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His first, iconic manifestation had something of Chaplin to it: he was the little guy, just over the border of the respectable. His circular ears, like two minimal cents, bespeak the smallest economic unit, the overlookable democratic man. His name has passed into the language as a byword for the small, the weak—a "Mickey Mouse operation" means an undercapitalized company or minor surgery. Children of my generation—wearing our Mickey Mouse watches, prying pennies from our Mickey Mouse piggy banks (I won one in a third-grade spelling bee, my first intellectual triumph), following his running combat with Pegleg Pete in the daily funnies, going to the local movie-house movies every Saturday afternoon and cheering when his smiling visage burst onto the screen to introduce a cartoon—felt Mickey was one of us, a bridge to the adult world of which Donald Duck was, for all of his childish sailor suit, an irascible, tyrannical member.

Mickey didn't seek trouble, and he didn't complain; instead he rolled with the punches, and surprised himself as much as us when, as in *Brave Little Tailor*, he showed warrior resourcefulness and won, once again, a blushing kiss from dear, all but identical, Minnie. His minimal, decent nature meant that he would ultimately yield, in the Disney animated cartoons, the starring role to combative, sputtering Donald Duck and even to the awkward Goofy with all his "gawshes" and his Gary-Cooper–like gawkiness.

Except for an occasional comeback like the Sorcerer's Apprentice episode of *Fantasia*, Mickey was finished as a star by 1940. But, as with Marilyn Monroe when her career was over, his life as an icon gathered strength. The America that is not symbolized by that imperial Yankee Uncle Sam is symbolized by Mickey Mouse. He is America as it feels to itself—plucky, put-on, inventive, resilient, good-natured, game.

discipline. Tracking, camouflage, and survival were his particular loves; and he took good care to fail his Bren gun course, so he could retake the ten weeks' training.

The Army took precedence over orthodox romance. True, he married Irene Tate in April 1955, but that was an affair of the pocket as much as the heart; the couple now qualified for a service allowance. The bride was permitted to collect the money, but had orders to save it and live on what she earned at the mill.

Neilson was no believer in the delegation of power in marriage. Irene got her white wedding but no guests, no reception. The groom, who wore battledress, was on forty-eight hours' compassionate leave; and the bride's mother and twin sister knew nothing about the wedding for another four months.

Irene's mother was never forgiven for striking Neilson, when she found out he had been breaking into her house while she was out shopping. She had thought it was burglars.

So the young couple embarked on their shared life alone.

It was a good marriage. He was a bastard to her but the marriage was a happy one. Everybody has their tiffs. She wasn't bad tempered, rather a happy person. She was a good mother and the best wife you could ask for. He did love her.

Neilson also loved his daughter Kathryn, born in 1960, but as she grew up he started to express his emotion by including her in his obsessions. He had for her the fierce tenderness of a sergeant-major towards a sloppy recruit.

The household at Grangefield Road came more and more to resemble a military unit. Neilson looked every inch a part-time paratrooper. The neighbours called him "Castro" because he always wore battledress, and marched down the street. He even bought a jeep.

You could see Mrs. Neilson in the back yard, dressed in jacket and trousers, helping to mix concrete or move heavy equipment. Kathryn was required to wear her hair short. Her

can be imagined; and the more imagination we have the better we shall know this. The really important difference is that the medieval universe, while unimaginably large, was also unambiguously finite. And one unexpected result of this is to make the smallness of Earth more vividly felt. In our universe she is small, no doubt; but so are the galaxies, so is everything—and so what? But in theirs there was an absolute standard of comparison. The furthest sphere, Dante's *maggior corpo* is, quite simply and finally, the largest object in existence. The word 'small' as applied to Earth thus takes on a far more absolute significance. Again, because the medieval universe is finite, it has a shape, the perfect spherical shape, containing within itself an ordered variety. Hence to look out on the night sky with modern eyes is like looking out over a sea that fades away into mist, or looking about one in a trackless forest—trees forever and no horizon. To look up at the towering medieval universe is much more like looking at a great building. The 'space' of modern astronomy may arouse terror, or bewilderment or vague reverie; the spheres of the old present us with an object in which the mind can rest, overwhelming in its greatness but satisfying in its harmony. That is the sense in which our universe is romantic, and theirs was classical.

This explains why all sense of the pathless, the baffling, and the utterly alien—all agoraphobia—is so markedly absent from medieval poetry when it leads us, as so often, into the sky. Dante, whose theme might have been expected to invite it, never strikes that note. The meanest modern writer of science-fiction can, in that department,

popular work, the *South English Legendary*: better evidence than any learned production could be for the Model as it existed in the imagination of ordinary people. We are there told that if a man could travel upwards at the rate of 'forty mile and yet som del mo' a day, he still would not have reached the *Stellatum* ('the highest heven that ye alday seeth') in 8000 years.[1]

These facts are in themselves curiosities of mediocre interest. They become valuable only in so far as they enable us to enter more fully into the consciousness of our ancestors by realising how such a universe must have affected those who believed in it. The recipe for such realisation is not the study of books. You must go out on a starry night and walk about for half an hour trying to see the sky in terms of the old cosmology. Remember that you now have an absolute Up and Down. The Earth is really the centre, really the lowest place; movement to it from whatever direction is downward movement. As a modern, you located the stars at a great distance. For distance you must now substitute that very special, and far less abstract, sort of distance which we call height; height, which speaks immediately to our muscles and nerves. The Medieval Model is vertiginous. And the fact that the height of the stars in the medieval astronomy is very small compared with their distance in the modern, will turn out not to have the kind of importance you anticipated. For thought and imagination, ten million miles and a thousand million are much the same. Both can be conceived (that is, we can do sums with both) and neither

[1] Ed. C. d'Evelyn, A. J. Mill (E.E.T.S., 1956), vol. II, p. 418.

not only against the Nazis, but for a better Russia, without terror, without Gulag.

With victory it was widely felt that the titanic effort, the enormous sacrifice of life, could not have been in vain. In Pasternak's words, 'so many sacrifices cannot result in nothing' and 'a presage of freedom was in the air'. The mood of the country, as Andrei Sakharov recalls, was that 'we all believed – or at least hoped – that the postwar world would be decent and humane. How could it be otherwise?' The war, he says, had restored the nation's 'pride and dignity'. But the hope of social and political peace in Russia, and a cooperative international community, was a false one. In the event, says Sakharov, 'As the illusion faded, the nation disintegrated into separate atoms and faded away.'

In Sochi Stalin got, as it were, his second wind. If he had to some extent slowed down, he was still possessed by the old hatreds and suspicions, the vision of enemies everywhere. The mood of the country, the longings for a freer and fuller life, were for him not a guide to future policy, but an intolerable challenge to his power and his principles.

Returning to Moscow, he took steps not merely to restore but to consolidate his system. In some ways it was to become even more brutal. The labour camps received a flood of new inmates. Those who had served their time and been released were soon to be rearrested. The maximum sentence was increased from ten years to twenty-five. A new category of 'strict regime' labour camps came in where the inmates served in chains and without blankets. The exiled nations, but also the mass of individual exiles, were forbidden to return on pain of a twenty-year sentence. In the secret-police laboratories research was to go on into poisons, mind-bending drugs, assassination weapons. Important prisoners were to be tortured with red-hot irons in special trains circling Moscow.

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The economy was in a desperate state. Agriculture had been disrupted, with a devastating famine in the Ukraine and elsewhere. When Kosygin reported the incidence of dystrophy in the areas affected, Stalin was angry, and for some time addressed him ironically as 'Brother Dystrophic'.

Stalin cared as little as ever for the fate of ordinary people. He is reported (not only by Khrushchev but also by his Minister of Finance,

subject. If it is taken as essence or as existence (as Being-such or Being-there), if it is taken as copula or as position of existence, or, more profoundly and more originally, if it is taken as the unitary focal point of all these possibilities, then the Being of the existent does not belong to the realm of predication, because it is already implied in all predication in general, and makes predication possible. And it makes every synthetic or analytic judgment possible. It is beyond genre and categories, transcendental in the scholastic sense, before scholasticism had made of the transcendental a supreme and infinite existent, God himself. It must be a singular truism that, through which is sought, in the most profound way, as the most concrete thought of all thoughts, the common root of essence and existence, without which no judgment, no language would be possible, and which every concept can only presuppose, by dissimulating it.[59] But if "ontology" is not a truism, or at least a truism among others, and if the strange difference between Being and the existent has a meaning, or is meaning, can one speak of the "priority" of Being in relation to the existent? An important question, here, for it is this alleged "priority" which, for Levinas, would enslave ethics to "ontology."

There can be an order of priority only between two determined things, two existents. Being, since it is nothing outside the existent, a theme which Levinas had commented upon so well previously, could in no way *precede* the existent, whether in time, or in dignity, etc. Nothing is more clear, as concerns this, in Heidegger's thought. Henceforth, one cannot legitimately speak of the "subordination" of the existent to Being, or, for example, of the ethical relation to the ontological relation. To precomprehend or explicate the implicit relation of Being to the existent[60] is not to submit the existent (for example, someone) to Being in a violent fashion. Being is but the Being-of this existent, and does not exist outside it as a foreign power, or as a hostile or neutral impersonal element. The neutrality so often denounced by Levinas can only be the characteristic of an undetermined existent, of an anonymous ontic power, of a conceptual generality, or of a principle. Now, Being is not a principle, is not a principial existent, an archia which would permit Levinas to insert the face of a faceless tyrant under the name of Being. The thought of Being (of the existent) is radically foreign to the search for a principle, or even for a root (although

Psychology of the satanic

W. H. AUDEN from *The enchafèd flood or the romantic iconography of the sea* 1951 [Taking off from Kiekegaard on despair and the demonic, and talking about Claggart, the devil figure in Melville's *Billy Budd*]

...paradoxes are raised by the demonic, the religious passion in reverse. For the demonic must be moved solely by pride, just as the religious must be moved solely by faith and love. Absolute pride cannot be manifested aesthetically because it tolerates no weakness except itself which thinks of itself as absolute strength.... The Devil, therefore, cannot himself be lustful, gluttonous, avaricious, envious, slothful, or angry, for his pride will not allow him to be anything less than proud. He can only pretend in disguise to be any of these without actually feeling them; he can only 'act' them. His acts must appear to be arbitrary and quite motiveless. No accurate aesthetic portrayal, therefore, is possible; Iago has to be given some motive, yet if the motive is convincing, he ceases to be demonic.

You might follow up 'the religious passion in reverse' in Angel Clare's role in Hardy's novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*: see David Lodge *Language of fiction* (1966) II iv. See also J. C. Flugel *Man, morals and society: a psychoanalytical study* 1945 Pelican, especially ch. 11 on 'The need for punishment'; and Ernest Jones *On the nightmare* 1931.

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF A THEORY OF IMPETUS

It is one of the paradoxes of the whole story with which we have to deal that the most sensational step leading to the scientific revolution in astronomy was taken long before the discovery of the telescope—even long before the Danish astronomer, Tycho Brahe, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, had shown the great improvement that it was still possible to achieve in observations made with the naked eye. When William Harvey in England opened up new paths for physiology by his study of the action of the heart, he alluded once or twice to his use of a magnifying glass, but he carried out his revolutionary work before any serviceable kind of microscope had become available. With regard to the transformation of the science of mechanics, it is remarkable to what an extent even Galileo discusses the ordinary phenomena of everyday life, conjectures what would happen if a stone were thrown from the mast of a moving ship, or plays with pellets on inclined planes in a manner that had long been customary. In fact, we shall find that in both celestial and terrestrial physics —which hold the strategic place in the whole movement— change is brought about, not by new observations or additional evidence in the first instance, but by transpositions that were taking place inside the minds of the scientists themselves. In this connection it is not irrelevant to note that, of all forms of mental activity, the most difficult to induce even in the minds of the young, who may be presumed not to have lost their flexibility, is the art of handling the same bundle of data as before, but placing them in a new system of relations with one another by giving them a different framework, all of which virtually means putting on a different kind of thinking-cap for the moment. It is easy to teach anybody a new fact about

Barbarians

The name comes from *ba-ba* (cf. modern American *yawp*): what foreign languages sounded like in Greek ears. This raises the question of how far barbarism (and barbarity?) is something we attribute to aliens just because they are alien; and how far there actually are successive waves of barbarism breaking civilization down, and then perhaps reinvigorating it? Milton's barbarians are the ancestors of all NW European peoples. The issue lies below what we feel about 'immigrants'.

The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, contains an introduction to 'barbaric' art; and see a book which deals with a specific culture, e.g. Henry Bradley *The Goths: from the earliest times to the end of the Gothic dominion in Spain* 1888 Story of the Nations.

EDWARD GIBBON *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire* 1776–87
ch. 38 'General observations on the fall of the Roman Empire in the west'

The Romans were ignorant of the extent of their danger and the number of their enemies. Beyond the Rhine and Danube the northern countries of Europe and Asia were filled with innumerable tribes of hunters and shepherds, poor, voracious, and turbulent; bold in arms, and impatient to ravish the fruits of industry. The barbarian world was agitated by the rapid impulse of war; and the peace of Gaul or Italy was shaken by the distant revolutions of China. The Huns, who fled before a victorious enemy, directed their march towards the West; and the torrent was swelled by the gradual accession of captives and allies. The flying tribes who yielded to the Huns assumed in *their* turn the spirit of conquest; the endless column of barbarians pressed on the Roman empire with accumulated weight... Such formidable emigrations no longer issue from the North... The reign of independent barbarism is now contracted to a narrow span... Yet this apparent security should not tempt us to forget that new enemies and unknown dangers may *possibly* arise from some obscure people, scarcely visible in the map of the world. The Arabs or Saracens, who spread their conquests from India to Spain, had languished in poverty and contempt till Mahomet breathed into those savage bodies the soul of enthusiasm.