Il s'agit de les dissocier au profit d'un ascétisme équivoque, où les forces de la personne humaine se dissolvent et retournent au néant. (D:815-816)

Accusing Massis of having taken into account only such facts as confirm his beliefs, Malraux states that all Massis has succeeded in doing is creating a myth about Asia which counters everything that he, Malraux, has said and believes. Even Massis' Catholic solution is not feasible for, since "Le monde moderne porte en lui-même, comme un cancer, son absence d'âme" (D:818), man must wait for "un appel collectif de l'âme" or "un nouvel objet d'amour" (D:818).

As Robert Thornberry concludes in his article, "Malraux Reaction and Order,":

In situating the problem on the ethical, religious and aesthetic levels, and in affirming that the desire for order was a passion and not just an idea, Malraux foresaw the intensely emotional and highly irrational nature of many of the extreme right-wing movements that were to engulf much of Europe during the thirties and forties.⁸

Turning away from any right-wing sympathies that he may have implied in his 1923 Maurras review, a "péché de jeunesse," Malraux reaffirms the conviction already expressed in La tentation de l'Occident and D'une jeunesse européenne that the West was spiritually bankrupt and must turn to the East for guidance. Guidance, but not a ready-made solution, a new "system" which, like all systems, would stifle individual initiative and freedom. Hard put to define his ideal in abstract terms, Malraux turned to the novel to express the problem in concrete terms and suggest alternative options. The polemic with Massis was a vital step in the defining of his own dialectical technique.

III.3. "Bouddha vivant"

Malraux's review of Paul Morand's novel, Bouddha vivant was published by the N.R.F. on August 1st 1927. Paul Morand was born in Paris in 1889 and joined the diplomatic service in 1912. He began his immensely successful literary career⁹ by writing poetry and then turned to the novel to capture with poster-like brilliance the feverish atmosphere of the 1920's. His witty and urbane novels with their impressionistic descriptions of the Orient, Africa, North and South America are as far removed from Massis' concerns as one could imagine but since Morand had, like Malraux, been a contributor to the Signaux de France et de Belgique and was to continue to write for some of the same reviews as Malraux did in the early 1930's (Marianne is a case in point), it seemed only natural for Malraux, who had met Morand at the end of 1925 in Saigon,¹⁰ to print the first copies of Rien que la terre (1926), Siam (1927) and Bouddha vivant (1928) as luxury-editions and then to write a most flattering review of the latter, the subject of which coincided with his current interests.

Bouddha vivant is the second of four novels each treating a different continent that Morand grouped together under the title Chroniques du XX^e siècle. The four novels: L'Europe galante (1925) (Europe), Bouddha vivant (1927) (Asia), Magie noire (1928) (Africa) and Champions du monde (1930) (U.S.A.) offer the author's own very personal views of the continents he studied from his vantage point in consulates and embassies and, as such, have much superficial exotic appeal.

Bouddha vivant is a novel which, in content if not in form, closely resembles Malraux's La tentation de l'Occident. It is the story of the crown prince of an imaginary kingdom which greatly resembles Siam, who comes into contact with a young French adventurer and who, on his travels to London, Paris, New York and San Francisco, becomes disenchanted by Western materialism and racism. Returning to his country to ascend the throne, he reaffirms his ancestral beliefs.

In his review of Bouddha vivant, Malraux discusses Morand's previous works, both prose and poetry. Of Bouddha vivant Malraux says that it is essentially a document which will permit: "Les critiques futurs obligés à chercher l'aspect sous lequel l'Occident apparaissait aux voyageurs français en 1927 . . . [de] trouver une mine . . . [très] riche" (BV:254). The distinction is subtle for Malraux does not say that Morand has captured the essence of Oriental manners and mores, but only of how they appear to Western eyes. Likewise when he comments on the two main characters, both stereotypes, he finds the Frenchman more coherent than the Oriental. Whether or not he realized that Morand endowed his fictional character with some of Malraux's own features¹¹ is not obvious from the review but Vandegans' assertion¹² that many of Renaud d'Ecouen's adventures are similar to Malraux's is unquestionably correct.

Malraux's comments on Morand's style are far more favorable than those of other critics. Georges Lemaître contends that it is not so much "concise" as Malraux would have it but rapid and breathless.

Morand uses the following method, he explains: he first writes in a connected manner a full and fluent account of what he has

to relate. Then . . . he deliberately cuts out all the transitions and connexions. . . . Approximately one third of a first version is eliminated. . . . This manner of composition conveys to the reader an impression of great rapidity. . . . Yet speed must not be taken here as a synonym for conciseness. Morand does not possess the art of expressing a great deal in a few well chosen and highly significant words. His technique is one of suppression rather than of compression--though the result for the casual reader amounts to practically the same thing.¹³

All in all, Malraux's review of Bouddha vivant is dictated by his own interest in the Orient and his desire to speak well of his friend's work. He learned nothing from Morand for, as he wrote to Edmund Wilson in October 1933: "Ma construction . . . ne pourrait rejoindre celle d'un écrivain comme Morand: ses types reposent sur l'observation ironique, les miens sur le besoin de traduire à travers des personnages un certain ordre de valeurs éthiques."¹⁴

III.4. "Histoire comique de Francion"

Malraux's last contribution to the N.R.F. in 1927 was a review of the Histoire comique de Francion by Charles Sorel. Charles Sorel, Sieur de Souvigny (1600-1674) began his literary career by writing novels but soon turned to historical studies and became royal historiographer in 1635. However, he was too much of an individualist to succeed in the court of Louis XIV and was therefore dismissed in 1663. He is known as the author of a novel, Histoire comique de Francion (1623) and of his Nouvelles françoises (1623). His Berger extravagant (1627) was obviously influenced by Cervantes' Don Quixote and he left an unfinished "roman de moeurs bourgeoises," Polyandre (1648).

Sorel first published his Histoire comique de Francion as Histoire comique de Francion, fléau des vicieux and signed it with the pseudonym Nicolas de Moulinet. It was the first French picaresque novel to present a colorful picture of French society in the early years of Louis XIII's reign. The work mocks everyone and everything, particularly the legal system and the education one received in colleges, and abounds in diverse and singular characters: beggars, courtesans, writers. The pedant Hortensius is a vivid portrayal of the writer Guez de Balzac. The savory adventures of the hero, Francion, put one in mind of Lesage's Gil Blas and of Beaumarchais' Figaro. The Histoire comique de Francion therefore marks an important date in seventeenth century French literature for it is the first of a series of burlesque novels which culminated in the works of Cyrano de Bergerac and in Scarron's Roman

comique (1651-57).

The occasion of Malraux's excellent review is the 1927 edition by J. Fort of the original 1623 text which Malraux highly recommends and prefers to the second watered down version published in 1633. His view conforms with that of modern specialists who, like Hervé Béchade, feel that: "L'étude des variantes laisse en effet apparaître que . . . la refonte du premier Francion de 1623, marque . . . un tel recul de l'audace, un tel amoindrissement de l'esprit des textes originaux que se fonder sur les dernières éditions reviendrait à fausser irrémédiablement toute analyse."¹⁵

Malraux's review takes a very scholarly approach for not only does he discuss the variants but he also recalls the controversy concerning the identity of author of Francion which had first been published under a fictitious name. His attribution of authorship is correct but, given the limits of his short review, he did not enter into all the complex reasons which led Sorel to hide behind a "nom de plume" and which later caused him to abandon his Polyandre, a disenchanted picture of his own bourgeois class.¹⁶

Malraux's main interest in the 1623 Francion text and in Polyandre can of course be explained by Sorel's picture of the non-conformist, libertine undercurrent of the "grand siècle." According to Malraux, it was precisely because Sorel's works did not conform to the standard clichés that they had been overlooked for so long. He lauds the efforts of:

Les érudits qui ne dépendent point de la Sorbonne [et qui] semblent s'appliquer, depuis la fin de la guerre, à remettre en

lumière des ouvrages importants publiés en France de 1550 à 1660, qui sont, souvent presque inconnus. Cette littérature est libre et désordonnée; de là son omission dans les histoires de la littérature et l'intérêt qu'elle peut inspirer.
(F:686-87)

In fact, what Malraux says is true and he is perhaps closer to the new establishment view than he would have wished.

Malraux's comments about the similarities and the differences between the Francion and other seventeenth century works of fiction are pertinent for he sees that whereas most picaresque novels are blindly respectful of the nobility, Sorel's is not (F:687) and that while Sorel is more a moral and social critic than a novelist, he is a parodist of note. What strikes Malraux, moreover, is the change in point of view from the hero's point of view which predominates in the first part to the "author's" in the second part. "Ce livre . . . est formé," says Malraux, "de la réunion de deux récits: celui que Francion fait de sa propre vie; celui que Sorel fait des aventures de Francion postérieures à celles que celui-ci conte" (F:687). This unusual interplay of perspectives is crucial to meaning for, just as Francion plays tricks on his victims, Sorel plays with literary conventions and with his readers in order to expose their illusions about literature and about the world.

For Malraux, "Le récit de Francion . . . est, en grande partie, une biographie de Sorel. Il m'intéresse," he says, "par la liberté que gagne l'auteur à prendre un porte-parole, et par la sincérité qu'il y trouve. C'est de ce procédé que vient la différence profonde qui le sépare des mémoires du temps" (F:687). Thus, Sorel achieves this

freedom of expression by attributing his comments and criticisms to a fictional counterpart, as Malraux was to do, but in a much more complex fashion, in his own novels. "Un homme à qui un masque permet de s'exprimer sans crainte des autres ni de lui-même, tel est ici le personnage digne d'intérêt et de curiosité," (F:987) he says.

As in his reviews of Fleuret's novel about eighteenth century France and Morand's novel about Asia and France in 1927, Malraux is fascinated by a fictional depiction of seventeenth century French society which blends fact and fiction in a special fashion. Malraux finally realizes that fiction gives its author a freedom and power which memoirs or essays do not and that, if he is to speak out about the ills of his society rather than write more works in the vein of La tentation de l'Occident and D'une jeunesse européenne, fictionalizing the same arguments would be a far more effective way of reaching a larger audience and propounding his views.

* * *

Malraux's experiences in Indo-China changed both his literary and his political convictions. The views expressed about Eastern and Western ideology in La tentation de l'Occident (1926) and D'une jeunesse européenne (1927) permeate his 1927 reviews for the N.R.F., all of which evidence a keen commitment to the Orient. The polemic with Massis distanced him from Maurras and other right-wing thinkers but in the Morand review he showed that he was not yet quite ready to break with friends for the sake of a cause. New aspects of his temperament and interests appear in the Fleuret review, in particular eroticism and the art of earlier generations. Malraux's examination of the techniques of the novels of Fleuret, Morand and Sorel shows him searching for ways of discussing ideas and portraying society in works of fiction as he was soon to do.

Notes

¹ See Robert Payne, A Portrait of André Malraux (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice, 1970) 65.

² See André Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire d'André Malraux 234.

³ See Walter G. Langlois, André Malraux: The Indochina Adventure (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966) for a complete analysis of Malraux's two-year sojourn in Indo-China.

⁴ See Walter Langlois, André Malraux: 1901-1976 (Hempstead: Hofstra UP, 1978) 15.

⁵ André Malraux, "Un chapitre inédit de La condition humaine (A l'hôtel des sensations inédites)," Marianne 60 (mercredi 13 décembre 1933): 4.

⁶ See Henri Massis, L'occident et son destin (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1956) 68-69, 71, 74, 105, 121, 161.

⁷ Henri Massis, De l'homme à Dieu (Paris; Collection Itinéraires, Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1959) 230.

⁸ Robert Thornberry, "Malraux, Reaction and Order," Mélanges Malraux Miscellany 13.1 (Spring 1981): 14-15.

⁹ In 1945, Morand was dismissed from the diplomatic service because of his collaboration with the Vichy government. As a result, his candidacy for election to the Académie Française was opposed and withdrawn. Of Morand's many works, the most noteworthy are: Lampes à arc (1919), Feuilles de température (1920), Ouvert la nuit (1922), Fermé la nuit (1923), Lewis et Irène (1924), Europe galante (1925), Rien que

la terre (1926), Magie noire (1928), Champions du monde (1930), Papiers d'identité (1931), France la douce (1934), L'homme pressé (1941), Hécate et ses chiens (1954), L'eau sous les ponts (1954) and Le flagellant de Séville (1959).

¹⁰ See André Vandegans, "Paul Morand et André Malraux: A propos de Bouddha vivant," Publications de l'Université de l'Etat à Elisabethville (juillet 1961): 7-26.

¹¹ Paul Morand, Bouddha vivant (Paris: Grasset, 1927) 18.

¹² See Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 252-53.

¹³ Georges Lemaître, Four French Novelists: Marcel Proust, André Gide, Jean Giraudoux, Paul Morand (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford UP, 1938) 387-88.

¹⁴ André Malraux quoted in Edmund Wilson, The Shores of Light (London: W. H. Allen, 1952) 573.

¹⁵ Hervé D. Béchade, Les romans comiques de Charles Sorel (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1981) 327.

¹⁶ See Gabrielle Verdier, "The Problem of Authorship," Charles Sorel (Boston: Twayne, 1984) 2-7.

CHAPTER IV

1928: A BANNER YEAR

Of all the civilizations of the Far East, China most attracted Malraux. For him there were two Chinas: the China of revolution and the China of legend, compounded out of all the travelers' tales he had read. Violent, sensual and ugly, the first consisted largely of the treaty ports, their foreign enclaves served by teeming coolies and ricksha drivers and in which small revolutionary committees proliferated under the control of foreign communists. The second China was calm, gentle and sensuous. Each was the subject of a Malraux work: the novel, Les conquérants (Sept. 1928), depicts the former and the exotic tale, Royaume farfelu (Nov. 1928), the latter.

Drawing upon the ideas he had already expressed in his review of Massis' Défense de l'Occident and in his essays La tentation de l'Occident and D'une jeunesse européenne, Les conquérants is Malraux's first fictional work to express his convictions and to reflect the real world as he had experienced it. The novel is essentially the story of one man, Pierre Garine, of his rise to power and his death in the Canton revolution in 1925. Les conquérants revealed Malraux overnight as a writer of stature. The book's immediate success can be explained both by its subject and its style. The use of headlines, radio flashes, "camera eye" points of view and cinematographic techniques gave dramatic immediacy to the action-packed story of the revolution. In a larger perspective, Les conquérants probed the "malaise" of the late 1920's, formulated the moral distress of the younger generation and foreshadowed the existentialism of Sartre and Camus.

In contrast with Les conquérants and its violent action, Royaume

farfelu, first published in a condensed version as "Voyage aux îles fortunées" in Commerce in the summer of 1927, paints a poetic picture of the legendary Orient. The work suggests that the newly politicized Malraux still reverts at times to the aestheticism that marked the beginning of his career although this collection of exotic prose poems is more concerned with allegory and mystery than with fairy tales in the Lunes en papier vein.

At approximately the same time, Malraux wrote five reviews for the N.R.F. and an introduction to Louis Chevasson's modern abridged adaptation of the "Lettre du Prestre-Jehan à l'Empereur de Rome." This was published in the review Commerce in the autumn of 1928. In spite of its title, this review, which was financed by the Princess of Bassiano from 1924 to 1932, was edited by Paul Valéry, Valery Larbaud and Léon-Paul Fargue while Saint-John Perse and Jean Paulhan actually chose the texts to be published.¹

None of these five reviews reveals a new dimension in Malraux's thought, a new concern or a new technique. Instead he seems to be consolidating and defining his earlier positions. His reviews of Arland's reminiscences, Où le coeur se partage, and of Bernanos' novel, L'imposture, stress his interest in man's fate and his choice of appropriate conduct while the review of Sade's Contes, historiettes et fabliaux and of the Dialogue d'un prêtre et d'un moribond shows a continued interest in erotic literature. In his review of Franz Hellens' memoirs, L'enfant et l'écuyère, Malraux states his preference for fiction over non-fiction while, in his review of Alexandre Vialatte's Battling le ténébreux, he reaffirms his interest in the

domain of the fantastic. Obviously his own creative efforts had for a time provided him with all the theoretical and technical proving ground his critical talents needed. The novelist had temporarily supplanted the critic who continued, very simply, along the accustomed path.

IV.1. "Où le coeur se partage"

On February 1st 1928, the N.R.F. published a review of Marcel Arland's Où le coeur se partage (1927) by André Malraux. Marcel Arland was born in Varennes-sur-Armanche in 1899 and began his literary career as a professor. Like Malraux, Arland contributed to Florent Fels' Action in 1920 and with the advent of Dadaism, he founded an avant-garde magazine, Aventure, which came to an end after three issues (1920). Arland first joined and then broke off relations with the Breton group and, after a final attempt to create another review, Dés, which published only one issue, he joined the N.R.F. group in 1925.

In the following passage Arland describes his initial encounter with Malraux in 1922:

Mais je venais de rencontrer Malraux (il avait publié Lunes en papier et ne songeait pas au roman), he writes. Nous nous sommes vus presque chaque jour jusqu'à son départ pour l'Indochine (où d'ailleurs je lui avais promis de le rejoindre). Nous étions liés par le même souci d'indépendance, le même mépris des tréteaux littéraires, aussi par notre amour de la peinture. Nous nous répétions: Tout ce qui n'est pas essentiel ne compte pas. . . .²

In her memoirs, Clara Malraux relates further details concerning the nature of the Malraux-Arland relationship and the subjects of their conversations:

L'entente entre Marcel et André, pour tout ce qui concernait

l'art, fut rapide. . . .

Déjà aussi, dans ces longs entretiens, les thèmes abordés étaient ceux que l'on retrouve dans Les noyers de l'Altenburg. Que faire dans un monde d'où Dieu a disparu? Quelle justification de sa présence terrestre l'homme peut-il trouver par l'art? Que vaut un homme? . . . Quel est le rôle de l'histoire? Quel est le rôle des mythes dans l'aventure humaine? Plus tard, quel est le rôle de l'action dans l'aventure individuelle? . . .³

Before his departure for the Orient in 1923, Malraux left Arland with two excerpts of "Ecrit pour une idole à trompe" which he asked Arland to submit for publication, preferably in Accords, a review which emphasized the value of self-affirmation and the union of thought and action. Arland succeeded in his mission and fragments of "Ecrit pour une idole à trompe" appeared in the October-November 1924 issue of Accords preceded by an "Avertissement" by Arland:

Je ne puis parler d'André Malraux sans émotion, he writes; à l'âge où certains se consomment en gestes et en paroles, et cherchent en de minuscules scandales une publicité facile, André Malraux va jouer au Cambodge une aventure dont l'enjeu (et ce n'est pas que sa vie) lui apparaît assez négligeable.

Dira-t-on qu'il renonce à la littérature? Pas même: lui qui est un des plus purs parmi les jeunes écrivains, il savait que la littérature ne pouvait pas le satisfaire; il la dédaigne sans grandes phrases, simplement parce que son angoisse ne peut plus se contenter de mots.

Car si l'on peut parler d'angoisse, c'est bien à propos de cet homme qui, à 23 ans, a plus vécu, plus pensé, plus souffert que la plupart de nos vieillards officiels. Son admirable intelligence avive encore ce tourment; elle l'a jeté tour à tour vers toutes les possibilités qui s'offraient à lui; il les envisage, il s'y livre maintes fois; mais il garde jusqu'au bout sa lucidité, qui l'alimente d'amertume, son frémissement, qui fait de lui un artiste et son malaise, qui le pousse sans cesse plus avant.⁴

Such praise for a twenty-three-year-old is rare but Arland was a confidant "de choix" as well as a friend and supporter, as we see by the two letters which Arland received from Malraux from Phnom-Penh in January 1924. They are important letters for, in addition to describing Malraux's impressions of China, Indo-China and Cambodia, they reveal that Malraux was growing more interested in metaphysical than in aesthetic questions.

Marcel Arland dedicated his first work, Terres étrangères, (1922; 1923) to Malraux and, in all his works,⁵ showed a concern for post-war Europe. His 1924 essay, "Sur un nouveau mal du siècle," deals with the theme of the lost generation and his novel, Ames en peine (1927) depicts the moral disarray of the post-war society in realistic terms. The essay which Malraux reviewed was written in 1925 and 1926 and published the following year by Gallimard. Où le coeur se partage is a series of recollections which endeavor to define the mystery of Arland's birthplace, Varennes, and of his residence on the outskirts of Paris next to the ruins of Port-Royal. In it he re-examines themes already

discussed in his essay "Sur un nouveau mal du siècle" and, in particular, his position concerning tradition and revolt.

The strong incisive introduction of Malraux's review indicates that he knew Arland's earlier works well and judged Où le coeur se partage the best to date, particularly because its theme, fate and the choice of an appropriate conduct, was central to all Malraux's works. Few critics share Malraux's opinion and most prefer Ames en peine to Où le coeur se partage, which they rarely mention.

According to Malraux, Arland's works always deal with questions they discussed in their correspondence: "Qu'est-ce que la vie?" "Comment puis-je, comment dois-je diriger ma vie?" (0:250). He sees how: "M. Arland est imprégné de christianisme," but that, "il n'en est pas pénétré; il s'accorde sans peine à ce qu'il a de négatif, mais il n'accepte pas ses affirmations" (0:251). Malraux has similar concerns; but, for Malraux, God is dead and while "Arland a toujours regretté la perte de sa foi en continuant à chercher,"⁶ Malraux was to go beyond such negative attitudes and to create a new faith to replace the old. Thus while Malraux reproaches Arland for not suggesting heroic action as a solution to man's problems, at the end of his review, he retreats somewhat and admits that he finds this negative symphony both pure and moving. Ever reluctant to say ill of a friend, Malraux compliments Arland on the quality of his writing.

Malraux's criticism of Arland's Où le coeur se partage shows his ability to get to the heart of a book and treat its strengths and weaknesses with understanding and sympathy. He criticizes the philosophy without once being cruel and makes his own view clear without

denigrating a different one. In response to Arland's question: "Qu'attendons-nous de la vie?" Malraux replied: "Nous sommes hantés de sottés idées: néant, chaos, etc., et incapables de considérer avec loyauté un état de choses nouveau parce que son acceptation nous oblige à supprimer beaucoup de choses qui ont fait notre valeur, ou celle que nous nous prêtons."⁷ In due course, Malraux, not Arland, will answer Arland's question. The time is not yet ripe.

IV.2. "L'imposture"

Malraux's review of Georges Bernanos' L'imposture (1927) appeared in the N.R.F. on March 1st 1928. Georges Bernanos, best known as a novelist and polemical writer, was born in Paris in 1888. Strongly influenced by Balzac's writings and by his Christian education, he began his career as a journalist in 1913 and wrote for the royalist paper L'Avant-Garde. Like his predecessor Léon Bloy (1846-1917), Bernanos was a visionary who abhorred materialism and any compromise with evil. As a novelist⁸ he portrayed the struggle between the forces of good and evil in the soul of man, and particularly in the souls of priests, and as a polemicist he attacked both Church and State for their lack of faith and deviation from tradition.

Malraux's high regard for Bernanos as a writer and a humanist remained unchanged throughout his lifetime. After the publication of Bernanos' first two novels, Sous le soleil de Satan (1926) and L'imposture (1927), Malraux stated that Bernanos was: "[1'] un des meilleurs romanciers de sa génération," (LI:407) and, in an interview with Malraux in 1954, Roger Stéphane reported that Malraux "estime beaucoup Bernanos qui est un des hommes qui ait le plus de charité de coeur qu'il connaisse."⁹ Twenty years later, in an interview with Frédéric Grover dated August 18, 1975, Malraux added that: "Chez Bernanos, la création d'imaginaire est comparable à celle d'un prophète."¹⁰ When Grover remarked to him that Bernanos was the only writer that he had spoken about with passion in the Antimémoires,

Malraux offered the following explanation:

Oui j'ai eu pour lui une véritable amitié. C'est une chose curieuse car nous n'avions pas deux idées en commun. C'était un homme chaleureux, impulsif. Ses conférences, ses articles lui ressemblent beaucoup: ils ont quelque chose de torrentueux, avec une grande éloquence. Il n'avait pas grand-chose à dire bien qu'il ait eu une puissante pensée religieuse et qu'on puisse le considérer comme un romancier de génie. . . . Oui, il est comme un torrent; il en a la force, il tombe de très haut mais il ne charrie pas grand-chose.¹¹

All dogmatism notwithstanding, Malraux cannot resist the conviction and eloquence of a writer whose every view is foreign to him.

Initially called Les ténèbres, L'imposture, which was written in 1926 and 1927 is more an investigation into the soul of Abbé Cénabre than a novel of action. Abbé Cénabre's story is based on the career of the famous Jesuit writer, Abbé Henri Brémond (1865-1933) who wrote a monumental twelve volume Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France.¹² Both are impostors because Brémond wrote a book of erudition instead of a book of faith and Bernanos' black hero continues to administer the sacraments although he no longer believes in God. Thus if ever a book by Bernanos were to intrigue Malraux, L'imposture would, for to show a priest's loss of faith was to admit the full extent of twentieth century disaffection with the Church.

Just as he was among the first to defend Gide's works, so "Malraux a été un des premiers à percevoir la nouveauté du roman bernanosien"¹³ and Michel Estève, a Bernanos specialist, reprinted Malraux's review of

L'imposture in Etudes bernanosiennes in 1974 with the following explanatory observation: "Ce texte, qui fut sans doute le meilleur publié à l'époque, demeure à nos yeux fondamental pour comprendre les liens établis chez Bernanos romancier, entre une vision du monde et une esthétique romanesque."¹⁴ Not only is it a "remarquable critique"¹⁵ then, but the Bernanos study stands apart from Malraux's earlier reviews in its analytical approach.

Malraux knew Bernanos' work well and, in writing about L'imposture, compared it with Sous le soleil de Satan. Malraux, recognizing that Bernanos does not attach the same importance to plot and psychological analysis as traditional writers do, adapts his method to the content of the novel. "Rien ne serait plus faux qu'un compte-rendu de L'imposture," he says: "les faits n'y ont qu'une importance secondaire. Ce qui est primordial, c'est une certaine catégorie de conflits" (LI:406). He therefore discusses these conflicts, the prime of which is Satan's conflict with God as waged in the souls of Bernanos' characters. Malraux praises Bernanos' choice of a priest as a protagonist, for he sees that nowhere is the struggle between good and evil more acute than in a consecrated soul but he particularly admires the crises which pit man against metaphysical powers. Malraux's own growing interest in metaphysics is evident when he defends and defines Bernanos' work:

Je crois, he says, que les résistances que rencontra Sous le soleil de Satan et que rencontre L'imposture, malgré des qualités telles qu'elles font indéniablement de M. Bernanos l'un des meilleurs romanciers de sa génération, tiennent à ceci, he explains: l'auteur ne se soumet pas au réel

communément reconnu; il vit dans un monde particulier, créé par lui. (LI:407)

Malraux chooses three scenes which exemplify the lyrical power and the depth of the best of Bernanos' writing but he does concede that Bernanos does not always succeed in convincing the reader of the existence of his characters' inner world with the result that his novels sometimes degenerate into religious pamphlets with caricatures. However Malraux does not dwell on the flaws in Bernanos' works and, instead, concludes by extolling the lyrical and dramatic qualities of his fiction.

At a time when many critics were criticizing Bernanos' works simply because they were unlike other novels, Malraux unerringly discerned the genuine strengths and weaknesses of L'imposture. This is all the more remarkable because, although Malraux himself believed God was dead, he never once criticized Bernanos' religious convictions. Here, as in his earlier review of Arland's Où le coeur se partage, Malraux shows that not only is he interested in the question of man's fate but that he is interested in all authors who deal seriously with it, regardless of their convictions. However, and this is very important, his review of L'imposture shows that he considers metaphysical novels superior to essays on metaphysics. For Malraux, Bernanos, "le créateur d'hallucinations" as he calls him, has found the best vehicle for expressing metaphysical concerns.

IV.3. "Contes, historiettes et fabliaux; Dialogue d'un prêtre et d'un moribond"

Three months later Malraux honed his critical skills in an evaluation of two works of an entirely different kind, both by the Marquis de Sade. On June 1st 1928, the Nouvelle Revue Française published Malraux's review of the Marquis de Sade's Historiettes, contes et fabliaux, printed for the first time by Kra in 1926 and Dialogue entre un prêtre et un moribond which Stendhal et Compagnie published in 1926. Donatien, Alphonse, François, the Marquis de Sade, who was born in Paris in 1740, was the author whose machiavellian erotic writings gave rise to the term "sadism." His own life as a libertine led to his being convicted for debauchery and acts of violence and spending more than twenty-seven years in prison where he wrote most of his works. His best known work, Justine ou les malheurs de la vertu, was published in 1791 but many others were not published until after his death in 1814.¹⁶

Although many of Sade's works are still considered obscene, they were esteemed by Sainte-Beuve, Baudelaire and Swinburne and influenced Lamartine, Barbey d'Aurevilly, Lautréamont, Dostoyevsky and Kafka among others. Guillaume Apollinaire and the Surrealists did much to rehabilitate them and critics of the stature of Maurice Heine, Jean Paulhan, Maurice Blanchot, Maurice Nadeau and Simone de Beauvoir have demonstrated the "infernale grandeur" of his writings. For many he is not so much the inventor of a special brand of sexual perversion as the creator of a special sort of Gothic novel which portrays the eternal

rebel seeking to extend the frontier of human experience.

According to René-Louis Doyon, Malraux was familiar with Sade's works before he wrote the review in question and may well have even instigated it: "Il connaissait . . . Sade dont il m'avait procuré La philosophie dans le boudoir," he says, "et c'est certainement à sa suggestion que Kra publia illustrées des pages fort capiteuses du divin (?) Marquis."¹⁷ Vandegans informs us, in addition, that not only did Malraux review the two Kra publications, but that some time earlier he had even edited two Sade texts for Kra:

Malraux prépara aussi pour Kra, dans le même temps, quelques éditions clandestines, he comments. Il semble qu'il soit responsable de la publication de deux textes de Sade, arbitrairement détachés de ses romans. Le premier, orné de bois gravés, parut, sans mention de date, sous le titre: Les amis du crime. Le second, intitulé Le B. . . de Venise, fut illustré d'aquarelles "scandaleuses" par Coupéry; il porte la date de 1921.¹⁸

Such evidence of continuing interest shows a side of Malraux unknown to the general reader and which plays an important part in his novels.

The Dialogue entre un prêtre et un moribond, completed in July 1782, was Sade's first important work. It is the story of a death-bed conversion, but instead of the dying sinner, it is the priest who is converted. The dying man offers to share the six lovely women he has been saving to make his final minutes on this earth happy. The priest is promptly won over. Structurally the Dialogue owes a great deal to Diderot's Lettre sur les aveugles (1749) while its argument is similar

to that of Holbach who, in his Le système de la nature (1770), had spoken of the divergence between the laws of nature and the laws of religion and attacked priests for veiling their theology in a fog of mystification.¹⁹ However, unlike either, it abounds in concrete examples and details which foreshadow Sade's later works which, unlike most erotic novels, contain a high proportion of argument to action.

Sade's Contes et fabliaux du XVIII^e par un troubadour provençal, written in 1787 and 1788 while he was imprisoned in the Bastille, were originally to consist of four volumes of short stories arranged so that, "une aventure gaie et même polissonne, mais toujours contenue dans les règles de la pudeur et de la décence, suit immédiatement une aventure sérieuse ou tragique."²⁰ The posthumous edition of the work contained the following twenty-six stories:

Historiettes: "Le serpent," "La saillie gasconne," "L'heureuse feinte," "Le M. . . puni," "L'évêque embourbé," "Le revenant," "Les harangueurs provençaux," "Attrapez-moi toujours de même," "L'époux complaisant," "Aventure incompréhensible," "La fleur de châtaignier."

Contes et fabliaux: "L'instituteur philosophe," "La prude, ou la rencontre imprévue," "Emilie de Tourville, ou la cruauté fraternelle," "Augustine de Villeblanche, ou le stratagème de l'amour," "Soit fait ainsi qu'il est requis," "Le président mystifié," "La marquise de Thélème, ou les effets du libertinage," "Le talion," "Le cocu de lui-même, ou le raccommodement imprévu," "Il y a place pour deux," "L'époux corrigé," "Le mari prêtre, conte provençal," "La châtelaine de

Longeville, ou la femme vengée," "Les filous,"

Appendix: "Les dangers de la bienfaisance."²¹

In his review of Sade's Contes and Dialogue, Malraux shows that he is familiar with at least three of Sade's other works, Justine, Juliette and La philosophie dans le boudoir, all of which he discusses in his review. Malraux's brief analysis of Sade's ideas and of his style clearly indicates that he is disappointed by the latter. "Il est clair," he asserts "que la langue de Sade est pauvre, son style affecté, marqué par les modes les plus niaises de son temps; qu'une extrême puérilité recouvre sans cesse ce qu'a de singulier sa pensée" (S:853). Modern critics tend to be divided about Sade's style; some agree with Malraux, others praise "le goût de la page bien écrite"²² while the majority are more interested in content than in style.

Speaking of the Dialogue, Malraux believes Sade is wrong to use "reason" to defend his immoral and atheistic theories and, while other critics see this as an eighteenth century approach,²³ Malraux insists on judging Sade by twentieth century standards. In addition, Malraux does not believe any useful lessons can be learned from Sade's works because what Sade says of human experience and man's passion for possession is based mainly on "illusions" and "legends." It is only in the last part of his critique where he discusses sensuality in Sade's works that Malraux makes a comment which explains his interest in a writer whose general views and literary talent find so little favor in his eyes. What strikes Malraux is that, in all his works, Sade's "heroes" continually "seek" sensual gratification without ever obtaining it:

C'est un effort constant, furieux pour atteindre une sensualité

qui se dérobe sans cesse. Une recherche furieuse. J'entends bien que Sade met en scène, de façon constante, des actes ou des aventures qui font naître d'ordinaire la sensualité; mais ils ne la font pas naître chez lui, et c'est de là que vient le caractère particulier de son oeuvre. (S:854)

He adds that in the thousands of pages of Sade's writings he is unable to find a single voluptuous scene mainly because Sade's characters, whether male or female, are objects instead of partners and victims of drives over which they have no control: "Ce n'est pas le personnage qui crée pour lui le désir, mais le désir qui crée le personnage, comme dans les songes" (S:854). Malraux's seemingly negative assessment of Sade who, he said, told stories as children do, to satisfy his need for power, is in actual fact a remarkably penetrating interpretation both of the appeal of his works and his role in Malraux's education as psychologist. Perken in La voie royale and Ferral in La condition humaine owe much of their strength to Malraux's study of Sade. When Perken tells Claude of the way imagination can compensate for genuine erotic pleasure and experience, he is actually defining what Malraux considers to be the true perversion of twentieth century man. "L'essentiel est de ne pas connaître la partenaire," Perken states, and then adds: "Savez-vous comment elles [les prostituées] appellent les irréguliers? Des cérébraux. . . . Il n'y a qu'une seule 'perversion sexuelle' comme disent les imbéciles: c'est le développement de l'imagination, l'inaptitude à l'assouvissement."²⁴ Likewise Ferral who, in his dealings with Valerie and the "courtisane," humiliates both himself and his partners in the name of "une idée" which is power.²⁵

The theme of eroticism is not new in Malraux's critiques. He had already broached the subject in his article on Lautréamont as well as when he examined the sensuality of Fernand Fleuret's work: Histoire de la bienheureuse Raton, fille de joie. However, as Rima Drell Reck explains in her article "Malraux's Cerebral Eroticism," Malraux's eroticism is of a very special nature: "There is no real sensuality, no pleasure in the literature of eroticism, nor in the pursuit of eroticism for Malraux. . . . Eroticism is one form of artistic obsession and like other obsessions, its basic concern is with philosophical questioning of life."²⁶ Seen in the light of his later works, Malraux's review of Sade marks the beginning of a long meditation on sexual relationships as manifestations of the Western need for dominance which, although it originates in the works of an author many feminists criticize for his "machism," actually breaks the ground on which much feminist theory reposes.

IV.4. "Lettre du Prestre Jehan à l'empereur de Rome"

In the autumn of 1928, the review Commerce published Louis Chevasson's modern and abridged adaptation of the "Lettre du Prestre Jehan à l'empereur de Rome" with an introduction by André Malraux. Chevasson and Malraux had been close friends since childhood. Vandegans comments as follows on the Malraux-Chevasson relationship:

Louis Chevasson, son [Malraux's] plus ancien ami . . . fut son condisciple à l'école primaire. [Bondy, rue Saint-Denis, 1906] Petit, brun, les yeux très noirs, il avait été surnommé "Grain de café" par Max Jacob. Quand Malraux le connut, Chevasson était employé de commerce. C'était un excellent jeune homme, travailleur et très rangé. Tout de suite, il témoigna à Malraux un attachement qu'il ne devait jamais démentir. Celui-ci, de son côté, estimait ce garçon chez qui la modestie, l'effacement s'alliaient à beaucoup de ténacité et même, il allait le prouver plus tard, de courage.²⁷

Chevasson accompanied Clara and André Malraux to Indo-China in 1923 and was implicated and charged in the Banteay Srei affair. "Chevasson-le-fidèle" as Lacouture calls him was loyal and devoted to Malraux throughout the entire lengthy hearings and remained his closest friend. Upon his return from the Orient in 1926, Malraux created his short-lived publishing firms, A la sphère and Aux Aldes, in collaboration with Louis Chevasson and, when Malraux became artistic director for Gaston Gallimard in 1928, he took Chevasson with him. Many

years later, when Malraux became a Minister in De Gaulle's cabinet in 1945, he named Chevasson advisor.

The apocryphal text "Lettre du Prestre Jehan à l'empereur de Rome" which Chevasson adapted purports to be a letter from a powerful oriental potentate who calls himself Prestre Jehan. Prester Jehan sends his best wishes to Fédri, emperor of Rome. The device is a familiar one and one already practised by Malraux in La tentation de l'Occident. Claiming he wants to exchange information about the people, the customs and the characteristics of their respective countries, Prester Jehan invites Fédri to visit his country, the imaginary "3 Yndes: Ynde mineure, Ynde moyenne, Ynde majeure" whose customs and inhabitants he describes in great detail. The "3 Yndes" are the exotic Orient of myth and adventure but, since the Yndiens have been converted to Christianity, there is much implicit criticism of Western society in the description of Eastern practices.

The legend of Prester Jehan had captured Malraux's fancy long before he wrote the introduction to Chevasson's adaptation. Pascal Pia recounts that:

A love of art and a taste for travel tormented him [Malraux] from his youth. Even before he went to the Far East, Marco Polo, Rubruquis and Plano Carpini fed his dreams. As we left the Bibliothèque Nationale, we would question each other, half seriously, half in jest, about the identity of Prester John. What had he been, a prince or a devil? The great Khan or the Negus? Suppose we were to go out there to see for ourselves.²⁸

Vandegans mentions various sources from which Malraux drew to

familiarize himself with Prester Jehan:

Sur la lettre et le Prestre Jehan, Malraux avait pu s'informer à des sources diverses: les voyageurs anciens qu'il pratiquait citaient le mystérieux souverain. Achille Jubinal avait publié, en 1874, avec des commentaires, la version française du texte, dans son édition des Oeuvres complètes de Rutebeuf. Le Père Huc s'était longuement étendu sur le Prestre Jehan dans Le christianisme en Chine, en Tartarie et au Thibet. René Grousset avait éclairci sa légende dans son Histoire de l'Asie.²⁹

It is even suggested that since Malraux was so interested in Prester Jehan, he may have suggested to Chevasson that he prepare a new edition of the letter.

Malraux's introduction to the Chevasson text is both succinct and scholarly. He compares Prester Jehan's letters to Rutebeuf's "Herberies," to Rubruquis' (1220-1293) account of his visit to the Great Khan in 1253 and to the description of central Asia by Plan Carpin and Giovanni dal Piano dei Carpini (1182-1252), the Italian Franciscan author, and captures the essence of the Prester Jehan letters when he notes that their author combines the attributes of all the legendary Eastern rulers from the Nestorian Turkish princes to the Negus of Abyssinia, to the legendary emirs of the East, to the prince who wrote to Saint Louis to propose war against the Moslems, to the imaginary Kings surrounded by centaurs. Malraux, the myth maker, recognizes in Prester Jehan: "le personnage autour de qui s'est créé le mythe de l'Asie tel qu'il exista au XIII^e siècle et qui, né des légendes, des

Croisades et des premiers grands voyages . . . est mort de la découverte de l'Amérique, tué par l'Eldorado" (LPJ:7). This comment is the first of many which attests to Malraux's explanation of the history of Western civilization, an explanation that most critics attribute to the influence of Spengler and H. G. Wells and according to which civilizations, which are mortal, are born, die and are replaced in a totally discontinuous fashion. In the more immediate sense, the Chevasson critique is important because Malraux used much the same material when he wrote Royaume farfelu in 1928.

IV.5. "L'enfant et l'écuyère"

The August 1st 1928 issue of the Nouvelle Revue Française contains a "note critique" by Malraux on Franz Hellens' L'enfant et l'écuyère (1927). Franz Hellens, born Frédéric Van Ermenghem on September 8, 1881 in Brussels, studied law at the University of Gand and published his first novel, En ville morte: Les scories, in 1906. The book was well received by the critics and henceforth Hellens devoted himself to writing poetry, short stories, novels and art criticism and translating Russian literature. Hellens was associated with a number of reviews and periodicals,³⁰ three of which also published works by Malraux: namely, Action, Signaux de France et de Belgique and its successor Le Disque Vert. When he was director of Signaux and Le Disque Vert, Hellens set about introducing innovative young French writers to his readers in Belgium. In addition to an excerpt of Malraux's "Les hérissons apprivoisés" which appeared on August 1, 1921 in the Signaux, Hellens also published Malraux's article "Ménalque." Although he had not yet met Malraux, in 1923 Hellens dedicated one of his short stories, "L'Adversaire," (Réalités fantastiques) to Malraux and in 1925 he reprinted Malraux's article about Lautréamont, "La genèse des Chants de Maldoror," in the Disque Vert.

Hellens, who is recognized by critics as an original author who strove to capture the fantastic and mysterious aspects of reality, is best known for his novel Mélusine (1920).³¹ His L'enfant et l'écuyère (1927) is a collection of nine short stories: "La cage ouverte," "Le

secret de ma mère," "Le râle," "Cloches," "Fleur-de-Beurre," "Le ciel a visité la terre," "Adieu à la maison," "Lydie" and "L'Ecuyère," which were obviously influenced by Edgar Allan Poe's Histoires extraordinaires. As Marcel Arland explains:

La plupart de ces contes, on ne saurait les résumer plus que l'on ne résumerait un poème. On peut, sans doute, en citer un trait ou une image, en détacher un personnage ou une anecdote, on peut aussi en suggérer l'atmosphère. Resterait l'essentiel, et je ne sais comment le définir. Il est dans les rapports qui unissent au conteur les personnages, le décor et la fable. . . . Dans ce don d'innocence et d'émerveillement, par où l'homme rejoint son enfance, et qui fait qu'à son coeur tout s'anime, tout signifie, soit que les plus simples apparences prennent un caractère insolite, ou que les plus bizarres, et parfois monstrueuses, se révèlent familières.³²

Malraux's review of Hellens' L'enfant et l'écuyère is a token of appreciation for Hellens' publishing his works and although Malraux uses no direct quotations from L'enfant, he implies that he is familiar with Hellens' writings by mentioning Le naïf. Essentially he seems more interested in the advantages of the memoir form than the text itself. According to Malraux, memoirs may help the artist to express certain of his obsessions but they limit the free play of the imagination: "Que devient sa magie, son besoin de transformer, lorsque au lieu d'être relativement libre en face de son sujet il doit se soumettre à lui, lorsque les démons semblent réfractaires à l'appel?" he asks. "Voilà ce que nous montrent des livres comme L'enfant et l'écuyère" (EE:291-92).

What seems an obvious disadvantage is mitigated by the fact that in L'enfant et l'écuyère the world is seen through the naive and sensitive eyes of the child. Other critics have commented on the importance of this focus: "Lorsque paraît Le naïf (1926)," Ayguesparse says, "on est loin de soupçonner que ce livre amorce un thème qui va s'étendre à travers toute l'oeuvre de Hellens. . . . Dès ses premiers écrits, Franz Hellens a reculé les frontières du patrimoine de notre littérature; il a apporté une forme de sensibilité ignorée avant lui."³³ Malraux, who has still not abandoned his interest in the inner world, commends Hellens' choice of a child as a "medium" or "interpreter": "C'est lui [cet enfant] qui donne l'existence à l'une des choses les moins communicables qui hantent un être: sa féerie familière" (EE:292).

As a commentary on L'enfant et l'écuyère, Malraux's review is most cursory, focusing as it does on general ideas about literature and not on the work in question. Since Malraux himself never dealt with the subject of childhood memories in his own works, except in his Antimémoires (1967) which are, in the terms he uses to describe Hellens' book, "en partie vrais et en partie imaginaires," perhaps it was the genre itself which he disliked, for as he confesses in his Antimémoires: "Presque tous les écrivains que je connais aiment leur enfance, je déteste la mienne."³⁴ Be that as it may, the Hellens' review is, at best, perfunctory.

IV.6. "Battling le ténébreux"

Malraux's last "note critique" for the N.R.F. in 1928 was on Alexandre Vialatte's novel Battling le ténébreux which had been published that same year by Gallimard. Alexandre Vialatte, a native of Auvergne, was born in 1907. Considered by many to be the best French translator of Kafka, he also translated some of Nietzsche's works and published three novels of his own, Battling le ténébreux (1928), Le fidèle berger (1942) and Les fruits du Congo (1956), all of which are marked by Kafkaesque descriptions of the "underground" world of the memory.

Battling le ténébreux is the story of the exploits and adventures of three high school students, the sixteen-year old narrator, the seventeen-year old Manuel Feracci and the eighteen-year old Fernand Larache, nicknamed "Battling." The young rebels display all the usual tendencies and the contradictions of adolescence: a contempt for tradition which is emphasized by their cynical attitude toward their teachers and their families coupled with a sense of confusion about love and sentiment. More important than the adolescent's rebellion against authority in Malraux's eyes, is the description of the fantasy world in which adolescents live at least part of the time and which inevitably enters into conflict with the physical urges of puberty. For Malraux, the essential questions asked by Vialatte in Battling are: "Qu'est la vie d'un adolescent qui veut vivre, hors de ce que les hommes ont de commun et de leurs passions, dans un univers particulier? Comment cet

univers et la passion se heurteront-ils?" (B:870). In Malraux's view, not only does Vialatte's novel portray the confrontation between the real world and the adolescent's dream world but it does so in a very unusual way as:

Chacun de ses personnages s'est réfugié dans le rêve qui l'habite, a substitué son ordre à celui des hommes; mais l'art de l'auteur consiste à supprimer le mouvement qui mène le personnage du réel au rêve, à le peindre comme si les rapports qui naissent du réel pouvaient s'établir à l'intérieur de son rêve. (B:870).

By not describing the characters' transition from reality into the dream world and by portraying the fantasy world in realistic terms Malraux says, Vialatte creates mythical characters who have legendary lives (B:869).

Malraux's review contains little actual criticism of Vialatte's work as such. Apart from dismissing the plot as being unimportant and criticizing the title which, he says, suggests athletic sports and can only lead to a misunderstanding of the work, he can only say that criticizing a work of this kind is very difficult. Traditional critics, he speculates, would point out that Manuel is more of a caricature in the style of George Grosz than an actual character. He compares Vialatte to Alain-Fournier, Hoffman and Mac Orlan and, in so doing, suggests far more than he actually says. Malraux's fascination with Vialatte's ability to blend fact and fantasy, reality and imagination, underscores his own dilemma as a creative artist who, in 1928, was not ready to choose between the real world of Les conquérants and the fantasy of Royaume farfelu.

* * *

Just as the post-Indo-China reviews dealt with topics related to Malraux's interest in the East, his 1928 reviews reveal at least as much about the reviewer as the authors reviewed. Arland and Bernanos interest Malraux because their works are metaphysical in nature, Chevasson because he describes the Orient of myth and legend, Sade because he deals with eroticism as a manifestation of the power struggle, Hellens and Vialatte because of their powerful representation of the fantasy world of children and adolescents. Having treated these same subjects in his current works (Les conquérants, Royaume farfelu) and not been satisfied with the results, Malraux turned to his peers for guidance. Each review is, for him, an opportunity to analyze a different approach to the problems which interest him and the fictional forms best suited to express them.

Notes

¹ See G. Ribemont-Dessaignes, Déjà jadis ou du mouvement Dada à l'espace abstrait (Paris: René Julliard, 1958) 217 for details about Commerce.

² Marcel Arland in Jean Duvignaud's Arland (Paris: Gallimard, 1962) 31-32.

³ Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans 252.

⁴ Marcel Arland, "Avertissement," Accords 3-4 (oct.-nov. 1924): 55.

⁵ Of the novels and short stories that Arland wrote, the most noteworthy are: Monique (1926), Ames en peine (1927), L'ordre (1929) for which he received the Prix Goncourt, Les vivants (1934) and La grâce (1941). In addition to Chronique de la peinture moderne (1949), Anthologie de la poésie française (1941) and Prose française (1951), three critical works, the most important of Arland's later works include: L'eau et le feu (1956), A perdre haleine (1960) and Je vous écris (1960-63).

⁶ A. Eustis, Marcel Arland, Benjamin Crémieux, Ramon Fernandez: Trois critiques de la "Nouvelle Revue Française" (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Debresse, 1961) 54.

⁷ André Malraux, "André Malraux à Marcel Arland," La Nouvelle Revue Française 286 (oct. 1976) 65.

⁸ Bernanos' first novel, Sous le soleil de Satan (1926), established him as one of the most original and independent Catholic

writers of his time. His other novels are: L'imposture (1927); La joie (1929) for which he received "Le prix Femina-Vie," Journal d'un curé de campagne (1936) his masterpiece and for which he was awarded "Le grand prix du roman" of the French Academy, Nouvelle Histoire de Mouchette (1937) and Monsieur Ouine (1943). Among the many political pamphlets inspired by Bernanos' vehement sincerity are: Les grands cimetières sous la lune (1938); Lettre aux Anglais (1943) and La France contre les robots (1947). Of the works published after his death in 1948, the most noteworthy is the moving account of the attitude of sixteen nuns martyred during the French Revolution, based on the story, Die Letzte am Schafott, by Gertrud von le Fort. In 1949, it was adapted for the stage by Marcelle Tassencourt and Albert Béguin who gave it the title Dialogue des Carmélites and it was first performed in 1952.

⁹ Roger Stéphane, Chaque homme est lié au monde: Fin d'une jeunesse (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1954) 47.

¹⁰ Frédéric J. Grover, Six Entretiens 140.

¹¹ Grover, Six entretiens 148.

¹² Michel Estève, Georges Bernanos: Un triple itinéraire (Paris: Hachette, 1981) 126.

¹³ Joseph Jurt, "Malraux et Bernanos," Revue des Lettres Modernes 425-31 (1975): 8.

¹⁴ Michel Estève, "Notes et recherches," Etudes Bernanosiennes 15, La Revue des Lettres Modernes 409-412 (1974): 121.

¹⁵ Joseph Jurt, "A propos d'une rencontre de 1937: Note sur Bernanos et Malraux," Revue des Lettres Modernes 13 (1972): 228.

¹⁶ The Marquis de Sade's major works include: Justine ou les

malheurs de la vertu (1791), Oxtiern ou les malheurs du libertinage (1791), a prose drama, Aline et Valcour ou le roman philosophique (1795), La philosophie dans le boudoir (1795), La nouvelle justice and L'histoire de Juliette, sa soeur (1797) and La marquise de Gange (1813). Among the works published after his death in 1814, the most noteworthy are: Les 120 journées de Sodome ou l'école du libertinage (1904), Dialogue entre un prêtre et un moribond (1926), Historiettes, contes et fabliaux (1926), Les infortunes de la vertu (1930) and Histoire secrète d'Isabelle de Bavière (1953).

17 René-Louis Doyon, "A. Rimbaud, J. Laforgue, A. Malraux," 5.

18 André Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire d'André Malraux 28.

19 Ronald Hayman, De Sade: A Critical Biography (London: Constable, 1978) 124-26.

20 Gilbert Lely, Sade: Etudes sur sa vie et sur son oeuvre (Paris: Gallimard, 1967) 283.

21 Lely, Sade 368.

22 A. M. Laborde, Sade romancier (Neuchâtel, Suisse: Editions de la Baconnière, Boudry, 1974) 9.

23 Hayman, De Sade 125-26.

24 André Malraux, La voie royale (Paris: Grasset, 1930) 8, 10.

25 André Malraux, La condition humaine 188.

26 Rima Drell Reck, "Malraux's Cerebral Eroticism," Forum 3 (1962): 44.

27 Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 51.

28 Quoted in Walter G. Langlois, Malraux: The Indo-China Adventure 4-5.

29 Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 348.

30 Jean Paulhan, éd., Le dernier "Disque Vert": Hommage à Franz Hellens (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1957) 309.

31 Le naïf: Contes (1926) and La femme partagée: Roman (1929) are among the most notable works by Hellens which were published before his fiftieth birthday. Even more prolific in his later years, Hellens wrote many other works of interest including: Frédéric: Contes (1935), Le magasin aux poudres: Roman (1936), Moreldieux: Roman (1946), Naître et mourir: Roman (1948), L'homme de soixante ans: Roman (1951), Les marées de l'Escaut: Nouvelles (1953) and Mémoires D'Elseneur: Roman (1954). In his lifetime he received the following literary prizes: the "Prix Edmond Picard de la Libre Académie Belgique" (1912), the "Grand Prix Quinquennal de Littérature Française" (1950), the "Grand Prix de la Littérature Française à l'Etranger décerné par l'Académie Française," the "Grand Prix de la Société des Gens de Lettres" and he was named "Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres."

32 Marcel Arland, "L'homme et le conteur," in Le dernier "Disque Vert": Hommage à Franz Hellens 46-47.

33 Albert Ayguesparse, Franz Hellens: Les meilleures pages (Bruxelles: La Renaissance du livre, 1959) vi, xxv.

34 André Malraux, Antimémoires (Paris: Gallimard, Editions de la Pléiade, 1976) 4.

CHAPTER V
THE ROAD TO THE PRIX GONCOURT

From 1929 to 1932 Malraux's position as artistic director at the Gallimard publishing house brought him financial stability and the means to devote himself to his favorite pursuits: literature, art and travelling. He wrote only two reviews for the N.R.F. in 1929: one on the travel diary, Journal de voyage d'un philosophe, by Hermann Keyserling and one on Pierre Véry's novel of the fantastic, Pont-Egaré. However the interviews, newspapers articles and debates which followed Les conquérants in 1928 deal with exactly the same sorts of matters as the reviews and constitute a continuous meditation on the art of the novel.

On June 8, 1929, L'Union pour la Vérité, which was founded in 1906 by Paul Desjardins to encourage discussion of contemporary philosophical, political and social problems,¹ organized a public debate on Les conquérants. The main speakers were Léon Brunschvicg, Julien Benda, Gabriel Marcel, Emmanuel Berl, Pierre Hamp, Alfred Fabre-Luce, Jean Guéhenno and André Malraux. Also in attendance were André Gide, Roger Martin du Gard and André Chamson. Malraux, in his double role as author and critic, defended his novel against the critics' objections and, in so doing, he clarified his literary, moral and political beliefs in a powerful speech which announced the Malraux of the 1930's.²

Later in 1929, André and Clara Malraux travelled to the Soviet Union and to Ispahan in Persia where Malraux conducted research for an art exhibition on the Gothic-Buddhist works of art from the Pamirs commissioned by Gallimard and, on the journey back to France, Malraux began writing a new novel, La voie royale. The novel, based on the

Banteay Srei expedition in 1923, was published in October of 1930 to complete the three-book contract which he had signed with Bernard Grasset in 1925. Although the reviews were favorable and the novel an artistic success, La voie royale did not receive the enthusiastic acclaim accorded Les conquérants. Malraux's account of the journey of the two men into the heart of darkness in the jungles of Cambodia is more realistic than his portrayal of the revolution in Les conquérants, and his answer to the eternal problems posed by man's struggle against all-powerful Fate is a concrete one as action replaces talk in the Malraux credo. The reading public, however, was not yet ready to do likewise.

Following the publication of La voie royale and a trip around the world with Clara in 1930, Malraux returned to the N.R.F. and wrote a reply to Léon Trotsky's Marxist criticism of Les conquérants. Trotsky's "La révolution étranglée" together with Malraux's answer, "Réponse à Léon Trotsky," were published in the April 1931 issue of the N.R.F.. In 1932, four new critical writings by Malraux appeared in the N.R.F.: an introduction, an article and two reviews. In his brief introduction to a series of articles about China titled "Jeune Chine," Malraux speaks of the social, cultural and philosophical differences between the East and the West. It is followed by one of Malraux's most important critical writings for the N.R.F., his article on D. H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover, "Lawrence et l'érotisme," which was then reprinted as the preface to the French translation of Lawrence's novel and, as such, introduced the English writer to French readers in a way he had never been introduced to his fellow countrymen. A review of Franz

Hellens' memoirs, Documents secrets, and one of Louis Guilloux's En marge d'Hyménée, show Malraux's continuing preference for fiction to express his concern for the human condition.

V.1. "Journal de voyage d'un philosophe"

On June 1st 1929, the foreign book section of the Nouvelle Revue Française published Malraux's critique of Hermann Keyserling's Journal de voyage d'un philosophe which had been translated from the German by Alzir Hella and Olivier Bournac. Count Hermann Keyserling, a German philosophical writer whose ideas enjoyed popularity after World War I, was born in Konno, Livonia in 1880. His approach to philosophy was essentially non-academic and his ideas, which centred on the theme of spiritual regeneration, were often platitudinous or obscure. Das Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen (1919), the first of his books to be translated into French, is also his best-known work.³

In his Défense de l'Occident, Henri Massis had denounced the ideas of such German writers as Spengler and Keyserling in stinging terms, remarking that:

A ces sombres et dures anticipations où s'exaltait le Prussien Spengler, le Balte Keyserling apportait les tempéraments idéalistes [sic] de son subjectivisme "oriental." Ce que l'un avait tenté pour soustraire l'individu allemand aux normes de l'esprit latin, l'autre entendait l'accomplir en s'adressant à son âme, en l'élevant jusqu'à la spiritualité dont la sagesse asiatique possède les secrets. A la suite du thaumaturge de Darmstadt, toute une jeunesse, dégoûtée de la connaissance d'Occident et qui soupirait vers une humanité nouvelle, de nouvelles formes de vie (eine neue Seelengelstalt), jeta les

yeux vers l'Asie et ses possibilités mystérieuses.⁴

Malraux was more open-minded and, after his marriage in 1921 to Clara Goldschmidt, an intellectual whose family was of German origin, he came to broaden his knowledge of German writers. Together the young couple read Heine and Goethe, as well as Hegel, Keyserling's Analyse spectrale de l'Europe and Spengler's Le déclin de l'Occident.⁵ In her memoirs, Clara Malraux recalls their reaction to the ideas of Spengler and Keyserling in particular:

Tout déferlait sur nous en ces années de la grande rupture. . . .

Mais si hier et aujourd'hui semblaient nous appartenir, les philosophes nous les arrachaient aussitôt, nous apprenant que nous ne possédions nullement ce dont nous nous emparions avec tant d'avidité; les siècles écoulés sont morts, affirmait Spengler et nous ne les comprenons pas. . . .

Nous n'en partions que plus joyeux à la découverte des visages que l'Histoire s'était donnés. Nous nous réjouissions même qu'ils fussent aussi multiples, ne se limitassent pas à notre ressemblance; nous ne nous voulions pas les détenteurs d'une universelle sagesse. Pourtant, le domaine où Keyserling accueillait des hommes que la défaite poussait à chercher d'autres raisons de vivre que cette victoire qui leur avait échappé, se qualifiait d'Ecole de la Sagesse. Cette sagesse, justement, acceptait que nous autres, Européens, ne fussions pas aussi exemplaires que nous l'avions imaginé jusque-là.⁶

Malraux, whose disillusionment with post-war Europe was acute, made the

Germans' doctrine his own.

The two long volumes of Keyserling's Das Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen are neither a theory of philosophy nor a treatise on morals but an investigation of the birth of a consciousness, the author's own. In the preface to the French translation of the work, Keyserling's words are translated thus: "Le journal de voyage n'est pas un livre de philosophie abstraite, mais la description plus ou moins poétique d'une évolution intérieure vécue, . . ." ⁷ and, as such, a work which, by its very nature, was bound to interest Malraux particularly since, in the original German edition of 1918, the author asks the reader to peruse the diary as one would a novel. Like many philosophers of his time, Keyserling was shaken in his beliefs by the first World War and, in order to study the problems this moral upheaval posed, he set off on a trip around the world. In Europe, the Orient and America, he met with representatives of different cultures, listened to their conflicting viewpoints and came to the conclusion that the wise man is capable of reconciling Eastern "wisdom" with Western "will." This "sagesse" for all that it seems reasonable, seems utterly beyond the realm of human possibility as Malraux does not fail to note.

In his review of the Journal, Malraux states unequivocally: "Je préfère le Journal de voyage d'un philosophe à tous les autres ouvrages de Keyserling, indépendamment de sa richesse, parce que la présence concrète de l'auteur, qui réagit personnellement aux propositions du monde, donne à ce livre un pôle nécessaire" (J:885-86). He is fascinated by the way in which Keyserling deals with new experiences which, far from being simply new ideas, give him a better understanding

of himself. Travelling confronts him with new situations, evokes new responses in him and reveals traits and attitudes of which he was previously unaware. "Keyserling," notes Malraux, "est donc parti à la recherche de la plus vaste expérience humaine; c'est cette expérience qu'il nous dira, à la fin de son livre, avoir connue; elle en est le vrai sujet. Keyserling se cherche lui-même à travers le monde" (J:885). A philosopher who does not value new knowledge for its own sake but who is willing and anxious to change his beliefs and his very existence to accommodate it, is a man among men for Malraux.

While Malraux praises Keyserling for eschewing the superficial acquisition of knowledge which he had found in Paul Morand's Bouddha vivant, he considers the task Keyserling set himself too ambitious. One man cannot become a Taoist, then a Buddhist, then a Hindu in rapid succession, Malraux claims, yet this is what one would have to do in order to really know and understand these different faiths. In spite of his sincerity, Keyserling inevitably remains on the outside and, according to Malraux, presents the reader with stereotypes of "the Chinese," "the Indian," "the American" as seen by a European, that is, with a myth. However, Malraux adds, he would be willing to overlook Keyserling's creation of myths, stereotypes and generalities if only Keyserling did not use inappropriate criteria to explain and judge other civilizations. This is exactly the same criticism that Malraux had expressed in his review of Gobineau's L'abbaye de Typhaines and, while it may be valid, this failing is, to a greater or lesser degree, present in any Western attempt to explain Eastern philosophies:

Et voici, à mes yeux, le conflit essentiel: l'opposition entre

l'auteur, foncièrement occidental quoi qu'il en dise, avide de posséder le monde au moyen de l'esprit, et les éléments du monde qui ne se laissent pas réduire par l'esprit. IL FAUT que l'Inde nous propose une leçon susceptible d'être traduite. . . . Tout ce qui s'opposera à ce passage sera ignoré, combattu ou supprimé. . . . (J:885)

Even Malraux himself is guilty of this sort of cultural imperialism.

However, the importance of the review lies elsewhere for, in the words of Henri Peyre: "Before any of Malraux's novels had received acclaim," Malraux's Keyserling review shows: "the deepening that might accrue to fiction and the probable metamorphosis of that genre through 'a dramatic conception of philosophy' such as Keyserling had propounded in his very original travel book."⁸ Thus Keyserling, whose travel diary offered a dramatic representation of his philosophy, showed Malraux that it was possible to break down the barriers between the genres and write an exotic novel of adventure to illustrate a problem in metaphysics. In the Keyserling review he asserts: "La conception dramatique de la philosophie, plus puissante d'année en année dans tout l'Occident, et qui aboutira peut-être à une transformation profonde de la fiction, se défend beaucoup mieux lorsqu'elle POSE le philosophe" (J:886).

Of the many ideas expressed in this review, two in particular relate to Malraux's later works. We find an echo of Keyserling's attempt to explain his experiences to his reader in L'espoir (1937) when Garcia answers Scali's question: "Dites donc, commandant, qu'est-ce qu'un homme peut faire de mieux de sa vie, selon vous?" by the words: "Transformer en conscience une expérience aussi large que possible, mon

bon ami."⁹ Likewise, when Malraux says that we must: "Traduire en mythes la pensée des hommes essentiellement différents de nous: former de ces mythes une expérience" (J:886), he is formulating, albeit in the vaguest possible terms, the theory of the new "museum without walls" where historical art criticism is replaced by "viewer reception" criticism in which the presence of the work and its impact on the viewer are the only things which count.

V.2. "Pont-Egaré"

André Malraux's review of Pierre Véry's Pont-Egaré appeared in the N.R.F. on December 1st 1929. According to Vandegans, Gallimard accepted Véry's manuscript for publication on Malraux's recommendation.¹⁰ Shortly after the book was published, Malraux met Véry, a "bouquiniste," whom he liked. Born in Bellon, Charente in 1900, Véry speaks of Pont-Egaré as his first and most literary endeavor. His later works consist mainly of detective stories one of which, Danse dans l'ombre (1930), he dedicated to Malraux "en admiration, en amitié, en reconnaissance."¹¹ A number of his short stories were published posthumously in 1961 and, in addition to adapting many of his suspense novels for the screen, Véry also did the film adaptation of Stendhal's La Chartreuse de Parme.

Pont-Egaré is a two-part novel complete with prelude and conclusion recounting a day and night in the lives of seven superstitious residents of a small village in the Dordogne. A combination of ghost stories and heavy-handed humour at the expense of the local populace, Pont-Egaré is a novel of the fantastic which is infinitely less subtle than works in the same vein by Mallarmé, Apollinaire, Cendrars, Reverdy, Salmon, Mac Orlan and Vialatte and Malraux's short review makes it clear that he is more interested in expounding his theories of the fantastic than in talking about Véry's book. In his reviews of Bernanos and Vialatte, Malraux barely touched on the question of how the author of such works creates a parallel world entirely of his own making. This time he

attempts to define the fantastic by showing, all preconceptions to the contrary, that it is an expression of the artist's conviction and obeys the strictest rules of possibility. "Le fantastique, . . ." Malraux says, "naît presque toujours d'une foi profonde, d'une adhésion rigoureuse au possible" (P:838). According to Malraux, an artist of talent expresses the fantastic by rejecting the constraints of the real world: "non parce qu'il n'est pas VRAI, mais parce qu'il est fixe" (P:838) and then by making unique and convincing substitutions which go against our experience of reality.

Lorsque M. Pierre Véry veut nous mettre en contact avec Pont-Egaré, Malraux notes, son attitude est la même: aux rapports reconnus par les hommes, il doit substituer des rapports particuliers, mais dont le caractère UNIQUE trouve en lui-même une force assez convaincante pour être reconnue. Et la conviction naît de l'accord entre elles de toutes les transformations apportées par l'écrivain. L'art, pour lui--la création--ce sera toujours: traduire toutes choses en fonction de la différence essentielle qui le sépare des autres hommes. (P:838)

Technique alone interests Malraux who even speaks rather insultingly of the content of Pont-Egaré saying: "Il me semble impossible de prêter de l'importance au sujet: à cette vie d'un hameau périgourdin on pourrait substituer toute autre chose" (P:838). Likewise, when he states: "Toute magie commence à l'insolite et finit à l'effroi. Celle-ci vit surtout de l'insolite" (P:838), he seems to be on the verge of admitting his original favorable opinion of the

manuscript was an error or at least that Pont-Egaré is a special form of the fantastic which he defines as "une histoire."

Il [Pont-Egaré] ne tend ni au poème ni au conte, he writes, mais à l'HISTOIRE, bien disparue aujourd'hui; à l'histoire où le sujet est vain, où le marquis de Carabas a peu d'importance en comparaison du merveilleux paysage de créneaux, de tours pointues et de dômes que salue le Chat botté d'une patte bien léchée dans le soleil matinal! (P:839)

The distinction might well seem pedantic but, when we consider that Malraux called his Royaume farfelu "une histoire," and that in his review of Fernand Fleuret's Histoire de la bienheureuse Raton, fille de joie, he had remarked: "M. Fleuret n'en fait point un roman, mais une histoire,"¹² it appears that the distinction is an important one for him. For Malraux, authors of "histoires" create their own particular worlds in which relationships between characters, their actions and the consequences of those actions are decided by the writer and not determined by the laws of reality or probability or even by the psychology of the characters who, in "histoires," are much less fully developed than in novels.

In conclusion, Malraux's review of Véry's Pont-Egaré is not very informative and does little to enlighten the reader about the content of the book. It seems more likely that Malraux reviewed Véry's book in order to define his own practice of the fantastic in Lunes en papier and the more recent Royaume farfelu which was not a critical success.

V.3.1. "La question des Conquérants"

Les conquérants is the story of the revolutionary movement in Canton in 1925. Malraux was in Canton in 1925 but his knowledge of revolution came mainly from his memories of Indochina, from the Phnom-Penh trial, the revolutionary politics of the Cholon Kuomintang, his own difficulties with police and colonial authorities and the events he witnessed in Hong Kong during the general strike in August 1925. Since Malraux felt that he had been a victim of official injustice and corruption in Indochina, he defended his own position by creating the fictional character of Pierre Garine, the hero of Les conquérants. In the first part of the novel, he changes the "locale" and conditions of the trial by having Garine, who was studying literature in Paris, arrested for complicity in procuring an abortion. Since Garine's motive for procuring the abortion was a humanitarian one, he regarded the trial as a farce and his sentence of six months' imprisonment as a totally absurd punishment. Although the sentence was quashed, he was so outraged by the laws and the behavior of the judges and lawyers that he declared war on institutionalized social injustice.

In 1918, Pierre Garine sailed for China, was appointed one of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen's advisers and later became head of the propaganda bureau of the Canton government and a founder of the Whampoa Military Academy. Together with Borodine, he organized the Canton general strike in 1925. A complex, impatient, brooding, brusque and commanding man, Garine is the slave of his phenomenal will power and his commitment to change the

world. Borodine, who represents another kind of revolutionary leader, is a disciplinarian whose pleasure is to force everyone to conform to a rigid plan manufactured in Moscow. The whole plot of the novel depends on the conflict between the two men, with all Malraux's sympathy going to Garine.

In his speech at L'Union pour la Vérité in Paris, Malraux used a rather unusual approach to defend Les conquérants against the critics' objections. Certain critics had attacked the work for being more of an autobiography than a novel and for being ideologically slanted. Malraux replied in the strongest possible terms that:

Il n'est pas un seul point des Conquérants qui ne soit défendable sur le plan historique et réel. Que Garine soit un personnage inventé, c'est exact, et il est donné pour tel. Mais dans la mesure où il est un personnage inventé, il agit toujours avec une vérité psychologique liée aux événements. . . . Je crois qu'il est impossible d'opposer aux Conquérants . . . un élément historique tel qu'il supprime la possibilité du livre, et, élément essentiel, la possibilité de la création de Garine. Car il est bien évident que là se trouve la principale objection faite jusqu'ici; si Garine est impossible, sa valeur de création mythique s'effondre. (Q:431)

In his eyes, Garine is the product of history and conditioning, his every action the expression of his experience of life. True, he is a product of his author's invention but that does not and should not invalidate him as a person or detract from the book's high seriousness.

But Malraux goes one step further and defines his novel as one of a

growing number of post-Christian novels.

Je crois, he states, que depuis que la Chrétienté a disparu en tant qu'armature du monde, le romancier, après le philosophe, est devenu un homme qui propose,--qu'il le veuille ou non,--un certain nombre de modes de vie; et qui les propose en fonction d'un élément irréductible étroitement lié à la création littéraire, en fonction d'une dimension particulière qui n'existe pas dans la vie. (Q:430)

Malraux believes that, in this new and uncertain world, the novelist's purpose is to help his reader to understand his own situation and to present him with a certain number of options. This new or metaphysical novel, of which Les conquérants is a prime example, takes on all the trappings of a tragedy as modern man pits himself against overwhelming forces bent on destroying him.

L'ensemble des Conquérants est une revendication perpétuelle, he explains, et j'ai d'ailleurs insisté sur cette phrase: échapper à cette idée de l'absurde en fuyant dans l'humain. Il est certain qu'on pourra dire qu'on peut fuir autrement. Je ne prétends en aucune façon répondre à cette objection. Je dis simplement que Garine est un homme qui, dans la mesure où il a fui cette absurdité qui est la chose la plus tragique devant laquelle se trouve un homme, a donné un certain exemple. (Q:436-37)

His self-assurance, his new-found eloquence all attest to the fact that, after a decade of hesitation and experimentation, Malraux has found his way and that henceforth he will not have to look to others for guidance.

He has used the novel to define what man's conduct should be. Now he expounds his theory of the novel by citing his own work as an example.

In Malraux's view, the new novel must portray a hero, an exemplary man: "Il est certain," he explains, "que la création de Garine est pour moi une création de héros (au sens où héros s'oppose à personnage). Il est clair qu'elle implique une conception particulière de la vie" (Q:43). This "hero" must, in addition, be a man of action whose every action is determined by his philosophy of life and by the constraints which the contemporary world imposes on his freedom. Although the characters and events are imaginary, they must present what for Malraux is the essence of our reality, namely the conflict between opposing political philosophies. Thus Les conquérants is not a defence of the 1925 Canton revolution, but a study of a group of men, who though holding very different beliefs, manage to unite in the common cause. While explaining that:

La bourgeoisie est pour Borodine une réalité historique qui doit être dépassée, qui sera d'ailleurs inévitablement dépassée par le cours de l'histoire; comme telle, elle ne présente aucun intérêt. Pour Garine, elle est une certaine attitude humaine. Le bourgeois ne se définirait certainement pas pour Garine comme l'homme d'une profession ni même comme l'homme d'une certaine époque de l'histoire; le bourgeois se définirait essentiellement comme l'homme d'un certain mode de pensée, lié à une éthique particulière, (Q:432-33)

Malraux defends his characters from the critics who found fault with Garine because they thought he was too much of an individual ever to

espouse the Marxist faith and with Borodine because he was an inhuman ideologue. His youthful idealism makes it possible for him to say:

Pour moi, le révolutionnaire naît d'une résistance. Qu'un homme prenne conscience de certaines injustices et de certaines inégalités, qu'il prenne conscience d'une souffrance intense, cela ne suffira jamais à faire de lui un révolutionnaire. . . . Pour cela, il faudra qu'au moment où il voudra intervenir en faveur de cette souffrance, il se heurte à une résistance. C'est ici que Garine et Borodine se rejoignent absolument. Pour l'un comme pour l'autre, au moment des Conquérants, la question de la révolution en soi se pose extrêmement peu, mais une question se pose, fondamentale: quel est l'ennemi qui doit être détruit? (Q:434)

Malraux's response to Marxist criticism is equally unambiguous. Garine is not a doctrinaire Marxist, he says, and he does not subscribe to the Marxist vision of the society of the future. He is participating in a revolution which he believes will improve the fate of his fellow man. In his effort to counter what he calls "the Michelet syndrome," Malraux concludes by saying that there is not just one type of revolutionary who adheres completely to the orthodox doctrine just as there is not one type of novelist who endlessly repeats the given formula for producing novels. Many men with many different beliefs can unite in a common cause for different reasons and many writers can produce novels of varying sorts. Likewise there are as many ways of leading a revolution as there are leaders: Lenin, Trotsky, Gandhi, are cases in point. The argument is sound, but scarcely likely to convince

anyone who has strong political convictions of one sort or another.

Malraux's speech, "La question des Conquérants," is important because it shows a completely new Malraux. The Malraux of Les conquérants is a committed writer and a man of action who no longer has any resemblance to the Cubist, the fantasy writer, the "dilettante" of the twenties. He is an impassioned defender of his own novel and succeeds in giving us a convincing and coherent explanation of the literary techniques he used to express his political and philosophical position.

V.3.2. "La révolution étranglée"

News of the debate reached Leon Trotsky through Pierre Naville, a Marxist writer and acquaintance of Malraux who, in 1931, visited the Russian revolutionary, then in exile on the island of Prinkipo, just off the Turkish coast. Trotsky, who was passionately fond of French literature, had read Les conquérants and, in comparison to what he called the "insipid" heroes of Proust and Gide, the forceful Garine had impressed him very much. His immediate question was whether Malraux would make a suitable candidate for the Communist cause. Malraux's interest in Trotsky was also keen and, according to Jean Lacouture, Gaston Gallimard had to force Malraux to renounce his plans to undertake an expedition to Kazakhstan to rescue Trotsky from Alma-Ata in 1929.¹³ Malraux, it must be said, was mainly attracted to Trotsky, the "living legend," the "conqueror," the "creator of the Red Army," the advocate and archetype of "permanent revolution." Trotsky the "myth-maker" had stimulated Malraux's imagination and led him to create "larger than life" heroes. He was less familiar with the details of Trotsky's political philosophy.

The dialogue between Trotsky and Malraux began in February 1931 when Trotsky wrote a thirteen-page article, "La révolution étranglée," on Les conquérants. It appeared in the N.R.F. in April 1931, followed by a reply by Malraux. Quite apart from its value as an analysis of Les conquérants, the article initiated a six year exchange of letters between the two men and led to a profound change in Malraux's political

stance. Clara Malraux, who is less than impartial as an observer, sums the whole matter up when she writes,

Quoi qu'il en soit, les Conquérants relèvent de la fiction appuyée sur l'histoire. Que Trotsky pût croire qu'ils constituaient un témoignage et en discuter à ce titre, m'impressionna; que d'autres, ignorants de la Chine, allassent jusqu'à y voir une oeuvre biographique m'amusa; qu'André contribuât à accréditer cette légende me fut pénible.¹⁴

Her cursory judgment of the whole affair may well be fair, but it merits further study.

Trotsky's critique is keen, intelligent within its self-imposed limits, and predictable. Despite his admiration for Malraux's style "in the manner of the pointillistes," his choice of the Chinese revolution as his topic and his portrayal of characters "who engrave themselves in one's memory like social symbols," Trotsky complains that Malraux does not give a Marxist analysis of events. For Trotsky, Malraux's excessive individualism, his aesthetic caprices and his patronizing tone of snobbish superiority betray his typically western anti-Marxist bias: "Une bonne inoculation de marxisme aurait pu préserver l'auteur des fatales méprises de cet ordre" (RE:493). In addition, Trotsky claims that Malraux misrepresents some of the people involved in the Canton revolution in 1925 and even the events themselves. Borodine, for example, ". . . qui, tout le temps, reste à l'arrière-plan, se caractérise dans le roman comme un homme 'd'action,' comme un 'révolutionnaire professionnel,' comme une incarnation vivante du bolchévisme sur le sol de la Chine. Rien n'est plus erroné!" (RE:491).

Trotsky asserts that Bolshevism as such never existed in China nor anarchism in Russia.

Thus, apart from his flattering opening sentences about style, Trotsky made no attempt to treat Malraux's novel as a work of fiction. He measured it by an extra-literary yardstick and, because he equated Borodine with Stalin, he let his personal obsessions override his literary acumen. Finally, his praise for Hong, the archetypical terrorist, seems ironic coming from the Field-Marshal who "ordered the slaughter of the Kronstadt workers in March 1921."¹⁵ Trotsky's critical review of Les conquérants would be totally irrelevant and the exchange of ideas and the subsequent personal meeting between the two men would be nothing more than interesting historical footnotes, were it not for their effect on Malraux and on his analysis of the Chinese revolution in La condition humaine.

V.3.3. "Réponse à Trotsky"

Flattered but not for a moment intimidated by Trotsky, Malraux penned a self-confident reply in which he expressed his strong convictions unequivocally. Malraux's unorganized and repetitive style is proof of how emotionally involved he was in this matter. Malraux quotes at least ten of Trotsky's ideas with which he disagrees, then defends his own point of view in much the same terms as those he used in an interview on October 18, 1930.¹⁶

In Malraux's opinion, Trotsky's criticisms can be explained by his animosity towards Stalin, his lack of knowledge concerning the situation in Canton, and his belief that Les conquérants was intended to be a "fictionalized chronicle" of the Chinese revolution. "J'entends bien," he says, "que le véritable adversaire de Trotsky, c'est précisément l'Internationale. Il attaque moins Garine que Borodine, moins Borodine que Staline" (RE:504). Since Malraux was directly involved in the uprising in Canton in 1925¹⁷ and since Trotsky had never visited China at all,¹⁸ his second point is well taken. Furthermore, Malraux felt his experience in Indo-China enabled him to understand the political situation in China better than Trotsky who assumed that the situation in the Orient was parallel to the one prevailing in Russia at the time of the Revolution. According to Malraux, the Komintern did not have access to the Chinese Military Academy nor had it gained the sympathy of the masses. Rather, it was the pacifist leader of the Kuomintang, Tcheng-Dai, and not Borodine whom the people held in esteem.

La force de l'Internationale, en Chine, en 1925, he writes, n'existait que dans des limites très précises: celles de la guerre. Le Komintern ne disposait pas de l'Ecole des Cadets, formée de volontaires des grandes familles, dirigée par Chang-Kaï-Shek, et où les cadets tirèrent pendant une revue sur Gallen; quant à la sympathie des masses, il ne la possédait qu'en tant qu'animateur de la guerre. Que l'Internationale parle de soviets et non de canons, ces masses suivent Tcheng-Dai: Gandhi a tout de même plus d'action sur la foule de l'Inde que le camarade Roy. (RT:504)

Most importantly, Malraux's criticism of Trotsky's article focuses on his approach to Les conquérants. Malraux admits that there may be errors in documentation but, he insists, his book is a novel and not a history of the Chinese Revolution. Unlike Trotsky, who said that novels were purveyors of Western cultural attitudes and the work of dilettantes, Malraux has a high regard for novels and for novelists. Malraux attacks Trotsky's brand of "social realism" for, however much he may condemn rampant western individualism, he is not ready to concede that the individual does not count, or that art should not represent the individual artist's view of the world:

Je crains qu'il [Trotsky] ne connaisse mal les conditions d'une création artistique: les révolutions ne se font pas toutes seules, mais les romans non plus. Ce livre n'est pas une 'chronique romancée' de la révolution chinoise, parce que l'accent principal est mis sur le rapport entre des individus et une action collective, non sur l'action collective seule.

(RT:502)

The essential point of political disagreement between Malraux and Trotsky relates to the fusion of the Chinese Communist Party with the Kuomintang. In Trotsky's opinion, this was "adventurism." Communists must not become subservient to reactionary forces and must always put "The Party First" (RT:505,507). Malraux thinks that the Chinese Communists had no other choice but to align themselves with the Kuomintang to assure themselves of the support of the masses (RT:507). Likewise, Malraux adds, the Hong Kong blockade was not intended to break England's hold over southern China as Trotsky thought, but simply to give the Communists a chance to show how efficient they were (RT:503). Thus, while contending that he had not set out to write a rigorously exact historical novel, Malraux was very anxious to prove his recording of events to be accurate.

Malraux also speaks of his four main characters: Borodine, Garine, Tcheng-Dai and Hong who, he says, are not his spokesmen, but each illustrate a different political choice. He defends Borodine who is a different brand of revolutionary than Trotsky but avoids discussing Garine, who Trotsky had said was in need of a "solid inoculation of Marxism." We must turn to Clara Malraux's memoirs to find out what Malraux's response would likely have been: "Trotsky s'est trompé en croyant que Garine est un révolutionnaire," she writes, "c'est un révolté métaphysique. En quoi il rejoint Perken. . . ." ¹⁹ As for Tcheng-Dai, Malraux states that he created him to establish a Chinese option to Borodine's and Garine's political option while Hong exists to awaken and develop class consciousness and not, as Trotsky claims, to

represent the common people whose commitment to Communism is in no way as certain a thing as Trotsky contends. Far from being an exemplary revolutionary, Malraux maintains that:

. . . Hong . . . représente, non le prolétariat, mais l'anarchie; il n'a jamais travaillé; agissant d'abord en liaison avec les bolchéviks, il les attaque et n'accepte de directives que les siennes propres. Il s'agit de le convaincre? Hong n'est pas susceptible d'être convaincu. Il se fiche de l'avenir du prolétariat; le prolétariat ne l'intéresse qu'héroïque. . . . Son but est éthique, non politique--et sans espoir. (RT:505)

For all this, the political events on which the story is based and the characters who participate in them are less important to Malraux than the metaphysical problem they dramatize. "Ce livre," affirms Malraux, "est d'abord une accusation de la condition humaine" (RT:502). Politics and history serve only as the occasional vehicles which convey the sense of man's struggle against the universe.

Malraux's "Réponse à Trotsky" is the most important of all his articles of literary criticism because in it he defines and defends his own conception of the universe and of the novelist's function as creative artist. Dealing first with the points which Trotsky discusses: theme, plot and character, he emphasizes the importance of the creative writer's having complete control over his creation, even to the point of being free to select and invent facts necessary to convey his vision. While Malraux is quite correct when he reacts against Trotsky's paranoia and his use of historical criteria to judge a novel, his main difference

of opinion stems from something Malraux does not even mention, namely that Trotsky is a Marxist and he is not. Clara Malraux is unequivocal in this matter: "A la vérité," she writes:

Je ne crois pas qu'André ait jamais été marxiste ni que sa réflexion ait beaucoup porté sur le marxisme. Le connaître réellement, c'est-à-dire l'avoir lu dans le texte--puisque les traductions à l'époque étaient encore rares--lui paraissait si particulier qu'il mentionna le fait en ce qui concernait Borodine. L'efficacité du marxisme le retenait, me semble-t-il, plus que sa justification intellectuelle ou morale. Certes l'espoir d'améliorer le sort des hommes intervint aussi. Mais le sort de la créature humaine lui semblait en soi fondamentalement absurde: il était une accusation au Dieu absent. A cette hauteur, c'est selon un point de vue dostoïevskien que se joue le drame. Que ses personnages parfois incarnent des positions qui apparaissent comme plus sociales que métaphysiques, sans pour autant d'ailleurs être vraiment marxistes, prouverait me semble-t-il, que comme tout poète, il était placé "au centre de tout comme un écho sonore."²⁰

The positions were well taken, the dilemma insoluble. Or so it would seem for, although Malraux does not concede a single point at the time, critics have suggested that at least some of the changes in the revised and definitive edition of Les conquérants published in 1949 are no doubt the result of Trotsky's comments. Denis Boak, for one, shows that not only does Malraux change the emphasis of his novel but that he

modifies certain characters to make their position absolutely clear:

In omitting passages . . . from his final version, Malraux weakens the political effect of his book--one of ferocious partisanship in the Communist and Nationalist interest--and heightens the "metaphysical" aspect, the psychological examination of Garine's motives for his political allegiance. . . .

Garine's position is clearly opposed to Borodine's, and there is some reason to believe that Trotzky's [sic] criticisms have been taken into account by Malraux here, who dissociates Garine much more clearly than before from party orthodoxy.²¹

Roger Dial goes even further and claims that, in addition to the alterations he made to Les conquérants, Malraux undertook his next novel, La condition humaine, with Trotsky and his Marxist critics in mind:

Suffice it to say that it seems evident that Trotski's [sic] voice had an authority and poignancy which spoke directly to a weakness of epistemological confidence in Malraux. Man's Fate is indelibly an attempt to reflect elements of Trotski's materialism and empiricism, if not ultimately his viewpoint. Through the characters Kyo, Suan [sic], and Pei Malraux revises his framework of understanding in a way that he might reasonably have expected would satisfy his Marxist critics. He may also have learned something about himself along the way. Through Gisors, Malraux accepts Trotski's final damnation in good humor, while defending revolution outside the Marxist

paradigm--his revolution!--through the character Chen.²²

Trotsky did not let Malraux's public denunciation of his article go unanswered and, although he was still in exile in Kadiköy, Turkey, he replied on June 12, 1931 with a five and a half page reply which the N.R.F. refused to publish. "De la révolution étranglée et de ses étrangleurs: Réponse à M. André Malraux" shows us a Trotsky who has become increasingly paranoid about the role of the Communist International in China and increasingly fierce in defense of his own revolutionary ideas. When the radical government of Edouard Daladier granted Trotsky a "visa de séjour" and allowed him to reside in Saint-Palais-sur-Mer near Royan, a small town just north of Bordeaux, André Malraux, undeterred by the Russian revolutionary's dissimilar views, asked for and was granted an interview in July 1933. Nine months later, on April 25, 1934, the weekly newspaper Marianne published an article entitled "Trotzky" in which Malraux described the encounter. Apparently the two men had discussed a vast number of topics: art; Christianity; individualism; the Russian political strategy in the Polish campaign, Europe and Japan; Lenin; Freud and death. Soon the polemics which had begun with literature, became exclusively political but the high regard in which each held the other never led to an open break. As Malraux explained at length in an interview with Jean Vilar in 1971, his admiration for the Russian revolutionary never abated. In answer to Vilar's question: "Quel effet vous a fait Trotsky?" Malraux replied:

Considérable. De toute évidence l'égale de sa légende. Il donnait l'impression éclatante du génie. . . . Devant lui, on

était sûr d'être devant un très grand esprit. . . .

Trotsky avait dans son éloquence un côté Victor Hugo, révolution française, cette éloquence qui va de Danton à Jaurès.²³

This attitude to a man of heroic stature whose attitudes did not coincide with his own only confirms what we feel in reading Malraux's novels, that is, that his primary interest is in men and not the ideas which guide them.

Malraux's exchange of ideas with Trotsky which began in 1929 and continued until Trotsky's death in 1940, usually took the form of debates, interviews and newspaper articles which show Malraux to be keenly aware of the most important moral, social and political issues of his time. In them, he expounds the ideas he expresses in fictional form in Les conquérants (1928), La condition humaine (1933), Le temps du mépris (1935) and L'espoir (1937) but their particular interest is that they show how Trotsky's remarks prompted Malraux to expound upon his literary ideas, to explain his conception of the creative process and even to revise certain parts of his earlier work. Without Trotsky, Malraux may never have spelled out his aesthetic credo as clearly as he did or taken pains to overcome what he himself recognized as certain "juvenile" weaknesses in Les conquérants: "Plus de vingt ans ont passé depuis la publication de ce livre d'adolescent; et beaucoup d'eau, sous combien de ponts brisés!"²⁴

In the final analysis then, Malraux's encounter with Trotsky was more important in his formation as an artist, essayist and critic than it was in his political education. A case in point, Malraux's 1930

lectures on the psychology of artistic creation and the evolution of art forms and his 1933 discussion of continuity with Trotsky mark the emergence of the theory of metamorphosis which he was to develop in Les voix du silence (1951). The fact that the form and content of Malraux's novels evolved considerably in the 1930's is, however, not sufficient proof that Trotsky is responsible for Malraux's turning away from Symbolist and Cubist fantasies to adventure stories steeped in revolutionary ideology and deeply rooted in the human psyche. In the 1933 interview with Trotsky, Malraux had defined art as "l'expression la plus haute ou la plus intense d'une expérience humaine valable."²⁵ These words which are reiterated by Garcia in L'espoir constitute a definition of a value system forged in the heat of a vital controversy. Through his encounter with Trotsky, Malraux found himself.

Malraux's interview with Henri Barbusse shows how this same controversy shaped Malraux the critic for, when he states:

L'oeuvre de Zola ne m'a jamais directement intéressé, voici pourquoi:

Ce qui me touche dans le romancier--comme dans l'artiste quel qu'il soit--n'est pas le monde qu'il peint, mais la transformation particulière qu'il est obligé d'imposer à ce monde pour parvenir à le traduire. L'oeuvre de Balzac peint bien moins la Restauration que les efforts que devait faire un Bonaparte, desservi par les circonstances et contraint à demeurer à l'intérieur d'une classe ou d'une profession, pour se réaliser à l'intérieur de cette classe ou de cette profession. . . . L'accent particulier qu'est chez Balzac

[sic], cet esprit me semble chez Zola médiocre et sans portée,²⁶

he is only reiterating the argument he had enunciated in his debate with Trotsky, namely that a great novel is not the result of the application of a deterministic system but shows the struggle of individuals with each other, with society and with fate. Then, in an interview published in the Literatournafia Gazeta in Moscow on August 24, 1934, Malraux explains to a Russian audience his view that it is the individual artist's vision which is important and that great works of art cannot be dictated solely by the nature of the world in which the artist lives. His attack against "social realism" is all the more effective in that he never names the enemy doctrine in so many words.

Je pense que, dans le domaine de la littérature artistique, le rôle de l'idéologie et même son choix peuvent être conscients ou inconscients. Je considère que ce qui importe dans l'art n'est pas tant la représentation de quelque chose que l'expression de quelqu'un. Tout grand art, comme par exemple l'art de Balzac, est précisément l'expression de quelqu'un, à l'aide de la reproduction de quelque chose, c'est-à-dire à l'aide des événements de son époque. L'affirmation, que l'artiste est entièrement subordonné au monde qui l'entoure, est sans valeur. Le monde, en lui-même, est sans forme et le premier devoir de l'artiste, du peintre, consiste à trouver la forme, à choisir les matériaux nécessaires. Et ce choix est conditionné par l'idéologie qui joue le rôle de lunettes à travers lesquelles l'artiste observe le monde. . . .

L'idéologie détermine le champ de vision.²⁷

Likewise, when in 1934, he speaks of the future, Malraux attempts to counter the prevailing flaw in his countrymen's works which is, ironically, the very flaw that the social realists condemned.

Le problème qui intéresse à présent les romanciers français, he writes, est, à la fois, la découverte d'une forme nouvelle et le retour au roman à thème social qui attirerait de grandes masses de lecteurs, masses que le roman a perdues depuis Balzac, Zola.

En France, on veut, à la fois, garder et surmonter l'individualisme.²⁸

Walking the uneasy tightrope between the two ideologies, Malraux tried to convert the Russians to a respect for the individual and the French to a concern for society as a whole. By engaging literature on a new path of social action and metaphysical doubt, Malraux also engaged literary criticism on a new path away from biography and towards the serious discussion of the content of the work.

V.4. "Introduction à 'Jeune Chine'"

Despite the promise made before his return from Indo-China, Malraux wrote very few articles on the Orient. As Langlois says:

During the decade 1926-35, he spoke out in print on a specific Indochinese question only twice: in 1933 in a newspaper article and in 1935 in the preface to a friend's book on Indochina. In both instances, he made a strong attack on the corruption of colonial courts.²⁹

There is however, a third text which is quite different in nature, an introduction to a series of articles about China which were published in the Nouvelle Revue Française on January 1st 1932. "Jeune Chine" is a translation by the Reverend Léon Wieger of articles by relatively unknown Chinese youths who compare European and Chinese customs and thought. All of the essays are very pro-Western and had been previously published in either the manifesto of the Revue des Jeunes, in the review Jeunesse Nouvelle, in the Temps de Chouun-T'ien or in the Journal de la Jeune Chine all of which were propaganda vehicles of the modern Chinese youth movement. With reference to these essays in particular, Chang Mei Yuan's "André Malraux et la Chine" accuses Malraux of reflecting "the extreme doctrines of certain Confucians" which, as the following comment shows, is a seriously retrograde step:

Pendant la première moitié du XX^e siècle, la Chine a vu la naissance d'une nouvelle jeune élite qui a subi l'influence de la culture occidentale, et qui désire à tout prix transformer

l'ancienne civilisation. Cette nouvelle élite attaque le confucianisme pour avoir corrompu la société chinoise et affaibli le pays tout entier. . . . [Ceci] est surtout la réflexion des doctrines extrémistes de certaines confucianistes.³⁰

André Malraux was therefore the obvious choice to review the articles for the N.R.F.

"Jeune Chine" is divided into five sections: "Esprit nouveau," "Rites et coutumes," "Feminisme," "La question sociale; observation des métiers" and "Etudiants modernes en France." Every rubric contains a bitter denunciation of Chinese traditions and "mores." According to these Westernized young Orientals, China has no redeeming qualities. "[Q]uiconque a voyagé en Europe et en Chine, aura senti la différence," they claim: "vulgarité, grossièreté, vénalité, fourberie et saleté, chez nous; distinction, politesse, désintéressement, droiture et propreté chez les autres" (JC:23).

Malraux who, as a young man, had been equally critical of his own country's culture, felt considerable sympathy for the authors of "Jeune Chine" even if their views were diametrically opposed to his own. "La vie réelle qui anime la métempsychose de l'énorme insecte chinois," he explains, "c'est la lutte de diverses idées contre les forces sourdes dont on trouvera ici quelques exemples" (JC:5). The struggle itself interests him more than the interests at stake and, since the theme is an old familiar one, he repeats once again what he has said previously about European and Chinese thought. Europeans, he notes, are interested in "man's transforming the world," they conquer. In contrast, Chinese

have only recently begun trying to transform their society but, he notes, their goals are not the same as the European's and their success will depend neither on the nature of their goals nor on the strategies they devise to obtain them. Success is simply a question of political strength, he says. His lesson to the young Chinese revolutionaries is practical, not ideological, but his anti-European bias is obvious. He has learned from Marx and Trotsky that power not ideology assures the success of an enterprise and he also understands that different societies have different value systems. "Le Chinois anonyme cherchait dans une considération plus grande cette preuve de son existence que l'Européen cherche dans l'amour," Malraux states: "Mais la force donne droit aux signes de la considération. Les généraux se font saluer autant que les mandarins" (JC:7).

Unlike the authors of the texts he is introducing, Malraux refuses to condemn a non-rational culture by applying rational criteria to it, particularly since the young Chinese writers are reinforcing western myths about China by looking at China as an outsider would. To condemn Confucianism is to deny the role it plays in Chinese daily life and in the Chinese code of ethics with its strong emphasis on filial duty. "Je ne comprends la morale d'un peuple que si je sais comment il se sent coupable," Malraux writes, "et je crus m'approcher de la Chine lorsque je discernai qu'aucun acte n'était séparable du devoir filial" (JC:6). For Malraux, the important thing about these writings is that they reveal a serious clash between new ideas and old values: "Cette race tout entière vivotte dans le sang," he states, "mal accrochée à des valeurs auxquelles elle ne croit plus, se débattant, tantôt

ironiquement, tantôt convulsivement, contre la chaîne qui l'attache à ses morts" (JC:7). China is being born anew before his very eyes and the dramatic and historic impact of this rebirth moves him even more than its philosophical and political implications.

Many of the themes dealt with in "Jeune Chine" had already been examined by Malraux in D'une jeunesse européenne (1927) and La tentation de l'Occident (1926). Unlike the young authors of "Jeune Chine," Malraux does not have an unfavourable view of Confucian philosophy. Yet, he does not refute Chang Mei Yuan's interpretation of his views when the former asserts:

Malraux a basé ses opinions sur une morale sociale qui est surtout la réflexion des doctrines extrémistes de certains confucianistes. . . . L'oeuvre de Malraux nous suggère que . . . les maximes confucianistes telles que le devoir filial et les rites semblent avoir apporté aux Chinois plus de maux que de bienfaits. . . .

Si Malraux n'est pas explicite sur ce point dans La tentation de l'Occident, il en donne un exemple frappant dans son article sur la "Jeune Chine." Là, il montre comment l'amour paternel a pu être sacrifié au nom de la tradition.³¹

Instead, he holds fast to the ideas he had expressed when he had Wang-Loh say, in La tentation de l'Occident: "Le confucianisme en miettes, tout ce pays sera détruit. Tous ces hommes sont appuyés sur lui. Il a fait leur sensibilité, leur pensée et leur volonté. Il leur a donné le sens de leur race. Il a fait le visage de leur bonheur."³²

The important thing for Malraux is to make the young pro-Western Chinese

realize how dangerous it is to replace an indigenous culture with one which is foreign to the mind-set and "mores" of their countrymen.

Although Malraux's introduction is more a lesson in practical politics than literary criticism "per se," it is an appropriate review of the articles in "Jeune Chine" which, by their very nature, had little or nothing to do with literature. They also have the merit of documenting an important shift in Malraux's own political position between the publication of Les conquérants in 1928 and the writing of La condition humaine which appeared in 1933.

V.5. "D. H. Lawrence et l'érotisme: A propos de L'amant de Lady Chatterley"

As early as 1920, Malraux had ridiculed Lautréamont's treatment of the theme of eroticism in Les chants de Maldoror. In 1927 and 1928, Malraux had examined the theme of eroticism in the works of Fernand Fleuret and the Marquis de Sade. His fourth article on the same theme, "D. H. Lawrence et l'érotisme: A propos de L'amant de Lady Chatterley," was published in January 1932 in the N.R.F.. Here Malraux claims that the twentieth century English writer's view of eroticism is much less cerebral than that of the above authors and that only Lawrence reflects a "spirit of love." A modified version of the same article prefaces the excellent French translation of Lady Chatterley's Lover by F. Roger-Cornaz³³ published by Gallimard the same year.

David Herbert Lawrence, one of the most original and controversial English writers of the twentieth century, was born on September 11, 1885 in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire. His literary works, many of which were inspired by his travels in England, Italy, Mexico and Australia, are as varied in subject as they are in genre and include fiction,³⁴ poetry, drama, criticism, travel books, translations and letters. In April 1912, he met Frieda Von Richthofen Weekley, the aristocratic wife of his German professor at Nottingham and he left with her for Germany in May 1912. Thus began the restless, nomadic, gypsy life and the difficult but intensely intimate marital relationship which was to form the underlying theme of much of Lawrence's later fiction, including his

notorious last novel, Lady Chatterley's Lover, which he rewrote three times, to discharge his accumulated bitterness about society and to assert his belief in the healing possibilities for civilization of a new relationship between men and women. The novel, which was published in Florence in 1928, in Paris in 1932, in New York in 1959 and in London in 1960, associated two forms of liberation, the sexual and the social, and was the subject of a sensational court case (Regina versus Penguin) which focused largely on the use of words which had been hitherto taboo.

Although Lady Chatterley's Lover was a courageous, profoundly sincere and carefully considered piece of work, the most outstanding English critic of Lawrence's work, F. R. Leavis, thought that it was "too deliberate an undertaking to cleanse the obscene words and to redeem from the smirch of obscenity the corresponding physical facts to be a wholly satisfactory work of art."³⁵ Lawrence twice defended his work vigorously, first in Pornography and Obscenity (1929) and then in A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover (1930). His anger over the controversy spilled over into such sarcastic collections of verse as: Pansies (1929); Nettles (1930) and More Pansies included in Last Poems (1932). The flamelike intensity, the elevation and the urgency of his novels, were no doubt what first attracted Malraux for, although emotionalism may on occasion blur Lawrence's vision and repetitiveness mar his style, his "organic" style of composition, his refusal to isolate reason from the passions and his quest for the wholeness of man were not unlike Malraux's own, although the relative importance of the political, social and sexual revolutions is different in each case.

Very little had been published about D. H. Lawrence before 1932 and

none of it was in French.³⁶ Even in England, Lady Chatterley's Lover had unleashed such outrage that only Edmund Wilson had dared to write a fair review of the book (New Republic, July 3, 1929). The other articles dealt almost exclusively with sexuality and, what other of Lawrence's ideas were familiar to the public, were so because of the success of his final essays, Assorted Articles (1930).

Malraux, who had already treated the subject of eroticism in three critical articles and in fictional form in La tentation de l'Occident and in La voie royale, compares Lawrence's ideas on eroticism with the views traditionally represented in French literature and then with his own views. His marginal note in Gaëtan Picon's Malraux shows just how his mind operates, comparing and then defining. "Mais c'est l'obsession d'autres civilisations qui donne à la mienne, et peut-être à ma vie, leur accent particulier," he says: "A mes yeux du moins."³⁷ The article on Lawrence dates from a crucial moment in Malraux's development as he moved from the positions he defended in La voie royale in 1930 to those he espoused in La condition humaine in 1933.

In Lady Chatterley's Lover, Lawrence affirms his belief that physical love is a means of curing excessive intellectualism by renewing man's contact with the natural and instinctive forces in life. Lady Chatterley's husband, Sir Clifford, is crippled during World War I. He returns home impotent and devotes himself exclusively to literature. He surrounds himself with a group of passionless intellectuals, men who are slaves to the mind's false gods: money, fame and the "bitch-goddess" of "Success"³⁸ while his wife, Connie, engages in a brief and disappointing affair with an Irish playwright, Michaelis. She then becomes

passionately involved with Sir Clifford's gamekeeper, Mellors who, unlike Michaelis, puts Connie's happiness before his own. As a fictional character, Mellors is as appealing as he is unlikely. He is an educated, well-travelled aristocrat who has renounced the world which has made Connie so unhappy and his virile strength coupled with his extreme gentleness make him a paragon among men. Bravely, Connie and Mellors decide to run off and leave their spouses and to live a fuller life made possible by their sexual passion. Their union represents Lawrence's view that love and self-affirmation can and should triumph over the destructive and sterilizing forces of Industrialism, careerism and cynicism, all of which are rampant in modern England. The relationship between Sir Clifford and his nurse, Mrs. Bolton, deteriorates into perverted sexuality as Lawrence provides an awkward antithesis to Mellors' and Connie's vital bond. Lawrence's didacticism is the cause of most of the faults in this verbose novel yet Malraux is not overly upset by its artistic flaws. The message alone concerns him and he shows that the manner in which Lawrence deals with it is part of the message.

Although Malraux does mention D. H. Lawrence's Mexican novel, The Plumed Serpent (1926), his short analysis of Lawrence concentrates almost exclusively on Lady Chatterley's Lover. He attributes the confusion that the book generated in France to a distinctly different French literary approach to the same theme, citing such writers as Laclos, for whom eroticism was a power play: "Chez nous," he writes, "l'érotisme s'oppose à d'autres passions, à la vanité surtout (d'où le subtil sadisme des Liaisons dangereuses) [tandis que pour Restif de la

Bretonne], comme pour tous nos auteurs du second rayon, le livre érotique est un moyen dont la sensation est la fin" (DH:136). Malraux notes further that, over the centuries, erotic literature has undergone a significant change which corresponds to a change in social attitudes:

[Les] moyens [de la littérature érotique] changent avec les auteurs, mais les siècles les entraînent tous dans un étroit courant. D'abord, à la Renaissance surtout, la technique physique de l'érotisme. Puis, vers le XVIII^e siècle, la technique psychologique: les hommes de race blanche découvrent que, pour eux, une idée peut être plus excitante qu'un instrument, et même que la beauté d'un corps. Puis, l'individualisation de l'érotisme . . . du XIX^e siècle. . . . Chacune de ces phases grandit l'érotisme, lui donne une plus grande place dans la vie des hommes. Il s'approche peu à peu de l'individu. . . . (DH:136-37)

For Malraux, the eroticism of Lady Chatterley's Lover is different from that of any of Lawrence's precursors because, ceasing to be a means to an end, it became an end in itself and in so doing, became a force for good and not for evil:

Il [l'érotisme] était le diable, il devient l'homme; nous allons le voir dépasser l'homme, devenir sa raison d'être. Là est l'intérêt essentiel de ce livre, et aussi son intérêt historique: l'érotisme y cesse d'être l'expression de l'individu. Il devient un état de l'âme, un état de vie. . . . C'est l'individu maintenant, qui n'est pas plus qu'un moyen. (DH:137)

In La condition humaine, Malraux will illustrate these two very different uses to which eroticism can be put by opposing Kyo's love for May to Ferral's passion for Valerie.

Lawrence's lesson is important to Malraux for another reason also and his statement that Lawrence believed that "an exalted awareness of sensuality can alone combat man's solitude" shows Malraux's keen awareness of one of the solutions twentieth century man has found to "the lonely crowd." Making individualism into a virtue, Lawrence who: "knew nothing of Gide's psychological individualism" or Balzac's ethical individualism, was less interested in "defending the individual's freedom than in discovering what one could do with it" (DH:137), says Malraux who interprets Lawrence's ideal of sexuality as a negation of individuality: "A ses yeux, [Lawrence] ce n'est pas par la conscience de ce qu'il a de particulier que l'individu s'atteint, c'est par la conscience la plus forte de ce qu'il a de commun avec tant d'autres: son sexe" (DH:137). While the English critics denounced Lawrence's paganism, Malraux finds in Lawrence's eroticism a cure to all the ills of modern society. "Il n'y a pourtant pas de livre moins hédoniste," he comments. "Il ne s'agit pas là d'échapper au péché, mais d'intégrer l'érotisme à la vie sans qu'il perde cette force qu'il devait au péché; de lui donner tout ce qui, jusqu'ici, était donné à l'amour; d'en faire le moyen de notre propre révélation" (DH:137).

Since to achieve such a goal woman must be man's equal, a person and not a plaything, Malraux sees that Lawrence's work implied not just sexual freedom for women but total liberation from the shackles in which a patriarchal society has confined her: "Seul moyen pour l'homme

d'atteindre sa vie la plus profonde à travers l'érotisme, seul moyen d'échapper à la condition humaine des hommes de son temps, Lawrence veut posséder la femme par l'esprit comme par la chair" (DH:138). While Malraux compares Lawrence's conception to the Hindu notion of woman as an irresponsible contact with the infinite, to the Christian idea of woman as not entirely human and to the concept of woman as the embodiment of eternal feminine, it must be noted that he himself never exalted women to the degree that Lawrence did and, to combat Lawrence's more liberal ideas, he accuses Lawrence of not fully understanding women: "La sexualité féminine lui échappe," he says. "Irréductiblement différente de nous, avide d'une unité dans laquelle elle se possède plus qu'elle n'est possédée, la femme deviendra donc dans Le serpent emplumé l'indispensable instrument de la possession du monde" (DH:138). Unwilling to give women this sort of power, Malraux clung fast to his own conception of women and, in his 1967 interview with Emmanuel D'Astier, admitted as much:

C'est vrai: les femmes n'interviennent pas dans mon oeuvre. J'ai pourtant eu une vie très classique, j'ai été marié trois fois. . . . Les femmes n'interviennent pas non plus chez Chateaubriand. Le sujet de mes livres ne se prêtait peut-être pas à une présence féminine. Je pense à l'Esprit. Mais c'est une mauvaise explication. Je peux répondre que la femme est pour moi un être si différent--je parle de différence, non d'infériorité--que je n'arrive pas à imaginer un personnage féminin.³⁹

Some twenty years later, the debate still remains open and is more acute

than ever, though with one important difference in that now it is the battle ground of feminists of different persuasions.

In his examination of the technique of Lady Chatterley's Lover, Malraux states that Lawrence has created two main characters, Mellors and Connie, who embody the underlying theme very successfully. "Toute la technique du roman tient dans les moyens qu'emploie l'auteur pour substituer à la sexualité la personne vivante de Mellors, ou inversement," he says (DH:138). He appreciates the fact that since Lady Chatterley seeks "self-revelation through sexuality," "the real dialogue is between Lady Chatterley and herself." Accordingly Mellors "never the seducer, is initially reduced to an anonymous sex partner albeit with a sense of human dignity superior to Sir Clifford's" (DH:138-39). What Malraux fails to realize is that Mellors not only derives sexual pleasure from Connie but that this is his way of taking exquisite revenge on his employer and the society he represents.

Malraux's comments concerning the way Lawrence integrates theme and subject are far more astute. "Son art," he says, "consiste à sauver par la peinture convaincante d'un sentiment primitif et profond--le désir de maternité par exemple--le passage de la fiction à l'affirmation éthique," so that "la doctrine est inséparable de cet art, du halètement fiévreux avec lequel il s'efforce de rendre éblouissante la face nocturne de la vie" (DH:139). The 1955 interview develops this idea further and explains Malraux's unusual approach to Lawrence who, in his eyes at least, is far more important as the proponent of a new ethic than as the high priest of a new brand of eroticism. He harks back to the eighteenth century novel of ideas and declares that:

En littérature la révolte commence avec Rousseau, lorsque la prédication éthique devient une fonction de la littérature. On peut ne voir dans Le vicaire Savoyard qu'un hérésiarque parmi d'autres; reste à savoir si une hérésie qui veut se fonder sur la raison ne se sépare pas de celles qui l'ont précédée. Mais le fait nouveau est que la fiction (donc le talent littéraire) devient alors le moyen d'expression de l'hérésie. Tentant de substituer l'éthique à une religion dont la structure est très affaiblie, Rousseau la substitue du même coup à la politique. Mais au système des valeurs qu'il attaque, il en substitue un autre,--celui de l'individu et de son système politique, la démocratie.⁴⁰

Thus just as Rousseau substituted one system of values for another, Lawrence set out to replace the old myth of love and, by equating it with eroticism, hoped to achieve "greater awareness and a more normal, universal and human attitude" and simultaneously "de créer un nouveau mythe de la sexualité; de faire de l'érotisme une valeur" (DH:139). Lawrence himself never spoke of myths, but Malraux, who makes extensive use of myths to treat questions of ethics in fiction, defines Lawrence's power in terms of his myth-making genius. It may well be that Lawrence's work heightened Malraux's awareness of the nature and importance of myths in the novel of ideas for his whole argument here is less an explanation of Lady Chatterley's Lover than of Malraux's own ideas.

Un mythe n'est pas objet de discussion: il vit ou ne vit pas, claims Malraux. Il ne fait pas appel en nous à la raison, mais

à la complicité. Il nous atteint par nos désirs, par nos embryons d'expérience; c'est pourquoi l'éthique, depuis un siècle, s'exprime si volontiers par la fiction. . . . Les mythes ne se développent pas dans la mesure où ils dirigent les sentiments, mais dans celle où ils les justifient. (DH:139-40)

This high praise notwithstanding, Malraux doubts that eroticism is a cure either for man's solitude or for the absurdity of the human condition. What is more, he adds, in practice even Lawrence's characters fail to live up to his theories.

Si l'homme doit trouver sa raison d'être par l'intégration de l'érotisme dans la vie, he writes, je me méfie de garanties qu'il faut aller chercher au plus profond de la chair et du sang. Je crains alors et leur nature et leur durée. Car une grande saveur de solitude accompagne ces personnages de Lawrence: pour ce prédicateur du couple, l'"autre" ne compte guère. Le conflit ou l'accord s'établit entre l'être et sa sensation. (DH:139)⁴¹

Fundamental differences between Lawrence, who, like Rousseau, believes man's genuine identity lies in everything but the conscious will, who maintains that the individual's physical and psychological states are one and affirms that artistic achievement bears no relation to volition, and Malraux, who like Byron, equates the self with the will, acknowledges the duality of man and values art as a triumph of the creative will, explain much in Malraux's review. Perhaps this was inevitable for, as Henri Peyre has remarked in an article on the comparative study of literature:

Any foreign influence is a distortion and a transfiguration. The chief interest of what is called the comparative study of literature lies precisely in the diversity of the image of our own writers which several mirrors (translations, foreign criticism) reflect for us. The foreign observer does not necessarily gain from his perspective several thousand miles remote, nor does he necessarily lose.⁴²

Thus Malraux's interpretation of Lawrence's novel results in a different view of Lawrence than that presented by the English critics. In addition, since Malraux was not well-versed in English literature, he failed to discern to what extent Lady Chatterley's Lover differed from the traditional Victorian novel. Elizabeth Tenenbaum puts it very neatly when she says that:

Although Victorian novelists vigorously criticized the realities of their society, they were generally committed to the values it espoused. Unlike many of their Romantic predecessors, who assumed that self-fulfillment required a repudiation of societal expectations, they tended implicitly to equate true self-fulfillment with the realization of a socially sanctioned ideal. . . .

In the novels . . . genuine self-knowledge is usually equated with altruistic self-abnegation.⁴³

Malraux also attributes all the controversy about Lady Chatterley's Lover to the deeper, philosophical message of the novel, whereas, as Edmund Wilson explains, the reason for the scandal it caused in England and the confusion this scandal caused in France was of an entirely

different nature:

The truth is simply, of course, that in English we have had, since the eighteenth century, no technique--no vocabulary even--for dealing with such subjects. The French have been writing directly about sex, in works of the highest literary dignity. . . . They have developed a classical vocabulary for the purpose. . . . James Joyce and D. H. Lawrence are the first English-writing writers of our own time to print this language in English; and the effect . . . has been shocking to English readers to an extent which must seem very strange to a French literary generation who read Zola, Octave Mirabeau and Huysmans in their youth. But beyond the question of this coarseness in dialogue, we have, as I have intimated, a special problem in dealing with sexual matters in English. For we have not the literary vocabulary of the French. We have only the coarse colloquial words, on the one hand, and, on the other, the kind of scientific words appropriate to biological and medical books--and neither kind goes particularly well in a love scene which is to maintain any illusion of glamor or romance.⁴⁴

In the last analysis, Malraux's article is more an essay on eroticism and on the novel of ideas than a methodical analysis of Lady Chatterley's Lover. Likening Lawrence's purposes and methods to his own, Malraux assumes that Lawrence has created characters who each embody an idea or ethical position. However the following passage in Lawrence's A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover clearly states that the

book is not as premediated as Malraux would have us believe:

As to whether the "symbolism" is intentional, Lawrence writes,--I don't know. Certainly not in the beginning, when Clifford was created. When I created Clifford and Connie, I had no idea what they were or why they were. They just came, pretty much as they are. But the novel was written, from start to finish, three times. And when I read the first version, I recognized that the lameness of Clifford was symbolic of the paralysis, the deeper emotional or passional paralysis, of most men of his sort and class today. I realized that it was perhaps taking an unfair advantage of Connie, to paralyse him technically. It made it so much more vulgar of her to leave him. Yet the story came as it did, by itself, so I left it alone. Whether we call it symbolism or not, it is, in the sense of its happening, inevitable.⁴⁵

Obviously Malraux was much influenced by thinkers like Georges Bataille who believed that "le domaine de l'érotisme est celui de la violence" and Denis de Rougemont who claimed that "L'amour heureux n'a pas d'histoire dans la littérature occidentale. . . . Chacun n'aime l'autre qu'à partir de soi, non de l'autre. Leur malheur prend ainsi sa source dans une fausse réciprocité, masque d'un double narcissisme."⁴⁶ Viewing Lawrence through their eyes, Malraux sees the sexual relationship as volitional assertion while he interprets sexual union in terms of unrestrained spontaneity. Or, to be more accurate, studying Lawrence from his own viewpoint, Malraux clings to the chauvinistic attitudes he had expressed in his earlier works. In La tentation de

l'Occident (1926) A. D. had explained to Ling that: "Tout le jeu érotique est là: être soi-même et l'autre; éprouver ses sensations propres et imaginer celles du partenaire."⁴⁷ In Les conquérants, Garine's attitude about women is that: "Pour s'occuper en paix de choses sérieuses, le mieux est de coucher avec elles et de n'y plus penser."⁴⁸ For Perken, in La voie royale: "L'essentiel est de ne pas connaître la partenaire. Qu'elle soit: l'autre sexe."⁴⁹ Yet one cannot say he has been immune to Lawrence's lesson for in La condition humaine, when he comments on Ferral's behavior with Valérie, it is obvious that he condemns it: "L'érotisme, pensa-t-il, c'est l'humiliation en soi ou chez l'autre, peut-être chez tous les deux. Une idée, de toute évidence. . . . En somme il ne couchait jamais qu'avec lui-même, . . ."⁵⁰ and, however unconvincing his picture of Kyo's relationship with May may be to the reader, Malraux obviously advocates a more equal relationship between man and woman. Most telling of all, the idea expressed by Gisors, the sage, when he notes: "Peut-être l'amour est-il surtout le moyen qu'emploie l'Occidental pour s'affranchir de sa condition d'homme, . . ."⁵¹ is surely the result of Malraux's long meditation on Lawrence. What he then called "cette érotisation de l'univers que nous prêtent les Asiatiques" (DH:139), became a cornerstone to his whole philosophy of sexuality. On May 6, 1931, Julien Green noted in his Journal that he had lunched with Malraux and that they had spoken of eroticism. He writes that Malraux "soutient que l'érotisme ne paraît vraiment dans toute sa force que dans les pays où existe la notion du péché."⁵² This association of eroticism and Christianity is spelled out in full detail in Malraux's 1975 interview

with Olivier Todd where, in response to Todd's question: "En Occident, on parle beaucoup, trop peut-être, de sexualité, de pornographie, quelquefois de plaisir et d'érotisme, parfois de l'amour. En Orient, beaucoup moins. Comment expliquez-vous cela?" Malraux replies:

On en parle moins en Orient parce qu'il y a eu la Sainte Vierge. L'Occident a inventé la valorisation de la femme au moment du culte marial. S'il n'y avait pas de cathédrales, de sainte Marie, il n'y aurait pas eu de poésie courtoise. A un moment, la chrétienté se met à valoriser la femme. Ce phénomène n'a pas d'équivalent ailleurs. Le Bouddha est misogyne. . . .⁵³

At first glance it might seem that Lawrence has been forgotten but in actual fact, his lesson has been so thoroughly assimilated and deformed by Malraux that the latter no longer seems to be aware of the contradictions implicit in such a statement.

V.6. "Documents secrets"

Four years after publishing Malraux's review of Franz Hellens' L'enfant et l'écuyère, the N.R.F. of May 1, 1932 carried a critique by Malraux of one of Hellens more noteworthy works, Documents secrets, which had been published in 1931 by Stoiles in Maestricht and Brussels.⁵⁴ Malraux did not meet Hellens until later but his review was at least in part motivated by Hellens having accepted some of Malraux's works for publication.

The three sections of Franz Hellens' Documents secrets: 1905-1956: Histoire sentimentale de mes livres et de quelques amitiés (1931; 1956) are, as the title suggests, a writer's diary or, more accurately, a diary of the author as writer. A modest man, Hellens would no doubt never have undertaken such an enterprise if two Dutch writers, Jan Greshoff and Eddy du Perron, had not suggested that, to commemorate his fiftieth birthday, Hellens should write a book about his literary work. The content was of obvious interest to the N.R.F. since Hellens speaks of his friendship with Jean and Germaine Paulhan and his acquaintance with most of the contributors to the N.R.F., among them Gide, Schlumberger, Fargue and Claudel as well as the younger generation of writers, Drieu La Rochelle, André Beucler, Eluard, Rolland de Renéville and Denis de Rougemont (HDS:144, 235-36). Hellens discusses his relationship with Malraux at length and in particular, their first meeting in December 1932 and his early impressions of Malraux's personality and his literary works and, in so doing, shows great

sympathy and understanding. "Cette figure d'homme et d'écrivain, fascinante à première vue, sans m'en imposer, se plaçait devant moi comme un problème psychologique et moral," he states. "C'est celui des rapports, dans le même individu, entre l'homme d'action et l'écrivain. . . ." He understands the choice Malraux must make between the two paths open to him: "Tout semble chez lui volonté de puissance, mais il s'agit de savoir s'il cherchera la solution du problème dans la vie ou dans la littérature" (HDS:225-26). Hellens correctly defines the "rôle" Malraux hopes to play in life: "celui d'un homme qui entend se surpasser" and points out that, for the moment at least: "Tout le rôle me semble se jouer dans sa tête" (HDS:228). His opinions of Malraux's literary works are, to say the least, harsh. For Hellens: "Le succès des Conquérants semblait dû autant à la vie aventureuse du romancier qu'aux mérites littéraires de l'ouvrage" and of the later Condition humaine, he could only say that it "donne par endroits l'impression d'un grand livre. Avec Les Faux-Monnayeurs, d'André Gide, il exprime la mesure de toute une catégorie d'esprits de notre époque, . . ." concluding that: "Aucun écrit de Malraux . . . n'éveille l'idée profonde du mythe. Tout cela se réduit à un curieux impressionnisme. C'est de la poésie, au rythme de l'éclair" (HDS:225-27). He underestimates Malraux's commitment to literature and is nevertheless aware where such attitudes can lead.

La littérature aussi n'est sans doute pour Malraux qu'un moyen, he writes. Son oeuvre écrite ne serait qu'un témoignage . . . à moins qu'elle ne soit un de ses masques ou l'un de ses alibis. Comme la plupart des intellectuels français, Malraux a

pu se croire appelé à tenir une grande place dans la littérature. Mais il se pourrait bien que cet écrivain, qui paraît incapable de se corriger, ou pour mieux dire de se limiter, ait cessé assez vite de surprendre et, en même temps, de se prendre au sérieux, pour se vouer au seul rôle qui lui paraît digne, le rôle d'action et d'énergie, pour lequel il a été créé. Il est bien possible que l'homme, ou le surhomme qu'il veut être, soit né de cet avortement. (HDS:229)

Hellens concludes his assessment of Malraux with a curiously contradictory remark. "J'éprouve pour Malraux une profonde estime," he says, "Mais il me paraît affligé d'une tare commune à toute une jeunesse française d'aujourd'hui: il n'a pas foi en lui-même et il lui est impossible de croire profondément à autre chose" (HDS:229).

In his short review of Hellens' work, Malraux makes no attempt to defend himself against Hellens' criticisms except indirectly. He begins by questioning the value of narcissism. "Dans quelle mesure un homme peut-il penser sa vie? he asks (DS:915), noting that memoirs are not action and that self-awareness is never future-oriented:

M. Hellens, comme Proust et comme tous ceux qui cherchent à se reconnaître, quel que soit le mode de leur reconnaissance, s'efforce de retracer certains de ses actes; et, il le sent, ce qu'il exprime en est bien différent, parce qu'il y ajoute ce dont l'absence, précisément, faisait le caractère de sa vie, la conscience. (DS:915)

Malraux prefers writers who act on men and society and not those who consider themselves bound by the past. Dividing them into two groups,

he says:

La première [catégorie] tend à connaître les hommes pour agir sur eux; c'est celle de la fin du XVIII^e, celle de la jeunesse de Stendhal; son objet est l'absurdité des autres. La seconde consiste à retrouver nos possibles et à constater que nous avons mal choisi parmi eux; son objet est notre propre absurdité. (DS:915)

Clearly Hellens falls into the second group and he, Malraux, the first when he asserts that: "La méditation de M. Hellens le mène à s'apercevoir que, s'il était nécessaire qu'il écrivît, il ne l'était nullement qu'il écrivît ses livres. C'est l'état d'esprit du musicien. M. Hellens appartient à la catégorie des écrivains pour qui l'écriture est à la fois le moyen et l'expression d'un état" (DS:916). For Malraux, each book is an act while, for Hellens, it is a retreat from action, a flight into an enclosed personal world. Ultimately Malraux thinks that the reason Hellens is not a popular writer is not because of his lack of talent but simply because his books describe an inner world with which many of his readers cannot identify.

Malraux's condemnation of Documents secrets is actually a condemnation of memoirs as a genre. He deplores the dependency on feeling, the lack of commitment and the dilettantism of the memorialist and refuses to make his private life the subject of his literary works. His note in the margin of Gaëtan Picon's Malraux par lui-même is explicit on this point. "Le roman moderne est, à mes yeux, un moyen d'expression privilégié du tragique de l'homme," he says: "non une élucidation de l'individu."⁵⁵ When he discusses autobiographies in his

Antimémoires, Malraux can only say: "Je ne m'[y] intéresse guère" and that he disapproves of "la pitoyable honte de Jean-Jacques [Rousseau]."⁵⁶ The interview with Frédéric Grover shows Malraux modifying his tone to the point that he says that if, in his critical writings, he never approached the author from a biographical point of view, it was more because "le travail biographique proprement dit est assez loin de moi. Considérant l'homme comme énigmatique, je ne suis pas à l'aise dans l'intelligible,"⁵⁷ than because he felt biography to be irrelevant but, in the interview with Emmanuel d'Astier, he falls back on his original dislike of memoirs.

L'homme ne se construit pas chronologiquement, he argues: les moments de la vie ne s'additionnent pas les uns aux autres dans une accumulation ordonnée. Les biographies qui vont de l'âge de cinq ans à l'âge de cinquante ans sont de fausses confessions. Ce sont les expériences qui situent l'homme. Je crois que l'on peut retrouver une vie à travers ses expériences, et non pas énoncer l'expérience comme le couronnement du récit. L'histoire littéraire est jalonnée de ces mémoires chronologiques: de Saint Augustin à Rousseau et Chateaubriand. J'écarte les journaux qui ne sont qu'une chronique d'événements extérieurs, comme l'est celui de Saint-Simon, comme l'est en partie celui des Goncourt. Il y a une exception: Stendhal tient son journal non pour construire pièce à pièce son personnage mais pour se juger--"J'écris pour savoir dans quelques années combien j'étais bête. . . ."⁵⁸

On the whole, Malraux's unfavourable review of Documents secrets is

significant not because of what it tells us about the content of Hellens' work but because of what it tells us about Malraux. His attack against individualism is scarcely new but this time he takes the writer and not society to task. Hellens attributed his lack of success in France to the fact that he was Belgian:

Peu de mes ouvrages ont trouvé, en France, l'adhésion du grand public. Ils sont trop différents; ils rendent un son étrange, et leur plus grand tort, peut-être, est qu'ils sont écrits en français, je veux dire dans une langue qui ne sent pas la traduction mais une sorte de transposition. C'est le fond, le caractère, qui n'est pas absolument français. (HDS:129)

Malraux, more correctly, felt that they were out of temper with the times.

Malraux takes great pains to elucidate the same argument when he explains to Frédéric Grover the difference between a biography, an autobiography, a novel and his Antimémoires and, in so doing, shows how the article on Hellens simply clarified his stand as novelist:

La vraie différence c'est que le tout des Antimémoires ne sera pas comme le tout d'un roman. Lorsqu'on écrit un roman, on a une intention romanesque spécifique. A partir du moment où vous faites intervenir la réalité, vous n'êtes plus, techniquement, dans la même perspective. Ainsi dans une biographie, voire dans une autobiographie, vous jouez sur la continuité du temps. Même si ce temps est syncopé, vous êtes à l'intérieur d'un temps qui est celui de la réalité objective. Un roman offre un temps beaucoup plus élastique. Dans une

biographie qui suit un ordre chronologique, les faits vont 'expliquer' la vie. Dans un roman vous créez la vie ou vous ne créez pas la vie. Si vous écrivez la biographie d'un auteur même inexplicable, vous allez en faire un personnage intelligible.⁵⁹

The Hellens review is important from another point of view also, as we see by the comments in Antimémoires concerning the personal time of Joyce, Proust and Faulkner, and what Malraux calls "historical time":

Quant à la structure temporelle des Antimémoires--qui leur donne cet aspect de composition par fragments--elle tient à la conception que je me fais du temps. Tous les grands romanciers qui ont mis en question la forme du roman sont aussi ceux qui ont mis en question le temps. Littérairement, ce qui distingue les romanciers de notre époque depuis Joyce et Proust, c'est que les romanciers mettent le temps en question. Proust joue avec un temps apparemment individuel; dans Faulkner vous avez un temps . . . qui est ce qu'il est mais qui n'est qu'à lui. Chez moi, vous avez affaire à un temps que j'appellerai . . . historique.⁶⁰

Even more importantly, Malraux, the critic, is fully aware of the role time plays in the twentieth century novel. Clearly his encounter with Hellens was the point of departure of a long and fruitful meditation on literary forms. Whether or not this led him to conceive of a new kind of memoirs which he calls Antimémoires is a moot point but, when the time came for Malraux to give his personal testimonial on his life and times, he chose a formula as unlike Hellens' as possible. "Les

Antimémoires refusent la biographie, avec préméditation," he stated in an interview: "Ils ne se fondent pas sur un journal ou sur des notes."⁶¹ Moreover, Malraux added, the work was not chronological and did not focus on him as an individual. "Dans les Antimémoires," he said, "j'essaie de retrouver les moments où l'énigme fondamentale de la vie m'est apparue. Souvenirs ou fiction, fiction d'ailleurs enchevêtrée à des souvenirs, il s'agit toujours des moments les plus profonds de ma vie."⁶² While the point of departure is personal, he concludes: "Je raconte les faits et décris le personnage comme s'il ne s'agissait pas de moi."⁶³

In his article on Hellens' Documents secrets, Malraux stated that he believed that the purpose of writing was to defy death, thereby committing himself not to his own past but to his future readers. His works will only be relevant to them if they communicate a sense of what it was like to live at a special moment in history, not his own personal history, but the history of "la première génération à être conscients que nous vivons une métamorphose dans l'histoire du monde."⁶⁴ Hellens, like Proust, is anchored in the past. Malraux, on the contrary, is a witness to his time. "[J]'aimerais être un anti-Proust et situer l'oeuvre de Proust à sa date historique," he says.⁶⁵

V.7. "En marge d'Hyménée"

On June 15, 1932 André Malraux's review of Louis Guilloux's novel Hyménée appeared in Europe. Louis Guilloux, who was born in Saint-Brieuc, Brittany in 1899, wrote translations, memoirs, literary criticism and realistic novels depicting his experience of poverty. His talent lies in his ability to express in poetic terms his profound pity and sympathy for human suffering. Winner of the Prix Blumenthal (1927), the Prix Populiste (1942), the Prix Renaudot (1949) and the Grand Prix National des Lettres (1967), his main title to fame is his novel, Le sang noir (1935.)⁶⁶

Malraux's review of Hyménée was written essentially to promote the work of a personal friend who, though he is interested in the tragedy of human destiny, treats it in a totally different manner. Guilloux's prose narrative, Hyménée, is set in his native Brittany and tells the story of two adolescents, twenty-two year old Maurice Lacroix and twenty-one year old Berthe Garel. Maurice dreams of leaving his native province and going to live in Paris one day but when Berthe tells him that she thinks that she is pregnant, he agrees to marry her, although he does not think he really loves her. A few days before the ceremony Berthe discovers that she has been mistaken but, out of love for Maurice and fear of rejection, she decides to remain silent. The young couple experiences many hardships of which Guilloux writes very sympathetically since his main interest is in exploring ordinary human feelings in everyday situations.

In an introduction which indicates his familiarity with Guilloux's ideas and works, Malraux notes that there are two types of writers: those whose power seduces the reader by their skill and those who convince the reader by the force of their arguments. In Malraux's opinion, Guilloux falls into the second category. "De Guilloux," Malraux says, "je dirai d'abord qu'il ne compose guère; et que, lorsqu'il compose, il ferait mieux de se tenir tranquille. . . . Il n'y a dans les livres de Guilloux ni saveur de style, ni recherche d'architecture. Son effort ne porte pas sur la transformation d'un drame en qualité" (EMH:304-305). For Malraux, Guilloux's secret is that he creates a complicity between his reader and his characters: "Ses livres . . . sont les phases d'un effort haletant pour créer chez ceux à qui ils s'adressent, une tragique et profonde fraternité" (EMH:304). Thus, according to Malraux, Guilloux's novels invest his own wretched life with meaning. "Son effort," Malraux concludes: "porte sur la libération d'une conscience particulière que lui impose l'univers. Pour lui, la conscience d'un fragment isolé du monde est d'abord dérision. Son art, sa force, c'est l'ensemble des moyens dont il se sert pour échapper à cette dérision" (EMH:305).

Malraux bases his opinions of Guilloux's work not only on Hyménée but on three novels published earlier. Guilloux's first novel, La maison du peuple, is the most complex, he says, and, although its theme is man's humiliation, Guilloux is quite unlike Charles-Louis Philippe: "[P]our Philippe, la pitié est une valeur, pas pour Guilloux," Malraux says, "Philippe aime les humiliés, parce qu'humiliés; Guilloux les aime, bien qu'humiliés. Dans leur humiliation, il cherche leur grandeur"

(EMH:305).

Guilloux's second novel, Dossier confidentiel, is mediocre, Malraux asserts, because it is too schematic. Comparing Guilloux to the Russian writer, Chtchédrine,⁶⁷ whose contempt for the lower classes he describes is evident, Malraux says that Guilloux, who wants to "save" his characters, has difficulty reconciling their lives and their souls because: "Chez lui, l'atmosphère poétique est pour l'homme, non contre lui" (EMH:305).

Guilloux's third novel, Compagnons, a work of more limited scope, recounts the story of three men who find that solidarity and friendship are man's only solace in this cruel world. According to Malraux, Guilloux's greatest talent is his "aptitude à poser le drame hors de l'individu, sans en affaiblir l'intensité" (EMH:306). In comparison, Hyménée's message is weakened by Guilloux's tone and his attempt to probe emotions. Ever an enemy of the psychological novel, Malraux feels that the work should have been less analytical. "Je reprocherai à Hyménée ces moyens psychologiques," he says, "cette justesse de ton, désignés bien plus pour analyser des sentiments que pour faire sourdre ce qui les dépasse. Quand la destinée est l'essentiel d'un livre, son moyen d'expression le plus efficace est d'ordre poétique" (EMH:306). Moreover, Malraux disagrees with Guilloux's approach to Berthe's lying to Maurice. "Au delà du mensonge de cette femme," he explains, "il y a son amour. Il est donc absurde, au sens plein du mot, de lui tenir rancune de son mensonge, disons plus: d'en souffrir. Il est pourtant impossible de n'en pas souffrir; et de ne pas savoir que cette souffrance est misérable" (EMH:306). For Malraux, the suffering endemic

to the human race is metaphysical in origin and attributing it to individual error is a mistake. Therefore, he concludes: "La tragédie n'a jamais que deux frontières, la délectation morose (ou sadique, ou sanglante, mais la délectation) et la contemplation; la question fondamentale posée par l'ensemble de ses livres est de savoir comment Guilloux parviendra à la contemplation" (EMH:305).

Malraux's review accentuates the similarities between Guilloux and himself. Both novelists incorporate elements of their personal experiences in their works but Guilloux fixates on early memories and the suffering of the weakest whereas Malraux never mentions his childhood and chooses exceptional and outstanding men as protagonists. Both treat themes favored by the generation of absurdists and existentialists and both are committed to Guilloux's goal as he defines it: "[L]'artiste n'a d'autre devoir que de connaître l'homme," he writes, "de l'atteindre en ses profondeurs, et de conter ses plus grands rêves."⁶⁸ However, Malraux's vision of the novel as the genre best suited to express the tragedy of modern man and his willingness to sacrifice the formulae of the "roman bien fait" makes him impatient with Guilloux's sentimental naturalism.

Malraux's critique of Guilloux's Hyménée is one of the rare reviews in which he focuses on the work he sets out to discuss instead of talking of his own opinions about art and writing in general. It is possible that his friendship with Guilloux explains his stance but, even when Malraux does not actually spell out what he believes, his own value system influences his every comment. What is more, Malraux is not alone in criticizing Guilloux's "morose almost sadistic delight" in describing

the humiliation of his characters, for in his memoirs, Guilloux recalls a discussion that he had with Guéhenno whose objections parallel Malraux's.

Et Guéhenno m'a dit que j'étais un "montreur," Guilloux recalls. Un peu comme un montreur d'ours. Et même il ajoutait que j'étais un montreur assez cruel, qui prenait son plaisir au grotesque de ses bêtes. Ce n'est pas vrai. J'accepte d'être dans un certain sens un montreur, mais je refuse de laisser croire que j'y prends la moindre joie, bien au contraire. Je suis victime des évidences. Ce n'est pas ma faute si ce qu'elles enseignent est tel. Bien naturellement, il faut faire très attention. Il faut montrer la douleur, mais il ne faut pas faire la grimace.⁶⁹

Malraux did recognize Guilloux's sympathy for his characters but, as far as he was concerned, sympathy was akin to complicity when the sufferer did not fight against the forces which condemned him to such a fate. When Malraux remarked that Guilloux's attitude to his characters was always to "chercher leur grandeur dans leur humiliation," he did not mean to detract from their suffering but only wished that they would attempt to overcome or transcend it. The conclusion of La condition humaine clearly shows that in this unequal battle man can never win, but he must hope (L'espoir) and act as if he could.

* * *

The road to the Prix Goncourt which Malraux travelled from 1929 to 1932 was one of the most uncertain and challenging ones he was ever to know. His reviews show a marked evolution in his literary ideas and, although he was still concerned with the novel as an art-form, after 1929 he showed no further interest in fantasy. Once he had written Les conquérants, he never turned back. His review of Keyserling, of "Jeune Chine" and Guilloux's works show his growing interest in social, cultural and philosophical problems while his article on D. H. Lawrence reveals much more of his own psyche than he, Malraux, would ever have willingly unveiled, and in so doing, makes him a much more human figure. Most importantly, the answer to Trotsky and the Hellens review contain key statements about the essence of fiction. His condemnation of autobiographies and novels based on personal memories is not an aesthetic one but rather the expression of his belief that the artist must devote his creative energy to expressing and helping solve the tragic situation in which twentieth century man finds himself. That he has first done so in his critical works is a measure of the man whose works are born of a need to make the novel not a gratuitous exercise in style or an expression of his own distinctive identity but an act of faith in the power of man to defy the forces bent on his destruction.

Notes

- ¹ See Walter G. Langlois, Malraux: The Indochina Adventure 200.
- ² André Malraux's speech and excerpts from some of the other speeches were subsequently published in "La question des Conquérants," Variétés 6 (15 octobre 1929): 429-37.
- ³ Among Keyserling's other published works, the most noteworthy include: Das Gefüge der Welt (1907), Unsterblichkeit (1907), Schöpferische Erkenntnis (1922), Die Neuentstehende Welt (1926), Wiedergeburt (1927), Das Spektrum Europas (1928) and Südamerikanische Meditationen (1932).
- ⁴ Henri Massis, L'occident et son destin 73-74.
- ⁵ J. R. Bourrel, "Malraux et la pensée allemande: 1921-1949," Revue des Lettres Modernes 2.425-31 (1975): 104.
- ⁶ Clara Malraux, Nos vingt ans 253-54.
- ⁷ Comte H. de Keyserling, Le journal de voyage d'un philosophe (Paris: Librairie Stock, 1930) I, XI.
- ⁸ Henri Peyre, "Malraux and the Metamorphosis of Literature," 30.
- ⁹ André Malraux, L'espoir (Paris: Gallimard, 1937) 397.
- ¹⁰ André Vandegans, La jeunesse littéraire de Malraux 287.
- ¹¹ In addition, Véry wrote: Le testament de Basil Crookes (1930), Les disparus de Saint-Agil (1938), L'assassinat du Père Noël (1941), Groupi Mains-Rouges (1942) and Le pays sans étoiles (1945).
- ¹² André Malraux, "Histoire de la bienheureuse Raton, fille de joie par Fernand Fleuret," 550.

- 13 Jean Lacouture, Malraux: Une vie dans le siècle 120, 194.
- 14 Clara Malraux, Le bruit de nos pas: Voici que vient l'été 6 vols. (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1973) vol. 4: 87-88.
- 15 Robert Payne, The Life and Death of Trotsky (New York: McGraw, 1977) 242.
- 16 André Malraux, "A. Habaru: Malraux nous parle de son oeuvre: Après Les conquérants, La voie royale," Le Monde 124 (18 oct. 1930): 4.
- 17 Lacouture, Malraux 95.
- 18 André Malraux in "Jean Vilar: Un entretien avec A. Malraux," Magazine Littéraire 54 (juillet, août 1971): 11, 13 discusses this point with Jean Vilar:

Jean Vilar: On peut se demander pourquoi Trotsky, l'homme d'action, au lieu d'aller s'exiler par force au Mexique, n'était pas allé, justement, en Chine.

André Malraux: C'est un problème passionnant que je me suis toujours posé. Trotsky alors pensait qu'il était là en attente et pour écrire. C'est curieux, ces grands hommes d'action--je pense à Napoléon--qui se mettent tout à coup à être complètement tourneboulés par leur écriture. En 1934, Trotsky écrivait son Lénine, et il ne pensait qu'à ça. Qu'il ne soit pas allé en Chine à ce moment-là n'est donc pas pour m'étonner. Mais qu'il n'y soit pas allé du tout est d'une certaine façon stupéfiant.

Later on, in the same interview the subject is broached again:

Jean Vilar: En raison même de l'importance qu'avaient les idées de Trotsky en Chine autour des années 30, et Trotsky le sachant, comment se fait-il que, devant s'exiler, il soit allé au Mexique et non pas en

Chine?

André Malraux: Au début, il n'avait pas envie d'aller en Chine parce qu'il écrivait, il ne voulait pas rentrer immédiatement dans l'action, etc. . . . et après il ne pouvait plus y aller. Ça ne devait pas être si simple car, enfin, je l'ai vu à Royan en 34. S'il était allé en Chine, ç'eût été en 35. Mais en 35 la Chine était complètement entre les mains de ses ennemis. Il aurait fallu arriver au centre de la Chine, là où se trouvaient les derniers grands noyaux communistes ou, si nous voulons, les noyaux maoïstes. Mais comment les aurait-ils [sic] atteints? Les avions de cette époque-là n'avaient pas un tel rayon d'action. . . . Donc il serait arrivé en bateau. Eh bien en bateau il serait arrivé chez l'ennemi, chez Chang-Kai-Chek. Je pense que c'est là l'explication.

¹⁹ Clara Malraux, Voici que vient l'été 88.

²⁰ Clara Malraux, Voici que vient l'été 206.

²¹ Denis Boak, "Malraux: A Note on Editions," A.U.M.L.A. 21 (May 1964): 80-81.

²² Roger Dial, "André Malraux on Revolution: Elements in The Conquerors and Man's Fate," M.M.M. XIV.1 (Spring 1982): 29.

²³ Malraux, "Jean Vilar: Un entretien" 11, 13.

²⁴ André Malraux, Les conquérants 1928 (Paris: Grasset, 1973) 285.

²⁵ André Malraux, "Trotzky," Marianne 79 (25 avril 1934): 1.

²⁶ André Malraux, "Henri Barbusse: Emile Zola et la nouvelle génération: Opinions d'André Malraux, . . ." Monde 73 (26 octobre 1929): 4.

²⁷ André Malraux, "Conversation avec André Malraux: Questions et

réponses," trad. de Literatournaïa Gazeta (24 août 1934) trans. E. Rovich in Revue des Lettres Modernes (1972): 140.

28 Malraux, "Conversation de Literatournaïa Gazeta" 142.

29 Walter Langlois, Malraux: The Indochina Adventure 200-210.

30 Chang Mei Yuan, "André Malraux et la Chine: A travers le Confucianisme et le Taoïsme," M.M.M. V.1 (Spring 1973): 12-13.

31 Chang Mei Yuan, "Malraux et la Chine" 12, 13.

32 André Malraux, La tentation de l'Occident (Paris: Grasset, 1926) 135.

33 See Emile Delavenay, D. H. Lawrence: L'homme et la genèse de son oeuvre: 1885-1919 (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1969) I, 6.

34 Lawrence's first novel, The White Peacock, was published in the English Review in 1911. Lawrence's second novel, The Trespasser (1912) was based on a visit to the Isle of Wight with a friend he calls "Helen." Sons and Lovers (1913) which depicted Lawrence's family and his adolescence, did not sell widely, but established him as a serious writer. His first volume of poetry, Love Poems and Others (1913) was followed almost immediately by his first volume of short stories: The Prussian Officer and Other Stories (1914). The greatest and most representative of Lawrence's early novels are The Rainbow (1915) and Women in Love (1920). They are large canvasses in which much of the detail is blurred or drawn hastily but which, as a whole, trace in bold and sweeping strokes the relations between men and women in marriage. Among his other works, the most noteworthy are: The Lost Girl (1920), Sea and Sardinia (1921), a travel book, Fantasia of the Unconscious (1922), a treatise on his psychological theories, Aaron's Rod (1922), a

novel which dealt with both sexual themes and the communist upheaval in Italy after World War I, Studies in Classical American Literature (1923) in which Lawrence practises an unprecedented mode of criticism as he studies the strange emergence of the new American "consciousness" and the American world vision, Kangaroo (1923), a novel in which Lawrence relates the sexual theme to an imaginary fascist movement in Australia and describes his wartime ordeals, Memoirs of the Foreign Legion (1924) and The Plumed Serpent (1926) in which Lawrence links the theme of sexuality to the struggle between Catholicism and the insurrectionary peasants of Mexico.

³⁵ F. R. Leavis, D. H. Lawrence: Novelist (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962) 70-71.

³⁶ See Ronald P. Draper, D. H. Lawrence (New York: Twayne, 1964) 184-89. Draper lists the following works on D. H. Lawrence: J. Herbert Seligmann, D. H. Lawrence, An American Interpretation (New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1924); E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (London: Edward Arnold, 1927); F. R. Leavis, D. H. Lawrence (Cambridge: Minority Press, 1930); Stephen Potter, D. H. Lawrence: A First Study (London: Jonathan Cape, 1930); John M. Murry, Son of Woman (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931)

Delavenay, D. H. Lawrence II: 724 lists only one work on D. H. Lawrence before 1932, namely Werner Wesslau, Der Pessimismus bei D. H. Lawrence (Griefswald: Hans Adler, 1931).

³⁷ André Malraux, Malraux par lui-même by Gaëtan Picon (Paris: Seuil, 1953) 18.

³⁸ D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover 1928 (New York: Penguin, 1976) 22.

- 39 André Malraux, "Dialogue," 60.
- 40 André Malraux, "Lignes de force," Preuves 49 (mars 1955): 10.
- 41 André Malraux, in his "Préface" to D. H. Lawrence, L'amant de Lady Chatterley 9, clarifies this statement with: "Pour l'homme, qui cherche, [sic] si passionnément sa raison d'être. . . ."
- 42 Henri Peyre, "American Literature through French Eyes," The Virginia Quarterly Review XXIII.3 (Summer 1947): 424.
- 43 Elizabeth Brody Tenenbaum, in The Problematic Self: Approaches to Identity in Stendhal, D. H. Lawrence and Malraux (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1977) 65, 172.
- 44 Edmund Wilson, "Review of Lady Chatterley's Lover," New Republic (July 1929) in H. Coombes, ed., D. H. Lawrence: A Critical Anthology (England: Penguin, 1973) 200.
- 45 D. H. Lawrence, A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover (London: Mandrake Press, 1930) 64.
- 46 Denis de Rougemont, L'amour et l'occident 1939 (Paris: Plon, 1956) 37-38.
- 47 Malraux, La tentation de l'Occident 73.
- 48 Malraux, Les conquérants 170.
- 49 André Malraux, La voie royale 10.
- 50 André Malraux, La condition humaine 188.
- 51 Malraux, La condition humaine 185.
- 52 Julien Green, Journal: Les années faciles. Tome 1, 1920-1934 (Paris: Plon, 1973) 173.
- 53 André Malraux, "Malraux par Malraux avec Ollivier Todd," Le Nouvel Observateur 573 (3-9 novembre 1975): 113, 115.

54 See page 145 of this thesis for a brief biography of Hellens and note 31, pages 154, for a selected bibliography of his works.

55 Malraux in Picon, Malraux 66.

56 André Malraux, Le miroir des limbes 4, 7.

57 Frédéric J. Grover, Six entretiens 141.

58 Malraux, "Dialogue" 57-58.

59 Grover, Entretiens 141.

60 Grover, Entretiens 109.

61 Malraux, "Dialogue" 58.

62 Grover, Entretiens 121.

63 Malraux, "Dialogue" 58.

64 Grover, Entretiens 114.

65 Malraux, "Dialogue" 58.

66 In addition to Hyménée and Le sang noir, Guilloux wrote: La maison du peuple (1927), Dossier confidentiel (1930), Souvenirs sur G. Palante (1931), Compagnons (1931), Angéline (1934), Histoire de brigands (1936), Le pain des rêves (1942), Le jeu de patience (1949), Absent de Paris (1952), Parpagnacco, ou la conjuration (1954), Les batailles perdues (1960), Cripure (1960) and La confrontation (1967).

67 Mikhail Saltykov-Chtchédrine, known as Chtchédrine (1826-1889) was born in Spas-Ougol, Russia and wrote realistic novels of which the best-known is The Golovliov Family (1880).

68 Cited by Gertrude Eleanor Gecewicz, Louis Guilloux: A la recherche de la pureté (Winnipeg: U of Manitoba, 1973) 263.

69 Louis Guilloux, Absent de Paris (Paris: Gallimard, 1952) 36.

CHAPTER VI
THE CONTROVERSIAL 1930'S

The period from 1933 to 1935 clearly shows Malraux's growing political commitment. With the rise of Hitler and Nazism in Germany, Malraux raged against Fascism as he had against French colonialism. He established "ad hoc" committees such as the World League against Anti-semitism and the International Committee to Aid Victims of the Nazis and, with relentless energy, he read, wrote, edited, made speeches, presided over conferences, raised money and conducted a vast correspondence. In 1934, he accompanied André Gide to Berlin to intercede for the life of Giorgy Dimitrov, the Bulgarian Communist who had been arrested and imprisoned at the time of the Reichstag fire. In August of the same year, Malraux together with about thirty left-wing writers from western Europe, attended the first All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in the Soviet Union.

Malraux's literary and critical writings throughout these tumultuous years bear testimony to his political and philosophical beliefs. During this productive period, Malraux wrote two novels, two prefaces, four reviews of literary works and one article of literary criticism. Of the two novels, the first, La condition humaine (1933) was his crowning literary achievement and the second, Le temps du mépris (1935), his least successful endeavour. Written in the fall of 1932 and published in 1933, La condition humaine was an immediate, lasting and worldwide triumph. The simple themes of the earlier novels were now fully orchestrated and Malraux had emerged as a writer of extraordinary power in full command of his craft. Malraux summed up the content and message of his most famous novel as follows and his picture of the death

agonies of the old order and the birth pangs of a new one moved its readers deeply.

No one can endure his own solitude, he said, whether it is through love, fantasy, gambling, power, revolt, heroism, comradeship, opium, contemplation or sex, it is against this fundamental "angst" that consciously or not, the characters of this novel--communists, fascists, terrorists, adventurers, police chiefs, junkies, artists and the women with whom they are involved--are defending themselves, engaged as they are to the point of torture and suicide in the Chinese Revolution (Shanghai, 1927), upon which for some years the destiny of the Asian world and perhaps the West depended.¹

During the winter of 1934-35, at the height of his involvement with communism, Malraux wrote Le temps du mépris, a novel about a Communist leader who is imprisoned by the Nazis. In an excellent preface to the novel, Malraux remarked: "It is not emotion that destroys a work of art, but a desire to demonstrate something" but, in spite of his own condemnation of the "genre," the accusation that Le temps du mépris is a propaganda novel is justified. Dedicated to "Our German comrades," the story of Kassner, a German communist organizer, of his internment by the Nazis and of his almost miraculous escape contained none of the ideological conflict of Les conquérants or La condition humaine. The theme was still that of the individual struggling with his destiny and facing suffering and death but the new novel put the accent on revolt and escape. Although Le temps du mépris fails as a work of art, it is noteworthy because it was the first work in French to report on Nazi

repression.

It was also during this period that Malraux explained unambiguously and for the first time his attitude and purpose as a literary critic.

Un critique professionnel s'engage parce qu'il parle de beaucoup d'ouvrages, et qu'il est contraint par là à une hiérarchie; un romancier, non, he says. Qu'il prenne donc sa position pour ce qu'elle est: faire aimer ce qu'il aime. Comme je l'ai fait pour Lawrence et pour Faulkner lorsqu'ils étaient encore à peu près inconnus en France, j'écris ici pour dire que j'aime un livre et pourquoi.²

This positive and impressionistic approach to books was also, whether he realized it or not, an attempt to introduce to the French reading public foreign writers of talent and works which presented points of view and concepts not commonly expressed in France, and which paralleled his own. From 1933 to 1935 for example, his preface to Faulkner's Sanctuary and his reviews of Matveev's Les traqués, Ehrenburg's Sans reprendre haleine and his article on Guilloux's Sang noir show his continuing interest in novels which deal with the theme of man's fate. In addition, his comments on Guéhenno's Journal d'un homme de quarante ans and Gide's Les nouvelles nourritures and his preface to Andrée Viollis's Indochine S.O.S. indicate that he is still preoccupied with the choice of "genre" and in particular in diaries, (Guéhenno and Gide) and newspaper reporting (Viollis) as a means of recording contemporary reality.

VI.1. "Préface à Sanctuaire de W. Faulkner"

R.-N. Rimbault and H. Delgove's excellent translation of William Faulkner's Sanctuary was published by Gallimard on November 21st 1933 to launch Faulkner in France. Prior to this publication, Faulkner's name was virtually unknown in France. An article by Maurice Edgar Coindreau,³ a French University professor teaching in the United States, was the first to appear in France where only three of Faulkner's short stories had been published in translation: "Une rose pour Emily," "Septembre ardent" and "Il était une reine."⁴ Although Professor Coindreau's translation of As I Lay Dying complete with preface by Valéry Larbaud was ready for publication as early as January 1933, Gaston Gallimard felt that Sanctuary, which had met with great commercial success since its publication in February 1931, was a better choice and that the French reading public would also prefer the "meretricious sensationalism of Popeye's corn cob to Addie's coffin."⁵ Setting aside Valéry Larbaud's discreet and prudent approach to As I Lay Dying, Gallimard turned to André Malraux whose "préface-fanfare" to Sanctuary was published in November 1933 in the N.R.F. with the desired effect, ringing out as a "coup de gong sensationnel." There is no question but that André Malraux was instrumental in assuring the success of Faulkner's book and literary reputation in France.

William Cuthbert Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi in 1897. Devotion to the South was part of his heritage. His great-grandfather, William Clark Falkner, had been a colonel in the

Civil War and was the author of three books including a popular novel about the South, The White Rose of Memphis (1881). The young Faulkner did not complete high school and, after attempting a variety of occupations, began his writing career first as a poet, then as the author of short stories, sketches and reviews. Early works such as: The Marble Faun (1924), Soldiers' Pay (1926) and Mosquitoes (1927) were largely derivative and it was not until the publication of Sartoris in 1929 that Faulkner found his own voice as a novelist. The Sound and the Fury (1929) is one of the most important novels of the century. As I Lay Dying (1930), Sanctuary (1931), Light in August (1932) and Absalom, Absalom (1936) followed in quick succession, introducing the reader to the special world of Yoknapatawpha County which Faulkner analysed with great profundity, all the while experimenting with new narrative techniques. His later works,⁶ with the exception of Requiem for a Nun (1951), made far less impression on the literary world.

Despite the fact that Faulkner was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1948 and that he was awarded the 1949 Nobel Prize for Literature, the American public viewed him as a fatalistic and nihilistic writer of difficult books. His fame spread far more rapidly in Europe and Latin America however and the French government made him an officer of the Legion of Honor in 1951. It was only after his death that Faulkner was hailed by his fellow countrymen as one of America's greatest authors.

Looking outward in the 1930's, literary France turned westward for inspiration and the N.R.F., already a leader in French and English publications, began to promote young and innovative American writers.

The fact that the American critics had denounced Faulkner for violating standards of taste did not deter Gaston Gallimard from deciding to publish Sanctuary in 1933, any more than scandal had prevented his publication of D. H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover in 1932. In fact, it may well be that they spurred him on and, once again, his reading of the public's mind was correct: French critics were fascinated by Faulkner's preoccupation with the world of the senses and with his simple, direct and poetic vision of man. His deliberate turning away from the psychological novel seemed to them the promise of a new and more human and humane approach to literature.

Malraux did not meet Faulkner until May 1952 when, in the company of Denis de Rougemont, Auden and Salvador de Madariaga, they participated in a prestigious literary round table at the Salle Gaveau in Paris. Then and again in an interview in 1955, Malraux described the difference between American and European writers as follows:

A mes yeux, le caractère essentiel de la littérature américaine actuelle, c'est d'être la seule littérature qui ne soit pas faite par des intellectuels. . . . Ma conviction est que le grand jeu de cette littérature va être de s'intellectualiser sans perdre sa prise directe. Aux Etats-Unis, les écrivains que je rencontrais m'ont peu fait penser aux écrivains européens, dont ils n'ont ni la relative culture historique ni le goût des idées (apanage, aux Etats-Unis, des professeurs). Ils me faisaient penser à nos peintres: même indifférence apparente à presque tout, sauf la table et la bouteille, même connaissance précise et assurée de la technique de leurs

confrères du présent et du passé, même goût du changement sûr, même pittoresque vestimentaire et parfois même physique.⁷

Malraux's assessment was accurate at least insofar as Faulkner was concerned for, in an interview with Jean Stein in 1956, Faulkner admitted bluntly: "I am not a literary man but only a writer. I don't get any pleasure from talking shop."⁸ Professional critics have also noted that Faulkner's less successful novels suffer from a "failure of intellect," that is "a lack of comment and observation within the structure of the work," a trait they attribute to a whole generation of writers without literary tradition or training whose failure is "in the explicit, in precise statement and intellectual coherence" and which is related to their romantic fear of the literary vocation and literary stance."⁹ Like Faulkner, Malraux was largely self-educated and like Faulkner, he disliked academic and traditional criticism. Both agree that "the artist is of no importance; only what he creates is important"¹⁰ and, although in actual practice, their works are very different in scope, style and intention, Malraux was ideally suited to introduce Sanctuary to the French reading public. Both tend to present extreme situations in extreme terms to shock the reader¹¹ and both rebel against present society in order to express their deeper metaphysical revolt. Both writers were accused of revelling in blood and gore. Yet, when the noted critic Robert Brasillach attacked Malraux's "cruelty," Malraux replied:

[J]e n'ai pas eu à choisir la sauvagerie, car je l'ai rencontrée. Tout homme tire ses valeurs de la vie qui lui est donnée, et je revendique les unes et l'autre, non comme des

objets de complaisance, mais comme une assise. Je ne pense pas par plaisir à ce que vous appelez "le sang," mais parce qu'il m'est nécessaire que cela d'abord soit pensé. Assez d'écrivains pensent à partir de rien.¹²

Similarly, when Alan Reynolds Thompson attacked Faulkner's works in like terms, Faulkner's reply was: "Violence is simply one of the carpenter's tools."¹³ Gaston Derycke was therefore quite correct to point out that what Faulkner and Malraux had in common was that the ethical significance of the events they described in their novels was more important than the events themselves. "Ce n'est pas par hasard," he wrote, "que j'insiste sur l'importance du climat faulknérien, ce climat qui fait de Sanctuaire, au même titre que La voie royale ou La condition humaine, une 'création éthique.' Car, chez Faulkner comme chez Malraux, moins visiblement peut-être, c'est la signification éthique de l'événement qui importe davantage que l'événement lui-même."¹⁴

In his preface to Faulkner's Sanctuary therefore, Malraux stresses the fact that the American novel deals with the theme of "Destiny" with all the poetry and emotion one finds in Greek tragic and epic poetry. Amplifying the sort of remarks he had made a decade earlier in his preface to Maurras' Mademoiselle Monk, suivi de Invocation à Minerve and his reviews of Marcel Arland's Où le coeur se partage, Bernanos' L'imposture and Guilloux's Hyménée, Malraux once again makes frequent allusions to classical Greek tragedies which, he says, are the only literary works which have dealt adequately with the horror and pathos of human suffering. His own works had frequently dealt with similar themes and/or been modeled along a classical line. For example, La tentation

de l'Occident examines the Greek legacy to the West; the characters in Les conquérants are frequently little more than symbols fulfilling their destinies while a note appended to La voie royale states that this novel is an "initiation tragique" to the human condition. In La condition humaine even the progression of events seems patterned after that of a traditional classical tragedy. In another vein and, although Malraux does not explicitly discuss the theme of eroticism in Sanctuary, critics in the 1930's were quick to perceive the connection between the novels Malraux chose to preface, Lady Chatterley's Lover and Sanctuary, and Les conquérants, La voie royale and La condition humaine, all of which contained a significant component of erotic material.

Sanctuary is the story of the rape of an eighteen year old college girl, Temple Drake, by the cowardly, perverted and stunted Popeye. Limiting the action of his novel to a period of a few months after May 1929 (the date of the rape), Faulkner explores in depth the problem of evil both in society and in man's nature. The irony of the novel's title becomes evident as the characters, in a bizarre twist of events, are overcome by their macabre fate: one man is lynched by Baptists for two crimes that he did not commit, murder and rape, Popeye is hanged for the death of a policeman that he did not kill and a well-intentioned lawyer who attempts to right matters finds himself powerless in the face of the highly organized and powerful forces of evil. Those who survive the ordeal are mere shadows of their former selves: Temple Drake, who committed perjury in court and her father, the judge, are condemned to a living death for, once set in motion, fate destroys each of the characters in turn. Like the grotesque funeral in the beer parlor which

closes the book, Sanctuary is an unforgettable black mass.

In his three page preface to Sanctuary, Malraux first analyzes Faulkner's creative methods and objectives and then situates Faulkner in the literary and historical progression of the preceding fifty years. His remarks show that Malraux has some knowledge of Faulkner's other works for he refers to As I Lay Dying and mentions the stream of consciousness monologues in the early books but, as these works had yet to be translated in French, Michel Gresset wonders whether Malraux had read them in the original or whether he had not simply read the Coindreau article.¹⁵ Since Malraux was known to have only an "elementary grasp of English,"¹⁶ the second hypothesis is the more likely one.

When Malraux says that Sanctuary is not a detective story in the usual sense of the word, he proves he has grasped the stunning originality of Faulkner's handling of the theme of violence in modern society.

Sanctuaire, he says, est . . . un roman d'atmosphère policière sans policiers, de gang aux gangsters crasseux, parfois lâches, sans puissance. Mais l'auteur acquiert par là une sauvagerie que le milieu justifie, et la possibilité de faire accepter, sans quitter un minimum de vraisemblance, le viol, le lynchage, l'assassinat, les formes de la violence que l'intrigue fera peser sur tout le livre. (SF:744)

For Malraux, this use of plot to convey an ethical position is not only brilliant--"Son importance [l'intrigue] vient de ce qu'elle est le moyen le plus efficace de traduire un fait éthique ou poétique dans toute son

intensité" (SF:744)--but, by injecting the spirit of ancient Greek tragedy in a hitherto popular prose genre: the detective novel--"c'est l'intrusion de la tragédie grecque dans le roman policier" (SF:747)--Faulkner has created a new type of novel which is admirably suited to depict the tragedy of modern man.

More than fifteen years were to pass before Malraux defined Destiny as not just a synonym for death, but everything that forces upon us the awareness of our human predicament (Les voix du silence, 1951), but his treatment of Faulkner as a "tragic poet" obsessed with "the anguished awareness of what it means to be human" or the "Absurd Destiny of man," shows how his study of Faulkner led him to a better understanding of classical tragedy. As Walter Langlois says in "Malraux and the Greek ideal,"

For him, the Greek tragic play was an interrogation of human Destiny that extended the probing of the Greek thinkers because it represented what man could do--beyond philosophy--when confronted with certain things in his experience that limited or transcended him. Tragedy, the intrusion of the world of human awareness into the eternal world of the Sacred, as he once put it, was simply another way in which man could affirm his domination over the Inhuman. For Malraux, the tragic poet is obsessed with an anguished awareness of what it means to be human. . . . In Malraux's view, the people of Athens did not believe their tragedies represented a defeat for man, but rather the reconquest and domination of Destiny by the poet. . . . Evidently for Malraux the primary meaning of Greek tragedy

was as a comprehension (in the root sense of that word) of the Absurd Destiny of man within the man-made aesthetic universe of a tragic poem.¹⁷

In his preface, Malraux also examines the techniques that Faulkner uses to achieve his ends and he even goes as far as to imagine the genesis of a Faulkner novel.

Je ne serais nullement surpris, he hypothesizes, qu'il pensât souvent ses scènes avant d'imaginer ses personnages, que l'oeuvre fût pour lui, non une histoire dont le déroulement détermine des situations tragiques, mais bien, à l'opposé, qu'elle naquît du drame, de l'opposition ou de l'écrasement de personnages inconnus, et que l'imagination ne servît qu'à amener logiquement des personnages à cette situation conçue d'abord. C'est, soit d'une impuissance d'esclave pleinement ressentie (la jeune fille dans la maison des gangsters) soit de l'absurde irrémédiable (le viol avec l'épi de maïs, l'innocent brûlé, Popeye en fuite mais stupidement condamné pour un délit qu'il n'a pas commis; dans Tandis que j'agonise le fermier qui soigne son genou malade en l'enrobant de ciment, l'étonnant monologue de haine) que jaillit chez Faulkner l'exaltation tendue qui fait sa force, et c'est l'absurdité qui donne à ses personnages secondaires, presque comiques (la maîtresse du bordel avec ses chiens) une intensité comparable à celle de Chtchédrine. (SF:746)

As most Faulkner critics have acknowledged, Malraux showed great perspicacity when he suggested that Faulkner imagined his scenes before

his characters because, in actual fact, that is what he did. The publication of the galleys of the first version of Sanctuary provide ample evidence to the fact.¹⁸ In addition, in a statement made at a later date, Faulkner is quoted as saying:

[The Sound and the Fury] began with a mental picture. I didn't realize at the time it was symbolical. The picture was of the muddy seat of a little girl's drawers in a pear tree, where she could see through a window where her grandmother's funeral was taking place and report what was happening to her brothers on the ground below. By the time I explained who they were and what they were doing and how her pants got muddy, I realized it would have to be a book.¹⁹

While we have no evidence to back up our intuition, the striking first scene of La condition humaine seems modeled on the Faulknerian example.

For Malraux, Faulkner's conscious exploitation of the theme of violence shows that the novelist is not at the mercy of his world, but in possession of it. In the interview with Jean Stein quoted above, Faulkner acknowledged that writing, for him, involved both his obsessions and his control. Referring to The Sound and the Fury, he said, "I wrote it five separate times, trying to tell the story, to rid myself of the dream which would continue to anguish me until I did. . . . I found out," he continued: "that not only each book had to have a design but the whole output or sum of an artist's work had to have a design . . . so I created a cosmos of my own. I can move these people around like God, not only in space but in time too."²⁰ Or, as Malraux said, Faulkner expressed his obsessions in order to confront

them, to understand them and ultimately to control them however briefly. "Le poète tragique exprime ce qui le fascine," Malraux writes, "non pour s'en délivrer (l'objet de la fascination reparaitra dans l'oeuvre suivante) mais pour en changer la nature: car, l'exprimant avec d'autres éléments, il le fait entrer dans l'univers relatif des choses conçues et dominées" (SF:747).

Malraux's comparison of Faulkner's works with Poe's and Hoffmann's is a clear indication of Malraux's own turning away from the world of fantasy to the real world where horror of a different nature abounds.

Le rapport entre son univers [Faulkner] et celui d'Edgar Poë ou d'Hoffmann serait évident, Malraux says. Matériel psychanalytique semblable, haines, chevaux, cercueils, obsessions semblables. Ce qui sépare Faulkner de Poë, c'est la notion qu'ils ont l'un et l'autre de l'oeuvre d'art: plus exactement, c'est que l'oeuvre d'art existait pour Poë, et primait la volonté d'expression. . . . Il créait des objets. (SF:745)

Citing Picasso and Flaubert as cases in point, Malraux explains that less and less attention is being paid to the work of art as an "object" to be perfected while more and more importance is being attached to form as an expression of theme. In his final judgment of Faulkner, Malraux concludes that the significance and originality of Sanctuary lie in the discovery of a form adequate to the theme of man's tragic destiny. For Malraux, if the human condition cannot be basically altered, it can at least be made to seem less devastating when it is translated and transfigured by a great artist.

Malraux's Faulkner preface was the most important critical article he had written to date. It could well be that his experience in writing La condition humaine in 1933 had made him more aware of other novelists' methods and objectives when dealing with similar themes. The similarity between his vision of the world and Faulkner's was such that it enabled him to understand and explain Faulkner as no critic had before him. Most Faulkner critics, whether foreign or French, do not fail to mention, praise and develop the ideas first expressed by Malraux in this preface²¹ and Michel Gresset goes so far as to say: "Or, contrairement à la préface discrète et prudente que Valéry Larbaud avait déjà rédigée (quoiqu'elle fût encore inédite) pour Tandis que j'agonise, le texte de Malraux, puissant et magnifique, allait aussitôt imposer--et figer--une vision française de Faulkner." However, Malraux's view of Faulkner is too monolithic for Gresset who proceeds to discuss the obverse side of the coin. "Dès lors," he adds, "Faulkner sera identifié en France au poète tragique qu'il est, certes, dans Sanctuaire, mais qu'il n'est pas seulement. L'épique . . . et surtout le comique, que pourtant Malraux relevait chez les personnages secondaires de Sanctuaire, allaient pour longtemps se trouver gommés au profit de 'l'art tragique' [de l'interprétation de Malraux]." In addition, "Si Malraux frappait juste à propos de Sanctuaire," Gresset explains, "il frappait un peu trop solennellement. Sanctuaire fut accueilli comme un gangster dans un salon: avec effroi. . . . On compara le roman aux films 'noirs' américains. . . . On évoqua, sur le ton de la conclusion de Malraux, 'l'intrusion bouleversante des puissances obscures du rêve dans l'aventure que nous vivons.'"²² The article, which heralded the advent

of "l'âge du roman américain" in France, frightened many who, in the "defense" of traditional French values, were actually protesting not against the Americanization of the French novel, but against every "unlovely" aspect of the modern world.

A complete assessment of Malraux's preface necessitates an examination not only of what he does say but also of what he chooses to omit. With this in mind, it is interesting to compare it to Valéry Larbaud's preface to As I Lay Dying and Coindreau's 1931 article in the N.R.F.. A letter dated January 1st 1933, explains Valéry Larbaud's purpose as follows: "Il fallait surtout renseigner le lecteur et lui expliquer aussi courtement que possible le sujet et les mérites du livre,"²³ he writes, while Coindreau, the professor, enumerates Faulkner's earlier works, gives a resume of Sanctuary and analyzes Faulkner's technique. Malraux neither summarizes, explains or analyzes the story in methodical fashion. His discussion of Faulkner's creative methods and objectives is so allusive that only those who are already familiar with Faulkner can understand them fully. Even a novelist like Valéry Larbaud is more concerned with the potential reader than Malraux is and, however erudite the article may seem to some, it is not a "scholarly" article. On that count, Coindreau's article is clearer for Malraux's use of figurative non-scholarly expressions does not make his meaning obvious to all.

Malraux's reading of Faulkner and his writing of La condition humaine led him to elucidate the literary and artistic ideas which he then promulgated in four important speeches: "L'art est une conquête," "L'attitude de l'artiste," "L'oeuvre d'art" and "Sur l'héritage

culturel."²⁴ These speeches delivered between 1934 and 1936 and later published in Commune, a popular left-wing review, all elaborate a very Faulknerian theme: "L'Art n'est pas une soumission, c'est une conquête" ("L'art est une conquête":69). In both cases the artist's struggle to express human destiny removed the novel from the realm of entertainment and made it a work of high seriousness. Malraux and Faulkner gave the novel a new metaphysical dimension approaching that of the Greek classical tragedy. The only human victory possible is in the work of art.

Malraux was aware that not every novelist had as bleak a view of man and his destiny as he and Faulkner did and so, in his second speech, he set about converting his fellow writers. "La liberté qui compte pour l'artiste n'est pas la liberté de faire n'importe quoi," he told them, "c'est la liberté de faire ce qu'il veut faire et l'artiste . . . sait bien qu'en tant qu'artiste ce n'est pas dans son désaccord avec la civilisation qui l'entoure mais au contraire dans son accord avec elle qu'il trouvera la force de son génie" ("L'attitude de l'artiste":167). He clarified this point in the preface to Le temps du mépris, a novel which deals with what Malraux so aptly calls "l'univers concentrationnaire." "L'individu s'oppose à la collectivité," he says with an apparent regard for artistic freedom, "mais il s'en nourrit. Et l'important est bien moins de savoir à quoi il s'oppose que ce dont il se nourrit. . . . Toute vie psychologique est un échange, et le problème fondamental de la personne vivante, c'est de savoir de quoi elle entend se nourrir."²⁵ For Malraux then, even the individual psyche is not an independent entity and, whether he wants to or not, the artist

expresses his vision of some element in the world around him. Therefore, he would do better to choose what cause he is defending.

In his next speech, "L'oeuvre d'art," Malraux took the argument one step further. "Toute oeuvre d'art se crée pour satisfaire un besoin," he says, "mais un besoin assez passionné pour lui donner naissance. . . . Une oeuvre d'art, c'est un objet, mais c'est aussi une rencontre avec le temps. . . . Car toute oeuvre devient symbole et signe . . . ("L'oeuvre d'art":1365-66). Over and above its individual and social dimensions, a work of art has a symbolic dimension as it represents what distinguishes one artist and one society from another in the popular consciousness. Writers and artists are myth-makers who fashion our understanding of the universe.

The fourth speech, "Sur l'héritage culturel," is an impassioned expression of faith in the artist's power to liberate men.

L'art vit de sa fonction qui est de permettre aux hommes d'échapper à leur condition d'hommes, non par une évasion, mais par une possession, he says. Tout art est un moyen de possession du destin. Et l'héritage culturel n'est pas l'ensemble des oeuvres que les hommes doivent respecter, mais de celles qui peuvent les aider à vivre. ("Sur l'héritage culturel":1-2).

These speeches which carry the meditation on Faulkner to its logical conclusion express views from which Malraux never departed. In his conversation with André Parinaud in 1951, he stated that: "L'art est l'une des défenses fondamentales de l'homme contre le destin"²⁶ and, in a 1954 interview, he explained more clearly than ever before "le

prestige du roman" which, for him as for Faulkner, "vient peut-être de ce qu'il est devenu la forme d'art qui oppose le plus puissamment l'homme au destin."²⁷

VI.2. "Les traqués"

André Malraux's review of Michel Matveev's Les traqués, which had been published by Gallimard in December 1933, appeared in the N.R.F. on June 1st 1934. Michel Matveev, who was born in Russia in 1893, emigrated to France in the 1920's and, in addition to French translations of Lenin's letters, Lettres de Lénine à sa famille (1936) (in collaboration with Pierre Morhange) and of a novel, Klavdia (1946) by Nadezha Vasilévna Chertova, which he completed with the assistance of Diane Canivet, he wrote: a history of the Russian Revolution of 1905, Les hommes du 1905 Russe (1930), Les traqués (1933), La cité des peintres (1947) and Ailleurs, autrefois: roman (1959).

Malraux did not know Matveev and his review of Les traqués does not contain any details concerning the author. Instead, since he was interested in literature as an expression of historically- and geographically-determined experience, Malraux chose to introduce Matveev to his countrymen as a "new Russian voice." This review is brief and mainly concerned with the techniques that Matveev uses to transmit his Russian experience to the reader. What strikes Malraux is the way Matveev incorporates memories and recollections of brutal events into a work of fiction from which he nevertheless seems to remain remote.

Les traqués is an account of the trials and persecutions of the Grunwalds, a family of Jewish refugees. The first person narration begins with the description of the pogroms in Czarist Russia and continues the narrator's travels with his family to Odessa, Cairo,

Kichinev and Paris in search of a better life. In Paris, they are discriminated against as foreigners and, after a nightmarish series of tragedies, the family ultimately disintegrates. A final note of irony in this depressing and tragic tale takes the form of a letter from the narrator's sister in which she describes how happy she is in Russia.

Malraux's review of Les traqués treats the novel as an example of a new type of prose work which bears witness to the horrors of life in certain brutal and repressive régimes. In such works, he says, the writer's task is comparable to the cinematographer's in that, in a film, "montage" is the sole criterion of value and in a novel, it is the author's "choice of events" which counts. Therefore, although purely aesthetic concerns do not properly apply here, for Malraux "La faiblesse de tous ces livres, et de celui-ci, dès qu'ils échappent au souvenir . . . est que leur domaine semble à peine conciliable avec le récit. Volontairement ou non, leur rythme ignore le temps" (TM:1015). Malraux is, in fact, hard put to call Matveev's work a novel since it is composed of "une suite de tableaux coordonnés par une fatalité." Its most salient feature is "l'opposition des moyens dont l'écrivain se sert pour exprimer cette fatalité dans l'instant et dans le temps" (TM:1015) but, as a novelist himself, Malraux does not consider this an essentially novelistic technique. Thus while Malraux admires the strength and the skill of Matveev's technique saying:

Dans l'instant, ces moyens sont aigus. Matveev dispose de l'illusoire impassibilité qui permet de raconter des faits atroces avec rapidité et sans intervenir dans le récit, qui donne à ces faits un perpétuel caractère de raccourci; ce

raccourci lié à ce qu'il exprime . . . donne avec force la sensation d'une domination complète du drame par l'auteur, mais par un auteur invisible; et, permet, d'autre part, l'intrusion soudaine d'éléments inattendus qui donne aux romans l'étrange indépendance par quoi vit une fiction. (TM:1015)

Nevertheless Malraux is not sure if these qualities compensate for what he considers Matveev's basic weakness. "Dans le temps, ces moyens sont beaucoup plus faibles," he comments. As a result: "ce récit qui ignore le temps aboutit, ici comme dans le roman russe de la période de guerre civile, non à une durée mais à scènes" (TM:1015). For Malraux, time is an essential element in a novel, time and a sense of commitment. "Le jour où Matveev substituera à ses souvenirs ou à ses impressions une volonté préméditée," he says, "il écrira un livre exceptionnellement poignant. Aujourd'hui, il apporte en France un son qui n'y a guère été entendu" (TM:1015).

In order to give the reader a sample of Matveev's novel, Malraux quotes a rather lengthy passage from Chapter 14 of Les traqués, "La nuit à la préfecture." It is an emotionally-charged passage which describes how the prisoners lose all self-respect under repeated torture and humiliation. This vision of man as: "Trouble, non élucidée encore, violente, incertaine, aventureuse comme celle de la Renaissance et peut-être féconde comme elle" is, for Malraux: "la plus féconde, en tout cas, de toutes celles qui nous pressent sourdement" (TM:1016). In many ways, it prepares us for the universe of Le temps du mépris.

On the whole, Malraux's review is a sound assessment of the strengths and the weaknesses of Les traqués but it fails to mention

obvious contradictions in the story and its unrealistic plot sequences.²⁸ His advice is given with all the "assurance" of an experienced and successful writer with several published novels behind him and, while he specifically praises those themes and techniques of Les traqués which are similar to his own, Malraux is also doubly harsh when Matveev's weaknesses correspond with his own. The basic distinction between the cruel world of Matveev's Les traqués and the universe portrayed in Malraux's works is that Malraux's imaginary world contains heroes whereas Matveev knew no heroes and wrote of none.

In his review of Matveev's Les traqués, Malraux makes a brief reference to two points which he will develop at greater length in his later works. Firstly, Malraux's comparison of the writer's choice of events to the cinematographer's art of "montage" foreshadows ideas developed more fully in his Esquisse d'une psychologie du cinéma (1946) well after he had applied them in his own novel, La condition humaine. Secondly, his comments that a writer can obtain direct experience of tragedy in the many countries where violence abounds, as, for example Spain, suggests that the setting of his 1937 novel L'espoir has already attracted his attention. Also, some of the ideas first expressed in this review are treated in greater detail in "De la représentation en Occident et en Extrême-Orient" which later became La psychologie de l'art (1947). "Le roman est la fiction la plus claire," he writes there:

Entre la vie et sa représentation, la différence, c'est la suppression du destin. . . . Destin recouvre ici quelque chose de précis: la conscience qu'a l'homme de ce qui lui est

étranger et de ce qui l'entraîne, du cosmos dans ce qu'il a d'indifférent et dans ce qu'il a de mortel; l'univers et le temps,--la terre et la mort. . . . Mais c'est la nature même de l'art de vouloir posséder espace, temps et possible, et de savoir qu'il y parvient seulement en les arrachant au monde que l'homme subit pour les faire entrer dans celui qu'il gouverne, en changeant un destin en signification. . . . Et cette signification est plus forte que la multiplicité du monde, cette signification seule permet à l'homme la conquête du chaos et la possession du destin. . . . Un style est la réduction du monde à une signification particulière.²⁹

Clearly fate and style are not only the keys to Malraux's works but also to his artistic credo. Matveev's shortcoming was that, although his book abounds in examples of one family's unhappy fate, as a writer, Matveev did not fashion them into a stylistically significant statement about man's lot.

In the words of Henri Peyre:

In the pregnant review Malraux gave of Les traqués ("The Hunted Down") by the Russian Michael Matveev, the recent Goncourt laureate spurned the temptation to bask in the security of his success and to turn into a candidate for academic honors: a metamorphosis that Mauriac, Cocteau himself, and Green would not reject and that was the pitfall open before Camus when death carried him away. Quietude is the enemy whose insidious lure is to be guarded against. "Man is an unknown animal who believed he could know himself in quietude. Let the drama be

unleashed, and he discovers his power of dreaming, his specific
madness."³⁰

He dared to question, take sides and run the risks commitment demands.
Matveev did not.

VI.3. "Journal d'un homme de quarante ans"

On January 1st 1935, the section "Essays and Memoirs" of the N.R.F. carried a review by André Malraux of Jean Guéhenno's Journal d'un homme de quarante ans which had been published in 1934 by Grasset. Marcel (Jean) Guéhenno was born in 1890 in Fougères, Brittany. He attended the prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. At the same time, he was attracted to journalism and, before the Second World War, became editor of the left-wing international review, Europe. He was appointed Inspector General of Public Education in 1945. In spite of his elitist education, Guéhenno remained faithful to his proletarian origins and attempted to reconcile the aspirations of the working class with the value system of the prevailing bourgeois culture. His writings, whether they were essays discussing religion or contemporary affairs or critical examinations of Rousseau and Michelet, were primarily autobiographical in nature and include: Caliban parle (1929); Conversion à l'humain (1931); Journal d'un homme de quarante ans (1934); Jeunesse de la France (1936); Journal d'une "révolution" (1937-38); Journal des années noires (1946); Jean-Jacques (1948-52); Aventures de l'esprit (1954); La foi difficile (1957); Sur le chemin des hommes (1959); Changer la vie (1961). He was elected a member of the French Academy in 1962.

In a letter to Romain Rolland dated September 18, 1930, Jean Guéhenno mentions that he became friendly with Malraux after he was introduced to him by Daniel Halévy a few years earlier.³¹ Halévy and Rolland were socialists and closely associated with Péguy's Cahiers de

la Quinzaine. Guéhenno discusses Malraux at length in one of the last books he published before his death in 1978, Carnets du vieil écrivain (1971) and it is clear that he considered him a spokesman for his whole generation:

Il y avait Malraux, un peu énigmatique, dont on ne connaissait pas le pays mais qui pouvait être de partout. Il y avait en lui de l'aventurier, et cela gênait un peu, mais quand il donna pour titre à l'un de ses romans ces mots: La condition humaine, beaucoup d'entre nous y virent, quelquefois avec un peu d'envie, un signe de cette espèce de génie rapide qu'il a. Il avait trouvé d'emblée les mots qui disaient le mieux ce qui avait été pour nous tous l'objet de nos soucis et de nos efforts et publiait le livre que, tous, nous avions rêvé d'écrire. Je sus, en le lisant, un peu plus précisément où j'en étais et le dis.³²

In Carnets du vieil écrivain, Guéhenno, speaking directly to Malraux, suggested that, in some ways, the book fell short of his expectations. "Si je ne songe qu'à la frénésie de notre temps, si je me laisse prendre par elle," he says, "je suis bien tenté de vous donner raison, de penser de la condition humaine précisément ce que vous en pensez" (Carnets:162). He is moved by the protagonists of La condition humaine who struggle, each in isolation, to justify their existence by heroic acts:

Tout le tragique du livre tenait ainsi dans les efforts que font quelques héros: Tchen, Katow, Kyo, pour échapper à la condition humaine, se dépasser eux-mêmes, enfin devenir

dieux. . . . Et c'est là que je croyais voir la vraie grandeur, mais aussi les limites de cette oeuvre. Tous les personnages qui y apparaissent sont de quelque manière exceptionnels, et l'on y apprend plutôt comment on devrait vivre que comment on vit. (Carnets:161)

Thus the book's strength is also its weakness since the great majority of men are not heroic.

For Malraux, the genre "par excellence" is the philosophical novel in which exceptional individuals possessed enough will power and energy to defy fate. For Guéhenno, the solution lies elsewhere, in the humble adventure of the simplest of men:

Mais il arrive, he says to Malraux, que, las de cette frénésie, de ce fracas assourdissant que fait le monde, j'adresse à je ne sais quelles puissances inconnues une prière pour qu'elles m'accordent un peu de silence, le temps de vivre en moi un moment. . . . Je pense à notre condition et c'est quelque chose qui me fait mal. . . . Vous souvenez-vous de cet "héroïsme discret" dont parle Nietzsche? Eh bien, contre Nietzsche qui le réservait à ses surhommes, contre vous peut-être, j'incline à penser que presque tous les hommes finissent par être ces héros discrets. . . . J'en suis venu à penser que la vie quotidienne des hommes ordinaires peut être plus héroïque que la vie des héros. Les héros ont de la chance; ils ont la ressource de la bombe, du revolver, de l'opium, de l'aventure. La plupart des hommes n'ont rien. . . . La condition humaine? Une bataille perdue

d'avance qu'il faut pourtant livrer tous les jours comme si on devait la gagner. Vous avez raison: les hommes ne peuvent supporter la condition qui leur est faite, mais ils la supportent tout de même. Les actions violentes assurent à vos héros une sorte d'absence. . . .

Quant à moi, j'ai décidé de ne pas faire le dieu . . . pour des raisons tout humaines. Homme médiocre, lié par ma chair et mon esprit à des hommes aussi médiocres que moi-même, je sais que tout ce que nous avons à vaincre est cette médiocrité. . . . La solution sera médiocre, je le sais, cher Malraux. L'accepter est peut-être le plus grand courage.

(Carnets:163-64)

The response is eloquent, but the figure of Malraux nevertheless looms much larger in French literature than that of Guéhenno.

Malraux's personal relationship with Guéhenno notwithstanding, his goal in reviewing the Journal d'un homme de quarante ans was no doubt to reiterate the reservations concerning autobiography he had already expressed in his reviews of the works of Sorel, Hellens and Keyserling. Thus, in his review of Guéhenno's Journal d'un homme de quarante ans, he examines once again the advantages and disadvantages of a genre which Guéhenno had used to discuss the theme which ran through all of his own works, namely, man's search to restore his dignity and fraternity when faced with an adverse fate.

Journal d'un homme de quarante ans is the diary of a man who, after a happy childhood in the country, is "initiated" into the hardships of life in the city. As a scholarship student at the Ecole Normale

Supérieure, he becomes familiar with the ideas of a number of the most influential writers of his time, in particular Romain Rolland, Jaurès, Barrès, Gide and Nietzsche. After active combat duty in the war, disillusionment sets in and he is too sceptical to seek refuge in his mother's pious resignation, too bitter to accept his father's belief in political action. Instead, Guéhenno relates, he turned to learning, teaching and writing, believing that the key to man's salvation lay within himself. Guéhenno's memoirs are therefore more than a simple autobiography for they express his profound belief in humanistic values and his deep sense of compassion for his fellow man.

As a personal friend, Malraux was no doubt aware of Guéhenno's previously published works, but no mention of them is made in his analysis of the Journal d'un homme de quarante ans. He discusses the author's intentions and his choice of "genre," claiming from the outset that the book in question is really not a diary: "Journal? Non. En rien. Ni mémoires, ni même confession" (GJ:148) and then proceeds to examine the elements in the Journal which distinguish it from the above genres. As he has done in reviewing any work of a personal nature, he questions whether the format chosen by Guéhenno is the one best suited to the message he has to deliver.

Malraux notes that, traditionally, autobiography attempted to increase one's knowledge of man through the discovery of the underlying laws of psychology and philosophy. In other words, study of the individual leads to knowledge of the general and man's "hidden self" is revealed. As Malraux explains it:

Cette connaissance s'exprimait toujours à travers une série de

lois: des "lois de l'amour" à celles du refoulement, la démarche de l'esprit est la même; et elle trouvait surtout sa force en ce qu'elle était la recherche du caché, lequel était . . . supposé identique à la fois au vrai et à l'essentiel. Il y a pas mal de siècles qu'on croit que l'homme est d'abord ce qu'il cache. (GJ:148)

However, Malraux says that when Freud plumbed the psyche, he went beyond whatever knowledge the artist could hope to impart and, more importantly, that psychoanalysis is not the domain of art. As he explains:

L'artiste se demande . . . quel est son domaine propre, quelle est, notamment, sa connaissance; si elle est, autant qu'il le crut, une élucidation psychologique. Il s'aperçoit qu'elle est avant tout celle d'un jugement porté sur la vie par un esprit d'une qualité et d'un ordre particuliers: une expérience, au sens où ce mot a déjà un son amer de vieillesse. (GJ:149)

Thus, for Malraux, twentieth century writers must abandon forever diaries, autobiographies and even the traditional "roman d'analyse" in order to deal with the moral and metaphysical questions which are paramount in the 1930's.

Malraux realizes that Guéhenno's work is more than just a "journal," that it expresses a philosophy and a commitment uncommon in published diaries. "Chacune de ces pages fait partie d'une action," he affirms, "montrer que 'l'âme d'un pauvre homme, comme celle du plus grand artiste, peut contenir tout l'infini'" (GJ:150). However, for Malraux, its eloquent plea for a new order would have been much more

powerful had it been dealt with in a work of fiction and particularly, in a novel.

Malraux's opinion that the autobiographical form "paralyzes" Guéhenno and limits his effectiveness is then in actual fact a defence of his own choice to express a similar vision in the novel form. An author who continually says "I" is limited to a single point of view, he claims and, in the following passage, he goes so far as to say that such material virtually demands to be treated in fictional form:

Il semble à plusieurs pages que Guéhenno s'achemine clandestinement vers le roman qui lui permettrait de traduire avec plus d'intensité tout ce à quoi il tient. Il s'agit seulement de savoir s'il peut passer des fragments narratifs, parfaits mais très courts, de ce Journal, à un récit dans la durée. Et il est clair que si la fiction donnait à ce Journal la troisième dimension qui lui manque, si l'auteur, qui dit je, devenait personnage, échappait par le concret au style soutenu, au caractère fatalement linéaire de la prédication pure, le livre s'approfondirait: l'absolu de Guéhenno ne le rend pas plus fort, mais plus faible. (GJ:149-150)

As is so often the case, Malraux's comments stem from a fundamentally antagonistic view of the importance of the individual in society and in literature. In Malraux's opinion, personal confession is "un misérable petit tas de secrets" and leads to no solution of the problem enunciated. As he said much later in life: "J'ai peu et mal appris à me créer moi-même, si se créer, c'est s'accommoder de cette auberge sans routes qui s'appelle la vie. J'ai su quelquefois agir, mais l'intérêt

de l'action, sauf lorsqu'elle s'élève à l'histoire, est dans ce qu'on fait et non dans ce qu'on dit. Je ne m'intéresse guère."³³ Memoirs as a genre do not interest him either for, he continues:

J'admire les confessions que nous appelons Mémoires, mais elles ne me retiennent qu'à demi. Il reste que l'analyse de l'individu, outre l'action qu'elle exerce sur nous lorsqu'elle est celle d'un grand artiste, nourrit une action de l'esprit qui m'intéressait fort au temps de [ma] conversation avec Valéry: réduire au minimum sa part de comédie. Il s'agit alors de la conquête de chacun sur un monde romanesque. (Le miroir des limbes:7)

His position is clear and does not vary: fiction and fiction alone can deal adequately with metaphysical problems.

Unlike Malraux, Jean Guéhenno claims that fiction gives us a false picture of the world and that any solutions to man's condition must begin with self-analysis. In the introduction to his Journal d'un homme de quarante ans, he explains his choice of genre in terms which Malraux could well have considered a direct challenge to him. "Je ne consignerai ici que ma propre histoire," Guéhenno begins,

Et il me déplairait cependant que ce livre parût n'être qu'une autobiographie. . . . Mais une assez longue pratique des livres des autres m'a convaincu que nous n'avions guère qu'une chose à dire, et c'est nous-mêmes. Nous faisons mille simagrées, mille grimaces, pour paraître dire autre chose. C'est vainement. . . . [Car] chacun ne fait jamais que porter témoignage. Et puis j'ai conscience d'appartenir à une espèce

commune de l'humanité et cela m'aide à croire qu'en parlant de moi, je parlerai aussi des autres.³⁴

Thus, although both writers see the human condition in like fashion, they disagree with each other's solutions to man's dilemma as well as with the choice of genre most appropriate to express them.

VI.4. "Sans reprendre haleine"

On November 1st 1935, one month after the publication by Gallimard of the French translation of Ilya Ehrenburg's Sans reprendre haleine, the N.R.F. published a review of the novel by André Malraux. Ilya Grigorievitch Ehrenburg, who was born in Kiev in 1891, wrote poetry and novels which combine stinging satire of capitalistic Europe and corrosive cynicism about the Revolution in his own country. From Verses about the Eves (1916) through The Extraordinary Adventures of Julio Jurenito and his Disciples (1922) and Trust D. E. (1923) to Ryach (The Grabber) (1925), Ehrenburg was critical of both Eastern and Western European political systems but, when he was sent to Paris as correspondent for Izvestia in 1930 and witnessed the rise of fascism, he chose to side with the East against the West. His novels of the 1930's praise Soviet economic and foreign policy. The Second Day (1934) and Without Taking Breath (1935) lauded the five-year plans and, in What a Man Needs (1937), Ehrenburg glorified the Soviet role in the Spanish resistance. The Second World War was the subject of a pro-Soviet trilogy: The Fall of Paris (1941), The Storm (1947) and The Ninth Wave (1952) and, in the fifties, Ehrenburg was one of the first Soviet writers to criticize the moral climate created by Stalinism (The Thaw, 1954). His memoirs, Men-Years-Life (1961-65), published shortly before his death in Moscow in 1967, provide a rich testimony to a half century of literary life in the U.S.S.R.

In the early 1920's, Ehrenburg had been a contributor to two

avant-garde reviews in which Malraux had published: Action (1920-22) and Signaux de France et de Belgique (1921) but his first meeting with Malraux did not occur until 1932. His first impressions of Malraux and of Gide whom he met at approximately the same time, were far from favourable. "André Gide was then sixty," he reminisces, "André Malraux was about thirty, but they both seemed to me, by turns, adolescents who had not yet tasted grief, and old men poisoned not by alcohol or nicotine, but by book-addiction." Later, after his relationship with Malraux developed, he wrote: "He is a man who is always in the grip of a single absorbing passion. I knew him during the period of his infatuation with the East, then Dostoyevsky and Faulkner, then with the brotherhood of the workers and the revolution." Evidently, Ehrenburg's interest in Malraux increased as Malraux's political views swung to the left so that ultimately he could say: "During eight years, in Paris and in Spain, he [Malraux] was invariably at my side, he was my close friend."³⁵

In May 1933, Ehrenburg wrote a review of La condition humaine for the Soviet newspaper Izvestia and, like Trotsky, he objected to the book for political reasons. In Ehrenburg's eyes, the book was not about the Revolution, but the story of a group of conspirators who were "exalted romantics" and who "suffered needlessly."³⁶ Despite this seemingly negative criticism, in his memoirs Ehrenburg admits to a certain satisfaction with the success of the book, albeit for political and not literary reasons: "I saw, however, that Malraux was moving towards real life and I was glad when rather conventional writers awarded him the Prix Goncourt: the committee was influenced by the circumstances of the

day--France was shifting to the left."³⁷ He saw, with unerring accuracy, that in certain situations a non-Communist was a better advocate for the new society than a card-carrying member of the Party could ever be.

Ehrenburg's recollections of his relationship with Malraux's focus for the most part on the anti-fascist literary meetings that they both attended in the thirties. He mentions that André and Clara Malraux³⁸ accompanied him to Moscow in June 1934 and remained until the Congress of Soviet Writers which took place in August. He also discusses their joint participation in the Congress of Writers held in Paris at the "Palais de la Mutualité" in 1935, their trip to Madrid for the First International Writer's Congress in 1937 and their attendance at the last International Anti-Fascist Conference in Paris in 1939. When the German-Soviet pact was signed on August 23, 1939, Ehrenburg was under constant surveillance by the French but, he relates gratefully, Malraux continued to visit him regularly.³⁹

Malraux's fascination with foreign literature, his travels in the Soviet Union and his knowledge of at least two of Ehrenburg's earlier works as well as those of a number of other Russian and Soviet writers,⁴⁰ made him the obvious choice as reviewer of the translation of Sans reprendre haleine. Yet many people must have been shocked at the extent of his advocacy for Soviet and Russian literature for, in an interview which he gave in Moscow, Malraux suggested that there was a bias against Soviet literature in France and that translators of Soviet works were even more poorly paid than other translators. "Vous dites que les versions françaises des textes de Zoshshenko, de Babel, de

Pilniak sont également déformées," the interviewer asks: "Quelle en est la raison?" "L'avarice," Malraux replies, "Joyce, par exemple, n'est pas moins difficile, mais on l'a magnifiquement traduit. Pour la traduction d'un roman russe, on paye deux mille francs. Avec de tels honoraires, il faut terminer la traduction en deux mois, si l'on ne veut pas mourir de faim. Alors?"⁴¹

Sans reprendre haleine paints a vast tableau of life in the Soviet Union seventeen years after the Russian Revolution. In it Ehrenburg contends that it is possible to achieve personal happiness within the Soviet system and that everyone, from artists like Lydia Nikolaevna and Kouzmine and scientists like Ivan Nikitovitch to simple farmers and factory workers, is eventually satisfied with his life. The narrative, recounted in direct unsophisticated language, is rich in events and, as the title suggests, unfolds quickly. Ehrenburg's message is transmitted to the reader through his choice of characters who are not individuals but collective heroes. The workers sing partisan songs: "Du passé faisons table rase," the sawmill operates by "la volonté des hommes" and the following description of Moscow conveys the novel's spirit of collective hope and renewal:

Moscou n'existait pas encore, on la [sic] faisait à chaque pas. Les communistes, les architectes, les maçons, les poètes l'inventaient à nouveau; et même les enfants, en l'inaugurant dans les squares des jeux mystérieux [sic]. Et même les moineaux, les plus anciens habitants de Moscou, pépiaient, semblait-il, d'une nouvelle manière.⁴²

This enthusiastic portrayal of the new order suggests that the Soviets

are well on their way to creating a socialist Utopia. "The critics received this book [Sans reprendre haleine] far more favourably than my previous ones," Ehrenburg recounts in his memoirs, but, he adds: "Personally I do not think it very good: I put into it a lot of what had found no place in The Second Day, and without noticing it, I had repeated myself."⁴³

Malraux's criticism of the work is of a special nature for he speaks almost exclusively of its documentary value. Beginning quite traditionally, Malraux compares Sans reprendre haleine to Ehrenburg's earlier works and then to traditional Western novels. He repeats what he had said in the June 1934 interview when he had remarked that he found Ehrenburg's novel, The Second Day (1934), particularly interesting for the new information it contained about the Soviet way of life,⁴⁴ adding that what particularly strikes him in Sans reprendre haleine is "la participation à l'exaltation qui anime le pays" (IE:772). Comparing Ehrenburg's technique in his latest novel to his work in Rapace, Malraux finds that in both cases there is "un système prémédité d'expression par les faits, à quoi les autres moyens d'expression sont subordonnés" (IE:772). This is characteristic of social realism of course and, in Malraux's opinion, a critic would be totally biased if he judged such a work by Western criteria or even in relation to traditional nineteenth century Russian literature which owes so much to Western values and practice. As Malraux puts it:

L'expressionnisme violent de Dostoïevsky nous a habitués à attendre des Russes une littérature à la fois psychologique et pathétique, une littérature écartelée qui repose, comme la

nôtre, sur la volonté dogmatique de sa création. . . . Et, alors que nos littératures cherchent dans le trait révélateur le moyen de la multiplicité et de l'existence propre du personnage, la littérature soviétique le cherche dans le trait significatif. (IE:770)

Soviet critics tend not to make such comparisons so that Malraux's comments strike a new note in Ehrenburg criticism.

Malraux believes that the differences between Soviet and Western literature can be attributed to the societies which produced them, that is, to environment. He asserts that aging Western society is stable and unmoving whereas Soviet society is in the dynamic early stages of development and that, as a result, recent Western novelists depict what distinguishes one individual from another while Soviet novelists portray man as a typical product of the society in which he lives:

Le romancier occidental choisit donc ses traits à partir du type, vers l'individu; le romancier soviétique, au contraire, est obligé de rendre possédable par l'esprit le chaos de sa société en formation: toute littérature tend, entre autres choses, à la possession du monde. Pour cela, il choisit des traits collectifs. Non pas communs à tous; significatifs d'un certain nombre. Nous découvrons essentiellement l'autre en notre chaos intérieur et le soviétique le découvre dans le chaos de ce qui l'entoure. (IE:770-771)

This curious convergence of his own anti-individualist stance and Soviet aesthetics makes Malraux sound like a social realist which, of course, he is not.

To illustrate his case, Malraux compares Balzac's novels with Ehrenburg's. "Balzac," he says, "comme les écrivains soviétiques d'aujourd'hui, se trouve en face d'un monde 'à inventorier,' et comme eux, il fut d'abord contraint aux types. Mais, pour lui, l'homme vaut par sa volonté (à tel point que souvent l'expression artistique de la passion est chez lui la même que celle de la volonté)" (IE:771). Thus while, in one sense, Balzac did for nineteenth century French society what Ehrenburg is doing for twentieth century Soviet society, in another sense, there is nevertheless a vast difference between the two writers. For Balzac, individual passion automatically pits man against society. For Ehrenburg, man is the expression of the general will. But, adds Malraux, "Aucun écrivain soviétique n'a encore trouvé l'accord entre le monde qu'il veut posséder et le sentiment qui serait le moyen de sa possession, entre sa Comédie humaine et son Rastignac" (IE:771). Thus, whatever Malraux's ideological commitment may be, as an artist he is still on the side of Balzac, judging novelists both by their vision and their craft.

Malraux also criticizes other weaknesses of Ehrenburg's work. According to Malraux, Sans reprendre haleine, concentrates on the Soviet world rather than on the individual characters who inhabit it and focuses on facts instead of individual feelings. He perceives, quite correctly, that socialist realism requires authors to treat all characters as if they were romantic heroes and that "La formule 'réalisme socialiste' a un tout autre son dans un pays où le romantisme purement mythologique de l'Occident n'a presque pas existé" (IE:771). In so saying, Malraux questions both the credibility of Ehrenburg's

characters and his "realism" and his conclusion, that the main value of Sans reprendre haleine lies in its success in portraying Soviet life, is, in actual fact, a condemnation of Soviet ideology and aesthetics.

Malraux's critique of Ehrenburg's Sans reprendre haleine is one of his better reviews because it deals with a subject that he has researched well and that is close to his heart. When, much later, Ehrenburg expressed his dissatisfaction with his novel Without Taking Breath which, he said, was "written in a rather immature style, with deliberate simplification"⁴⁵ and contained a "multiplicity of characters rather than a main hero, swift changes of scene and short sentences all of which contribute to a certain kaleidoscopic impression,"⁴⁶ his comments seem to owe much to Malraux's prior criticism and conversely to be equally applicable to Malraux's own novels.

Here as elsewhere, Malraux's critical judgment is a clear reflection of his own novel-writing experience, of the difficulty he encountered in discovering the forms appropriate to the ideas he wished to express. In Malraux's view, the world is formless, life has no logic and is filled with contradictions. It is the artist's task to give shape to the shapeless. "Le monde, en lui-même," he says, "est sans forme et le premier devoir de l'artiste, du peintre, consiste à trouver la forme, à choisir les matériaux nécessaires. Et ce choix est conditionné par l'idéologie qui joue le rôle de lunettes à travers lesquelles l'artiste observe le monde." Malraux even believes that, by so doing, the artist can cure man of the ills which oppress his divided soul, adding that: "La différence entre la vie et la conception que nous en avons, se détermine à l'aide de raisonnements logiques, mais

cela produit souvent en nous un état presque maladif et seule la reconstruction artistique de la réalité peut mener à la réconciliation de telles oppositions."⁴⁷ These statements which enunciate Malraux's faith in the social mission of art also show that, unlike the social realists who embellished what was by hiding the warts on the workers faces, Malraux invented heroes for us to emulate in order to create a better world.

When Malraux stated, in his 1934 interview, that the traditional Western novel was "dead," he meant that it did not even attempt to solve our problems as social realism did. "La psychologie, dans son expression artistique, dépasse toujours les limites de la logique," he says: "Plus l'idéologie est idéaliste ou abstraite, plus aiguës seront les contradictions logiques. Le matérialisme, ou la conception vivante de l'univers, réduit au minimum la différence entre logique et psychologie."⁴⁸ By turning away from the psychological and from Flaubert's aestheticism and reading Soviet literature to discover whether socialist realism was the answer, Malraux had discovered not only to what extent his political, philosophic and artistic goals were similar to those of Soviet writers but also, and more importantly, how he differed from them. Once again, criticism was the route to self-discovery.

VI.5. "Les nouvelles nourritures"

The N.R.F. published Malraux's last review, a critique of André Gide's Les nouvelles nourritures (1935), on December 1st 1935 in the section on "La Poésie." The fact that Malraux's final book review should have been on Gide was particularly fitting since it was Malraux's 1922 article, "Quelques aspects d'André Gide," which led to their initial encounter and undoubtedly helped launch Malraux's literary career and assure his association with the N.R.F.⁴⁹

In our analysis of Malraux's 1922 and 1923 articles on Gide, we emphasized that, at that time, Malraux was in the position of the young disciple in awe of his older and wiser "mentor," Gide. When Malraux wrote his review of Les nouvelles nourritures in 1935, twelve years had passed and, in addition to his being an accomplished and successful writer--he had won the Prix Goncourt in 1933--Malraux was more mature and his critical intelligence and knowledge of Gide's works had improved vastly. More importantly, as their friendship became more intimate, a role reversal took place so that, in later years, Gide's social and political ideas were more influenced by Malraux than Malraux's by Gide.

To document the Gide-Malraux relationship, we have relied on three primary sources, namely: Clara Malraux's memoirs, Le bruit de nos pas and particularly Volumes II and IV, Gide's own Journal and Les cahiers de la Petite Dame: Notes pour l'histoire authentique d'André Gide, the notebook about Gide and his entourage that Mme Théo Van Rysselberghe, Gide's lifelong friend, kept from 1918 to 1951. Clara Malraux's memoirs

place Gide in their circle of friends as early as 1921 and describe their close contact in the early 1930's. The foremost trait that she noted was Gide's high regard for Malraux's intelligence. "Son admiration pour André allait jusqu'à l'épouvante," wrote Clara.⁵⁰

Gide's personal recollections of his relationship with Malraux are to be found in his Journal between the dates 1928 and 1948. His comments suggest that the rapport was both literary and political. His first observations concern the study of Montaigne he was preparing for Malraux's Histoire de la littérature. He later comments that Malraux's "zeal" and "good taste" contributed to the success of his [Gide's] Voyage au Congo and says that he could never adequately express his gratitude for Malraux's aid in publishing his Oeuvres complètes. He also mentions Malraux's visits to him during the Spanish Civil War and again in 1941 when he and Malraux both lived on the Côte d'Azur.⁵¹ Gide's Journal is filled with comments about Malraux's "extraordinary eloquence" in his speeches to revolutionary writers and he even remarks that in the presence of Malraux and Valéry, he did not feel very intelligent:

André Malraux, de même que Valéry, sa grande force est de se soucier fort peu s'il essouffle, ou lasse, ou "sème" celui qui l'écoute et qui n'a guère d'autre souci (lorsque celui qui l'écoute, c'est moi) que de paraître suivre, plutôt que de suivre vraiment. C'est pourquoi toute conversation avec ces deux amis reste, pour moi du moins, quelque peu mortifiante, et j'en ressors plutôt accablé qu'exalté. (Journal I:1254)

Given Gide's great intellect and his interest in a tremendous variety of

subjects, the praise is all the more remarkable.

In fact, it was Gide's admiration for Malraux's intelligence that led him to share his political ideology. Mme Théo Van Rysselberghe's notebooks describe the close relationship which existed between Malraux and Gide from 1929 to 1938 during which time politics cemented their relationship. Mme Théo recounts how André and Clara introduced German intellectuals who took refuge in France to French writers, among them André Gide, and how Gide and Malraux both travelled to Berlin in 1934 to deliver to Goebbels petitions on behalf of Thaelmann and Dimitrov.⁵² Their experiences in the French colonies, Malraux's in Indochina and Gide's in Africa, had stirred their consciences and awakened their sympathies for the victims of the colonial system, a view they shared with the communists but, like Malraux, Gide showed no interest in the theories of Marx and refused to become a member of the Communist party.⁵³ They did however discuss strategies and party activities, they rehearsed their speeches in each other's presence and prepared together for the Congress of Anti-Fascist Writers in Paris in 1935.⁵⁴ Both writers eventually became disillusioned with Soviet communism, Gide after his return from the U.S.S.R. (Retour de l'U.R.S.S., 1936) and Malraux, after the Spanish Civil War in 1939.

Mme Théo's diary also records Gide's opinions of Malraux's early works. According to her notes, Gide did not like Les conquérants because his own mind was "peu historique" and because he considered that the novel lacked style (Les cahiers 1:383-84). She observed that Gide disliked La voie royale also. He referred to it as "un roman raté" and explained his opinion as follows: "son style défectueux, impossible,

tient pour une grand part, je crois au mépris qu'il a pour le lecteur; c'est une grosse faute de psychologie pour un écrivain" (Les cahiers 2:121). As for Le temps du mépris, although Gide was interested in the topic of torture in German prisons, he found the book disappointing (Les cahiers 2:417, 435). Mme Théo sums up Gide's remarks about Malraux as follows:

Certes, je ne doute pas qu'il ait l'étoffe d'un grand homme; à mes yeux son prestige est grand, très réel mais je ne pense pas qu'il devienne un grand écrivain. Il n'a pas une bonne langue, il ne connaît pas d'instinct son métier, et il aboutit malgré tout à une pseudo-écriture d'artiste. Je lui fais là-dessus toutes les remarques utiles, mais il y a des choses qu'on ne peut pas dire . . . moi, ça coupe l'émotion qu'il veut produire. (Les cahiers 2:446)

It is obvious that, for Gide, style is the hallmark of the great writer but it must be said to his eternal credit that eventually he came to understand and appreciate a style as unlike his own as one can imagine. Writing of La condition humaine in his Journal, Gide can say in all honesty that:

Ce livre qui, en revue, m'apparaissait touffu à l'excès, rebutant à force de richesse et presque incompréhensible à force de complexité . . . me semble, à le relire d'un trait, parfaitement clair, ordonné dans la confusion, d'une intelligence admirable et, malgré cela (je veux dire: malgré l'intelligence), profondément enfoncé dans la vie, engagé, et pantelant d'une angoisse parfois insoutenable. (Journal

1:1165)

On the other hand, Gide is very critical of La lutte avec l'Ange and in particular of its style.

J'espérais qu'il aurait mené à plus de perfection son récit, he says: on y trouve encore beaucoup à reprendre et cela reste, si prenant que cela soit, très loin de ce que cela aurait pu et dû être. Souvent, trop souvent, il n'emploie pas les mots qu'il faudrait, et nombre de phrases restent si imparfaites, si ambiguës, qu'on souhaiterait les récrire, ou lui dire ce que, enfant, raconte-t-il, il eût voulu dire, caché derrière un pupitre, à l'Académie, aux "Grands Auteurs:" "Allons! recommencez-moi ça." Je pourrais citer maintes phrases d'une syntaxe indéfendable. (Journal 2:272)

Gide also points out the grammatical errors in the Psychologie de l'art and recommends that Malraux consult Grevisse's Bon Usage (Journal 2:325). Gide's criticisms did not surprise Malraux. In Les chênes qu'on abat, Malraux admits: "La création artistique m'a toujours intéressé plus que la perfection. D'où mon constant désaccord avec André Gide."⁵⁵ In short, they agreed to a large extent on substantive issues but not on stylistic ones.

After the first volume of Gide's Journal: 1889-1939 was published in 1939, Malraux complained to Roger Stéphane that Gide had not written much about him or his work.⁵⁶ Gide responded by publishing a glowing article, "André Malraux, l'aventure humaine," in which he captured, as well as any critic before or since, the essence of Malraux's writing and the peculiar nature of his appeal to his readers:

Cette noblesse naturelle, cette grandeur secrète, cette conscience de la dignité humaine, je les retrouve partout, dans l'oeuvre de Malraux, et c'est aussi le trait le plus marquant de sa propre figure; par où il nous conquiert dès l'abord, puis nous retient et nous subjugue. L'homme qu'il peint dans ses livres n'est enfin plus cette créature déchue, seule et résignée dont nous voyons l'abjection complaisamment étalée dans nombre d'oeuvres d'hier et d'aujourd'hui. . . .

Et le mot aventure reprend avec lui son plein sens, le plus beau, le plus riche, le plus humain. Le rôle assumé par lui n'est-il pas de redonner à l'homme et de reconquérir pour lui les titres effacés d'une noblesse méconnue? Malraux s'éprend de la belle et tragique aventure humaine, la court lui-même et dans chacune de ses oeuvres la redit et nous en instruit. . . .

Et que m'importe dès lors si cela pourrait être mieux dit. Malraux n'a pas, ne cherche pas le style lapidaire. Il écrit à plume abattue; et, comme souvent dans sa conversation, on s'essouffle un peu à le suivre. Et parfois sa phrase s'empêtre dans un trop abondant foisonnement d'images, de sensations, d'émotions et d'idées. Car peu nous importerait l'aventure humaine si la sensibilité la plus frémissante et l'intelligence la plus ouverte, la plus générale, la plus généreuse ne s'y trouvaient à la fois engagées. . . .

Pour importante que soit son activité, c'est pourtant par ses livres que Malraux nous réjouit et nous touche; et, par eux, encore il agit; par eux, il prend prise sur nous, et nous

exalte, et nous engage. Je les rouvre souvent et c'est toujours pour y puiser de belles raisons d'aimer la vie. . . . Tandis que tant d'autres aujourd'hui s'ingénient à déprécier l'humanité, Malraux spontanément la magnifie et je pense que les jeunes lui en gardent, comme je fais, reconnaissance. . . .⁵⁷

Although Malraux had not read these lines when he wrote his review of Les nouvelles nourritures in 1935, he was nevertheless inclined to present his friend's work in the best possible light and he was also interested in examining the relationship between a writer's fictional and non-fictional works as he had already done in the Hellens and Guéhenno reviews.

Les nouvelles nourritures was written to amplify Les nourritures terrestres (1897) and it is addressed to the same Nathanaël. The work consists of passages of poetry, anecdotes, proverbs and reflections and is written in the same ironic tone as Paludes. The middle-aged author who reminisces nostalgically about his former "fervor" for life has lost none of his curiosity, his thirst for new adventures or his craving for knowledge. "Je rêve à de nouvelles harmonies," he confides.⁵⁸ Yet there is a change of emphasis. Les nourritures terrestres was an iconoclastic work aimed at destroying whatever prevented Gide from enjoying sensual pleasures to the full. In the later work, although the enemy remains the same, the praise of sensual pleasure gives place to a search for spiritual wholeness. Begun in 1916 and not completed until 1935, Les nouvelles nourritures, documents Gide's evolution from hedonism to commitment. Book One was written in an ecstasy of joy. The

rest of the work, by contrast, contains a tragic series of passages entitled "Rencontres" which describe the outcasts and failures the author has encountered in the streets of Paris. When Nathanaël inquires why these tales of sadness are included in a book dedicated to joy, the narrator responds that: "Mon bonheur est d'augmenter celui des autres. J'ai besoin du bonheur de tous pour être heureux" (Les nouvelles nourritures:221). Clearly Gide has heard the Malrucian message for, as he explains to Nathanael, it is not just the Church and the family which are at fault, but all men and that, as a result, man must look to himself to change the world.

D'où surgira-t-il, cet homme neuf? he asks. . . . Camarade, sache le découvrir en toi-même. . . . Camarade, ne crois à rien; n'accepte rien sans preuve. . . .

Camarade, n'accepte pas la vie telle que te la proposent les hommes. . . . Du jour où tu commenceras à comprendre que le responsable de presque tous les maux de la vie, ce n'est pas Dieu, ce sont les hommes, tu ne prendras plus ton parti de ces maux. (Les nouvelles nourritures:269,274,283)

Four years later, Gide regretted the publication of his pro-communist Les nouvelles nourritures and perhaps even the influence Malraux had had on him at the time he wrote it. His Journal records the moment as follows.

Je parcours à nouveau la dernière partie du volume, he writes, ces Nouvelles nourritures que la plus récente édition joint aux premières; et m'y reconnais mal. C'est, de tous mes livres, le plus inégal, le moins bon. J'y sens la résolution et l'apprêt.

Autant les premières, Les nourritures terrestres, restent près de moi, de sorte que je puisse frémir à neuf en les relisant et raviver mon émotion de phrase en phrase, autant ces pages dernières, bien que beaucoup plus récentes, se sont écartées de moi, au point que, si je ne les avais signées, je douterais qu'elles soient vraiment de moi. . . . Je n'y sens plus cet accent de sincérité qui sans doute fait la valeur la plus sûre de mes meilleurs écrits. (Journal 2:220)

It is however highly unlikely that Malraux was aware of Gide's disaffection with communism when he wrote his review of Les nouvelles nourritures. Instead he concentrates on the similarities and differences between Gide's works and those of traditional moralists. He compares the Nouvelles nourritures to the Nourritures terrestres and to Gide's other works before repeating his classical complaint against psychologically oriented literature. "Pour presque toute la génération de Gide, et pour plusieurs autres," he states, "le monde n'a pas été autre chose que le moyen d'expression plus ou moins vaste d'un drame particulier" (NN:935).

The most important aspect of this review is that, in dealing almost exclusively with questions of genre, form and style, Malraux disregards entirely the content of the book. He makes much of the formal and stylistic differences between the Nouvelles nourritures and the Nourritures terrestres and regrets that the highly metaphorical expression which was the chief artistic value of the Nourritures terrestres has been replaced in the Nouvelles nourritures by a quiet, discreet voice which frequently leaves much to the reader's imagination.

"L'action la plus pressante de ce livre est dans ses blancs," he states (NN:937).

Actually, the most interesting of Malraux's comments have to do with Gide's evolution as a writer. He explains that as memoir-writing had become Gide's main form of expression and as his Journal grew, his other works had either become very short (La symphonie pastorale, Ecole des femmes) or taken on forms akin to the Journal (Congo, Tchad) while conversely, Gide's Journal has none of the precision and objectivity of an ordinary diary. As he puts it:

. . . le journal n'est nullement le mélange d'un carnet de confessions et de matières premières pour romans futurs; dès qu'il entend dépasser le document, il devient pour l'écrivain l'objet principal de son obsession; et c'est là son premier caractère et sa valeur essentielle. . . . Le moyen d'action de l'artiste n'est pas un don mystérieux, c'est une obsession particulière, et lorsque cette obsession vitale tend au journal, dès que l'écrivain entend se servir du journal pour s'exprimer, son optique change, pour la raison élémentaire qu'il se trouve contraint de préférer, en tant que moyen d'expression, le réel à la fiction. (NN:936)

Ultimately then, according to Malraux, Gide prefers the diary to fiction because it is the form best suited to the expression of his individualism.

What Malraux most appreciates in the Nouvelles nourritures is its tone which is so admirably suited to Gide's purpose. He observes: "La force de Gide--en tant qu'artiste et en tant que moraliste--est en ceci

qu'il est presque toujours un justificateur. . . . Le lecteur rend en admiration à l'artiste ce que celui-ci lui donne en justification. Ce livre-ci va justifier beaucoup de ceux qui veulent penser intelligemment leur générosité" (NN:937). According to Malraux, Gide can argue so forcibly in favor of his beliefs that he can convert his readers to his views, a talent which he Malraux does not possess to the same extent.

Thus, although he neither criticizes the book's faults, comments on its strengths, or even for that matter mentions what the book is about, his remarks about various ways of dealing with the "drama of the individual," are most interesting and astute. They are all the easier to understand if one takes into account the following 1967 conversation between Malraux and Roger Stéphane as related by Jean Lacouture:

En 1967, au moment de la sortie des Antimémoires, Lacouture recounts, Roger Stéphane interroge Malraux devant l'écran de la télévision: Gide a joué dans votre vie personnelle un grand rôle?

--Pas tellement. . . . Nous nous sommes connus longtemps mais en définitive, l'admiration que nous avons pour Gide avait quelque chose de très bizarre. . . . Nous l'admirions sur une oeuvre future. . . . Nous attendions tous le prochain Faux-Monnayeurs. Or, il n'y a pas eu de prochain Faux-Monnayeurs.⁵⁹

At the time that Malraux wrote his review in 1935 then, he still hoped that Gide would write another substantial "avant-garde" novel which, of course, Gide never did. Had he known this, he might have been more critical or, at the very least, less detached. But he did not know and

his friendship for Gide made him more cautious than he was in the Stéphane interview which, of course, dates from some twenty years after Gide's death.

VI.6. "Préface" à Indochine S.O.S.

In September 1935 Gallimard published Andrée Viollis' Indochine S.O.S. with a preface by André Malraux. Malraux, who was then an important member of the N.R.F. editorial board, no doubt had an active part in this decision. Excerpts of the work had already appeared in December 1933 in the newly-founded liberal Catholic review Esprit.⁶⁰

Andrée Viollis is the pseudonym chosen by Andrée Françoise Caroline d'Ardenne de Tizac who was born in 1878 and married Jean d'Ardenne de Tizac, a curator of Oriental art at the Musée Cernuschi in Paris. Her first work, Puycerrampion: Illustrations d'après les dessins de Georges Lepape was written in collaboration with her husband, Jean, and published in 1911. Andrée Viollis was a brilliant newspaper woman and author of biographies of famous literary people and royalty, of histories of the First and Second World Wars and of books describing the politics, government, social life and customs of French and British colonies, Japan and Russia.⁶¹

Malraux was a personal friend of the Viollis family. He shared Jean's passion for Oriental art and his wife's interest in social life, politics and contemporary history at home and abroad. They frequently attended the same meetings and it is known that, when Malraux gave his report on the Soviet Congress of Writers, Andrée Viollis was present at the Mutualité de Paris on November 23rd 1934 as she was at the conference of the International Association of Anti-Fascist Writers in Madrid in October 1937.

In the spring of 1933, Paris had received news of two particularly flagrant travesties of justice committed by the courts in Hanoi and Saigon. The uproar became so great that in September 1933 the French Government created a commission of inquiry under the leadership of the then Minister of the Colonies, Paul Reynaud, whom Malraux had already met in Indo-China. One of the journalists accredited to the Reynaud Commission was Andrée Viollis. While the inquiry was underway, Malraux wrote an article, "S.O.S.," which was published in the October 11, 1933 issue of the liberal Parisian weekly, Marianne.

Malraux's article, "S.O.S.," was an angry recital of the facts contained in the Hanoi-Saigon dossiers accompanied by vivid first hand descriptions of the cruelty which characterized the French treatment of the Annamites. Echoing his previous grievances, Malraux denounced the principle of colonialism in general and French practices in Indo-China in particular. He remarked that the Colonial Administration could adopt one of three attitudes, namely: the "democratic attitude" which would permit the local population to vote, the current system in which the French remained in control but allowed representation in Parliament or the "fascist system" which would eventually push the Indo-Chinese into the Communist camp. He concluded by saying that: "Cutting off of people's heads is not a permanent way of keeping them from using them."⁶² In his preface to Andrée Viollis' book, which was completely different from "S.O.S.," Malraux repeats the same arguments against colonialism before turning to the problem with which he had been grappling for close to a decade, that is, the relationship between journalism and writing novels.

In her foreword to Indochine S.O.S., Andrée Viollis explained that she had been inspired by two books about Indo-China which exposed the desperate plight of the indigenous population: Louis Roubaud's Viet-Nam and Paul Monet's Les jauniers. Her notes, which are presented in diary form, give striking and concrete examples of Indo-China's problems. If, for patriotic reasons, Viollis had delayed publishing her work, the inequity of the situation was such, she said, that she could no longer keep still, even though she did not and could not present the complete picture or offer a viable solution to such a complex problem. Although she had been asked by the Minister to present a "objective and picturesque report on the Indo-China situation for the press," when Andrée Viollis presented her account for approval, the Minister seemed sincerely indignant. Andrée Viollis then remained in Indo-China to gather information about the implementation of the changes suggested by the commission and which were, in her eyes, totally insufficient. The appendix of her book contains over a hundred pages of documents which provide eloquent proof of the deplorable conditions in Indo-China and substantiate her claims. Gallimard obviously knew what a contentious issue this was and, in deciding to publish Indochine S.O.S. and ask Malraux to preface the book, that it was taking issue with the government over a policy which went far beyond party politics.⁶³

Malraux's preface does not mention any of Viollis' other works but all his comments on Indo-China show a thorough familiarity with the documents in the annex. However, his five-page preface is far more than a simple commentary on the book and colonialism. It is heightened by personal memories and contains important reflections on the novel as a

genre and on the difference between reporting and writing novels.

Malraux's rapid assessment of Viollis' book attributes its success both to its subject and to the author's passionate commitment to a cause (SOS:viii), but it is clear that his concerns are more artistic than political. The problem of the novel as a genre is foremost in his mind and as the clouds on the political horizon darken, Malraux is agonizing between two forms of commitment, to politics and to art. "Je pense," he asserts, "qu'il est bien peu de romanciers de notre temps qui n'aient rôdé autour des reportages réunis en volume, qui n'aient senti que se préparait là une forme nouvelle de roman, et qui n'aient assez vite abandonné leur espoir" (SOS:vii). Malraux has not yet abandoned such a hope. In his coherent and well-organized analysis of the art of the novel over the past one hundred years, he examines in detail the difference between reporting and novel writing. He remarks that whereas nineteenth century realists from Balzac to Zola used social and political material to explain their characters' attitudes and actions, nineteenth century journalists used similar techniques for different purposes, that is, to present facts. "Il est clair," affirms Malraux, "qu'Albert Londres créait ses personnages de plusieurs rencontres assemblées, tout comme un romancier. Mais, je crois qu'Albert Londres, qui fut l'un des meilleurs reporters français, marque moins le début que la fin d'une technique" (SOS:viii). The new generation of reporters, like the new generation of novelists, is not concerned with people but with events and social causes: ". . . ce qui me retient dans le nouveau journalisme, dans ce livre d'Andrée Viollis, dans ceux de Kisch, dans certains articles d'Ehrenbourg, c'est qu'il ne s'agit plus d'y chercher

des personnages mais des choses. . . . S'il y a ici un grand roman à l'état brut, c'est que toute nouvelle forme d'art implique une volonté" (SOS:viii). But the will must come from the novelist, Carlyle and Michelet being out of favor with historians, if not with Malraux. Furthermore, it is not just a question of content, but also one of art. "A l'art qui reposait sur la métaphore," Malraux comments, "se substitue sourdement l'art qui repose sur l'ellipse" (SOS:vii). Here Malraux captures the style of modern journalism completely: "Si cet objet peut être le rapprochement elliptique non de deux mots, mais de deux faits, cinéaste et reporter retrouvent leur force, et c'est la même" (SOS:viii). Beyond the particular there is the general and Malraux's instinctive recognition of the principle underlying all of modern art is unerring. He realizes furthermore that this "elliptical" presentation of facts is very effective in the delivery of a convincing argument. In fact, he had already used it with great success in La condition humaine. In Malraux's opinion, what makes Andrée Viollis' book, undertaken as an objective report of the situation in Indo-China, so successful is that it uses many of the techniques of modern works of fiction.

Malraux's preface is brief and succinct but eloquent. Although he devotes very little of his discussion to Viollis' book, he is doubly sincere in his sympathy for and his support of her cause. The most interesting and rewarding part is the analysis of the difference between reporting and writing novels which clearly shows how much Malraux's ideas about the novel have changed. In fact, his praise of Viollis' "elliptical style" and her "commitment" shows that, all question of "genre" aside, these are the qualities Malraux most admires in a writer.

VI.7. "Le sens de la mort"

On November 20th 1935 André Malraux's review of Louis Guilloux's masterpiece, Sang noir, which had just been published by Gallimard, appeared in the liberal Parisian weekly, Marianne. Guilloux, who had been Malraux's close friend since the late 1920's, had been involved in a number of the same activities as Malraux.⁶⁴ He had been secretary to the International Congress of Writers which was held in Paris in 1935 and he had travelled to the U.S.S.R. with Gide the following year.

Malraux was very familiar with Guilloux's literary works and had already written a review of one of his less important, earlier novels, Hyménée, in 1932. In his article on Sang noir, Malraux stresses that his main interest in the novel stems from his "strong liking" for the work, no doubt because its political and metaphysical themes and even some of its stylistic techniques are similar to his own.

Sang noir is a novel which describes the last twenty-four hours in the life of a high-school philosophy teacher, François Merlin, who is a physical, social and professional misfit, a complete anti-hero. Although Merlin's thesis about the philosopher, Turnier, was rejected by the University, his colleagues consider him a great intellectual because he has a knowledge of Sanscrit and has published a study on the Media and other such learned articles. However his most important project is prophetically named, Apocalypse, La chrestomathie du désespoir.

The climax of the novel occurs when Merlin accompagnies the head-master, Marchandreau, to the railroad station. It is 1917 and he is

trapped in a crowd of people rioting against the government's participation in World War I. There he is provoked by a colleague, Nabucet, who challenges him to a duel which he ultimately refuses. His cowardice haunts him and when his Chrestomathie is torn to shreds by his dogs, Merlin commits suicide.

Preposterous as the plot may seem, Sang noir paints a compelling picture of the society responsible for World War I. Guilloux describes these ordinary people who crave dignity realistically and with much compassion. Sang noir is Guilloux's "chef d'oeuvre" mainly because he succeeds in making his reader sympathize with the pathetic twentieth century Don Quixote who is the main figure in the novel.

Sang noir shows that, to a certain extent, Guilloux's and Malraux's interests have converged. Metaphysical concerns are paramount to both and they both have a poetic vision of the world. However, Guilloux's novels are more autobiographical and tend to focus on the monotonous and dull aspects of everyday life whereas Malraux's works rely less on autobiography and deal with spectacular events in contemporary history. Where Guilloux's characters are complex, grotesque anti-heroes, Malraux's characters, who are often his spokesmen, are, for the most part, one-dimensional and heroic. Both Guilloux and Malraux harbor a similar uncompromising attitude toward the bourgeoisie. What ultimately separates them is their attitude to life: Malraux is vigorous and optimistic, Guilloux is passive and very pessimistic.

In his review of Sang noir titled "Le sens de la mort," Malraux set out to share his enthusiasm for the book at hand with potential readers. Since works of art either "live" or "die" for reasons which frequently

escape the critics, he will not speak as a professional critic and his airy dismissal of the honorable craft may well explain why he never bothered to collect and edit his reviews. Henri Peyre interprets this refusal differently, saying that:

Unlike several of his contemporaries, Malraux was too passionately eager to think forward as well as live forward, to busy himself with collecting every scrap of his past writings, or to prepare for the Pléiade series a full edition of his scattered works. He declined to encourage those of us who offered to him to collect and publish his reviews, done mostly between 1927 and 1936, and his subsequent addresses on political and cultural topics.⁶⁵

Unless new evidence were to come to light, it would be impossible to state categorically which interpretation is correct.

Be that as it may, Malraux finds Guilloux's description of life in a "provincial" town masterful and he appreciates the fact that, to convey the criminal absurdity of World War I and man's total lack of dignity in the face of suffering and death, Guilloux invents two kinds of characters: the intellectual anti-heroes (the teachers) who have lost any dignity they may have had and the true "grotesques," the "cloportes" and the hunchback, who never did possess true dignity in the first place. As Malraux puts it, according to Guilloux: "Les hommes ne sont pas au niveau de leur douleur--Les hommes ne sont pas dignes de leur mort" (SM:4). This mixture of pity and hatred is what sets Sang noir apart from other novels, according to Malraux, who compares Guilloux to Flaubert who also had a love-hate relationship with his

characters. Guilloux is a frustrated poet at odds with the world: "[Un] poète que la nature de son talent contraint à s'exprimer non par le lyrisme, mais par le réel même" (SM:4). For Malraux, the art of Guilloux, who seems dominated by his passions and obsessions, lies in the delicate balance he maintains between the grotesque and the tragic.

In his final judgment of Sang noir, Malraux states that Sang noir is not the "greatest of art," it is second best and he concludes:

Le plus grand art c'est de prendre le chaos du monde et de le transformer en conscience, de permettre aux hommes de posséder leur destin: Tolstoï, ou Stendhal. Mais celui qui vient après, c'est de choisir son chaos et de lui donner sa marque, de faire des hommes avec des ombres, et de sauver ce qui peut être sauvé des vies les plus dérisoires en les ensevelissant dans ce qu'elles ignoraient de grand en elles. (SM:4)

While Malraux is very appreciative of the strong points in Sang noir, he prefers not to speak of its weaknesses. Malraux's understanding of Guilloux's characters is not only an extension of Lucien's remarks in the novel: "La vérité, c'est qu'il avait été comme tous les enfants, un enfant écrasé, puis un jeune homme et un homme écrasé, à qui on avait commencé de voler la vie en détail avant de tenter le grand coup de la lui voler en bloc,"⁶⁶ but also of Guilloux's comment: "Ah oui, on meurt volé! Et volé sur tous les plans. Dans cette putain de société. . ."⁶⁷ However when Malraux states that Guilloux attempts to "rescue what can be saved of the most absurd lives by enshrining them in the greatness within them," he surely overstates the case. Guilloux's characters are not heroic, whatever Malraux might

say, and his comments are more an extension of his concerns than Guilloux's.

* * *

The reviews and prefaces treated in this chapter show that Malraux's literary interests underwent certain changes from 1933 to 1935. They often impart the impression that Malraux, the "maître à penser" and successful novelist is speaking to his disciples, Matveev, Guéhenno, Ehrenburg, Guilloux and even Gide. Although he did not share the pessimistic views of a Faulkner, a Matveev or a Guilloux, Malraux did share their philosophical concerns and he praised their realistic portrayals of social and political issues. His Guéhenno and Gide reviews indicate that he still believed fiction to be the most powerful and effective form of expression and, while he had become more and more politically committed, he nevertheless preferred Tolstoy's realism to Ehrenburg's social realism. The Viollis preface stresses Malraux's continuing interest in Indo-China and in the relationship between novel-writing and newspaper reporting. The fact that he had been writing Le temps du mépris (1935) during this time explains his preoccupation with the problem of the writer as witness. Where did reporting end and commitment begin? How could the novelist be faithful to his times and to his art? Le temps du mépris was not the novel he hoped for and which he had yet to write if only he could solve the problem which underlies all the 1933-35 reviews and prefaces. It was still to haunt him as he set off to fight in the Spanish Civil War which became the subject of his next novel, L'espoir (1937).

Notes

- ¹ Malraux, Publicity for La condition humaine, trans. by Axel Madsen, Malraux (New York: William Morrow, 1976) 128.
- ² Malraux, "Le sens de la mort," Marianne (20 nov. 1935): 4.
- ³ Maurice Edgar Coindreau, "William Faulkner," N.R.F. 236 (juin 1931): 926-30.
- ⁴ William Faulkner, "Une rose pour Emily," trans. M. E. Coindreau Commerce 29 (hiver 1932): 111-37.
- , "Septembre ardent," trans. M. E. Coindreau N.R.F. 20.220 (janv. 1932): 49-65.
- , "Il était une reine," trans. M. E. Coindreau N.R.F. 21.239 (août 1933): 213-33.
- ⁵ Michel Gresset, "Notice à Sanctuaire," Oeuvres romanesques de William Faulkner (Paris: Gallimard, 1977) 1532.
- ⁶ Faulkner's later works include: Pylon (1935), The Unvanquished (1938), The Wild Palms (1939), The Hamlet (1940), Go Down, Moses (1942), Intruder in the Dust (1948), Knight's Gambit (1949), A Fable (1954), The Town (1957), The Mansion (1959) and The Reivers (1962).
- ⁷ André Malraux, "Lignes de force," 7.
- ⁸ William Faulkner, "An Interview," William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism, eds. Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga W. Vickery (MI: MI State UP, 1960) 79.
- ⁹ Irving Howe, William Faulkner: A Critical Study (New York: Vintage Books, 1962) 296.

- ¹⁰ William Faulkner, "An Interview" 67.
- ¹¹ Harold Taylor, "Death, Terror and Aesthetics," University of Kansas City Review 8.1 (October 1941): 3.
- ¹² André Malraux, "Malraux vu par Brasillach, critique des années trente," by Gérard de Jubécourt Wascana Review 14 (Spring 1979): 96-97.
- ¹³ William Faulkner, "An Interview" 76.
- ¹⁴ Gaston Derycke, "Sanctuaire," Cahiers du Sud 22 (oct. 1935): 697.
- ¹⁵ Michel Gresset, "Notice à Sanctuaire," 1355, writes:
 D'après cette phrase, André Malraux avait lu dans le texte The Sound and the Fury ou As I Lay Dying, puisque, comme nous l'avons dit, aucun roman de Faulkner n'avait encore paru en traduction française. Ou bien avait-il seulement lu l'article publié par Maurice-Edgar Coindreau en 1931? Il n'est pas indifférent de savoir si les commentateurs d'importance lurent Faulkner dans l'original ou en traduction. Il ne fait guère de doute, par exemple, que Sartre et Camus ne l'ont jamais lu qu'en traduction.
- ¹⁶ Madsen, Malraux 114.
- ¹⁷ Walter G. Langlois, "Malraux and the Greek Ideal," 204, 205.
- ¹⁸ Gerald Langford, Faulkner's Revision of "Sanctuary": A Collation of the Unrevised Galleys and the Published Book (Austin and London: U of Texas P, 1972) 6, 7.
- ¹⁹ William Faulkner, "An Interview" 73.
- ²⁰ Faulkner, "An Interview" 73, 81, 82.
- ²¹ See for example: J. Douglas Canfield, ed., Twentieth Century

Interpretations of "Sanctuary": A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice, 1982) 11; Maurice Edgar Coindreau, A French View of Modern American Fiction (Columbia, SC: U of SC, 1971) 32, 34, 69; Irving Howe, Faulkner 195; Claude-Edmonde Magny, L'âge du roman américain (Paris; Seuil, 1948) 239-40.

22 Michel Gresset, "Notice à Sanctuaire" 1354-56.

23 Michel Gresset, "Valéry Larbaud et les débuts de Faulkner en France," Preuves (juin 1966): 27.

24 André Malraux, "L'art est une conquête," Commune 13-14 (sept.-oct. 1934): 68-71.

---, "L'attitude de l'artiste," Commune 15 (nov. 1934): 166-174.

---, "L'oeuvre d'art," Commune 23 (juillet 1935): 1264-66.

---, "Sur l'héritage culturel," Commune 37 (sept. 1936): 1-9.

25 André Malraux, "Préface," to Le temps du mépris (Paris: Gallimard, 1935) 1.

26 André Malraux, "André Malraux nous dit: Une interview," Arts 335 (30 nov. 1951): 1.

27 André Malraux, "La condition humaine: Premier entretien avec Malraux," L'Express 83 (25 déc. 1954): 11.

28 On page ten of the first chapter, the narrator remarks that his father has just been killed in the street. However in chapter five, the narrator is distressed upon hearing of the death of his father.

After two years in Odessa, the narrator's sudden urge to rejoin his family is unmotivated. In addition, the rest of his family seems to appear magically in Poland as if to fulfill his wish.

29 André Malraux, "De la représentation en Occident et en

Extrême-Orient," Verve 3 (1938): 69, 70, 71.

³⁰ Henri Peyre, "André Malraux and the Metamorphosis of Literature," 30.

³¹ Jean Guéhenno, L'indépendance de l'esprit: Correspondance entre Jean Guéhenno et Romain Rolland (1919-1944) (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1975) 128.

³² Jean Guéhenno, Carnets du vieil écrivain (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1971) 160.

³³ André Malraux, Le miroir des limbes 4, 8.

³⁴ Jean Guéhenno, Journal d'un homme de quarante ans (Paris: Grasset, 1934) 12-13.

³⁵ Ilya Ehrenburg, Memoirs: 1921-1941 trans. Tatania Shebunina and Yvonne Kapp (Cleveland and New York: The World, 1964) 242, 136, 395-96.

³⁶ Ilya Ehrenburg, "La condition humaine," Duhamel: Gide: Malraux: Mauriac: Morand: Unamuno vus par un écrivain d'U.R.S.S. (Paris: Gallimard, 1934) 189-219.

³⁷ Ilya Ehrenburg, Memoirs 242.

³⁸ See Clara Malraux, Voici que vient l'été, 263-74, for her account of the people they met and the places that they visited in Moscow with Ehrenburg.

³⁹ Ehrenburg, Memoirs 264, 274.

⁴⁰ André Malraux in "Réponses d'André Malraux aux questions posées par Pravda," Revue des Lettres Modernes (1972): 136, mentioned (Moscow, 1934) that he had read Maïakovski, Pasternak and Tolstoy.

⁴¹ Malraux, "Réponses à Pravda" 136.

⁴² Ilya Ehrenburg, Sans reprendre haleine trans. J. Pouterman

(Paris: Gallimard, 1935) 200.

43 Ehrenburg, Memoirs 284.

44 Malraux, "Réponse à Pravda" 136.

45 Ehrenburg, Memoirs 324.

46 Ehrenburg, Memoirs 233-34, 501.

47 Malraux, "Réponses à Pravda" 140-41.

48 Malraux, "Réponses à Pravda" 141-42.

49 For a summary of Gide's literary career and works see Chapter I, note 33, pages 67-70, of this thesis.

50 Clara Malraux, La fin et le commencement vol. 5 of Le bruit de nos pas (Paris: Grasset, 1976) 154.

51 André Gide, Journal: 1889-1939 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1951) 886, 925, 1099.

52 Lacouture, Malraux: Une vie dans le siècle 161.

53 Clara Malraux, Voici que vient l'été 206, 213.

54 Maria Van Rysselberghe, Les cahiers de la Petite Dame: Notes pour l'histoire authentique d'André Gide 4 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1974) 2: 415, 450-2.

55 André Malraux, Les chênes qu'on abat (Paris: Gallimard, 1971) 7.

56 Roger Stéphane, Fin d'une jeunesse 63.

57 André Gide's, "André Malraux: L'aventure humaine," was first published in the weekly, Terre des Hommes 10 (déc. 1945) 1, then in Pages Françaises 9 (janv. 1946) and in L'Espoir des Alpes (22 janv. 1949). See Bulletin des Amis d'André Gide 33 (janv. 1977): 66-69.

58 André Gide, Les nourritures terrestres et Les nouvelles nourritures 1935 (Paris: Gallimard, 1947) 197.

59 Lacouture, Malraux: Une vie dans le siècle 184.

60 Walter G. Langlois, André Malraux: The Indochina Adventure 205.

61 Of these works, the most noteworthy include: Criquet (1913), Le corps d'armée des femmes anglaises (1918), Lord Northcliffe (1919), La vraie Mme de la Fayette (1926), Seule en Russie, de la Baltique à la Caspienne (1927), Alsace et Lorraine au-dessus des passions (1928), Tourmente sur l'Afghanistan (1930), L'Inde contre les Anglais (1930), Le Japon et son empire (1933), Changhaï et le destin de la Chine (1933), Le Japon intime (1934), Indochine S.O.S. (1935), Notre Tunisie (1939), Le racisme hitlérien, machine de guerre contre la France (1944), Le secret de la reine Christine (1944), La vérité sur le Viet-Nam: Une étude objective du problème, des reportages inédits sur la guerre du maquis (1948) and L'Afrique du Sud, cette inconnue (1948).

62 André Malraux, "S.O.S.," Marianne (11 oct. 1933): 3.

63 Walter G. Langlois in André Malraux: The Indochina Adventure 252, remarks that: "The book was reissued late in 1949, at a time when history was repeating itself in Indochina" and that "in this later edition, a preface by Francis Jourdain was substituted for the earlier one by Malraux perhaps out of consideration for the latter's important political role in the Gaullist party."

64 See page 246 of this thesis for a summary of Louis Guilloux's literary career and his relationship with Malraux and note 66, page 260 for a list of his works.

65 Henri Peyre, "André Malraux and the Metamorphosis of Literature": 30.

66 Louis Guilloux, Le sang noir (Paris: Gallimard, 1935) 104.

67 Louis Guilloux, "Je mourrai vivant," Actualités de Louis Guilloux
(Marseille: Editions Jeanne Laffitte, 1978) 12.