

of the major world powers, and thus travels the way with them to inevitable doom.

The Jewish State, in short, is a ghetto in the Middle East. It has a ghetto mentality and a ghetto soul: "let's wait and see". Its basic perspective — and this is surely what the major Zionist leaders discuss among themselves — is to have a "second round" with the Arabs, to get more Arab territory. In short, the stupidity continues: having failed in Poland during the 'forties and in Russia during the 'fifties, the growth of Peronism in the Middle East (Neguib and Co.) suggests that the rhythm will continue in the 'sixties, as the danger moves ever closer to "home". Unfortunately, "home" also includes nearly a million and a half Jews, who are not responsible for the light-mindedness and stupidity of the Zionist leaders. It is to be hoped that there will not be any need for another summation of this kind with reference to Israel, but that will be in spite of, rather than because of, the Zionist leaders.

12th February, 1953.

Postscript

The inevitable crawl of events continues. When Israeli officials were asked if the "Jewish" State planned to break off diplomatic relations with Russia, they answered: "What will be gained by such a measure?" A few days later, the Russians used the bombing of their Tel Aviv embassy as an excuse to sever relations with Israel.

According to the *New York Times* of 14th February, 1953, Moshe Sharett delivered his soul of the following opinion:

"The attachment which many Jews throughout the world feel for the State of Israel does not conflict with the Western conception of proper international relations," Mr. Sharett explained, "but it does cut right across Soviet conceptions, which require that all peoples of the U.S.S.R. be shut off from the rest of the world.

"None the less, the emotional reverberations set off by the creation of the State of Israel were felt in the hearts of millions of Jews in the Soviet Union. The rupture of relations is an attempt to eradicate the sense of unity and the longing for Zion among these Jews. The Soviets felt they must remove from the sight of their Jews the physical embodiment of the State of Israel represented by our legation in Moscow."

Stalin's attempt to exploit anti-Semitism in Russia is not even touched upon by our modern Patroclus! Given a few more "incidents" of this order, however, and a favorable prognosis may yet be made: even Sharett will crawl up to the level of a more pointed denunciation of the Kremlin's actions against Russian Jewry.

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Another report by Dana Adams Schmidt in the *New York Times* of 28th February is (to put the matter mildly) of interest:

"TEL AVIV, Israel, Feb. 24:—Anti-Semitic developments behind the Iron Curtain probably will be brought up by Israel in connection with Poland's 'world peace' item on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly, a Foreign Ministry official said to-day. He added that the Israeli

Government had decided against bringing up anti-Semitism as a separate item. . . . Meanwhile, suggestions that the Prague treason trials, Moscow's charges against Jewish physicians and the American Joint Distribution Committee, and other signs of anti-Semitism should be interpreted as part of a campaign of genocide, aroused some uneasiness in Israel. In connection with a reference to "racial" persecution made by a spokesman of the Israeli delegation to the United Nations, the independent daily Haaretz warned to-day that "a single exaggeration can cause an entire political campaign to fail."

"The newspaper believes that, despite what is known of practices in the Soviet Union [], the absence of any Soviet theory of racial superiority would make it possible for the Soviet delegation to defend itself against charges of racial persecution.

"Furthermore, Haaretz doubted the wisdom of moves likely to concentrate world-wide attention on Jewish problems that 'those who are interested in disparaging the Jews and Israel could describe as a cause of aggravating international relations'.

"The western world was repeatedly told by Zionist leaders that a Jewish state would solve the Jewish problem,' the paper went on. 'If the Jewish problem continues to be brought up the western world may eventually turn its back on Israel.'"

Wilhelm Lunen

APPEAL FOR AN ENGLISH EDITION OF DIDEROT'S "JACK THE FATALIST"

I

IN 1951 the civilized world duly celebrated the 200th anniversary of the epochal French *Encyclopédie*. Respect was paid especially to Denis Diderot, the true head, hero and martyr of the colossal enterprise: so much trash, fine words, wise reflections, and so little sense, honest endeavor, real concern — as was to be expected in the framework of our society which has but one paramount incentive for never leaping over an opportunity for a big or small festival: business in whatever form! While business went on according to circumstances, while every possibility related to the memorable event was exploited, the English speaking world "generously" overlooked the blemish that one of the most precious and lovable masterpieces of all existing literature, Diderot's *Jacques le Fataliste*, is not available to the

English-reading public. The sad fact is that the only English translation ever made so far dates back to 1798, and even this was a private translation to satisfy the particular interest an English lord had taken in the work.

American publishers, in 1951, did not have the excuses which English publishers may present, with a shadow of formal justification at least, for having sent *Jacques* obstinately to Coventry: austerity, paper-shortage, poverty and — lack of an adequate translation! The literary and cultural honor of the English speaking world had been rescued in time by the American scholar J. Robert Loy, who called attention to the neglected treasure with a study entitled *Diderot's Determined Fatalist*. In this study the author announced:

"The present work grew out of a desire to perform that service of translation, a service made the more interesting by the challenge involved in attempting to carry over the disordered charm of Diderot's prose into another language. That work has not been forgotten, for the translation is completed and will be published in the near future."

But if the study found its way into the press (King's Crown Press, Columbia University, New York), Loy apparently had no such luck with the translation of *Jacques* he had prepared with the same devotion for his admired subject (ample proof of which are the numerous quotations from *Jacques* in the course of the study). Inquiry as to why Loy's announcement failed to materialize yielded only one impression: For some inscrutable reason *Jacques* seems to be "poor business" in the eyes of American publishers. Consequently, the interested English reader may readily indulge himself in Loy's study, rich in insights and congenial comments, but not in the work it deals with. However, it is highly questionable that *Jacques* would be a business-failure. Indications are rather in the direction that a fairly large edition could be sold out in a relatively short time. The question then is what can be done to remedy the situation and whether there are no other determinants for the attitude of those publishers Loy must have thought of when confidently saying that his translation would soon appear. An attempt to explain the strange fate of Diderot's unique novel, in support of an appeal for its publication in the English language, seems to be in order.

II

What happened to *Jacques le fataliste* at the time it was written (around 1773-5) sticks somewhat to the whole career of the book. As far as the bulk of Diderot's essential writings is concerned, Diderot himself was always reluctant to publish. Several reasons for the fact that the majority of his best works did not see the day during Diderot's life-time have been advanced, but surely not the last is the one Loy gives in connection with *Jacques*:

"It is known that the work was not publicly printed until Schiller translated the Mme de La Pommeraye episode in 1785 [Diderot died in 1784, W.L.], and that it was not known in its entirety (in other than manuscript form) until 1792 when a German translation by Mylius (Jakob und sein Herr) appeared. Mylius took great precaution to warn that the copy from which he made his translation had been entrusted to him only on the strict stipulation that the French text should not reach the press. The actual French text does not appear until 1796 when, upon the request of the newly

organized Institut de France for other material, Henry of Prussia, brother of Frederick II, sent on *Jacques*. . . . It is significant that the first of Diderot's unpublished works (exception made for the *Salons*) to be sent to the *Correspondance littéraire* subscribers was *Jacques le fataliste*; it was sent by Grimm, piecemeal, from 1778 to 1780. . . . The reasons for the complete silence on *Jacques le fataliste* remain an interesting enigma. . . . To explain it on the grounds of censorship seems, in the final analysis, the best solution. At the time of writing, however, a great part of *Jacques* would appear fairly harmless after the long record of daring and difficulty which characterized the *Encyclopédie* and other earlier works. But, perhaps, this is precisely the reason for Diderot's silence: tired of the whole struggle with censorship and having learned many a hard lesson, he may very well have chosen to leave *Jacques* to posterity, whilst he enjoyed a modicum of peace with the authorities."

Censorship in many forms had interfered with Diderot's work long before *Jacques*, too, was put on the *Index* by the Catholic church (decree of July 2, 1804) and in 1826 confiscated and destroyed by a sentence of the *tribunal correctionnel du département de la Seine*, not to speak of a still later and similar judgment pronounced in Russia in 1872. Diderot's *Pensées philosophiques* (1746) had been burned by a decision of the parliament; his *Promenade du Sceptique* was also condemned as "anti-religious". With these works his name is noted by the police as "suspect" — all in all "procedures" characteristic of a doomed society and to be reproduced all over the world in our time. The year 1745 saw Diderot confined for three months in the prison of Vincennes after the police had raided his house and confiscated his manuscripts. The actual motive for his arrest was not his ironical observation levelled at Mme du Pré Saint-Maur, but his renown, the atheistic "smell" of his work, and his story *Le Pigeon blanc*, a satire on Louis XV and his Maîtresse. In 1752 the "licence" for editing the *Encyclopédie* was suspended as the result of a drive by the Jesuits. Noteworthy fact: Only the benevolence of Malesherbes, himself Chief of the Censorship but in sympathy with the *Encyclopédie*, made further printing possible by way of "tacit" grant. In 1757, *Le Journal encyclopédique* suffered suppression — the attack on the Encyclopaedists was again in full swing. In the spring of 1759 Malesherbes saved the situation once more, permitting Diderot to safeguard the plates and proofs in his house before the police could seize them in a surprise raid. Nevertheless the "licence" was cancelled, and nobody can tell when the main troubles for the Encyclopaedists would have ended had the *Lieutenant de Police* not unexpectedly died, to be superseded by Sartine who (another noteworthy fact) protected the continuation of the *Encyclopédie*. But doubtless the hardest blow of censorship Diderot received was the secret betrayal committed by Le Breton. In 1764 Diderot discovered that this publisher had exercised a brute censorship of his own. *Voluntarily*, and therefore all the more ruthlessly, Le Breton had mutilated the text of about ten whole volumes of the *Encyclopédie* by taking out everything which in his eyes could possibly irritate the authorities. The effect of this nefarious plot was devastating both for the original value of nearly all of the most excellent articles and for Diderot himself. Deeply wounded, he was unable for weeks to eat and to find sleep. Mortified, his eyes filled with tears of rage, the most