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The Zionist Movement and
Russian Anti-Semitism

M. S. Shiloh

Appeal for an English Edition of
Diderot's "Jack the Fatalist"

Wilhelm Lunen

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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 into 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.

* * *

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

gentle and good-natured of all men cried in the face of his miserab
tormentor:

"For years you have been basely cheating me. You have massacred, c
got a brute beast to massacre, the work of twenty good men who hav
devoted to you their time, their talents, their vigils, from love of right an
truth, from the simple hope of seeing their ideas given to the public, an
reaping from them a little esteem richly merited, which your injustice an
ingratitude have now robbed from them forever. . . * You and your boo
will be dragged through the mire; you will henceforth be cited as a man
who has been guilty of a treacherous act, an act of vile effrontery, to which
nothing that has ever occurred in this world can be compared. Then you
will be able to judge your panic terror, and the cowardly counsels of those
barbarous Ostrogoths and stupid Vandals who assisted you in the havoc
you have made".

The abominable operation of the unscrupulous Le Breton affected the
frank and communicative Diderot doubly, because the most infamous
treachery of all times had to remain a secret and was, to Diderot's pain,
kept as such, except for four of his close friends.

III

On the background of this still very incomplete survey of censorship and
persecution, it is easy to imagine that in poor Diderot, while relentlessly
going on, the feeling emerged of coming "too early" with his works to be
understood by the "general public". His feeling, taken as the deeper motive
for withholding manuscripts from print, has in any case been confirmed and
may perhaps become tangible in concentrating a little on the fate *Jacques*
encounters with his critics. The decisive note is struck in Loy's opening
remark:

"Literary critics are not infallible. The pronouncement is neither sur-
prising nor debatable. Yet to follow the literary fortunes of any important
work, and to see the original formula of criticism perpetuated, is to feel in
operation amongst the members of the literary *confrérie* a respect for past
dicta which approaches dogmatism. What is disconcerting in such blind
faith in a former judgment is the fact that the first judgment very often
shows a complete misunderstanding of the work.

"On this score, it must be admitted that *Jacques le fataliste* has been
sinned against much less than many other works in the history of literature.
Jacques' story has been pretty generally one of indifference rather than of
complete condemnation. But one has only to glance through the standard
handbooks and histories of any literature to notice the repetition of trite
judgments. . . . Frequently it appears a useful service to devote a more
thorough study to such an indifferently accepted work, in an attempt to
revaluate its merit by more recent standards".

Complete misunderstanding and indifference (or *indifferent acceptance*)
have their root, to be sure, in banal social conditions and circumstances.

* The word "forever" must be understood in the light of the cruel circumstance
that Le Breton and his helper executed their censorship to the point of a private
Autodafé in the true spirit of the inquisition: they took great care to make sure
that the damage was beyond repair by burning all the original manuscripts and
proof-sheets which Diderot had carefully corrected, revised and signed.

Constant acceptance of the work expresses the fact that its substance is "eternal" and indestructible; perpetually adverse conditions and circumstances prevent, at the same time, its understanding and lead to indifference, because the substance cannot become a vitalizing factor in the context of the given reality. Loy poses the problem well in saying:

"The critics at the close of his own century seem to have least understood Diderot. This is natural when one considers the unsettled atmosphere in which the book first appeared in 1796, and is, at once, a tribute and a proof that the *tête universelle* wrote for posterity".

Indeed, when *Jacques* finally made his appearance in France, he came in one sense still too early, and in another too — late. At that time the parvenu of the Directory occupied the high places of the revolution. The tribune, from which Paris had once heard the voice of Danton (himself, with his boundless optimistic energy and sensuality on one side, with his touch of pessimistic melancholy and resignation on the other, perhaps the purest incarnation of the true French spirit during the revolution), was now held by Barras; and in the society and salons of the 9th of Thermidor, *Jacques le fataliste* was anything but sympathetically received. Expressed in a different way: The conditions into which *Jacques* would have fitted had vanished when the enthusiasm of the Revolution with its universal ideals was reduced to the prosaic task of replacing the *ancien régime* by bourgeois rule. These conditions could, as history bears out, be re-established (and for that matter on an even much higher level) only in our time with its "more recent standards", a time in which the exhaustion of the narrow interests of the bourgeoisie again imposes a social change and opens a broad, real perspective for all. What, precisely, the recent standards are will be concretized in the course of the investigation which continues with Loy's essential statement:

"The nineteenth century is, on the whole, more understanding, but it repeats most of the adverse criticism. . . . That the general pattern should show greater comprehension in proportion to the lapse of time only strengthens the basic conviction Diderot had that he was writing for posterity [my italics! W.L.]. But, in detail, the criticism of *Jacques* during the nineteenth century reflects the general waves of liberal and reactionary thought [my italics! W.L.] which Miss Charles has seen for the works of Diderot in general. Thus there is a renewal of interest in Diderot and in *Jacques* in the early part of the century, and a judgment which is on the whole favorable; there is another renewal of interest in the latter part of the century where judgment of *Jacques* is less favorable. This is probably a reflection of the unrest during the Restoration; the varied feeling, with Reaction usually victorious, under the Second Empire. For Diderot in general, and the very equivocal nature of *Jacques* in particular, might be expected to appeal to those thinkers who are not completely satisfied with the *status quo*".

There seems to exist, then, a direct connection between Diderot's basic conviction to write for posterity and the social conditions — namely to the effect that dissatisfaction with the *status quo* is a *presupposition* for the understanding of *Jacques* either by the public or specific thinkers. It is highly characteristic that "from 1912 to the present day, there has been a definite change in attitude toward Diderot in general, with accompanying

increase of understanding of the equivocal *Jacques*". And again Loy remarks:

"The enthusiasm for the novel, in general, has been strangely incoherent, an enthusiasm of literary creators such as Schiller, Goethe, and Stendhal, or of social radicals such as Marx and Engels — *all preoccupied with new directions which are not yet absolutely clear even to themselves*. The most recent criticism has marked a change. The past thirty years has seen a dismissal of the familiar fault-finding, and an attempt to explain, quite simply, why the book was written and why it is still read. Perhaps the *world confusion* of these past years has encouraged such an attempt, for the confusion of *Jacques* is, for such a period, somehow consoling. And yet, there have been *similar periods before*. It would rather seem that, both from a literary and a philosophic point of view, the time has become ripe for a sympathetic understanding of *Jacques*. It is at least with that conviction that the following chapters were written". [All italics mine!]

It must, however, be observed that the historical period from 1912 up to this day is one of steadily growing *world confusion*, namely social decomposition, unrest, insecurity, discontent in all countries and segments of society. This kept in mind it will be evident that there have been *similar periods before*, but by no means periods which expose the features favorable to an understanding of *Jacques* with such constancy, increasing generality and magnitude as the one in which we actually live. The connection between the social conditions and the basic understanding of *Jacques* is thus — rather strengthened and remains the principal inspirer for its adequate appraisal "both from the literary and philosophic point of view". The implication of all this is that "the time has become ripe" for Diderot's novel (which should be called an "un-novel") because only today we face as a *practical issue the ultimate implications of an entire historical epoch* which began with the Renaissance and which is in its *literary* aspect marked by the forming of the new humanistic ideal of life. From the days of the early capitalist development there arises and is transmitted from century to century a more or less conscious foreboding that its final results will be much broader, much more universal or "all-embracing" than those which the different concrete stages of this development immediately yielded. Great manifestations of the new feeling for life coincide quite naturally always with times of political and social troubles, of wars, reaction, persecution, censorship and confusion. But spirits are highest when these characteristics are but the reverse side of impending and far reaching social changes of a progressive order which reaction attempts to prevent. The audacious, enthusiastic and unrestricted vision of men representing these times in literature contains far more than the "illusion" which the mercantile, financial and industrial bourgeoisie had about the "blessings" which were to spring from the execution of their specific and relatively limited historical tasks — tasks which are after all only mere links in the development of the whole. There is invariably a tremendous difference, even an abyss, between the spiritual representatives of the capitalist epoch (beginning with the mercantile system) and those representing the *material* interests of the new strata rising in the process of change: the latter will generally follow the "day" and betray all ideals as soon as established in power; the former hold the "universal view", survey centuries and take the attitude that the

outcome of the new development will in the end be itself "universal" and benefit *everybody*.

It is not at all accidental that the unsurpassed encyclopaedic outbursts of humanism occur in the Renaissance with Rabelais and on the eve of the French revolution with Diderot, for the times of these men were times of decisive changes and "encyclopaedic" in themselves. Even the somewhat more sceptical note in Diderot can easily be explained by the character of the French revolution as the "lesser event" compared to the Renaissance as the foundation upon which everything else rests. All other manifestations of the same spirit are revivals and "follow ups" rather than fundamental enlargements, for they reflect times in which economic and political changes coincide with a still more specific and therefore "narrower" stage of the development. In such times the general perspective is, despite inherent tremendous consequences, less immediate than before, and the negative effects of the particular stage overshadow for the whole the positive ones and make them practically appear as not too consoling "possibilities". If men like Schiller, Goethe, Stendhal, Marx and Engels expose a "strangely incoherent" enthusiasm for *Jacques* it is because the enthusiasm receives impulse only when the deeper coherence between the basic aspirations and certain trends or events in a given stage of the development impresses itself to whatever degree upon the mind. The revitalized coherence may then produce new manifestations or enthusiasm for the older ones, but they are (except for the intervals of roughly 200 years each which separate *Jacques* from the fifth book of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* and Loy's study from *Jacques*) not strongly enough supported by events to make *new directions* clear even to those *preoccupied* with them. It is finally not the "confusion" of *Jacques* which is "somehow" consoling in periods of "world confusion", but rather the insight that the confusion can be mastered somewhat in *Jacques'* manner and that mastering it will yield a marvellous reward. This insight consists in the perception that the apparent chaos or confusion is not devoid of sense — it is on the contrary saturated with strong forces striving beneath the surface towards a new comprehensive balance. Loy, with a remarkable grasp for the relation between the conditions of the time and the manifestations of the new spirit, is very close to the consoling perception when he describes the "tradition", the "typical French lineage" of — Pantagruelism:

"Such a tradition *does not presuppose* that all of these authors manifest a complete similarity or community from *all points of view*, for the *ages* in which they wrote *have left their imprint* on their works. But the *spirit* — of which the *keynote* is Pantagruelism — is the same. Rabelais, for example, shows exuberance, a *faith in the human animal so complete* as to be only slightly conditioned by his very real experience with existence *as it is*. The newly rediscovered testimony of Greece and Rome is still too fresh and exciting [in connection with the newly opened perspective of his own age! W.L.]. Montaigne, after a century of religious wars, has already greatly modified his enthusiasm, but the *faith* and the *hope* are there along with the resignation. Molière, writing in a medium which puts his reader immediately off-guard, and in a century where the classical conventions of the *honnête-homme* have so readily been accepted as fact, was probably much closer in spirit to his libertine friend Cyrano de Bergerac than is

usually thought. The equivocal nature of *Le Misanthrope* alone gives sufficient pause for reflection. Without *Jacques* the eighteenth century would seem without representation except perhaps for Voltaire and his philosophic tales — especially *Candide*. But there is a certainty and an inherent bitterness, often ill-disguised, in all of Voltaire including *Candide* which is quite different from the final impression of *Jacques*. Since Diderot mentions it in the same breath with Rabelais, mention should perhaps also be made of the abbé Dulaurens' eighteenth-century *Compère Mathieu*. Although obviously a lesser work, Diderot certainly was not making an empty gesture in mentioning it in *Jacques* as recent research has shown. Diderot, not in *Le Neveu de Rameau*, certainly not in *La Religieuse*, but in *Jacques le fataliste* is the eighteenth-century representative. Much has happened intellectually and socially since Molière's day, so it is not surprising if the basic humanist enthusiasm has been even more seriously and stringently limited by actual experience. But the faith in man and the scorn of events is still there and *inviolable*. A century separates Diderot from Anatole France and the humanist's position in a period of revolutions, industrial and political, has become a hundred years more difficult. The easier judgment of France has been that he is a sceptic or cynic; the terms were probably as applicable to the others in this lineage by their contemporaries. But the same love of man, masquerading strangely, is in France as it was in Rabelais, Montaigne and Diderot. Gide, by reason of his overdose of Puritanism and carefully cultured intellect, is sometimes questionably qualified for the group". [Aside from French expressions and titles, all italics mine!]

IV

If the keynote of the "Gallic spirit" is Pantagruelism and Gide (who definitely belongs to an inferior group) cannot qualify, exception shall here be made also for Anatole France. To discuss the proper place of both Gide and France would require a special study. The fundamental difference between them and the Rabelaisian tradition can, however, be made distinct by definition of what Pantagruelism is.

To begin with it may be stated that the reference to Rabelais (or to Sterne, Cervantes and even Voltaire) plays an enormous part in the discussion of *Jacques* with most of its friendly or hostile critics. These critics can be examined, one after the other, in Loy's study. But whether they are friendly or hostile, pure enthusiasts or enthusiasts with critical reservations, referring to Rabelais or not — very few of them have something to say about either the substance (content) of the work or "Pantagruelism". The tone of the pure enthusiasts, and not mentioning Rabelais, is set in a letter by Goethe to Merck (1780):

"There is a manuscript of Diderot, *Jacques le fataliste*, being circulated about, which is quite remarkable. A large, very rich dinner, with much intellect, prepared and served up for the mouth of a unique idol. I took over the seat of this Bel and during six uninterrupted hours, devoured all the courses and between-the-courses in the order and following the intentions of this artificial cook and table-setter".

Confronted with identical comments by Goethe and Schiller, which add nothing in content, Loy sees at once what is involved:

"It is unfortunate that the reactions of Schiller are not more detailed; in effect, they tell us little more than his personal attraction to the book. . . . [What Goethe] has to say of *Jacques* is again much in the vein of Schiller's unbridled delight, and however unusual his figures of speech, he gives little actual textual appreciation".

Going over to the hostile group operating with Rabelais, its typical representative is Andrieux with his "famous" exclamation (1796):

"You know Rabelais? You know Sterne? If you don't, I advise you to read them, especially the latter; but, if you want a very weak imitation of *Tristram Shandy*, you have only to read *Jacques le fataliste*. . . . From his model, Diderot has copied only the disorder and lack of transition. . . . Do you like scandalous tales, even filthy ones about monks, whores and renegades? Read *Jacques le fataliste*. . . . It's enough to turn the stomach of the least delicate reader".*

In view of this, one may reverse Loy's remark about Schiller-Goethe and state: In effect, Andrieux reveals little more than his personal revulsion for the book and leaves us with Rabelais-Sterne in the air. But so do also, in the latter respect, most critics of the third group who evoke the Rabelaisian element on the basis of a more or less sympathetic approach. The heart of the matter is touched upon by F. C. Green who is, however, already "concerned with explaining away the emphasis on Sterne's influence, and attempts to see clear into the difference between the two writers":

"Sterne and Diderot, though they both sat at the feet of Rabelais, have actually little in common. They present a temperamental [!] disparity which is reflected in *Tristram Shandy* and in *Jacques le fataliste*. Sterne's interest in human beings is essentially that of the artist, whilst Diderot's springs from a deeper source. Sterne has the simian inquisitiveness of the small boy, the same alert cocked eye for the comic or revelatory trick of speech or movement. In point of fact, he has none of that profound sympathy for humanity [!] which glows beneath the screen of Diderot's apparent cynicism and humorous tolerance".

Similarly Lucien Scheler:

"What separates Diderot irrevocably from the modern writers is his temperament [!]. Faulkner and his colleagues say 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here'. . . . Completely different is the connivance that Diderot establishes among his characters, his reader and himself, for here the

* Poor Goethe, Schiller, Stendhal, Carlyle, Marx, Engels, Hegel and so on! They all may take to heart what this "very serious gentleman" (as Loy apostrophizes Naigon, another of the hostile critics and by chance Diderot's friend, disciple, and literary heir) has to say about their extremely "undelicate" stomachs, which did not turn in the least after being filled with all the courses and between-the-courses of the very rich dinner. Goethe is even explicit about his stomach when he writes: "I read it with the delight of the Bel of Babel enjoying an immense feast, and thank God, I was able to devour such a portion with the greatest appetite, all at once, as if I were drinking a glass of water, and yet with an indescribable voluptuousness". No being is more ridiculous and selfrighteous than the "serious" moralist generalizing on the ground of his private taste. Andrieux is punished on the spot (Nov. 16, 1796) by a writer with a more healthy stomach than his: "All these situations are developed with a good-natured spirit, and a light touch which could displease only a few peevish [!] minds who replace purity of morals by the hypocrisy [!] of decency". That writer observes on the Sterne-Rabelais question that Diderot had Sterne's "work in mind", but that *Jacques* is "an original modeled after an original".

complicity is established in fun. It is because Diderot loves life [!] passionately that he has confidence in man; it is for this reason that *Jacques*, in the worst circumstances, preserves his good humour".

The statements of the two last critics have (like that of Loy in the previous section) the merit of pointing out some characteristics of Pantagruelism. First, faith in the human animal or confidence in and love of man, profound sympathy for humanity, passionate love of life; secondly, *hope* for humanity on one side, *scorn of events* on the other; thirdly, humorous tolerance or complicity among all established in fun. Whether these characteristics make for a distinct *temperament* or are the properties of the temperament itself, is irrelevant: the temperament cannot be separated from its properties (and vice versa) which are, further, indissolubly blended with a sound dose of — pessimism. This pessimism is concretely at work in the forms of resignation, scepticism, satire, irony, humour, stoicism, "fatalism"; it gives the enthusiasm or optimism (in itself, like gold, too soft a material) the necessary resistance, while the temperament receives from it that wonderful balance without which faith in the human animal would become: insipid day-dreaming; hope: a cheap consolation; love of life: trivial affirmation of existence *per se*; scorn of events: pure cynicism; humorous tolerance: apologetic complicity in baseness; complicity in fun: passive and sentimental adaptation to circumstances.

V

How the balance, so vital for Pantagruelism, asserts itself at every turn and point is to be gathered from other characteristics and elements present in *Jacques*. Of great consequence is the element of *realism* (not to be confounded with the product of degeneration called "naturalism"), many times objected to as the "obscenity" of Rabelais, Diderot and Sterne alike. Loy notes on this score: *

"Both works [*Jacques* and *Tristram Shandy*] have been criticized for their obscenity: the issue needs some clarification. . . . The passages for which Diderot has been taken to task are the very frank *gaulois* episodes of *gay and earthly lovemaking* [which is one of the pillars in the structure of the Rabelaisian temperament! W.L.]. Sterne's treatment of such episodes is more suggestive than pictorial; Diderot goes *bluntly to the point without insistence*, as if he were relating *any other inoffensive event*. . . . The pseudo-sensibility, the '*rire mouillé d'une petite larme*' which is Ducro's formula for Sterne's humor, or at least the very fact that he is, after all, a churchman prevent him from a *frank* treatment of subjects touching the obscene. Diderot, on the other hand, for all his sensitive nature, is a man of the world and, *at heart, an uninhibited gaulois* from the provinces. . . . Obscenity or not, it is fairly clear that Diderot's *earthy attitude in face of the sexual and physical* is the more *honest and frank*. Actually, this attitude toward the physical, with the above reservation, is common to both men; there is *much of Rabelais* in them both. . . . But in a broader sense obscenity is a *universal human problem* [and treated as such and positively embraced by all Pantagruelists! W.L.]".

* If not otherwise indicated, and except for titles, French words and expressions, all italics in all following quotations are mine. These italics emphasize Pantagruelism.

A significant example of the realism in question is the ravishingly "obscene" episode in which Jacques tells his master how he fooled Dame Marguerite who believed wrongly that Jacques was wholly ignorant about the female sex. The trick he used to prove his "pucelage" is very convincing, because it is very realistically conceived:

Jacques (proceeding in his recital): "Ah! Dame Marguerite, teach me, I beg you, and I shall be very much obliged to you, only teach me. . ." Begging her in this manner, I squeezed her hands and she squeezed mine, too. I kissed her eyes and she kissed my mouth. Meanwhile it had become completely dark. I therefore said to her: "I see well, Dame Marguerite, that you don't feel enough toward me to teach me; I'm all chagrin about it. Come, let's go up and go back". Dame Marguerite was silent; she took back one of my hands, and I don't know where she led it, but the fact is that I exclaimed: "There is nothing! there is nothing!"

At which point the *Master*, who immediately understands the trick, apostrophizes Jacques: "Miscreant! double miscreant!"

Jacques continues: "The fact is that she was very much undressed, and I was much so too. The fact is that I still had my hand where there was nothing on her, and that she had placed her hand where this was not exactly the same on me. The fact is that I found myself under her and, consequently, her on top of me. The fact is that, not helping her in any way, it was quite necessary that she take all the effort upon herself. The fact is that she instructed me with such a good heart, that there came a moment when I believed she would die of it. The fact is that I, as much confused as she was and not knowing what I was saying, exclaimed: "Ah, Dame Suzanne, what pleasure you give me!"

The *Master* (keen listener and observer): You mean Dame Marguerite.

Jacques: No, no. The fact is that I confounded one name with another and that instead of saying Dame Marguerite I said Dame Suzanne. The fact is that I confessed to Dame Marguerite that what she believed she was teaching me that day, Dame Suzanne had taught me, a little differently, it is true, three or four days before. The fact is that she said to me: "What! It is Suzanne and not I? . . ." The fact is that I replied: "It is neither the one nor the other". The fact is that, while still making fun of herself, of Suzanne, the two husbands, and while bestowing upon me slight insults, I found myself on her and consequently her under me, and that, whilst she admitted that this had given her much pleasure, but not as much as in the other manner, she found herself again on me and consequently me under her. The fact is that after a little rest and silence, I found neither myself nor her below, neither me above nor her above nor me below; for we were one and the other on our sides, and she had her head bent forward and her two buttocks tightly pressed against my thighs. The fact is that if I had been less instructed, good Dame Marguerite would have taught me all there is to learn. . . . [Jacques doesn't forget to add that they had, after such strain, much pain in regaining the village.]

The *Master*: And you haven't seen these women again?

Jacques: I beg your pardon — more than once.

Master: Both of them?

Jacques: Both of them.

Master: They didn't fall out with one another?

Jacques: Being mutually useful, they liked each other even more for it.

Master: Our kind of folk would have done much the same. . .

Everything in this episode is realistic and delightfully balanced, above all morals and psychology. Jacques' slip of the tongue (saying Dame Suzanne), the sensuality without inhibition, the heartiness with which Dame Marguerite embraces Jacques' trick (it is a good and witty one, and if there is a prickle in it, it increases only the pleasure), the healthy behavior of the two women, the concluding aphorism of the master — all that is a thousand times more profound and truer than the Freudian rubbish. Natural things are in themselves harmless, unproblematical and gratifying: the balance is

preserved if nobody gets hurt, and then the complexes, guilt-feelings, repressions, sublimations and so on of the psychoanalysts are put to shame. Indeed, Jacques' "slip" reveals nothing but the fact that two women gave him equal pleasure — nothing "subconscious" is brought out by it which Jacques was not consciously intent on telling Dame Marguerite anyhow. How right was that writer of 1898 who accused *Jacques* of being a work "without psychology"! Ah, he didn't know that his accusation was a compliment which placed Diderot far above the fabricants of the wearisome, boring and paralysing *Ersatz* for true psychology called the "psychological novel".

But what about "morals" if the husbands of Suzanne and Marguerite are made cuckolds, who earn nothing but mockery in the whole affair? First of all, morality is a matter of convention, and the convention is in the case of "monogamy" (before or after marriage) a thoroughly hypocritical and untenable one. The realist sees things as they are — it is higher morals to dismiss the lie and to recognize without ado that every healthy man and woman is an "adulterer", if not in flesh, the more frequently in thought. How many writers describe indignantly and enjoy secretly what they can't have in real life! Instead of attacking the *social* conditions, the only barrier to their longings and the sole force which cripples man psychologically, they call their frustration morals and embellish it with problems of psychology and human "nature". Such "problems" are quickly squashed when the master says that virtue is a good thing of which the wicked and the good speak well, and Jacques retorts: "Because both of them reap benefit from it". Or when, in the affair of Jacques and Justine, the master cries out: "Traitor! miscreant! Do you know what crime you're going to commit? You are going to violate that girl, if not by force, at least by fright. Carried before the law courts you would suffer the full severity reserved for rapists". To which Jacques replies: "I don't know whether I violated her, but I do know for sure *that I didn't hurt her any and that she didn't hurt me*". For the fact is that "all" went very well, and then very well again, and then again very well. And there go your morals, very much hurt, to the pit, where "deep" analysis can follow them and solve the problems of human "nature" which have just so happily been — dissolved.

Secondly, the two husbands, who will not fail of their own opportunities, receive only just "punishment" (an implicit side-point also in the case of Justine). At a wedding, these "jokesters" had asked Jacques some questions concerning wedding nights to which he answered rather stupidly. They burst out laughing and arouse the curiosity of their wives sitting at the other end of the table. "It's too funny", said one of them to his wife, "I'll tell you to-night". The wife of the other gets the same answer, and when all are in their beds they tell their wives the incomprehensible, unbelievable thing that Jacques, at the age of twenty-two, big and strong as he is, rather good-looking, alert and not stupid, is as new, but just as new as when he had left his mother's womb. The two women marvel about it as much as their husbands, and the very next day Suzanne gives Jacques a sign and asks him: "Have you nothing to do?" Naturally, Jacques has nothing to do, and there they go together with your — psychology, which you should enrich with a chapter on how to remove "inhibitions" of any sort (the material for it can be taken, gratuitously, from these notes).

Thirdly, neither the master nor Jacques nor Diderot himself stand outside the moral circle. Jacques-Diderot philosophizes, as Loy remarks, in terms reminiscent of Lady Macbeth's "Things without all remedy should be without regard". So he accepts the unavoidable, and his sole reaction to the perspective of becoming one fine day himself a cuckold is realistically balanced and constitutes an invulnerable position. This position, stated at the very end of the book, is Diderot's last word on the matter. Since it is rendered in the "vein of that *gaiety of mind* concocted *in spite of fortune, in spite of fear*, one catches a last glimpse of *Jacques the fatalist* — who is, in reality, all along Jacques the *Pantagruelist* — " [Loy] when Diderot concludes:

"One has tried to convince me that his master and Desgland have fallen in love with his [Jacques] wife. I don't know what it's about but I am sure that in the evening he said to himself: 'If it's written up yonder that you'll be a cuckold, Jacques, you may do what you want, you'll be one; if, on the contrary, it is written that you'll not be, they may do what they want, you'll not be. Sleep then, my friend. . .' And he fell asleep".

Once more: There goes your psychology, a dry, dead product of frustration! Commercial interests alone are responsible for its reproduction, but once reproduced it becomes an animal more hungry than ever before. It will now proceed to a "deep" analysis; it will search for complexes lying at the bottom of the *pantagruelistic* human "nature" and surely find another — frustration on which to feed. And why on a frustration? Because, for psychoanalysis, everything is, leads to, or results from a frustration. If you eat and make love twenty-four times a day, you never get hungry. That's the trouble — *you overcompensate* therewith only an immense frustration which may go back to Cain who loved mother Eve (there was no other woman around) but was rejected by her (reason enough to kill Abel whom he suspected perhaps of being more successful, and to create the "brother-complex" which is nothing more than an overcompensated Oedipus-complex). So it is easy to grasp that the seemingly unproblematical appetite of the Pantagruelists is extremely problematical and a mere overcompensation, because the healthier the appetite, the more "complex" the hunger. And what is wrong with them both? Ah, that is a question you must never ask an animal which devours only pseudo-problems and rightly says: Doesn't the water make you wet? Well, then there's something "behind" it!

VI

Realism, in steady opposition to convention, is by its very nature *factual*, not programmatical, *revolutionism* — the next important element of the Pantagruelian temperament. Jacques and his master, the "strange pair", may be taken as a symbol of whatever one likes, but one can heartily agree with Naigon's complaint that Jacques is a servant "such as has never existed". It is easy to agree on this point because the servant is the carrier of a *shift* in the social *status quo* (*chose incompréhensible* for a Naigon!), appears as the real master and, for that matter, as one who is the negation of all masters or (*omnis negatio est determinatio*) a generalized human being as visualized by Diderot. This human being is, of course, in the process of *becoming* generalized, and it has to struggle with the actually *outlived*, yet *formally* still persisting *status quo*.

Once, Jacques had forgotten to water the horses. His father got angry. Jacques shrugged his shoulders. The father took a stick and worked rather heavily on Jacques' shoulders. Jacques, *out of spite*, enlisted in a regiment just passing by.

Jacques reports this incident to his master in the beginning of the story, but very soon follows one of a quite different type. The weather is sticky and the master falls asleep. Night *overtakes* them in the middle of the fields, and there they are, *lost*. The master, in a terrible rage, falls on his servant with a whip, and that poor devil says at each blow: "*That one, too, was apparently written up yonder . . .*"

Very soon after this Jacques' behavior changes again. With pistols in hand he puts a dozen brigands to reason who have insulted him and the master. Later, on the road, Jacques discovers that his wallet, and the master that his watch, have been left behind. Jacques immediately rides back to fetch them, while his master goes on, then sits down and — falls asleep. When Jacques returns he sees that the master's horse has been stolen. As the master is about to beat Jacques with the bridle-thong, Jacques says to him: "Take it easy, sir, *to-day I'm not in the mood* to let you assail me; I shall receive the first blow, but I swear that at the second I shall spur my horse and *leave you there*. . ." Upon which menace the master suddenly calms down.

At another occasion, the master tells Jacques that he is and will ever be only a Jacques. Jacques counters: "If, in that thatched inn where we found the rascals, Jacques hadn't been worth a little more than his master. . ." — What ensues from this answer is too relevant for the subject-matter not to be rendered in full:

Master: "Jacques, you are an insolent person: you abuse my bounty. If I have committed the folly of taking you out of your place, I shall quite know how to put you back there. Jacques, take your bottle and your kettle and go downstairs". *Jacques*: "It pleases you to say that, sir; I'm fine here and shall not go down". *Master*: "I say that you will go down". *Jacques*: "I'm sure that you don't mean it. How, sir, after having for ten years accustomed me to live as your equal. . ." *Master*: "It pleases me to stop that". *Jacques*: "After having suffered all my impertinences. . ." *Master*: "I will suffer them no longer". *Jacques*: "After having seated me on your side at the table, having called me your friend. . ." *Master*: "You don't know what the name friend means when given by a superior to his subaltern". *Jacques*: "When one knows that all your orders are but wind-bags if they are not ratified by Jacques; after having paired your name so well to mine that the one never goes without the other and everybody says Jacques and his master — suddenly it pleases you to separate them! No, sir, that will not be. It is written up yonder that as long as Jacques lives, and as long as his master lives, and even after they are both dead, one will say Jacques and his master". *Master*: "And I say, Jacques, that you go downstairs, and that you go downstairs immediately, because I order you to do so". *Jacques*: "Sir, order me anything else if you want that I obey you".

Here Jacques' master got up, took him by the lapel and said gravely to him: "Go downstairs". Jacques replied to him coldly: "I'm not going down". The master, shaking him violently, said: "Go down, boor, obey me". Jacques replied coldly again: "Boor as much as you please, but the boor is not going down. Look, sir, what I have in the head, as the saying goes, I have not in the heel. You excite yourself in vain; Jacques will stay where he is and will not go downstairs".

Thereupon Jacques and his master, having been moderate up to this moment, lose patience at the same time and start to cry at the top of their voices: "You will go down. — I will not go down. — You will go down. — I will not go down."

At this noise the landlady came up to find out what was going on; but it was not instantly that one answered her. They continued to shout: "You will go down."

I will not go down". Then the master, his heart heavy and pacing about the room, said grumbling: "Has one ever seen something like that?" The landlady, standing there amazed: "Well, gentlemen, what's the matter?"

Jacques, without exciting himself, said to the landlady: "It's my master who's off his head; he's mad". Master: "He's stupid, you mean". Jacques: "All as you please". Master (to the landlady): "Did you hear him?" Landlady: "He is wrong; but peace, peace! speak, one or the other, and let me know what it's all about".

Master (to Jacques): "Speak, boor". Jacques (to his master): "Speak yourself". Landlady (to Jacques): "Come, now, Mr. Jacques, speak; your master orders you to; after all, a master is a master".

Jacques explained the affair to the landlady. The landlady, after having listened, said to them: "Gentlemen, will you accept me as arbiter?"

Jacques and his master (in unison): "Very gladly, very gladly, our landlady". Landlady: "And you engage you by your honor to execute my sentence?" Jacques and his master: "Honor, honor. . ."

Then the landlady, seating herself on the table and assuming the tone and the bearing of a grave magistrate, said:

"Having heard the declaration of Mr. Jacques, and upon facts tending to prove that his master is a good, a very good, a too good master, and that Jacques is not at all a bad servant, albeit a little subject to confound absolute and immovable possession with temporary and gratuitous concession, I annul the equality which has been established between them over a period of time, and I immediately re-establish it. Jacques will go down, and when he has gone down, he will come back up: he will re-enter in possession of all the prerogatives he has enjoyed up to this day. His master will offer him his hand and say in friendship: 'Good day, Jacques, I'm very glad to see you again. . .'. Jacques will answer him: 'And I, sir, I'm very glad to have you back. . .'. And I forbid that this affair ever come up between them again, and that the prerogative of either the master or servant be disturbed in the future. We decree that the one shall order and the other obey, each to the best of his ability; and that there be left, between what the one can and what the other shall, *the same obscurity as before*".

Upon finishing this pronouncement, which she had lifted from some contemporary work published on the occasion of a very similar quarrel, and in which one heard the master cry from one extremity of the kingdom to the other at his servant: "You will go down!", and the servant cry from his side: "I will not go down" . . . she said to Jacques: "Come, now, give me your arm without further parley".

Jacques exclaimed grievously: "Thus it was written up yonder that I should go down! . . ."

The Landlady (to Jacques): "It was written up yonder that the moment one takes a master one will go down, go up, go forward, retreat, stay — and all that without the feet being ever free to turn down the head's orders. Your arm, and that my order be accomplished. . ."

Jacques gave his arm to the landlady, but scarcely had they passed the threshold of the room when the master threw himself upon Jacques and embraced him; left Jacques to embrace the landlady; and whilst embracing the one and the other said: "It is written up yonder that I should never disengage me from that original there, and that as long as I live he would be my master and that I would be his servant. . ." The landlady added: "And that as things stand neither of you would be the worse off for it".

The landlady, after having settled this quarrel, which she took for the first and which was but the hundredth of the same sort, and having reinstated Jacques in his position, went about her business. And the master said to Jacques:

"Now that we are cooled off and in shape to judge sensibly, don't you agree?" Jacques: "I agree that when one has given his word of honor one must hold it; and since we have promised the judge on our word of honor not to return to this matter, we must not speak any more about it". The Master: "You are right". Jacques: "But without returning to this affair, couldn't we prevent a hundred others by some reasonable agreement?" Master: "I consent to that". Jacques: "Let's stipulate: 1. Since it is written up yonder that I'm essential to you, and since I feel and know that you cannot get along without me, I shall abuse these advantages at any time and as often as *the occasion for it presents itself*". Master: "But Jacques, one has never stipulated something like that". Jacques: "Stipulated

or not stipulated, that has always happened, happens to-day, and will happen as long as the world stands. Do you believe that others had not, like yourself, attempted to escape that decree and that you will be more able than they? Get rid of that idea and submit to the law of a necessity from which it is not in your power to free yourself.

Let's stipulate: 2. Since it is as impossible for Jacques not to realize his influence and his power over his master as it is for his master not to realize his own weakness and to get rid of his indulgence, *it is necessary that Jacques be insolent* and that, for the sake of peace, his master will not notice it. All that has been arranged behind our back, all that was sealed up yonder the moment nature made Jacques and his master. It was decreed that you would have the titles and that *I would have the stuff*. If you would try to oppose the will of nature, you would piss but clear water".

Master: "But in this way your lot would be better than mine". Jacques: "Who says the contrary?" Master: "But in this way I have only to take your place and to put you in mine". Jacques: "Do you know what would happen? You would lose the titles and you wouldn't have the stuff. Let's stay as we are, we're both very well off; and may the rest of our lives be employed in making a proverb". Master: "What proverb?" Jacques: "Jacques leads his master. We shall be the first of whom one will have said it, but one will repeat it of thousands of others *who are worth more than you and I*". Master: "That seems hard to me, very hard". Jacques: "My master, my dear master, you are going to kick against a prick which will but prick the more lively. That is it, then, what is agreed between us". Master: "And what does our consent add to a necessary law?" Jacques: "Much. Do you think it's useless to know, once and for all plainly and clearly, to what we have to stick? All of our quarrels have, up to now, come only because we had not yet clearly said to ourselves that you would call yourself my master and that it is I who would be yours. But now that's understood and we have, consequently, only to go ahead". Master: "But where the devil did you learn all that?" Jacques: "In the great book. Ah, my master, one may reflect, meditate, study as much as one wants in all the books in the world, but one is only a petty scholar if one has not read in the great book. . ."

Jacques' fatalism is *determinism*, but a determinism which comprises the actions of the individuals as one of the main determinant factors. Sometimes Jacques acts *out of spite*, and that may influence the course of his whole life. At another time he is *lost* because night has *overtaken* him, and then the master represents mere elemental forces with which it is senseless to argue and whose blows he endorses with the comment that *it was written up yonder*.^{*} A third time he is *not in the mood* to suffer, and that

^{*} What is true of Jacques is true of the master: he is one *such as has never existed*. Diderot's description of him runs: "He has very few ideas in his head; if he happens to say something sensible it's from reminiscence or from inspiration. He has eyes like you and me; but one doesn't know most of the time if he's looking. He doesn't sleep, nor is he awake either; *he lets himself exist*: that's his usual function". This "automaton" clearly stands for nature and outside conditions in their usually *passive* aspect, and therefore the master is, with all his limitations and foibles, still a well meant man, a very good master, who likes to interrogate Jacques and cannot go on without him. It is precisely as a part of the outside conditions that he represents also the "master" of whom Loy says with good reason: "The Master would seem to represent for Diderot just that — a gentleman whose extinction is *forestalled* only by the efforts of a Jacques. Yet even this picturization is too simple, for although he has not the fire of genius, the Master is not a complete dolt. At times he amazes the reader with a pronouncement which shows a quiet sort of experience and reflection and which fits very badly with most of the other things he has said. He is undeniably but an individual member of a more general class, yet nonetheless, a convincing and consistent character". As such a character he stands in evident contrast to Jacques: "In politics Jacques would certainly be to the left, his Master, to the right; in matters scientific, Jacques would be an experimentalist, his Master, a scholastic; in matters of

means only that he struggles, and struggles successfully, against evils and injustices which can be avoided. A fourth time the forces in play block each other, and then the only way out of the impasse is a compromise.

In the compromise accepted by both parties *the same obscurity as before* is maintained, but Jacques' position has become stronger. It is now once and for all stipulated that he shall abuse the advantages he has over his master *at any time and as often as there is an occasion*, and that *it is necessary that he be insolent*. Jacques draws his lessons from the past, lives completely in the present, and is nevertheless entirely oriented towards the future. He is at the spearhead of the development, which has already gone too far to be reversed and which makes the social change a *necessity*. So he does not advocate physical violence — forces have shifted and the *status quo* has become such that *thousands of Jacques will lead their masters peacefully* along the path set down in the "great book", provided that the *status quo* in its *true actuality* is recognized and respected. As Loy expresses it:

"Just how much of a revolutionary there is in Diderot cannot be adequately discussed here. It is certain, however, that the relentless project of the *Encyclopédie*, and the equivocal, often strong, suggestions as to a change of things . . . point to a certain amount of defiant spirit against the *status quo*. Several such thought-provoking ideas tinged with revolution have already been pointed out in *Jacques*. For *Jacques* was conceived in a time of crisis, in the years of the Maupeou parliament so disliked by the *philosophes*, in the years when the young Louis XVI made his tragic bid to counterbalance the march of tragic events and was found wanting, in the years when Turgot was about to make his valiant but unsuccessful attempt to save France from 1789. If there can be a final explanation for *Jacques*, it is that it represents Diderot's prejudgment of the Revolution which was already writ large, the testament he leaves to limit his responsibility in that tragic affair, and a forejudgment of those basic romantic heresies (here Rousseau again rears his head) which still badger the modern world — destructive totalitarianism and self-assertive individualism. . . . *If all the Jacques can be assured of leading their masters* who, for all that do not cease being masters, the revolution, if it be called revolution, will *necessarily* be a gradual, not a violent shift. Such an attitude with its insistence on the power of the Jacques, is Machiavelli popularized and reversed, a handbook for the masses and not for the Prince. . . . But with what fear and stealth is it necessary to proceed! The Masters are patently afraid of the Jacques, and the Jacques cannot but be, more than ever, distrustful and afraid of the Masters when their well-meant attempts to help are met with fearful repression. Fear begets fear whether in the political body or in the individual. If there is a mellowing in the ageing Diderot it is in the realization that much effort and time has been lost because of the fear of fear. Jacques sums it up rather well in the episode of the brigands with whom he has so bravely dealt. To the Master, who is at once afraid of he-knows-not-what, and awed by this devil of a man, his lackey, Jacques says, 'All of us, in this

morality, Jacques would be relativist, his Master, a careful adherent to the code of his family and the times. It is natural, then, that Jacques should do most of the leading in discussions, that the Master should only react [the *usual* function of the environment! W.L.], which is, in effect, what happens from the start".

house, are afraid of each other — which proves we are all fools'. . . . In many ways the French Revolution remains the most important event in modern history, and still overhangs most of the modern world's problems more than the moderns will admit. In *Jacques* Diderot has answered before the fact both the *practical* and the *philosophic* problems which the Revolution . . . has preserved for the twentieth century".

VII

It is only too probable that here, in Diderot's answer to the *practical* and *philosophical* problems of our time, one of the truly determinant factors for the rejection of *Jacques* by (specifically) American publishers has been uncovered. To act out of spite, to accept what is absolutely inevitable, to fight unflinchingly against avoidable evils, to make necessary compromises without sacrificing one's character — this alone is already "dangerous", but it does not exhaust Pantagruelian revolutionism and cannot suffice to make the Pantagruelian temperament the rounded, well-balanced unit it is. Pantagruelists are generally far ahead of their time, and their revolutionism has other "appalling" aspects for the Masters of the mad-house in which we live.* Some of these aspects particularly concern America, the country in which a serious compromise with the *Jacques* could spare humanity innumerable sufferings and prevent its eventual annihilation. In Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Empire it has all too clearly been demonstrated that any violation of the "will of nature" cannot but destroy the social substance, engender general barbarism and finally, a universal catastrophe. Vice versa: America could eliminate barbarism once and for all and free the world from want, fear and avoidable evils. In no other country does it appear so clearly written up yonder that as long as the *Jacques* and the Masters *live*, the former would have the stuff and lead the latter to the creation of a society in which both categories are to be dissolved into pure and simple human beings, whose lives will be regulated neither by orders nor their ratification, but by social relations which have become *reasonable in themselves*. It is, in short, in no other country so absolutely clear that the very terms Master and servant have already been stripped of

* A fine observation by Loy concerning the fear Stalinists sense in view of *Jacques* shall not be omitted: "The Russians . . . usually skip over *Jacques* as having no [!] significance to their study, or perhaps, as having only an equivocal or even dangerous [!] conclusion for their narrow Soviet interpretation. Luppöl, in his whole work on Diderot, is content to say only that 'in 1773 he finishes the great prosaic epic, *Jacques le fataliste*'. Luc . . . limits himself to a sympathetic observation on the so-called obscenity: 'As for the tone of Denis Diderot's sexuality, I believe that *Jacques le fataliste* gives it better than the painful [!] artifice of the *Bijoux indiscrets* . . . [it is] an admixture of a rather [!] rustic indecency which expresses scarcely [!] more than a healthiness of temperament'". — It seems that this utterance is less sympathetic than extremely snobbish. Stalinist counter-revolution was naturally eager to stamp out all achievements of the October Revolution also in the sexual field. And since then the rather rustic indecency of a healthy temperament has been supplanted by a rather *Russian* indecency, which expresses no more than a painful, artificial and unhealthy admixture of icy Siberian puritanism coupled with Stakhanovism for record-figures in child-production. Luc and neo-Malthusians may learn from *Jacques* why to-day even France has a rising birth-rate: "One never makes so many children as in times of misery". Or as the Master puts it: "*Rien ne peuple comme les gueux*."

all sense by force of material conditions which have rendered the capitalist *status quo* obsolete and require no longer the social types corresponding to these terms.

And yet, besides the Stalinoid sector of our mad-house, no other part of it is so extensively pervaded with insane fear, hysterical distrust, malevolent persecution, ridiculous (but disastrous) witch-hunting, intimidating "loyalty oaths", degrading "tests", perverse spying, insulting controls, wanton injustices and insidious censorship as America. Especially there have Masters long since been transformed into sheer *usurpers* — its ranks have been filled with innumerable parvenus, with scum and (in the genuine tradition which has always "distinguished" the formation of the American ruling class) outright criminals. And what such "Masters" instigate is amply supplemented by the viciousness and the zealous cowardice of their dependents (lackeys in the meanest sense of the word) in every sphere of public life. The press, Hollywood, publishers, writers, professors, school-teachers, union-leaders, scientists, "liberals", many organizations and bodies impose *voluntarily* — and therefore all the more ruthlessly — a devastating censorship upon themselves and the public, not to mention voluntary participation in illegal government drives, and witch-hunting, denouncement and similar activities of *their own*.

Even willing publishers must, in such an atmosphere, be frightened of one-knows-not-what at the sight of *Jacques*. They must be "awed" by a book which has a "contagious" quality, and whose author delights in the unpardonable sin of saying what he means and — *for the benefit of all: seriously, honestly* — meaning what he says. Indeed, what is to be done with a "Master" who revolts outright against the injustice of Him who "is said to be the assemblage of all perfection"? No doubt, Jacques and his Master lived in a mad time, and that is why Jacques, fearing for the security of his outraged Master, looked around to make sure that nobody had overheard him. But pray, has an American publisher in our time not to watch out for Cardinal Spellman and the American Legion? Are they not at any time ready to "protest" successfully against anything they "don't like", and that without the slightest concern for the democratic right of others to like intensely what the "protesters" don't like? Indeed, the poor publisher has to watch out — the fear is under his skin and drives him into submission, even if he is unaware of what really makes him conform to the rules of the mad-house.

Perhaps the most horrifying circumstance of all for to-day's illiterate rulers is the fact that Jacques, this devil of a man, is so strong in character, so unsubdued, so steady, so indomitable, so sure of himself, and simultaneously so gay, so easy, so good-natured, so harmless, so undisturbed, so relativistic. Diderot's portrait of him and his ideas really inspires "dread":

He does not, like our beloved "mass-psychology", hold that the masses are "inhuman" and enjoy the crimes of their diverse tyrants. "They would snatch that unfortunate about whose gallows they gather from the hands of justice if they could. . . . The people are terrible in their fury, but it doesn't last. Their own misery has made them compassionate; they turn their eyes away from the spectacle of horror they went looking for; they grow tender, they return weeping". [Pray, citizens, what can any government and "scientific" propaganda do with teachings which do not conform

with "collective guilt" and give the lie to the assumption that people are crazy about witch-hunting?] "The distinction of a physical world and moral world seemed void of sense to him". [That fellow is definitely dangerous: If people realize what he means — adieu rulers and a lot of ideologies!] "He waxed angry at the unjust man; and when somebody objected that then he resembled the dog who bites the stone that struck him, he said: 'Not at all; the stone bitten by the dog is not corrected; the unjust man is modified by the stick'. Often he was inconsistent like you and me and subject to forgetting his principles, except in some circumstances where his philosophy evidently dominated him and then he said: 'That had to be, for it was written up yonder'. He tried to prevent evil; he was prudent *with the utmost scorn for prudence*. When the accident happened, he came back to his refrain, and he was consoled".

Practically speaking: If the rulers are foolish enough to *provoke* a violent revolution against the stipulations in the "great book", the undesired "accident" *must* happen and provide the consolation which all natural events bear in themselves. Pantagruelian revolutionism is thus not only a property of the physical world, but also of the human "moral" world whose behaviour is off-hand not distinguishable from the "behavior of matter". For in the final analysis only one morality can stand the test — the morality expressed in the great dictum: *Good is that which is necessary, or what is necessary, that is good*. And what is necessary will be felt with irresistible force every time the situation itself commands: For better or for worse, you have no other choice than between these two possibilities! In the interim which separates such situations from each other, the problems of balance are solved by steps relative to the concrete stage of the development, and here numerous solutions are offered. Jacques remarks: "The doctors say that opposites are cured by opposites". The master concretizes: "Which is as true for morality as for *physiology*. I have noticed a rather strange thing; there are scarcely any moral maxims of which you couldn't make a medical aphorism, and, conversely, no medical aphorisms which wouldn't make moral maxims".

The cure of opposites by opposites is the general pattern of all development, but it depends again on many concrete circumstances what form this development will take. The Master has been condemned to bring up a child which is in reality that of his deceitful friend, the Chevalier de Saint-Quin. Jacques reflects on the strange things written up yonder: "Who knows the rôle which this little bastard will play in the world? Who knows whether he is not born for the good fortune or the destruction of an empire?" The Master says no — he will make him a good turner or a good watchmaker. He will marry and have children who will perpetually do the same as their father in this world. Jacques: "Yes, if that's written up yonder. But why should not a Cromwell come out of the workshop of a turner? He who had his King's head cut off, didn't he come out of the workshop of a brewer, and does one not say to-day . . ."

The Master hastily interrupts him at this point, and while the book approaches its end the opposite solution is presented in the episode which is, as the climax of human behavior, the most significant in the whole story. This episode has been prepared in a dialogue in which Jacques challenges the Master's view that he is free to do as he wishes. The Master admits

that we pass three-quarters of our lives in intending without doing. Jacques immediately gives the problem its dialectical turn: "And in doing without intending." This the Master doubts, yet he consents that it be proven to him. Jacques declares that the proof will be delivered and proposes meanwhile to speak about other matters. Before long the following happens:

Jacques has loosened the straps of his Master's saddle; the Master falls, but Jacques is at his side and receives him (falling) in his arms. The Master complains that Jacques takes bad care of him — he might as well have ended his life in falling. Jacques answers insolently; the Master gets furious and chases Jacques round the horse in order to beat him; Jacques bursts out laughing and the chase goes on until the cursing Master and the laughing Jacques, sweating and exhausted by fatigue, stop each at the opposite side of the horse, both breathless, but Jacques still laughing and the Master looking furiously at him. With breath coming back, Jacques says:

"Will the sir, my master, now agree?" The Master: "And with what, you dog, rascal, insolent, shall I agree if not that you are the most malignant of all servants, and that I am the most unhappy of all masters?" Jacques: "Is it not evidently proven that we act most of the time without intention? There, put your hand on your conscience: have you intended something of all what you have said or done since half an hour? Haven't you been my marionette and wouldn't you have continued to be my pickle-herring for a month if I had so proposed to myself?" Master: "What! This was a jest?" Jacques: "A jest." Master: "And you were expecting the straps to break?" Jacques: "I had that prepared." Master: "And with your marionette cord, you led me at your fancy?" Jacques: "Exceedingly nice!" Master: "And your impertinent reply was premeditated?" Jacques: "Premeditated." Master: "You are a dangerous scamp." Jacques: "Say that thanks to my captain who gave himself once a similar pastime at my expense, I am a subtle reasoner." Master: "If I nevertheless had been hurt?" Jacques: "It was written up yonder *and in my provision* that that wouldn't happen".

As soon as *provision* comes into play and arises as a possibility out of the development, the Cromwell-perspective can be supplanted: if the masters consent to the experiment it will be proven that they will "fall" without being hurt. Loy neglects this obvious aspect of the episode, but his philosophical comment on it is of the highest "recent standard":

"Yet what is this but a complete admission on the part of Spinoza's disciple that *volonté* did come into the affair — obviously not the Master's free will, but *moral freedom* nonetheless. So that the chain of cause which toppled the Master is then not purely physical but, in great part, psychological, and the latter due to Jacques' wishing. [Observe, however, that wishing must have become *physically* possible if it is to be more than wishful fancy! W.L.] The victor in the affair is not fatalism, in which planning is helpless but determinism, in which planning is an *integral part* of the moral freedom granted".

Equally excellent is Loy's summary concerning Diderot's moral ideas:

"After Jacques, there is no easy analysis, but it becomes increasingly clear that there is here still no *codified* moral system, no philosophic structure with *bylaws* for behavior. There are as *many solutions* as there are in *actual personal behavior*; there is *only an attitude* toward life, a

suggested state of mind toward a facilitated acceptance of life by the individual, of the individual by the world".

VIII

With this *attitude* or *state of mind* the third essential element of the Pantagruelian temperament has been brought to the fore, namely the *philosophical* element which involves, of course, all other elements, and especially revolutionism. It is now again irrelevant whether the elements make for a distinct philosophy or are shaped by it: the philosophy cannot be separated from its concrete content — both philosophy and temperament form *one* whole and are as a whole stronger than the sum total of their parts.

The balance of Pantagruelian realism and revolutionism is well established, but is the matter of its morals definitely settled? Loy does not always escape the danger connected with an abundance of nerves — here and there he turns his subject around too much in the desire to explore it to the fullest extent in his reach. And so the discussion of philosophy opens anew with the problem of morals when Loy continues his happy summary:

"And in that parallel acceptance centering about the *individual*, there is a blending of the conservative with the revolutionary which *presupposes* a humanistic equilibrium of moral behavior. But the *actual balance* of such equilibrium is *not precisely projected*".

Unless we have missed Loy's point, he obscures what he had just so excellently clarified and makes a statement which represents factually an impossible demand. In order to show that the first part of Loy's summary is sufficient in itself and injured by his addition, some steps back are imperative.

It seems above all that the *parallel acceptance* must center as much about the world as about the individual, for no facilitated *mutual* acceptance (as a matter of practical behavior) is thinkable if that attitude (also something practical) or state of mind is not *suggested* by the, so to speak, *physical state of the world*. The only meaningful distinction between the unconscious (elemental) physical world and the conscious (responsible) physical world is exactly this, that a *part* of the *physical world* has become conscious of its problems and *tries consciously to solve them in a responsible (moral) manner*. Since wide differences between consciousness and consciousness exist and by far not all human beings have reached that degree of consciousness required for *responsible* action, it follows at once that it is impossible to *precisely project the actual balance* of the equilibrium in either world. To speak about *actual projection* means to pose a false problem (as, alas, all moral or ethical systems have hitherto not projected the actual balance of the equilibrium, but the abstract balance of a very actual disequilibrium) — the real problem is whether or not an equilibrium, of which the actual balance is *unknown* and *unprojectable*, can be *achieved* in human society. And in this respect everything depends on whether or not there are sufficient reasons which suggest that the problem is solvable in *actual practice*.

A famous sentence has it: "It is not enough that the idea strives toward reality, reality itself must strive toward the idea". If a humanistic equilibrium of moral behavior is *presupposed*, then no problem exists, for problems arise out of concrete practice and must be *solved*. If, conversely,

there is a problem and it can be solved by moral behavior, then the latter is only a means to the end and cannot have an equilibrium of its own, for means give up their ghost with the solution of the problem. The mere fact that a social equilibrium is lacking inspires us with the *idea* of such an equilibrium and causes us to reflect on the means for its realization. (This in turn tells us that only the *equilibrium* is projected, *in abstracto*, not the actual balance of behavior, *in concreto*.) Our problem of equilibrium has, consequently, a purely *practical* nature and excludes for its solution any presupposition, except that forces must be at hand or tendencies at work or means be found which make a solution *possible*. It is a sad fact that ideas are cheap under many circumstances, and that they remain powerless as long as the concrete *material* conditions which are the *presupposition* for their *realisation* don't exist or have not yet been created in reality. The primary importance of the material conditions and circumstances for a mere *understanding* of certain problems has already been stressed (section III) and can only again be stressed in connection with the problem of a social equilibrium which is, moreover, a problem of the material wealth, resources and techniques required for an undisturbed social life. As for this material side of our problem, it must in the present context simply be assumed that the question is no longer one of *social* wealth, resources and techniques — the trouble of our time is precisely the question of what to do with a superabundance of those requirements in the framework of a social *organization* where they are in ever greater measure used for the *destruction* of humanity. As for the philosophical side, the question is: What are the *general* reasons for asserting that a humanistic equilibrium *can* be achieved? The answer to this question must of necessity be a *general* one and is, naturally, imbued with "recent standards", i.e. the level of a time which has in every respect (materially, philosophically, morally, etc.) become ripe for the fulfilment of humanity's dream.

The whole universe is dominated by a striving for equilibrium, which for its part is incited and regulated by the perceptive or sensitive faculty (attribute) of matter. This sensitive faculty gains with the grouping and regrouping of matter in intensity and momentum: it leads to a higher and higher organization of matter and produces gradually (though by no means evenly) reflection, consciousness, intellect, thinking, perception, reason, mind, morals, ethics. And that is to say: Matter *creates* forms of organization in which it becomes increasingly *responsible* (to use a moral term) for its own movement and behavior.

Further: All matter is at one time or another subject to elemental processes and violent elemental eruptions which are, in that world not yet capable of *reasoned* perception (reason or perception alone are inferior to *reasoned perception*, the highest product of matter), beyond the notions of good and evil. Included in these violent eruptions is the never lasting fury of the masses which it is sheer convention to pronounce good or bad, for it is invariably *provoked* and necessary in the sense that it has become an *unavoidable* reaction against intolerable pressure. It is therefore one of the great regulative factors: Every time the conscious world, for whatever determinants, falls short of responsible action and reaction, it recedes for all practical purposes to a greater or lesser extent into the strictly elemental world and produces as many "morals" as there are elements and different

degrees of perception (cognition) in differently organized *conscious* matter. Morals are thus not only a problem of an actual *disequilibrium* and always correspond to the latter and change with it, but are eventually dissolved when *reasoned perception* becomes sufficiently generalized to permit the establishment of a solid social balance with no other limitations than those imposed by the eventual disappearance of the *physical* conditions for responsible behavior itself.

Summarizing theses:

a) The world, in whatever sense conceived, tries to overcome its purely elemental state and to master its own destiny. It lies in the nature of the problem that its attempts can be successful only in the realm of the *conscious* world, but the conscious world will in the end miserably fail in its task if it does not succeed in harmonizing its surroundings called "nature". (Maxim: Given our present economic, technical and scientific standards which have taken away all justifications for the destruction of man by man and for a blind, wanton exploitation of nature, man must centre about it and can commit no greater crime than to destroy unnecessarily the relative balance already achieved in the unconscious world around him and waste his own resources of life. Man must *help* nature or he will perish.)

b) The blending of the conservative with the revolutionary is intrinsic in all matter, but that does not *presuppose* an equilibrium, still less a humanistic one of *moral behavior*. On the contrary, it *conditions* only the *striving for it* and invariably reaches with eternal changes a point where either the conservative or the revolutionary gains preponderance, then turns into its opposite and so on.*

* A philosopher of "recent standards", Ernst Cassirer, writes in the *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*: "The novel *Jack the Fatalist* endeavors to show that the concept of fate is the alpha and omega of all human thinking; but it also shows how thought time and again comes into conflict with this concept, how it is forced implicitly to deny and revoke the concept *even while affirming it*. . . . According to Diderot it is this oscillation between the two poles of freedom and necessity which brings the circle of our thought and *existence* to completion. By such oscillation, not by a simple assertion or denial, we can discover the *all-inclusive* concept of *nature*, that concept which in the last analysis is just as much *beyond agreement and contradiction* and *beyond truth and falsehood* as it is *beyond good and evil* [moral! W.L.], because it *includes both extremes without differentiation*". — Philosophy is at its highest where it discovers that the movement of thinking is identical with the movement of matter, i.e. where it perfectly "mirrors" the laws of nature. To supplement Cassirer's parallel between thought and existence: The concept of fate in human thinking corresponds to blindness in nature, to the *strict* (mechanical) determinism which is the alpha and omega of the physical world. But nature itself comes time and again into conflict with *strict* determinism and is forced implicitly to deny and revoke mechanics even while affirming it. As fate has the two poles necessity and freedom, so has this concept as all other concepts the poles necessity and accident, continuity and disruption, statics and dynamics, attraction and repulsion, inertia and mutation, evolution and revolution, etc. Only one should not say that the circle of our thought and existence is brought to completion by the *oscillation* between these poles (oscillation is a pendular, not a circular, movement), but by the "growing" of one pole into the other or by the constant "turning over" of opposites into opposites. Our human world would, exactly like nature, be beyond good and evil and include all extremes *without differentiation*, were it not for the fact that freedom (otherwise identical with accident) is a matter of consciousness (physics turns into chemistry)

e) Matter is intrinsically (by attribute) revolutionary, namely *creative* — it tolerates no other absolutes than its own attributes: motion (energy), sensitivity (as a faculty), creativeness (revolutionism), and the striving for balance.

d) An equilibrium may be "presupposed" in the most abstract sense because, for the whole universe, equilibrium and disequilibrium are in "equilibrium" and constitute their opposites without distinction. In the concrete, however, everything is and remains partial and relative. A part of the universe may be in violent eruption or change, while the solar system is in relative equilibrium, which may be indeed "the best of all possible" equilibria.

e) The same holds for the relative equilibrium of matter organized in all the forms of our globe up to human society. Specifically, parts of human society for a long time may live in a fairly stable equilibrium; for example, primitive people if not disturbed by natural catastrophes, the interference of the white man or other outside influences. But human society as a whole has never reached a stage in which the equilibrium was the predominant, disturbance the minor feature. The so-called social balance has been and is to-day more than ever an extremely precarious one — it is through and through a *coercive* and *suppressive* "balance", not a free one swinging of itself.

f) The moral problem arises precisely from the fact that in human society, with growing *reasoned perception*, the elimination of all blind elemental processes, eruptions and violences is, at least in principle, possible.*

* To avoid misunderstanding: The "violence" attached to childbirth, personal accidents, certain sicknesses, minor natural catastrophes are of no consequence for the social equilibrium and must be left aside. However, traffic accidents (public services), epidemics, social maladies and — death belong to the problems of balance. To eliminate these evils and make natural death (which is a "problem" only for those who had not a full and harmonious life) for *all* a peaceful and painless process instead of a "dreadful" event, a well-balanced society is required. And to make the other side clear: All possibilities hold only as long as an unpredictable elemental catastrophe does not interfere. The natural end of the solar system is another factor which brings all possibilities to an end, but that is a matter too far off to be counted with here.

and distinguished from accident by cognition or "insight". It is frequently said that accident and necessity, fatalism and free will (etc.) are not simply antithesis but *synthesis*. The fallacy of this assertion is obvious: fatalism and free will, or whatever opposites (poles) one may take, are as little synthesis as hydrogen and oxygen, the synthesis of which is *water*. With water something *new* is "created" (the criterion for all true synthesis), while accident and necessity, taken as *synthesis*, produce nothing other than what they are: two poles of one and the same thing (blindness or fatalism of the *strictly* determined world), turning into each other and remaining accidental as necessity, necessary as accident. The case turns from bad to worse if the *concept* (fatalism) *which has the two poles of freedom and necessity* is taken as one of the *poles* and *fatalism* and free will are presented as not "simply" antithesis but *synthesis*. In other words: Fatalism and free will are not even an antithesis — they are "simply" *false* poles and cannot be opposed at all. The real poles of fatalism (strict mechanical determinism or blindness of nature) are accident and necessity, and freedom as the *evolutionary* synthesis (more complicated than and different from the "unification of opposite units" in chemistry) appears only where the evolution has progressed to reasoned perception and material conditions which permit differentiation in *practice*, not only in theory. From this moment on, accident and necessity, necessity and accident, become *practically* distinguishable

Not even the idea of a *general, non-coercive* social balance could be conceived by the human brain until, at the time of the Renaissance, the material development suggested it to the mind. The humanistic equilibrium is a *product* of history — nothing in it can be presupposed other than the striving for balance inherent in matter. This striving is the sign of a real *disequilibrium*, the *negation* of which is a real *equilibrium*, not an equilibrium of *moral behavior*.

g) Hence: Morals are always relative and concrete, never absolute and abstract. Their own nature, moreover, will render them completely superfluous when the social organization has reached the stage where Rabelais' *Jay ce que voudras* (do as thou wilt) becomes *generally* practicable, for Rabelais' maxim is the dismissal of all maxims and is neither moral nor immoral, but simply *amoral* (a synthesis in which its components are preserved, yet deprived of their specific character).

IX

When Loy returns from his occasional errandries to "recent standards" he sees the true state of affairs. Some of what he has to say on philosophy is once more an excellent summary and deserves a place of honor. For example:

"To make Jacques and *every other man* worthy of existence on this earth, *practically* not intellectually, he must be granted the possibility of doing something for himself. But if, like the Neveu, he is necessarily the product of natural, unfeeling, antecedent combinations of matter, where can the reservation for human effect be intercalated? Spinoza had made no distinction between mind and matter, and by Cartesian reasoning. In general, Diderot would insist on the same anti-Cartesian unity but for completely different scientific and experimental reasonings. For mind to Diderot is but the organ of minding and constructed from the same (in modern parlance) electro-chemical organization of matter which has produced the modern calculating machine. Spinoza's Substance, being of itself and causing all other existence, has just as surely made individual decision a confusion of terms, for that decision at any given moment has already been decided in the Substance. Of the myriad *attributes* [Loy's emphasis] possible to his Substance, Spinoza has made only two comprehensible to man. Thus man, like all Substance, moves and occupies space, and that is all. But suppose, once matter has become organized into the species man, in his capacity as a new entity, he finds himself capable of more than movement and extension, finds himself, from the great necessary backlog of matter-movement and matter-extension, capable of envisioning not the cause of his next step, but the effect which it might have. Would not this in itself add to the causes of the next step and change, ever so slightly, the fated effect? [In reality, we change the effect tremendously and

and *separable* as a chain of differently determined cause and effect by which accident has been freed from the blindness of necessity, necessity from that of accident. It is even not enough to say (with Hegel) that freedom is the recognition of necessity, not enough to say that necessity is blind only insofar as it is not understood or perceived. The true synthesis of accident and necessity is *planning*, and not only "plain" planning, but planning capable of *calculating the consequences* of both accident and necessity.

find in principle no limitations to effect *decisive* changes! W.L.] Here basically is Diderot's argument with Spinoza. The sage of Amsterdam has completely ignored the possibility of development and evolution of the modes of his Substance. However determined any human entity may be, can he not for that become an agent, another *attribute* [Loy's emphasis] of Substance? Or more simply, must he be any part of that Substance, or, for that matter, does Substance, as Spinoza defines it, really exist? There is matter, to be sure, capable of movement and extension; and there are atoms of matter. But who is to say that such atoms must always follow an incontrovertible path in their peregrinations? Must not Lucretian *chance* be taken into consideration here? Then Jacques is what he is because the atoms took the turn they did, but they did not have to take those turns and those turns only. And if there were but a way of encouraging a certain turn over another in the realm of psychologic determinants [again: such a way exists to an enormous extent in every realm! W.L.], might one not have added to or at least have *directed* the turn of events? The issue of disagreement is clearly scientific reasoning vs. *a priori* reasoning, determinism vs. fatalism, a doctrine of advance vs. a pragmatic doctrine of circumstances [the "philosophical" equivalent for chewing-gum! W.L.], a doctrine of optimism on *practical* grounds vs. a doctrine of, *at best*, purely *intellectual* optimism".

With this the moment has arrived where a closer description can be given of that element from which the examination of the Pantagruelian temperament proceeded, namely the "sound dose of pessimism". It is the palpitating heart, the fiery soul, the animating spirit of Pantagruelism and gives (to repeat what is of paramount importance) the enthusiasm or optimism on *practical grounds* the necessary resistance, the temperament its wonderful balance. Since this pessimism is concretely at work in the forms of resignation, scepticism, satire, irony, humour, stoicism, "fatalism", and since it prevents the acceptance of the world from becoming the hard-boiled, brutal, disgusting, conceited, self-righteous, infatuated, stinking, murderous "optimism" of those vulgar materialists who (God bless America's pragmatic doctrine of circumstances, so flatly mirrored in Eisenhower's face!) take business, their own world, their own stupid beliefs, their own "successes" for the last word — it refutes any over-seriousness and declares even the "seriousness" of the universe with its "grave" problems to be what it is when all reflection has been done with: vanity, futility, fuss, nonsense. It makes an enormous difference whether one indulges blindly in such vanity or approaches world and life with the distance flowing from the insight that "all this" is a play — a serious play, certainly, but a play nonetheless. With the latter approach, the nonsense can make sense — with the former, humanity will go to pieces. Loy sees the true state of affairs and has jewels to offer:

"*Jacques le fataliste* [Pantagruelism] makes sense only if seen in the general setting of nonsense."

"There is [besides the outward amusement] an inner amusement of much more lastingness — the 'merry heart of Sterne', the Pantagruelic chuckle, the enlightened laugh of Diderot. The complete treatment of a serious problem in this atmosphere of healthy gaiety [the cure for dead-sick over-seriousness] is what makes *Jacques* a rare and worthy work of French fiction."

"*Jacques*, far from Swiftian bitterness, is full of good fun and derision, however serious certain implications of the fatalism question are for Diderot."

"For *Jacques* is a gay book and the *intentional playfulness* of the author is certainly not least in that part which centers about fatalism. . . . *Jacques* is ridiculous many times and the very recurrence of the stock phrase 'written up yonder' is calculated, sooner or later, to strike the reader's sense of comedy, given the character of *Jacques* and the situations in which he proffers his dictum. . . . All of this constitutes not a boisterous humor, but rather an intellectual chuckle, that very inward smile of Sterne of which Diderot has so many times been judged incapable."

"*Jacques'* doctrine works, of course, much more efficiently after the fact, and Diderot takes relish in showing the Great Scroll at work in such circular order. After a request by the Master for clarification on a point of *Jacques'* love story, the following dialogue takes place:

Jacques: I consent — but only on condition that we come back on our traces and return to the surgeon's house. *Master*: Do you believe that's written up yonder?

Jacques: It's up to you to say so; but it's written here below that *chi va piano va sano*. *Master*: And that *chi va sano va lontano*; and I would like to go there.

Jacques: Well, have you decided? *Master*: It's up to you; whatever you like. *Jacques*: Well, in that case, we are back at the doctor's, and *it was written up yonder* that we would come back.

Jacques is certainly not unique in this *playfulness*. . . . But it is unique in the degree of playfulness; from first page to last, the reader cannot long ponder seriously over these weighty problems of human freedom because Diderot cuts him off with an 'after all this twaddle or humbug', or 'thank your stars, readers, that I don't continue this problem which theologians have argued for centuries'. For Diderot has realized the *academic* nature of the problem and — to put it frankly — the *futility* of it. In this, he has again foreseen much of modern philosophy, for if the *basic implications* of human freedom are still very vital, the dissection of the question as academic metaphysics is not; the interest has been transferred more to what the *tangible effects* of the problem *will be to society*, which is precisely where Diderot would have put it. It is to the philosopher what the squared circle is to the mathematician — a philosophical chess game. But meanwhile the philosopher must live in an actual world. Academic questions are not complete nonsense on the one hand, but on the other, they are not the sum total of truth. A thinking man considers them seriously when he is serious, knows how to play with them when they refuse to bend to his contemporary world. The very academic thinking is not useless; the day might arrive when the steadily changing, the steadily enlightened psychological elements will have made a *natural adaptation to the equally changing physical elements*. Moral freedom might one day be either unnecessary to the human entity, or nature itself might leave off its adamancy and become increasingly a *willing cosmos like man*. But until then, the answer of *Jacques* is evident: at all times when the materialist philosophy would seem to confuse and thwart the humanist — paradox, contradiction, inconsistency notwithstanding — the humanist must stay.

It stays naturally, for after *Jacques* it is clear that the *humanist* can be, must be, and is *synonymous with the materialist*. So *Jacques* [whose materialism is not business-materialism!] goes peacefully to sleep, lulled by his doctrine which need not necessarily influence his acts, and Diderot continues to act and mold for the future although his experience many times tells him he is a fool".

"Hoax it is [the book], and the laugh is equally on the reader, the author, and humanity in general. And if the good-natured admission of the joke does not end in an equally good-natured laugh, *Jacques* has missed its point".

"Any paradox which is read into Diderot comes from the eternal desire to categorize, to demand that each man create his system if he is to be preserved for posterity. Systems are so much more easily and painlessly grasped. What has not been seen is that Diderot is *preeminently human, with none of the pretences of a Nietzsche*; that, although he may waver on concrete problems between two possible points of view, the general feeling for and interpretation of human existence remains much the same, one of *reasoned* optimism. Has more been required or received from Montaigne and Rabelais?"

"If the final interpretation of *Jacques le fataliste et son maître* seems thus to turn completely toward the comic, there have perhaps been many words wasted in the foregoing attempt to study several aspects of the novel from the serious point of view. If that is true, then much unnecessary talk about Rabelais has been published since 1532. The serious implications in *both cases* are, rather, the necessary precondition for the fullest enjoyment of the final laugh. The steady infectious laugh of the simple and naïve joker is spontaneous and momentary; the more sparing intellectual laugh of the responsible man who has equal reasons for weeping is apt to be more effective and more lasting. It is the second type of laugh which is the final impression of *Jacques*".

"The final *tone* of the work, then, is *Rabelaisian*. . . . *Jacques* is a comedy, a true human comedy whose tragic is felt but definitely hidden beneath the playful Pantagrueism".

X

The Pantagrueian approach to life or the philosophical attitude of Pantagrueism, forming one whole with the Pantagrueian temperament and admitting no difference (disequilibrium) between philosophy and practical activity, is the miracle by which nature attains its self-liberation. It is an inexhaustible miracle and reveals the realism, the revolutionism, the playfulness, the merry heart, the bursting laughter, the philosophic chuckle, the preeminently *human* and *unpretentious* seriousness with which nature proceeds in all its creations and finally finds with the creation of the human brain its liberating formula: As *serious* nonsense I recognize myself the moment self-reflection has been completed, but since the nonsense cannot be brought to an end I constitute my capacity of being serious as *reasoned* optimism.

This formula leads back to the question of realism and deeper into the inexhaustible miracle of Pantagrueism. Writes Loy: *

* The writer of this Appeal selects the following quotation in which Loy quotes

"In an excellent article on Sterne, B. H. Lehman ['Of Time, Personality and the Author', *Studies in the Comic*] has attempted to explain the real significance of *Tristram Shandy*; he has succeeded admirably in writing the *order* of a much more *universal* and *human* kind than is usually granted about the *disorder* of that work. It is not at all surprising if in many places his conclusions are equally valid for Diderot. For both men had seen themselves the same Herculean and generally thankless task.

"Sterne and Diderot were both conscious of the *basic relativity* of all things. As Lehman puts it, 'For Sterne, the world is *contingency incarnate*. Anything and everything may be upset by thoroughly but *irrelevantly* motivated chance'. So that the 'normal' concept of reality, of morality, and particularly of time is an artificial concept. The possibilities, then, of reality in a multitimed world are infinite, and small wonder that both men found themselves incapable of expression in a *traditional medium* [the steady opposition of Pantagruelism against convention! W.L.]. For they are talking of time by the period clock, by the mind's clock, and in a much broader sense, by the universal clock which for Sterne is moved by God, for Diderot, by matter and the material concept of the cosmos. This points the way to obvious differences of detail in the two men. Says Lehman,

Since therefore all that man can know was mind-made and not actual, all principles of morality were *imposed* on the natural order by the idea-association process of the mind. As laid down in a hundred directions, they did *not* consist with the reality, because man's dreams and hopes and fossils of old institutions and procedures got *associated into the reality patterns and falsified them*.

Thus far we are still in a Lockian, if not indeed a Berkeleian* world. But Diderot has gone even further. For if he insists very definitely upon this psychologic causality, he has made it sufficiently clear that there is another *very physical causality of materialism*. His conception of reality is then doubly complicated, for there is the chance of both simple matter and organized or mind-matter to be accounted for when he defines the real, and the complete comprehension of this twin chain of causality has thus far eluded him. The gigantic proportion of the problem he has set himself becomes suddenly much clearer. For 'personality', that enigma in itself, 'existed and manifested itself in time; association of ideas and communications took place in time', and time itself (in whatever concept it existed — personal, periodic, or universal) was the precarious balance between per-

* In a note on this Loy says: "One of Diderot's maddening preoccupations was his inability to refute completely Berkeley". Diderot's inability was one inherent in the problem — any idealism in philosophy can only be refuted in practice, not in theory. But the paragraph quoted from Lehman is one of the many proofs that consistent idealism is practically much closer to materialism than is generally believed.

Lehman, because he has the avowed aim of demonstrating that there exists a "community" of Pantagruelists (he will return to this point a little later) and that this community is expanding — a fact which might make the Appeal a successful one. He tries, therefore, to bring in as many witnesses as possible and refrains wherever he can from treating in his own words a subject he has cherished during all his conscious life. The motive for quoting other (if only potential) Pantagruelists is, avowedly, a selfish one: Pantagruelists find their utmost satisfaction in meeting — Pantagruelists.

personality and the very impersonal physical world of matter. The very reflection of reality is, then, irreality as seen by *traditional* concepts; the prolonged analysis of the order which is predicated on the above relatives — personality, time, and the cosmos — must appear disorder to *traditional* minds. And yet 'the incongruous and the inconsistent, the contingent, all the diverse doing and being, though it could come to nothing, had something in it — a vitality masquerading oddly. And that something was good. The temper of Yorick's heart was a naked temper; but the heart consented, it was a merry heart'. The *comic*, the *nonsensical*, and *rhapsodical* of both *Tristram* and *Jacques* is there. That is why both novels had to be *essentially* queer and Rabelaisian; it was a necessary postulate of the type of realism they sought after. 'Philosophy considered as the wisdom of acceptance *after* recognition, understood as the mental climate of an imagination served by a true eye and deeply imbued with a *reverence for reality*, discovered in "the naked temper of a merry heart" — this philosophy the book is not only made of but is enveloped in as in an atmosphere'. Only after one realizes all this, does Jacques become the very real character he is. So both Sterne and Diderot — and especially Diderot — are far ahead of their time".

Loy writes this in connection with the problem of the *Realistic Novel*. He continues: "It is *questionable* if the problem has been more conclusively treated by anyone since Diderot. True, others have more clearly suggested solutions — Proust, for example — but be it noted, in a much longer, involved and patience-testing work. One might conclude with Lehman, taking the liberty to add a second title, '*The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent.* [*Jacques le fataliste et son maître*] is full of premonitions of the future of the novel. To see what Sterne's [Diderot's] achievement really was, is, I believe only in these last years possible, in a mind made aware by the *Magic Mountain*, *Ulysses*, and the *Remembrance of the Past*".

If this is to mean that the formidable *limitation* and the over-serious *pettiness* of the *Magic Mountain* (etc.) makes the mind aware of how infinitely *superior* Diderot's achievement really was, the case could be considered as closed and the premonitions left in their full right. For what is more self-evident than the fact that above all the *Magic Mountain* is the cheapest *symbolism* imaginable? There is in it not one iota of what is essentially Rabelaisian — no true eye serves the imagination and there is only a reverence for the *past*, not for reality. It is, further, imbued with a "vitality", a temper and a "merriness" (Mann's pedantic and pale "irony") which are not even as "good" as in that "something" known as a wooden horse, and its reality patterns are utterly *falsified* by exclusively reactionary dreams and "hopes", by fossils of old institutions and procedures associated into them.

Loy, however, seems to reach farther and is on the way to one of his errandies. With his usual conspicuously good start he explains:

"In the *final* analysis, a more *practical* point of view must perhaps be adopted. Diderot has not written a realistic novel or *anything approaching it* in *Jacques le fataliste* if one judges it by usual standards. Of realistic touches there are doubtless many; Diderot did know how to write convincingly and writers in the realist tradition can learn much from his mastery of dialogue and gesture. But in the broader sense, *Jacques* is not a

creative whole which reflects a *limited reality*. From the foregoing it is obvious that both Sterne and Diderot were much too *sincere* to accept the inherent compromise of such limitation [a devastating point against Mallarmé, Proust, etc.]. What Diderot probably knew very well, but *refused to accept*, was the consciously or unconsciously admitted fact that every work of art presupposes a certain artistic *convention*. Each time a spectator enters a theater or the opera he has already accepted without question a *great deal of limitation*; what he is going to see has by definition been subjected to much formalization or stylization. The same applies to all genres of literature. It is true, that at some periods such formalization has been more strict, in other periods, more pliable, but the tacit understanding between creator and audience has always existed. New art forms are continually searching to break down or add greater freedom to this artistic convention; some, indeed, seem intent upon working the other way and making the formalization so difficult to accept that only a chosen few disciples can hope to share in the communication; but invariably such attempts sift down to the same attempt at mutual understanding. . . . The scope of both the imitation and the communication of *Jacques le fataliste* is so *vast and all-inclusive* that it rather defies the type of acceptance which every work of art must have. Perhaps a changed novel form will one day successfully cope with the problem, but it seems *highly improbable*, for the problems of *Jacques*, tied as they are to so many other relative values, would still appear rather insoluble".

With such a good start Loy arrives at the rather strange conclusion: "It is the very wilful order of disorder which has so characterized *Jacques* that allows finally the introduction of a term which has become so familiar to the modern literary world. It seems clear that Diderot and *Jacques* stand at the beginning of a long and involved road which leads finally to surrealism. *If* by surrealism one thinks of Apollinaire's search for a reality above and beyond the accepted and the obvious, *if* surrealism, as Anna Balakian has so clearly stated it, is an expedition into disorder using contradiction in place of comparison as basic communication, *then Jacques* is Diderot's clearest surrealist attempt".

If, says Jacques, if the sea boils there would be a lot of cooked fish — it simply makes no sense to ask for more than is there, because it means to ask for much less. It is, of course, true that a long and involved road has, among other phenomena, also led to surrealism, but it is equally true that the great stream or the great tree of literature and life has many stunted arms and dead branches, one of which is precisely the *pretentious* (over-serious) nonsense of surrealism. That the dead wood is still "wood" and that *Jacques* has something in common with surrealism (all things have something in common with — *all things*) in *no way* justifies the identification of the dead branch with the *main* and "all-inclusive" living tree. The main tendency of the modern development goes toward the *positive* dissolution of bourgeois society in economy, politics, art, literature, philosophy, etc. — a vast process in which much that is sheer *decomposition* tries to resist and to crystallize against change. Such crystallizations, as the very manifestations of an actual decay, may remain an interesting phenomenon and can tell us much about the degree which the decomposition has already reached. The main stream, in contrast, defies the type of acceptance and

the formidable limitation of surrealism which has, *at best*, succeeded in stating its own disorder which it tries to ossify, but which has not succeeded in making order of a *universal* and *human* kind out of disorder, not sense out of nonsense. Pantagruelism achieves this miracle and nothing can deprive it of further characteristics which — together with the mass of other characteristics and elements so far enumerated — irrevocably separate it from surrealism: *sincerity, simplicity, naturalness*, and the *power to convince*. It is neither art nor a means of communication to use contradiction for the sake of contradiction, i.e. to operate with *absurd* contradictions and to ask for so much mutual understanding as is required to accept a laborer dancing on human legs for more than an attempt to justify the absurd position of the artist in the framework of our absurd system. Such endeavor is, even if executed with the most refined techniques, simple affirmation of the *convention* apologetically postulated and taking the form of *voluntary dilettantism* in the service of the *status quo*.^{*} The real art in every sphere is to reveal the inner logic of true, *tragic*, contradictions whose essence is to represent sense *in spite* of nonsense and to remain (as Rabelais, Diderot, Sterne, and nature itself) perfectly *natural*. The real art, in one word, is to *master* the nonsense and to face the grotesque with the same *heroic serenity* which characterizes nature's behavior on the one, and Pantagruelism (as the miracle of nature's self-liberation) on the other side.

Loy, in this case too, returns to the true state of affairs and shows by his own efforts the hopelessness of his undertaking:

^{*} Accordingly, our newspapers must be regarded as "great manifestations" of surrealism because they are filled with the most absurd contradictions that are by no means below the level of to-day's voluntary dilettantes called "artists". It is the same story as with other "artistic" efforts of our time. The "pact with the devil" in *Dr. Faustus*, for instance, is a "symbol" of German fascism which newspapers had invented and used "comprehensively" for the apology of American imperialism, before Thomas Mann adopted it in order to justify a still more "limited reality". Newspapers falsified the reality patterns enough by the fossil concept of a "pact with the devil", but at least did not leave out *economic* and political factors which told *part* of the truth regardless of the false "symbol". Thomas Mann, who for all his "artistic" apparatus could not even make *Dr. Faustus* a *novel*, was so insincere as to falsify reality to a point where it simply — disappeared in the "surrealistic" description of "compositions" by a syphilitic musician. To describe music is the, so to speak, pretension of pretensions, and that pretension of describing *non-existent* music could not make ten steps without landing in — Hollywood. There is, besides innumerable crutches like "my good and faithful Helene", the shoddy-story of the "beautiful" boy killed by the (platonic) love of Leverkühn who had, in his pact with the devil, forsaken all love. How terrible! — Hollywood should not neglect the subject but rather combine it with the story of the dog who listens to a whistle men can't hear! There is the story of the morphinic adulterer, Ines Rodde, who shoots her infidel lover (the "real" murderer is again our syphilitic "composer"), and God knows how bitterly this irrelevant trash was needed to make *Dr. Faustus* a "big" book. There is the still more irrelevant story of Clarissa Rodde who kills herself (that noble Hollywood soul) because a stereotype of the purest Hollywood brand (for whom she once fell while she was, in the purest Hollywood style, a little "tipsy") tries to blackmail her with a motivation drawn from the purest Hollywood psychology, etc. That a man like T. W. Adorno, who helped Mann in the fabrication of his Hollywood monster but together with Horkheimer (*Dialectic of the Enlightenment*) wrote bitter truths about Hollywood, — that such a man associated himself with these pure Hollywood revelations is a problem which psychologists interested in the phenomenon of "dual-personality" may examine in their own way.

"It is equally true that Diderot could not have accepted *many* of the manifest peculiarities which have characterized the more daring [one should say the most *apologetic*! W.L.] surrealists. To begin with, the frank *anti-social* iconoclasm would have needed limits for Diderot; as Jacques has plainly shown, Diderot could not equate his *artistic search for the trans-logic* with complete isolation from the social. But [the errantry is still too tempting! W.L.] there is more than enough feeling if not proof in all of Diderot (cf. the surrealist René Crevel's title, *Le Clavecin de Diderot*) and particularly in Jacques to justify the conclusion [the *impossible* conclusion that particularly Jacques is Diderot's clearest surrealist attempt! W.L.]. It is so difficult for Diderot to tell what he means by *real* [Loy's emphasis on values, if it is so difficult for the reader of Jacques to assimilate and co-ordinate what *seems* many times only disordered contradiction [by far not all readers find that assimilation and co-ordination difficult! W.L.], it is most probably because he was groping about for the *surreal* [Loy's emphasis] in the vocabulary of a century whose ideal was logic and whose first mission was to *destroy the old marvelous* and in every way spread the conviction that the physical universe including man was *more logical* and *natural* than tradition would allow. Thus Diderot is far ahead of his contemporaries, for he has seen a new unreal [?] world, not based on the traditional confusion of *revelation and metaphysical speculation*, but which must grow out of a better comprehension of the pseudo-logical nature of things."

The point is that Loy for all his efforts is unable to reconcile Jacques the *Pantagruelist* with the pitiful experiments of "surrealistic" *parasitism*. He himself has said so much about the impossibility of his conclusion that all that is left of it is the same "confusion of terms" he has seen in Spinoza. Indeed, why insist on the term "surreal", why speak about Diderot's search for "the trans-logic", the "pseudo-logical nature of things" and a new "unreal" world when Diderot was looking for the *real* world and the *deeper reality* behind the vanishing *status quo*? Is this not a fact which Loy has repeatedly stressed, foremost in his brilliant discussion of Diderot's disagreement with Spinoza? There is not even a purely *formal* justification for Loy's conclusion, for *not even the slightest similarity between the formal (artistic) means* employed by Diderot and surrealism exists. Surrealism, one could say with Lehman, is *contingency incarnate*, but with the severe reservation that it is exclusively artificial, *mechanical* and dead: *reality*, not *irreality*, as seen by the *traditional concept* of irreality which appears as perfect "order" to *traditional* minds coaxed by the contingencies of competition. Jacques is far removed from the mechanical artifices of surrealism and remains perfectly *natural* — it destroys, as Loy states (and in reality argues *against* surrealism), the *old marvelous* and spreads the conviction that the *physical universe including man* was *more logical* and *natural* than tradition would allow. Indeed, how is one to reconcile this statement with the *opposite* statement that Diderot has seen a new *unreal* world (recession into the *Berkeleyan* world against which Diderot had "made it sufficiently clear that there is another *very physical causality of materialism*"") which must grow out of a better comprehension of the *pseudo-logical* nature of things? This contradiction makes no sense and only leads back to a world based on the *traditional confusion* if not of

revelation, then at least of *metaphysical speculation*. Diderot had, in truth, realized the *futility* of metaphysical problems like "surreality" and was groping for the deeper *coherence* of what *seems* (in a world which was for him entirely a physical *reality*) many times only disordered contradiction. It must be admitted that Loy's contradiction is a "perfect" one and consequently (Mephistopheles told us so long ago) "equally mysterious for sages as for fools" — he has constructed a paradox against his own premonition: "Any paradox *read into* Diderot comes from the eternal desire to categorize."

Summary: In surrealism the world becomes more adamant than ever (not a willing cosmos) and the humanist disappears in it. And so it is the business of "petty scholars" who have not read in the "great book", where Jacques the *Pantagrue*list has his feet "solidly on the ground" (Loy) and stays as a *convincing* character, *preeminently human, sincere, simple, natural, beyond all bourgeois art*. But as the living instrument of nature's self-liberation and the personification of this miracle he emerges with new qualities of great consequence. To be preeminently human and to love life *in spite* of the nonsense, nay, even with the firm resolution to *master* it, means to face life and world *heroically*. Yet this heroism too is beyond bourgeois notions: it is not the heroism of the drama, the battle-field or the "tragic" destiny — it is the *serene* heroism of *prudence* with the *utmost scorn for prudence* which yields the synthesis of all characteristics and elements of Pantagrueism, namely *Sovereignty*.

XI

Sovereignty reigns in every Pantagrueistic work from Rabelais to — Claude Tillier, the man who has to be put in the place of such inferiors as Anatole France and André Gide in the "typical French lineage" of Pantagrueism. There are, no doubt, *traces* of Pantagrueism in many individuals, but it should by now be absolutely clear that neither France nor Gide exhibit any of the *essential* features required to constitute that all-rounded, all-inclusive and preeminently *French* miracle. The only man who corresponds in temperament and character, in philosophy and attitude, in politics and personality perfectly to Rabelais and Diderot is, all necessary differences between the three men considered, Claude Tillier. No guess can be ventured as to why Loy totally overlooked Tillier's *Mon oncle Benjamin*, that novel which manifested the "Gallic spirit" (of which the *keynote* is Pantagrueism) in the *nineteenth* century with a freshness, originality and uniqueness as if no similarity with the two other great originals (*Pantagrue* and *Jacques*) had existed.

The originality of these works flows from the character of the ages in which they were written and which have left their "imprint" on them. It has been explained that great manifestations of the new feeling for life (Pantagrueism) always coincide quite naturally with times of political and social troubles, of wars, reaction, persecution, censorship and confusion, but that spirits are highest when these features are but the reverse side of impending and far-reaching social changes of a progressive order which reaction attempts to prevent. It has further been stressed that the enthusiasm for *Jacques* receives impulses only when the deeper *coherence* between the basic aspirations and certain trends or events in a given stage

of the development impresses itself to whatever degree upon the mind; that the revitalized coherence may then produce new manifestations or enthusiasm for the older ones, but that they are (except for the intervals of roughly 200 years each which separate *Jacques* from the fifth book of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* and Loy's study from *Jacques*) not strongly enough supported by events to make *new directions* clear even to those *preoccupied* with them. And that is to say that Tillier's *Mon oncle Benjamin* has all the features of Pantagruelism crowned by Sovereignty, that it exhibits the Pantagruelian *personality* with its specific attitude towards life in which no difference between philosophy and practical activity is permitted, but that it gives, unlike *Pantagruel* and *Jacques*, no clear new direction. To bring this difference between Tillier and Rabelais-Diderot into relief, the attempt to define Pantagruelism as closely as possible and from all sides may be rounded up with the help of some writers who approach the problem in such a way that the Pantagruelian *personality* becomes the *centre* of the whole, as is natural and fitting for a phenomenon which is both the incarnation of nature's miracle and its performer. To begin with, there is Rabelais' own definition of Pantagruelism (Prologue to the fourth book) which is unthinkable without his personality:

"Do you ask what Pantagruelism is? Good heavens, you know as well as I! Pantagruelism is a certain *gaiety* [serenity] of spirit *produced* by a *contempt* for the incidentals of fate; it is a healthy, cheerful spirit, one ever ready to drink, if it will.

"Did someone ask me why? O dearly beloved, I answer positively: because such is the will of the mighty, beneficent and omnipotent Creator [nature], Whom I acknowledge and obey. Whose sacrosanct and auspicious Word I revere. (By Word, I mean Bible.) [By Word, I mean what is written in the "great book"].

"Is it not the Bible which derides with excoriating sarcasm the physician who neglects his own health? Does not the Holy Book say: 'Physician, heal thyself!'"

Then there are the fine and pertinent passages concerning Rabelais himself in Jacques LeClerc's Introduction to his praiseworthy English translation of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (The Modern Library, N.Y., 1944):

"Born into that *age* which, of all ages, possessed the most *passionate love of life and knowledge*, Rabelais believed intensely in the *cultivation of nature*, and its *enjoyment through every sense and faculty*. He is a *thorough-going realist*, interested in life *as it is*; this *realism*, moreover, holds the key to his *own existence*, to his *philosophy* and to his *writings*.

"To his existence, because, *eminently French*, he never failed to *face facts*. . . . As hostile to the mediæval bigotry of extreme papacy as he was to the new fanaticism of Calvinist cant, he steered, almost miraculously, the middle course of *reason*.

"To his philosophy, because it was concerned *solely with actualities*, and because it indicated always a *reasonable resolution of the problems of life*. Rabelais was, after all, *no profound thinker*, however wide his scholarship; indeed, his ideas are *primitive, fundamental* and *eternal* in their *simplicity*.

"To his writings, because those five books, far from being a single work, reflected three decades of constantly changing endeavor in the world, over

four centuries ago, yet to-day possess a *freshness, a power and an immediacy* that are *dynamic*.

"What is the secret of Pantagruelism? It is the *theory of life* held by your man of the Renaissance: *live fully, richly, follow your instincts, find the utmost satisfaction for the body in the pleasures at hand, acquire the utmost delight for the mind in the joys of intellectual curiosity and study. Do as thou wilt*' was the *only rule* in the house of Thélème; and Rabelais was too confident in the unerring *rightness* [LeClerc's emphasis] of instinct to fancy there lay the slightest danger in doing as one willed. Instinct, with him, thus became a *principle of human morality, a principle of human sociability, a principle of science and art. Nature was good*; excessive discipline, not to mention the mortifying asceticism of mediæval monasticism, was utterly rotten. For the middle ages had taught contempt for the body; flagellation of corrupt flesh, and a scholasticism to justify it to the incurious, acquiescent mind. Into this dreary miasma, Rabelais tossed the bombshell of Thélème. He preached the *full and free development of every faculty, the rehabilitation of the body, the love of forms*; his work was a panegyric of nature, a hymn to life. Is morality menaced? No, he replies . . . because '*men that are free, of gentle birth, well bred and at home in civilised company, possess a natural instinct that inclines them to virtue and saves them from vice. This instinct they name their honor*'. Was truer, nobler tribute to humanity ever penned?

"What Rabelais has the power of communicating to us', says John Cowper Powys in *Visions and Revisions*, 'is the renewal of that *physiological energy* which alone makes it possible to enjoy this monstrous world . . . Rabelais is the sanest of all the great writers, perhaps the only sane one'. . . .

"The man, then, was religious in the high sense of the term. But, since he believed in instinct and since '*laughter is the essence of mankind*', he *abandoned himself prodigiously to it*, and, mirthfully engaged in a satire which can be qualified only by applying to it a word coined from his own gigantic character, Gargantua. This satire was, *ever reasonably, ever realistically, directed against anything that could offend or hinder Rabelais' philosophic conception of liberty*. . . . O laughter, *universal, purgative, indestructible, immense!*"*

Speaking of the ideas on education of the "*broad, all-inclusive*" (nobody who describes Pantagruelism can avoid these terms!) Rabelais, LeClerc notes:

"His literary method consists first in *sharply satirizing the existing order, the old scholarship routine of the middle ages* [no Pantagruelism without steady opposition to convention and the *status quo!* W.L.], then in outlining the new humanistic learning. Ponocrates' *instruction follows out, step by step, Rabelais' philosophy*: since nature and instinct are good, they should be cultivated to the utmost; since life is enjoyable, the faculties should be developed and trained to enjoy it to the full. The body is not the corruption despised by mediæval monks, it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, worshipped by Renaissance men. . . .

* O modern psychology, pale, becked (as Rabelais would have said), limp, doleful — this laughter must ring like a blasphemy in thy dog's-ear!

"Mentally and intellectually, the plan is *encyclopedic*; Rabelais would have Pantagruel become 'an abyss of knowledge'. No detail of daily life but serves to teach something *useful in the most pleasant manner*. Rabelais' *own curiosity, realism and joy pierce through the text at every line* [the unity of Pantagruelism in all its aspects! W.L.]. . . .

"Does Rabelais' idea make his schoolboy a well-taught compiler, rather than a *human being feeling and experiencing objectively*? Does it lack the sense of beauty that animates the Renaissance poets, does it lack the exquisite tact of Montaigne?

"In fairness to Rabelais it must be stated that his is a program for a giant, perhaps [!] less a workable scheme than an ideal to aim at. And, as such, for all our modernism, we have advanced very little further in the last four centuries. Again, Rabelais' pupil studies texts and books; but he *also studies the text of nature and the book of life*. His learning derives from *things about him*; Ponocrates proves *more realistic* and one hundredfold *more inspiring* than Rousseau. If the enjoyment of art goes by the board, that is a *slight loss* compared with the *practical results acquired* [and what a slight loss in our time, where "art" is merely "artful" b-----t! W.L.]. Montaigne offered us a sceptic adapting his intelligence to a strangely limited life [reflecting the conditions of the time! W.L.]; Rabelais aimed to *create* a man, *happy and rich in the satisfaction of his natural instincts*. '*An abyss of science*!' Rabelais' is the higher ideal, and the closer to a noble tradition which is *daily being perverted*."

Wherever one touches it, Pantagruelism emerges as a miraculously organic and indivisible unity in philosophic composition, temperamental attitude and practical results or (with a new formula and a perhaps surprising turn) as a philosophy which is preeminently *French*, which is *lived in daily life* by Pantagruelists, and which aims to *create* Pantagruelists and a Pantagruelistic society.

No truer word can be said about this philosophy than that it constitutes (neither in *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, nor in *Jacques*, nor in *Mon oncle Benjamin*), after all and despite the knowledge of their authors, no so-called "profound thinking". It must only be clearly understood that a) Pantagruelism has practically *overcome the adamancy* of "profound thinking" and has recognized the academic nature and futility of certain problems; that b) to work consistently with ideas which are *primitive, fundamental* and *eternal* in their *simplicity* amounts to the same as to work with the most profound ideas of the most profound system;* that c) to be concerned

* Hegel's philosophy, the deepest and richest ever conceived, is a case in point on which to expand is impossible here. It may at least be said that it stands closest to Pantagruelism and is the only profoundly *serene* philosophy besides Pantagruelism and its other great relative, Marxism. Just because of the close relationship between primitive, fundamental, eternal, simple ideas and true profound thinking was Loy able to write:

"From England also comes the assurance that two correspondents, whose names are destined to remain long upon many lips, have read and talked about *Jacques*. In a letter of August 20, 1852, from Marx to Engels, both *Jacques* and the *Neveu* are spoken of as well worth rereading. In a subsequent letter Marx speaks more at length of the *Neveu* which he characterizes as a 'unique masterpiece'. Unfortunately, there is no record of a longer statement on *Jacques*. But in the article on the *Neveu* he quotes at length from 'old Hegel' who must have read the *Neveu* with *rare understanding* and delight. It is clear that Hegel had also read and

solely with actualities, to indicate always a *reasonable* resolution of the problems of life and to oppose ever *reasonably*, ever *realistically anything that can offend or hinder one's liberty* means to *solve* our problems more "profoundly" than any other philosophy can, for it means to solve them *practically*, not theoretically or intellectually.

Rabelais, working with his philosophy in the broad perspective opened in his age, presented the only realistic *new direction* possible for that time. The way in which he, himself threatened by the church (dear Calvin at the spearhead) and saving his neck thanks to his common sense, solves the problems of government and politics is best illustrated by the principles applied in the Picrocholine War (LeClerc on that whole episode: "What a ridiculous thing he can make of personal ambition, of militarism and its minions"). One has literally to *study* these principles in all seriousness in order to perceive that they are of a profundity which answers any objection in advance, of a wisdom from which our own age has still everything to learn, and of a freshness, power, immediacy so dynamic as to reduce to bloody dirt the "principles" with which in "modern" times utterly obsolete governments conduct utterly obsolete wars.* Rabelais' *enlightened sovereigns* proceed with genuine Sovereignty — the policy of the pretentious pygmies in Washington, Paris, Bonn and the Kremlin (250 pounds and a face like a balloon don't make Malenkov a giant!) merits only the sarcastic comment: Physician, heal thyself!

True enough, Rabelais was enthusiastic about the new broad perspective and *anticipated* genuine Sovereignty in *state affairs*, expanding his exuberant, gigantic personality into a sphere not yet ripe for him. True enough, hence, that the still adamant material conditions did not answer him with the Sovereignty of his enlightened giants. But they answered him nonetheless with what was still necessary to secure further development and to hold the perspective of Sovereignty in state affairs open: with the more or less enlightened sovereigns of *Absolutism* as the interim form of Sovereignty and the only progressive *political* force which could pave the way for Sovereignty in *all* spheres. This *intermediary* phenomenon of

* In fact, the Picrocholine War amounted to a true revolution, executed sovereignly by Pantagruel, and must particularly have angered Calvin, who in the interest of his monstrous doctrine of predestination eagerly watched for victims to be tortured and burned. Compare Gargantua: The "*worst harm*" he did to the troublemakers who had instigated the Picrocholine War (not merely stated their *opinion* like Rabelais, Servet, etc.) "was to make them work the screw-presses in the printing house he had newly installed" (compare also the Allies and their "concept" of "collective guilt"). The contrast is illuminating: Calvin and the Allies as miserable slaves of "divine" or "democratic" passions, Rabelais as the enlightened, reasonable and practical humanist acting with serene Sovereignty and anticipating the most daring modern views on "crime and punishment". Is it necessary to underline that Diderot and Tillier, in this respect too, are one body with Rabelais?

remembered *Jacques le fataliste*, for in a short newspaper article which concludes with a discussion of master-servant relationship, his admiration is reserved for the *French manner of looking at things, exemplified immediately* for him by Diderot's lackey and master. In Diderot's strange pair, he half-jokingly sees a *new* possibility of class society which might succeed, just as in the whole of the article he has *playfully and humorously* seen a *central problem* of his philosophy in terms of eighteenth-century art".

Absolutism, moreover, *confirms* Rabelais' new direction as the truly *reasonable* and *realistic* resolution instead of refuting it, for there is at the end no way to get around it! With all the material progress achieved under Absolutism it reached *politically* nothing else than the point where Rabelais' direction became decisive for its destiny: either engage in Pantagrueian policy or be doomed. Pantagrueism is the enlightened essence of nature itself — it is known how the violaters of nature's will were punished.

XII

Subsequently, Rabelais' new direction cannot be supplanted by another realistic one before the eve of the French Revolution. The perspective in the *seventeenth* century (the century after Rabelais) is more limited; the mind is sobered by the painful development which stretches out in time and space; Pantagrueism is reduced to the individual and literary sphere; the tradition is upheld by Montaigne, Molière, Cyrano de Bergerac, each of them rather a large fragment of Pantagrueism than the miraculous unit. In the following (the *eighteenth*) century Pantagrueism is faced with the definite decadence of Absolutism and the necessary new direction cannot longer be promoted by the representative of this obsolete institution. All that has been said in praise of Rabelais' solution of the problems of government and politics applies now to the new directions which Diderot the Pantagrueist (like Rabelais, threatened, persecuted, and saving his neck thanks to his common sense) advances as the only realistic and reasonable ones: the compromise in which the Jacques, who have now the "stuff", lead their Masters and carry the development farther, or the (same anticipation of Sovereignty in state affairs as in Rabelais) voluntary abdication of the Masters who instead of losing something by their act will only benefit from it. And why will this be so? Because this act of Sovereignty will (as reasoned perception tells us) set an invincible example — it will accelerate and harmonize the development which would then be freed from the blindness, complications and innumerable quarrels implicit in the obscurity dominating the compromise. If the material conditions are still too adamant and if they blind the Masters in regard to their fate, the only other *realistic* direction which Diderot envisages and which the development finally carries through is then the *enforced* abdication of the Masters, the *Revolution*. But again: This latter *intermediary* direction *confirms* and not refutes Diderot's alternative directions as the truly *reasonable* and *realistic* solution. No way to get around it: With all the material progress achieved under bourgeois rule we have only reached the point where the stupid rulers of our time have no longer any other choice than at least to accept the compromise sincerely (they had better abdicate voluntarily) or to perish in a revolution — revolution failing, in a general catastrophe of society.

The irrefutable proof that the *fundamental* and *simple* ideas of Pantagrueism embody the only realistic and reasonable resolution of the problems of life and are more profound than anything "profound thinking" has to offer in the interim which brings the political development invariably back to the point where the directions of Pantagrueism become imperative — this proof is delivered by the great Pantagrueist of the *nineteenth* century, Claude Tillier. No need to dwell upon well-known political facts, upon the political failures of the new Masters (the "third estate"), etc. Suffice it to

note that the new Masters are generally blind or bad Masters; that the Jacques of the nineteenth century have greatly increased in numbers; that their sufferings drive them repeatedly to revolt; that "deep thinking" has advanced society not one iota and is *factually* an ideological attempt to prevent political progress which is always achieved by execution of the *revolutionary* directions of Pantagruelism; that the only real *new* directions which are formulated aim to end the sufferings of the Jacques by bringing them to power, i.e., to free society by the revolution and the (temporary) rule of the fourth estate; that these new directions (profoundly thought out and at the beginning seemingly the final solution, it must be admitted) were with regard to their ultimate aim at the end radically disproven by all events from the Paris Commune to the October Revolution in Russia (which was in *content* only a belated Revolution of the third estate and almost immediately exposed but the most extreme decadence of Bourgeois society); that in this whole period "profound thinking" is on its positive pole identical with real knowledge, scientific research and discovery (which Pantagruelism absorbs to the full), on its negative pole with pseudo-thinking which marks the progressive decay of the capitalist system in every field and becomes more and more a systematic dupery of the people.

Mon oncle Benjamin appears in a time of high political fermentation — between the July-revolution (1830) and the February-revolution (1848). Its author shares the persecution suffered by Rabelais and Diderot: for his liberal pamphlets he is punished by the loss of his position as a teacher; he lives in poverty, dies at forty-three years (born 10th April, 1801) of consumption, but holding his ground to the last and ready to haunt his children should they ever become "rich". He is the man of the *people* in a time of the people, and his unrestricted love of the people, his deep instinct tells him what is needed for its cause. The mere fact that he is untouched by contemporary concepts concerning the social question proves not only that he is the deeper *realist* but it assures also the roundedness of his uncorruptible character. For what is the secret of the entire epoch from the French Revolution up to the present day? Its secret is that the time slowly ripens for Rabelais' higher and *general* direction of "Do as thou wilt", for the installation of the house of Thélème *everywhere*, in which house rulers of any sort are unknown. The situation of society becomes from decade to decade more perplexed and paradoxical: On the one side nature, under the molding hand of man, visibly loses its adamancy and behaves increasingly like a willing cosmos which produces and reproduces whatever is desired; on the other side society, under the system of commodity production and precisely because of nature's unlimited willingness, becomes more enslaved by petty interests, more adamant than ever and behaves blindly like nature in its most crude stage. Those blind automatons, who possess and rule and ruthlessly exploit their fellow men and nature, harden under the compulsion of competition to a degree where they sacrifice everything except their profits and privileges — the people who are forced into the mechanism of competition suffer all its consequences, until the very adamancy of the rulers and their army of interested parasites will either drive the people to revolt or the whole system to explosion.

What is the way out of the social paradox? It is surely not the workers' movement whose leadership and functionaries finally wind up in total

corruption. These bureaucrats gain influence, power, positions, privileges, high salaries, even fortunes; they get well embedded in bourgeois society, lower the intellectual level to zero and sacrifice everything (especially one bit of political liberty after the other) except their positions, until they become either political oppressors themselves (chemically pure example: Stalinism) or the victims of their own policy (fascism), with the further alternative that either the people will dethrone them or that they perish with the system.

The workers' movement dead, it is surely not "profound thinking" which has found a way out, for this fine endeavor finally winds up in charlatanries like Positivism, Pragmatism, Logical Positivism, Existentialism, Keynesian Economics, Psychoanalysis, Pre-natal Anthropology, trash on "Education", on "1984" (Orwell), the United Nations and so on.

Since no other effort enters, it is after a hundred years of experience simply a fact that Tillier the Pantagruelist was the man who took the correct stand. Factually, he operates firmly on the basis that one has to oppose ever *reasonably*, ever *realistically* anything that can offend or hinder the liberty of the *people*. Factually, he recognizes that his is the age of the whole mass of the people, not of a new class which has to take power, and it is a fact of highest significance that as long as the workers' movement conquered and defended its political liberty, human and social progress were assured. Through defence and constant enlargement of the peoples' liberty to a human society — that is the *fundamental* idea of Pantagruelism which in its simplicity leaves "profound thinking" behind and *solves* the social problem, because enlargement of freedom means to break down the adamancy of class society and to dissolve it through its harmonious unification with liberated nature, which unification becomes a natural necessity at that point of the development where both man and nature can accept each other with the greatest facility. Where the leadership of the workers' movement engaged in the wars of the Picrocholines and "led" the masses into ever greater misery, the utmost Pantagruelism did was to accept *necessary* compromises without injuring in whatever form its character. One has to read *Mon oncle Benjamin* and to study it in order to see how Tillier's fundamental idea works, how his inviolable character pierces through the text at every line. The perspective of the age is anything but rosy — for the first time in a work of Pantagruelism the "sound dose of pessimism" appears directly as its basic pessimistic *philosophy*, but no other form, characteristic or element is lacking which constitutes the miraculous unit, and serene Sovereignty reigns supreme. One must firmly grasp that Pantagruelism is something that is *incarnated* and actually *lived* if one is to understand the realism, the revolutionism and the philosophical attitude of the Pantagruelistic temperament and personality. Tillier is not less identical with his Benjamin than Rabelais with his Pantagruel and Diderot with his Jacques, a point which Guy Palmade in his Introduction to *Jacques* (Editions Delmas, Paris, 1948) brings out somewhat better than Loy who tends to weaken it. What Palmade has to say is interesting in more than one respect:

"There is much of *Diderot* in this sympathetic Jacques, of the Diderot who believed, as André Billy wrote, 'in a nature *sovereignly good and just* in its compensations and its unfathomable harmonies'; of the Diderot also

who had given himself for epitaph: '*Ci-gît un sage; ci-gît un fou*' [here lies a sage; here lies a fool]. The *same* care to understand all and to clarify all, but inside of *certain limits only*, and the *same calm scorn* for what overflows them and exceeds man. To compare Rabelais and Diderot, as the critics of *Jacques* want, is folly if one thinks of the profound differences of the men and the epochs; but to recognize in them, together with a certain *relationship*, I don't know what *common quality*, that the reader of *Jacques* can doubtless admit".

The certain relationship and the common quality which Palmade cannot denominate is precisely the complex miracle of Pantagruelism — consequently no wonder that the quotation contains not one word about Diderot's personality, personal behavior, beliefs or endeavors which does not entirely apply to Rabelais and Tillier. This is but another side of the miracle: The difference of the men and epochs is there and asserts itself vigorously, yet the complex unit too is there and asserts itself as stronger than the sum total of its parts, i.e. renders even the most marked difference unessential. And that is still not yet the end of the miracle: '*Ci-gît un sage; ci-gît un fou!*' the epitaph for all Pantagruelists, is a formula which bespeaks them as *a-bourgeois* individuals.

Indeed, the Pantagruelist is not anti-bourgeois or "non-bourgeois" but *a-bourgeois*: he is preeminently human, while the bourgeois is fundamentally a-human and alienated from the human essence; he is naturally social, while the bourgeois is unnaturally a-social; he possesses reasoned perception, while the bourgeois is blind and demoniacal; he *faces* facts, while the bourgeois is *overwhelmed* by them; he is sovereign, while the bourgeois is entirely enslaved by commodity production and its adamant mechanism of competition; he is a realist and an effective planner, while the bourgeois is essentially irrational and with all his pseudo-planning increases solely the adamancy of his extremely chaotic commodity production; he revolutionizes the mind and society, while the bourgeois is reactionary and revolutionizes only the means (techniques) for society's enslavement; he is heroic and serene, while the bourgeois is stupidly tragic and idiotically serious with all the pretensions of a Stalin or Hitler; he is reasonable and enlightened, while the bourgeois is fanatic and either cynical or superstitious or both; he is concerned with what the tangible effects of certain problems will be to society, while the bourgeois is completely absorbed by the problem of profit-making in the interest of which he disregards all other effects; he recognizes that insoluble problems are no problems at all and have to be dismissed as absurdities, while the bourgeois insists on the absurdities of commodity production and, thoroughly infatuated, tries to solve the insoluble problem of competition which will simply be dismissed when production for profit is transformed into production for human use.

XIII

That Rabelais-Pantagruel and Diderot-Jacques are the embodiment of this *a-bourgeois* entity has been sufficiently demonstrated (at least one can hope so) by their deeds, procedures, attitudes, lives, philosophy, etc., which are besides well-known enough to bring many complementary illustrations to the mind. As for Tillier-Benjamin, this shamefully neglected but inestimable witness for the fact that since Rabelais the social problem itself has steadily

become more humanized and must be solved by the majority of the *people*, only a few indications are possible here. One has to read *Benjamin* and to observe with what scorn for prudence Benjamin encounters the Marquis de Cambyse; how he saves his neck thanks to his common sense and faces the fact of brute force which compels him to compromise, i.e. to kiss the behind of the Marquis instead of being killed by the ragamuffins of the latter; with what serene Sovereignty, wit, prudence, planning he fools the Marquis and drives *him* to kiss his (Benjamin's) behind, insisting that every witness of the insult done to himself be present when it is avenged, but gallantly permitting *Madame la Marquise*, who had not witnessed the insult, to retire (realistic episodes of that sort, by the by, burden Tillier with the unavoidable Pantagruelian "obscenity"); with what indomitable pride he preserves the integrity of his character and rejects, poor as he is, the money with which the Marquis tries to buy his silence on what had happened; how reasonably he handles matters like duelling (to give only one instance) and first offers his adversary to settle the affair by a game of chess, then thrice simply disarms the well-trained fencer without doing him in true Pantagruelian fashion any physical harm (that unjust nobleman has, however, to endure the whip of Benjamin's vivid wit); how he is in unflinching opposition to convention; how he cares to understand all and to clarify all, but inside certain limits only, — *in toto* how he acts, lives, laughs, loves (very "earthly", it is only too true!), philosophizes, makes sense out of nonsense and is "ever ready to drink" in a perfect gaiety of spirit produced by a contempt for the incidentals of fate . . . until all that is essential for Pantagruelism is unfolded and the sparkling miracle performed once more.

O laughter, o serenity of mind, o wisdom of Sovereignty and of the readiness to drink! Whenever there is a presentiment, a doubt, an insoluble problem, a false tragedy — whenever inspiration is needed, the Holy Bottle gives advice. Gargantua and his companions travel far (that is they examine many social institutions and find them bad or ridiculous) in order to obtain an answer on Panurge's pseudo-problem! Shall I marry or not? And if I marry, will I be a cuckold? The one-word answer Panurge receives from the Holy Bottle is: *Trinc!* The priestess of the Bottle, Bacbuc, then instructs the amazed Panurge:

"My friend", she said, "give thanks to heaven, as *reason* requires you to, for you have been vouchsafed the Word of the Holy Bottle. And what a word! The most gracious, godliest, most *certain* word of answer I have ever heard her give since I have officiated here at her most sacred oracle. Rise, friend; let us try the chapter in whose glass this noble word is explained" . . .

She produced a large, unwieldy silver book, shaped like one-quarter of a four-volume work of *erudite philosophy* or, if you prefer, like a *half-hogshead of learning*. Having dipped it in the fountain, she announced:

"The philosophers, preachers and learned doctors of *your* world feed you up with fine words, cramming their cant down your ears. *Here*, on the contrary, we really incorporate our precepts at the mouth. Therefore I shall not tell you to read this chapter or consult that gloss; I prefer to suggest that you *taste* this succulent chapter or *swallow* this rare gloss" . . .

"In olden days", Bacbuc pursued, "at the Lord's bidding, an ancient prophet of the Jewish race, Ezekiel, ate a book and became scholarly to the back teeth. I now tell you to drink a book to become learned to your very liver. Come, open your jaws!"

Panurge was gaping wide as his jaws would stretch. Bacbuc picked up the silver book — and we watched, spellbound. For we believed it to be a real book,

because of its shape: it looked like a breviary. And a breviary it was, too: a tome-shaped flask filled with Falernian wine, every drop of which she made Panurge swallow.

"A notable chapter! A most authentic gloss!" Panurge declared. "Is this all the trismegistian or thrice-mighty Bottle's word meant? I'm very grateful, of course. . . ."

"Exactly that and nothing more", Bacchue explained. "For *Trinc* is a panomphaean word, that is a word employed, understood and celebrated among all nations. It means simply: *Drink!* . . ."

Mind you, I do not mean drinking in the *simple and absolute* sense in which *any beast may be said to drink*. No — I mean the drinking of cool, delicious wines. Remember, friends, that by the vine we grow divine: no argument could be surer, no divination less hazardous. Why, your own Academics say as much, when they give the etymology of wine . . . as being connected with *vis*, which means strength and power. Has not wine the power to fill the soul with all *truth, wisdom and philosophy?*" . . .

"It is impossible to speak more cogently than this excellent priestess", Pantagruel told Panurge. "I said *as much to you* when *first* you spoke to me about it all. *Trinc*, then. What says your *heart*, elevated as it is by Bacchic enthusiasm?"

"I say this", cried Panurge:

Trinc! Drink up, by goodman Bacchus!

Let no ponderous problem rack us!
All our quest was one long farce.

I foresee a jogging arse,
Gaining vast momentum under
Good Panurge's wedding thunder.

From my arsenal, I draw
My gigantic pleasure-saw,
Working it in the soft wood
Of Milady's maidenhood.

Trinc! I know I shall be wed,
How my wife will love her bed!
The pot snaps shut, the stout eel
wriggles,

Lord! What juicy fumblefriggles!

Marriage? Marriage is my oyster!

Harder, deeper, lower, moister,
Toss them down and drain them dry.

Hail, the hymeneal urge
Of the perfect groom, Panurge!

Sing Io paean! Victory!

Hail, to Bacchus! Hail, to me!

Hail, to marital relations!

Hail, to joyous copulations!

Friar John, I swear that Bottle

Spoke the truth; and I will throttle

Any oaf who dares deny

I'll be married, by and by.

So the problem of cuckoldry is not less effectively drowned than in the case of Jacques who reacts to *ponderous* problems as follows:

"Here, sir, here's what knows better than all the augurs, seerss geese, and sacred chickens of the republic; it's the bottle [his *gourde*]. Ask the bottle".

Jacques took the bottle and consulted it lengthily. His Master drew out his watch and snuffbox, looked at the time, took his snuff, and Jacques said: "It seems I see destiny *less black* now".

But since the author of a Pantagruelian work is always fully involved in the affair, Diderot himself addresses the reader as Rabelais did:

"I have forgotten to tell you that in cases which demanded reflection, his [Jacques'] first move was to interrogate his gourd. Was it necessary to solve a problem of morals, discuss a fact, prefer one way to the other, embark upon, pursue or abandon an affair, weigh the advantages or disadvantages of a political operation, of a commercial or financial speculation, the wisdom or folly of a law, the outcome of a war, the choice of an inn, in the inn the choice of an apartment, in the apartment the choice of a bed — in all these cases his first word was: 'Let's interrogate the gourd'. His last was: 'It is the opinion of the bottle and mine'. When destiny was mute in his head, he explained it by the gourd; it was a sort of portable Pythia, mute the instant it was empty. At Delphi, the Pythia, her skirts pulled up, seated with naked arse on her tripod, received her inspiration from the bottom up; Jacques, on his horse, his head turned toward heaven, his gourd uncorked and the mouth of the vessel near his own, received his inspiration from the top down. When the Pythia and Jacques pronounced their oracles, they were both drunk. He pretended that the Holy Ghost had come down to the disciples in a gourd; he called Pentecost 'the festival of the gourds'. . . . He gave the most magnificent picture of the enthusiasm, the passion and the fire with which

the Bacbucians and Perigourdians were and still are seized when, at the end of a meal, their elbows resting on the table, the divine Bacbuc would appear to them, would be placed in their midst, would hiss, throw her cap far away and cover her worshippers with her prophetic foam. His manuscript [his treatise on divination] was decorated with two portraits, beneath which one reads: '*Anacreon and Rabelais, the one among the Ancients, the other among the Moderns, Sovereign Pontiffs of the Gourd*'. [Diderot's italics.] . . .

All this is very well, you will add, but Jacques' loves? — As for Jacques' loves, there is but Jacques who knows them, and there he is suffering from a sore throat which reduces his master to his watch and his snuff-box; an indigence which afflicts him as much as you. — What shall we do then? — Really, I don't know. This would be truly the case to interrogate the divine Bacbuc or the sacred gourd; but her cult is falling, her temples are deserted. As at the birth of our divine Savior the oracles of paganism ended; as at the death of Gallet the oracles of Bacbuc were mute — so also *no more great poems*, no more these *pieces of sublime eloquence*, no more these productions marked with the stamp of *enthusiasm and genius*. All is reasoned out, considered, academic and flat. O divine Bacbuc! o sacred Gourd! o divinity of Jacques! Come back to our midst! . . . The desire seizes me, reader, to entertain you with the birth of the divine Bacbuc, the miracles which accompanied and followed it, the marvels of her reign and the disasters of her retreat. . . ."

It is the same praise of the Holy Bottle, namely of genius and serenity, as in the verses with which Pantagruel rebukes Friar John who makes fun of Panurge's rhyming:

Believe me, friend, this must be noble Bacchus —
His mad, *poetic* frenzy will attack us
Through his sweet wine, and *grant the gift of song*.

Impossible for Tillier not to strike again and again this keynote of true Pantagruelism. Two examples will show how congenially he understands the nature of the Holy Bottle:

"Is he [Benjamin] drunk?" whispered my grandfather to his wife.

"Why?" answered she.

"Because he speaks with sensibleness".

Yet my uncle Benjamin was not what you trivially term a drunkard, take care not to believe that. He was an epicurean who pushed *philosophy* to the point of rapture, and that was all. He had a stomach full of elevation and nobleness. He loved wine, not for itself, but for that dementia which it procures for some hours, a dementia which makes the man of wit talk *nonsense* in such a naive, such a piquant, such an original fashion that one would like to talk so forever. If he could have intoxicated himself by reading the mass, he would have read the mass every day. My uncle Benjamin had principles: he pretended that a man with an empty stomach was a man still asleep; that drunkenness would have been one of the greatest blessings of the Creator, if it did not cause headaches, and that the only thing which gave man superiority to the brute was the faculty of getting drunk.

Goethe, says René-Louis Doyon in the René Rasmussen edition of *Mon oncle Benjamin*, "Goethe affirmed that only a work of circumstance could attain to a masterpiece; if his works were not adequate to confirm his saying, Rabelais had confirmed it in advance [and Diderot had confirmed it at Goethe's time! W.L.]. The history of *Mon Oncle Benjamin* decides once more amply in favor of the Weimar master". And a winged word has it: The style is the man! That is only too true, but the style of the Pantagruelist is something more; it is, one could say, the man *plus* the world, *plus* his life and his time.

Tillier's style is pure and, in the noblest sense of the word, popular; his art of characterization is masterly concise, his wit cogent, his irony sure of its aim; his cheerfulness and humor are bubbling, his sympathy with the

people' and its cause undisguised, his serenity and the pessimism underlying it indestructible.* This style answers for the man as for his time, his life and the world around him:

*The author takes the passage on style, as some on other subjects to follow, from a study he wrote ten years ago. A rather strange coincidence: just having tackled the question, an English translation of *Mon oncle Benjamin* arrives for which he had asked his friend M. S. Shiloh. The translation has an appendix — the sketch of Tillier's life and works by Ludwig Pfau. Pfau is the learned German professor who rescued *Mon oncle Benjamin* which had passed unnoticed in France. So this immortal work, like *Jacques le fataliste*, became known to France and the world through the enthusiasm a German (or some Germans) had felt for it. It is interesting in this connection that Joh. Fischart, Rabelais' German "relative in spirit", had already presented in 1575 a German adaptation of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, the last book of which had appeared in 1564. Since the present writer has up to this day not known Pfau's sketch, he is somewhat struck by the similarity of judgment on style and spirit:

"For a long time no book had yielded me such deep satisfaction; but by whom was it? [The "stitched volume, of damaged appearance" which Pfau bought on one of the Seine-quais' bookstands, had "no cover, no title-page, no preface, neither author nor printer".] The simple, *concise*, and direct style seemed to be that of the eighteenth century; the narrative, so *natural* and without reserve and circumlocution, recalled Voltaire, Diderot [!], and Le Sage; the genuine feeling for *nature and mankind* maybe [!] also conveyed a suggestion of the sentimentalism of Rousseau. But the whole manner of expression was more spontaneous, *popular*, and richer in color; and even if the author had not introduced himself as a grandchild of that generation, the spirit of *liberty and equality* that permeates his book betrayed too much of modern thought not to have lain at the breasts of the Revolution". — Pfau also points to the "Gallic spirit" of Tillier who, as all our Pantagruelists, is an "uninhibited *gaulois* from the provinces" [Loy], and quotes abundantly from Tillier's pamphlets. Among these quotations is one which the corrupted writers of our time will like:

"But however base we esteem venality in general, the basest is that of the writer. Those who have a voice strong enough to make themselves heard by the *masses* are the *natural* champions of the noble cause. God has loosened their tongue and commanded them to preach the service of *liberty*. If they prove false to their sacred calling, if they, like wicked shepherds, lead their flocks to the shambles, they deserve all the contempt of which a human soul is capable. That is just as if the light-house were to desert the coast that it ought to point out to the storm-tossed ship and station itself on a cliff. I am one of the least of those who write for the people; I wield only a wren's quill; but God forbid that I should ever sell it to our oppressors! O, no! and if hunger with his iron fingers should tug at my vitals, I would not so degrade myself. If I must beg my bread, it shall at least not be in the ante-chambers of the ministers. Rather would I recite my pamphlets from door to door and hold out my hand to those who have a heart for *liberty and the people*. And surely calmer dreams would visit me on my straw than many another on his silken couch. . . . Instead of selling myself to the powerful, I made war upon those who sold themselves to them, and I do not regret it. That is, after all, the best road to an honorable grave. Of that I am convinced; and if this my pamphleteer's quill should grow out of my grave, and my son had the cunning to use it, I should urge him to grasp it, even if he should [as Tillier himself! W.L.] meet a prison in the middle of his course. When one can say to himself: the oppressor fears you and the oppressed puts his trust in you — that is the noblest riches, riches for which I would willingly give all else. . . . It is true, I have cancelled a number of too pompous adjectives which certain names had appropriated to themselves; and now and then I have also pricked the bubble of some bloated self-conceit. But the persons whom I have treated so were on the side of the enemy, and I had a right to explode their airs. I did not violate the law of war against them; and if they complain about me, it is just as if an old soldier of the empire should complain because he was wounded at Austerlitz by a Frenchman. Call it personalities — what of it? Every one has his own way of making war: the others shoot into the masses at half the height of a man; but I select my man

"For the rest, the gaiety of the poor is a sort of pride. I have been poor among the poorest. Well, I found pleasure in saying to fortune: I will not bend under your hand; I will eat my hard crust as proudly as the dictator Fabricius ate his radishes; I will wear my poverty as kings wear their diadem; strike as much as you like, and strike again: I will answer your flagellations with sarcasms; I will be like the tree that blooms while one cuts it at the roots; like the column whose metal eagle shines in the sun while the pick is working at its base.

But, at the period to which I take you back, the customs of the little towns were not yet glossed with elegance; they were full of a charming *laissez-aller* [Rabelais' *fay ce que voudras!* W.L.] and a most amiable simplicity. The character of that happy age was unconcern. All these men, ships or nut-shells, abandoned themselves with closed eyes to the current of life, without troubling themselves as to where it would land them.

The *bourgeois* were not office-seekers; they did not hoard treasures; they lived at home in joyous abundance, and spent their incomes to the last louis. The merchants, rare then, grew rich slowly, without devoting themselves exclusively to business, and solely by the force of things; the laborers worked, not to amass savings, but to make both ends meet. They had not at their heels that terrible *competition* which presses us, which cries to us incessantly: 'On! On!'

Tillier sees that competition is the basic evil of the capitalist system and Benjamin draws politically the conclusion:

"It is for us, men of heart and education, to do honor to these people in the midst of whom we were born; they must learn through us that they do not need to be nobles in order to be men; that they may rise through self-esteem from the degradation into which they have fallen; and that they may say at last to the handful of tyrants who oppress them: 'We are as much worth as you are, and more numerous. Why should we continue to be your slaves, and why should you wish to remain our masters?' Oh, Page, may I live to see that day and drink sour wine for the rest of my life'.

But to round the picture of the Pantagruelistic style which is the man, his life, his time and his world, LeClerc may speak about Rabelais, André Billy and Goethe about Diderot. One will again see how much "common ground" there is between our three Pantagruelists in spite of all differences.

LeClerc on Rabelais:

"His was a flexible, supple, abundant style, brilliant with *verve* [this word is to be kept in mind! W.L.] and *harmony*, extraordinarily complex and *original*; his admirable memory and his bold imagination allowed him the most vertiginous flights of fancy. Into his expression went racy French terms of the soil, the mill, the tavern, the marketplace . . . scholarly terms from ancient philosophy, Renaissance science, jurisprudence, theology, scholastics, medicine . . . terms that were a part of the oral heritage from the Middle Ages . . . phrases borrowed from the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arab, English, German, Italian and Basque . . . terms of the arts, crafts, theatre . . . and finally, fantastic terms he himself invented with a *robustness* and *feeling* that make James Joyce sound anemic and obscure. . . . And ever, shot through them, that *supreme sense of reality!* . . . True, it [Rabelais' French] has aged considerably. Yet — O consoling thought! — compared with Calvin's, it is rapid, modern and picturesque as the 'Normandie'!"

André Billy on Diderot:

"*Jacques* is of all the novels of Diderot the most strongly marked with and take a good aim. But if a plumed crest happens to pass by my door, I always give him preference".

With regret must here be left out the short but excellent Introduction to *Benjamin* by Benj. R. Tucker who translated the work into English and published it (Boston, 1890).

his *personal spirit*, his *turn of mind*, and his *qualities* . . . What accent, what *verve*! What a sense of dramatic dialogue! . . . The criticism of bad taste has not been spared this work. Shall we admit that the grossness of certain joking does not shock us? The style saves everything and every work has its strong points" [especially if the style is "strong" content].

Goethe on Diderot (in the notes to his translation of Diderot's *Neveu*):

"The important work which we deliver over to the German public under this title is certainly to be reckoned among the most outstanding works of Diderot. His nation as well as his friends have reproached him as being able to write excellent parts of things, but no excellent whole work. Such formulas of judgment are not denied and are being propagated; and the merit of an excellent man, without further inquiry, remains belittled. The same ones who judge thus have certainly not read *Jacques le fataliste* which . . . shows quite well with what happy skill he has been able to mold the heterogeneous elements of *Reality* into an ideal whole. You can think of him as a writer what you will, even so, both friends and enemies will have to agree that nobody, in *viva-voce* conversation, has excelled him in *vivacity, vigor, spirit, diversity and charm*".

XIV

It is natural, after all the foregoing insistence that Pantagruelism is a predominantly *French* phenomenon, to pose the question: Why is this so?

The problem defies any exact scientific investigation — the phenomenon is there together with the fact that France, unlike Italy, Spain, etc., is a great capitalist nation and yet industrially second-rate. France has arrived at her relatively favorable second rank because she has in all her colorful history travelled a side road which was her fortune and (under capitalist conditions) also her fate. This nation, which has given modern society its dramatic effects and the fireworks of history, the Great Revolution and the Paris Commune, the press and the parodical operetta, comedy and satire, bourgeois rhetoric and criticism, pathos and passion, irony and serene catholic sentimentality, romanticism and naturalism, eroticism and luxury industries, liquors and the gourmet's kitchen, spirit and fashion, impressionism and pointilism, military techniques and the Republic (yes, for all that and more France is "classical", because economically second-rate) — this nation is imbued like no other with a feeling for life in which the consciousness that all earthly efforts are in the last instance nonsense vibrates perceptibly.

The French feeling for life is based on pessimism, but it has nothing of the burrowing despair of Northern pessimism or Eastern nihilism, nothing of the struggle of the Faustian man with an eternally insoluble problem.* The plant grows, blooms and must die — on such crystal-clear grounds, which are by no brooding surpassable for depth and balance, sprouts the incomparable flower of French "sérénité", a word that has a precise

* The so-called Faust-conflict is a pseudo-problem which Pantagruelism dismisses; the same goes for the Hamlet-problem and many others, to say nothing of the personal tragedy of Faust's Gretchen which with her pseudo-salvation reflects but the pettiness of German conditions at Goethe's time. Compare with Goethe's treatment of such "conflicts" (Gretchen's brother too has to die because he is possessed by a social prejudice) the death of Minxit's daughter in *Mon oncle Benjamin*.

equivalent in several languages and yet is as untranslatable as the transplanting of the French feeling for life into other cultures. Out of the marvellous and, in its perfection, unique mixture of both components (the consciousness of the nothingness of all efforts, and the priority of existence which obliges to activity) springs the ideal of "*clarté*", that is, *clarity* in all its nuances such as light, splendour, transparency, brightness, limpidity, perspicuity. *Clarté* represents the living readiness of the *qui-vive*? — the call to be heroic and to fight, to guard life and to empty the goblet in the quiet flow of life, but also to plunge into the stream and to burn oneself when the great hour has struck. The world for hundreds of years has rightly looked upon France with admiration and pampered her even with abuses. Her vices and weaknesses have been as figurative as her strengths and virtues. Nowhere else has civilization borne a more beautiful flower on its broad vulgar stem; nowhere else have liveliness of temperament and the *laissez-faire, laissez-aller*! transmitted an inkling of better humanity than in France. Where sureness, composure, ingenuous humanness appear, one is on the trail of great traditions which condition their — self-evidence.

Alas, that great and noble tradition is, as LeClerc says, daily being perverted. Poor France! — she too has not been spared by the general retrogression of contemporary society. How horribly she has broken up since the Dreyfus-affair, how her magnificent feeling for life has sunk to mere banal need for rest, how her well-balanced optimism has crept down to the trivial affirmation of the *status quo*. The true battle-cry of France in the last war sounded: *Je veux mon bifteck!* (I want my beefsteak) and *Foutez-moi la paix!* (go to hell). The famous French talent for improvisation, by which the Marne-battle was once won, flames up for the last time in the sit-down strikes of 1936 and fails completely in the last war, giving way to the slogan: *Débrouillez-vous!* (get out of trouble).

Débrouillez-vous! is the negative turn of the winged *verve* of *qui vive*?! It is indeed the only possible battle-cry for France after every better solution has been prevented through outright betrayal by those world-forces figuring under the name of the "progressive camp". Thus it is only natural that the flower fades while the stem rots; only fatal destiny if France goes to ruin in the capitalist mill; only broken force of a people with sure instinct in good and evil if it accepts certain defeat without futile resistance. That befits a great nation which economically never could reach the first rank, which exhausted itself in the dramatic effects of politics and precedes the doom of the British Empire while the merciless Gods of imperialism prepare with the doom of the latter also their own downfall.

What France during the last war was scolded for by the "progressive camp" — for her "pacifism", her unwillingness to let herself be once more sacrificed for a hopeless cause — that is what she should be praised for. As much as she has sunk and her qualities have been lost in triviality — in this refusal of the French people is preserved a remnant of her former qualities: in it is hidden political instinct and historic genius. The French people refused to follow the leadership of Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt; it gave them the negative answer which the masses always have in store for political deceptions: passive rejection.

Old France is dead and will never see her resurrection under the rule of the capitalist system. That is what the French people senses and has lived

through intensely. Whether in the Great Revolution, in the Paris Commune or in the Dreyfus-affair — at all historical turns it accepted being shaken from top to bottom. Again and again it has, collectively and individually, fought out its conflicts to the point of exhaustion; again and again it has forced through events which set its blood in uproar and which left the true taste of things on its tongue. And therefore it had to be thus: Finished as an imperialistic country, France could do nothing else but anticipate the fate of humanity in the age of capitalist disintegration and be the mirror in which the civilized world's future is reflected. The hopelessness of all endeavors becomes under imperialism the gray reality of daily life. This hopelessness burns now in the consciousness of a people which has experienced history like no other and has learned from it: History is (to speak with Theodor Lessing) the endeavor "to give sense to what is senseless", or, better yet, the effort to purge the senseless of the demony which it bears in its crude natural status. It is the great want of life under unmastered nature which sets history in motion — through it shall be restored the pure, uninhibited movement of the senseless (waxing, blooming and withering away) which emerges from the historical process purged from the demony of the unconscious. History is thus the formal means in the liberatory struggle of humanity and must in its present form negate itself with the accomplishment of its task. A great nation which imperialism deprived earlier than other great nations of a historical perspective had to feel the catastrophic effect of the capitalist system earlier than they. France has authentically proven that capitalism ruins humanity, breaks its life-energy and murders its spirit, will and instinct.

If that is the situation (and it surely is), what will then be the fate of Pantagruelism? And has the France of the twentieth century made no attempt to keep the tradition alive?

The last attempt to present a true "Frenchmannish" novel the present writer knows of was made by Romain Rolland with his *Maître Colas Breugnon*, the story of a philosophic woodcarver. It was, significantly enough, written in 1918 (there was some hope that the war would end with a social turn) and passed quite unnoticed. And since then the scene has, perspicuously, changed. On one side the tradition becomes more and more perverted and we have, in fact, not advanced, but terribly regressed from Rabelais' "ideal". Thus no more great Pantagruelistic works, no more these Frenchmen for whom, the same as for our man of the Renaissance, the ideal was as much a workable scheme as the workable scheme an ideal. A program for a giant fitted perfectly a multitude of men (especially in the Renaissance and in the eighteenth century) who were giants themselves — broad, all-inclusive, encyclopedic, universal not only in knowledge, but also in their capacity to exercise many "professions". Goethe, that universal genius who represented both Germany's spiritual greatness and politico-economic backwardness (this "philistine" side of his prevents him from being the Pantagruelistic entity, but he nevertheless easily manages to admire *Jacques* and *Tristram Shandy* without restraint) — Goethe and Hegel and even Schiller are compared to Proust, Gide, Joyce, Thomas Mann, Jaspers, Bertrand Russell, the world in comparison to a piece of dry straw (cf. Mann's utterly rotten "problem": the "problematic of the writer in our time", the lollipop of an over-pretentious parasite). "The strange

prejudice that any worthwhile achievement can be brought about only by the always earnest, always serious man whose life follows an irrevocably blue-printed doctrine remains just that — a narrow prejudice" [Loy]. Compare then the life, occupations, actions of Rabelais, Diderot and Tillier with those "professional" writers, philosophers, specialists who are regarded as the "cream" of our time, and the tremendous regress, the extreme rarity of men distinguished by character and "free development of every faculty" is striking.

But this side of the picture portrays only the *official* side of a *status quo* which has become untenable, has even factually vanished. If to-day France can neither live nor die, her past still stands before humanity and extends into the present as a challenge! You all can neither live nor die, and yet there is Pantagruel who has the answer to every one of your silly problems! Indeed, the pretentious and disastrous madness of the capitalist system is too obvious — renewed and forceful hope flows from the fact that the official trend is slowly being reversed. There is, as a consequence of the inherent tendencies working beneath the surface of the confusing modern development, a steadily growing number of individuals from all social strata who see the problem and elaborate it from the most diverse angles — a kind of collective effort to reconstruct Pantagruelism by pieces or elements scattered all over the world which corresponds perfectly to a world full of awakening Jacques who sooner or later must ask: "Why should we continue to be your slaves, and why should you wish to remain our masters", if you yourselves are dissatisfied with the system, if there is more than enough for all of us and if you don't even know what to do with the fruits of our services? Favorable conditions made Pantagruelism spring up first in France, but it is the essence of nature in its human form and will be a general phenomenon when the basis for it has been laid on a world scale. This is presently the case — to pose a problem means to go beyond former limits, and the urge to look for its solution has led to the scrutiny of the past not for the sake of mere (passive) scholarship, but with the more or less clear aim of finding "workable schemes" outside of the official ones. This has in turn created a kind of Renaissance, especially of the Renaissance itself with all that goes back to classical Greece (Periclean age) and forward to the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth centuries.

Men, dissatisfied with the *status quo*, again study texts and books, but also the text of nature tortured by man and the text of life violated by a vicious system. If there are no more great Pantagruelistic works, there are pieces* and studies in its spirit and, above all, the spreading of the Pantagruelistic human individual. Again Ponocrates proves more realistic and one hundredfold more inspiring than Rousseau, again men derive their learnings from things around them. The whole development turns, on a higher technical and material level, back to its starting point, the point where man and life occupied the first place and production, art, science and so on were not their masters, but their friendly helpers. The need to present

* It is for several reasons a delicate matter for the author of this Appeal to declare that Erik Erikson's "Critical Review of 'The Dog Behind The Stove'" (*Cont. Issues* Nr. 9) is a truly Pantagruelistic piece. Honor to delicacy! but it had to be declared because the fact is important and — honest opinion and truth value higher than formal considerations.

Jacques to the English speaking world is thus the need to restore more and more the sense of how full the Pantagruelian challenge is, and yet, how much we will surpass this peak when all fetters have been removed which separate us from our own human resources.

XV

"The awkward and tenuous work of preparation, of suggestion, of criticism has been done. There remains only to read, or reread, *Jacques le fataliste*, a masterpiece of Diderot who doubtless knew all this without knowing it. It is enough to consider — to consider anything — if, as for Alice, it will keep us from crying, keep us from forgetting man".

With these words Loy takes leave of his readers and the sober practical question must be answered for which this Appeal has been written: If there is a need to present *Jacques* in English, how can it be met if all efforts to find a publisher for it fail? In former times it was the usage to open subscriptions and it may well be that we have to return to solid customs in this respect too. Contemporary Press, in any case, will publish Diderot's ravishing work if a sufficient number of readers encourage it by giving their opinion and support. They can rest assured that Contemporary Press is no business enterprise and takes the editorial work upon itself as a public service.

"To Posterity and the Being who does not die". This dedication by Diderot, says Loy, "is the fitting dedication to the wonderful nonsense of *Jacques*". It will, eventually, be also the dedication to the readers of an edition by Contemporary Press.

G. Troiano

THE FARM GLUT

THE housewife who protests the outrageous prices of food probably does not realize that what she pays the grocer is only a small part of her actual food bill. Indeed, government statistics show that she is paying twice for everything she buys. First she pays the grocer for the food that actually appears on the family table. But, at income tax time, she must pay again: this time for food that she will never see at all. This second kind of food will probably never be eaten by anybody. Instead, it will be bought by the government, stored away in granaries, freezing plants, abandoned factories, and surplus ships. There it will be left to rot. When it begins to overflow all available storage space, it will be taken by truck and trainload and dumped into lakes, rivers, and into the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Great heaps of it will be poisoned or set afire. The government, which cannot