NORMAN MAILER

THE FORTUNES OF THE EXISTENTIALIST HERO IN AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

In contrast to the eclectic, fragmented, and accommodationist character of liberal thought in the post-war years, Mailer has looked for a position that could provide comprehensive and effective resistance to totalitarian tendencies in American life. The result has been the emergence in his novels, essays, and journalism of an existentialist protagonist with a left-wing collective ethic, but an individualistic epistemology and ontology. The limitations of this posture are disclosed by the pattern in Mailer's work whereby emphasis on collective resistance in periods of social transition (as in The Naked and the Dead, The Armies of the Night) shifts to isolated subjectivism in periods where the context of struggle is more closely defined (as in Barbary Shore, Miami and the Siege of Chicago).. The suspicion arises that Mailer cannot sustain a revolutionary perspective adequate to the needs of organized mass resistance to an increasingly repressive political order.

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Andre: Unhappy is the country that has no hero.

Galileo: Unhappy is the country that needs one.

Brecht, Galileo

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO MAILER's WORK

To develop an initial view of Mailer's work, it is useful to counterpose it to the established intellectual and literary climate in which he wrote in the late forties and fifties, for with the exception of the acclaim that met The Naked and the Dead[1] until the recent success of The Armies of the Night,[2] his writing has been subject to a sustained critique by the liberal literary establishment.

The liberal critique of Mailer's work is based on two apparently contradictory ideas: on one hand, the notion that the socially engaged artist like Mailer who is also alienated from the centre of social and political life is irrelevant and passé (a thesis less fashionable today than in the fifties); on the other hand, the more enduring theme that Mailer has badly confused the separate claims of art and life. The two complaints, however, are not opposed, rather they are parts of a consistent development of liberal consciousness in the post-war years.

The critique of alienated engagement coincides with the recoil of American intellectuals from Stalinist totalitarianism. Where they had been déclassé exiles in the twenties and left-wing activists in the thirties, in

the fifties many of these same intellectuals assumed the role of defenders of Western civilization, liberal democracy, "our country and our culture," against impending Eastern barbarism; intellectuals were called into ideological service of the institutional powers committed to the defense of these values and for the most part they went willingly. This new attitude found typical expression in an editorial statement in the once alienated pages of Partisan Review:

> Whatever the cultural consequences may be, the democratic values which America either embodies or promises are desirable in purely human terms. We are certain that these values are necessary conditions for civilization and represent the only immediate alternative as long as Russian totalitarianism threatens world domination.[3]

As the immediacy of the crisis diminished into the daily tedium of the East-West cold war, however, the inescapable dehumanizing experience of the "cultural consequences" asserted itself. The intellectual was confronted with the problem of how to reconcile the democratic claims of the society with the frustration, boredom, and tastelessness of American mass culture, increasing social conformity with the need for individual independence and sensitivity, political acquiescence with aesthetic revulsion. Finding themselves in a situation where individual and social needs did not appear to correspond, the new intellectuals

needed an explanation for this separation. Many of them found it in the Freudian idea of the opposition of nature and civilization, the contradictory demands of individual instinct and collective culture. Committed to the support of the given American social and political structure, after the model of Freudian psychoanalysis they located in the accommodation of the individual to this social reality what appeared a timeless task. Given the magnitude and centrality of this work of accommodation, the old conceptions of the artist-intellectual as alien, critic, radical, provocateur or visionary seemed marginal, negative, trivial, or merely a small part of the larger task. Marcus Kline, for example, writes: "This happened: the revolution in behalf of an alienated engagement found itself ancient, respectable, and irrelevant to the social reality."[4]

Kline's perspective provides an example of the capability of advanced capitalism to absorb dissent. As Herbert Marcuse points out:

> Mass production and mass distribution claim the entire individual, and industrial psychology has long since ceased to be confined to the factory. . . . In this process, the "inner" dimension of the mind in which opposition to the status quo can take root is whittled down. The loss of this dimension, in which the power of negative thinking, the critical power of Reason--is at home, is the ideological counterpart to the very material process in which advanced industrial society silences and reconciles the opposition.[5]

In fact, when liberal intellectuals abandoned the posture of negative thinking and alienated engagement in joining

the mainstream establishment, it was the intellectuals themselves who became respectable, not their former position.

Still, in the more particularly aesthetic sphere of intellectual life in the fifties, the vulgarization and commercialization of mass culture made the idea of accommodation to that reality singularly unpalatable to most liberal intellectuals. In order to avoid an impasse, the old idea of the incompatability of artistic activity and practical life was extensively resurrected. Within the limits of aesthetic criticism, resistance to commercialism, vulgarization, mass culture in general became a liberal cause, feeding off the idea of the opposition of the individual and collective society, often offering art as an alternative to a comprehensive critique of society and to active participation in that society. Under these circumstances, to wish an effective role in social life for art ultimately became tantamount to admitting vulgarization; to see art as a form of active engagement was a variety of commercialism. Intercourse between the claims of art and the claims of life was considered miscegenous: its offspring, anti-intellectualism and anti-art. This reaction of the liberal intellectuals to vulgarization and commercialism represents another chapter in the tumultuous history of the doctrine of art-for-art's sake. Although the theory develops

initially as a reaction against the mechanization of life and the pragmatism of the rising middle classes, ultimately the artist who embraces art-for-art's sake achieves peace for himself and "purity" for his art only at the price of an understanding with the prevailing order which disqualifies him from active intervention and influence in practical affairs. Ironically, in an effort to salvage art from becoming a commodity like any other, the art work is fetishized. This contradiction reveals art-for-art's sake as a deluded attempt to break away from capitalist determinations independently in art, while confirming, at the same time, the capitalist principle of "production for production's sake."

It is with variations of these axioms that liberal critics confront Mailer. One of the more sophisticated, Richard Gilman, writes: "Mailer is a writer who radically mistrusts art. Its effects are too slow and impalpable, it recommends itself a place in history, but what is more crucial, it tends to become a surrogate for the artist's own life and thus inhibits action and eventually replaces it."[6] Even more explicitly, Gilman says, "Mailer finds it intolerable that thought and action should remain separate, he is the arch-priest of what we might call applied philosophy, or thought as an uppercut, an anathematizer of research and contemplation and an excommunicator of whatever cannot be

handled, wielded and made to score."[7] Edmond Volpe suggests that ". . . Mailer confuses art with politics. His championing of violence, for example, to dramatize the refusal of society to recognize the force of the irrational in the human being is artistically justifiable, but politically irresponsible."[8] Similarly, Christopher Lasch in his study of American radicalism cites Mailer as the apotheosis of a muddle of political and cultural concerns;[9] Richard Hofstadter uses Mailer's work as an example of a cult of sensation that is essentially anti-intellectual.[10] Leslie Fielder puts Mailer in the "hard-boiled" tradition of Hemingway and dismisses him as chronically behind the times.[11] In an explicitly Freudian vein, Ned Polsky suggests that "Mailer confuses the life of action with the life of acting out;"[12] and James Baldwin unhappily concludes that Mailer misunderstands the writer's unique responsibility.[13]

In contradistinction to the fragmentation of experience and the eclecticism of thought that characterize these passages and indeed the whole development of intellectual liberalism after the war, Mailer's work from its beginnings has looked for a position that would unify experience, account for the estrangement of the individual from the social whole, and provide not accommodation to the prevailing order but a method for changing it. Originally influenced by Marxism, Mailer shared with his generation and intellectual

peers the trauma of the exposure of Stalinism. Rather than rushing like them to the defense of liberal democracy, however, he maintained that America itself had planted the seeds of totalitarianism in the Second World War and was cultivating them in the perpetration of the cold war and in preparation of armaments for a hot one.[14] Rooting the dehumanization of individual life in the social and political structure of American society, Mailer nevertheless slowly abandoned the Marxist concepts of class struggle and mass political organization as a basis for effecting change. Looking for an alternate means of resisting what he calls liberal totalitarianism, Mailer found a model in radical existentialism. Its emphasis on the unique, irreducible consciousness of the individual did not run counter to the established preoccupation with personal psychology, but its insistence on the potential ability of every solitary individual to act significantly was suitable to Mailer's opposition to liberal accommodation. Defining his immediate literary function in terms of becoming "consecutively more disruptive, more dangerous and more powerful,"[15] Mailer built his resistance upon the existentialist notions of violence, extreme situation, unlimited liability, and psychopathological and apocalyptic heroism which had also been concretized by the French existentialists in political resistance. Interested

in broadening the base of his opposition as well, Mailer developed these themes in the context of a literature of social engagement: to write is "to reveal the world and particularly to reveal men so that the latter may assume full responsibility before the object which has been thus laid bare."[16] Reflecting upon his own responsibility as a writer, in effect posing himself the question of what would happen if everybody read his work, Mailer set his long term goal as "nothing less than making a revolution in the consciousness of our time."[17] Thus, although he retained a social analysis of American society, Mailer revised his method of confronting it: in the place of collective action he set exemplary action; in place of change in the structure of society, a revolution in consciousness.

Dismissed by liberal thinkers as a species of passé alienation, anti-intellectualism, and misdirected egoism, Mailer's position on the contrary has affinities with a significant modern development: in the context of cold-war politics the attempt to come to terms with the claims of both Marx and Freud in the elaboration of radical existentialism. Here Mailer shares concern with energetic thinkers like Reich, Marcuse, and the early Fromm. It is true that Mailer has extensively revised the tenets of European existentialism and Freudo-Marxism to suit his own peculiar

apprehension of American reality and his own literary purposes; it is equally true that the result has sometimes been bizarre, particularly in the overlay of religious mysticism which Mailer has given his project. What is essential to determine is in what degree and in which ways Mailer's work provides an effective development and expression of an alternative to "liberal totalitarianism," and in what degree and ways it submits to its premises and purposes.

In attempting to answer this question, the method of this paper is to trace the development of Mailer's ideas and literary techniques from their inception in The Naked and the Dead through their elaboration in the novels and essays of the fifties and sixties to what I think is their best achievement in his recent documentary novel, The Armies of the Night; the paper's purpose is to provide a critique of Mailer's work as an alternative to that of the liberal literary establishment. As guidelines for discussion, it is well to keep in mind both the difficulty of maintaining as oppositionist stance of any kind in America in the period in which Mailer writes, and the unremitting demands of social reality at the present moment in history for an end to a manipulative fragmentation of human life.

CHAPTER II

THE EMERGENCE OF THE EXISTENTIALIST HERO: THE NAKED AND THE DEAD TO THE DEER PARK

In a sense, the shift of the setting from the theatre of war in the Pacific to the dingy rooms of an anonymous boarding house in Brooklyn in Mailer's first books, The Naked and the Dead and Barbary Shore,[1] mirrors rather accurately the displacement of Marxist thought from the near centre of American intellectual life to its periphery. Less metaphorically, although the books ostensibly share a theme that is present in all Mailer's writing--totalitarianism in American life--their differences suggest Mailer's movement from a Marxist-influenced social analysis to an increasingly subjectivist view of history and social change. This shift is most clearly seen in the emergence of the "Mailrian" existentialist hero and Mailer as hero.

The Naked and the Dead attempts to portray class struggle and imperialist domination in the context of the Second World War. Whereas many writers in the naturalist tradition of the thirties misread the determination of men's lives by their class as determination by natural forces, Mailer's most effective technique in The Naked and the Dead is to present examples of oppression by natural forces in order to reinforce symbolically both the power relations

in the army that invades Anopopei and the machinations of the authoritarian characters, General Cummings and Sergeant Croft. Thus the storm that destroys the camp and appears to initiate the first exhausting struggle of the men in the reconnaissance platoon follows Cummings' discussions with Hearn about the nature of his power on the island. Similarly, implacable Mount Anaka serves to underscore the depths of Croft's unremitting megalomania.

More specifically, this juxtaposition of social determination and natural determination signifies the attitude whereby most of the men see themselves in relation to things, rather than in relation to other men. After the misery of their submission to Croft, for example, the men remember only the mountain:

> They passed a bend in the island and saw Mount Anaka in the distance. It looked immense. "Boy did we climb that?" Whyman asked.
>
> Some of them scrambled up the side, pointing out the slopes of the mountain to each other, arguing whether they had climbed each particular ridge. They had a startled pride in themselves. "It's a big sonofabitch."
>
> "We did okay as far as we did."
>
> That was the main sentiment. Already they were thinking how they would tell it to their buddies in other platoons. (p. 551)

Implicit in this tendency of the enlisted men--a microcosmic version of the exploited classes in civilian life--to reify their relationships is Mailer's concern with

how the psychology of the mass is created in an authoritarian society, reflects its pattern of dominance, and operates in the interests of the privileged. Although all the enlisted men hate "the army," the weather, and Mount Anaka, only Red Valsen really understands that his interests are opposed to those of the General. To Toglio's "'Gee, the General is a swell guy,'" Red replies, "'He's a crowd pleaser, that's all he is. . . . What the fug business has he got telling us his worries? I got enough of my own'"(p. 83). Red also realizes that patriotism masks both his real relationship with the General and the imperialistic backbone of the war:

> Red slapped his knee. "You're a regular Boy Scout, ain't you, Toglio? You like the flag, huh?"
> Toglio thought of a story he had read once, The Man Without a Country. Red was like the man in that, he decided. "I think some things ain't fit for kidding," he said severely.
> "You want to know something?"
> Toglio knew a crack was coming, but against his better judgment he asked,"What?"
> "The only thing wrong with this Army is it never lost a war."
> Toglio was shocked. "You think we ought to lose this one?"
> Red found himself carried away. "What have I go against the goddam Japs? You think I care if they keep this fugging jungle? What's it to me if Cummings gets another star?" (p. 102)

At the end of the book, Valsen has a brief insight into a solution for the powerless enlisted man: co-operation against the common enemy. Out of the welter of detail and

situation, the essence of the narrative finally emerges as Red, the proletarian or lumpen-proletarian, recognizes the antagonistic structure of social relations and the need for collective resistance, but despairing of the competitiveness and lack of consciousness of his fellow sufferers, finds his only role in individual defiance. His internal monologue at the end of the novel is the clearest illustration:

> You carried it alone as long as you could, and then you weren't strong enough to take it any longer. You kept fighting everything, and everything broke you down, until in the end you were just a little goddam bolt holding on and squealing when the machine went too fast.
>
> He had to depend on other men, he needed other men now, and he didn't know how to go about it. Deep within him were the first nebulae of an idea, but he could not phrase it. If they all stuck together . . .
>
> Aaah, fug. All they knew was to cut each other's throats. There were no answers, there wasn't even any pride a man could have at the end. . . . He coughed once more and spat into his hand, holding it numbly for several seconds before he wiped it surreptitiously on the canvas of his bunk. Let the boat pilot try to wash that out. And he smiled wryly, shamefully, at the satisfaction it gave him. (p. 548)

If these glimmerings of truth fail to take firm root in Valsen's consciousness or to become transformed into organizing activity, if this penetrating perception of the necessity for collective struggle is not only not further elaborated but lost in the translation into a despairing individual act of misdirected defiance, the limitations of Valsen's own experience and abilities are only partly responsible. This reticence in encountering, and ultimate

desertion of, the need and possibilities of a movement signal already in his first novel Mailer's tendency: a skepticism that cannot in the last analysis visualize the mass recognition and seizure of liberating potentiality, the drama of men making their own history collectively and in solidarity.

Mailer's skepticism, however, effectively illuminates the character of liberal intellectualism. Already in The Naked and the Dead we find an enduring aspect of Mailer's work: a major focus on the ineffectuality of liberal intellectuals in confronting the totalitarianism in American life. Intellectually, Lieutenant Hearn understands much beter than Red Valsen the possible consequences of the war. He grasps the gaining momentum of the political right and abhors it, but his analysis is undercut by his fear that his real affinity is with General Cummings and the type he represents. This dual perception, characteristic of bourgeois intellectualism, results in Hearn's attempt to reduce his actions to a question of style: "the only thing that had been important was to let no one in any ultimate issue violate your integrity . . ." (p. 258). In his confrontation with Cummings, however, Hearn finds his integrity violated; and in his dealings with Croft, his good intentions and the "rational dessicated mind" he ascribes to his liberal

friends are no match for Croft's ambition. Mailer treats Lieutenant Hearn's contradictions sympathetically but, through his death, suggests that they are too debilitating to provide an effective resistance to the single-minded authoritarianism represented by Croft and Cummings.

The notion has been advanced by Mailer's critics (and Mailer himself in a later and different frame of mind) that despite his compassionate treatment of Valsen and Hearn, the "natural" heroes of The Naked and the Dead turn out to be Sergeant Croft and General Cummings.[2] This interpretation ignores the context of American domestic authoritarianism and foreign imperialism in which Croft and Cummings are set. It is important to realize as Harris Dienstfrey does that Mailer writes in the first instance of "a war with no chance for heroism and no heroes--only men who suffer more or less";[3] The Naked and the Dead is formally a collective novel with its interest centred in the interaction of conflicting social groups and ideologies, rendered in the specificity of individuals. The burden of opposition to totalitarianism ultimately devolves upon the working class awareness of Red Valsen, although Mailer foresees for Red himself only the capacity to resist its encroachments in individual acts of defiance.

Mailer's development of the role of the conscious individual in authoritarian society is conditioned by his interpretation of the unfolding of the political and economic events that followed the Second World War. Thinking that another war was the inevitable conclusion of the economic organization both of American monopoly capitalism and what he takes to be Russian state capitalism, Mailer felt that the antagonism of the two systems insured a second coming of barbarism. McLeod, the old revolutionary in Barbary Shore, develops this argument:

> "War is permanent and the last argument of the apologist is no better than the first. If one block should vanquish the other, it will find itself almost totally impoverished. It will repeat at even a lower level the necessity to wage war which now besets the sole representative in the world today of state capitalism. It's impoverishment enormous, the winner will find it impossible to set up rational exploitation which could solve his problems. Instead he must exploit as extravagently as he dares not only the vanquished but his former allies as well. His demands must be so great in relation to what is left that a new military situation develops before the last has ceased. The war begins again with a new alignment of forces, and to the accompaniment of famine and civil war, the deterioration continues until we are faced with mankind in barbary." (p. 202)

There are ample indications in the book that Mailer is in substantial agreement with McLeod's analysis. In appraising Mailer's perspective, one should note that the assurance of permanent war and inevitable barbarism constitutes a fetishism of war which impoverishes the reality

described. The prediction of man's unavoidable descent into barbarism obscures the essential differences between just, revolutionary wars and unjust, counter-revolutionary wars. Although Mailer's implication that war is absurd is understandable, even attractive, at a time when so much of our lives is defined in a context of warfare, to obliterate the differences between wars of liberation and wars of oppression, either in their material causes and reults or in their effects on men's minds, is to drain reality of meaning and to trivialize the future. There is little encouragement or satisfaction that one can derive from the suggested course to follow:

> "That there be theorists at such a time is of incalculable importance. The culture of a revolutionary socialist is not created in a day, and not too many of us will be alive. Yet there must be some to participate, for revolutions are the periods of history when individuals count most. It is not a question of a party now, nor recruiting drives, nor attempts to match the propaganda of the blast furnace with the light of our candle. It is the need to study, it is the obligation to influence those few we may, and if some nucleus of us rides out the storm, we shall advance to the front of any revolutionary wave, for we alone shall have the experience and the insight so vital for the period. Then we shall be the only ones capable of occupying the historical stage. (p. 204)

To bury distinctions in the prophecy of an apocalyptic cataclysm is to ignore the urgent needs of millions; to seek a solution in the formation of an intellectual vanguard apart from and above the immediate struggle is to abandon,

not support, the struggle: these are the delusions of a desperate response to a complex reality comprehended only in a highly mystified form.

As in The Naked and the Dead, the necessary posture of resistance is individual, but its agents have a new character. They are, on one hand, members of a vanguard like Lannie and McLeod; on the other, types like Mike Lovett. Unlike Red Valsen who is explicitly defined in terms of his class experience, Lovett, an amnesiac, is Mailer's first treatment of an existentialist hero, thrown into the world without a past, free to elect a project for himself. With only a vague memory of membership in a Trotskyist organization before the war, Lovett in effect makes a purely subjective choice to take on the task of witnessing against the machinations of the American and Soviet bureaucracies, thus conserving the "remnants of socialist culture" until the convulsions of war are over and a new revolutionary period develops (p. 223).

Mailer's choice of Lovett as the hero-narrator of Barbary Shore reflects an important aspect of his post-war thinking--increasing uncertainty about the status of the working class. In Barbary Shore, this problem is reflected in Mailer's portrayal of Guinevere, the representative of the working class, who is married to McLeod, the revolution-

ary theorist. Guinevere is attractive and seductive, as Lovett characterizes her, "a jewel. But set in brass" (p. 15). Bored with the dull and meagre life offered by McLeod, she becomes increasingly concerned with comfort and consequently treacherous. Ultimately she sells out her husband to Hollingsworth, the FBI agent who seduces her with the promise of security and sensation. Whereas in The Naked and the Dead the enlisted men only reflect passively the ideology of the ruling class, Guinevere's symbolic role in Barbary Shore imputes an active part to the working class in the betrayal of the revolution. Responsibility for resisting the forces of barbarism thus falls upon the individual like Lovett who has transcended class determination by a combination of accident and acts of will.

Despite his rejection of the working class as an agent of revolution, however, Lovett is distinguishable from the liberal apologists who, claiming to be realists, espouse the side of monopoly capital against state capital and hope it will win the war which is to come (p. 197). At the same time, Mailer's treatment of Lovett is another example of the impoverishment of reality through simplification. Lovett's perception of political fact reduces the development of "monopoly capitalism" and "state capitalism" to the point where they are equated as examples of two

authoritarian systems, although Russian communism may be permitted a negligible advantage in being a worker's state (however degenerate in terms of Lovett and McLeod's Trotskyist analysis). Consequently, Lovett defines his own choices along a libertarian/authoritarian axis, stripping the systems he treats of their historicity by ignoring their distinct historical development, their differing social and economic organization, and their opposed goals of social and economic development, foreign policy, etc. This tendency to reduce complex social and historical conditions to an exclusively libertarian/authoritarian framework is characteristic of Mailer's subsequent work.

Mailer merely adumbrates the role of the conscious individual in The Naked and the Dead; in Barbary Shore he attempts to define this role more closely in terms of a narrower analysis of economic and political conditions but developed through symbolism and assertion rather than through concrete detail. To give Mailer his due, his analysis of the third world has some validity (pp. 203-204); but in terms of America, the decline of capitalism into global war simply did not materialize in the apocalyptic terms he predicted. The credibility and efficacy of vanguard organization and of Lovett's position depend at best upon the imminence of this apocalyptic war and a socialist revival. When these

are not immediately forthcoming, Mailer's protagonist, cut adrift from the working class, must find new explanations for the impoverishment of life and define for himself new means of resistance outside the perameters of revolutionary politics.

As Michael Lovett is the heir of Red Valsen and Lieutenant Hearn, Sergius O'Shaugnessy, the hero-narrator of The Deer Park,[4] Mailer's next novel after Barbary Shore, is Lovett's counterpart in a world where war and socialism are no longer the main features of the social landscape. At the conclusion of The Deer Park, Sergius attempts to articulate the new concerns of this world:

> Then for a moment in that cold Irish soul of mine, a glimmer of the joy of the flesh came twards me, rare as the eye of the rarest tear of compassion, and we [God and Sergius] laughed together after all, because to have heard that sex was time and time the connection of new circuits was part of the poor odd dialogues which give hope to us noble humans for more than one night. (p. 319)

It is clear that in this perspective, the common and unifying element of social life is no longer found in class solidarity, class antagonism, social and political conditions, but rather in universal, internal, and sexual conditions. In general terms, the external world, susceptible to change, adaptation, manipulation, and control is replaced by a biological, inner world which is essentially given.

Mailer's earlier concern with social justice in broad terms is subsumed in his interest in the psychic and sexual health of the private individual.

Mailer's transition from concern with revolutionary politics to this more than a little obscure psychology of sexuality becomes intelligible when examined in the context of a short story written in 1952, shortly after the popular failure of Barbary Shore, and originally intended as a prologue to a sort of comédie humaine, a series of eight novels of which The Deer Park was to be only one.[5] Sam Slovoda, the central character of "The Man Who Studied Yoga," is a portrait of a middle-aged radical, one-time member of the Communist Party, whose Marxist analysis no longer seems to reflect, or be useful in, the world of social indifference and domestic humdrum in which he lives; for consolation Sam turns to psychoanalysis. The narrator of the story outlines the technique of Sam's psychiatrist, Dr. Sergius:

> Sergius feels that Sam's concern with world affairs has always been spurius. . . . Sam will argue with Sergius but it is very difficult. He will say, "Perhaps you sneer at radicals because it is more comfortable to ignore such ideas. Once you become interested it might introduce certain unpleasant changes in your life."
>
> "Why," says Sergius, "do you feel it so necessary to assume that I am a bourgeois interested only in my own comfort?"
>
> "How can I discuss these things," says Sam, "if you insist that my opinions are the expression of neurotic needs and your opinions are merely dispassionate medical advice?"

> "You are so anxious to defeat me in an argument," Sergius will reply. "Would you admit it is painful to relinquish the sense of importance which intellectual discussion provides you?"
>
> I believe that Sergius has his effect. Sam often has thoughts which would have been repellent to him years ago. . . . It would be nice, Same thinks wishfully, to believe that the source of one's unhappiness comes not from oneself, but from the fault of the boss, or the world, or bad luck. (pp. 152-153)

Mailer is incisive and penetrating in his demonstration of the pacification of Sam by Dr. Sergius in spite of the blatant contradictions of the psychoanalytical method. Implicit in this charactierization of Sam and of his sometime radical friends, however, is the further implication that their kind of political and social consciousness, having been successfully co-opted into social work, progressive schooling for their children, and bad attempts to display their lack of sexual inhibition, is no longer sufficient to resist a massive movement into conformity and compromise in American life. Some other kind of awareness is needed, more subtle than gross social and political analysis which offers no insights into how these insidious pressures can be resisted at the level of the individual. At the end of the story, Sam dwells upon the limitations of his experience: "There is so little he knows, and so much to know. Youth of the depression with its economic terms, what can he know of madness or religion? They are both so alien to him" (p. 172).

Sam's reflections suggest Mailer's new direction which attempts to develop effective resistance to totalitarianism through individual self-realization defined in opposition to a context of mass conformity, manipulation, and daily compromise, and veils the more basic context of war and class antagonism. An alternative to Sam, "a man who seeks to live in such a way as to avoid pain, and succeeds merely in avoiding pleasure" (p. 172), is offered in The Deer Park in Sergius, who makes a principle of seeking pleasure (pp. 12, 318). In place of what Mailer implies has become an ineffectual focus on economics, sociology, and politics, a tentative investigation of psychopathology, religion and, most significantly, sexuality, begins. Whatever the temperamental differences between Sam and Sergius, however, Mailer's interest is no longer in the expression of the external chains that bind men; this interest has been transferred to internal repression that takes the form of psychoneuroses.

Considered schematically, The Deer Park enlarges the environment in which Sam lives into a structural equivalent of broader social implication--the media capital of America, Hollywood. The main repressive elements of this setting are represented in Herman Teppis, an autocratic head of a major motion picture studio; Collie Munshin, a sentimental but unscrupulous "liberal" producer; Charles Eitel, a one-time radical director turned political informer and artistic hack;

Lulu Myers, a narcissistic super-star, who, as Harris Dienstfrey points out, is a descendant of Monina, the neurotic child for whom Guinevere wished a career in Hollywood in Barbary Shore.[7] Ranged against these characters are a trio of outsiders--Sergius O'Shaugnessy, an orphan, now an unemployed flier; Marion Faye, a bastard become pimp; and Elena Esposito, a working-class girl become kept woman; the thematic tension of the novel derives from the hesitant attempts of these characters to resist the seductive, but sick norms of the movie capital and its satellite, Desert d'Or.

The main lines of defense of the three are an exploration of what Mailer is later to call "the extreme imperatives of the self."[8] Elena protects herself from the "squares and snobs" by experimenting in promiscuity and orgy until her sexual curiosity is satisfied. Sergius retain his independence by refusing the temptations of security proferred at different times by Lulu, Tepis, Eitel, and Dorothea O'Faye, ending finally in the most marginal of activities--instructing bullfighting in New York City. Marion Faye, the most conscious of the three, fights the "slobs" by following every thought and impulse to its most extreme conclusion. For him, "'Nobility and vice--they're the same thing. It just depends what direction you're going. You

see, if I ever make it, then I turn around and go the other way. Toward nobility'" (p. 128). In the application of his outlook, Marion encounters death, drugs, violence, mysticism, a variety of sexual perversions, and the idea of a purifying nuclear holocaust (p. 139). Elena recognizes part of the rationale behind Marion's behaviour: he thinks "if he's doing something dirty, that's going to change the world or blow up the world or something of that sort" (p. 264). Behind her crude description and the "hip" character of Marion's activities lie the elements of the existentialist idea of effecting change through exemplary action in extreme situations.

Although development of this idea is a central and favourably treated feature of Mailer's subsequent work, The Deer Park is highly ambivalent in its depiction of the characters who begin to embody it there. There is a deep uncertainty in the book as to whether Elena, Marion, and Sergius are pathetic and helpless victims of a predatory and hypocritical society or conscious rebels who offer hope for and eventual reversal of the prevailing order. The result of this confusion for The Deer Park itself is predictably disastrous aesthetically; the problem is reflected technically in Sergius' role as narrator. Mailer himself realized:

> Now, after three years of living with the book, I could at last admit the style was wrong, that it had been wrong from the time I started, and that I had been

> strangling the life of my novel in a poetic prose which was too self-consciously attractive and formal, false to the life of my narrator who was the voice of my novel and so gave the story its air. He had been a lieutenant in the Air Force, he had been cool enough and hard enough to work his way up from an orphan asylum, and to allow him to write in a style which at its best sounded like Nick Carraway in The Great Gatsby must of course blur his character and leave the book unreal.[9]

Mailer's rewriting of the book, however, did little to clarify Sergius's essential character. The Deer Park is a transitional work for Mailer, and such it reflects all the confusions of passage: its tone is uncertain; its focus shifting.

CHAPTER III

VARIATIONS ON THE EXISTENTIALIST HERO: "THE WHITE NEGRO," THE COLLECTIONS, AN AMERICAN DREAM

Ihab Hassan writes that "the central and controlling image of recent fiction is that of the rebel-victim. He is an actor but also a sufferer."[1] This is a reasonably accurate account of the role of Elena, Sergius, and Marion in The Deer Park. After The Deer Park however, for the ten years between 1956 and 1966, Mailer's project becomes to ascribe to this rebel-victim the most active and contentious mode of behaviour possible in a hostile environment. It is this effort that primarily distinguishes Mailer from the "beat" writers of this period and from other contemporaries such as Salinger, Updike, Baldwin, and Bellow.

The generic description of this kind of rebel-victim, the hipster, is found in Mailer's notorious article, "The White Negro." Species examples are developed in his conception of the existential politician, constructed in the collection, The Presidential Papers;[2] in the variant of the intellectual in An American Dream,[3] and perhaps most significantly, in the role Mailer creates for himself in the manner of Hemingway as "the champion writer of this time"[4] in the collections Advertisements for Myself and Cannibals and Christians.[5]

Part of the motivation that underlies "The White Negro" is, as Jean Malaquais understands, the desire of a frustrated socialist to find an alternative to the theory that the proletariat is the only possible reliable agent of revolutionary change.[6] Mailer's argument is that marginal groups like the American Negro and psychopathological types like the white hipster are equipped by virtue of their daily experience to understand and effectively confront totalitarianism. Mailer admits that the hipster is initially characterized by his desire for limited sexual gratification, but "having converted his unconscious experience into much conscious knowledge, the hipster has shifted the focus of his desire from immediate gratification toward that wider passion for future power which is the mark of civilized man" (p. 317). What will tend to keep the hipster from the reactionary use of this power usually made by other marginal groups--lumpenproletariat in classical Marxist philosophy--is that the hipster potentially understands the dialectical relation between being and becoming, the process of change:

> . . . Hip . . . has almost no interest in viewing human nature, or better, in judging human nature from a set of standards conceived a priori to the experience, standards inherited from the past. Since Hip sees every answer as posing a new alternative, a new question, its emphasis is on complexity rather than on simplicity. . . . (p. 326)

Furthermore, Mailer argues, Hipsters understand the

essential relationship of the individual and society: "Hip sees the context as generally dominating the man, dominating him because his character is less significant than the context in which he must function" (p. 327). Mailer also sees the hipster as ultimately capable of self-discipline (p. 324), and of the realization that for him to be free, everybody must be free (p. 329). Although Mailer admits a potentiality for hipsters to be seduced by "the first truly magnetic leader whose view of mass murder is phrased in a language which reaches their emotions," (p. 328) he concludes:

> It is obviously not very possible to speculate with sharp focus on the future of the hipster. Certain possibilities must be evident, however, and the most central is that the organic growth of Hip depends on whether the Negro emerges as a dominating force in American life. Since the Negro knows more about the ugliness and danger of life than the white, it is probable that if the Negro can win his equality, he will possess a potential superiority, a superiority so feared that the fear itself has become the underground drama of domestic politics. Like all conservative political fear it is the fear of unforseeable consequences, for the Negro's equality would tear a profound shift into the psychology, the sexuality, and the moral imagination of every white alive. (p. 329)

One has only to follow the history of the growth of the Black and White radical-cum-hip movements and their mutual influence, or read Eldridge Cleaver's account of his sexual-political education in Soul on Ice[7] to realize how staggeringly prophetic Mailer has been. In contrast to theoretical purists, Mailer has realized that "the super-

structure of society has attained vast autonomies outside productive relations, psychological undercurrents which often clash with material economic realities . . ." (p. 337).

Mailer's insight into the role of marginal social groups and the influence of cultural superstructure has another facet, however. For example, in his description of the relation between the hipster and his context quoted above, Mailer writes:

> What dominates both character and context is the energy available at the moment of intense context [sic].
> Character being thus seen as perpetually ambivalent and dynamic enters then into an absolute relativity where there are no truths other than the isolated truths of what each observer feels at each instant of his existence. (p. 327)

This is an idea derived from existentialism, articulated more clearly than in The Deer Park. In Fact, as Mailer puts it, the hipster is "the American existentialist" (p. 312). Furthermore, in contrast to French existentialism, the American version is mystical and religious, rather than rational and atheistic (p. 315). The American hipster-existentialist:

> . . . must always advance . . . the very intensity of his private vision--his argument depends from the vision precisely because what was felt in the vision is so extraordinary that no rational argument, no hypothesis of "oceanic feelings" and certainly no skeptical reductions can explain away what has become for him the reality more real than the reality of closely reasoned logic. (p.316)

Mailer's explorations after "The White Negro" tend often into an investigation of the isolated activities of these hip existential heroes rather than in the direction suggested by his cultural and poltical analysis.

The most vigorous and convincing fictional portrayal of the hip existentialist hero is found in the resurrection of Sergius O'Shaugnessy in a fragment from another of Mailer's projected comédies humaines, finally published as a short story, "The Time of Her Time."[9] Here Sergius is found pursuing his activities as a bullfighting instructor and seducing a variety of Village girls in a variety of sophisticated ways. The story succeeds admirably as a revelation of the life-style and obsessions of a part of a generation which lives on the margins of conventional university intellectualism and psychoanalytical adjustment and bohemia.

Rather than follow the development of the individual awareness of this generation into the radical political consciousness he prophesied in "The White Negro," Mailer's interest in existential consciousness leads him to look for its counterpart in the context of American politics. Fascinated by the idea of a conjunction of existential heroism and power, Mailer concludes in The Presidential Papers that what America needs to pull it out of the regulation, con-

formity, false security, and cold war rhetoric of the Eisenhower era, is a political hero:

> . . . a hero central to his time, a man whose personality might suggest contradictions and mysteries which could reach into the alienated circuits of the underground, because only a hero can capture the secret imagination of a people, and so be good for the vitality of his nation; a hero embodies the fantasy and so allows each private mind the liberty to consider its fantasy and find a way to grow.[10] (pp. 41-42)

Mailer finds the potentiality for such heroism in President Kennedy.[11]

Although he was later uncomfortable with his ascription of heroic possibilities to Kennedy, highly critical of his role in Cuba and skeptical of his legislative record, what is consistent is Mailer's penchant for seeing American political situations and possiblity for change in terms of personality. The Presidential Papers is devoted to the idea that Kennedy might be educated into proper heroism. More blatantly, Mailer argues a solution for the spreading influence of the FBI in the choice of its chief administrator: "If its leader was not heroic as a man, the FBI would proceed to exist less, it would lose existence because it would be in open competition from the other organs in government. But with a heroic leader it would deserve to prosper."[12] Similarly he argues that "the mystery of Vietnam revolves around the mystery of Lyndon Johnson's personality."[13]

Related to Mailer's idea of the role of individual heroism or lack of it is the role that violence plays in his political hypotheses. In "The White Negro," he writes:

> Hip, which would return us to ourselves, at no matter what price in individual violence is the affirmation of the barbarian, for it requires a primitive passion about human nature to believe that individual acts of violence are always to be preferred to the collective violence of the state; it takes literal faith in the creative possibilites of the human being to envision acts of violence as the catharsis which prepares growth. (p. 328)

Mailer's thesis resembles some of the formulations of Wilhelm Reich in that violence is seen as an inescapable heritage of totalitarianism which cannot be avoided by appeal to liberal ethics;[14] after the existentialists, that its irrationalism must be confronted. In terms of totalitarianism at home and totalitarianisms fighting it out in the jungles of Vietnam, Mailer thinks it preferable that men be violent in some fashion that the best man may win, rather than resort to the legalism of capital punishment[15] or the inventions of technology.[16] In terms of his development, as Paul Krassner notes, there has been a significant change in Mailer's attitude towards violence: "In The Naked and the Dead, there was a theme about the futility of violence on a grand scale; . . . in "The White Negro" there's almost a justification of violence, at least on the personal level."[17] Mailer admits that "the ideas I had

about violence changed 180 degrees over those years."[18] His point is that there is a significant difference between human violence, large and abstract, and human violence which can act as a way of enlarging consciousness.

Mailer's most extreme consideration of like ideas is found in his novel, An American Dream. In it, a television personality and professor of existential psychology, Stephen Rojack, is pitted against the combined powers of monopoly capitalism modulated through high society, the police force, the Mafia, with undercurrents of nepotistic politics, cold-war espionage, and incest: together, an interlocking maze of the elements of American totalitarianism.

Deadened to the point of suicide by his relationship with his wife Deborah, who is implicated in most of the above, Rojack kills her and finds his violent act has opened a new area of experience: "And in the midst of that Oriental splendor of landscape, I felt the lost touch of her finger on my shoulder, radiating some faint but ineradicable pulse of detestation into the new grace" (p. 32). This state of grace, fortified by an exceptional sexual relationship with a night-club singer, significantly named Cherry, allows Rojack to withstand the police, the Mafia, Cherry's old lover and his wife's father, multimillionaire industrialist Barney Kelly, the seducer of his own daughter. At the climax

of the narrative, Rojack by an extreme act of will redeems his murder and makes himself worthy of Cherry by facing death himself, walking the parapet of Kelly's terrace at the top of the Waldorf-Astoria.

An American Dream, more clearly than any other of his writings, shows the logical conclusion of Mailer's existentialist thought. The impulse followed to its extremity, the confrontation with death--action and personality--become a function of the unconditioned will which expresses itself in a choice between good and evil; for Rojack the choice between Cherry and the incestuous pair, Barney and Deborah. Mailer even ascribes the imagery of good and evil to the women: Deborah is dark, Cherry, fair. In a sense, the struggle Mailer originally saw in terms of class antagonism has become a mysterious, Manichean battle between good and evil, which, like Rojack's fate in An American Dream, is tentative and uncertain. At the same time, monopoly capitalism has become for Mailer no more than the context of this struggle between good and evil, no longer the actual enemy.

The roles that Mailer creates for himself as secret candidate for the presidency, overt adviser to the president, and "the champion writer of this time" are to be understood in the context of his development of resistance to totalitarianism through the power of exemplary action in extreme

situation and by uniting power and mystery to existential consciousness. Such a position requires him to be a writer-hero. The programme begins for Mailer with the recognition that:

> . . . even if one dulled one's talent in the punishment of becoming a man, it was more important to be a man than a very good writer, that probably I could not become a very good writer unless I learned first how to keep my nerve, and what is more difficult, learned how to find more of it.[19]

This is perhaps part of the motivation behind Mailer's much publicized violent actions outside his literary activity--a desire to test his nerve against the fabric of totalitarian society.

Secondly, Mailer's programme requires that his literary work itself reflect a continuous position with regard to American realities, with the result, as he himself admits, that "the writings always have a touch of the grandiose, even the megalomaniacal: the reason may be that the writings are parts of a continuing and more or less comprehensive vision of existence into which everything must fit."[20] Finally, in order to achieve the status in the public eye that precedes power artistic and power temporal, Mailer must advertise himself:

> An author's personality can help or hurt the attention readers give to his books, and it is sometimes fatal to one's talent not to have a public with a clear public recognition of one's size. The way to save your work and reach more readers is to advertise yourself, steal your own favorite page out of Hemingway's unwritten

Notes From Papa on How the Working Novelist Can Get Ahead.[21]

Thus Mailer's inflating of his reputation, his insistence on the value of his own work, his assurance of the wider relevance of his acts, literary and otherwise--a posture so baffling or infuriating to the more unctuous modesty of the liberal literary establishment that they are given to crying commercialization and vulgarization--is a consistent part of his sustained attack on liberal totalitarianism. It is a posture that is a function of the axiom that Mailer has reiterated constantly: "History, finally, is not the sum of people's sentiments, but of people's actions";[22] a capacity, as Norman Podhoretz has pointed out, "for seeing himself as a battleground for history--a capacity that is usually associated with the French and that American writers are never thought to have";[23] what Irving Howe calls with respect to Mailer's work, the theme of "the felt burden of history."[24]

There are, nevertheless, serious limitations to Mailer's position of a different order from the accusations of commercialism and vulgarization. As I have tried to point out in my description of Mailer's development up to _An American Dream_, although he has never ceased to see himself, and put his characters, in a context of resistance to

American liberal totalitarianism, his conception of the historical role of the individual has become increasingly subjectivized and personalized as it has moved from class consciousness to existentialist consciousness. The consequences are an increasingly distorted picture of American reality in his literary work, and increasing solipsism in his political stance.

It is true that Mailer's Americanized version of existentialism, like the existentialist movement in general, has a tendency to correct the economist determinism of the vulgar Marxism perpetrated under Stalin and retained by marginal groups like the American Communist Party; as Mailer justly points out:

> If we socialists, radicals, anarchists, rebels, nihilists, and dissenters are to become more than dried twigs of an old family tree . . . it can at least be recognized . . . that an unjust society wreaks cruel if subtle imprisonments and destructions of personal energy, wreaks them not only upon an individual class or race, but upon the being of each of us.[25]

It is also true that this kind of perception has led Mailer to an awareness of the role of marginal groups and the cultural superstructure in the shaping and changing of political realities. Furthermore, during the period in which Mailer developed his existentialist notions, the lack of opportunity for radical political solutions left little

alternative but to attempt to get by on style and personal integrity--a solution preferable at least to liberal accommodation.

In the final analysis, however, as Georg Lukács points out, emphasis on the psychopathology of the isolated individual which is a basis of existentialist thought begins as "a moral protest against capitalism,"[26] but ends as "an immutable condition humaine,"[27] implicitly glorifying the isolation and neurosis capitalist totalitarianism creates. To present life under capitalism as distorted and destructive as Mailer does in accurate:

> But to present psychopathology as a way of escape from this distortion is itself a distortion. We are invited to measure one type of distortion against another and arrive, necessarily, at universal distortion. There is no principle to set against the general pattern, no standard by which the petty bourgeois and the psychopathological can be seen in their social contexts. And these tendencies, far from being relativized with time, become even more absolute. Distortion becomes the normal condition of human existence; the proper study, the formative principle, of art and literature.[28]

It is this lack of standard that vitiates An American Dream and leads Mailer on a wild chase after an abstract good and evil, spirit and soul, in articles written around that time.[29] Moreover, Lukács' description of the retreat into psychopathology as a "universal distortion" has a logical counterpart in the existentialist idea of the absolute relativity of personality and action which Mailer emphasizes in "The

White Negro." There, the significance of personality and action is a matter of totally arbitrary and subjective judgment, divorced from any objective social standard.

Ihab Hassan writes that "it is precisely the relativity of human actions that makes the discrete choices of the existentialist hero universal."[30] If the universally exemplary actions Mailer implies for himself and his heroes are understood in the context of a psychopathology that represents a false norm and a false absolute relativity, his existentialist heroism is reduced to good intention and folie de grandeur.

Like Sartre in his development from the heroism of Orestes in The Flies to the debunking of heroism in The Condemned of Altona, it seems to me that Mailer for a short period sees existentialist heroism as solipsistic and irrelevant, or at least puts heroism to new purposes. The most obvious indication of this is his ability to treat himself as hero with a kind of cominc irony in The Armies of the Night. Mailer's new awareness of himself has been hastened by the political and social consciousness of the sixties which is quickly being translated into collective action by militant students, non-passive hippies, and the Black power movement. At least, Mailer's own subjectivity and a lifestyle of personal defiance, confronted by a growing radical

movement, has generated a source of tension in his recent documentary novels, The Armies of the Night and Miami and the Siege of Chicago.[31]

CHAPTER IV

THE EXISTENTIALIST HERO TRANSFORMED: *WHY ARE WE IN VIETNAM?*, *THE ARMIES OF THE NIGHT*, *MIAMI AND THE SIEGE OF CHICAGO*

If *Why Are We in Vietnam?*,[1] Mailer's next novel after *An American Dream*, seems to represent the apotheosis of the hip existentialist hero, rather than his decline, it nevertheless offers some interesting insights into Mailer's methods and interests in *The Armies of the Night* and *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*.

In fact, *Why Are We in Vietnam?* does offer the apotheosis of the existentialist hero: D.J., the Texan adolescent-genius, is a variation of Nietzsche's artist-god who acknowledges only an artist's meaning behind everything that happens. As D. J. points out about the events he narrates in *Why Are We in Vietnam?*: "The fact of the matter is that you're uptight with a mystery, me, and this mystery can't be solved because I'm the centre of it and I don't comprehend, not necessarily; I could be traducing myself" (p. 22). . . . "The book might be a tape recording, right? A tape recording of my brain in the deep of its mysterious unwindings" (p. 23). . . . "Or maybe I'm Spade and writing like a Shade . . . what if I'm not the white George Hamilton rich dear son of Dallas. . . ?" (p. 26)

The idea that the artist like D. J. creates the significance of events begins as an extension of the existentialist axiom that actions are absolutely relative, hence meaningless unless interpreted in terms of the subject which perceives them. Much of modern literature reflects the influence of this conviction of absolute relativity; a central feature of the modern novel is the giving up of objective omniscience in a narrator as unrealistic, since what is knowable and significant is reflected by limited subjectivity. Actions and events in the fictional world are filtered through the consciousness of a character who is set inside the frame of action itself, thus making him a credible authority and the truly objective norm of the book. From here it is only a matter of emphasis until action and event become subordinated to the primacy of the activity of their processing and recording by a perceiving consciousness. As Jack Richardson puts it:

> Indeed, again and again readers have discovered that, at its best, the modern novel often deals with the adventure of its own making and that, while celebrating itself that its real hero is its creator, whose passion and agony we, for convenience, simply call his style.[2]

In Why Are We in Vietnam?, this description applies. What is central are not the activities of the bear-hunt or D. J. and Tex's escapades in the bush, but D. J.'s method of recording them. If his style resembles nothing so much as

the tones of underground newspaper journalism, the book succeeds by a species of implication. Its impressionistic account of technology gone mad in Alaska in the hands of corporation executives closely tied to government and the military is a correlative of the same phenomenon in Vietnam expressed in similar tones in underground newspapers. To quote Richardson again:

> Taken as a collection of social insights into corporate America Why Are We in Vietnam? in an outlandish caricature; taken as a narrative of the American spirit coming upon its pagan god at the end of a man's hunting trip, it is simple and familiar stuff; but considered as the recreation by means of language of the notions Mailer has about America, it is brilliant.[3]

It is, however, an extremely attenuated expression of the complexities and composition of the forces that put Americans like D. J. in Vietnam. As in An American Dream, any non-subjective principle by which to assess the narrative is missing. In this sense, Why Are We in Vietnam? is typical of much of modern fiction where the accent shifts from what one sees to how one sees it or who sees it. The super-subjectivity of the artist-hero ends in the limited significance of literary allegory and the dessicated cleverness of parody and pastiche. Content is subsumed in formal whimsy and the word replaces the deed. John Barth's Giles Goat-Boy is perhaps the ne plus ultra of this tendency in American fiction.

What is significant about Why Are We in Vietnam? in terms of Mailer's development is that it marks at least a re-emergence of interest in topical political issues in their social complexity after a period of flirtation with the abstractions of good and evil, if not the achievement of an effective expression of the issue itself. Even more significantly, where the artist-hero reflects an inseparable union of events and their significance in Why Are We in Vietnam?, in The Armies of the Night Mailer transforms this figure to achieve exactly the opposite effect: distance between event and its interpretation. The role of the artist-hero in its most general function in The Armies of the Night shares something with the Brechtian view of the theatre--particularly in its most demystifying effect: insistence on the reality of the book being what it is, namely an art-form that mediates between the subjectivity of the artist and objective reality, and not an illusion of the events it describes or of the narrator's consciousness. An art-form so conceived, when it treats a socially-conditioned phenomenon, frees it from the familiarity which insulates it from the grasp of the audience.

This demystifying effect--the alienation concept as it is formulated with respect to Brechtian theatre--derives from a variety of complex, interlocking, and intriguing roles that Mailer adopts for himself in The Armies of the Night. The most central is the role he assumes as both

novelist and documentor of the march on the Pentagon by 50,000 radical and pacifist demonstrators in Washington in October, 1967 to protest the war in Vietnam. The two roles are reflected in the two-part structure of the book: "history as a novel," and "the novel as history." Both these methods of description--the first from the point of view of Mailer's personal participation in the march, the other from the point of view of post-facto information--were originally motivated by a practical problem which had radical aesthetic consequences: a need to save the demonstration from distortion at the hands of the mass media. Mailer writes of his account:

> The method is then exposed. The mass media which surrounded the March on the Pentagon created a forest of inaccuracy which would blind the efforts of the historian; our novelist has provided us with the possibility, no even the instrument to view our facts and conceivably to study them in that field of light a labor of lens grinding has produced (pp. 245-246)

Mailer's initial lens-grinding is simply the juxtaposition of two accounts of the same event, underlining the fact that descriptions of an event take radically different forms; by implication, the monolithic authority that the mass media assumes is challenged. Mailer's interspersal of media accounts of events in his own narrative reinforces awareness that documentary and novel alike are highly selective in their treatment of materials and colour them according to their interests. Mailer, moreover, insists on a reversal

of the ordinary understanding of novelistic and documentary methods. He explains:

> However, the first book can be, in a formal sense, nothing but a personal history which while written as a novel was to the best of the author's memory scrupulous to facts, and therefore a document; whereas the second, while dutiful to all newspaper accounts, eyewitness reports, and historic inductions available, while even obedient to a general style of historical writing, . . . is finally now to be disclosed as some sort of a collective novel. . . . (p. 284)

Mailer's role as a participant-hero-novelist in the first section of The Armies of the Night, "On the Steps of the Pentagon,"--his account of his own participation in the march--furthers the demystification of the event in a variety of obvious and subtle ways. The most obvious is simply derived from the unorthodoxy of reporting a public event as a personal history. Within this section, the intermingling of detail in the manner of documentary and highly subjective commentary on the detail after the manner of a narrator or centre of consciousness in the novel heightens the reader's awareness of the difference between fact and interpretation of fact. Mailer, of course, has used this technique before in his reportage of the Democratic and Republican conventions of 1960 and 1964, and more notably in his account of the first Patterson-Liston fight, "Ten Thousand Words a Minute".[4] The difference between his purpose in that impressionistic reportage and "On the Steps of

the Pentagon" is that, in the former, Mailer uses the events as a foil to advertise the significance of personality; in the latter, he manipulates the legend of his own personal egotism to advertise the significance of events. By making himself the hero of his own account of the march on the Pentagon, Mailer inflates his own importance until it eventually negates itself. "This egotism is so vast and lucid that it becomes a kind of modesty . . . ."[5] As Leon Trotsky points out, "The universalization of one's ego breaks down to some extent the limits of one's individuality and brings one closer to the collectivity . . . ."[6] Mailer capitalizes on his image of vanity and eccentricity in such a way that the protest, courage, and resistance of the demonstrators as a whole is projected.

Mailer's radical treatment of the subject of "On the Steps of the Pentagon" is generated by the nature of the subject itself. As Mailer points out, "The March on the Pentagon was an ambiguous event whose essential value or absurdity may not be established for ten or twenty years, or indeed ever." (p. 67) He characterizes it as "that historic moment when a mass of the citizenry--not much more than a mob--marched on a bastion which symbolized the military might of the Republic, marching not to capture it, but to wound it symbolically; the force defending that bastion reacted as if a symbolic would could prove as mortal as any

other combative rent" (p. 68). Such a subject, Mailer realizes, might prove bathetic if treated with undue solemnity of overt political partisanship. Consequently, Mailer selects himself as the "comic hero" of his account, so that the misproportions of the event tend to be assumed by himself and the serious sociological, political and moral elements of the event emerge obliquely but distinctly.

Another aspect of the comic and alienating effect of the role Mailer chooses for himself is achieved by his technique of referring to himself in the third person. The method is, of course, not unknown. Caesar used it in his history of the Gallic Wars; Sean O'Casey writes his autobiographies in this way. Mailer himself has had occasion to refer to himself as "one" in "Ten Thousand Words a Minute"; the technique is also suggested in the pieces where Mailer interviews himself--"The Metaphysics of the Belly" is one example.[7] Its use in "On the Steps of the Pentagon" richly complicates the narrative. By ascribing himself with a double consciousness, Mailer firstly concretizes the picture of himself as a man with a double image--his own version and that created by the press with inevitable distortions; thus he manages another stab at the unreliability of the mass-media. Secondly, the third person narration provides a subtle hint of Caesar-like megalomania, another tactic in

Mailer's strategy of presenting himself in a way that ultimately deflects light on the march itself. Thirdly, the bifurcation allows Mailer two points of view through which he can simultaneously present both the political strengths and limitations of the march on the Pentagon without excessively denigrating or exaggerating its importance. Most subtly, the third person narration clearly separates Mailer's participation in the event, his consciousness of it, and his expression of it, creating distance between these functions. The active, dialectical relationship between subject and object is maintained, while that confusion of subject and object, their fusion into an indistinguishable conglomerate, which marks the narration of Why Are We in Vietnam?, is challenged. Consequently, the reader's traditional confidence in the illusion of objectivity that third person narration creates is questioned, making the reader aware of the art of the book and de-anesthetizing him as to the significance of events it presents.

The Armies of the Night offers an interesting aesthetic solution to the problems of the engaged radical writer. It provides something of the solution of the documentary writers and naturalist novels of the thirties in its focus on topical situation, its sociological density, and its consciousness of the forces of totalitarianism in America,

without falling into stereotyped party writing, cliché, and irrelevant naturalistic detail. It offers something of the Brechtian concern with the awareness of the audience: the need to break down conditioned responses to events by destroying the set patterns of aesthetic response. The Armies of the Night also shares many of the artistic premises of the existentialist movement. As Herbert Marcuse writes:

> Existentialism plays with every affirmation until it shows forth as negation, qualifies every statement until it turns into its opposite, extends every position to absurdity, makes liberty into compulsion and compulsion into liberty, choice into necessity and necessity into choice, passes from philosophy into Belles Lettres and vice versa, mixes ontology and sexology, etc. The heavy seriousness of Hegel and Heidegger is translated into artistic play.[8]

It is this quality of "artistic play" that characterizes the existential quality of The Armies of the Night. Mailer, moreover, extends the technique to his treatment of himself as artist-hero so that the most debilitating feature of existentialism, the hero's posture of seeing his act in universally representative terms, is stripped of its solipsistic and pretentious character. The germs of a collective movement allow Mailer to abandon the hero he has cultivated in the period from Barbary Shore to An American Dream as having outlived his usefulness; Mailer writes his first collective novel since The Naked and the Dead.

The Armies of the Night also debunks the literary

prejudice against journalism by showing that documentary journalism has the creative potentiality that is usually considered the exclusive property of literature. (D. J., incidentally, prohesies the significance of documentary in Why Are We in Vietnam? [p. 23].) Unlike some in the French tradition of engaged writers (Robbe-Grillet for example), Mailer does not make the mistake of mechanical materialism that assumes that only those qualities are real into which the observer does not enter, and thus confines the writer to the verisimilitude of transmitting only events of which he has been the witness. Mailer advertises the potentiality of the American resistance movement with a hint of ritual, the effect of which is distinct from the excessive subjectivity based on sympathy and rapport between hero and reader so despised by (especially) the new French writers. As Jack Richardson notes, "Mailer has created a fresh entente between the personal mode and the public record . . . . Simply, he has enlarged the territories of language, something the very best writers have always done for us."[9] Mailer's great contribution in The Armies of the Night is that he has chronicled the beginnings of the resistance movement so that it provides a history for the movement itself that is also accessible to a larger public. The radicalization of middle-class youth, their emergence as a potential agent of social change, is a start-

ling phenomenon. The times that produce such a phenomenon demand new aesthetic forms. Mailer appears to have found one.

In contrast to the tone of celebration that marks The Armies of the Night, Mailer's next book, Miami and the Siege of Chicago, is a sombre and darker work. Mailer recognizes in The Armies of the Night that the organization of the resistance movement in America is rudimentary and its future a series of struggles which could easily last twenty years. There, a small aspect of Mailer's tactics is to explore his own relationship as a middle-aged radical to this movement whose history is only beginning. The recognition of his expendability, a part of his elaborate play on his role as comic hero, is an aspect of his realization of contradictory elements; his ironic portrayal of himself is contrasted with romantic evocation of a potential revolution. However, in Miami and the Siege of Chicago, an account of the Republican and Democratic conventions of 1968, Mailer's concern with his future in a long-term revolutionary struggle is the main focus of attention. His experience with the stability and pervasiveness of traditional American free-enterprise values and Wasp moral rectitude at the Republican convention in Miami and with the overt repressiveness of the police in Chicago have an appreciable effect on Mailer's optimism generated by the resistance in Washington. Although

the two books use the same basic techniques of third-person narration, personal documentation of a public event, and so forth, there is an unmistakable difference in tone. Jack Richardson pinpoints the difference:

> Whereas in The Armies of the Night Mailer was in every sense a participant, in its sequel he is more detached, more wary, as tentative in his verbal manner as he is in his role of Old Guard Revolutionary. Between the quiet inexorability of Miami and the porcine hysteria of Chicago, there seemed less and less room for aesthetic sportiveness, and, as the pressure of these events increased. one felt Mailer's constriction of spirit, a slow sentence-by-sentence admission that there were forces of obliteration uncowered by even the most intricate artiface.[10]

The most obvious example of Mailer's loss of "aesthetic sportiveness" is found in his choice of detail, some of which is dull and trivial. There are long lists of the names of Miami Beach hotels (p. 13), counts of the nose-shapes of the Nixon cheerleaders (p. 30), and of the number of Republican delegates who wear glasses (p. 35). Whereas in The Armies of the Night each of Mailer's detailed descriptions and catalogues aids in the apprehension of the whole, much of Mailer's observation in Miami and the Siege of Chicago fails to add up to pattern and significance. On one hand, Mailer's catalogues are appropriate to the monotonous ritual of the conventions, their lack of meaning an "objective correlative" of the absurdity of the conventions themselves; on the other, they are suggestive of a new passivity on Mailer's part in the face of this intractable experience.

Mailer's use of his own personality in Miami and the Siege of Chicago serves little of the complex mirroring function that it does in The Armies of the Night. Rather, Mailer creates a static picture of a man uncertain of his own role in the events he witnesses. Mailer has minimal contact with the same group of students, hippies, and radical, militant youth protesting the Democratic convention, for whom he saw potential in Washington. His single attempt to organize these protesters and disillusioned Democratic delegates ends in failure; he avoids all violent confrontation between demonstrators and police. Speaking of an imminent attack by the police in the park where the demonstrators are gathered, Mailer explains his prudence:

> For what was one to do when the attack came? Would one leave when asked--small honor there--why wait to offer that modest obedience. And to stay--to what end?--to protest being ejected from the park, to take tear gas in the face, have one's head cracked? He could not make the essential connection between that and Vietnam. If the war were on already, if this piece of ground were essential to the support of other pieces of ground . . . but this ridiculous barricade, this symbolic contest with real bloody heads--he simply did not know what he thought. (p. 148)

It is not Mailer's disinclination to become involved in a violent situation that is disturbing here, but rather the character of his rationalization. Given a writer who has insisted on locating the source of war in Vietnam in the repressiveness of the American social, economic, and political order, and on stressing the interrelatedness of

social phenomena, it comes as a strange surprise that he cannot see the connection between domestic and foreign repression. Strange as well is his lack of understanding of how the resistance movement seeks to dramatize the roots of repression in Vietnam in the political machinery at home; that even symbolic protest provokes real brutality in local authority.

There is, of course, an explanation behind Mailer's confusion and equivocation: not merely the fear of immediate physical danger, although that is real enough, but the fear that the era augured by Chicago is one that challenges not totalitarianism abstractly conceived, but one's daily pattern of living. Mailer recognizes explicitly this deep-seated "conservative fear" in himself:

> . . . he looked into his reluctance to lose even the America he had had, that insane warmongering technological land with its smog, its superhighways, its profound dishonesty. . . . a profound part of him . . . detested the thought of seeing his American society--evil, absurd, touching, pathetic, sickening, comic, full of novelistic marrow--disappear now in the nihilistic maw of a national disorder. The Yippies might yet disrupt the land--or worse, since they would not really have the power to do that, might serve as a pretext to bring in totalitarian phalanxes of law and order. (pp. 186-187)

Mailer's concern that the strengthening of the political left strengthens the political right is a common one, but one that commonly forgets that the increased organization and

militancy of the left is the only alternative to "creeping" conservatism. The corallary of this process of polarization is cost in comfort, life. Mailer's account of his fears, nevertheless, his sense of fading engagement, his loss of where his loyalties belong, is sincere, acute, genuinely problematic and, most significantly, stated without equivocation of the issue: the necessity of choosing between the old order and the new. His apparent solution in Chicago--a retesting of his nerve by risking arrest--offers no significant answer to the dilemma for old, young, or middle-age radicals.

Since the publication of Miami and the Siege of Chicago, Mailer's activities have been well publicized. His attempt to enter establishment politics by presenting himself as a Democratic candidate for mayor of New York City represents an old ambition--to unite existential consciousness to power. His act must be interpreted in light of his experience in Chicago as well--as an attempt to counteract his impotence there and to provide an alternative to the extra-parliamentarian activities of radical politics and the chaos it augurs in his analysis. Perhaps his rejection at the polls will confirm Mailer's recognition in The Armies of the Night that there is no stop-gap measure with which to by-pass twenty years of struggle for the political left.

Certainly his rejection at the polls should disabuse him either of the idea of the viability of old-party politics or the compatibility of a radical posture with his life-style. Obviously, his radicalism can not be nurtured in the folds of the Democratic party.

Mailer's other much-advertised project is a forthcoming account of the Apollo 11 flight to the moon. The deep ambiguities of that event will surely tax his artistic talent and suggest his political directions.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Mailer's position in Miami and the Siege of Chicago signals a moving away from the solid ground he established aesthetically and politically in The Armies of the Night. The shift in emphasis from collective resistance to the fears and frustrations of the individual offers a parallel to the change in emphasis from the collective and class character of resistance in The Naked and the Dead to the defiance of the individual existentialist hero who emerges in the books that follow it. This pattern raises some essential questions about the basic orientation of Mailer's work.

In The Naked and the Dead and The Armies of the Night, the stress is on the left-wing ethic of what is basically an existentialist posture. In the intervening books, the conservative epistemology and ontology of existentialism gains dominance, as reality is reflected from the point of view of the subjective categories of sexuality, mysticism, and psychopathology, rather than from those of class struggle, social structure, and economic and political conditions.

Mailer's ideas about sexuality, like Reich's, begin in the correct realization that authoritarian repression is successful because it roots itself in the individual character

structure, particularly in sexual attitudes and practices. It is this realization that partially motivates his skepticism about the ability of the working class as a whole to effect revolution and which defines his attitude towards Guinevere in Barbary Shore and later Sam Slovoda in "The Man Who Studied Yoga." It explains his reliance on the existentialist heroes such as Sergius O'Shaugnessy, Marion Faye, and Stephen Rojack, whose capabilities for good orgasm undermine the repressive hold of the prevailing order upon them. Unlike Reich, however, or like Reich in his later work, Mailer de-emphasizes the social determination of sexuality and neurosis and transforms them into independent categories of experience that transcend class and history.

Similarly, Mailer begins with a legitimate revulsion against the mechanical materialism of vulgar Marxism and the ultra-linear, positivistic rational logic of liberal technocrats. At its best, this reaction reveals itself in a philosophical, humanist recoil; The Deer Park is Mailer's most significant novel written in this vein. At its worst, Mailer's reaction degenerates into a religious mysticism that idealizes socially determined aspects of personality as manifestations of good and evil; An American Dream represents this tendency.

In general, Mailer's existentialism, although it focuses alternately on sexuality, psychopathology, and

mysticism, is consistent in its emphasis on the primacy of individual subjectivity; the existentialist hero unquestionably occupies the central place in his work. Intuition is the true source of his hero's knowledge and the source of his ability to act against a repressive system. Positing the primacy of intuition allows Mailer and his heroes to recognize the reality of the body without really admitting a reality that goes beyond individual consciousness. Ultimately, such a way of perceiving the world confronts consciousness with a chaos of things (and men) which only individual subjectivity can articulate and objectify. The arbitrary quality of this position has been pointed out before. It should be added that it is exclusive as well: only some have the secret intuition that allows them knowledge and the capacity to act. Politically, the consequence of this subjectivism is that Mailer's interest is focused in eccentric, depolticized actions (An American Dream) or deflected away even from personal action to the function of perception itself (Why Are We in Vietnam?).

The pattern of Mailer's work suggests that he finds a role for the collective only in periods of social transition: after the Second World War and at the beginnings of the radical movement in the sixties. After The Naked and the Dead, Mailer increasingly degenerates into subjectivist

individualism; after The Armies of the Night, once again he no longer seems able to retain any revolutionary perspective on collective realities. Even in these books, moreover, Mailer seems unable to project a wholly positive view of collective resistance. His portrayal of Red Valsen, a proletarian hero, implies only a limited opposition to authoritarianism through isolated individual defiance. In addition, Valsen suggests something of the anti-heroic, pessimistic quality of existentialism that is the complement of its bravado. Likewise, in The Armies of the Night, the individual (Mailer) in his multiple roles tends to usurp the focus from the collective drama being documented. The technical virtuosity of the book is double edged and frequently reinforces this negative tendency. Although the irony with which Mailer treats himself in relationship to events in The Armies of the Night works primarily as an effective alienating device, at times it becomes sufficiently indiscriminate that the technique backfires: irony becomes a way of protecting Mailer rather than of revealing his subject.

These factors encourage the suspicion that Mailer cannot sustain a left-wing ethic in periods other than those of social flux where the alignment of social and political forces is unclear. When the context of struggle is more closely defined, Mailer tends to retreat gradually but

perceptibly behind a protective but illusory individualism that despairs of a collective movement or fears it. Certainly in Miami and the Siege of Chicago, he uses his role as artist-journalist-historian as protection against the activities of the movement, and his artistic needs as a rationalization of a desire to conserve the America he knows. Ironically the practice for which Richard Gilman attacked Mailer--his reluctance to accept the artistic life as a surrogate to a life of action--appears to be reversing itself. Similarly, Edmund Volpe's criticism that Mailer champions violence no longer seems accurate.

At the beginning of this paper, Mailer's posture was set against that of the American liberal intellectual establishment of the fifties. It is useful now to set it against the context of political and social conditions of the sixties. America is producing a generation of young intellectuals whose high level of material satisfaction, less authoritarian upbringing, and high level of education have led to large expectations and an ability to articulate them. It is a group that is able to see through the competitive values, ideological mystifications and repressive mores of a neo-capitalistic society oriented to the profit of the few rather than the self-realization of the many. Greater affluence and freedom from material insecurity have not led to satisfaction, complacency, or accommodation to

the middle class, but rather to a concern for the qualitative character of human needs, instead of simply their quantitative character; to demands for participation, meaning, and control in education and at work, not only for increased volumes of consumer goods. Once the problem of scarcity has been largely solved, the problem becomes one of the kind and content of the life to be produced. As Andre Gorz points out:

> A contradiction breaks out between the power, the responsibility, and the mastery of the worker in productive praxis and his powerlessness and servitude in relation to capital. . . . once a certain level of culture has been reached, the need for autonomy, the need to develop one's abilities freely and to give purpose to one's life is experienced with the same intensity as an unsatisfied physiological necessity.[1]

In addition to the cultural, intellectual, and sexual repressiveness that neo-capitalism has perpetrated domestically, the young intellectuals believe that neo-capitalism in its exploitative function abroad contributes to the life of violence, hunger, disease, and ignorance endured by two-thirds of the world's population. The result has been increasing commitment to political and social revolt, and most significantly, a revolt that appears to be expanding its traditionally limited appeal to include young workers, white and blue collared, large numbers of students, hippies, yippies, and particularly young blacks. The contradictions of neo-capitalism are deeply experienced by a large part of a generation increasingly militant and organized.

Mailer is probably fairly accurate when he writes in The Armies of the Night that he has had as much influence on this generation as any writer in his; in Miami and the Siege of Chicago that he has had some influence on many of the best black writers. What is in question is Mailer's ability to maintain his influence given the parameters of his commitment. From that articulate and committed body of young radicals, for example, which does not limit its protest against the war in Vietnam to call for "peace" and the withdrawal of American troops, but identifies with the struggle of the Vietnamese, Mailer's squeamishness about being situated near a group carrying a flag of the National Liberation Front (Armies of the Night, p. 148) would earn nothing but contempt. Some of this generation are Marxists who no longer brood upon the errors of Stalin and have bypassed the very framework of thought that defined itself in relation to East European Communism; rather they look to Sartre and Marcuse, Mao and Che, for the guidelines of revolutionary theory and practice. Mailer's deep suspicion of communism, in spite of his acknowledgment of its influence on his thinking and political stance, would strike them as paranoid and irrelevant. Radical youth admires personal sincerity; the kind of candid confession Mailer makes in Miami and the Siege of Chicago about his fears in the face of potential revolutionary change would be welcomed for its

clear exposition of the difficult but necessary choice between the old order and the new. What young radicals reserve for their ridicule and contempt is the inability or unwillingness to act consistently, continuously, and collectively for substantive social change on the basis of the contradictions perceived. Mailer's concern with his comfort, his fear of chaos, his flirtation with establishment politics, his individualism and subjectivism, suggest that he is unwilling to make the choice he himself has outlined. In times that are increasingly defined by intensifying confrontation between monopoly capitalism and international revolution, Mailer's hesitancy will be interpreted as support for the former, whether directly or indirectly, for there is no third position that provides an answer for the hundreds of millions of people affected by the drive of monopoly capital in the United States and elsewhere. In the final analysis, Mailer reduces the crisis in America to a "plague" which, by implication, has attacked a basically healthy organism. On the contrary, the radical youth to whom he would wish to appeal is becoming more and more aware that the social and economic structure of imperialist America is itself the plague.

Not only does Mailer's mystified way of seeing American realities increasingly disqualify him from influencing the generation which is now his subject, but his long-standing penchant for seeing America as the victim of the

growth of technology, a theme that permeates much of his recent work, eliminates him from any serious role in the construction of a new society. Mailer's mistrust of science and technology has its basis in his desire to preserve a distinctively human element in a mechanized world. What he fails to realize is that science and technology are uniquely human products, the source and expression of man's ability to control and manipulate his environment and free himself from the necessities of physical labour. Mailer's tendency is that he ascribes the particularly capitalistic form of technological society to the technological facts themselves. The fact that science and technology themselves are not destructive, dehumanizing, or evil disappears in his portrayal of a world where technology is used for destructive, dehumanizing and evil purposes. In general, Mailer's tendency to see technology as a determining, universal feature of modern, social life without rooting it clearly in a specifically capitalist form of production implicitly reinforces the ideology of the prevailing order which seeks to perpetrate its own form as supra-historical, natural, necessary, and hence not susceptible to change. In particular, Mailer's rejection of certain specific products of technology--including birth control devices, and synthetic drugs, is more than eccentric; it subordinates the real needs of people for freedom from biological determination to an abstract and dealistic notion of natural health and spontaneous activity.

In the context of Mailer's fear of technology and science, I am reminded of Bertolt Brecht's play, Galileo, an excerpt from which prefaces this essay. In Galileo, dramatic tension and irony is generated from the conflict between the need for heroism in order to advance science against ignorance and superstition and the scientist's wish to deprive nature and society of their ability to make life tragic and heroism necessary. An analogous situation seems to me to be present in America today. There is a need for a collective and individual heroism to combat the power of political repression and social ignorance, in the hope that heroism, self-sacrifice, martyrdom will become as anachronistic as the system which has produced a need for them. Mailer's work is centred in an attempt to develop a heroism suitable for our age. He has, however, allowed the concept to become uprooted from its social determinations and to transcend them, so that individual heroism becomes an abstract value unrelated to social conditions, collective needs, or the ultimate goal of making heroism obsolete.

In comparison to many of his contemporaries, and especially in the context of the fifties when he developed the main aspects of his position, Mailer's work has not lacked courage, nerve, and a generally progressive orientation. Yet his perspective seems inadequate to the challenges and

requirements of the present moment; in terms of the new alignments of forces to emerge from the social and political developments in the years ahead, indications are that Mailer's position will take on increasingly reactionary colourations.

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[12]Reflections on Hip," *Advertisements for Myself*, by Norman Mailer (New York, 1959), p. 339.

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[6]Advertisements for Myself, pp. 145-173. Subsequent references in the text are to this edition.

[7]Dienstfrey, p. 427.

[8]"The White Negro-- Superficial Reflections on the Hipster," Advertisements for Myself, p. 313. Subsequent references in the text are to this edition.

[9]"Fourth Advertisement for Myself: The Last Draft of The Deer Park," Advertisements for Myself, pp. 218-219.

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[7](New York, 1968). See especially "Notes of a Native Son," pp. 97-111.

[8]"Reflections on Hip: Mailer's Reply," Advertisements for Myself, p. 337.

[9]Advertisements for Myself, pp. 440-465. Subsequent references in the text are to this edition.

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[18]"An Impolite Interview," p. 136.

[19]"Postscript to the Fourth Advertisement for Myself," Advertisements for Myself, p. 247.

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[22]"The Village Voice: Columns Four to Seventeen," Advertisements for Myself, p. 280. See also Barbary Shore, p. 117; "The Man Who Studied Yoga," p. 152; "Last Advertisement for Myself Before the Way Out," p. 439.

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[27]Lukács, p. 31.

[28]Lukács, p. 33.

[29]See particularly "The Political Economy of Time," Cannibals and Christians, pp. 312-375.

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[7]O'Brien, p. 16.

[8]Cannibals and Christians, pp. 262-299.

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