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## Austro-American Reflections: Making the Writings of Ann Tizia Leitich Accessible to English-Speaking Audiences

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Austro-American Reflections: Making the Writings of Ann Tizia Leitch Accessible to  
English-Speaking Audiences

Stephen A. Simon

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

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## ABSTRACT

### Austro-American Reflections: Making the Writings of Ann Tizia Leitich Accessible to English-Speaking Audiences

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Ann Tizia Leitich wrote about America to a Viennese audience as a foreign correspondent with the unique and personal perspective of an immigrant to the United States. Leitich differentiates herself from other Europeans who reported on America in her day by telling of the life of the average working American. In so doing, Leitich uses her work as a foreign correspondent to create a new identity for Austria between the World Wars. Leitich uses America in the 1920's and 1930's as a cultural mirror in which the new Republic of Austria can see itself. Leitich's perspective of America is not only useful to the German-speaking audiences of her time, but also sheds light on America in the interwar period to readers of all backgrounds. Unfortunately, the influence of Leitich's journalism is currently limited to German-speaking audiences. Included are 31 translations of Leitich's articles for the benefit of English-speaking audiences to assist in further analysis of implications of her work.

Keywords: Ann Tizia Leitich, Austro-American Relations, First Republic of Austria, Journalism, Great Depression, Foreign Correspondence

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## I. Introduction

In the January 29, 1924 edition of Vienna's premiere Liberal newspaper, the *Neue Freie Presse*, there was an article describing the life of women in America. The author was foreign correspondent and Vienna native Ann Tizia Leitich. Leitich observed the interaction between men and women in America and how it contrasted from her own experiences in Austria. She reports:

From the window of a villa in an elegant suburb of Chicago I saw a friend of the house, a well-known doctor, carrying a stack of serving platters over the pristine gravel path to his car. The matter was a simple one: his wife had invited the ladies in her club to *Lunch* and borrowed twenty platters from her friend. Since carrying heavy loads is no matter for a maid, the man of the house was entrusted with the transport. The lady of the house watched from window with me and asked me why I was smiling. In response to my very careful explanation she said: "Well, we would not like to exchange our men for yours!" I had to admit that she was right, because she would be the only one to lose out in the deal. ("The Life of Women in America," 31)

Why is it that the American women would lose out if they had European men? What was it about the husband's actions that led Leitich to draw such conclusions? Why would an Austrian audience even care about the men and women of America? At the time of the article's publication, America was an economic leader in the world. Austria, conversely, was struggling to survive in its shrunken state after World War I. Much of what was formerly Austria, including Bohemia, Moravia, and Yugoslavia was now

composed of independent ethnic states<sup>1</sup>. Ann Tizia Leitich wrote to Austrians who still remembered having lived in a much larger and different Austria. She immigrated to America in 1921 and wrote this article in the second year of her tenure as a part-time foreign correspondent. She actually was the maid in the story she related above. In order to sustain herself and explore America, she worked at several more menial jobs before and during her time as a foreign correspondent. Much of Leitich's reporting and perspective stem directly from her own experiences of working everyday jobs throughout the United States<sup>2</sup>.

Even though many of Leitich's essays are now available on-line on the pages of the archived *Neue Freie Presse* as a part of the Austrian National Library's ANNO Project<sup>3</sup>, these articles are in German, in Fraktur script, and embedded in the context of the newspapers in which they appeared. This form of archival information is only valuable to those who speak German and can read Fraktur font. Leitich's articles offer first-hand experiences of America from an immigrant in the early 20th century. I argue that her journalism is accessible and relevant to American readers and those interested in America and American culture between the two world wars. It cannot be expected that all of those interested in what Leitich had to say would be fluent in German and could read Fraktur script. This thesis is comprised of distinct sections. In the first section, I will argue that Ann Tizia Leitich's articles about America are, on one level, a discussion of Austrian identity. To contextualize this topic, I will first review what has already been written concerning Leitich and her journalistic career to date. I will

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix D for a list of works on the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

<sup>2</sup> See Leitich's articles: "Don Quixotes of the Silver Screen," "Hunting for a 'Job' in New York," "The Life of Women in America," and "Weekend."

<sup>3</sup> See <http://anno.onb.ac.at/> for a detailed catalogue of the digital archives of Austrian newspapers included *Neue Freie Presse*.

subsequently describe the historical and cultural conditions in Austria preceding Leitich's emigration and during her time as a foreign correspondent. I will then explore how the German fascination with America and Americanism at the time make Leitich's articles relevant to her contemporary, German-speaking audience. Lastly, I will demonstrate the aspects of American life that Leitich use to create her view of a unique Austrian identity in the critical decades between the world wars. Through this analysis, I will demonstrate that Leitich's view of this new Austrian identity is that of a democratic people with a wealth of cultural history that Austrians should know and share with the world.

The second section consists of 31 translations of Leitich's articles that I have selected from throughout her journalistic career. These articles are examples of Leitich's unique perspective as a highly educated European working menial, every day jobs in America. I have prefaced each translation with a short cultural historical introduction. The majority of these articles are from the *Neue Freie Presse*, with others from popular German newspapers as described in their introductions. The translations include revisions based on the commentary and suggestions of my thesis advisor, Dr. Rob McFarland. The translations follow each other in chronological order by the date of their original publication. By making these articles available in English, I hope to present Ann Tizia Leitich to a broader readership so that they too can draw their own conclusions on her journalistic works.

## II. Review of Literature

Scholarly and popular reception of the works of Ann Tizia Leitich has been focused on her biography, novels, and her later cultural and historical works about Austria<sup>4</sup>. Three recent works have addressed Leitich's journalistic work about America. In her 2004 thesis titled, "Ann Tizia Leitich: New Voice, New Woman Packaging America for Vienna," Brooke Marie Wright approaches Leitich's work through the lens of gender. Wright shows how Leitich's writings were influential in defining the new woman during the period between the two world wars. Wright's particular focus was to show how "Leitich's articles would address both men and women to refute the material European version of the American new woman and replace it with a deeper analysis of the American woman" (33). Wright's thesis argues that Leitich remained aloof from the extreme views on gender roles in America and Europe by relating her own real world experiences.

Shortly after Wright finished her thesis, Emma Leigh Boone wrote an article about Leitich in the *Sophie Journal*, a journal focusing on early female German authors. She published her article in 2005 under the title, "International America: Analyzing Cultural Influence Based on the Voice of Ann Tizia Leitich, a 20th Century Austrian Woman". Boone's article shows how Leitich's collection of *Neue Freie Presse* articles entitled, *America, du hast es besser* acted to encourage America's and Austria's mutual influence through international communication. Boone shows how Leitich acknowledges her own deeply traditional Austrian culture while trying to bring the focus of her fellow countrymen to the present and the future. Boone writes:

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A for Leitich's works novels about America, Appendix B for her biographical novels, and Appendix C for her cultural historical works about Vienna.

Leitich shows that she is looking towards a new way of thinking by attesting that in America there is no past; there is only present and future. Humanity has no tethers binding them to an ancient era. In America, culture is defined by the now—by people becoming who and what they want to be, regardless of class, heritage, and the situation into which they are born. (3)

Boone's article shows how Leitich endorses the theories of Henry Ford and American capitalists in helping a country reach new economic heights (11). Boone further states that America does not stand alone in the position of "teacher". Austria has much to teach America, as well. Boone writes that, "the influence of each of these nations was two-sided and essential" (13).

In 2006, Dr. Rob McFarland published an article on a public rebuttal that Leitich published in the *Neue Freie Presse* and the cultural debate upon which the rebuttal is based. In 2006, in *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, McFarland published an article titled, "Migration as Mediation: *Neue Freie Presse* American Correspondent Ann Tizia Leitich and Stefan Zweig's 'Die Monotonisierung der Welt'." Shortly after Austrian intellectual, Stefan Zweig, had written a scathing article on the negative influence of America's consumer culture on Europe, Ann Tizia Leitich wrote a rebuttal. McFarland focuses on how Leitich's role as an immigrant qualified her for a true critique of America and Americanism, as opposed to the perspective of a mere visiting intellectual such as Zweig. McFarland explains Leitich's argumentative point of view: "Not everyone who has travelled to the United States has performed the same kind of migration. Like many European visitors, [Leitich] personally... moved almost instantly from the shadows of Europe's castles and churches to a fully new landscape" (250). McFarland shows how

Leitich's writings reveal her perspective as a true immigrant and therefore qualified commentator on the state of affairs between America and Austria, while providing the cultural-historical basis for the debate between Leitich and Zweig.

Wright, Boone, and McFarland used certain specific articles that Leitich wrote so that each could drive home their respective arguments on defining womanhood, fostering international communication, and accurately reporting to Europe about America. I expand on the work of all three in different way. I take the understanding presented in Wright's work on Leitich's view of the new woman and show how it Leitich uses the American gender roles of her time as a new starting point for Austrian gender roles. I agree with Boone's assertion that the influence of Austria and America was mutual, but I concentrate on how Leitich chooses uses that mutual influence to create her own view of America and Austria's roles. While McFarland uses cultural historical artifacts such as contemporary advertisements in the *Neue Freie Presse* to prove his argument, I relate Leitich's arguments to the writings of Oswald Spengler concerning the struggle between culture and civilization. I differ from their writings in stating that Leitich uses her descriptions of America and American life to form her view of a distinctly new identity for Austria. I will show how Leitich uses America as a constructed other to which Austria can compare and contrast itself. Additionally, my translations will make Leitich's writings accessible to a wider audience, thus enabling them to study her articles and draw their own conclusions.

### III. Biography

As a member of Vienna's educated middle class and as an emigrant to the United States, Ann Tizia Leitch had a unique viewpoint for her project of intercultural journalism. Two weeks before she would achieve full-pension status, Leitch resigned from her post as a certified history teacher to lead a group of women who intended to work as domestic servants in Chicago. Well-educated and cultured, Ann Tizia Leitch enjoyed a rich academic and aesthetic education in Vienna's upper-middle class Sixth District. Leitch was privileged from birth to be part of the Viennese bourgeoisie. The term "bourgeoisie" with its adjective "bourgeois" is French, often being associated with the German terms *Bürgertum* and *bürgerlich* and the English term middle class. The original French term meant a "town dweller, especially one who possessed some special status or privileges" (Seigel 1). In his work, *The Middlemost and the Milltowns*, Dr. Brian Lewis defines his use of the bourgeoisie as "merchants, manufacturers, professionals, substantial retailers, and their families—people who exercised the most power locally" (1). Leitch is considered to be part of the bourgeoisie because her family had means, education, and capital to which not all Austrians had access. As she admits in her own diary, Leitch was an avid reader of the Viennese feuilletonists in liberal papers such as the *Neue Freie Presse*<sup>5</sup> and, accordingly, distinctly aware of the philosophical and political discourses of her time (Leitch Diary Entry 1). The *Neue Freie Presse* was itself a bourgeois, liberal newspaper. As stated on the current website of its successor, called *Die Presse*, it is a paper that represents bourgeois-liberal views at

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<sup>5</sup> The leading liberal newspaper in the Austrian Empire thanks in great part to the contributions of leftist intellectuals such as Karl Emil Franzos, Eduard Hanslick, Theodor Hertzka, Theodor Herzl, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Felix Salten, Alice Schalek, Arthur Schnitzler, Berta von Suttner and Stefan Zweig. Originally published under the title *Die Presse* from 1848-1864 and then again from 1946 to the present, it was printed under the name *Neue Freie Presse* from 1864-1939.

a sophisticated level, independent from political parties (“Die Presse”-Blattlinie).

Leitich was raised in an environment of educated discourse conducted via publications in such newspapers as the *Neue Freie Presse*. She was therefore familiar with this style of presenting arguments and counterarguments through print journalism.

*Neue Freie Presse* was not the only source of bourgeois culture that Leitich had available to her in Vienna. Vienna was referred to as “Red Vienna” due to the liberal, socialist culture that predominated throughout most of the time in which Leitich wrote her articles. Vienna was not only a city, but a city-state in which the Social Democratic Workers’ Party (SDAP) held the majority from 1919 until 1934. The Social Democrats quickly introduced several reforms during this time, such as the eight-hour work day and unemployment benefits, while providing unprecedented amounts of public housing. In his 1991 work entitled “Red Vienna Experiment in Working-Class Culture 1919-1934,” University of Vienna Professor Helmut Gruber describes the role of the SDAP in reforming daily life in Vienna. He states that the early years of party control of Vienna were full of idealism that, “translated into practical measures... meant educating workers, improving their environment, shaping their behavior, and turning them into conscious and self-confident agents” (6). When it came to education, Gruber explains that the SDAP emphasized cultural enrichment in their educational goals. He states that SDAP leaders believed the working class would find cultural enrichment, “in the books of the great socialist teachers as well as the classics of German philosophy” (84). Leitich was a teacher certified by the city of Vienna who had been raised with the great German literature and philosophy that Red Vienna was encouraged. Leitich was living in Red Vienna as a middle-class citizen in a city that was protecting her comfortable, bourgeois lifestyle. But what led her to leave Vienna behind?

Well bred, well read, and gainfully employed, Ann Tizia Leitich had a nervous breakdown in 1921. She left her homeland to live her life, as she put it, according to her own skull<sup>6</sup>. Leitich arrived in Boston Harbor via the *Zeeland* on February 21, 1921, as the leader of a group of Austrian women seeking employment as domestic servants in the America. For the remainder of 1921, she worked as a maid and a governess in Chicago. In 1922, Leitich moved from Chicago to De Moines to work at the Equitable Life Insurance Company. It is during this time that on April 18, 1922, Ann Tizia Leitich applied to become a full citizen of the United States of America in Polk County, Iowa. By September 16th, 1922, Leitich moved to New York City to seek employment<sup>7</sup>. On August 2nd, 1923, she published her first article in the *Neue Freie Presse*, entitled “Hunting for a Job in New York. A letter to a friend of the crown who is obsessed with America.” In her debut article as a foreign correspondent, Leitich explains how her own authorial perspective is unique and valuable among the many publications about America filling newsstands and bookstores in Europe. Leitich had read of the experiences of other Europeans who received grand receptions with a chauffeur and a room at the Biltmore (8). Quite to the contrary, Leitich had arrived as one of droves of immigrants seeking employment and a new existence in America. She describes the gross contrast between a personal reception at an airport with the process she underwent as a regular European immigrant arriving by sea:

The promiscuity of Ellis Island that is almost unbearable for a cultured European. After days of waiting, my brains racked by the idea of

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<sup>6</sup> As stated in a letter found in the Ann Tizia Leitich Teilnachlass in the Vienna City Library, dated November 22, 1922: “Ich bin nicht drüben geblieben, weil ich nicht bleiben konnte... ich habe mein Leben gelebt nach meinem eigenen Schädel!”

<sup>7</sup> This section of biographical information is drawn from Dr. Rob McFarland's unpublished manuscript under the working title, *Red Vienna, White Socialism and the Blues: Ann Tizia Leitich's Amerika*.

potentially being sent back, I was shuffled through unavoidable mass treatments of delousing and bathing. I was searched, scrutinized, and knocked about between and by people in whom the curious notion of a “bath” would awaken a dreaded and fearful shiver. I was finally unloaded onto the pavement of New York: no car, no hotel, no checkbook (“Hunting for a ‘Job’ in New York,” 8).

Leitich worked among the common American people and she fought for a job in the fiercely competitive market of New York. In her debut article, she writes to a friend in Austria of her difficulties in finding even part-time employment. “For fourteen days I’ve been walking my soles - American soles - off on the New York pavement to find a ‘Job’.” That job was to work as a chambermaid/waitress for \$15 per week. She was not a celebrity; nor was she a dignitary. Her perspective was more down to earth. That is why Leitich proposes that her articles about America are the ones worth reading. She pleaded her case well, as attested by over 200 articles published in the *Neue Freie Presse* over the course of fifteen years (McFarland *Red...*). That number does not include her articles published in other newspapers, nor her novels, plays, and art historical works.

Despite the fact that Leitich continued to work full time in other positions and only part time in journalism, she experienced considerable success as a foreign correspondent. By remaining only a part-time correspondent, Leitich kept her perspective on American life anchored in work experiences, including 16 months as a scenario reviewer for Metro-Goldwyn in New York. Such full-time employment in America continued to keep Leitich’s perspective as grounded in authentic American life as the day she arrived to begin working as a maid. In 1926, Leitich published her first

collection of essays entitled *America, Du hast es besser*<sup>8</sup>. These essays stem largely from her articles that she had already published in *Neue Freie Presse* with minor editorial changes. Along with her many articles in *Neue Freie Presse*, *America, Du hast es besser* won Leitich a large and dedicated readership. In recognition of her accomplishments, Ignatz Seipel, the Federal Chancellor of Austria sent a letter to Ann Tizia Leitich on May 10th, 1926, congratulating her on her success as a journalist and an author (Seipel 1). Drawing on her own experiences, Leitich published her first work of fiction, *Ursula Entdeckt Amerika*<sup>9</sup>, the story of a young woman who immigrates to America and begins her new life as a maid in Chicago.

Leitich's fame was not restricted to German-speaking audiences<sup>10</sup>. That same year, Leitich accompanied New York Democratic Representative Sol Bloom and his wife to the White House Congressional Reception where she personally met President and Mrs. Coolidge. Despite her busy schedule of working and publishing, Leitich had maintained correspondence with many of the people she had known in her younger years in Austria. On June 30th, 1928, Ann Tizia Leitich married Dr. Jur. Erich Viktor Korninggen, an Austrian governmental statistician. Korninggen supported Leitich in her writing efforts. From August to October of 1929, Leitich's next novel, *Ein Leben ist nicht genug*, was serialized in the *Neue Freie Presse*. Leitich remained an influential arbiter between America and Austria throughout the 1930's. On March 24, 1933, she attended the Testimonial Dinner for the Hon. Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, as she later

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<sup>8</sup> Meaning, "America, you are better off," from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 1827 poem about the United States, where he claims America is better off due to its lack of controversial history compared to Europe.

<sup>9</sup> *Ursula Entdeckt Amerika*

<sup>10</sup> Biographical information in this paragraph is drawn from Dr. Rob McFarland's unpublished manuscript under the working title, *Red Vienna, White Socialism and the Blues: Ann Tizia Leitich's Amerika*

described in her *Neue Freie Presse* article, “Dinner for Madame Secretary of Labor”, published on September 24th, 1933. She reported on the significance of a female cabinet member, stating: “With Roosevelt II and his choice of Frances Perkins, a new era has begun for men and women” (26). Shifting more and more towards literature, Leitich published her next serialized novel from December 1933 into January 1934. *Phoebe spielt um die Liebe* appeared in the *Neue Freie Presse*. With the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany in 1938, the *Neue Freie Presse* was largely “aryanized” and purged of all Jewish employees and the editor-in-chief. Leitich published her last article for the *Neue Freie Presse* on January 1st, 1939. It was a book review on the British mystery novelist Ethel Lina White’s *Step in the Dark*, with the German title, *Panoptikum*. This last article shows the direction that Leitich’s article writing eventually took: Art Criticism and Historicism. From 1947 to 1971, Ann Tizia Leitich published 13 works on Vienna’s cultural history. Topics included the Biedermeier period, the Baroque period, and the Viennese Spanish Riding School. The rest of her literary career during this time is devoid of any further journalistic endeavors. Ann Tizia Leitich passed away in her retirement home in Döbling, Vienna, Austria on September 3rd, 1976.

#### IV. Americanism in Germany and Austria<sup>11</sup>

Although she is most widely known for her cultural histories of Austria written in her later life, Leitch's earlier journalistic works and fiction about America reveal inter-war Europe's fascination with all things American. What was it about the United States that so enthralled Austria, Germany, and other countries during the 1920's and 1930's? In theory, Austria especially had no reason to celebrate anything having to do with America. The United States had played a key role in assisting the Allied victory of World War I. America was part of the crushing defeat that the Austrians and Germans had to face in the wake of the Great War. On May 4th, 1919, the newly-announced Republic of German-Austria held its first local elections, with an equal vote for all citizens of both genders and every social class. The Social Democratic Workers' Party of Austria (SDAP) won the absolute majority in Vienna. A few years prior to the free elections, Vienna had been the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. At such a tremendous moment for democracy in Central Europe, Austria was in no state to celebrate its own progress. Nationalist pressure from the various ethnicities throughout the empire reached their height in the autumn of 1918, as an Allied victory became increasingly inevitable. A provisional Czech government had taken over Prague on October 28th, 1918. With the independence of Czech lands, Austria was suddenly separated from its major manufacturing center. The Slovaks, Galician Poles, Southern Slavs, and even the Hungarians officially cut all ties with Austria over the course of the next three days. Austria was effectively separated from the breadbasket of its former empire by new tariffs and borders.

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<sup>11</sup> If not otherwise stated with specific citations, I draw the following historical information and analysis from Dr. Rob McFarland's 2012 unpublished manuscript under the working title, *Red Vienna, White Socialism and the Blues: Ann Tizia Leitch's Amerika*.

Referred to as a “Rumpfstaat”<sup>12</sup>, German-Austria, soon to be the Republic of Austria, was left war-torn, without food, and devoid of industry. The first stage of legitimization for Austria was to draft a letter to President Woodrow Wilson asking for the United States of America to recognize Austria as a country (Brauneder 45-57). Wilson approved of Austria’s statehood on November 16, 1918 and began organizing efforts to assist the people of Austria (Pick 131-143). America’s official recognition of Austria as an independent nation was not only formative in legitimizing the new Austrian state; it also began a positive relationship between two countries that had been war-time enemies. America contributed greatly to the humanitarian aid sent to Austria in the wake of their dismemberment as an empire. Suddenly, yesterday’s enemies were handing out food and medicine in person to the sick and malnourished of Austria. As a result, the wealth and influence of America were immediately present in Austria after the Great War ended. As Austria made attempts to stabilize itself, Austrian writers began to publish books in a style popular throughout German-speaking countries: travelogues. Viennese author, Arthur Rundt published his own trip from Vienna to America in his 1926 book, *Amerika ist anders*. Similar travelogues were published by well-known Austrian journalists such as Felix Salten, Joseph Roth, and Alexander Roda Roda. Marta Karlweis’ 1928 autobiography, *Eine Frau reist durch Amerika*, contributed a female perspective to European observations of the United States. Leitch touches on the European fascination with America in her 1923 article, “Hunting for a ‘Job’ in New York”. In describing her inability to find a job as a translator, Leitch blames her difficulties on the fact that her fellow Europeans are excelling in learning

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<sup>12</sup> From the German words for torso and state, the term conveys the image of a torso whose limbs have been removed.

English: “You all learn English over there like madmen so the majority of correspondence can be done in English, making translators superfluous” (9). German and Austrian businesses were so intent on interacting successfully with Americans by 1923, that there was no need of German-speaking interpreters in New York City.

Another force in American economic influence was Henry Ford. His autobiography was translated into German in 1923 and sold over 200,000 copies. Germany and Austria looked to the mechanized, industrialized America of their time to find a way out of their deficits which they had accrued because of World War I and its reparations.

Austromarxist and head of the Austrian Board of Economic Efficiency Ernst Streeruwitz promoted rationalizing Austrian industry after the American model. But not all of the attention given to America was positive. Red Vienna formed a Chamber of Workers and Employees, which warned of the potential misuse of American theories in its guide to industrial rationalization. Situated somewhere in the space between Americaphiles and Americaphobes, Ann Tizia Leitich was part of a spirited debate about the role that America would play in Austria.

#### V. Leitich’s Use of America to Create an Austrian Identity

Ann Tizia Leitich writes to an Austrian public dealing with a national identity crisis. Austria’s fascination with America becomes a starting point from which she could form that new Austrian identity. America then becomes a basis of comparison for Leitich throughout her articles. Austria was in need of a new self, and Leitich forms it by creating an American other. Although the terms and theory came after Leitich’s newspaper articles, the concept of forming an image of self that is based upon an other can be found in the writings of the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. Levinas states that each concept of a self is precluded by recognition of an “Other.” In his essay

“Totality and Infinity: an Essay on Exteriority” Levinas argues the other precludes the self because the self must first respond to the demands made by the other (150). The self cannot first be self-conscious. The self is first aware of the other and then of itself. This same structure can be used to understand the manner in which Ann Tizia Leitich first describes America and Americanism and then proceeds to describe Austria and Austrianism. By presenting America as an other to Austria, Austria must react to Leitich’s descriptions of America. Leitich therefore shows the ways in which America both positively and negatively relates to Austria. Each case of stating differences in the United States assumes that America is different *from* Austria. As positive aspects are highlighted, they are done so in comparison with the current status quo in Austria. For example, in Leitich’s article “Austrians in New York” she reports on the appearance of Austrian-Americans dancing in traditional dirndl and lederhosen. “These Austro-hicks all look far more authentic than those at similar occasions in Vienna because these Austrian-Americans are all well-nourished and the red in their cheeks goes well with the green of their hats” (31). Leitich refers to the Austrian-Americans as “more authentic” because of the good health that they enjoy. Leitich infers that her impression of native Austrians is not one of a people who are well-nourished and who display a healthy complexion. But her use of the phrase “more authentic” conveys her ideal of a well-fed and healthy Austrian populace. In this way, Leitich has presented Austria with the positive image of healthy Americans in order to express her own concept of how healthy Austrians should be. Conversely, when negative aspects are discussed, they are shown in light of how Austria conducts itself in a more positive manner. In her article “The White City”, Leitich writes about the experience of touring Washington D.C. She states that certain aspects of Washington remind one of the capital cities of Europe, such as

Paris. Leitch describes the realization that America does not offer all of the comforts of a European capital:

You get a little irked because you know that you will not be able to order a demitasse while leafing through the various newspapers of the world after having enjoyed a satisfying meal in a good setting... No, not even in Washington is there a proper cafe or *Kaffeehaus*, because a coffee-house is no *Kaffeehaus* by a long shot (“The White City,” 29).

Leitch’s disappointment in Washington is that America does not support a culture of cafes with sophisticated comforts one could otherwise find in Europe. In contrast, cafe culture flourished in cities such as Vienna and Paris. The American other is a construct for both presenting ideals towards which Austria should strive and for highlighting the positive aspects already present in Austria. Without the constructed American other, Leitch’s assertions as to how Austria should be and act would have no basis of comparison. There would be no Austrian self-identity in Leitch’s correspondences without precluding the other-identity of America.

Leitch was not alone in publically discussing the interaction between Austria and America. Other intellectuals in Europe expressed the notion that Europe had nothing to learn from the United States. The strongest criticism against the United States was its assumed inherent lack of culture. Any country devoid of culture would be unable to contribute to another country’s culture. Leitch’s contemporary German-speaking world was discussing the issue as a certain contrast between culture and civilization. The German cultural historian Oswald Spengler defined this opposition in his 1918 work, *Decline of the West*. Spengler juxtaposes the terms *Zivilisation* and *Kultur* by first stating that each culture has its own civilization and then by defining what civilizations

are: “Civilizations are the most external and artificial states of which a species of developed humanity is capable” (31). Civilizations are merely the superficial and artificial manifestation of human interaction. Spengler describes eight high cultures that precluded the modern West of Europe and America, each of which he states experienced a life span of a few thousand years at the most (32-41). The final stage of each culture’s life span is to develop a purely functional structure of daily life, which Spengler defines as civilization. Civilization comes about when the spirit of the people is replaced with concepts of efficiency who aim it is to simply maintain order within a group of people. Spengler contrasts, stating: “In a word, Greek *soul* - Roman *intellect*; and this antithesis is the differentia between Culture and Civilization” (32). Spengler clarifies with an example of what he calls Greek culture and Roman civilization. He writes that the Romans were “unspiritual, unphilosophical, devoid of art, clannish to the point of brutality, aiming relentlessly at tangible successes, they stand between Hellenic Culture and nothingness” (32). It is that tangible success that makes Spengler’s Roman civilization a good match for America in the 20’s and 30’s. Spengler wrote in 1918 that New York City was already a manifestation of civilization. “After Syracuse, Athens, and Alexandria comes Rome. After Madrid, Paris, London come Berlin and New York” (33).

Ann Tizia Leitich shows an awareness of Spengler’s definitions of civilization and culture when discussing America. In her article about the death of the Lindbergh baby, “All-out War Against the Gangsters,” Leitich uses the German term for civilization (*Zivilisation*) to describe the structure holding American people together. Leitich was reporting on public’s reaction to the kidnapping and murder of Charles Lindbergh’s son. She considered the infanticide to be a pragmatic, eye-opening experience for the people of America who had tolerated an underworld of gang activity for far too long. “[The

gangsters] upset the smooth symmetry of a *Zivilisation* full of bored Americans who could still hear the echoing gunshots of their earlier heroic age” (26). This *Zivilisation* matches the brutal, soulless scaffolding of Spengler’s definition. It was a social structure, but was not tied to the soul of the people. By turning a blind eye to gang activity in their own country, the American people were not functioning within the confines of culture, but of civilization. The American civilization was only the superficial structure built by that previous era. But this does not mean that Leitch agrees with Spengler’s assertion that a civilization marks the end of a culture.

Where Spengler wrote that civilizations were an inevitable end to culture, Leitch writes that the American people can reconnect with the soul of culture in order to save themselves from pure civilization. Writing in 1931, the first year of the Great Depression, Leitch’s article entitled “On the Run from Boredom”, discusses the superficiality that swept over America due to its rapid rise to economic success and how the onset of the Depression could lead to a solution to America’s problem of civilization. She tells of how an industrialized America had been driven by business: “*Business*’ ruled the world as an untiring, oversized machine, and business was ruled by the agonizing precision of the index card system. Gone were the days of daring, visionary enterprises” (31). Similar to Spengler’s arguments, Leitch laments the creative, entrepreneurial spirit of an earlier age that had no room to flourish in America’s boom years. The civilized world of mechanized business was key in building up America, but it built a civilization. Leitch then demonstrates how the American people began to recognize their own dilemma. She commends the Nobel Prize Committee for having awarded Sinclair Lewis for his novel *Main Street*, which criticized the American focus on material success.

He laid his hands in the hidden wounds of [American] civilization as he published his book... When they read it, Americans clapped with loud applause. *It is just like that, isn't it? He said it so well!* But what he captured with the book was *America's boredom* (32).

According to Leitch, America's boredom is rooted within its own civilization, it's Main Street. America was bored with civilization.

Leitch finds hope in the fact that the American people admit their flaws as a civilization in their positive reception of Lewis' novel. By first recognizing the issue, Americans could then decide how to overcome it. Leitch proposes a possible solution to the boredom epidemic in the development of emotions. She writes: "Emotions provide the one true creative aspect in life. In 'The Magic Mountain' Thomas Mann states that man is godlike only as long as he can still feel" (32). Leitch shows that the American people can free themselves from civilization if they reconnect to their feelings, or as Spengler described it, the soul of the American people. In this, the Great Depression was a tool for the betterment of America. Leitch concludes her article with the note that the overly wealthy, bored America is actually a thing of the recent past. She postulates the implications of the Great Depression on America's civilization:

Since business and the *deification of material success* have suffered some serious setbacks, maybe people will be less compelled to always be buying or selling. They may be poorer in matters of money, but they will be wealthier in terms of time... Perhaps the very modern *School of "a thousand Geniuses"* in California will give them some pointers from their newest education program: "*The Cultivation of Emotions*" (32).

Leitich describes the economic setbacks of the Depression as a chance for the American people to reevaluate their priorities and avoid the pitfall of a doomed Spenglerian civilization.

Spengler was not the only critic who found fault with America's apparent lack of culture. Austrian philosopher and feuilletonist Stefan Zweig asserted that America was the source of what he referred to as the "monotonization of the world." In her own rebuttal and later articles, Ann Tizia Leitich acted as a voice for America in intellectual and cultural debates acted out on the pages of the *Neue Freie Presse*, where Zweig's scathing article on the harmful effects of Americanism was first published in 1925. Leitich first response to the arguments in Zweig's article appeared in an article in *Neue Freie Presse* that same year entitled "A Word for America".

I am writing today because of a sentence that I read in "Monotonization of the World." It reads, "What is the source of this approaching wave that threatens to wash away all of the color and variety of life? Everyone who has been there knows it. It comes from America." I am removing this sentence from his piece and placing it under a microscope (1).

Leitich proceeds to do just that. She argues in particular that Zweig's claims that America was whitewashing the world with Spenglerian civilization are false. As she states in other articles she published, Leitich points out that her own life experiences are apt to qualify her over Zweig and other European intellectuals in making such assertions. She explains how her own observations of Americans vary from the American stereotype that Zweig presents in his own article. "They are a colorful crowd: proudly exclusive and chummy, poor and rich, noble and ignoble. I watched the days, weeks, years, cities and towns like driftwood washing up on the shore. I held up my

lantern and asked: Who are you, what do you have to offer?" (1) Not just a visitor, but a resident and naturalized citizen, Leitch gives her own evaluation of America's influence and America's imbalance of culture and civilization. Leitch removes the black and white stereotypes of Americans by labeling the American people as colorful. Leitch also argues against Zweig's concern that Americans have replaced culture with civilization. "How could America have found the time to fill its form with adequate substance? Europe required centuries to create her culture... And now America is in the process of forming its own culture" (2). Leitch maintains that the assumption of replacing culture with civilization for a country as young as America is impossible due to its own youth.

Because Leitch does not view civilization as an inescapable endpoint, she can use America's youth and ability to form its own culture as an example for Austria.

According to Leitch, America is not the leader of a plot to monotonize the world; rather it is a young country forming its own identity. This classification as a young country that can form its own culture has implications for the young Republic of Austria, as well. Leitch ends her article with the warning that it is impossible to predict what lies ahead for any country in the 20th century. "This century has its own substance and purposes. We cannot fathom the extent to which things will expand... But you can feel it with more surety here in the heart of America than behind the walled fortresses of Europe" (4). America is not the epicenter of the end of culture; rather it is the starting point for the potentialities of the century of unlimited possibilities.

In engaging in public discussions about American and Europe, Leitch had to face more than just Spengler's definition of culture versus civilization. There was also the issue of who should have access to culture. As part of the fears about civilization associated with the technological spread of Americanism, Leitch was confronted with

the issue of mass culture as opposed to selective, bourgeois culture. The Austrian stereotypes of America included businessmen who thought of nothing more than increasing profits. Such a stereotype propagated the belief that Americans therefore lacked any real cultural or intellectual drive unless it was tied to the economy. In reevaluating the American economic situation, Leitch argues that there can be no functional world of pure business or pure cultural enrichment. The extremes are not sustainable. In her 1926 article “Vitaphone, the Talking Picture” Leitch explains this issue while describing the invention of simultaneous audio and cinematic film for talking pictures. She writes:

Man cannot live from business alone without intellectual nourishment.

On the other hand, an obsession with mere aesthetics brings about decadence and the cultural exclusivity of a chosen class, a social order that seems to be passing into obscurity (2).

Leitch admits that a purely commercial world cannot function, but she also points out the flaw in the dying bourgeois world of Europe. She shows that the problem with Europe’s decadent, aesthetic culture was its exclusivity. The decline of that decadent culture is proof of its lack of sustainability. Leitch then argues that business and culture are not exclusive concepts, rather forces that can be combined. She uses the vitaphone itself to prove her point. “This new technology is more than a scientific triumph: it has the potential to revolutionize art and culture... And, due to its mass distribution, it will inspire great artistic ambition in the masses” (2). The changes to art and culture that go beyond the scientific are due to the inclusive nature of the cinema.

By including the masses in the distribution of culture, the vitaphone was leading the way in changing the approach to who should be involved in culture. In her 1928

article “America Reads what America Likes” Leitch shows how the industrialization of art helps distribute art to the masses. Contending against critics in Europe who would find a literary industry degrading to literature, Leitch writes:

It took one hundred and fifty years to understand that the masses must take part in civilization... Now we have to understand that they have to take part in culture... We are in the middle of a new era and we cannot forget that fact. You can see it more clearly in America (29)

Leitch expresses her view that America is exemplary in making culture accessible to its masses. And it is her experiences in America that have made it clear to her that cultivating the masses is the way of the future. The masses themselves are now a recognized part of a people. Austria must figure out how America’s masses have gained access to culture. Leitch identifies the American movement to empower the masses as beginning at the level of the people and not among the elite. Leitch argues that the European criticism that industry and business would degrade the art of literature were unfounded. “Whenever we notice that the massive demand for mass literature... is all part of materialistic exploitation, we just have to remember that there is no realm that is completely free of the filthy taint of business” (29). For Leitch, the demand for a consumer-based literature ultimately meant a demand for literature, no matter how interwoven it happened to be with industry.

Leitch then turns the negativity surrounding a drive to produce an industry of literature into a positive reception of such a drive. As she sees it, the mass movement in favor of books is ultimately a movement in favor of educating the masses. Publishers will produce books if that is what the masses desire. When they engage in reading, they

can then absorb culture to which they otherwise would not have access. Concerning the spread of culture to the masses through books, Leitch writes:

Culture is the sum of all *the great accomplishments of the human spirit*. Culture is meant *for everyone*. The consumption of culture is part and parcel of the “greatest possible happiness” that Thomas Jefferson, a 100% Democrat, philosopher, and esthete from Virginia declared was the cornerstone of the American republic. He set it forth in the magnificent Declaration of Independence. It is such a modern thought that not even all of us today can comprehend it (29).

Whereas European critics claimed that economic motivations should not drive the production of literature, Leitch argues that the act of industrializing literature helps distribute culture to a wider audience. Consumers are people and extending possibilities for the cultural development of all people is a worthy goal.

Leitch also demonstrates that the American people were in search of knowledge and culture. “There are new literary forms that have come to satisfy the demands of the mentally younger (not the mentally inferior)... today the readers’ demands are loftier than before. They demand access to all of the knowledge and wisdom of humanity.” (29). When Leitch describes the American readers as mentally younger, she is referring to the relatively short amount of time that the American people have had to form their cultural identity in comparison with Europe. The mentally inferior would not be capable of understanding the “knowledge and wisdom of humanity,” but the mentally younger are merely ignorant of them. Leitch claims that the wisdom of men is of great importance to Americans. They buy encyclopedias and educational material as an integral part of their literature industry. Leitch shows that the claims that

industrialized literature is degrading are not true, given that Americans are using the literary industry to educate and cultivate themselves.

Leitich not only dispels the myth that America was a bad influence, but she also goes on to show how America could serve as a positive role model. In Leitich's 1926 article entitled "Ecce America", she literally challenges her audience to behold America. Austria had accepted European culture as a whole. That same culture had led to a humiliating defeat in the Great War and left Austria a tiny, struggling piece of a has-been empire. Leitich presents America as a possible source of positive input despite its obvious flaws. Europe's ruling classes were not capable of conforming to the masses that had slowly become empowered. America was created by the masses and could adjust accordingly. Leitich points out once more both America's imbalanced focus on monetary success and Europe's obsession with its own culture. She argues, "We live in a century that belongs to the masses and has adopted the masses" (3). Leitich labels America as the herald of the century of the masses. Americans are leading by including the masses in cultural endeavors, but they still require guidance. That is where Leitich feels Europeans who are unfortunately blindly following America's consumerism could be leaders, not just followers. "America's talented are making money, because money alone determines success...But Europeans should be teaching Americans how to accomplish something without being consumed by dollars and business, instead of just copying the Americans in their pursuits (3). Leitich's view of Europe is that Europe has been too willing to adopt American shortcomings instead of guiding America in those areas where it is still undeveloped.

Leitich does not condone that Austria should try to copy America's zeal for the dollar. Instead she promotes a mutual exchange. America can help Europe to involve

the masses in culture through business and Europe can help America to see the value in serious devotion to culture. “America will fail to be great as long as its best people are consumed by dollars and business and only go to the theater every now and then to unwind” (3). As Leitch presents her argument, it is of no use to be intelligent, cultured, and poor, but the problem is also not solved by being unbelievably wealthy and uncultured. Leitch encourages Austria to be an example and such an example has to be successful (3). Austria cannot be an impoverished land full of culture and devoid of a tolerable standard of living. She laments that Europe is only trying to absorb America’s mass culture without leading. In illustrating how Europe had already failed to lead by example, she describes the disappointment American tourists found when visiting Paris. “And they found their often mocked Main Street, the same boredom and empty entertainment that could kill everyone. Soon they will find a Europe that chews gum, because Europe is ‘Americanizing’ herself” (1). Austria should not take the worst and most superficial aspects from America; rather Austria should seek to emulate the nobler aspects of Americanism while rejecting baser aspects. Interestingly, Leitch does not blame Europe for attempting to become like America. “Europe is not only pragmatically selling out because she has no choice, but she is also neglecting and tramping the one thing that America tries in vain to buy with all of its wealth: tradition.” (2). In attempting to modernize and compete, Austria must not forfeit tradition and cultural standing. One of Austria’s greatest commodities is tradition. The very thing that frees America, a lack of historical baggage, is what Austria must utilize in order to become independent and successful.

Finally, Leitch uses the gender roles in America to show how Austria can redefine itself. America was affording its women many new opportunities in the

interwar period that were previously only available to men. Leitch's article, "Hunting for a Job in New York," shows the difficulty of competing for jobs in New York as a woman. Although Leitch is reporting as a foreign correspondent, she relates the tale of a German man whom she recently saw leaving the country after failed attempt at journalism in America (8). His English was not up to par with American reporters and Leitch claims there is little demand for correspondents reporting on Europe due to European infighting and weak European economies. As there was little work for anyone reporting on Europe, Leitch proceeded to seek employment as a foreign-language correspondent. As Leitch reports, few Americans learn a foreign language, but that fact was not enough to secure her a position. "A foreign-language correspondent faces the same expectations as every other American stenographer. There may be little competition; however, there are also few positions" (8). As an educated, but relatively inexperienced European, Leitch had issues getting a job as a saleswoman. During an interview in a department store, she hesitated when she could not answer exactly what kind of experience she had in sales. She reports that the manager turned away from her saying, "I can only use someone with experience. I have enough addresses" (8). As a European woman, Leitch was raised with a surplus of education and a deficit of work experience in any field outside of academics. Here she emphasizes the advantage that American women have, as the manager has plenty of contacts for the position.

Leitch further shows how the women in America maintain a dynamic self-identity. She uses this example to show that women in general are flexible. She tells her friend, Dick: "As a man, you aren't capable of adapting. You have greater difficulties in conforming. Women are more like chameleons when it comes down to it, and here it almost always comes down to it" (9). Women in New York are strong, adaptable

workers. Leitch mentions New York as a place where adaptation is a must, but the location merely serves to prove what women in general are capable of. Female identity can adapt in place like New York City. If Vienna, Austria were to be more of a working environment for women, the women of Austria would benefit in ways similar to the women of America.

Leitch also saw in America not only an environment that promoted growth and flexibility, but also a place where women could reach heights previously unattained by women. In 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Frances Perkins as his Secretary of Labor. Perkins became the first female cabinet member in American history. Leitch reported on a banquet she attended that was held in honor of Ms. Perkin's appointment later that year in her article "Dinner for Madame Secretary of Labor". Leitch's tells how the choice of Frances Perkins was blazing new trails for women.

With [Franklin D.] Roosevelt... and his choice of Frances Perkins, a new era has begun for men and women... The only issue is that I think that those two groups have yet to notice it, because they do not wish to notice it. Women have had to deal with the fallout from their wild exploits in the early years of emancipation. In America (and not only in Germany), people have had a negative reaction to women's political engagement (26).

Despite certain negative reactions to early movements in feminism, Leitch found that America was still seeing remarkable progress in the world of women's rights and personal freedoms. The involvement of women in political affairs in America is an example of how Austria could join the modern, successful world that America was helping to form. As an American, Frances Perkins embodied a new ideal of womanhood. Leitch focuses on Perkins in the same way that she focusses on America.

Perkins is the female American other from which she can define a female Austrian self. America has much to offer the women of Austria. Referring to Perkins, Leitich describes the combination of traits that have made her successful. “She combines intelligence, experience and the human warmth of temperate common sense. And it is this specific talent of common sense that women need today more than ever, but they do not seem to have discovered it just yet” (26). Leitich uses Frances Perkins as an example of a woman successfully capitalizing on innate feminine characteristics in order to contribute to society. She is an example to women everywhere, not just in America.

Leitich was not solely concerned with the political appointment of women in America. She also reported on the everyday life of American women in order to create a more complete picture of how Austrian women could live. In Leitich’s 1924 article “The Life of Women in America”, she shows the highs and lows of women’s lives in America. She writes to the women of Austria in a colloquial tone, advising that they not let men read the article. Addressing the question of why Austrian women would allow for American influence in their lives, she states:

Hurry up and set up your reservation for an eventual reincarnation as an American woman. People may say false and horrendous things about America as much as they want; one thing is and remains true: There is no land under the sun in which the women would have it better than here (31).

Leitich claims that America is the best country in the world for women. Despite such a daring statement, Leitich attempts to tell her readers that there are still downsides. To better explain why the women of Austria should not immediately emigrate, Leitich draws a comparison between the American women and other great American products:

they are ground-breakingly different, but the American woman is ultimately an “unfinished product” (31). Despite their many advantages, American women are not as refined as their European counterparts. Leitch adds that American women, although educated, are not cultured. To compensate for the cultural shortcomings, American women have something else:

The secret of the American woman, ladies, is neither available wrapped in tissue paper over the counter, nor is it something the Port Authority of New York can ascribe you between the pages of your passport like some sort of revision. A person has to grow up with it--as it (31).

The unique advantage American women have is therefore not part of the booming economy or the geographic location of America. Their strength is internal. It is something with which they are raised. It is self-confidence. In contrast to her own view of European women, Leitch states that American women “are not slaves that were taught nice things to please their masters; they aren’t the rib of man, not some part; they are themselves; that is why their smiles are so different” (31). American women are not dependent on men when they need to define who they are. This independence is a unique quality that is then visible on the faces of American women. Leitch continues: “Their smiles burst from their lips like cherries from a tree. They say: I am me and I’m glad to be me. And American women are never maidservants. They are queens and companions” (32). Leitch takes special notice to identify American women as people who are neither slaves nor servants. Their relationship to their men is that of equals. Such a positive relationship could then be emulated in the relationships of women elsewhere, regardless of where they live.

Leitch's words suggest that the culture and education of European women was based on becoming a pleasing spouse to their future husbands. Furthermore, Leitch infers that European women are convinced that they are subservient to men. Women in America, on the other hand, have become self-sufficient. It is immediately apparent that American women are happier about their position in life than European women. Most importantly, Leitch states that they are "queens and companions", never "maidservants". American women are treated well, not simply given tasks. They are companions. As companions, women are equal to their male partners. Unlike their European sisters, American women do not spend their youth working hard to become skilled and educated individuals just to be second place for the rest of their lives. As co-equals, American women have a sense of satisfaction from their personal endeavors.

Through portraying this image of American women, Leitch has created an American ideal. With this ideal of equal partnership with men, Leitch has created a feminine existence that is possible in both the United States and Austria. Leitch then concludes her article with concrete advice that she believes will enable the changes she wishes to see in Austria. It is the step that the women of Austria can take regardless of the actions of the men in Austria:

I have stressed one thing in particular that you ladies can achieve. Even if you can't do so overnight, you can do it little by little. Adopt the American woman's "state of mind", their happy disposition. And one thing was essential in making American women so strong: esprit de corps, solidarity, cooperation. The women of America are united (32).

Leitch asserts that a proper state of mind is key to successfully changing Austria into a country with equality for men and women. That state of mind is not only a positive one,

but a unified one. Women cannot tear each other down in attempting to assert themselves. On the contrary, women must unite in spirit in order to help each other progress. This is the change Leitch found in the women in America. The women were positive and they worked together to reach their respective goals.

Leitch's articles included in this translation project show her deep insights into not only the American culture she came to know, but also her own culture. By communicating to the educated readers of the *Neue Freie Presse*, she encouraged positive cultural exchange between Austria and America. Using America as Austria's other, she was able to influence the creation of a new Austrian identity. In engaging in public discourse with other Austrian writers she was able to show ways in which the Austrian people could learn from the mistakes of America and how Austria could emulate the noblest aspects of America. The ramifications of the connections between Austria and America go beyond the scope of this thesis. They could include the American stance on Austria's annexation into Nazi Germany, Austro-American cultural exchange in particular field of art and music, and Austro-American relations in our own day. By making some of Leitch's articles available to English-speaking audiences, it is my aim that the potential effect of her journalism will now be greatly expanded. Leitch's discussions on America and Austria are no longer a one-sided conversation, exclusively accessible to those who speak German. English-speaking readers can now draw their own conclusions concerning Leitch's viewpoint and her reports about the United States. Now those interested in studying America and views on America during the interwar period have access to more source materials in their search for the discourses and voices of that era.

## Introduction to *Hunting for a "Job in New York"*<sup>13</sup>

This is Ann Tizia Leitich's premiere article as a foreign correspondent. The series of articles is written as a letter to her old friend in Austria, Dick. Leitich had received several news clippings about America in European papers. Unlike the grand receptions awaiting dignitaries and diplomats, Leitich arrived with the other masses of immigrants. She had to go through processing, delousing, and was handed \$50. Leitich describes her search for a job in New York as a means of introducing her very unique, qualified perspective in reporting on the real America. A job is not a position, she explains. A job does not carry any promises. America may be a land of riches, but those riches are not so easy to come by. Although many a European could feel well-educated, the American employers valued experience above education. Experience is one thing that many of Leitich's friends, such as Dick, were lacking. While describing the various jobs for which she has applied and the one she eventually took as a chambermaid, Leitich points out the diverse and competitive environment of New York City.

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<sup>13</sup> Series in *Neue Freie Presse*

<sup>13</sup>Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Hunting for a "Job" in New York." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 2 Aug. 1923, Chronik  
<sup>13</sup>Beilage sec.: 9-10. Print.

<sup>13</sup>Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Hunting for a "Job" in New York." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 3 Aug. 1923, Chronik  
<sup>13</sup>Beilage sec.: 9. Print.

<sup>13</sup>Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Hunting for a "Job" in New York." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 7 Aug. 1923, Chronik  
<sup>13</sup>Beilage sec.: 8-9. Print.

## Hunting for a “*Job*<sup>14</sup>” in New York.

A Letter to a Friend of the Crown who is Obsessed with America.

Dear Dick,

I’m quite delighted to see from various *clippings*, pardon, *Zeitungsausschnitten*, that you prisoners of valuta<sup>15</sup> over there are finally getting some first-rate reports about the wonderland on the far side of Atlantic. By this, I mean articles that aren’t written by business people or bank directors, articles that aren’t received and delivered with a sense of urgency surpassing the New Yorker bustle itself, articles written by men who travelled 3,000 miles for *business* reasons and only see countries and peoples from their very particular, and often narrow, viewpoint. I also mean articles that were not written by artists, who slip ever so softly into the arms of the most benign providence from the very moment that they lay eyes on the often cited Statue of Liberty, falling into the excitement of a young and wealthy *Volk*. The kind of artists who, in reality, walk only among the heights of humanity here, dwelling in palatial hotels, transported in chartered luxury trains<sup>16</sup>, surrounded and applauded by the richest men and the most beautiful women in the world, carried on a wave of *Dollars* (just between ourselves, don’t let anyone rob you of your composure for the *Bridgепartie* at 8:30 and for God’s sake don’t convert the sum: Paderewsky<sup>17</sup> earned \$460,000 with his tour this year). I know that those kinds of numbers tear you right out of your noble Austrian phlegm and I fear you’re already thinking about your dusty old American visa that has become the

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<sup>14</sup> Words left in italics are the author’s original text as well as items that the author originally set in italics.

<sup>15</sup> Term primarily used in Europe for the value of a given currency considered according to its exchange rate to another currency.

<sup>16</sup> Extrazug - a southern German term for trains that lie outside the regular schedule, or chartered trains

<sup>17</sup> Ignacy Jan Paderewski - Polish musician and diplomat

stuff of legends. Simmer down! First listen to what I have to tell you and don't interrupt me with tedious interjections based on Central European prejudices.

So what I really mean is that I am happy that you now all have the chance to see America painted differently from the way these two categories I mentioned above have depicted them. In particular, you have had the chance to read from true authors whose profession it is to study mankind. What more do I have to say on this topic? My God, Dick, since when have you been so ungallant? I began with all these capacities so that I could exhibit the originality of my own report to you point-blank. As you know, I make a virtue out of necessity. We've been well practiced in this destitute art since our youth. When I say "we" here I mean the vast group of eggheads to which I still unfortunately must count myself and to which I still have the audacity to count myself, even though I... but more about that later. We lamentable slaves of our own personality must carry the burden of our education with us wherever we go - whether we want to or not. Here in the terrain of Manhattan, I wish I didn't have it. You don't know what Manhattan is? It's the *business* district of New York, the actual, proper New York. It's *Wall Street* and *Greenwich Village*; it's *Broadway* and *Fifth Avenue*. In a nutshell, I'd like to say that there are many things between heaven and the earth of Manhattan that could never be revealed to any of those who were received by a committee on the pier.

Let us suppose someone had given me the choice: to be led to an elegant car less than half an hour after landing, a car driven by a chauffeur that looks like Scottish *Lord* in his fur coat and not some boorish *Taxidriver*; then to be driven to the Astor or Biltmore<sup>18</sup>, skillfully steered through the knots in the traffic; to find my mail waiting for me at the hotel, invitations to *Dinner* in clubs or with certain families, slightly relieving

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<sup>18</sup> Two prominent hotels in New York City

my checkbook from the *Guarantee Trust Company*; everyone is enthralled with my good English, people find my foreign accent enchanting, people are willing with the utmost courtesy to make or answer telephone calls for me because I stand there with my flawless English completely baffled by the waterfall-like speed and nasality with which the average American wields his language. Yes, or the other side: The promiscuity of Ellis Island that is almost unbearable for a cultured European. After days of waiting, my brains racked by the idea of potentially being sent back, I was shuffled through unavoidable mass treatments of delousing and bathing procedures. I was searched, scrutinized, and knocked about between and by people in whom the curious notion of a “bath” would awaken a dreaded and fearful shiver. I was finally unloaded onto the pavement of New York: no car, no hotel, no checkbook.

You don't have any doubts as to which one I would choose? Don't judge so quickly! You know that I'm a little eccentric; besides, this time fate decided for me and in the most economical manner for me. To which hotel did the *Lord-Chauffeur* bring me? But no, you aren't trying to understand me in the least. I found myself in the second scenario. You were trying to be ironic? How come? How could I ever enter into the distinguished group, received by committees, walking among the heights of humanity!

By the by - and I'm rushing to add this part - the American government paternally remembers how hard the New York pavement is for immigrants. In fact they require that every one of them possess \$50 upon beholding the Statue of Liberty. I learned with astonishment, however, that laws are circumvented all over the place - not just in Austria; because I happen to know people that arrived with \$200 in debt. And what's \$50 anyway? You can live off of it decently, albeit quite frugally, for two weeks.

And after two weeks the hope is just beginning to dawn that you'll survive at the end of the day since you'll finally understand *Subway* conductors and telephone *Clerks*.

To make a long story short: For fourteen days I've been walking my soles - American soles - off on the New York pavement to find a "Job". You have to know that "job" differs very much so from "position". The word "position" corresponds fairly well to our nice German word "Position" and means the type of condition that you and I could expect as people who were pressed onto a school desk for sixteen years and who have been used to pressing bell buttons in an office for some time. Expectations that we are naturally willing to scale down to a reasonable degree in America. When I mention this, I don't know if it's the rule that proves the exception or the exception that proves the rule. I recently saw a German journalist bid farewell to New York with the grand and contemptuous motion of a relieved heart; he ardently believed for three months that he would get a position as an art critic or *Reporter* on the *Staff* of a *New Yorker* daily paper. He was vaguely conscious of the fact that his English didn't measure up to the savvy style of the American journalists, but he thought in his unconquerable naiveté that it would be but a trifle to improve his articles in this regard!

Well now, I am hopefully not such a pitiable "greenhorn" (the more or less derisive label for a foreigner who is not familiar with the basic American ways); as you know, I'm no rookie in America. You can believe me after spending three years here (during which I kept my eyes and ears wide open in different cities across the continent) that I'm blasé to the bone with regard to European expectations of America, macro and micro, specifically and generally. But that I - ? Dick, I beg you, imagine me with the array of all your retrospective fancy in a modern silk gown. Serpentine line, new hat. I

was especially proud of my lorgnon<sup>19</sup> that were a real show-stopper in the Midwest; people there were only familiar with them as a stage prop depicting tip-top elegance. On the fifth day of my hunt I plunged those weapons of the Rococo into the depths of my suitcase, completely convinced that America has nothing, nor can it have anything, in common with Rococo. The polite glances immersed in rejection that I tacked up in the course of my days hunting down a job also plunged after I stowed the lorgnon safely away.

Despite your academic English, I believe it will be necessary to explain the meaning of the word “*job*” to you. You’ll soon understand what it means when I say I accepted a “*job*” today. Starting today, I am a “*waitress-chambermaid*”, that’s *Serviererin-Stubenmädchen*, in the home of an affluent New Yorker in *Long Island*. I was at my wit’s end. Fifteen dollars are fifteen dollars here and not a million crowns. And faced with the decision: either factory worker or chambermaid, I chose the latter.

How did it come about that I sank so “deep”? For that, my dear, you all are most notably at fault, because you in Europe cannot stop fighting. That’s why you poor devils can’t buy anything from us and our exports to Europe could be far more productive. The result: Few positions for foreign correspondents. And you all learn English over there like madmen so the majority of correspondence can be done in English, making translators superfluous. Incidentally, it is especially hard to get a position as a straight translator, the supply far outweighs the demand, and if you can’t type you have absolutely no prospects. But what reputable person can’t type these days? You’re even better off if you’re a capable stenographer in English. You have relatively little competition since American girls shy away from the boring task of learning a foreign

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<sup>19</sup> Eye glasses attached to a handle, similar to opera glasses, also known as lorgnette

language and the foreigners are seldom proficient in English. So, in that respect, a foreign-language correspondent faces the same expectations as every other American stenographer. There may be little competition; however, there are also few positions.

There is no mandatory term of notice for firing someone here, so there is a great deal of turnover. I received two answers to my advert - for which I paid almost as much as your weekly state salary - that is, five dollars. The one was an invitation to sell stocks for a corporation, the other was right up my alley: They were looking for an English-German-French stenotypist. Of course I immediately followed up. The boss wasn't there; the secretary asked me to wait. I sat there and observed the girl. She was young, thin, had close-cropped hair, a blank but intelligent face, what the Americans describe as "*wide-awake*". She was typing a letter. Then she called up some friend - friend being an absolutely harmless word here - and arranged a get-together for the evening. The errand *boy* for a large women's hat salon carried in a gargantuan box painted with rosy red flowers for Mrs. Executive. Whenever Mr. Executive should drive home for the evening - the wealthy, real New Yorkers rarely live in New York, instead they live in suburbs - his chauffeur would take such deliveries along. After one and a half hours of waiting, Mr. Jones makes an appearance. The little secretary sits at attention. She gets a few words thrown at her head that she promptly puts into operation. She shares with him that he has a *dinner engagement* for this evening and then she receives the task to cancel it. It is within her discretion to find a plausible excuse. He signs the letters that she laid on the desk for him. He doesn't read them. He knows he can rely on her; otherwise he wouldn't keep her around. Then she hands him a slip on which she has written my name and the reason for my being here. The fraction of a glance grazes me; I think that this couldn't be enough to tell him if I am fat or thin, tall or short.

Subsequently, it later came to my knowledge that he had already assessed me from top to bottom. With the wave of his hand I was in the seat next to his desk; the secretary left the room. In the five minutes of our conversation this man grappled a motley mixture of conversation topics for which a European would have required an hour to conclude, or even another day. He explained his very personal views about what makes up a good stenotypist after a few general remarks about the condition of the export business, skipped over the list of my extrinsic assets, quoted a few lines from “Romeo and Juliet”, and invited me to dine with him in the Pavilion Royal, a fashionable *Boardhouse*. Then he would have time to explain everything to me more fully. I thanked him with a glimpse at the rosy red box and sounded retreat.

One position was advertised for by an agency. I had thus far avoided agencies because they charge an entire weeks wages from employees for mediating the position. The employer doesn't pay a thing. “Can you take 150 words per minutes?” I had never counted, but of course I said yes. “Can you spell properly in German? And do you have a good French accent?” When I read the name of the company, my hope sank. It was a French name, a top-ranked broker firm. My suspicion was validated; the very fine American listened to my introductory words and answers to a few questions then he said “I deeply regret to inform you after you troubled yourself so much, but the position is as good as filled.”

Since no prospects happened to be coming my way, I had to start looking around for something different. I read in the paper that pavers were demanding a pay raise of two dollars a day - that would bring them up from twelve to fourteen dollars a day! I naturally began regretting having learned stenography and English instead of how to pave. But we can't quite change such things, can we? There was a listing for a

saleswoman in a women's boutique, in the afternoons. I figured that would keep me afloat and leave me some time in the mornings to look around some more. For this particular job I pretended to be a Frenchwoman; I could venture this imposture since I was sure that in this district - a side street off of lower *Fifth Avenue* - there would be no real Frenchwomen about, they worked in the exclusive shops in central *Fifth Avenue*. The hefty gentleman to whom I was led looked at me: "Do you have experience?" Of course I was prepared for this most terrifying and inevitable question; so I naturally replied: "Certainly, I sold in a *Departmentstore* in the Midwest." His next question rushed down upon me like a deft blow to the head: "What have you sold?" I hesitated for half a breath - because I had unfortunately never sold a thing - and he turned around, thumbing through a pile of papers: "I can only use someone with experience. I have enough addresses." OK so nothing doing, I said to myself smiling and I entered into the billowing fashion splendor of Fifth Avenue.

And so I set about looking for a placement as a normal English stenotypist. As it goes, I had to lower my expectations by about 10 dollars a week (in America they pay by the week). And my expectations had to sink even more eventually. For \$25 an American *Businessmann* can get a nimble and qualified stenotypist. I was no rookie in this line of work in America, but I was a rookie in New York.

A crowd of girls waited in the outer office; all types of girls and from almost all ages. But each one of them had a new spring coat, handsome shoes, and a chic hat. I asked the swift little girl on the telephone something. She gave me my answer. A short while later she came back to me and said, as curt, clear and cold as if she herself were an executive and not some little chicklet that had just barely finished her schooling: "You're waiting here in vain. Mr. X needs someone who can write very well in English." One

would suppose that she wouldn't have the slightest notion of how I *write*. There is no way she could know that, but that right there is the fly in the ointment; Americans generalize, and that's all. They don't have time for differentiations or nuances. Ever since I arrived, I have Americanized my English on a constant basis, and even though I can write a letter just as well in English as I can in German, I still haven't managed - which remains unaccomplished by the most experienced people after years of practice - to eliminate every shadow of a foreign accent. I still cannot ban that imperceptible intonation, that quiet difference in the pronunciation of certain sounds from my spoken word. There was a time when it was quite distinguished to have an accent here in New York. But the last two decades of New York getting flooded with hordes of uneducated immigrants that you hear communicating in grammatically incorrect, rudimentary English with brusque gestures have eliminated the allure for the intellectuals. And for the uneducated - such as this little girl here - accents had become the sign of illiteracy.

My feet were already aching. New York is definitely big. So I began to diversify: "Those who have never walked in search of bread through the streets of New York, up and down elevators, knows ye not, ye powers of fortune." I struck "just an English stenotypist" first and foremost from my list. So what now? Governess? Good God, you know that I've been down that road before. No. Never again will I enter that land of unrestricted and divine freedom of children. Besides, I had already tarnished my shining reputation as a shepherd of children with a *Business* career. *Chaperon, Finishing Governess?* Such positions were only to be found among the best of families. And the best of families are at least as exclusive as European aristocracy. You would need a long and flawless family tree of previously held assignments or quite a weighty

patronage. *Gesellschaftsdame*?<sup>20</sup> They don't have them. You're either a *Nurse* or a *Ladies Maid* or both. That's because the wealthy American women, with an entire hierarchy of servant staff at their disposal for their own and their household's comfort, is so utterly independent in their own individual lives that they wouldn't have any use for a *Gesellschaftsdame*. And even the richest of Americans only care to pay for real work that was done. They have no palate for sinecures. No one will give you a red cent just based on the lone fact that you have an education. Sometimes it can open up a door that wouldn't be open to you, for it can make you more interesting than you otherwise would have been for a moment - since Americans of all classes have a great inner respect for knowledge of which they are often not conscious. But in the next instance, they will raise their eyebrows, take hold of a pencil over the notepad they constantly hold at the ready and ask curtly: "What skills do you have?" And when Americans, especially New Yorkers, ask "What skills do you have?", he means skills in the best sense: in the sense of "efficiency", that most American of all words. It doesn't matter if you don't have many skills, rather if you can exercise those skills efficiently and, above all, quickly. Quickly! The speed that a New Yorker demands from his stenographers and clerks - and primarily from his secretaries - makes it quite impossible for a European to successfully apply for an office position of any kind without a rigorous training here in the country. Because it isn't enough to just know your stuff; you also have to be completely familiar with the establishments of this land, and, even more importantly, the mentality of its inhabitants. Americans love to tell jokes, they can talk about their successes on the golf course for hours, but in *Business*, when communicating with their subordinates, they

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<sup>20</sup> German literally for a lady of society. A type of escort who assists in planning, organizing, and generally keeps someone company professionally.

never say one word too many - in fact, they tend to say one too few. And what the subordinate doesn't quite know, what his superior never disclosed, is something a good subordinate must be able to divine for himself. For it is an egregious sin to ask a question. In the blink of an eye the boss is already a mile away in his thoughts, or on the other side of the street at least. Backpedalling bores the boss and ruins the course of his plans. Machines don't ask questions; and employees in New York, even the best-paid ones, *College man* and *College girl*, is nothing but a machine, a cog in the great machine that is *Business*.

Until five or six o'clock, that is. After that he is a *Gentleman* and she a *Lady*. The executive's stenotypist has the same "Tutankhamen" patterned overcoat as his wife. In the evenings at the dance hall they sit at neighboring tables. He doesn't know her; she doesn't know him.

In the Wall Street district, among the alleyways that differ so greatly from the rest of America in their winding, narrow construction, a palace-like building stands overshadowed by skyscrapers: "All American Cables." Giant halls, typewriter after typewriter, a deafening roar. Hundreds of young people laying into the keys of the machines like madmen. They copy cables in every language, in every code found on Earth. The cable words pass by their desks on strips of paper fast as the wind as their eyes refuse to lose site of the tiny strips. They earn \$50 a week. That's no bad payout, that is an income that - converted into bread, butter, and shoes - exceeds many a European academic. Two things are expected from them: The ability to type quickly - some type 200 words a minute - and utmost concentration, one of the secrets of American success. The words must be reproduced correctly despite the speed of transmission, especially the code words.

Dick, as I saw these rows of young people with their slicked back hair in well-fitted but *ready-made* suits made of good material, I had to think on you. How you stood in your slender height the last time I saw you near that pond in Laxenburg with your beloved Great Dane at your side as the only thing that remained of your glory days as an Uhlan cavalry captain<sup>21</sup> as you said: “I hope God sees to it that I can come with you. It would be ridiculous if I were unable to find something over there. I am, after all, an intelligent person and I’ve learned a great deal.” And that is exactly why, Dick. We learn too much in Europe, useless stuff. That’s all well and good for the salon.

My search continued: model. Yes, that would be acceptable, however, not intellectual. Models are well paid here, very much sought after in a city that is the epicenter of the clothing trade for a hinterland of several million women. Even so, I lack the necessary, modern, 1923 ideal of the feminine form in America. I’m neither writing an aesthetic nor a fashion report, so I would just like to note for your information that the Venus Anadyomene<sup>22</sup> has been prodigiously played out today in America. Slender, flat, medium-height at the tallest; a precious, quite fragile but sweet doll draped in a rippled flood of silks. That is the fashion ideal. I realized right from the get-go that my every hope was in vain; and therefore I ascended the staircase to the pillared veranda of the villa of the owner of the law firm Stretton & Co. for the first and last time. Because, as a house servant, I no longer have the right to enter via the front door; only the back door may come into consideration for domestics and vendors.

Do not mourn me, my dear Dick; I’m better off right now than working as a *Foreign-Correspondent* for some company and the entire set-up is as amusing as a

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<sup>21</sup> A light lancer regiment in the cavalries of Poland, Russia, Prussia, and Austria

<sup>22</sup> Venus Rising from the Sea, possible referring to Titian’s or the lost piece by Apelles described in Pliny’s *Natural History*

comedy play. They find mind English simply marvelous here - all 15 domestics, including the gardeners and chauffeur, speak more or less pathetic English, with the exception of the Irish second chambermaid and the Butler, who is naturally an Englishman. All of these people are well paid and look radiant. The cook gets \$25, the butler \$35, the parlor maid \$20, the madam's personal lady's maid \$30. This all adds up because a self-employed person gets an estimated \$20 per week. I can finally save some money in order to get back in front of some kind of desk. For example, the *Zofe*, or *Ladies Maid* is naturally a Frenchwoman. She's been here for five years and she'll be headed home soon, she says. She'll marry her fiancé over there and buy herself a small hotel. She can afford to do so because she has saved almost every dollar of her wages, furthermore she has quite the wardrobe of seldom worn dresses handed down from her madam. There is rarely a night in which the poor girl gets to bed before two o'clock. And it's often later than that since she has to wait for the madam to come home. She has to be ready first thing in the morning, though. She attends the madam twice a day for bathing; then she dresses her hair, then she crimps her hair, she gives her a manicure and any finishing touches to further beautify her lady. She must always in search of the newest cosmetic trends. I believe she has the most difficult duty in the household. The cook - who is an artist in her field - reigns supreme. She is completely free of the lady of the house's moods. She only communicates with her employer via the butler who brings the madam her menu for the next day with her breakfast. Most of the time, the menu returns by like manner, usually unchanged. The cook sits upon her throne in her broad, white kitchen like an executive in a paneled, locked *Fifth Avenue Office*.

Let's call it a day, Dick. I'm sorry that I have had to report to you on such boring segments of my unromantic American life, but I wanted to teach you - with all of your transatlantic longing - the true meaning of fear. I know that you'll just defiantly say: "If you can do it, Addie, then why can't I! I'm a man, after all!" That's just it. As a man you aren't capable of adapting. You have greater difficulties in conforming. Women are more like chameleons when it comes down to it, and here it almost always comes down to it. And even then - just between the two of us - my maternal grandmother was from a peasant family. Those drops of democratic blood make it easier for me to balance on the trapeze of the struggle for existence in New York. I fear that your own uninterrupted ancestral line of civil servants, department heads, and university professors would still prefer starvation to using the master's backdoor. And therefore, Dick, take my advice: "Lay your American visa on the big pile of unfinished documents in your pretty little office overlooking *Ballplatz*<sup>23</sup> (you would never, ever get such a nice office in New York) and give my regards to the *Rathauspark*<sup>24</sup> and the *Volksgarten*<sup>25</sup>.

Your old friend rejuvenated on Fifth Avenue,

Addie

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<sup>23</sup> Shortened version of Ballhausplatz, the square that houses the Austrian Federal Chancellery

<sup>24</sup> Park along the Viennese city hall

<sup>25</sup> Famous walking park for the upper-class and bourgeoisie in Vienna

## Introduction to “Dollars and Ideals”<sup>26</sup>

In one of her articles written as a letter to her old friend, Dick, Ann Tizia Leitich explores two obvious and American concepts: dollars and ideals. Leitich describes the tension she feels living in America as an Austrian. She receives correspondence from Europeans who belittle so much of America, but she feels a personal belief in the land other Europeans would insult. While preparing herself for potential criticism for being an idealist, Leitich claims that is the very thing that makes America great. Among the American ideals that Leitich celebrates are welfare, forgiveness, and faith in their own country. Here she can use specific examples of the relief aid provided to Europeans in the wake of the war. Leitich also shows how easily Americans can forgive the German people for the atrocities they committed while obeying the Kaiser. Perhaps the last ideal is the most interesting when considering her audience. Speaking to her war-torn Austrian and German readers, Leitich promotes the concept of faith. She asks, “Faith in what? Faith in the fact that America is big and wonderful and that it is the land of freedom for all, that everyone can live a life that is fit for human beings.” Leitich promotes the ideals that she believes are most commendable. The American example of a positive idealism for the sake of others is worth following.

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<sup>26</sup> From a series:

<sup>26</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Dollars and Ideals." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 31 Aug. 1923, Chronik Beilage sec.:  
<sup>26</sup>8-9. Print.

<sup>26</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Dollars and Ideals." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 1 Sept. 1923, Chronik Beilage sec.:  
<sup>26</sup>11-12. Print.

<sup>26</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Dollars and Ideals." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 4 Sept. 1923, Chronik Beilage sec.:  
<sup>26</sup>12. Print.

## Dollars and Ideals

A Letter from New York to a Dear Friend of the Crown.

Dear Dick! Ever since my eyes were truly opened in this land of surprises and opposites I have found myself standing between two fires harass me, fires diligently stoked by people over there and over here. Out of Europe the flames hiss, smolder, and crackle like lava from Mt. Etna<sup>27</sup> on the innocent surface of my desk. Letters, News, Words. Words laughing with superiority, secret envy, proudly defiant presumptuousness dressed up as irony; misunderstanding, words of prejudice and corrosive burning.

The other fire, the one that mildly flickers? It is a light in which I have warmed a petrified heart. It's the idealism of the Dollar-land that I never quite expected.

Now Dick, don't let the vehemence of this introduction make you nervous. Just let me get carried away for half an hour. Carried away from the haste, the screeching, and the buzzing of innumerable vehicles carrying tightly-packed cargoes of human beings recently released from towering skyscrapers. The crowd emits dust, yammerings, roarings, dronings, ringings, and whistlings. And this congregation relishes in the barbarity of the noise, hearing in it a sign of vitality. The late afternoon sun broods over all of it - a witches' Sabbath is held in this hour between 5 and 6 o'clock in Manhattan-New York. This is the time when everything is running, salvaging, fleeing - under the earth, upon the earth, and--as is soon to be seen!--over the earth.

And that is why it's better to gaze upon the green Jersey shore that rises lightly from the silver sheen of the Hudson waves before my balcony. Memories of the Danube flare upward: *Nussdorf, Kahlenberg, Klosterneuburg* - well then. The high-intensity

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<sup>27</sup> Mt. Etna, Sicily, Italy. The tallest active volcano in Europe.

lifestyle of hunting down dollars can be reduced to the sedated mood of Viennese bliss. And now to my letter, which is to say, to your letter first.

“Thank you for the handsomely illustrated magazines. The stories are on par with “Marlitt”<sup>28</sup>, however they are rather technical. Americans seems to excel at such things; but the Upanishads<sup>29</sup> remain a mystery to them surely enough.” And then: “I’m noticing in your letters a conspicuous change towards materialism. This was of no surprise to me since I feared from the beginning that you would be weak enough to succumb to the influence of the atmosphere there.”

“Aha... since I feared from the beginning.” I’ve got you there; I’ve got all of you there. For this is the chorus that every letter sings to me: the unwavering faith etched into the hardest marble concerning American materialism. The type of materialism that prevents someone from looking upward so that he can spend his days hunting down dollars, counting dollars, steadfastly rooted in the ground without even the slightest longing for the blue mountains of the Alps. “For there abides hate and violence and prejudice, but the greatest of these three is prejudice.” This pearl of wisdom is already a few thousand years old and is just as true today as it was then. Three years ago I would have shrugged my shoulders in all my European pessimism and said: Thou irredeemable world! Today I think: what’s a few thousand years? Nothing but a moment in the evolution of the human soul. But it does move! - that human soul. Forward, upward. You grin, you shake your head, you point to your old Hindus or to your Theocritus and you think that we are standing where we stood back then? No? Sunken even deeper into barbarism? Well a few distinguished wise men aren’t going to

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<sup>28</sup> E. Marlitt, pseudonym for Eugenie John, 1825-1887 a German pulp novelist

<sup>29</sup> Early Sanskrit philosophical texts believed to be an early source of Hindu religion

bewilder me. Yes, my dear Dick, prepare to suffer it: I am coming to you today with idealism. I hope that you have yet to forget my last letter in which I pulled back a few veils concerning your beliefs about America. And therefore you should not suspect me of tasteless courtesies. In the end, I am only saying what you all already know: here is a people, an entire people that has done something which was never done in the entire history of mankind: they have fed their enemy. The function of the American *Relief Workers* stands alone. I can already hear you saying, “The work of an idealist, a group of idealists, mixed with the running of quite ordinary errands.” Granted, but every mass movement requires a leader. And a work that encompasses millions - almost the entire globe - cannot be held together by one group alone. The spirit that stands behind it holds it together. I didn’t have the slightest suspicion of this spirit when I bid farewell to the children in Vienna. Those same children whose cheeks had grown larger and rosier thanks to American white bread and cocoa. They assigned me the task of telling people over there that the cocoa should once more be as good and the bread as plentiful as they were when they first arrived. You think I’m just romanticizing because the sun is just now sinking with its last glowing light over the Jersey hills, the cool ocean breeze blowing over my buena-vista-balcony. Above me here on the fifteenth story in the still of the evening a large bird clatters. The new air taxi carries a load of “tired *Businessmen*” to the exhilaratingly elegant Atlantic City for a dollar a minute or *thereabouts*.

I have no intention of making a fool of myself by claiming that everyone here is an idealist. The mood of the people is like an over-filled rowboat: it’s easily tipped. This way or that. There was a man of the highest class of intelligence who said vexed:

“What’s in it for us to walk all the way to Germany or Russia and throw our good money

after those idlers. If only we Americans would just worry about own own affairs.” Of course this man was a Republican (the political party that opposes the Democrats and any intrusion into European affairs) and his hands were still warm from voting in anti-Wilson-rage (1921). But politics are always narrow-minded. But even he went quiet when I answered him: “Isn’t it worth more than money that America can claim for all time to have done something that mankind had never done before?”

And enemies! Don’t believe for a minute that we were really enemies for the Americans. Even two to three years after the armistice I could feel it on some corners, and even then, this young people found the grandeur of this all-encompassing gesture: to overlook every declaration of war, every race, every faith for the boundlessness to be found within the idea of helping someone in need.

And exactly why did the prudent American mothers with a good grasp of common sense send their sons to the battlefields of Europe? For so long over there we didn’t want to believe that they would do it and for so long we had no idea that so many, so many were in France already. “Wall Street had to save its investments. B had to say it because A said it.” It’s a possible theory. I don’t know, but keep myself from treading on such hot ground. But I do know how astounded I was to hear people talk about this topic over here. When I say “people” I don’t mean college presidents that were forced into resignation as martyrs of their idealistic views. I don’t mean the publisher and author who recently received a prize for \$100,000 for a feasible plan for ensuring world peace (something that never occurred to the rich people of Europe, and this man doesn’t even belong to the cadre of opulent tycoons). I don’t mean Wall Street brokers, professors at Columbia, or inhabitants of the upper Fifth Avenue in New York’s aristocrat district. If at all possible, I don’t mean New Yorkers. If you want a good

picture of America, this is the least typically American city. I mean the average resident of innumerable cities and towns in inner America, those cities with adventurous, and often mismatched names. For example, what is one to think of a “Palmyra”<sup>30</sup> in which none of the quickly built wooden houses is older than a single generation? Or what about a “Madrid” that was never seen by a King? The people in these cities almost all live in their own (if not modest) house and know little more of Europe other than it’s somewhere on a map. A young woman stands in front of me; she is married to a wealthy factory owner/Harvard graduate. We sat together in the white kitchen of her sixteen-room home and sorted garden strawberries from two large baskets for canning. When I complained about canning strawberries she began to tell me the maxims that the youth of America are raised with, her eyes glowing with excitement: “Whatever you do, do your best.” And similar things, like the following that Europeans would consider a trite phrase or - what would never hold up against the enthusiasm of these people - simply the appearance of an enchanting naiveté: “You have no need to fear, ‘cause, well if you just do the right work the right way, diligently, then you’ll get everything that’s coming to you.” And then about the war: “Yes, why did we send them over there if it wasn’t for the cause of freedom and to help a friend in need. It was our responsibility, our holy duty, when we saw that the Kaiser’s despotism could prevail. And you, you all should thank us that we did it!” This woman knew nothing of Wall Street - she was 2,000 miles away from Wall Street and had never seen the place. Then, another time: “I really should have the parlor wall paper redone, but I’d rather not. Businesses can go under and there’s so much, so much unemployment (Spring 1921)! And we have you all to

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<sup>30</sup> Palmyra is the name of an ancient city in central Syria with large temple complexes as well as the name of small towns and villages in 14 US States.

thank for it because you started that war. We have the Germans and the Austrians to thank for all of it. And you all are fussing? But how could we dare?

The previous day I had explained to her the miserable state of things over there. That same evening she came back with a whole load of ladies' suits, overcoats, dresses, and other things in good condition: "Do you think that the people over there could use it? It isn't going to get much better next winter and the coats are warm. I went out to see Mrs. Beardsly to ask her if she could get me something, too and Miss Glencoe gave me the brown ladies' suit. I actually never asked Miss Glencoe for anything - her groom was shot dead by a German in France, but she listened in when I told Mrs. Beardsly about the misery over there and she just cried and cried."

My heart sank; I thought of the millions of broken lives, and the jungle of disgrace, the greed that brooded over flowered meadows in the wake of the war. And I thought about the hunger and the terrible oblivion of the individual who was up to his neck in misery - everything that was forgotten, that it is a right of every human being to live in beauty and love. But it is also right to think: what are a few dresses from the gargantuan wealth of America? But then again I have to romanticize it: It's the kindness in the very thought, the worth of impetus that lies therein. It's the gesture of a child who breaks his slice of bread and butter in half and hands it to a hunger child on the street. How should the child know that this poor soul is helped so little by two bites to eat?

These people know nothing of Europe, and they are basically not interested in it in the least. It is essentially alien to them. Their culture, despite having been built Europe's ancient culture, is the culture of a future era. It's a culture in its primary stages of development with a magnificently arranged layout, and it is completely different from Europe, at least from the culture of prewar Europe. We don't know anything about this

fact when we come over here. We learn about it bit by bit, we learn to acquire the key to understanding this gigantic and so wonderfully sovereign land. In doing so, one must never forget that we perceive only large, fundamental threads, and not the filigree work of thousands of years of tedious labor. The hundred-year-old Senator Cole said that the America of today is much more American than it was fifty years ago, more American in relation to Europe and further removed than it was fifty years ago. The Americans of today travel to Europe in larger numbers than they ever have before. But they go to Europe like going to the zoo. They aren't like the Americans of previous generations who went to copy and find intellectual enjoyment. Europe and Europeans still carry an aftertaste of something exquisite for fine Americans of the older generation. He appreciates them like bouquet of a premium wine. The generation, however, that is at the helm today is indifferent to Europe. An American woman may crane and strain her neck in order to see a Parisian woman dressed in Parisian fashion, but then she will don her shoes with the low heels and her *Sweater* over her lingerie blouse when a *Sweater* and lingerie combination - by all European notions - is not called for in the least.

Take Knute Harborg, a naturalized citizen from Sweden. He has tough, rigorous work to do since he's uneducated and his English is poor. But he works so that his children can have the best upbringing. His eldest son was killed in action in Flanders. I started talking about the war and I expected to hear a volley of curses and bitter pain. I heard no such thing. For him, the war was just one more reason to consider America wonderful, the price of freedom was not too costly to be purchased with the life of his son. "If we hadn't gone over, the Kaiser would be here now. And if the Kaiser and the Germans had won, then my children would have been nothing more than the children of slaves."

Initially, it appeared to me from my skeptical, blasé European point of view that the things these people said to me were so infinitely naive, but little by little I began to recognize the power of this primitive notion. I began to marvel at its power and it shined down on me like a light above the abyss. “Sure,” someone is bound to interject. “Newspapers! Propaganda from the demagogues, an ingeniously chosen headline: Freedom.” It’s no rebuttal for those of us who have heard these people talk about it and have seen them laughing and working. The newspapers, the only serious reading for millions of them, are a business. But it’s an American business, so it’s conducted so that the public will get just what it wants according to the American principle, “*Give the best possible service*”. And if the papers want something from their public, then they know just what tune to sing to strike a chord with their audience.

When you come to America from the bloody turmoil of Europe, so dead tired of the never-ending, useless, and deadly bickering of the nations, so tired of the screeching battle cries of different parties that can cut to the core, the reciprocal lupine mauling - then those words of the universality of the idea of freedom land in grateful soil. Like beholding one of God’s miracles I watch how Germans and Frenchmen, Englishmen and Turks, Bohemians and Hungarians, Russians and Jews, Italians and Yugoslavians over here can peacefully live next to each other, work together and strive together in the light of the ideal of humanity contained within the great republic. Cooperation! Not that every one of them lives fully conscious of this ideal: the bulk of the American people is made up of *Farmer* whose mental horizon is naturally limited - but I must state that their education is substantially higher than that of a European peasant, which is why I abstain from translating the word “Farmer” with “Bauer”. Then there is the mass of industrial workers, *skilled* and *unskilled*, where you will likely find many naturalized

Americans, first-generation Americans, and immigrants. Oftentimes they aren't capable of speaking or writing grammatically, neither in the language of the country in which they were born (because they have either forgotten most of it or never really learned it well) nor in the language of their adopted country. An untrained adult brain has difficulties learning a language and a factory is not exactly the place to hear academic English. But they get the chance to hear good English in night school. You'll find immigrants from every European country and sometimes ones from Asia. A teacher, always a female teacher and never a male, usually a volunteer, a lady who has time and a good education and something perhaps more important than the other two: *enthusiasm*. If she didn't have enthusiasm en masse, then she would take to her heels at the first sight of her class. But she stands there smiling under this throng of callused hands with humble brows and dull gazes that they carry with them after generations of squalid existences in the lowest of social classes. She explains, asks, answers the same things tirelessly thousands of times; every individual feels that the teacher is there for him alone and that he can give her some private snippet of joy if he can just manage to do something. If it weren't for her smile and the radiance of her enthusiasm, then many a pupil would have fallen into despair on the first day. But her enthusiasm gives birth to faith, because it stems from faith.

Faith in what? Faith in the fact that America is big and wonderful and that it is the land of freedom for all, that everyone can live a life that is fit for human beings. There is no chance for trite phrases, for words are the things here that are least well understood. It's something that is deeper than words, stronger. It's something that paints a vast background from which the few words appear to come that radiate from the very being of the teacher. Something that is embedded in the classroom, it floats in

the air, intangible yet palpable everywhere. It's the spirit of the old, thoroughbred founders of America, the spirit of the old Puritans that landed on Plymouth Rock singing their songs. Their perspective may have been narrower, and a good deal of the American intelligentsia currently opposes certain offshoots of this Puritanism; you can think what you want, but one thing is for sure: They had the one thing in full measure that people accuse the *Yankee* of lacking over and over again: idealism. And even if prohibition and the *Clean-Book-League* and similar things show that there is still lives and thrives, you have to admit that the idealism of this strong and ethically lofty race also lives on. What crystallized the ideals of the republic more than a hundred years after the landing at Plymouth were the words of the *Declaration of Independence*, in all their simple grandeur, and they still apply to this day. Those words built America. They have an effect over the centuries and they penetrate millions of people, even those who can barely understand them.

On the Fourth of July, the biggest holiday, the day of the *Declaration of Independence*, there was a party in the night school. They had a whole program with performances by the students. Poems, songs, jokes, and a speech held by someone who was a student two years ago. The car that he came in was parked below. His wife and daughter have new silk dresses. And there was music and dancing and - as a matter of course - sandwiches, cake, and *Icecream*. Home is home after all, isn't it? And the language and everything so different and sometimes, yes, quite difficult. But well... America is so rich. Yup, cake and *Icecream*, as much as everyone wants, all for free. And yet, looking out from the wall, from black, ridiculously simple frame a man looks down at the laughter, the singing and goings-on. He looks out from deeply kind and - despite the sun - brilliantly brotherly eyes that are just a little sad, like the eyes of all of

the great idealists. He is that man who said a word that Old World could desperately use: *With charity to everybody, with malice to nobody (Güte für jeden, Haß gegen keinen)*. Words said by a man that no one could have imagined that anyone could have been his servant, because from the first moment on that person would be his fellowman. But Abraham Lincoln, looking out of his black frame there on the empty school wall smiles down, without elegance or pretension. A country boy from Kentucky, self-taught without a single “*dollar*” in his background, he is the person that Americans celebrate as the greatest in their land. Americanism is personified in his noble mind. He who, like the great ones of this earth did then and still do, descended from a region somewhere above the clouds, the place from which we receive our greatest and grandest thoughts.

## Introduction to "Weekend"<sup>31</sup>

Among Leitich's first articles in *Neue Freie Presse*, her "Weekend" pieces are written as letters to Leitich's friend, Dick, in Austria. In the first article of the two-part series, Leitich explains the difference between the American weekend of adventure and what just happens to be the end of the week in Europe. Although her friends in Austria send her postcards of scenic hikes and Alpine pasture, Leitich tells Dick of the adventures New Yorkers can seek every Friday after work. Although both places offer adventure, Leitich points out the passion that New Yorkers have for their beloved weekend. The same obsessive concentration that New Yorkers apply when earning their money from Monday to Friday becomes a determined drive to find entertainment. Manhattan becomes a ghost town as New Yorkers head to the mainland to find their relaxation and fun. Leitich tells of the true difference on the weekend between Europe and America: the lack of a true proletariat in America. Every worker gets his or her weekend, together with their employers.

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<sup>31</sup> Series of articles in *Neue Freie Presse*

<sup>31</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Weekend." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 25 Sept. 1923: 11. Print.

<sup>31</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Weekend." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 27 Sept. 1923: 10. Print.

Weekend.

Another letter to Dick, a Friend of the Crown.

by Ann Tizia Leitich

Dear Dick,

If I had not expressly asked you to write, I would never have been able to forgive such diabolic irony. Every one of those beloved ocean liners that dock just a few blocks from my *Office* pours reminders of lovely, cool, idyllic-pastoral, and all-in-all too wonderfully leisurely places where you and your sort take your summer moods for walks. Today, today of all days, when it's 95 degrees, when the electric fans are whirring all around me, and even my boss - in memory of his Mayflower aristocracy - is working in his shirtsleeves (that are made of the best silk you can find), which he never does, and a delivery man from a heavenly kingdom brings me your postcard from Heiligenblut. And as I'm trying to convert 1800 meters into *feet*, the next post card shows up from Glocknerhaus<sup>32</sup>! I had to give up on conversions and sink myself into the greenish blue haze and, *ach*, into that coolest of secrets. I felt myself floating away on the wonderful overcoat of that man from Andersen's fairy tale<sup>33</sup> as it carried me the entire four thousand miles away and the x-thousand feet high up into the majesty of the Carinthian<sup>34</sup> glaciers.

"But of course it's there. I already told ya already it's there."

How? What? Is it a dwarf that crawled out of the crystal passageways of the Alps? His dark hair stands out so abruptly from the forehead that covers two jolly and

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<sup>32</sup> A mountain in located in Heiligenblut, Carinthia, Austria.

<sup>33</sup> Leitich likely confused H.C. Andersen's fantastic description of the Sandman's magic overcoat and the story of the Flying Trunk in which a young man uses a magical flying trunk to fly to Turkey and visit the Sultan's daughter.

<sup>34</sup> Carinthia, the southernmost state in Austria.

crafty boy eyes. Those eyes lie behind immense horn-rimmed glasses and sweat gleams from his forehead. Poor fella, he won't even dare to take off his coat because he's just an *Office-boy*. Dwarf, nonsense. Of course, it's Con, the *Office-boy*! And the telephone shrills in the way only an American telephone can, it could be that it's been ringing the entire time.

“*It is Mr. Havemeyr, Miss Leidi--it's impossible for an American to pronounce a “ch”--He is on the phone himself and he gets impatient, you know.*” Mr. Havemeyr is the lawyer for, maybe not the company, but for the private affairs of the boss. According to his reputation, getting your first piece of mail means a day full of complications. And, oh, the incessant details of *Lawyers*. And it's 95 degrees! My hand--well-schooled in routine--mechanically touches the apparatus and, under the soft click of the receiver, glaciers and fairy tales and dwarfs and Alpine splendor atomize like a mirage. A pleasant, smiling, compliant face replies in an equally pleasant voice, toned down but clear, “*Yes, Mr. Havemeyr?*” in a three-toned cadence that rises to a high A note. And then *vogue la galere*<sup>35</sup>!

The Glockner and the Alps dissolved into the distant sun as my mind became fully concentrated on my work once more. I wasn't fooling myself - it really was a hot day. As I was driving a colleague *uptown* eight hours later, I slowly felt my way back to myself. In that moment, it occurred to me that I have a trump to play against your tantalizing card from the Paterze glacier: I have seen and savored the Paterze glacier, to the same degree that you have seen and savored it. Of course that doesn't mean that we don't find renewed enjoyment each time we go there each time we will go. But you, my dear friend, have been invited to spend the *Weekend* on an American luxury yacht?

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<sup>35</sup> French idiom, meaning “row the galley on”, similar to the idiom “come what may”.

*Voilà!* And there you have it! While I carry Paterze and Heiligenblut and everything beloved in my heart, I am (as you well know) an enthusiastic gatherer of all new experiences. As such, I call your Paterze and I raise you a yacht.

New York copes with a colossal mass of workers, not just in quantity, but also in quality. While its rushing tempo is surpassed by Chicago, New Yorkers have the grace of those who really know how to live. At the end of its thundering, cyclopean streets and at the end of five iron-hard work days, every New Yorker stands in front of a colorful voice of weekend plans, blossoming and opening up like a bed of tulips. And the dew from which he waters these delights is a refined indulgence: *Week-end!* Therein lies salvation, in our instinct that leads us to escape from the material cares of the twentieth century, the century of work. It is a word that cannot be translated. For what do our German words “Ende der Woche” actually mean? They are vapid and empty. *Weekend*, on the other hand, means sun and hills and wind. It’s the blue sea with the enticing white beaches caressed by waves. It’s the sailing trips and car rides. It’s sitting peacefully in a rocking chair with a view of the greenery with friends around you. It’s new, fragrant clothes. It’s the genial competition on the golf course. It’s tennis and ball games. It’s the broad hotels flooded with light. It’s play and surprise. It’s meeting new people, seeing new places. It’s having close friends over to your spacious, meticulously well-kept lodge. It’s flirtation and dancing and words of love. It’s a rigorous and conscious retreat from the daily routine. It’s *dreams comes true*. And it also means that Manhattan is dead. It is a skyscraper city happily left behind after midday on Saturdays, or even on Friday since many offices don’t require anyone to work on Saturdays in summer and all of the big department stores are closed. The keys to *Safes*, back offices, and factories has been turned with a little more gusto than usual and the descending

elevators are full of elegant leather handbags and golf clubs. Usually people go home first, but that takes too much time and time is not just money, time is enjoyment, pleasure, life. And New York lives for the intense pleasures. The more experiences New York can pack into one day, the better: work, sports, love, speculations, sensations, it doesn't matter what. Just movement, lots and lots of movement. New York creates its own diversity; New York loves the spectacle of ever-changing colors from the headlights. This is one major difference between New York and the rest of America - with the exception of Gold Coast. It has a sense of imagination. There is no *Weekend* in Chicago. Sunday begins on Saturday afternoon, and consists of endless rows of cars driving about aimlessly through all the glorious streets in the area. And Sunday, blessed Sunday, in the rest of the cities and towns? Boredom. A rosy flare of expectation in the beginning that ends with the eternal willingness of the human soul to find the miraculous, even with eyes that cannot see and ears that cannot hear. "*All dressed up and no place to go.*" The tragedy of the Midwest, the strong, stubborn Midwest with so much future ahead of it.

New York, on the other hand, is never boring. It doesn't have the time for such things. Whoever wants to pin an interesting *Weekend* onto his calendar can rest assured. Naturally the most welcome things are invitations. And they love to invite plenty of guests as often as they can, because guests disrupt the monotony of the country household. Recreation-seeking guests bring a kind of fresh, stimulating energy with them, and the iridescent, vibrating complexity of the big city. And, oh, about the glorious regularity and, at the same time, the magical irregularity at a *Weekend-mansion*! Americans aren't just enthusiastic hosts, they allow their guests complete

freedom, during which they make everything and anything in their household available to their guests.

(A second article to follow)

Weekend.

Another letter to Dick, a Friend of the Crown.

From Ann Tizia Leitich

Oh, I had a wonderful *Weekend!*” “*Well, how was the Weekend?*” It’s essential; the *Weekend* is an irreplaceable and natural pearl strung onto the coral necklace of days. You sit down in your office again on Monday morning with a fresh tan and beaming eyes in the cyclopean buildings with their *Lifts* going up and down. The machines start rattling Monday morning, the transmissions hum, the commands fly. On Monday, Wall Street becomes a swarming bee hive once more and the exclusivity of the executive *Office* is staunchly defended by the secretary playing the role of Cerberus. She is a lovable, flawlessly trained Cerberus whose extraordinary competence goes unnoticed from a distance. That is how the brain of New York operates. Each Monday New York is just as myopically committed to work as it was committed to fleeing the city to seek amusement the previous Friday. This is because Americans have a wonderfully childlike gift: At the sharp bend of the moment they are capable of shifting their very being in order to harmoniously slide into the sweep of that curve. There are no distracting, shaken nerves afterward - they don’t have any nerves yet. No need to a sluggishly break away from the old nor to habituate in a way that is heavy laden with memories. Nope. Americans require just one quick leap to enter into complete concentration on the next task.

New York is belted around far and wide by homes in the countryside with golf courses and *Farm* lands. Long-Island to the East is a large, elongated island, bathed on the one side by the sound, an ocean inlet, and on the other side by the surf of the Atlantic. Its emerald-green lawns are interrupted by pristine paved roads, dotted with gardens kept up most meticulously in the English style, and lined with many villas full of the most amazing creatures, those rich New Yorkers who have their homes here. The hill country of New Jersey lies to the west beyond the silver Hudson with the tunnel trains running below it day and night. In those rolling hills are villa weekend-home retreats for the everyday man, with small and large lakes named after Indians and the coast, the only real kilometer-long *Beach* where hundreds of thousands of people amuse themselves in the sand and crashing waves every Saturday and Sunday. When you are bobbing in those waves, lungs full of ozone, eyes sunken in the endlessness of the ocean, you can forget any longing for the cirque<sup>36</sup> or *Glocknerhaus*<sup>37</sup>. In the evenings, the ride home is a slow one. The roads into the city are full of cars for a radius of about thirty miles. It would almost be better to take the train home; there are plenty of trains that are comfortable, roomy, and swift. And indeed, it isn't till Sunday that you really notice that this city has six million inhabitants - just as many as Austria!

But there are no proletarians in America. None of the proletarians that make up the face of the major cities of Europe on Sundays. At first glance, there appears to only be one class: pretty consistently well-dressed, sometimes expensive, not always tastefully. They are content, well-nourished people. What do they do for a living? That doesn't matter. That is one of the truly democratic truths about this country: outside of

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<sup>36</sup> A valley head formed by glaciers in the shape of an amphitheater

<sup>37</sup> A mountain inn in the Austrian Alps near the Glockner, a famous peak

the workplace, no matter who you are, a human being is a human being and that's that. You could lay bricks or sell cars when you're at work, milk cows or operate heavy machinery, keep up the books or play the violin: it doesn't bother anyone what someone else does. Of course there is still a difference in relation to what you really are, but that's for another chapter. The Sunday crowds on the *Boardwalk - Boardwalk* is the term for the wide walking path built over the beach full of swimmers that was just erected by the borough of Brooklyn--are indistinguishable on the surface from those on the proud *Boardwalk* of Atlantic City that is lined with elegant *Shops* and gigantic, expensive, luxurious hotels. This grand, universal class, "*just folks*" to use the phrase that the late President Harding made his motto, reigns supreme in the public life of America. This class participates in everything and is allowed to go everywhere. And yet there remain two further classes: the intellectuals have their own circles and are lost in the masses whenever they leave those circles. Then there is "*Society*," the true one and the imagined one. By all appearances it is just one group, but it is actually separated by a deep moat built up around the fortifications of individuals who only rarely let down the proverbial drawbridge. Everyone can go to Atlantic City and Palm Beach, but in the hallowed regions around Newport, none may enter who do not belong to the *socially elect*.

The pleasure boats are full to the brim with "*just folks*," who ride up the Hudson in the morning and back down in the evening. For a dollar you can spend an entire Sunday on two folding chairs on deck. While you sit, the Hudson scenery so often and proudly praised by Americans unfurls before you like movie scene. But you won't find

any Lorelei Cliff<sup>38</sup> or the little rose garden of the Kuenringe<sup>39</sup>! Anyone looking for medieval romance in America will to be severely disappointed. Even in those parts of the country where human hands have yet to shape it, the American landscape is intrinsically different from that of Europe. And yet, the Hudson is beautiful. In one place it is as wide and mighty as a small sea, and right after that the mountains press up tightly against the water like in the Wachau<sup>40</sup>, forcing the proud current through daring curves that pass by little settlements under flowering trees. On the shore to the left is a piece of greenery that is more intense, fuller, and sectioned off by the artistic hand of man. It swings around to a white building - a millionaire's estate. And in the evening, as the ships make their way downstream, music strikes up all around and every guy holds his gal. In this moment the little houses gleam brightly round about like eyes in the face of the night. From one of the houses that sits on the crest of a hill, ruling both hill and river, heavenly lights dart through the pitch-black of the firmament. The lights proclaim the name of the palatial fortress. Anyone who can stretch his *Weekend* over a few days takes a trip up the Hudson all the way up to Albany and from there up into the splendid heights of the Adirondacks. It's a section of highlands similar to the Alps, minus the highest peaks and eternal snow, penetrated by the peculiar red of the American landscape. There is lordliness to the flow of its lines, there's an unwritten and virgin nature to it, even in places where men have settled it. There are countless lakes that reflect dark forests of fir trees and blue mountains. There are babbling Alpine

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<sup>38</sup> A dangerous bend in the Rhine associated with a siren, the Loreley, that drove sailors to crash their ships into the cliff of the same name.

<sup>39</sup> A section of the castle ruins of Burg Aggstein, as can be seen on boat tours of the Danube. The rose garden was the section of the outer walls so named because the lord of the castle hung out his prisoners to starve to death on the walls.

<sup>40</sup> A Danube river valley approximately 80 km west of Vienna.

brooks that tumble over stones. There are narrow paths in the still coolness of the high forests, and in those heights you will find a “*log-cabin*” charmingly removed from the hustle and bustle of the world in a clearing. A cabin is the American version of a chalet<sup>41</sup>, but it is a daring comparison, since a *log-cabin* has little more in common with a chalet than its location - for superficial observations - and the exterior. It doesn’t belong to a farmer, but instead to some wealthy city-dweller. It isn’t outfitted with any electricity, gas, or hot running water. Other than that you can find almost anything behind the exterior walls of rough-timbered trunks, “*logs*”. It serves as a place for relaxation, hunting, and flirting. The most beautiful room is the great hall, the *lounge room*. The enormous antlers of a “*moose*” - what we call elks in Europe - look down from the walls and the floors are covered in lavish pelts that you can blissfully lie down on after a day out in the ozone-rich air. Stretched out in front of the chimney - “*fireplace*” - full of flaming logs...

Addio for today, my dear Dick. Time! Time! The noble art of writing a letter in which I indulged at one time has crumbled in the gallop pace of New Yorker life. A “*Pad*” is sitting in front of me that says I have to catch a train at 6:30 that will take me out to a concert with Galli-Curci<sup>42</sup> in Ocean Grove - the great hall against whose walls the ocean waves beat. So, hotfooted I wish you farewell and so long! Addio.

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<sup>41</sup> Sennhütte or chalet - a traditional Alpine timbered house used by cattle farmers in the summer, also called a “Swiss chalet” similar to a mountain cabin

<sup>42</sup> Amelita Galli-Curci, famed operatic soprano from Italy

## Introduction to “*The Affairs of Anatol* on the Missouri”<sup>43</sup>

Reporting from New York on her experiences in the Midwest, Ann Tizia Leitich gives a review of Cecil B. DeMille’s film adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler’s 1893 drama, *Anatol*. In her article, she not only critiques DeMille’s American adaptation of a Viennese theatrical classic, she critiques the audience. Leitich develops the perspective that the refined culture of Europe cannot be reasonably adapted by such a young people for such a young people. Leitich diverts her reader’s attention away from the film itself and onto the various members of the audience. Each individual becomes a short story or snapshot of an American life. The lives of the American audience are full of issues such as driving to Omaha to buy a bull, making preparations for Thanksgiving dinner, and getting out of the theater as soon as the film is over. Leitich brings her own article back to New York to show how the audience on the Missouri river differs from the American metropolitans. It is there that Leitich discovers that for the 32nd week in a row *The Covered Wagon*, a film about American pioneers on the Oregon Trail, is even sold out for the matinee. Leitich praises what she calls, “the great, true American film,” for its artistry. In contrast to the poor American adaptation of a European work, an American film with an American story is art and storytelling to Leitich. The Americans were unable to reproduce let alone comprehend a great Austrian play. Far from condemning American film-making, Leitich positively evaluates a work of American spirit and epic proportions for its ability to convey itself.

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<sup>43</sup> Series in *Neue Freie Presse*

<sup>43</sup>Leitich, Ann Tizia. "The Affairs of Anatol on the Missouri." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 15 Nov. 1923: 12.  
<sup>43</sup>Print.

<sup>43</sup>Leitich, Ann Tizia. "The Affairs of Anatol on the Missouri." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 17 Nov. 1923: 10-11.

<sup>43</sup>Print.

“The Affairs of Anatol”<sup>44</sup> on the Missouri

by Ann Tizia Leitich

The waves of sudden, unbridled lights plunge onto the street and break on the row of cars that stand obliquely on the street like a rampart, like a defiant fortress of cars certain of its own might. Not one single horse-drawn vehicle, just automobiles. *Ford Cars* in every model, from the lightest smallest, cheapest *Flivver* to the six-person-*Car* that flies awkwardly on its way over country roads, practical *Overlands*<sup>45</sup>, dapper *Dodges* (which you get once you have surpassed the financial tier of purchasing a Ford), *Roadsters* of all makes and here and there a proud Cadillac - for we are in the state of rich fields. Slowly, carefully the cars drives on the narrowed street, always more, always more new arrivals. And the farmers are in their heavy fur coats because the season’s first snow lies on the stubble of the corn fields. They come with their wives who wear hats pinned up with peculiar ostrich feathers. Finally, children and adolescents clamber out of the seats and the wives look for their friends as their husbands lock up the cars.

Most of the cars are covered in the dirt and dust of several miles of country road. The once mirror-like bodies of the cars are tarnished and clouded from hard weeks of work on the Prairie, in weather, wind, sun, over rocks and deep-cut ruts. They come out of the darkness at the end of the street where the bridge leads them over the Missouri - one of the longest rivers on earth. The water rolls by with a soft gargling sound as dark and relentless as time itself. A sandy little island juts out its center with a pale sheen. Driftwood stretches upwards like ghastly arms reaching heavenward from their graves dug by waves. Tiny sand dunes pile up between the limbs crammed with debris, tattered

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<sup>44</sup> Anatol, Arthur Schnitzler, Verlag des Bibliographischen Bureaus , Berlin1893, dramatic piece by Viennese playwright, Arthur Schnitzler

<sup>45</sup> Overland Automobile Company, produced 1903-1926

boards, broken barrels. In the darkness of the November evening they look like mysterious gifts hanging from the Tree of Knowledge. Beyond the black and silent shore lies an endless succession of sleepy corn fields and pig pastures. A few lights flicker like will-o'-the-wisps over the swamp on the outskirts of town pressed right up against the river's edge - the negro quarter. The little wooden houses with modest verandas surface to the right and the left of perfectly straight Main Street. It's not a long row of houses; there are only two-thousand inhabitants in this town. The Princess Theater arises suddenly from the darkness as a triumph of light. This is where everyone is headed and the crowds have gathered around its glow.

The tiny cashier sits in her tiny glass box in the center of the flood of people and light. Her face is as smooth as a doll's, her lipstick and blush are far too gaudy and her brows too darkly blackened with shadow. Her light green silk dress is heavy with glass pearls. But she has the eyes of a very young girl. She sits there calculating without ceasing as slides coins and dollars and *Tickets* through the tiny hole in the glass. The price of seats gets raised tonight (it's Saturday night) to 25 and 35 cents. A tan young man stands in front of the entrance. His uniform that very well might have been grey and golden at some point is now just a good joke. The joke gets better when you realize that they're serious. The owner of the Princess Theater knows what belongs in a proper movie palace - AKA cinema. But no one is entering the main hall. They all stand in the entryway and relish the festive commotion of the moment. The men bump into business associates. "*Helle, old top.*" "*Whad ya doin ere, Sam, gettin swell?*" The prices of wheat and corn take flight like a little flock of partridges. The women criticize each other, secretly and openly. The children play tag around the cashier's box and holler and scream. The louder the cars on the street get, the louder they scream. Most of these

people are large, robust characters (both genders). They're blond and light-eyed, *Bauern*, and yet still so different from *Bauern*<sup>46</sup>. And they're in such heavy clothes. Not the youth, the youth know better. Almost every girl covers her country complexion with the same inept makeup skills as the cashier framed by a meticulous bouffant. Behind the cut back collars of fur coats you can spy the light-colored *Crepe de Chine* or Georgette dress that is regarded as *le dernier cri* from the East in the Emporium, the local *Department Store*. To form a quick analogy, that dress is to the East as a quart of spritzer of dubious origins is to a *bouteille* of aged Tokaji<sup>47</sup>. They laugh casually, joyfully, and loudly while walking arm-in-arm with their *Fellows*, their young men. Some won't settle for just one escort so they bring two or three along. "I bet my life, swellest show you ever saw, Dan!" Maggie's eyes sparkle with delight and expectation as they gaze up at the *Billboards* hanging in front of the theater. Dan doesn't care about the *Billboards*. Dan doesn't care about the *Show*. It's no Charlie and no Wild West show with *gunmen* and *thrills*. "Girl's stuff, anyway." But he's going to sit next to Maggie in the darkness of the theater and hold her hand, sitting oh so close.

Yes, those *Billboards*! A whole gallery of larger than life women all cheerily painted, women with eyes full of a bit too much yearning. They have lips that are pursed too much and they don low-cut gowns. A whole pack of Circe, Aphrodite and Theodora - where is the puritanical conscience of America now? The hero of the evening has looped his chain of roses around their heads, his hands gripping the chain like reins. He's tall, slim, elegant, and smug. He's wearing a dapper suit with tails and a top hat. He is a

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<sup>46</sup> Bauer is a possible translation for farmer, but is more closely tied to peasants and the European peasant class.

<sup>47</sup> Also known as Tokay. A wine from the Tokaj-Hegyalja region of Hungary and Slovakia with one of the oldest winery traditions in Europe.

painting that has been sent from a distant star into a world that has never seen a top hat, let alone a tailcoat - the world of Anatol! Our Viennese Anatol is here in the *Farmer* town on the Missouri. And there stands in screaming letters: Cecil DeMille's<sup>48</sup> newest and greatest production: *The Affairs of Anatol*<sup>49</sup>, based on the play by Schnitzler.<sup>50</sup> I can barely believe my eyes, but I buy a *Ticket* and I say a blessing on the cinematography that could conjure up something so familiar to me out here in the Prairie all the way from the balls in the *Sophiensaal*<sup>51</sup> and dance tours with Madam privy councilor.

And of course I was sorely disappointed. This is in no way Anatol. First off, this Anatol is married! And he and his wife are ridiculously young and behave even younger. They have access to, understandably, infinite resources. It's as if they are doing far too well and they are looking for a little variety in their lives. Anatol tries things out with one girlfriend, then with another, he gives away gifts like apartments and checks, but all in all everything runs according to a prudent sense of respectability and the natural end is a happy, united married couple. The master of coquetry, Anatol, forgot any hint of those ancient peoples of the arts. He's nothing but a young, smooth, handsome guy with too much money on hand.

At first I grew angry, then I smiled - I smirked at my own foolish belief that it would be possible for even one moment to find the same Anatol who was refined and degenerate right down to his fingertips out here on the Missouri. A hundred years ago Indians were still swinging *Tomahawks* around these parts. And then I looked out across the audience at their faces in that long, narrow theater with its low ceiling and

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<sup>48</sup> Cecil B. Demille 1881-1951, American film director, producer, and actor.

<sup>49</sup> *The Affairs of Anatol*, 1921, Cecil B. Demille

<sup>50</sup> Dr. Arthur Schnitzler 1862-1931,, Austrian author and dramatist

<sup>51</sup> Or Sofiensaal. Premier dance hall in Vienna, especially for the composers of the Strauss family.

bare walls with a few figures painted on them. Maggie is sitting there with radiant eyes, her heart beats loudly for this young, sweet, elegant Anatol. And then there's the grandeur of the powder rooms, the facilities and the umpteen servants - what a glorious life it must be and Maggie watches in rapture! She can just imagine how it must be. Wonderful! Dan is sitting next to her and notices the girl's elevated pulse and (who can help but smirk) he gives himself credit for her excitement. She strayed from her normal course and took his hand when he offered to help her into his dapper *Roadster*. Dan is happy. Maggie's father sits a few rows behind him. He's sleeping. He was tired for God's sake. It was twenty miles from Omaha where he bought a bull this morning and then back to the *Farm* and then the twelve miles to the *Show* and the roads are so bad, but the broads have to go to their *Show*! There's Maggie's mother who is too old-fashioned to command or correct her. She gave up trying to keep track of the plot line due to the fact that she didn't read the text of the play all the way through and she also didn't pay attention to the beginning because she had just realized that this next Monday will be the right time to start cleaning up for *Thanksgiving*. By the time she decided to call up Myrtle Hannehin tomorrow morning, she had already given up on thinking. Just being close to so many people with friends and acquaintances fills her with a feeling of well-being. The scenes from a foreign world are salted by the animated nearness of the audience. At the joyous coming together of the couple at the end she finds the plot line where she lost it at the beginning and "good end, good everything", she had "a good time". Dr. Tom Erickson is also sitting there. His first-born sits on his lap who, with all of his two years of life experience, understands practically nothing of the evening's luster. But since the doctor's wife is solely (but naturally with the help of the doctor) responsible for their ten-room house, there was no one there to look out for

*Junior*. “Doc” had quite a time trying to get the little one used to the environment. To the amusement of the other children in the theater Junior accompanied his father with a loud scream as they watched another one of Cecil DeMille’s squander-fests. The beautiful, young wife of the doctor appears to be accustomed to leaving such passionate outbursts of ministration to her spouse. Besides, the scene on stage at the time was far too interesting - Anatol’s wife has just followed the secretly suggestive command of a yogi to take off her shoes and stockings and she’s standing in a scanty skirt in the midst of a resplendent soiree. And then there is Benjamin Fullerton, the *Drugstore Clerk*, who plans on adopting as much of Anatol’s poise and style as possible and, in reality, he will never succeed. In the first (and most expensive) row, however, sits David Donaldson, *Realestate and Insurance*. Two years ago he was a *Cowboy* and today he’s sitting down for the first time in a top hat next to a lady in a gown - in the film at least.

Once you’ve arrived at him your eyes give up wandering around the various faces. Right when Max (who was essentially degraded to the role of an extra) gives the gracious lady a kiss on the hand for the last time on the screen, all the girls in the auditorium close their eyes with enchantment at such elegance the likes of which are utterly foreign along the Missouri. In that very moment, everyone stands up, throws his coat over his shoulders and exits out onto the now silent streets. The light is still flowing, the fortress of cars stands waiting and two *Niggerboys* chase each other down the sidewalk. Just a few steps beyond and you’re standing in an open, never-ending field. There’s nothing but acreage round about as the moon shines its cold, blue light down from above. A sharp, a miserably sharp wind cuts up from the shallow hollow that shows the

Missouri's current... Anatol and the Missouri, what an irreconcilable contradiction.  
Anatol on the Missouri, what an atrocious hybrid was born.

Once more there stands the fortress of cars, no, now it is a sea of cars, waves of cars piling onto one another and brought to a sudden stop by the commanding gesture of a single hand in a white leather glove. The police man - no, *cop* - stands in the middle of the street with mighty shoulders at six feet three inches as a commanding ruler of New York. His shrill whistle dwindles in the buzz and bustle, but his hand lives, shining as it wards off the clutter and reigns in order. Under the protection of his hand the pedestrians stream across Broadway pressed hard against flood of cars. The cars stand there like so many animals with hissing nostrils. Yellow, grey, white, sky blue, pale blue taxis with easygoing and brash drivers at the wheel. Quick and arrogant coupes driven by "*successful businessmen*" or their ladies. The slender and costly gracefulness of a *Rolls Royce* with mockingly aristocratic scowling chauffeurs with their passengers looking over Broadway full of arrogance. And in the middle of all the cars - gradually rolling forward like a satiated whale - is the *Trolley car*, the electric streetcar.

It's slow going on the pavement, shoulder to shoulder. Woe unto him who forgets the laws of right-of-way for he risks pulverization. Smiling face, healthy faces, young face, old faces - but they still have the quick, radiant look of youth: both open, devious; blond, and dark. The women in fur-trimmed *Capes*; in fluttering silk coats of black, grey, brown, green, red, colorful; feathers and flowers in their hats, multicolored flowers and undulating feathers. Hands gesticulating, lips casting out words, feet scuttling in dainty shoes, eyes that greet, eyes that kiss, perfumes of all sorts of fantasies float through the air. This air is quaint and clear under the glorious blue sky. One of the

most beautiful and longest series of blue sky days in New York. One of the most beautiful because it's autumn and autumn is New York's *beau jour*<sup>52</sup>. Radiant, crisp, and yet gentle and cozy, the air is heavy the inactivity of the humid ocean breeze. No city in the world has air like this; it whips you into action and yet there's something sensual about it. No city in the world has this Broadway that flows together with Seventh Avenue as it crosses Broadway from the left and pursues its natural course to the right. And in this intersecting, in this colliding, in this clamoring on one another, this symphony of traffic and this industrious atmosphere, the crowd gathers around the entrance to a theater of all places. Despite the beaming light of day the facade gleams in thousands of glowing red lights. "The Covered Wagon."<sup>53</sup> "32nd Week." And it's sold out! At thirty minutes past two o'clock in the afternoon on a weekday in the thirty-second week in its play time! The only person not waiting to get in is a man making some lucrative and secretive deals on the currency exchange rate just a few steps from the entrance.

Oh how the Americans talk about the great, true American novel, the great, true American play, the great, true American film! And here at 44th and Broadway, in the Criterion Theater they are playing the great, true American film. Everything is unified in one masterpiece. The pride of an entire people in its benevolent strength is artistically portrayed. They worked with a good sense of taste, with great insight into human nature, and life was brought into harmony, creating a unified whole. They used bravura. They artistically conceptualized empathetic scenes. And, with great effort - the infinite costs are nothing in America and wouldn't prove anything anyway - they

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<sup>52</sup> French for beautiful day

<sup>53</sup> *The Covered Wagon*, 1923, Director James Cruze, based on a novel by Emerson Hough about pioneers travelling from Kansas to Oregon.

brought the whole things to an end. “*The Covered Wagon*” has something to offer for everyone. Art for the artists; the pleasant, tingling feeling of suspense for those seeking “*thrills*” from the passionate and irreconcilable blows dealt by life; for those impressed by numbers: for three months three thousand actors were in the wildest regions of the Prairie eighty kilometers from the nearest train line, a thousand Indians, six-hundred oxen, a thousand horse and five-hundred mules. This creates a picture that paints the trek made by three-hundred wagons covered in tarpaulin (*covered wagon*) and drawn by oxen. It’s the story of the pioneers as they crossed the immense and partially undiscovered continent to Oregon and California with kith and kin in the year 1849 to try to find a better home. The scene in which those three-hundred wagons pulled by the oxen through the rapids of a wide river are washed over by the current is perhaps the most grandiose scene in all of cinematography to date. And right up there with it are the scenes with the buffalo hunt and wild fire on the Prairie. It is thankfully not just another wild west hit. Exaggeration, or better yet, emphasis is artistically allowed and necessary within certain boundaries and the scenes of natural, true and little everyday parts of life blossom like rambler roses among the gigantic historic events. And of course it can’t help but have a love story, for we are the in the land of sweet love stories where boy meets girl. But, in the end, we put up with it and laugh it off.

The theater choir sings “*Westward Ho!*” at the close. (The director of the Criterion is originally from Vienna, Hugo Riesenfeld.) “*Westward Ho!*” the song of the pioneers. And once you’ve passed the luxuriant porters, the marble halls and the sweet little *Ushers* (theater attendants) clothed in great grandmother dresses and you’re back in the roaring life of Broadway, the pioneer song sounds sweetly in your soul.

“*Westward Ho!*” This time it was *westward*, another time it’s *eastward* and yet

another time... where to? Isn't the human soul always pulled in some kind of direction? Over prairies of the Wild West and mountain heights, through storm and stream and fire, dark, instinctive or painfully conscious? "*Westward Ho!*" - *The Covered Wagon* - has depth and breadth; it is an American epic on film. Let's just hope that the Europeans will get to see it soon.

## Introduction to "The Life of Women in America"<sup>54</sup>

As with many of her early articles, Ann Tizia Leitich writes this article in the form of a letter. This time, she addresses the women of Europe in a very personal manner. Leitich states that the best place for a woman to live is America. With such a bold statement, she spends the rest of the article defending such a claim. American women have a unique state of mind. "The American woman is beautiful because she is natural, free, independent, and, above all, because she's happy - happier than all of the other women in the civilized world" (31). American women are happy because they can concentrate on something other than men. American women can lead their own lives without any involvement with men. Leitich describes solidarity among American women that she never experienced in Europe. American women involve themselves in the world outside of their own homes. They manage businesses and form clubs. Women are able to free themselves by relying on their inherent feminine strengths. Ultimately, Leitich attests that European women can be much happier if they would follow the example of the American women.

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<sup>54</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "The Life of Women in America." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 29 Jan. 1924: 31-32.

<sup>54</sup>Print.

## The Life of Women in America

by Ann Tizia Leitch (New York)

My fellow ladies, this letter is for you and just for you. Don't you dare let your men peek over your shoulders on this one. I don't want to give you the impression that I'm going to run amok like a militant suffragette. In fact, you'll soon see that I will do the exact opposite. I also don't happen to have a one of those revolvers in the folds of my dress that American women use to quickly and nonchalantly shoot down an unfaithful lover. Indeed, I object to your manly environment in Europe - to put it simply if not vaguely, I object to the "European man". You thoroughly spoil your men the in lenience you show them in everyday life. I also object to the manner in which men and women view the opposite gender. To better illustrate my last comment, I will have to interrupt my introduction with an example.

From the window of a villa in an elegant suburb of Chicago I saw a friend of the house, a well-known doctor, carrying a stack of serving platters over the pristine gravel path to his car. The matter was a simple one: his wife had invited the ladies in her club to *Lunch* and borrowed twenty platters from her friend. Since carrying heavy loads is no matter for a maid, the man of the house was entrusted with the transport. The lady of the house watched from the window with me and asked me why I was smiling. In response to my very careful explanation she said: "*Well*, we would not like to exchange our men for yours!" I had to admit that she was right, because she would be the only one to lose out in the deal. Her comment made me more than a little pensive. When I later saw the same *Gentleman* later at a very festive occasion in a top hat, it was difficult for me to believe that he could be wearing a top hat.

That is just one example, and a trivial one at that. However, it struck like a flash of enlightenment. This is my first letter to you ladies and I hope I can rely on your discretion. Then, if you are so inclined to do so, we will be able to graze upon these most educational grounds of cultural intersection.

First things first for today, miladies: hurry up and set up your reservation for an eventual reincarnation as an American woman. People may say false and horrendous things about America as much as they want; one thing is and remains true: There is no land under the sun in which the women would have it better than here. You're already packing your packs and heading over? No, that's not how it's done, ladies. Which really means that not everything has been done yet. The women of America are America's finest product; however, like so much here, they are an unfinished product. Unfinished because it's so big, so broadly conceived, and not due to incapacity. But it's a native product; not one that can be imported. We don't want to mistake them for something like the Sterling hallmark. The secret of the American woman, ladies, is neither available wrapped in tissue paper over the counter, nor is it something the Port Authority of New York can ascribe you between the pages of your passport like some sort of revision. A person has to grow up with it--as it. Admittedly, you can breathe some of it in from the air and that's how it came to be that I could tell any of you about it. For you see the secret is what the English language refers to as a "*State of mind*", a *Seelenkonstruktion*, a matter of temperament, if you prefer since there is no German word for the magnificent "*mind*".

Whenever an American says, in his beloved language of superlatives, that the women in his country are the beautiful in the world, he is right in a manner of speaking. Please, ladies, don't start pick up stones to cast at me before you've heard me out. I say,

in manner of speaking, because there are things that are so enchanting they act as companions or replacements of beauty and they have yet to be revealed to the American woman. But those are things of an age that lies centuries behind us, even if some of them were actually ten years ago - the time before the Great War. The war blew over Europe like la Marseillaise over a powdered wig. It's pain, it's rupture, it's resignation, it's slowly picking yourself back up, rubbing your eyes, that make it so hard to hard to adjust to a new and different light. There was no rupture here, things grew and continue to grow towards a happy completion and refinement. The American woman is beautiful because she is natural, free, independent, and, above all, because she's happy - happier than all of the other women in the civilized world. She knows nothing of resignation, that poison that makes a woman old at the age thirty. She doesn't know about it because she pursues interests other than the one and only interest around which the world revolves for European women: men. This interest blooms or withers in a realm all its own. American women enjoy flirting and marrying just as much as European women, they can sacrifice just as much and just as intensely for a feeling, they're the best mothers, but she also loves to go dancing. If they find themselves left alone by their husbands whose time is always taken up with *Business*, they occupy themselves with something to do other than to just wait for the men to return. They find enjoyment in a women's clubs that persist under various pretenses even though only women meet together there, a concept that right from the onset would be nipped in the bud in Europe. They arrange, organize, sponsor, pay visits - all of it without the man. They're happy when the men can participate, but when he can't - *all right!* She won't let that spoil her fun.

As a matter of fact, it moves European women in a strange way how well American women can entertain each other. American women tend to accept appointments *in business*, literature, or fashion. Not really because they need to financially, but because it gives them the opportunity to be closer to life and its pulse and to expand the horizon of her mindset. In a word, it's their way of escaping from the tight confines of domestic life where their husbands have spellbound them with Sleeping Beauty's thorn bushes of romanticism and they enter into the selfsame life from which the men return to them each day. If they don't take on an appointment they keep busy with some kind of social or artistic or simply a societal manner, and even then on a basis that is much broader and more self-sufficient than those of European women. How often did I have to hear over there in Europe that American women are so well educated, that they know so much! I remember one particular lecture by a well-known Nordic authoress. But this is the first impression that one must modify somewhat afterwards. They amaze people with their assured judgment, the clarity of their gaze, the casual manner in which they approach the tasks that we have the men do over there, for example, in finances, managing assets, transactions - it's not uncommon for a woman to take over her husband's business after his death and to continue favorably in his work. In a little town in the state of Iowa I know a twenty-four-year-old girl that swung herself up to the top of corporation in the course of two years. That same corporation ran 24 bus lines in the state that put her into a life or death struggle with three powerful train companies over which she conquered. To return to education - in the sense that we tend to understand it, a European woman is decidedly more educated than her sister across the ocean. She is well versed in literature, music, speaks multiple languages, knows the names of the greats ones of the world both past and present, plays piano and sings.

American women play too much basketball and tennis at college, dances a great deal and flirts enough. And no matter what the day in America also only has 24 hours. If they try to start anything in one of the above-mentioned faculties she most likely knows nothing about it. But they stand with both feet firmly planted on the ground with confidence, *Common sense* (natural, proper judgment), diligence, and endurance. And they're used to manning up, whether in having fun, playing sports, or pursuing career. Nothing denotes this confidence, this knowledge of things that matter better than the sight of an elegant, perfumed, enchantingly dressed American woman at the wheel of her car. And during the 14 kilometer drive home - villas and cars are both middle-class prerequisites - after she chauffeured her husband to work in the city early in the morning, necessity runs up against her and she has to play mechanic for a bit - *All right!* She knows how to fix her car!

No, American women are not at all more highly educated than European women. They are less oversensitive, not so much like ivy but more like smiling, blooming poppies striving upward, heartily pacing over the fields hand in hand. And then I think of Grillparzer's<sup>55</sup> Medea: "Jason, I know a song." Poor Medea! Her knowledge of the song gave her a few blissful days, but the song could not save her from despair. American women are not slaves that were taught nice things to please their masters; they aren't the rib of man, not some part; they are themselves; that is why their smiles are so different. Their smiles burst from their lips like cherries from a tree. They say: I am me and I'm glad to be me. And American women are never maidservants. They are queens and companions. They have more definitely shaken off the shackles of Oriental

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<sup>55</sup> Franz Grillparzer, Austrian dramatist and author whose trilogy "The Golden Fleece" contained what some to consider his masterpiece, "Medea". This work explores how Medea avenges herself when Jason leaves her for another woman by murdering her and Jason's children.

bondage and with more self-evident nonchalance than European women have up to this point, because the European women's continual pitfall is their own more refined mental cultivation. I'm not talk about a *Grande Dame* in the *Grand Hotels* - her kind bears a mark of international standard that remains true to its standards all around the world. I'm not talking about women who regularly receive orchids as gifts and whose shoes are tied by their ladies-in-waiting. I'm talking about the many women who find themselves in the happy medium of society, and in America they can be found in great abundance. The women whose sons and daughters populate the numerous *Colleges*, those who wait from 6:00-6:30 for their husbands to come home for *Dinner*, those who know what it means to darn stockings and, finally, (if not before getting married, then shortly thereafter) those who learn how to make *Apple-pie* and *Steak*, how to go *shopping* in the afternoon if they aren't involved with *Business* and how to lower a fur coat just off of their shoulders in the theater to show off the brilliance of a new dress. All of them are part of the happy medium, and yet simultaneously *Grande Dame*! Or what else could it be? This feeling that the wife a laborer can have or the wife of a clerk or a professor when she strides frank and free on the gravel path of a park during a Sunday walk and her husband is pushing the baby carriage next to her! She pushes the stroller every other day of the week, why shouldn't he be the one to push it on Sunday? If it isn't humiliating for her then why would it be humiliating for him? Or when he helps her to wash the dishes so that she has more time to get ready to go out to see a film? It's this very thought that one task is too lofty for a women and another too base for the splendorous majesty of the master of all creation, suggesting that only a woman is vile enough to do such things - it's this Oriental thought that never enters into the mind of

American men, they aren't even familiar with it. American men can be brutal: a chauvinist who placidly smokes his pipe while his wife works the fields.

But concerning the first point, the things that a man could consider too lofty or too difficult for a woman to do, well the war helped a lot in that regard as in many other cases. Women still aren't paid as well as men that do the same work, but the whole world awaits women with ambition. She need not feel like there are doors closed to her merely due to her gender. Women have well-paid positions in *business* and they are even beginning to break with tradition in civil service positions. The city of Cleveland recently appointed a woman as a judge in the municipal court and Miss Mary Barthelme is a judge in the court martial in Chicago. Women are *Reporters*, journalists and successful "*Shortstory Writers*" or authors that write short, trenchant stories in the many "*Magazines*". One of the most popular illustrators for these magazines is a woman. There's a play on Broadway that has played every day without interruption for two years now, a farcical, sassy, distinctive series of scene - the author is a woman. Another play by an American woman is considered one of the best contemporary pieces of American theatrical literature. Women are priests; women are - understandably - doctors. Ah, do you get anxious when you read about this, ye masters of creation? Serves you right, because you aren't supposed to be reading this! But you mustn't worry. Women just want out! To go outside every now and then, she wants to look around and, believe me, she'll try this and that out, but - ask any American man who watches her with a smile - in the end, she will stick with what lies in her proper nature. And since those things aren't congruent with, rather complementary to the things of men, she will not hurt her man by being liberated from the rosy shackles of domestic life. She will arguably be of use to mankind.

But to you, my dear ladies, listen to my hushed reply: “Yes, American women have it easy. They just don’t have the competition that we have is all. And then add to that that they live in a country where men’s psychological consideration of women was so to speak historically so profoundly different in form and those pioneer days aren’t all that far back when women were a numerical minority, making them a precious gem!”

My dear ladies, kicking against the unalterable pricks of life is just as futile as giving up the good fight and taking the yoke upon your weary necks. On the other hand, the only thing that really helps is the real Spirit of America. This spirit takes aim with a clear eye, selects the most effective and natural means and concentrates all its energy to reach its goals. Find this spirit and let nothing discourage you. And that is why I have stressed one thing in particular that you ladies can achieve. Even if you can’t do so overnight, you can do it little by little. Adopt the American women’s “state of mind”, their happy disposition. And one thing was essential in making American women so strong: esprit de corps, solidarity, cooperation. The women of America are united. They mean something to each other, they acknowledge each other, and they help each other. An authoress here has no need to assume a masculine pseudonym; no woman smiles that certain slightly condescending or scornful grin with its lethal laugh when she hears about some other woman’s work. And if you ask my more about how they made it just let me tell you something else - but only in hushed tones since I really don’t want to ruin things with the men - they didn’t do it with logarithms or hunger strikes or doctoral dissertations, but by and large with henpecking. *Exactly*, my dear ladies. There weren’t any suffragettes in America and the English voted a former actress into their parliament

- not Christabel Pankhurst<sup>56</sup>. And it proves once more the exceptional *Common sense* of American women. They know that no matter how much liberation takes place they are strongest when they are what they all with all they are: women. I'm no longer astounded to meet a beautiful woman, well-groomed and dressed to the nines, experienced in all the graces of flirtation and manners and then to hear that she has a salary of \$10,000 from such and such a company. It no longer astounds me, but it does excite me. Doesn't that just mean that we are approaching the realization of an ideal when a woman can retain the finer qualities of her gender and can consciously and helpfully stand face to face with her man, as a companion? With that ideal a new age dawns that history, that has only every known either patriarchy or matriarchy, has never seen before. Working together, both of them striving together. Indeed, we are not far removed from that age. There are still rough corners that need to be smoothed out, hurdles over which we must yet leap. But here in America the dawn of that new day is breaking.

New York, in December.

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<sup>56</sup> English suffragette active in England previous to WWI.

## Introduction to “Austrians in New York”<sup>57</sup>

As in her premiere article in *Neue Freie Presse*, Ann Tizia Leitich writes an article in April, 1924 as a letter to an old friend, Dick, in Austria. Her letter discusses the unique experience Leitich enjoyed in the company of Austrian and Austro-Americans at a party in New York. As a European immigrant in the early 20th century, Leitich states that she must confront her own heritage as a European immigrant in light of the European immigrants she sometimes sees in America.

This is the place where I rub my fascination with America from my eyes and I remember my obscure, Austrian birth because I see a little group of Europeans standing in a corner of this gigantic hall with scarves on their heads and bundles on their backs. Immigrants (31).

When she thinks of her Austrian roots, Leitich considers her homeland obscure. However, this feeling changes during the course of the evening she spends with several other Austrians. Leitich then uses her description of the events of the evening to not only explain her own pride in being Austrian, but also to define what she considers to be Austrian. Leitich describes the many elegantly dressed statesmen, doctors, and engineers as they speak German with distinctly Austrian accents. She also describes the Austrian-Americans who dance in “hick” costumes such as Lederhosen and Dirndl. Although she states differences between Austrians and Austrian-Americans, Leitich ultimately found renewed faith in her own heritage. She states, “I felt for the first time since the Great Disaster that I am proud to have been born Austrian” (32).

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<sup>57</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. “Austrians in New York.” *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 6 Apr. 1924: 31-32. Print.

## Austrians in New York

### Yet Another Letter to Dick, a Friend of the Crown

by Ann Tizia Leitich

I know. I know I've neglected you, but you have to understand and forgive me when I tell you that I spent the last few weeks eons away from you and Austria. I was entrenched in the deepest, most genuine heart of America, in "*Main Street*"<sup>58</sup>. That selfsame main street that Sinclair Lewis<sup>59</sup> so despicably and Booth Tarkington<sup>60</sup> - sometimes - so enchantingly describe in their writings. A place where the men are men and the women are women. Where everyone has a car, a bathroom and an electric dishwasher. So I spent a few weeks in some of these ideal main street metropolises. I spent day and a night in each place passing through fleeting, colorless spaces garnished with corrugated steel-roofed and timber-framed houses strewn about. Between the towns were majestically beautiful landscapes interrupted here and there by colorful billboards that poke up from the emptiness. One such billboard shows the magnificence of the globe-trotting train, the *Twentieth Century Limited*, on its journey between Chicago and New York. It's the fastest, most practical, most punctual, most luxurious, in a word most American train in the world. A dream come true in "*efficiency*", a term, a word that would be impossible to reproduce in Austria. For it means everything that Austria is not and, on the other hand, it does not mean many of the things that (thank God) Austria still stands for.

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<sup>58</sup> *Main Street: The Story of Carol Kennicott* by Sinclair Lewis, 1920. A satirical novel of American life.

<sup>59</sup> Harry Sinclair Lewis, 1885-1951. American Novelist, short-story writer, and playwright. The first American to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature.

<sup>60</sup> Booth Tarkington, 1869-1946. American novelist and dramatist best known for his novels *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *Alice Adams*. One of three novelists to win the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction more than once.

And I'm finally at Grand Central Station in New York. This is the place where I rub my fascination with America from my eyes and I remember my obscure, Austrian birth because I see a little group of Europeans standing in a corner of this gigantic hall with scarves on their heads and bundles on their backs. Immigrants. And the travelers pass them in waves like ants marching through the sparkling-clean vastness of the mastodon hall. They move at an excited speed, yet without any yelling or sense of nervousness. They are sure of their goal. In the station you cannot see, hear or smell anything of the trains. Trains only dare approach Her Majesty New York from below the earth, and their passengers enter through barred gates. But I was suddenly back at Westbahnhof<sup>61</sup> and I cried out while reaching for my hand baggage that was just softly and casually wrenched from my hands. I turned and looked into the face of a friendly Negro wearing a red cap. No, it was just a "red-cap". They always seems to be willing to accompany the American travelers and should not be confused with a patronizing gentleman offering to help carry my bags. So I pulled my hand back and said softly: "Taxi!" I was standing with both feet in New York again.

It was strange: everything worked well in my hotel. My luggage was there, my mail was there, the radiator radiated, the girl working as the telephone operator was profoundly amicable, the freshly-cooked food was spiced with a little nuance of Europe (that nuance from which I had to abstain in the "great" West). But it was no use. As Americans like to say, there was "*something wrong*". Then the phone rang! I could not believe I was here in America, but listening to those rolling R's and nasal O's that I had not heard for so long. Austrian words sounded from the receiver - the voice of an

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<sup>61</sup> Wien-Westbahnhof is a rail station in the western part of Vienna. Although it is shabby and crowded, It is the closest thing to Grand Central Station that Vienna has to offer.

Austrian ministry official. Forgive me, my dear Dick, the last anecdote was not some spawn of nerves grown tired of America. I was actually right, it was really an Austrian ministry official, more precisely, an official from the consulate. And, in that moment, I also knew what awful thing lay in my mind: that dirty, crowded, frayed, beloved Westbahnhof. To remind myself where I was, I directed my gaze frantically outward to see the forty-story building whose top seemed to hover above me so that I could remind myself of where I was. I cried: "Where are you, Herr Doktor?" The Herr Doktor seemed a bit taken aback by my indiscreet query and said: "In my office, naturally!" All of my enthusiasm transformed into sheer astonishment: "In your office? At ten at night? A government official in his office at ten at night?" He replied to my prying with in his friendly, natural manner: "Yes, the "Olympic" goes out tomorrow and we have to finish up all of our reports." - "Just like that: the "Olympic" goes out tomorrow." Please, Dick, take a note and remember that when you quit filling out reports at 3:30 in the afternoon." - "So what I wanted to ask you: would you please give us the pleasure of your company for some Austrian food with Austrian people?"

What a question! The pleasure was naturally all mine.

Mr. Haan is the president of the society that owned the St. Regis Hotel that is kept up in aged, dignified elegance. Mr. Haan is an old-style Austrian<sup>62</sup> who has a villa in the Währing cottage district<sup>63</sup> that you cannot help but admire. Anyway, our lovely Herr Doktor promised more about "Austrian food" than even the chef of a first rate American hotel can possibly deliver. But our little *Dinner* had the atmosphere and pastiche of a genuine Austrian spirit, Austrian art and Austrian science. The event had

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<sup>62</sup> Altösterreicher, used to connote either German-speaking citizens from one of the former countries within the Austro-Hungarian Empire or those who were sympathetic to the Empire

<sup>63</sup> One of the most expensive housing developments in Vienna

sprinkles of New York witticisms. There was also the tang of vivifying sourness from the few Americans there, struggling to speak to guests (as darling and interested as they were) in a broken, foreign language. The Americans were head physicians of some of the biggest hospitals in New York. They came along to spend the evening with their colleague from the other side of the pond, university professor Dr. Biehl from Vienna. Listening to Joseph Urban's pure Viennese, I easily forgot that he runs a nice "shop" for the Vienna Workshop<sup>64</sup> on Fifth Avenue. It stands as a true holy shrine of Viennese art. It immediately reminds you of the amazing sets that he designed for the stage of the Metropolitan Opera or the truly amazing images that he created as the art director of the historical film "Yolanda". Just across from him is his daughter, Frau Gretl Thrulow-Urban, who is telling jokes in flawless *Newyorkese* to the person sitting next to her at the table. She drew up Yolanda's enchanting costumes. In Viennese style, she made the costume as lavish as Americanly possible. Yolanda, who is now more familiar to us than the beautiful Maria of Burgundy<sup>65</sup>, wears a new dress in each scene. Frau Bodanzky had to come without her husband because he's directing the Metropolitan Opera tonight. He recently had his most critically acclaimed and successful project, a revival of *Meistersinger*<sup>66</sup> return for another tour after a long break.

The night's guest of honor was Dr. Biehl. He has almost been invited to death to different events during his short stay here. He will be returning home tomorrow aboard the "Albert Ballin" and he almost gets upset when you wish him a good crossing. He sailed in the first place because of a bad a crossing: he sailed across to study seasickness.

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<sup>64</sup> A production community of visual artists begun in 1903

<sup>65</sup> 1457-1482, Dutchess of Burgundy, her marriage to Maximilian of Hapsburg brought the Burgundy family into the Austrian Imperial family of the Hapsburgs

<sup>66</sup> Artur Bodanzky, famous for his direction of Richard Wagner's "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg" at the NY Metropolitan Opera

At his request, the dinner was held “speechless”, without any toasts, to make it shorter and cozier. The host, Herr Consul General Dr. Fischerauer, took the blame upon himself for such a crass un-Americanism. Dr. Biehl’s cheery disposition during the meal was somewhat darkened by his concern for the diverse alligators and sharks with which the director of the aquarium here graciously placed at Dr. Biehl’s disposal. Dr. Biehl hoped to take them aboard quite alive tomorrow. His secondary concern was for the two crates full of the most glorious “*grapefruit*”, a present from Dr. Häublein from Hartford. There is no way to fully describe the joys he would endow on others in Vienna with those exotic golden California girls. We all had to help the doctor overcome the suspicion that he was traveling not only as an animal tamer, but also as a fruit dealer. None of tomorrow’s plans seemed to weigh him down: before his departure on the steamship at noon, he had a departure lecture, three visits, and a trip to Hartford. In that respect, Dr. Biehl had already become “New York-ized” over the course of the last four days. His mood became light as a feather, though, when he received a check for one hundred dollars from the Old Vienna Club. The money came from an improvised collection among the Austrians and Germans in New York at a recent baptism. Now he would not return home to his needy colleagues empty-handed. Consul General Dr. Fischerauer stated how much of an honor it was to have met a man whose personality can somehow harmonize two such heterogeneous elements as the American “always being efficient and busy” with stylish Austrian joviality.

Another Austrian guest this evening, the painter Leo Katz, invited me to visit his studio in Central Park South. I went gladly because I wanted to see his famed *Lady with the Tiger* that was the talk of the town last year. I found in Herr Katz to be a very interesting and quite peculiar artist. The American art critics call him the “*Friend of the*

*ease*”. The genius of his art shines down into the chasms of the soul. His brush exposes the facets of the subconscious that no one, not even the model, suspects. This makes his pictures into revelations of human soul that baffle the observer as in the aforementioned *Lady with the Tiger* and many others. He seems to favor portraits of women, but he doesn’t necessarily limit himself to this genre. His *New York Businessman*, with its foreground of office buildings that climb into the sky, is wondrously eloquent in every detail and says more in its speechlessness about the soul of America than volumes of celebrity travelogues. It would exceed the scope of this article if I were to expound further on his art. I would just like to say that I have seen some things that show truly titanic imagination. Furthermore, I witnessed works of his that were characterized by an astounding attention to detail and a mastery of techniques, such as his silver point drawing of the young Vanderlip<sup>67</sup> or his brush drawing of a Japanese man rendered in ancient Japanese style.

There are a few small, elegant restaurants just a few doors down from Fifth Avenue. Between them you find the exclusive shops and few clubs whose doors only open with the correct utterance of open sesame. They are housed in the thoughtful and leisurely architecture of the Eighties and Nineties, when these “*Mansions*” were built. There you’ll find the “Crillon”<sup>68</sup>, a restaurant that is, despite its French name, owned by two native Austrians named Baumgarten. That is the place where, for the first time in years, I ate a goose with brown, crispy skin - I do not want to reveal any more except to say that the small, intimate rooms are artistically furnished by the painter Reiss.

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<sup>67</sup> Frank A. Vanderlip, American Banker and Assistant Secretary of Treasury under President McKinley

<sup>68</sup> Hotel de Crillon

When I talk about Austria in New York, I simply must mention the Austrian Ball. I have never known its exact location because I was disoriented by the endless drive through never-ending, unchanging streets, through a New York that was totally unfamiliar to me. Suddenly the car drives up to a light-bathed house by a lake. People stream inside, *Volk*<sup>69</sup>. The monstrous main hall is more than full; I can barely break through to the rostrum. The air is full of voices speaking in Austrian dialects, the faces are Austrian. A bright, golden vivacity devoid of any sass or wantonness floats over the surging crowd and the dangling garlands. *Dirndl* dresses and *Lederhosen*, real hick costumes<sup>70</sup>. These Austro-hicks all look far more authentic than those at similar occasions in Vienna because these Austrian-Americans are all well-nourished and the red in their cheeks goes well with the green of their hats. It's just like a procession at a peasant wedding with the open sky, with chicks wagging their tail feathers, and the village dandy. The mood is just right, it is so blissfully traditional that I just see all of the mountain folk from thousands of miles away where I once got my own *Dirndl* tan-lines. In the Consul General's lodge is Frau Jeritza<sup>71</sup>. Together with her husband, Baron Popper<sup>72</sup>, and the Deputy Mayor of New York, she sits and chats with the Consul General and his attaché, the official representation of Austria on US soil. The master of the lodge is standing there laughing kindly in his tailcoat, waving, caught up in the storm of enthusiasm that keeps rushing in through the entrance surrounded by flowers and cheers of proud, upward-facing glances. And then someone offers Frau Jeritza a

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<sup>69</sup> Usually translated as people, but has a cultural or racial connotation such as the American people or the people of Austria

<sup>70</sup> *Hiasl*, from the name Matthias, dialectical term meaning dolt, klutz, or schlemiel, possibly also to mean hillbilly or hick in this instance

<sup>71</sup> Maria Jeritza, born Marie Jedličková, famed Moravian soprano for the Vienna State Opera and the New York Metropolitan Opera

<sup>72</sup> (1886-1953) Friedrich Leopold Salvator Freiherr Popper von Podhragy, Austrian Baron

Faschingskrapfen, here they're called "dough-nuts", but in all reality they are just plebeian relatives of that noble species of delicacy.

You can get anything you want in New York: in the great entertainment palaces on Broadway you can see Spanish, Indian<sup>73</sup>, Russian, Patagonian and even Austrian dances. You can even here stanzas of Austrian music being sung. This "art", however, has already been processed through the filter of the American theater industry and touches us just as much as theater can. But these Schrammeln<sup>74</sup> were down-to-earth. Their desire to dance and masquerade were the cheery expression of a temperament that was artistically motivated and genial in the best sense of the word - just that, an Austrian temperament. One that despite having been adapted to the laws and forms and spirit of this great, new land has remained the same. "This is the people's paradise. Both great and small send up a cheer; here am I man, I feel it here."<sup>75</sup>

Driving home through all those smoothly paved streets I felt for the first time since the Great Disaster<sup>76</sup> that I am proud to have been born Austrian.

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<sup>73</sup> From India, not to be confused with Native American Indians

<sup>74</sup> Schrammelmusik is a style of Viennese folk music originating in the late nineteenth century, named for the prolific folk composers, Johann and Josef Schrammel. The style features two violinists, a double-necked contraguitar, and a G clarinet. Leitch is referring to the folksy, Austrian nature of the people she is describing.

<sup>75</sup> From Goethe's Tragedy of Faust, Part I

<sup>76</sup> Playing on the term "The Great War" for World War I

## Introduction to “Happenings on Broadway”<sup>77</sup>

In the summer of 1924, Ann Tizia Leitich reported on the end of yet another season on Broadway. Leitich describes this uniquely American street with its various entertainment venues. The pieces performed on Broadway are not limited to American works, but include many of the latest and greatest works of Europe as well. She also reports on the Actor’s Equity union and its efforts to ensure fair wages for its members. As she writes, the Equity has much sway on Broadway, with potential to strike if certain playhouses do not renew their contracts. The negotiations occur between the Equity and the Producing Managers Association. Leitich tells her readers about the situation from both sides. Leitich thinks that Broadway is still quite young. American dramatists and audiences are on the right path. They are creating their own style and they are maturing. While the Americans are developing, they have the advantage that their money is drawing in the talent of Europe. Broadway is on its way.

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<sup>77</sup> Neue Freie Presse Chronik Insert page 23-24, first published June 15th 1924

## Happenings on Broadway

by Ann Tizia Leitich

“*Le roi est mort, vive le roi.*”<sup>78</sup> ... While people on Broadway are taking stock, financially and artistically, for the season and the playhouses are ushering in the lighter wares of summer or even shutting their doors, the thoughts of the producers are already busy with sowing their seeds for the next season. Lee Shubert, one of the most entrepreneurial and seminal in his guild, already came back a few weeks ago from a fishing trip in Europe with a well-assorted collection of English, French, German, Hungarian, and - *last not least* - Viennese acquisitions. The manager for the Charles Frohmann Society returned yesterday aboard the “Majestic” with a collection of acquired novelties that will bloom next season on Broadway. These include - as per usual - the well-represented Hungarians Molnar<sup>79</sup> and Vajda<sup>80</sup>, but also a new piece by Schnitzler that should premiere in Vienna this coming fall. Balsco, who has grown grey in the saddle during his life makes up the unwritten history of the theater in New York glowers silently: his distinguished and distinctive Theater whose inner decorum he personally worked out in detail with love that makes a European used to a good atmosphere feel right at home has been close for weeks due to clouds of strikes threateningly hovering over Broadway. The same old battle of capital here and work there has penetrated into the playing field of the theater. For months now negotiations have been going back and forth, but right up to this very minute they have yet to find a solution with which all sides can be contented. To quickly explain the situation: the

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<sup>78</sup> French for “The king is dead, long live the king.”

<sup>79</sup> Ferenc Molnar 1878-1952, Hungarian dramatist and novelist. His Americanized name is give as Franz Molnar.

<sup>80</sup> Ernest Vajda 1886-1954, Hungarian actor, playwright, and novelist most famous for his screenplays.

capital faction is represented by the Producing Managers Association with Sam A. Harris at its head; the workers or employees are the actors that have their own incorporation called the “Actors’ Equity Association. It’s part of the America Federation of Labor set up so that every actor who is part of this association can enjoy the same benefits as metalworkers, engravers, carpenters, etc. that are all members of the Federation of Labor as closed guilds. Said guilds happen to control and determine the legal working hours and the number of employees of their respective fields. The members of the Federation of Labor subject themselves to the laws of “Organized Labor”, which is definitely to their benefit. This is because the “Union” - as the Federation is also called - is capable of acting on any threats to strike in order to establish their demands. For example, although the “Union” does not encompass all branches of labor, a manufacturer may only employ a *skilled workman* if that person also happens to be a member of this closed society of the Federation. And that is the fulcrum that gives the “Union” all of its power. Up until recently it was still a free choice for each actor to either join or not join the Equity Association and the producers have a contract with Equity according to which each production’s “staff” must consist of at least 80% Equity members. This contract expires on the first of June of this year and, if they do not reach an agreement within the next fourteen days leading up to that date, quite a few theaters will be close because the Equity members will strike.

The strike’s effect lies in the fact that the vast majority of actors are Equity members. In this case, the Equity Association does not want to agree to any more contacts that can expire, rather they want to establish an “Equity Shop”. That would mean they are demanding, just like with manufacturers, that managers and producers would only be allowed to use Equity members and that no Equity members may

participate in an ensemble that includes even one nonmember. The Managers Associations refuses to concede on this point. Why? Because that, according to the managers, would transfer all power into the hands of the Equity because this would be a means by which the Equity would be able to control, tyrannize, industrialize and hinder the artistic mobility of the managers. Eventually, this would be the demise of the artistic quality of their productions. The art that is drama cannot be dealt with like a factory. The financial worth that an artist offers cannot be weighed against that of another in some graduated system construed by a layman. Artist cannot be put in boxes of wage systems like apprentices, unskilled laborers, and laborers. The power of the Equity would quickly escalate beyond all limits. It would not only prescribe how much the managers must pay out in salaries or how many actors should be employed, but it would eventually have immense influence on the way in which works are produced. The managers would become nothing more than marionettes in Equity hands that are merely allowed to risk their money investing in various productions. So much for the Producing Managers Association.

And now the Equity's point of view. In the time before the Actor's Equity Association actors were bound hand and foot. They were at the mercy of the managers. To bring the situation into perspective, you have to realize that such a pitiful situation for actors applies more to an actor on the "road" than an actor working in New York. A play that sees enough success in New York gets sent on the "road", which is to say that the entire troupe, the actors and the stage production travel the various and often expensive states of the United States to perform their play however much longer they can manage to in the cities and towns they visit. These cities can often be several days' travel away from New York and it was no rare occurrence that a manager would simply

leave his troupe stranded when a show on the road was less successful, without having paid them their wages or provided even the means for them to return to New York. Or else a manager could cut an actor's pay as he felt necessary for whatever reason crossed his mind at the time. A contract was simply a scrap of paper. No judge took pity on the actors. In a word, the producer was an absolute ruler. On the other hand, actors did not feel obligated in the least and, if they felt like it, they might just pack their things an hour before a performance and vamoose, leaving the leader of the troupe in the middle of the Prairie with no one far and wide who could stand in. In such cases, the Equity creates order and justice through their regulated stipulations from which not only the actors, but also the producers benefit in the end. Most of all, the overall level of artistic quality was raised by the implementation of Equity standards. The Equity is of the opinion it is no more than fair to require that all actors that enjoy the protection of the Equity (and that also includes the 20% of the ensembles that are not members but act in shows with members) should be members of the association. That means that an ensemble, which in America remains the same for the entire run of a show regardless of its running time, should consist exclusively of Equity members or that the entire cast would have absolutely no Equity members. And that is the dead center around which all of their negotiations are tediously revolving.

The majority of the public is little concerned with all this back and forth and arguing. They come to Broadway to be entertained. With a thoughtless optimism they know that their amusement will get delivered to them somehow, that whatever may come to pass life will continue on its course. And Broadway is life and life is Broadway. Broadway cries and dances and sings, loves and deceives here, struts in foolish self-satisfaction, builds its dreams of beauty on wobbling boards, nails mankind's aspiring

thoughts on the cross, shadowboxes with various concepts - but no, it has yet to do that, not yet. The more or less chaotic conceptual dramas of the German-speaking world have yet to find a niche for themselves on Broadway. Georg Kaiser<sup>81</sup> is an unknown great; Toller's "Masses Man" lasted little longer than a week at the enterprising Theatre Guild<sup>82</sup> where the troupe brought the masterpiece to stage with great skill and love. Maeterlinck's "The Blue Bird" that saw three performances in its time in the Volkstheater in Vienna provided full houses for weeks despite its flow of ideas and worldly wisdom just because it has a cute little sweetheart that tickles the fancy of the women and children in the audience. French Esprit in Madame Simone and Maurice de Feraudy's performances caught the interest of the intelligentsia while the heavily spiced *haut-gout* of the Grand Guignol players fell "flat", to use the American technical terminology. Encouraged by the successes of the Italian master Luigi Pirandello last season, Brock Pemberton produced his "Henry IV" under the title "The Living Mask". It is an interesting piece full of spirit that glitters in Italian grace over a deep and somber wisdom. New York witnessed for the very first time Arnold Korff. He brought the lead role of an Italian nobleman of the twentieth century who lives under the delusion that he is Henry IV, having given his confession in Canossa. Arnold Korff was born in Cincinnati in the state of Ohio and the English language is no foreign idiom to him. His skills were sharpened by the traditions of the Burgtheater, yet he was not introduced with the usual ballyhoo. The highly educated audience on the first evening rewarded the abilities of a man who was completely unknown to them here. Meanwhile, the press remained cool and distant, even though his talent caused them more than once to tip

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<sup>81</sup> German dramatist, among the most frequently performed playwrights of the Weimar Republic.

<sup>82</sup> Theatrical society founded in New York in 1918.

their hats in reaction to his art. And it is his art that found its way over the elegant, unconquerable ones up into those artistic highs where the charm of one's personality must capitulate. The piece, however, was unable to hold its own. The performance suffered from a dragging tempo and the audience even refused to follow the author's juggling through several centuries as modern people and people from the eleventh century were simultaneously on stage. It was clearly confusing. It was a piece solely for the intelligentsia.

It must be asserted with joy, however: Broadway is growing up and it is being raised properly. It's no longer just play, song, dance, and comedy that guarantee a *box-office*, or financial, success. Shaw defined the theater as "factory of thought, a prompter of conscience, an elucidator of social conduct, an armory against despair and dullness, and a temple to the Ascent of Man." Broadway is reforming itself to better match such a definition. For months people have been relishing in the spirit, history and original approach of "Saint Joan" as a much-abused maiden. Shaw claims she is the only authentic one because she remains uninfluenced. Another English play, "Outward Bound", from Sutton Vane made its way over here after a most unusual run of success in London. And behold, it has been running here for months now, even though it opens up that chapter in the book of Things Americans Prefer not to See on Stage entitled Life and Death. In fact, it has to do with life after death. The "Outward Bound" are those who go outward into eternity. The cast of deceased is comprised of a mixed group of humanity *en miniature* that are sailing on a ship that is leaving port and neither they, nor the audience, knows they are dead at the onset of the piece. The exciting plot of the play builds (despite a lack of exterior motion) as we and the characters come to the knowledge that they are all dead. The only weak point is the conclusion. It seems like a

bad joke when the man whom all fear and who was mysteriously announced as the “Examiner” proves to be a jovial old man in a safari helmet. In the end, he allocates everyone to his proper seat - he’s more or less the superintendent at their graduation. And then there is “Beggar on Horseback” that is full to the brim with delightful American humor. It fits into the category of plays that practices satire on itself so that you can barely recognize the original behind the embellishments that Mr. Kaufman and Connelly place before the audience. The original is, in fact, by Paul Apel and is called “Hans Sonnenstößers Höllenfahrt.<sup>83</sup>” Neil MacRae is a young composer and he lives, as per usual, in a studio apartment in an attic and so does, as per usual, the young, ideal lady who lives across from him. And of course there is also the rich, uneducated *business man* would like to add to his collection of a daughter, butlers, ladies’ maids, automobiles, marble hallways, etc. a son-in-law that composes music. Neil MacRae prefers, of course, the young lady who lives across from him, but he dreams himself into the situation where he is married to the rich girl, but he doesn’t know at first that he is dreaming. And this dream is quite enchanting due to the poignant parody of certain American norms: the self-immersed stupidity of the *business man*, the emptiness and tyranny of his pompous household, the standardized organization of his business. In a strangely amusing courtroom scene, the trial system gets clobbered with a few violent blows. But the leveling of all living beings, even the artists and geniuses, via industrialization is made ridiculous when the hero is led through an art factory where artists of sundry branches work in separated, barred cells. At the request of our hero’s tour guide they quickly produce a sample play. The auditorium is then quickly overrun by a host of crawling, screaming “Newsboys.” They distribute leaflets that don’t quite

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<sup>83</sup> translated Hans Sonnenstoesser’s Journey to Hell

announce the outbreak of a world war, but parody the style of American newspapers, stories of crime and love with expressionistically twisted headlines and romantic embellished details. The Newsboys are part of the play, you see. And yet, in the middle of all this crass materialism, we see the innermost fantastic imagination of the young artist, Neil MacRae. His creativity is revealed to the audience through his composition that is, of itself, a charming pantomime: *A kiss in Xanadu*, music and pantomime by the American Deems Taylor.

Currently, there are two pieces from Eugene O'Neill, the most skilled domestic talent and most profound, top-ranked playwright, on Broadway. "Welded" places the married life of a couple under a microscope and stands somewhere between Ibsen and Strindberg. It is one of those pieces that Broadway has used just this year to raise their standards. It rides on the violent sea of problems that rages from the ways in which the two sexes relate to each other. To marry or not to marry. That is the question of this piece. In this line of thought, O'Neill's "Rain" takes a special place. The work is special because no one finds his partner in the land of Puritanical principles, and because the astounding endurance of the public here that normally only wants descriptions of the sunny side of life. "Rain" is an American adaptation of a story by the English author, Somerset Maugham. It is downright unpleasant and its sense of tragedy and truth is bloody. Most impressive is that "Rain" is beginning its third summer in New York, which is to say, it is being played for the third summer in a row a breath-taking eight times per week!

O'Neill's last piece, his "Emperor Jones" found little appeal in Berlin. Its problems and genius are far too American to receive due appreciation on the Continent - where we could use a little more talented arrangers. For example, take the song, "All

God's Chillun got Wings", from the American Negro-dialect meaning: all of God's children have wings. It describes the marriage of a Negro to a white woman. Although this country has not yet forgotten that Negroes were once slaves, the proposed marriage of the characters raised a ferocious controversy and gained publicity far before it could be performed before an audience. The white people here struggled above all with the idea of a white woman appearing in such an intimate role with a Negro, that would actually be a real Negro in the theater, and that a white woman would kiss the hand of a Negro. The Negroes, on the other hand, claim that their race is degraded in this respect because he gets the white woman only after she is abandoned by a white scoundrel and left to fend for herself in the streets.

While all this and more, so much more, takes the stage on Broadway, the Century Theater remains true to the purpose for which it was so gloriously built: to play for the last several months Max Reinhardt's production of Karl Gustav Vollmoeller's "The Miracle". The work enjoys such wonderful, such lavish facilities, the likes of which we poor souls in Europe could only dream. He's considering staying here throughout the winter as well. Due to the daily reoccurrence of a sold-out house he can hope to obtain pure profits starting in the fall.

## Introduction to “The White City”<sup>84</sup>

As a correspondent who normally reported on her resident city of New York, Leitich’s report on Washington D.C. becomes one of contrasting New York and Washington. Washington’s pace is calmer than New York’s. Leitich describes Washington as more than just another city in America. Washington is a place built in commemoration of American ideals. Leitich highlights the many meaningful monuments, libraries and public buildings. Slightly reminiscent of Paris, Leitich enjoys Washington and its cafes amid the pristine white buildings. Aside from her detailed descriptions of the various buildings and sites worth seeing in Washington, Leitich provides her readers with very informative historical notes to each location. Leitich not only gives a pleasant description of America’s capitol, she tries to convey the American spirit. Leitich quotes Abraham Lincoln as she describes the city that embodies the American dream: “A government of the people, by the people, for the people.” That dream takes form in Washington.

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<sup>84</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. “The White City.” *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 29 June 1924: 29-30. Print.

## The White City

by Ann Tizia Leitich

You have to be there in the spring. You have to come from the north where the buds first apprehensively bloom upon the branches. You have to distance yourself from the babel of New York with its skyscraper-pandemonium and jazz music. You do so by entering the carpeted Pullman car<sup>85</sup> of the “Congressional” train as you leave the city. Then you glide over changing landscapes such as Pennsylvania’s rolling hills and Maryland’s meadows.

It only takes six hours, and yet you witness a different world. As soon as you step out into the station with its high, broad ceiling and natural light pouring in, you know that this will be an experience. In this large hall where trains arrive one after the other without end, the people simply disappear. It isn’t the tempestuous glut of Chicago, or the excitement of New York that pulses through every fiber of your being, it isn’t even the somewhat dirty bleakness of Philadelphia. Instead you find solemnity and dignity. You stride out into the hall through a latticed gate, through the breadth of the waiting room, past the rat-a-tat-tat of the Western Union telegraph office and cross in front of a platform adorned with pillars. A man in front of you is lifting another man’s golf clubs into a car. But the man swinging his way onto the footboard is no mere *Businessman* in baggy, light greenish grey slacks. He is tall, slim, with grace in his movements and culture on his young face to accompany his tiny mustache. He is most likely an English diplomat. And then, next to you, the gate pours out another load. This time it is full of one, two, three dozen people: red, green, blue under their halfway open coats. They don small hats over their bobbed hair. They are dressed in clumsily tailored *homespun*

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<sup>85</sup> A sleeper car in a train.

sports suits, stocking caps in hand, open faces, healthy and full of expectation. Yes, these are the young folks from a university out west that have come to visit the pride of their homeland. People who would otherwise chat and laugh like a flock of sparrows find themselves thronging forward in unaccustomed dignity by means of the *genius loci*<sup>86</sup>. To be sure, the Columbus Memorial was nothing unexpected in front of the train station. Columbus seems to accompany you wherever you may go in America, much the same as Dante in Italy, and that is only just and proper. Yet the sweep of the marble curves is epic and clear, perhaps a bit too massive. On the other hand, perhaps the massiveness is necessary due to the widely protruding green and white cornucopia of streets. They all radiate away from the high portico of the station. Not a single skyscraper ruptures the peaceful heaven above you with the arrogant concrete overachievements that make up the skyline of other cities. No smokestack pollutes your dreams. Directly in front of you is a gigantic, gleaming dome, floating over the green that still shines so brightly. It seems to glow white hot with happiness. This is the Capitol. Yes, you are in Washington, the capital city of the richest country in the world. You get into one of the cars that are so numerous in front of the station that you cannot count them all. However, they are not as brash and pushy here as the hunter-like taxis of Chicago and New York. Taxis here are white and black. You have the man drive you through the city. He already knows the routine. And if fortune chooses to smile upon you, you have a friend at your side who can keep quiet and behold it all with you. Because it truly is a beautiful city, the apple of a young, proud, rich nation's eye.

Whereas some cities in this country exist in order to make money, and some others are just there to loudly boast, Washington exists to be beautiful, dignified, and

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<sup>86</sup> Latin term meaning the spirit of a given place.

grand. It is a temple grove in which the nation can hang its ideals. And it is in this regard that Washington is better represented by the jam-packed microcosm that is the famed Congressional Library or by the Smithsonian Institute, than by that landmark of the republic, the large structure crowned with a dome where the Senate and Congress reside and - sometimes also - govern. Above all, however, Washington is best represented by the house for which the progenitor of the city and the state, George Washington, laid the cornerstone in 1792: the White House, the residence of current president. It resembles Washington's famous country home in Mount Vernon, with the consummate simplicity of its architectural lines and its layout. You can even make a pilgrimage to Mt. Vernon from the city, but you will find that Washington's country house exceeds the White House by far in its sheer expanse. Tall trees stand behind the sturdy bars on Pennsylvania Avenue, where the official entrance to the White House lies. Through their stems you can see over the lawns and beyond to where cars are driving over the ramp. The south side will afford you with the most beautiful vantage point. Circumventing the White House Park, you turn the corner of Fifteenth Street and see the Mall on your left. That's the name of the immeasurable park grounds of Washington with lush English turf, well-curved road and walkways, flower beds, and monuments. In the Mall, as with many palace complexes, there stands the unique Smithsonian Institution with its guards and disciples in lordly exclusivity and peerless architecture. Yet this institution is here for everyone. The National Museum is only one part of the palace complex that was erected and commissioned by the half-American Smith who left his entire fortune for the founding of the institution upon his death in 1826. In his words, it exists "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men".

A truly humane and, in the most noble sense, American principle. While driving by, you

can imagine the buildings behind its crowned structure, but you cannot see them from the road. What you can see is a terrifically tall obelisk. No, it isn't Cleopatra's Needle, that monument stands in Central Park, in New York City. This one is far vaster than that slim Egyptian beauty and much, much higher: 500 feet high. And since a light May shower fills the air, the tip of the pyramid is cloaked in a fine shroud, as if it were peering into the clouds. It is Washington's monument, that self-same progenitor of America. You gaze and tell the cabbie to drive more slowly. As you open your window, your face is sprinkled with tiny droplets from the boughs weighed down so much by their fresh spring sap. And so you turn your head to the right and sit spellbound by the beauty of this place. From every angle and every side, this is one of the most sublime places in the world. The lawns here sway slowly upward through elliptical terraces while green waves of trees vanish to the sides, as if parted by the hand of God. And there, as if on a stairway, the White House shines from above in a whiteness carried on pillars: the White House. It looks so small from here, almost impalpable, like a dream. A dream of that which the people desire most from their government. As Lincoln coined the immortal phrase: "A government of the people, by the people, for the people."

The Library of Congress lies merely a few steps from the Capitol, in truth a vision hewn in stone. The outer walls are white granite and the builders departed from the Greek temple style in favor of the Italian Renaissance. The anthologies found within these walls comprise the third largest collection in the world. They are repositied in innumerable shelves that radiate outward from the reading desks in the central rotunda, interrupted by galleries. A gallery runs high overhead around the base of the rotunda. There stand the distinguished minds of humanity in larger-than-life size statues round about the balustrade. The historic figures share their message to the readers below. All

around the readers small black flies squat on the broad oak benches. The beautiful rotunda is constructed of a combination of dark marble from Tennessee with the red marble from Numidia and the marble from Siena that borders on yellow, meanwhile the dome is bedecked with garlands of stucco figures made of old ivory and gold.

The enormous staircase is intended to be a worthy entrance to this sanctuary. It is a symphony of Carrara marble in receding steps, pillars and sculptures; mosaics and frescoes; paintings and statues. They all tell the story of mankind, the dreams of mankind, the deeds of mankind. All that which is contained in mythology, history, religion, and daily life finds its living form in the symbolic characters in this room. There is almost too much luster. It almost conjures up too greatness. And yet the entirety of it is borne and ennobled by the very thought that brought it to life: to create the world of the human spirit inside of four walls of one building. You would like to stand here and marvel, to delve there and find something. But the city outside awaits.

Everything here is temperate and yet stern, distinguished. Even the electric streetcar, that proletariat of the road, complies with the overall picture. It runs so lightly, without haste, and half-filled as if for its own pleasure. Washington has no need of the curse of an elevated railway; it doesn't even have half a million inhabitants. Among it all, white company cars with loads of "sightseers" drive about, most of them are visitors from the states. In New York, these cars drive about like monsters, honking and rudely wedging themselves through the traffic. But here, they invite passengers aboard like white-sailed boats. The watchman stands in the intersection of the streets on top of a walled-up wooden podium beneath a large umbrella: the city seems to be protecting itself from head to toe from the spring rain. And the stores on Tenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, the main arteries for traffic, are friendly and appear to be

there solely for the shoppers and not for the screaming, self-advertising greed of all of the salesmen. The hotels stand inconspicuously and naturally in the overall picture of the city, the quiet elegance of the Shoreham, distantly reminiscent of Meissl and Schadn<sup>87</sup>; the new Willard Hotel that accommodates a thousand rooms with splendid lobbies and offices all in one building that neither bears down in monumental size upon the street below nor disrupts the skyline. The Wardman Park Hotel in the villa district almost falls out of Washington style. One could name it the largest hotel in America, if one hadn't already grown wary of using such superlatives here: there is always something larger somewhere else.

And there are restaurants and dainty tea houses in every nook and cranny of the city. They promise a pleasant hour or two behind white curtains in paneled rooms, while rejecting the usual exhibition of appetizing dishes in display windows. It doesn't mean much that the waiter immediately recognizes that he should address you in French, because almost all of the waiters in the good American restaurants are French or German (or even Austrian); but then it suddenly occurs to you what this city happens to remind you of another city: Paris. But, of course, it can only remind you of Paris now and then, since it is profoundly and most authentically American. And you get a little irked because you know that you will not be able to order a demitasse<sup>88</sup> while leafing through the various newspapers of the world after having enjoyed a satisfying meal in a good setting. The lady at the neighboring table forces you to acknowledge the feeling that the fine things of life are reduced to small glass of Chartreuse here. No, not even in Washington is there a proper cafe or *Kaffeehaus*, because a coffee-house is no

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<sup>87</sup> Hotel Meissl & Schadn, a luxury hotel in the 1st District of Vienna. In business from the mid-seventeenth century until it burned down in 1945 due to wartime destruction.

<sup>88</sup> French for half cup, used to served Arabian coffee and espresso.

*Kaffeehaus* by a long shot. Because you are an incorrigible European, you resume your tour in your car. You continue, even though you find Washington a little lifeless. It is really unfortunate that you are such a moody creature. You know how to dampen the glory of any good moment. But you also know how to imbue them with life.

All of these incredibly white buildings with echoes of Greek temples in their architecture and strewn about as if by the hands of the gods in the opulence of the parks: The Pan-American Building, the Building of the Daughters of the Revolution, the Red-Cross Building, the Scottish Rite Temple, etc., they are all ideas embodied in stone: humanitarian causes, national ideals. Then there are a few houses with the dark patina of history: the bare brick frame<sup>89</sup> that Commodore Stephen Decatur had erected from which the so often misquoted dictum stems: “My country, may she always be right; but my country, right or wrong” and the little stately, simple house filled from the cellar to the attic with gifts from foreign potentates and curiosities blown in by the four winds. Across from the Decatur House stands one of the best memorials in Washington, the memorial to the Prussian baron and general Steuben who drilled the soldiers in the Revolutionary War. There is Ford’s Theatre, dark and somber, where the frenzied Booth shot Lincoln and the house opposite where Lincoln died only minutes later. Then on through the *Residential Section* - many, many single family homes and all of the streets rest deep in the shadows of the broad-crested maple trees, definitely a blessing in summer because Washington is intolerably hot. There are the foreign legations, each with a crest over the *porte cochere*<sup>90</sup>. And then there is a truly odd building. It carries the defiant opulence of its grounds - in the meadow, staying “We have it, so people

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<sup>89</sup> Decatur House, one of the first private residences near the White House

<sup>90</sup> French for the coach gate, also known as the carriage porch.

should notice it!” The picture is disturbing: Mrs. Henderson’s English castle, where a bathing pond is situated next to all of the other practicalities and savories that Mrs. Henderson (who of course is not around except for the short season) has most cordially invited Mrs. Coolidge and the cabinet members’ madams to use. Mrs. Henderson was also the one who provided the stylish mansion situated kitty-corner from her castle for the vice president of the Wilson Administration. This high official of the richest land on the globe declined such a privilege with the not too little sarcastic reasoning that his income did not allow him to stay in such a household.

A Parthenon stands right where the mowed grass grounds of the capitol sinks into the Potomac. Steps fly upward towards the majesty of the pillars and a high entrance. Inside is a broad, white marble vacuum with nothing but the extremely larger-than-life figure of the noble American, the arch-American: Abraham Lincoln. Round about the temple there are no buildings, no trees, just freedom. A few paces from the flowing stream, the historic river of the Americans, the Potomac. Alongside this river you can fly now along the glorious “speedway” through Potomac Park and you see the street bordered with lovely Japanese cherry trees that are all still in bloom. Some may have already fluttered sleepily to the ground, the street smothered with auroral butterfly wings. This is all a few feet from the Potomac, which is swelling today from the spring torrents, broad, mighty. Dark-eyed irises and polychromatic tulips were planted along the narrow shore embankment. They are halfway under the dragging water that caresses the long stems as it sweeps by. The historic current, the poetry of the pedals, the stupendous modernity of the street upon whose tarmac you drove as if on velvet. All of these things imprint themselves deep into your memory.

To the left you have now the expansive grounds that the city provides for its many officials as a golf course. To the right, from beyond the river, there's a building that draws itself out thin as a needle: the naval radio station. Over there you're already in the State of Virginia, that first colony that Walter Raleigh appropriated for the Virgin Queen Elizabeth. And over there, separated only by a long bridge, is the great national cemetery: Arlington Cemetery. You may otherwise have any other opinions about American cemeteries - Arlington converts you quickly to their system. In poorer cemeteries, the same system clearly degenerates into nothing but miserable negligence. It has a grove with hills and trees and meadows and stones, many stones, monuments, and on the heights stands the Arlington Amphitheater with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The Arlington Mansion also still stands here. It was the residence - of course there was no cemetery and no Washington D.C. at the time - of Martha Custis. The selfsame Martha Custis that Commodore George Washington brought over into his house in Mount Vernon once upon a time. But it was in front of the Arlington Mansion that he stood and enjoyed the glorious vista of the Potomac down below, over the Potomac's ice that he led his troops in winter under untold difficulties. And it was from this point that he chose the capital of this liberated land.

## Introduction to “Don Quixotes of the Silver Screen”<sup>91</sup>

Ann Tizia Leitich worked various jobs in America, but perhaps one of the least typical jobs she had was as a scenario reader for Metro-Goldwyn in New York City. In the summer of 1924, Leitich shared some of the perspective she gained worked on the inside of the American movie industry. She lays bare the reality of how difficult it is to really make it in Hollywood. Her audience consists of the hundreds of Germans and Austrians who sought to break into the American cinematic dream world. She warns the naive that they should not let their hopes up. It is a tough industry full of people who are very good at what they do. The Germans are not the only naive ones, though, as Leitich illustrates. Americans are rejected for their acting and writing every day. Yes, despite the tough industrial edge of Hollywood, Leitich ultimately counts herself among the Don Quixotes of the silver screen. Leitich does not desire to act, direct or produce a film. She supports film as an art form that can reach more audiences than any previous medium. That might make her someone who chases windmills, but she valiantly fights for her cause.

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<sup>91</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Don Quixotes of the Silver Screen." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 20 July 1924: 17-18.

<sup>91</sup>Print.

## Don Quixotes of the Silver Screen

They are like clouds of incense that wrap themselves around an idol in strange spirals, like hands reaching devoutly towards the stars; they are like moths that fly into the flame; like the rainbow colored dreams from the south that fuel the fire of the blue-eyed wanderers from the north in the southern skies.

Yes, all of these thoughts that run the same course, all of these mirages that have one and the same sun, who are the ones who are thinking of them, who is dreaming them up? The very young girls, of course, who fledge so early in this land of the woman. Then the beautiful ones, that have already tasted of the fruits of life. And the young men, whose straight limbs and young blood give them so much confidence. And the many others that are no longer so young, no longer so pretty, no more resilient with sauciness: they are Legion. And what is the power that drives them? My God, what else could it possibly be except that special thing which calls the poet to rhyme and the musician to feel the tones, the special thing that ascetics suffer for, that women dream of: A chance to draw a glossy veil over the painful imperfection of this world, a veil that the soul wove for itself; a chance to look over the wooden fence of earthly imbecility and into the flowery pastures of somewhere beyond. They want a chance to emerge from their own miserable mediocrity. They possess so much hubris (equally rousing and ridiculous) that they think of themselves as heroes and geniuses, even when so very few mortals are actually chose to enter God's presence, and to toil with him through the joys and pains of creation. What is the result of all this creative energy? Art, religion, mysticism, music, and -- my apologies to the poet, the maestro, and the ascetic-- Cinema. Yes, you heard me right. Cinema, that ugly duckling of a culture that is so fanatical about pedigrees and so full of strange, hybrid art forms. When I wrote about

that legion of the devout, I meant all of those who have become fascinated with the “silver screen,” as they call it here so poetically in the land of machine-fabricated prose. This region of would-be screenwriters and stars are so enraptured with the cinema that they lose whatever little bit of common sense they might have had in order to chase their dreams. They leave the fox in the henhouse, the bills on the desk, and the steak burning on the stove so that they can follow a mirage. Those who thought the Americans to be hopelessly prosaic and petrified in the perfectionist routine of their civilization will learn something new when they experience the passion that they everyday American holds for the cinematic arts.

Hollywood, as you probably know, is twenty-eight miles of Los Angeles in California. It is the epicenter of the film industry, although there are studios located in the vicinity, in Culver City, in Universal City, in Westwood, but also in New York and Long Island. The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce felt obliged to send out a proclamation throughout the entire United States proclaiming that no one should come to Hollywood to “break into the movies” without having previously and formally applied. They do know what to do with all of those people who have already come looking for work. Every day there are long, long lines standing in front of the big corporate studios. They wait to get a chance to be “extras” when a director will let them march past, which a director does very quickly whenever he is in need of extras. As an “extra,” one can possibly draw the attention of the almighty director, and fortune has been found! And as an extra, one earns three, four, or five dollars for a few days, and then nothing afterward. Waiting, waiting, and more waiting. All of that waiting costs money and any savings brought along is soon spent. The way back is long, perhaps two days and two nights, and the days spent living in Hollywood cost a great deal. There are

so many potential award-winning beauties are hopelessly stranded there. Each little city in America holds a yearly beauty contest that assumes national significance. Beauty - beauty is so mundane in Hollywood! They all dreamt of earning so much money so easily, so splendidly, and yet they do not suspect - even when they get the “chance” - how hard the job is! Have any of you ever stood under the lights--the gleaming, glaring, burning light--where they plays must stand and repeat, perhaps a hundred times, the same scene, a teeny tiny, maybe inane or accursedly hard scene? No, this is no game.

I definitely know how tough things must be in Europe whenever I get another letter addressed to one of the big American film companies - at least from Germany - written by someone who, if it is even possible, believes more naively than the flood of natives that they have a chance. Among other stereotypes they share a particularly childish European dream of America: that people in America play badminton with dollars and write checks as a form of amusement. And do not think for one minute, ye of the stronger sex, that you can condescendingly laugh at your vain sisters, with your Socratic wisdom. Even though there are fewer male roles, you had better believe that men make up their fair share of the surplus of applicants.

I will often get a letter with a picture of some boy, gnarled as a lightning-struck oak and a face like a mushroom<sup>92</sup>. The writing on it states: “I am 21 years old, healthy and well-built, and I have the intention to join your company as an actor... As far as financial matters are concerned, you clearly know how this should be handled. You will therefore send the money for my passage right away.” A practical joke? No, not remotely. And this is no isolated incident, but a typical day’s work. He lives someplace

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<sup>92</sup> Leitch specifically states a *Steinpilz*, or *Boletus edulis*, a type of mushroom also known as porcino or cep.

called Werniger- or Heinze- or Minnigerode<sup>93</sup> and he once saw the “Queen of Sheba”, the film that seems to have immortalized the Fox Film Company on the continent. And he is sitting over there and waiting for the letter from America. One day he gets post from the fable land, a letter with a blue stamp with the serious face of some long since dead president on it evangelizing something that has absolutely nothing to do with the Queen of Sheba. But he won’t read it, the letter. No check lies inside, he can see that much already. But when did a heart ever let up hope before having first fallen nose-first onto the sidewalk of realities, and how often does a heart still hold on after that?

While some people are sure that they will break into movies with the magic of their personality, others believe that their intellect will cause the high drawbridges of the Fortress of Filmdom to come down over the deep and treacherous moat. This kind of person submits a letter, just like the wanna-be star, but the letter contains a long--infinitely long--manuscript, written in the most long-winded type of German thinkable. The letter invariably says: “I am sure that this item will become a breakthrough success and it would be best if you could have me sent over in order to discuss it all with you.” The Americans are a little better at this type of letter than the Germans. An example from Butte, Montana: “I can fence, swim, tumble, box; I am an excellent horseman and I can jump hurdles with a horse, I throw a lasso superbly, I can climb telegraph poles quickly and I don’t get dizzy on roof ridges. I rode with the cowboys through Texas and have camped in the desert in Colorado; I have listened to stories told at the Grand Canyon that no one has ever put down in a book or brought to the screen, and they could

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<sup>93</sup> The -gerode ending for a town name is typically for the region near the Harz mountains and infers a small, remote town far-removed from major metropolitan areas.

lend Tom Mix<sup>94</sup> a fresh sense of glory or possibly even bring his career new life.” This letter was five pages long, it was human document. I believe that no one read it here in this monstrous office with its two thousand eight hundred employees except for me, who had no business reading it.

The date was quite old on the letter. And perhaps no reply was ever sent. Although that rarely occurs here, because no Bohemian carelessness is allowed in the offices of a film company. Everything here is impeccably organized. We are also impeccable when it comes to sending back scenes and manuscripts. A couple of people are paid fifteen to eighteen dollars a week to sit there and open letters, to skim through the manuscript, and then to slip it into a return-addressed envelope with a nice rejection letter attached to it. It is never truly unfolded; you might say it never sees the light of day. It came from obscurity and it returns to that obscurity once more. Politeness is satisfied at little cost, for, you see, it would take a practiced and accordingly expensive staff member to read through or even judge all of this wasted paper. And anyone who has the slightest suspicion of the sheerly incredible incompetence of the greater part of these concoctions must admit that it is not bad corporate policy. Back home in Europe, people only sit down to write when the little bit of education they possess finally goes to their head. But here in America there is a kind of mass writing mania that has permeated all social classes. And because the cinema is more accessible to the common American folk than the theater, books, or periodicals, this writing mania--which seems to hit the farmers particularly hard--shows up in the form of screenplays.

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<sup>94</sup> Thomas Edwin “Tom” Mix, 1880-1940. Born Thomas Hezikiah Mix. American film actor and star of many early Western movies. He appeared in 291 films from 1909-1935.

Of course schools also exist that teach script writing for serious sums of money (I know of one that requires 100 dollars for the course), but the better ones are connected with the film departments in such a way that they function as a kind of agency for the distribution of manuscripts. The businessmen encourage - whether intentionally or unintentionally - this flooding of the market by continually calling for original screenplays. They purposefully give the impression that you do not need to be well educated or published in order to shoot the figurative apple off the head and carry the big prize home, it is precisely the simple man, etc. But then, in the seclusion of their offices, where the phrases condense themselves down into numbers, they take up a screenplay that they sent to their own screenplay department. That screenplay was written by someone who has been trained to use his intellect and imagination to maneuver and polish language into a halfway decent final project. That still does not guarantee that he knows how to turn the plot into a well-crafted story that moves through the necessary stages to a climax. But that is why there is an editor. He is someone who knows the psychology of the business like the back of his hand and can make a cinematically coherent screenplay for 100 dollars a week or more. Naturally certain scripts are often chosen for reasons of publicity or propaganda since the right title can draw in crowds by itself. The same goes for the season's hits on the stage. Stage adaptations reduce the enormous costs of development and advertising, and then the film can make a tidy profit.

The rubble of war--that great breaking of the dam that way human culture--may still inhibit commerce, and the free flow of goods still can be hindered by customs and bankruptcy. But borders and fences will always be open to travelling thoughts, art, science, and...the heart. Because, after years of shooting at each other, we are now eager

to learn about the souls of the people we were shooting. If one had known more about that soul, maybe we would never have shot in the first place. Most importantly--what would have happened if the common folk had known more about the souls of their so-called "enemies?"

Yet how can you educate the common people, open their eyes, make them wiser, strengthen their judgment, make them more autonomous? Schools are good, but the poor must start earning money at a very young age. And working and studying simultaneously is too hard. How many kids have I known who have face the world at age fourteen, determined to make their way in the world? Ladies and Gentlemen, all of you who dismiss the cinema with a haughty shrug of the shoulders: The grindstone of life grinds, it grinds all too well. And the lighter and more naive the soul, the more it loves amusement. Do you go to the theater for amusement? Yes, the theater brings you edification as well, and intellectual pleasure. But that is because someone taught you how to be edified, or they taught it to your parents or grandparents. The cinema is inexpensive and comprehensible to everyone, because the eye can capture and comprehend what the mind cannot. But cinema is not just amusement; with its stages poised to access every continent, every locality, and all kinds of people. It is a door outside, a door into the world. Yes, this world is strange, and it does not always make sense. But it is rich, it is colorful, it is large, this world. And movies allow people to go out into the world, to adventure, to feel love and hate, to move beyond those platitudes that circumscribe their colorless, day-to-day lives. And even beyond that--movies allow people to travel. They travel to the most peculiar, most remote regions. They get to go

there themselves and see everything. How can Rothaug's<sup>95</sup> blissful planiglobe map compare to this kind of travel, or how can paragraphs 5 and 6 in some history book hold up against the live scenes at Nero's court?

But besides delighting the people, there have already been some attempts made here in America to produce films that are produced with an eye toward refined artistry, without any regard for box office success; it is like a literary movement that is happening in cinema. Until now, there has yet to be a great artistic patron<sup>96</sup> for this new genre, as he himself would have used a literary cinema much like every form of art. But what is not yet, can be, and will be. And so, in closing: Despite the fact that I sit so close to the spinning-wheels of cinematic production, I have yet to write a script and I have not introduced myself to anyone as the future Norma Talmadge<sup>97</sup>. Yet I am a Don Quixote of the silver screen; I will strike a blow for this ugly duckling of international art.

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<sup>95</sup> Major Austrian atlas publisher

<sup>96</sup> Leitch originally states "a Maecenas," referring to Gaius Maecenas, advisor to Caesar Augustus in cultural matters and renowned as a generous, enlightened artistic patron.

<sup>97</sup> Norma Talmadge, 1894-1957. American actress and film producer of the silent era.

## Introduction to "Election Day in New York"<sup>98</sup>

Reporting on the presidential election of 1924, Ann Tizia Leitch explores the American democratic process. The average American is involved in hearing speeches from the different parties. But it is not just a matter of winning over the masses. The American people themselves have internalized the importance of their own votes. New York City's typically bustling world slows to a reverent and sober pace as each person approaches the polls and watches the results of the votes from the Times building. Leitch writes, "Politics here in America are not what they are in Europe. Over there it means the occupation of a small circle." Whereas a relatively small amount of Europeans had say in the events that shaped their own lives, the American people choosing the people who would represent them. Leitch commends the course America is taking. Not only are the American people allowed to vote for their leaders, they are deeply involved in the process of those whom they choose.

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<sup>98</sup> Leitch, Ann Tizia. "Election Day in New York." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 4 Dec. 1924: 12. Print.

## Election Day in New York

by Ann Tizia Leitich

Time flies faster in New York than anywhere else and each event is hot on the heels of the next one. Recently, on the 4th of November, New York was an enchanted city. Most people were not working and the clerks in the few open offices were not on task at all. It was not a normal holiday. Everyone's faces possessed a mix of solemn seriousness and worn importance. It was as if everyone were walking through the halls of a temple. The special meaning of the moment did not come from the tasks that people were doing. But something seemed to endow the moment with inexpressible substance. That substance is intangible, invisible, inaudible, and yet somehow intensely present. In the busiest city in the world, people stood around on street corners in their Sunday best, talking in front of restaurants whose windows were filled with campaign posters. The roadways in New York, usually flooded with a restless confusion, seemed to be even more alive than usual, even fuller. They did not just seem to be fuller; they really were, because people had come into the city from the outlying areas so they could feel the pulse. It is here that you can hear the heart beating. It's here that the arteries flow together from all over this massive country and where they flow out into the entire world. But the cars weren't being driven with the usual reckless frustration of people hurrying to various destinations. Everyone drove with grace through the skyscraper streets. Each car, from luxury cars carrying velvet-soled aristocrats to chattering Fords carrying entire families, floated like a golden gondola, carrying the Doge<sup>99</sup> down the Grand Canal of Venice. Normally New York gives the impression of monumental material significance, but behind today's mood stands the greatness of an idea. That is

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<sup>99</sup> Title of the chief magistrate of Venice.

because on this day, on the 4th of November of every leap year, the average American is endowed with the gifts of democracy. He fulfills his mission as a citizen of the Great Democracy. On this day, he will elect his President, his Senators, his governors. It's the climax of a drama that has caused the nation to hold its breath for months on end. Politics here in America are not what they are in Europe. Over there it means the occupation of a small circle. Outside of that circle, no one really cares about politics, unless their own interests are involved.

Over here, so-called society has long kept its distance from politics, regulating something every once in a while from behind the scenes by placing a few coins here or there to tip the scales of parties and candidates. But an election campaign devours millions of dollars. Who pays for all of it? Who pays to operate the monstrous machine that has been in motion for months trying to convince Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones of the legitimacy of one particular party? An entire army of candidates of all shapes and sizes try to outdo each other with trump plays, exposes, speeches, promises, and cheap shots. They race through the land on chartered trains. They deliver their speeches from atop the train platforms, five, six, ten a day. It doesn't matter to them. American speeches aren't like German speeches, and American speakers are good. Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones listen to what the speakers had to say and suddenly they felt so important! And then they went and voted. How did they vote? According to their better judgment? After long consideration? Or was it the eloquence, the convincing speeches, the watered down catch phrases that drove them to their decisions? Did they even comprehend that in voting for the president they were not just voting for the chief officer of the land, but also voting a man into a position with world-changing potential unlike any other? Did

they choose him, or were they themselves chosen? But who can plumb the depths of such questions?

At 10:00PM on November 4th, the statistics of different states are projected onto a giant screen on Times Square in shadow of the towering “New York Times” building. The most disciplined of crowds stands shoulder to shoulder in perfect rows as the numerical reports are updated. There was barely any time to read one radio message, “Davis 518,234, Coolidge 638,253, La Follette 200,” before the next bulletin. Betting, Tension. It’s like being at the race track. The solemnity of the day has transformed into feverish unrest. Young people are making a racket with wooden rattles and noise makers. People have been thinking about this moment for months, because the American people are all concerned with politics. They are interested because politics are like sports. They are a game, a gamble. Excitement, suspense, thrill. And what prevails in the end? Luck, higher stakes, better maneuvering, popularity, whatever it may be, the game holds everyone in a spell. Little whippersnappers with their school bags on their backs debate about Coolidge versus Davis versus La Follette with proper earnestness. The owners of the various theaters breathe a sigh of relief because the campaign debates provided comedy without entrance fees. The rows of seats in the theaters have stood empty for too long. Three parties united in a single plea: “Vote for whomever you want, but just vote already!”

And now, at 10:00PM on Times Square, the top floors of the “Times” building light up red. The sky glows with ruby light - the sign that Coolidge is in the lead, Coolidge will become the president.

The American people have shown that they are thriving, thriving quite well, because they voted conservatively for capitalism. Of course, it also proved advantageous

to the Republicans that the farmers had a record-breaking year, so they are content. Aside from that, nature was helped by Republican providence. That same sense of providence runs as deeply in their blood as their fear of Bolshevism and radicalism. Each and every moment of reform or destruction causes them to raise their hands in fear of “European entanglements” like a child in fear of fire. When you hear the Americans discussing the election results, you start to think that their excitement is not necessarily for Coolidge and his party. Rather, the results were a defensive victory against the other “platforms,” that the other two parties stood and preached upon.

November in New York

## Introduction to "America Seeks a Genius"<sup>100</sup>

By winter of 1925, America had millionaires, movie stars, and world-wide political sway. Ann Tizia Leitich wrote on the major American deficit: a great artistic genius. Leitich proposes that America only makes big plans and that Americans prefer to use superlatives. Accordingly, an American genius would have to be a master of the most highly-developed form of music, opera. Although the great operatic works of history were being performed in America's opulent musical venues such as the New York Metropolitan Opera, they were only performing the works from other countries. Leitich commends the millions of both public and private dollars donated by Americans to further the arts and subsidize opera companies. She mentions Julliard, The Boston Orchestra, and The Chicago Opera as examples. America has great universities with great schools of music, and yet the American version of Wagner has failed to appear. To explain why the extraordinary advantages for American composers have still failed to produce a genius, Leitich provides a quote by Mary Austen: "Genius is the memory of centuries." Leitich insists that genius is not something that is "made to order". It is something that will strike the right person at the right time. Ultimately, she views America's anticipation of an operatic genius as positive. She knows that when that genius does someday come from America, America will be ready to receive him.

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<sup>100</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "America Seeks a Genius." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 7 Feb. 1925, Chronik Beilage

<sup>100</sup>sec.: 11. Print.

## America Seeks a Genius

America has Rockefeller, the richest man in the world, who takes into consideration the congratulatory children of his home town every year on his birthday by giving each one of them a sparkling, brand new ten-cent-piece. America's opinion tips the scales on the affairs on two continents. The industries of Europe stand in tidy rows, patient, deferential, begging for wages in front of the marbled buildings of the banking quarter of America. America may kiss the noble hands of the unengaged grand dukes of the autocratic realm from a sunken time whenever they, more or less goal-oriented, should visit its shores. America's charity has saved millions of starving people from a hopeless death. America has strong men and beautiful women; it has Harold Lloyd and Jackie Coogan; it has skyscraper cities and palm-lined cities; plains heavy with fruit and orange groves; looming majesty of snow-capped mountains and black, tromping, seething blast furnaces; glowing coal and iron foundries. This and much more: it is all America's. A never-ending mass, a never-ending diversity. It is so busy with property that it has yet to properly realize how much it actually owns.

But America is not content.

Europe? *Well* - a tiny, condoling smile with a great, glowing pride behind it - Europe is poor and decadent. But deep inside, they know something: Europe has something that they don't have, not yet. Not yet in such radiance. Europe has the great artist, it has the creators of beauty, the souls of their peoples, their time, their soil, geniuses proffering their chalices of art. At the time of their individual journeys on earth, it treated them in a purely, miserably, poorly manner, but the sheen of their spirits radiates over time and misunderstanding, the precious property of Europe.

America knows that it lies far behind in this regard. That hurts America, because it has

forgotten how to take second place. It wants a genius. Its genius, its most very own, glorious, great *American* genius. Grown from its own ground, tanned to maturity under its own sun, all of its namelessness, its mutisms, all the power, all the thrills, all the longings of this terrific diversity sounding and resounding, having become an enchanting voice in its ingenuity. An artist born from the land, one unto whom God gave the gift to capture the essence of all this implicitness, all that appeals so powerfully into the crystals of his art in order to lay the eloquent beauties and glimmering objects, the one and only irreplaceable jewelry around America's young and strong shoulders. America is tired of providing for the world of deft bankers, successful captains of industry and to dispense its recipes for free on how the little guy can feel that he was born equal to the most resplendent millionaire while he eats meals from tin cans, listens to his radio, drives his two hundred dollar automobile and lives in his timber-frame house. And it is tired of importing artists and works of art en gros and en detail.

Thus America plans change. It always plans big and it loves superlatives. Hence it must be a great artist, the greatest, at least the greatest of the time. And it is reaching for the stars, like everyone who will find his way over the apple trees of country roads, if not all the way to the stars. Poet, painter, author, sculptor, architect? Nice, yes, they are all welcome, a thousand times welcome. It already has a towering poet, Walt Whitman. But the rich, laughing, strong America's long-cherished heart's desire does not reside in them, the desire reaches there where the highest crown hangs.

The most complicated of the arts, the one that places the highest demands on artistic ingenuity in implementing intelligence and also in conceptual power, scope, play and battles with the microcosm. This art form is music. And of the varied forms of music, the most highly developed, the prime of thousands of years of music-making,

that relatively young prodigy: the opera. And to finally say it: America wishes that its own Richard Wagner would arise.

Every winter, during America's undeniably brilliant music season, when the orchestras fiddle and drone, when famous guest directors are in a hurry to take each other's place - Furtwängler and Waghalter just arrived - and Koussevitzky came even earlier - when the composers from "overseas" are received with soughing honors - at this very hour Stravinsky is directing his famed "Oiseau de Feu" in Carnegie Hall whilst every evening Italian, German, French, of course here and there also English ring out from the throats of the lead singers on the tremendous stage of the Metropolitan Opera House. They were gathered here from all around the world. And then, aimlessly led about through the press and music magazines, they creep into dinner talks and sessional orations in women's organizations, the suppressed cries for an American composer, for an American opera.

Where is he? Where is this opus? In which nook are they being held, hidden away collecting dust? What kind of gag was pressed into his mouth to silence him? Fists clench secretly against Gatti-Casazza, the cavalier at the forefront of opera who still speaks in broken English after years of living in America and who prefers to converse in French, if it can't done in Italian. Why doesn't he perform any American operas? Why doesn't he have songs sung in English when foreign operas must be sung? Isn't America grand? Isn't America rich? Does it need to be so slavishly dependent on foreign products? To be so humbly cajoled aside? To be so easily extinguished? Why do the orchestras eternally fiddle programs by Beethoven, Handel, Brahms, Debussy, Tchaikovsky, and Puccini - nothing but strangers, nothing but "foreigners"? By God, we have nothing against them. We're happy to have them. But doesn't America have

MacDowell, DeKoven, Blair Fairchild, Cadman, and Viktor Herbert? Why? And now is what someone tells all of the agitated people: Cross my heart, I take my hat off to McDowell's loveable talent and the skills of the others, but do you really want to name them in the same breath with those greats? Certainly not, you know better. You are only arguing like defiant children. You are convinced that the great American *composer* is hiding somewhere and fearfully hiding his light under a bushel. Well then, go find him!

And the American millionaires are helping you to find them. Millions of dollars are spent in this land each year on good music, specifically on presenting good music. One must admit that in this regard (that of educating the public in refining the appreciation of good music), an immense has been done and achieved in the last few years here. With the help—naturally--of the “foreigners”. And American dollars. A noble cooperation. Why, oh ye who otherwise would never underestimate the dollar, do you do so in this case? The dollar brings that same splendor, that power into the American life that at some time, when the time comes, will be one of the typical and resplendent characteristics of the American genius. It is well-known that New York has excellent orchestras. The orchestras in Boston and Philadelphia enjoy a long-running and first class reputation. Other cities such as Cleveland, St. Louis, and Cincinnati are accomplishing outstanding things in this regard. All of these orchestras are subsidized.

Of course the Metropolitan Opera in New York is subsidized in quite a substantial way. At the head of the preservation committee stands one Otto H. Kahn. This institution was, for a long while, the only opera in America. But little by little they cities are beginning to build themselves opera companies. The Chicago Opera is subsidized by the city itself. The opera companies in San Francisco, Boston, Philadelphia, and

Cleveland are maintained via contributions from committees made up of each city's citizens, much like New York. The Juilliard Musical Foundation has access to assets totaling \$23,000.00, those left by the deceased Augustus Juilliard<sup>101</sup> to advance the cause of music. Prizes and scholarships are also awarded. There are several of these that stem from various little organizations. Another name that is inseparably connected with the development of musical life in America is that of George Eastman, the Kodak King. Eastman maintains in the city of his mortal ministry, Rochester, a great and wonderfully organized music college. And he has an orchestra there of course. The fact that he keeps a private quintet that plays for him during his breakfast now and again could lead one to believe that he possesses the delicacies and appreciative caprice akin to the soul of a Medici. But Eastman is no Medici, he is American. Young American composers receive invitations from him outlining that they should submit their works, and in March a series of concerts will take place, ultimately dedicated to performing these works, after they have been sifted through by a jury. Critics from across the land are also invited.

You see: the young American composer has opportunities. Everything is ready for him. They are waiting for him. But since they are America, they do more: they do. And that is where they make the big mistake. Energy, dedication, and trained intelligence may be able to construct miraculous bridges over gigantic rivers, they may be able to conjure fairytale houses and factories into existence in which the most modern civilization has all of their magical arts played in cool calculation. Everything is most precisely weighed and balanced in advance; the time of completion has been

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<sup>101</sup> Leitich named a "Fred. Jouilliard" as deceased in the original. Although Augustus Juilliard's heir was Frederic Augustus Juilliard, the latter was alive and running the Augustus D. Juilliard Company at the time of Leitich's publication.

obsessively calculated. To the day and at the hour the work is complete. If one engineer is not worth his salt, they will simply employ another one who is better. That is the way that Americans are used to working, to creating. Because they believe it is the right time, they assume they can forge their artists likewise. And thereby doing they are like Xerxes, King of the Persians, who had the waves of the sea whipped for not obeying his omnipotence.

An artist cannot be made to measure, cannot be groomed in the best universities. One generation cannot build up enough forces to create artistic genius. Several generations work on it, in the witch's cauldron of the subconscious where those secretive goings-on take place that shape the souls and forces of men through work, environment, inheritance, in short, through life.

“Genius is the memory of centuries,” says the witty American Mary Austen. Here and there it rushes up in an individual who remembers deeper and more far-reaching: this person becomes a genius. He is carried upward from the other side by the deeper waves, high over the heads of his fellow human beings so that he can see that much further - a genius always has something prophetic about him. The dead points that are past and future for the normal people of a generation appear to the ingenious one to exist in miniature. He builds bridges to and fro and invites us to walk upon them - if we are able.

America is correct in its passion with which it forces the fulfillment of its wish, to crown the work that is its land. Artists are the more subtle product of a nation and perhaps also its most sublime. And so it is doing a world of good in expecting its great artists. He will come, the sought-after, the longed-for. The halls are decked; the hearts stand open to him. The shield is ready that shall carry him to his throne. “Hosanna”

will resound from millions of proudly swollen throats, just as thousands rang out to the 28-year-old Californian Lawrence Tibbet<sup>102</sup>. America recently discovered him as its own, beautiful American baritone and cheered him on for his performance of “Falstaff” in the Metropolitan Opera. He shall walk beneath palm trees his feet shall tread upon rose petals. The torments written on the blank walls of cold attics by unrecognized ability will become the fairy tales he heard. He will be a king, received as a king.

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<sup>102</sup> Lawrence Tibbett 1896-1960, American opera singer and baritone in the New York Metropolitan Opera Company

## Introduction to "Darkness in New York"<sup>103</sup>

New York was dark and quiet during the day on January 24th, 1925. Thousands witnessed the solar eclipse through various contraptions while Ann Tizia Leitich witnessed their fascination. The same America with bustling business and swarming crowds stood still in awe of the heavens and Leitich noticed something different about the American people. Even the buildings of Manhattan transformed in the event, as skyscrapers became observatories and monoliths in the eerie light of the solar eclipse. In poetic contrast to much of Leitich's matter-of-fact reporting on America, she interprets the scene as a work of art. Of particular note are the ways in which Leitich describes the way in which the millions of New Yorkers share a primordial fear with the planet itself: that the very source of life, the sun, would be blotted out. The manner in which the American people allow a celestial event to sweep up their otherwise hectic lives sheds light on American people not often discussed in Leitich's articles. They are a people humbled by events and bodies far larger than themselves.

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<sup>103</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Darkness in New York." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 20 Feb. 1925, Beilage sec.: 10.

<sup>103</sup>Print.

## Darkness in New York

It was dark. And yet, just for that reason, “a brilliant show”, a radiant gala spectacle. That enormous stage was manufactured and commissioned as a beaming beacon for the show. The lighting effects were masterfully directed by mysterious, powerful technicians from an indiscernible distance, eons away. The spectators poured in, filling the parterre, the echelons, the galleries; all full of rapture of possibly witnessing the beauty of such a phenomenon. High above and in front of them, led by the all-powerful intendant, the two affectionate actors embrace, floating in a blissful blue eternity in the center of the magnificent breadth of the stage. Standing expressionless to the side are the three most powerfully planetary princes, today merely humble satellites: Jupiter, Venus, Mercury.

The swarming ant nest of spectators on the little clump of earth with their jabbering and their brains that sometimes really hit the nail on the head had computed the exact hour when the mute Silver Rider should seize the most brilliant beauty of the heavens with darkened arms; when he apparently slowly, but in reality with frantic speed, would sink over a celestial body, shrouding her ever more, pressing her ever deeper into his embrace, until those few precious moments when his dark figure should utterly extinguish her warm light so that he, completed splayed over her, could have her wholly to himself for the duration of a few heartbeats. Far beneath the two heavenly beings lay the earth, suddenly pale as a ghost. It was not the velvet darkness of night, nor the opal gleam of twilight through which the emergent light trickles or tarries in the dreams of memories past; not the darkness that quakes with passion before a storm: the laughter of a sunny morning was petrified into a gruesome horror. The faces of the

people became deathly pale, as did the bright flower whiteness of the snow cover on that crisp, cold winter day. Mute, like archaic petrifications, damned to a nameless suffering by the wand of an ill-fated magician, there stood the host of New York's otherwise so fun-loving skyscrapers.

Perhaps from nowhere else, except a mountaintop observatory or the triumphant, nearly incomprehensible freedom of an airship, could spectators be offered a better view of the total solar eclipse on the 24th of January 1925 than the top of one of the giants in Manhattan, New York. In the pallid green ghastly glow in which you could no longer read print, a puzzling masonry stretched itself around us, under us. Stone colossi that once, barely a quarter hour hence, were proud towers of eloquent action that were familiar to all of us. Now they appear anonymous and strange, muted in exasperation - like copies of Niobe, they have forgotten the redemptive communication of tears. Down below in the street-ravines the darkness balled up into a slate gray from which lights suddenly ignited like question marks. And up above, too far for the agony of earth, the western sky stood in an earnest, dark Madonna blue mantle, sweeping with rainbow colored ruffles. In inexpressible melancholy the earth held her breath for fear that her only benefactor might be quenched.

## Introduction to "A Word for America"<sup>104</sup>

In late January of 1925, Austrian philosopher and feuilletonist Stefan Zweig claimed that the source of the monotonization of the world was the United States of America. In his feuilleton, Zweig fears the replacement of European art and culture are being replaced by American a machine culture. Ann Tizia Leitich prepared her counterargument to her self-proclaimed role model and published it on the front page of the March 25th edition of the same *Neue Freie Presse*. Leitich argues that she is one of the best-informed Austrians regarding America and American life. Leitich says she came to America as a "gnat" the "giant" to ask America what it had to offer her. Leitich describes how she found out what America had to offer over the course of the next years of struggling to eke out an existence and redefine herself. After recanting her own story of self-discovery through the extremes of farm life to working in New York City, Leitich brings the argument back to Europe. America's identity and direction are positive and beneficial to mankind, but Europe has yet to find such direction or identity in the wake of the Great War. Leitich also contradicts Zweig's claims that America is lacking in real culture. America was still in a formative stage and could not be compared to a continent that had far more time in which to develop a distinct culture. The American influences worth European consideration include concern for the general public. America is concerned with its populace and not just its ruling classes. Leitich presents this concept in contrast to Europe's class structure. The cultural richness of Europe was only accessible to those of privilege.

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<sup>104</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "A Word for America." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 25 Mar. 1925: 1-4. Print.

## A Word for America

### The “Monotonization of the World”<sup>105</sup> Again

By Ann Tizia Leitich

A few weeks ago there was such an interesting feature article in this paper. It was full of that sort of melancholy that leans towards beauty. And yet it was also full of power in asserting itself, in the emotion of the closing lines. The man who wrote it is a poet and author of international acclaim, and the very fiber of his artistic and human character are infused with the tastes and sensibilities of a culture in irreversible decline. He laments that culture, that unconsciously and endearingly arrogant culture that has tried so diligently to explore the vast expanse of the mind. In doing so, the culture has created an ivory tower to display the riches of its emotional quest, a beautiful retreat where high-minded souls use their opulent leisure time to ponder eternal questions. Of course, you had to be born into this leisure, or else you were escorted to your rightful place outside the door. This beautiful, sinking culture (our own European culture from the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries) was struck with consumption in the war. It was an individualistic, aristocratic, respective, bourgeois culture like every other culture until now, excepting the Greeks. That culture belonged to those whose birth, class, and status were laid into the cradle with them. It is dear to all of us that grew up with it. We all bleed from the wounds we incurred when that culture was torn away. Our faltering song is penned by the eloquent words of such an author as he who wrote “Monotonization of the World.”

But I did not pick up my pen to mourn the past. I am in America and here there is only the present and the future; there is no past. I am writing today because of a

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<sup>105</sup> An article written by Stefan Zweig, published on January 31st, 1925 on page 1 in *Neue Freie Presse*.

sentence that I read in “Monotonization of the World.” It reads, “What is the source of this approaching wave that threatens to wash away all of the color and variety of life? Everyone who has been there knows it. It comes from America.” I am removing this sentence from his piece and placing it under a microscope.

And what right do I have to undertake such a task? Hardly a handful of years ago I was sitting in a coffee-house on the banks of the green Salzach River where the respected artistic community of Salzburg met for their regular Quartier Latin<sup>106</sup> sessions. They chose the spot because it looked out over the river, the bridge, the city and the palace of good old Wolfdietrich<sup>107</sup>. Was it the Academy Cafe? Intervening time and experiences have drowned the name out of my memory, but the place remains vividly clear to me in my heart. And Stefan Zweig sat there at the same table as I. It is not as if he would have noticed me: I was young and immature, but grateful for the hour that the poet took at my side. I am grateful that he reached his slender, sensitive hand down to me from his own little realm of art and literature that he had created in the walls of his ancient castle on the hill, from whence he rarely descended. When he did leave his castle, it was to preside over discussions with the grace of a Duke, dressed nonchalantly in knickerbockers and a casual shirt. But not nearly as rarely as that other invisible spirit that gloated over the literary community, the one who made his daily pilgrimage, silent and aloof as a glowering king in his silver beard and his checkered breeches, down to a certain restaurant in suburbs that had the best Knödel<sup>108</sup>. Of

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<sup>106</sup> A district in Paris where students often met to debate, named the Latin Quarter because the students and professors once spoke to each other in Latin.

<sup>107</sup> Mirabell Palace in Salzburg, constructed in Baroque style under Archbishop Wolf Dietrich Raitenau in 1606

<sup>108</sup> The Southern German and Austrian word for dumplings made of either bread or potato without yeast.

course, I am talking about Hermann Bahr<sup>109</sup>. There was also Franz Karl Ginzkey<sup>110</sup>, that wordsmith whose delectable verses and witty little stories recalled the bittersweet taste of a bygone Austria. At the time, he was building himself a little nest so far outside of town, tucked away so securely behind fields and hedges that people had their work cut out for them in trying to find his place. Reinhardt's baroque palace had not yet awakened from its long dreamy slumber, with its crumbling walls and empty windows that looked out over a reed-choked pond that belonged to anyone who wanted it.

What silvery days, what a silvery place, Salzburg! It is as if it were created as a place to build a fortress to defend against the phalanx<sup>111</sup> of big cities and the impending homogenization of time, man, and thought. And from there, straight on. I could just as easily say that I traveled from one planet through the endlessness of space to another planet. Meaning the America where I ended up. I was thrown straight into the beating heart of the new world: Chicago. And there was no lovely, pre-warmed hotel suite waiting for me, no friendly hand to lead me, no guide through the streets. But there were also no fancy salon wagons racing across the country from one hotel to the next, no babbling committees that do their honest best to present the world on a silver platter. I did not come to America because I was hungry for bread or gold. I had turned my back on a fairly decent living back in the old country, and I was smart enough to know that the streets of America were not paved with gold. I came from the collapse of an era, the collapse of a life, to search for a new life. And so I stood there, looking at America with my soul stripped bare by a past that had been burned away. I asked, "What are you,

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<sup>109</sup> Hermann Anastas Bahr 1863-1934, Austrian author, playwright, director, and critic.

<sup>110</sup> Franz Karl Ginzkey 1871-1963, Austrian officer, poet, and author.

<sup>111</sup> From Greek, meaning finger. A rectangular military formation in Ancient Greek warfare featuring a tight shield wall that allowed the unit to move forward as one without being penetrated.

where are you, who are you, what do you have to offer me, what can you offer the world?" I, a little gnat, asked the giant, America. And the giant replied, "Go ahead and find out!" I stood there with a bundle of rags that the war had left behind for an Austrian intellectual. I was on the big streets of Chicago with waves of fur coats and laughter streaming past me, but the north wind from Lake Michigan was icy cold, as severely bone-chillingly cold as the burning heat of the prairie sunshine of a Chicago summer. "Go and find out..." And I went to find out. First things first: I had to get something to eat and a roof over my head. Easy or not, I wanted far more than just that. Step for step I wrestled it away from the giant. I fought with it, I worked for it, I cried out against it, I flattered my way closer to it, tried to find its weak spots, and I found its strengths where I had never suspected they would be. I looked at it from head to toe, inside and out. I ate *apple pie* and *steak* with washerwomen and typists. I had oysters and lobster with club ladies and millionaires. I beat the laughing daughters of the West in English grammar at university, and was beaten by them in *basketball*. I went in and out of many doors and I kept a sharp eye on people while they worked. I eavesdropped on them in their free time. They are a colorful crowd: proudly exclusive and chummy, poor and rich, noble and ignoble. I watched the days, weeks, years, cities and towns like driftwood washing up on the shore. I held up my lantern and asked: Who are you? What do you have to offer? And I have been in the farmhouses of the Midwest where people's minds and hearts are full of pigs and corn, because that is all that nature has granted them. And I wondered how they manage not to forget God in the midst of all their troubles, whatever God may be. America's Midwest has produced some of the best poets and authors of the last decade. Europe has just begun to recognize them as trailblazers of a new literary territory. They are like the first rays of a dawn over dark,

sleeping forests. Of course I do not think that they could have understood Marcel Proust<sup>112</sup>, or that he could have understood them. They represent extremes on completely separate scales. I would not like to be buried in the Midwest. No European who grew up before the war could live there for the simple reason that it is just far too different. I escaped to New York to be closer to Europe. That way I could smell Europe from the steamships that arrived every day having just been over there a few days earlier. Despite the move, I learned more in the Midwest than I could ever imagine. America is more than monumental arrogance and borderline frivolity of its well-appointed skyscrapers. It is more than New York's white-hot market of vanities and thirst for sensationalism, more than Broadway, more than Wall Street's lust for dollars, more than the sixteen million cars and the uncanny ability to push a button in order to get whatever we want from a cup of coffee to a concert performed by a famous virtuoso playing a few hundred miles away (*just press the button*). The America that our European fairy tales call "the land of limitless possibilities for getting rich is a thing of the past. But America, the land of limitless possibilities for the evolution of mankind, may very well come true.

Europe is still clueless which way she should go. She is stumbling around in the dark. She cannot climb back over the ruins to her old ways, but she also does not know how to move forward. Europe is too prejudiced, too entangled in myriad streams and undercurrents, inhibitions and desires. Europeans as individuals are more endearing and undeniably more interesting than Americans. But what about the country? Is it boring, dull, superficial? No. The longer you stay here, the more convinced you become that there is always more to learn from it. When I say "country" that is exactly what I

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<sup>112</sup> Valentin Louis Georges Eugene Marcel Proust 1871-1922, French novelist, critic, and essayist.

mean, the countryside. The American cities are, with few exceptions, dismally ugly. They have been built for one purpose: to make money. But Americans overcome the ugliness by avoiding as much of it as they can. And they are helped by their great fortune: they have room. All of the American cities are located far apart from each other, with great green distances between them. The strength, the object of America does not reside in the cities, it lies in the ground. Monotony? Boredom? Yes, the cities and the country have terrible amounts of both. But Americans cannot fix that. They are not like the Europeans who willingly trade better things for that monotony. Monotony surprised the Americans and hit them like a flash flood. They are momentarily defenseless but not powerless in the face of monotony. After the bitter work of developing an entire continent was completed, they turned their much-practiced strengths to building up their lives. They had steeled themselves through success and created something within a few decades that exceeds the brilliance of everything that had ever been. America outgrew its former schoolmistress, Europe, with unnatural speed. How could America have found the time to fill its form with adequate substance? Europe required centuries to create her culture. That culture was even fed by Asia, although it remains distinct. And now America is in the process of forming its own culture. Everything it had up until now has been imported, adapted, or bore the mark of strict European schooling. Now it is beginning to emancipate itself. America's political isolation may be a symptom of that emancipation. It is not as if America wants to keep Europe at a distance, America and Europe are closer than ever, geographically. America is listening to what Europe has to say. But we cannot mistake this listening for absorption, because America is absolutely on its own path. Who can know for sure today which way that path leads? But everyone who is here and can feel the pulse of the

land will experience an unmistakable sensation. They will sense that something is in the process of becoming, that a soul is stirring and slowly opening its eyes.

Renan defines a nation as “having done great things together and wishing to do more.<sup>113</sup>” Materialism naturally baits her trap on the edge of that concept, as it does overall. But if you put your ear to the ground, you will hear the hoof beat of something better. Has Europe ever considered doing something great together? Yes, the individual European has thought and thinks great and beautiful thoughts. The impetus provided by the great ones was always the start of something new and better. But tyranny, stupidity, hate, and filth once were allowed to cross the threshold of the homes of those great ones. Did any other people work together in the way the Americans did in order to make their land great? No, at best others were whipped into making countries better. Just as an example: There are plenty of rich people in Europe today, perhaps more than before the war. Did it occur to any of them to start or to support a generous cultural work whose beneficiaries are the general public, such as a library, a university, etc.? I have heard nothing of the sort. No one should think that I am making gold from lead<sup>114</sup>. A library is a wonderful memorial in stone and precious volumes for a rich man. It is a shining symbol of vain self-gratification. Still, it is a priority for wealthy Americans. Why does it not occur to anyone over there? Because the term “the general public” simply does not exist in our historical codices. The few exceptions only serve to prove the rule. The Viennese Volunteer Paramedics comes to mind, for example. Europe has two types of people: the rulers and the ruled. In

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<sup>113</sup> Joseph Ernest Renan 1823-1892, French expert of Middle Eastern ancient languages and civilizations, known for his political theories concerning national identity. The quote is from his work, *What is a Nation*, originally in French, “avoir fait de grandes choses ensemble, vouloir en faire encore.”

<sup>114</sup> Leitich uses the German idiom “To change a U into an X” in reference to Roman numerals, where a five, “v” or u, can be extended into an “x” to falsify ledgers.

America there is a small but far-reaching difference. Here, society is split between employers and employees, between servant and master. The man with the dollar is the master and the man without the dollar is the servant. The servant remains the servant for so many hours each day, but when he gets out of his coveralls and steps out onto the street, he becomes the master's equal. He cannot buy everything that the master can. But it could well be that he has no desire to do so. Either way he has no need to become a Bolshevik. He is content; he will get a good dinner. The meat that he eats is in no way the same as the meat that the master will eat that same evening. It only looks that way. But he does not know that because his digestion has grown accustomed to frozen meat over the last few months. He thinks it is just as good, and so it is. He has a suit that was made (in a factory) to copy the same one his master wears. But, once again, the servant does not feel a reluctance to wear it. It only exists to build his confidence, and so it does what it is supposed to do. His wife drives his Ford to go *shopping* in the afternoon just like the master's wife. The fact that she has to drive the car herself only does her good, as does the fact that she will cook her own dinner. It saves her the need for a masseuse. This all appears to be just crude material possessions, but let us not forget that hunger and jealousy make people into beasts. And let us also not forget that clothing and housing are the most primitive and obvious ways to give people a sense of culture. I am summarizing here and cannot go into detail. In all, I am not trying to say that there are no poor people in America. I am not filling out statistics, but rather I am dealing with foundations. America is still in the process of laying foundations. Now to come back to our man, to our average everyday man. In the evening, Pablo Casals<sup>115</sup>, Jeritza<sup>116</sup>, and

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<sup>115</sup> Pau Casal i Defillo 1876-1973, Spanish cellist and conductor. Regarded as the pre-eminent cellist of the first half of the 20th century.

the philharmonic are playing in his house and Secretary of State Hughes<sup>117</sup> speaks to him. The richest man in the world could probably hire Pablo Casals and Jeritza for an evening, but probably not even Secretary of State Hughes. But this everyman has a house with five rooms in total! So: manufactured goods, machines, cinema, and radio. Horrors for the cultivated, sensitive Europeans for sure. But why would they be a danger? No artist need worry that his performance hall will be emptied by radios. The people who listen on the radio would never have gone in the first place. On the other hand, however, the desire to attend a concert can be awakened to see the performer in person. After someone listens to “O du, mein lieber Abendstern”<sup>118</sup> on the Victrola gramophone for the hundredth or two-hundredth time, the concept of beauty will become impressed on that person. And then he will want to hear the entire opera. Maybe the Victrola is the reason why opera companies seem to be popping up like daisies in America. America spans vast distances that culture could never have spanned in the good old days before radio. Several million people live in America. Suddenly a new world has been opened up to them. Let us make one thing clear. The time has long since passed that Kufu<sup>119</sup> created something tremendous with the help of hundreds of thousands of nameless slaves that died in the desert sun like flies. We stand on the verge of a completely new age. We are in the middle of a tremendous social evolution. Europe is dabbling in experiments for this era. And, as the Russian example is showing, Europe is not doing well with her experiments. But the Russian example also shows

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<sup>116</sup> Maria Jeritza 1887-1982, Moravian soprano singer, associated with the Vienna State Opera and the New York Metropolitan Opera.

<sup>117</sup> Charles Evans Hughes, Sr. 1862-1948, served as Secretary of State from 1921-1925.

<sup>118</sup> Actually titled “O du holder Abendstern” is an aria sung by the character Wolfram von Eschenbach in the Wagner opera *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*

<sup>119</sup> The Great Pyramid of Egypt, built to hold Pharaoh Kufu.

how lazy and how subverted our era was. Sure, we enjoyed ourselves, and when we heard of misery or sorrow or ugliness, we defensively held our hands out in front of us and protested. We said, “Yes, yes, that exists, but we do not want to have anything to do with it.” But it was no use. We, too, experienced years full of misery, sorrow, and ugliness and we escaped the Russian example by a hair’s breadth. If we whitewash the graves, the stench will still eventually find our noses.

One of the important, perhaps the most important, American of the age is the one who pays the lowliest errand boys in each of his plants a wage that allows him to get more than a piece of dry bread. He does not do so because of some idealism. Nor is it an act of propaganda. It stems from more of a clever thought process than a wise one: a sure and profound premonition to know the shape of things to come. That man is Ford. I delayed writing his name because Ford has a terrible reputation in Europe as a proponent of the Taylor<sup>120</sup> system, the most extreme, stupefying kind of labor specialization. You can never remove one cog of a complicated mechanism like the industrial complex and observe that cog by itself. If you did, you would draw incorrect conclusions. Good or bad, Ford is a chapter in American cultural history. But getting back to the errand boy. There have to be errand boys. Why should they be outcasts, just because they are errand boys? It would be dreadful if the world only consisted of university professors. I am neither a Bolshevik nor a socialist, but strictly American, but simply an American in the sense that I believe the following: Everyone, no matter where he is born, should have the possibility to shape his life, and should have a chance and a time to laugh. That is something we all wish we could do again: laugh. And we want to

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<sup>120</sup> Frederick Winslow Taylor, 1856-1915. American mechanical engineer who sought to improve mechanical efficiency.

see everyone be able to laugh, not just those who--as the Americans say it--were born on the right side of the tracks.

Yes, people will tell me that it is easier in America because the people there are better off materially. But that in no way gets to the fundamental difference. It lies much deeper, where the greasy sheen of money cannot reach. These noisy distractions--jazz, mass-produced exports, machines, schlock art-- these are just the dross of the process, they are not America itself. We, the European Elite who prize originality above all else and worship our cultural heroes--we may not care at all if millions of people get a chance to become better educated and happier. People who are below our dignity because they have not enjoyed the advantages that we have. Of course they do not interest us. But we must care, for these people are a part of the way things work, and the way things shall become. I once went to Coney Island, the world's biggest public amusement park. I was in the Sunday crowd with an experienced traveler from Vienna who was very culture, very spoiled, and very skeptical of America (like everyone is). He said to me, "These girls are all well-dressed. They all look good. They are pretty. How do they do it?" Well, I could have given any number of answers, but one of the answers is this: a nice, simple dress is cheaper in New York than in anywhere else. And that remains true despite the fact that New York is one of the most expensive cities in the world. The assumption is a girl can fit into one of the average sizes. That is all thanks to factories. If my taste is too lofty for that dress, I simply do not buy it. The idea that manufactured goods destroy good taste is false. The opposite is true, because the people who are content with manufactured goods have no taste to destroy, at best their taste can only be developed. And in developing taste, you have to start at the bottom, not at the top. It makes little sense to wistfully reminisce the days when someone conceived of

artistic household appliances and clothing in the tranquility of a leisurely lifestyle and then thoughtfully and carefully introduced them to the world. This century has its own substance and purposes. We cannot fathom the extent to which things will expand from the foundation that we currently have. But you can feel it with more surety here in the heart of America than behind the walled fortresses of Europe. You can feel that grand, new values are on their way, indeed, they are riding on the crest of this wave, this barbarically powerful wave called the “Monotonization of the World.”

## Introduction to "Prohibition at the Crossroads"<sup>121</sup>

Seven years into Prohibition, Ann Tizia Leitich saw the policy reaching a critical turning point. Little did she know, she was only at the midpoint of the law's lifespan. Leitich provides her readers in Europe with a history of Prohibition, including her assessment that the majority of the American populace agreed with the principle of prohibiting alcohol. This article serves as a progress report of how well the American people had converted to its goal of a "dry" country. She reports on the debates between the supporters and opponents of prohibition and their various arguments. Importantly, Leitich describes her time in Iowa, where she reports that she, "never saw a single drop of alcohol. It is intriguing to be able to observe a world and a social life devoid of alcohol." Leitich cannot help but describe obvious advantages that came with the successful integration of prohibition. She does not, however, neglect to mention that there would be no underground world of bootleggers and speakeasies if it weren't for Prohibition. While commending the creation of a world no longer reliant upon alcohol, Leitich asks her readers if it is worth it to remove the ability to choose such a world.

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<sup>121</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Prohibition at the Crossroads." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 11 Apr. 1926: 27. Print.

## Prohibition at the Crossroads

America has been distracted from noticing the catastrophic drop in stock prices these last few weeks because of one issue. The bold-faced headlines of the last few years have, from time to time, been centered on this very passionately controversial subject. That issue is Prohibition, the 100 percent ban on alcohol in America.

The Prohibition bill made its debut before Congress in December of 1914. The bill was proposed as an amendment to the constitution. It received a majority vote, however it did not win a two-thirds majority. In 1917, Congress passed the bill, but it did so with the very unusual condition that it would not be valid unless a certain number of states, namely 36 (as is well known, the union has 48 states) would ratify the amendment within seven years. In less than two years, enough states ratified the bill and the law became part of the Constitution. The law came into effect on January 16th, 1920.

It is therefore incorrect to say that an unprepared people had been spoon-fed propaganda during and following the Great War. It is just as incorrect to state that a reform-happy minority imposed a law upon the unwitting majority. If you could say it about any law at all, then it you could definitely say it about this law: the nation itself accepted the law with one heroic gesture.

And just how is Prohibition succeeding?

The people recognize now, after the law has been in force for five years, that the law cannot be effectively enforced with the current system in place. It is costing the nation millions of dollars each year, because the courtrooms are full of violators. It was calculated that two-thirds of the court cases in 1925 were related to violations against the ban on alcohol. In some districts, the disregard of the law on the one hand and the

helplessness of the prohibition enforcers on the other hand are so flagrant that a change in the law seems absolutely necessary. The prohibitionists are hoping for an increase in available funding. Up until now, they have been far too meager. It costs far too much to patrol the massive territorial borders of the United States to the north and to the south. In the previous year, the expenditures for the enforcement of prohibition were over 19 million dollars. Moneys resulting from fines and penalties amounted to 5 1/2 million. That results in a net loss of 13 1/2 million dollars. The president of the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment<sup>122</sup> calculated that prohibition has cost the nation two billion<sup>123</sup> dollars to date.

For someone who has lived in America, and not in New York, but in the larger, prospering cities of the Midwestern states like Iowa, Nebraska, Indiana, or Montana, there is no doubt that America will never be totally “wet” again. Wet implies those who are friends of alcohol. During one and a half years of residence in Iowa: I never saw a single drop of alcohol. It is intriguing to be able to observe a world and a social life devoid of alcohol. They appear to live in an age full of so many different, healthier forms of entertainment, and devoid of so many social problems, that it seems that they could make many “wets” into believers.

But there is, of course, the other side of the coin, and what is repressed on one side tends to run amok on the other. As human beings, it is in our nature to partake of forbidden fruits and long to leap across the most innocent boundaries. We are always

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<sup>122</sup> Founded in 1918 by William H. Stayton, a leading organization in the fight to repeal prohibition in the United States.

<sup>123</sup> Leitch's original text reads “zwei Billionen” which would actually convert to two trillion. Due to the American use of the short scale where billion stands for 10<sup>9</sup> and German and Austrian use of the long scale where billion stands for 10<sup>12</sup>. As such, journalists have historically translated “billion” incorrectly when dealing with American English.

ready to let a few sparkling drops fall into our class so we can taste the sweet flavor of rebellion for a few minutes. And it is the business of “bootleggers” to exploit this side of human nature, the business of smugglers, racketeers, and dealers. They know how to procure alcohol, either domestically or from abroad, and they also know how to sell it in secret. Bootlegging has created another nouveau riche, if not a new class of millionaires. Bootleggers stand with one foot in jail and they risk their lives in battles with the Coast Guard and prohibition agents. That is why they can dictate their own prices. And those prices keep rising the more the bootleggers are hunted down. All of these factors create a situation that speaks for the side of the prohibitionists. They demand an expanded and more expensive system of operations in order to achieve drastic results, because every price-hike on the side of the bootleggers decreases the number of their customers. But one nasty fact contradicts that argument. Despite the vast price increases imposed by the bootleggers, their clientele has continued to grow. But the striking period of prosperity and speculation in the last few years in America is most likely the cause of the increase in customers.

Nevertheless, the bootleggers have more than one ace up their sleeves. Their coffers are not only growing full on the frivolity and passion of man, but also on his stupidity. There are people who get drunk today in America that never would have thought of doing so before the days of prohibition. They are just like the women who smoke: just because they have seen others smoking, they think they look good doing it. And so entire sections of the population are persuaded to think that whiskey, gin, and some ghoulish cocktail would take them to the height of pleasure. Girls drink so that they don't get labeled as “bad sports” in front of other young people. In the house of a married couple that I knew to be avowed prohibitionists, I watched as someone

delivered a case of whiskey on New Year's Eve. In response to my astounded expression, the wife whispered that there was no other way. Her husband had to pay a business colleague a special favor, and only whiskey could do the trick. America is a country of nouveau riche and there is no other social group that feels the need to play up would-be gentility and keeping up with the Joneses quite like the nouveau riche. It would, in fact, be the most effective means of enforcing prohibition if an arbiter of good taste were to rise up and have drinking be something unfashionable by declaring it to be vulgar and inelegant. Haven't the prohibitionists ever thought they could easily get results with that type of propaganda?

The most bothersome chapter of the whole story is New York, the wayward child, a prohibition agent's personal hell, and a bootlegger's personal El Dorado. They can keep a strict watch on restaurants, cabarets and hotel dining halls with detectives, they can penalize the owners of such establishments, and they can even shut them down. However, a city of six million people with a population that constantly fluctuates has so many channels, so many possibilities that you just have to shake your head skeptically and admit that the prohibition law is, at best, ten percent effective in New York City. Waiters, hotel doormen, taxi drivers, maids, elevator boys - they are all in cahoots with the bootleggers. And for the westerner who leers at and longs for the uncharted adventures of the big city, New York is just as tantalizing as a seductive woman. And all of the bootleggers' cronies are ready to help him wet his parched throat.

And so the zeal with which the law is broken is like a hydra that grows two heads each time you cut off one. All of the statistics indicate that there was a noticeable improvement in favor of the prohibition law, whereas the following years show a steady drop in those same statistics. That fact is all too seldom shown in correlation with the

relative economic conditions. 1921 is known as the “black year” in American economics, and since 1923 there has been rapid growth leading up to the boom of 1925. The disconcerting thing is not the odd family who presses their own wine or the odd stash of wine or liquor kept behind the books in some library. The real danger, however, lies not too far from such scenarios. The danger is that the sneering, unbridled violation of one law could have the effect of increasing laxness regarding all laws, a continual demoralization. And now Americans see themselves forced by this potential danger to take some kind of action. Now citizens and lawmakers must confront that danger and consider means and methods to overcome it. And that is the reason that the discussion on prohibition has flared up once again. And the crucial point of the argument is no longer wet or dry, alcohol or no alcohol, but rather, can the law in its current form actually be enforced?

Prohibition at the crossroads.

According to the opinions of everyone today, it is impossible at this point to pass a final judgment on prohibition. After a time span of five years, there is no sufficient basis for such a judgment. Another factor is the way that the statistics and facts are spun by one side or the other to the point that they are discredited and are no longer admissible. More interesting, and sometimes more reliable, are the estimates in areas where numbers and facts are not obtainable. For example, consider a comparison of the consumption of alcohol before and after the ratification of prohibition. In 1916, Americans consumed two billion gallons of alcohol, which at the time cost around 2 ½ billion dollars. If that same amount were to be sold at the escalated bootlegger prices, that would produce a sum that lies beyond all possibility. A comparison that would get even the more ardent wet to stop and think.

It is worth taking the time to consider each of the doubts expressed, especially those related to profits generated from selling to the lower classes. Take, for example, the increase in bank accounts among the poor; cheap, single-family homes; furniture purchases; life insurance policies, and the like. The price of alcohol prevented the poor from buying alcohol. The middle class could still afford to imbibe every now and then, because reason is silenced by blind habit. And since alcohol can be seen not only as a luxury, but also as an opiate, it is not only damaging to the body but it also weakens willpower. It seems to justify almost any legal action against alcohol, even those which restrict the rights of individuals.

## Introduction to "Farewell to Austria"<sup>124</sup>

After having visited her homeland, Ann Tizia Leitich reports on the experience of leaving Austria to return to America. Leitich describes how not only Vienna, but the other states of Austria have maintained their own identities. These state identities combine to make what Leitich considers to be the living identity of Austria. Austria and the spirit of Austria can be found in the low plains surrounding Vienna and in the high mountain valleys of the Alps. Having lived in the melting pot land of America, Leitich describes her own nation now with similar terms. The Austrians are a mixed people, with influences from all around their former empire. "The soul of Austria is one of grand plurality, with a great temper and mixed blood. Roman dignity; German correctness, patriotism and love of music; Slavic love of pleasure and melancholia." Leitich stresses the preservation of Austrian culture. As she returns to America, Leitich knows there are those who envy her chance to go to America and others who disdain her because they do not approve of America. She defends America as a place of tolerance, where the papal flag can fly over protestant churches in honor of the Pope. For those who cannot go to America, she encourages them to do the same things Americans would do to find success in life.

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<sup>124</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Farewell to Austria." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 10 Aug. 1926: 9. Print.

## Farewell to Austria

It is not as simple as you might think. No, it's not easy to take the journey that leads you away from poverty, away from the horrific want of bread that leaves people poisoned down to their very soul. To walk away, in spite of it all, down a gangplank, onto an ocean liner, and off to the golden land of the jazz stars. To abandon those communal kitchens that have so tragically plagued the hard-working middle class since the end of the war, and to exchange them for the pleasant atmosphere of well-run hotels. To leave desperation behind you and to enter into the opulence of a country where the second largest city sees annual sales of over a billion dollars in its stores alone. To leave a crushing, pessimistic submission to fate and to return to a vital, lightning-bright sense of self, *where success happens because people believe in success*. No, it is no easy thing to leave Austria and come to the United States... What a journey! It is full of images, prospects and insights; as well as comparisons, suspicions, fears, and hopes. It is a long journey, farther than just an eight-day voyage aboard a steamer. A return and a leap forward at the same time.

Farewell to Austria. -

There are people who say that there is no such thing as Austria anymore; however, despite all their objections, *Austria still exists*.

We no longer see it when we sit in a cafe in Vienna, because that is Vienna. People pronounced Vienna to be dead a long time ago, but they were never able to keep Vienna dead quiet like the rest of the country. People are still talking about Vienna, still writing about her. They still love Vienna and sing her praises, even if not as enchantingly as they once had. Thank God that Vienna is far tougher than some first thought her. But Vienna is not Austria; Vienna is just one piece of the puzzle. I am

referring to the truly expansive Austria with her myriad bridges to foreign lands. Vienna is far more international, savvier, and more up-to-date than Austria's states even when the city herself may not be international, savvy or up-to-date. She is, on the other hand, Austrian. She has the most modern swimming complex<sup>125</sup> in Europe, and yet the majority of her streets are plastered like a small town. That's bad news for your soles, but it is just one more of Vienna's smiling, cheerful charms. Somehow the urban clings to the rural. The relationship between Vienna and Austria is to a certain degree the same as the relationship between New York and the United States. New York has American air and American streets, but only half of her thoughts are all that American. The other half of New York's thoughts come from across the ocean. That is precisely why it remains America, though. The hinterland constantly feeds New York with the essence of the country. Then New York takes the essentially American aspects from the hinterland and mixes it with outside influences to create a hybrid environment. That is how it has always been with Vienna. It was always "Vienna, in Austria". And that is how it must remain if Vienna wants to keep itself from losing its finest culture. If she wants to keep her little star in Baedeker's<sup>126</sup> guide and keep the memories alive that she leaves with those who have traveled to see her. If Vienna, in a word, wishes to remain Vienna, and not just some city with 1,800,000 inhabitants. There are plenty of other cities that have 1,800,000 inhabitants.

That connection that Vienna has with Austria's other states - people are doing everything imaginable to wipe them out. Sometimes that connection dawns on you -

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<sup>125</sup> The Amalienbad, an architectural masterpiece of Red Vienna in art deco style. Designed by architects Karl Schmalhofer and Otto Nadel.

<sup>126</sup> Travel guides from the Baedeker Verlag were world-renowned with cities evaluated according to a rating system based on stars.

almost tangibly - in front of old baroque palaces like the two from Prince Eugene<sup>127</sup>, the one on Himmelspfortgasse<sup>128</sup> and the one in Belvedere Park<sup>129</sup>. You can feel the connection in front of other buildings as well. Artists and craftsmen built them. Princes dreamt of them. They all stood together on rich ground that gave them the strength and good fortune of harmony. These are the places where you will suddenly find Austria. This is where you will know that it was more than just the dynasty or the once immense bureaucratic power of Vienna. These are the places where you know Austria can be so much more because you know what Austria has already achieved.

And out there, somewhere in the countryside, Austria reveals itself to you. Because you can recognize again and again that same pleasing line or sustained and rounded expression that found its most complete expression in a Viennese Palace. You can find it in a Burgher house in Wachau, in a *Stübrl*<sup>130</sup> in Salzburg, at a wayside cross<sup>131</sup> in Tyrol, or at a palace in Spittal an der Drau. Here and there you will find that feeling poeticized in a wunderkind like the Kremser Schmidt<sup>132</sup>. Schmidt embodied the joy, bliss, pleasure, picturesque power, and sense for beauty found only in the people of Austria. He did so in the jubilation of his colors, in the eloquence of movement that he depicted in his church paintings that we tend to forget all too often these days. You find that feeling when driving through Austria's states, each one so tiny and yet so individual, each one delightfully rooted in itself. It is there on a street that is bathed in sunlight

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<sup>127</sup> Prince Eugene of Savoy, one of Austria's most successful military leaders, best known for stopping the Ottoman invasion of Europe outside of Vienna.

<sup>128</sup> Currently the headquarters for the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance.

<sup>129</sup> Designed by Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt, one of the foremost baroque architects in Austria and southern Germany.

<sup>130</sup> *Stübrl*, Austrian diminutive for a small room, usually referring to a modest tavern or bar.

<sup>131</sup> *Marterl*, dialect term used primarily in southern Germany and Austria.

<sup>132</sup> Johann Martin Schmidt, a main figure in Austrian baroque painting who was admitted to the Imperial Academy in Vienna despite having never received formal training.

between blooming meadows and splendid, dark pines. The feeling touches you as you look into the faces of snowcapped mountains in the Tauernberg range as a few young fellows march by in military step, singing old songs. In Lienz, Tyrol I watched as they received the rifleman company from Hall<sup>133</sup> during their summer festival at Lake Tristach. The people stood assembled on the large town square smiling and cheerful, but quiet and full of dignity. The peasant women wore clothes as old as the hills themselves with large fluttering hats and apron strings. Next to them stood the merchant's wife in a skimpy little crepe de Chine dress. She's never felt decadent a day in her life and that is why she has never danced to jazz. I have nothing against jazz where it belongs, but jazz in the middle of the green Austrian mountains is just dreadful. Flags flapped from the gables of old, confident houses in the golden sun. Around the memorial to Kaiser Joseph II in the middle of the square stood parked automobiles that the young men in hunting caps had learned to drive quite well. Then came the riflemen playing music and donning the quaint garb of rural middle class that is distinctly Biedermeier<sup>134</sup> with wide-brimmed, tall felt hats pinned all over with alpine roses and wild orchids.

Yes, all of that still exists in the real world and not just in half-forgotten songs. And it's not just some masquerade! The people there belonged in those costumes and the people standing around them belonged to them as much as the crescent of mountains looking down on them from afar. The stately parish house belongs there as well, with a girl just as pretty as a picture standing under a wide window next to the silhouette of the pastor and pointing at the marching riflemen, her smiling face looking

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<sup>133</sup> Traditional rifle companies were formed throughout Tyrol to preserve traditions specific to the region.

<sup>134</sup> Period most widely known for flourishing middle class art forms such as interior design. Used in German to connote members of the middle class.

out from under the same pointed hat that the men wear. As the riflemen finished playing their tune, she clutched her bodice and threw the bouquet that she had been wearing.

But the best way for you to realize that Austria is still alive and well is for you to meet a truly Austrian person. You are more likely to meet him in the country than in the bigger cities. Oddly enough, in the cities, you tend to find true Austrians perched in the dust of old documents. He fits in somewhere between Grillparzer<sup>135</sup> and Bartsch<sup>136</sup> and he carries a good bit of Peter Altenberg<sup>137</sup> in him. They are moody creatures, sensitive, easily carried away but also somehow withdrawn deep inside themselves. They are as capricious as the mountains of their homeland. Much like the Alps, they stand serenely, backed by the blue sky one moment and the next moment they appear threatening and gloomy. Then the encounter ends with a coy smile. Amicable, yet arrogant, conservative, stiff-necked, they all carry the same old name: Austrian. Defiantly individualistic because they have traditions. Self-aggrandizing, even if they are just peasants. People that don't care at all about "success," that hot topic of our age. Souls that stood as the children of many generations on the edge of the fate of a nation, who experienced the fate of nations. They have become wise and devoted, philosophers beneath the same low roof. "Fatalists." "That is the way it is and that's how they will be. You can't do anything about it." It doesn't matter if they are poets or counts, privy councilors or - I apologize to the privy councilors in advance - Tyrolean milkmaids, like the one who helped me arrange my mess of wild flowers into glasses so that the farm

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<sup>135</sup> Franz Grillparzer, Austrian dramatist who wrote the oration for Beethoven's funeral.

<sup>136</sup> Austrian local historian.

<sup>137</sup> Austrian writer and poet, a key figure of early urban modernism, and influential member of the Young Vienna artistic movement.

hand could find just the right place to for them. She was completely happy to earn her four million a year if she still had a parlor and enough time to make cloth shoes and read stories. She wanted stories from me; not just any stories, but stories that would touch her heart. Give heed, ye publishers. The city? No, she didn't ever want to go to the city. She was content. Yes, Austrians are out of vogue. And that is exactly the reason why they have so much to offer in an age that is so lacking in content, in inner substance - if only they would put forth the effort! The soul of Austria is one of grand plurality, with a great temper and mixed blood. Roman dignity; German correctness, patriotism and love of music; Slavic love of pleasure and melancholia. Add a little Italian gaiety and grace; some stateliness and grandeur from the Spaniards; the cafes from the Turks that are more than just mere drinking establishments, rather an approach to life. And all that without having mentioned the Asian influences of experiencing pure joy of meditation and pondering.

Austria has a duty to retain her image and to preserve tradition.

Preserving tradition does not mean the same thing as letting a country become frozen as a giant museum. If Austria wishes to retain her image with a living pulse beneath her skin, she mustn't cut herself off. She cannot hold time itself in contempt. Instead she must fight back with her own weapons and assert herself as distinct, as Austrian. It is worth it if Austrians ascribe importance to themselves.

Some people envy me because I am going to America and some curl their mouths in disdain because they look down on America. To the latter I say: Do not condemn America because they place the idea of "A bathroom for everyone" over the idea of "Shakespeare for everyone". Instead, think about the fact that the papal flag was recently flown over protestant churches during the Eucharistic Congress. It was

necessary to show foreigners how the country of America, as a united country, could greet special emissaries. That was the most important matter.

I also repeat for those naysayers the words of the engineer, Lindenthal<sup>138</sup> who has so brilliantly represented Austrianism over there from a recent speech he gave in Vienna: Don't get upset if you have to stay here, or, I should say, if you have the privilege of staying here. If you want success, simply do those things here which you would have done in America. Unite all your strengths for one goal. Everyone with united strengths! For Austria. And then you can dispose of the greatest problem with which Austria has had the toughest time - not the economic problem, the psychological one.

That is how the Americans do it. They march separately but they strike together. That is the underlying idea behind Americanism. And that is why I always tell stories about them. Because, despite bathrooms and Babbitt<sup>139</sup>, you can learn a lot from them.

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<sup>138</sup> Austro-American engineer, best known for designing New York's Hell Gate Bridge.

<sup>139</sup> A term for petit bourgeois from "Babbitt", Sinclair Lewis' 1922 novel critiquing American middle class culture in the 1920's. See also Leitich's article, "New York's Bohemian Neighborhood"

## Introduction to "Vitaphone, the Talking Picture"<sup>140</sup>

As a foreign correspondent reporting on events in America, Ann Tizia Leitich makes mention of technological advances. This article is based specifically on a very significant development in an art form that Leitich had already defended in her article "Don Quixotes of the Silver Screen: cinema. Leitich gives an art historical summary of the simultaneous developments in film and sound technologies. She presents the two developmental paths as ones that have remained apparently parallel. Sound could not only be simultaneously transferred across vast distances, it could be recorded, duplicated, and redistributed. Photographs were successfully combined to display the real motion of life. Leitich is pleased to announce that the Vitaphone is the point at which the developmental paths of sound and cinema converge. She describes to her readers the sample talking films that she was privileged to see and hear simultaneously. Leitich then hints at the long-term implications of being able to permanently record simultaneous motion and sound: dramatic immortality. Future generations would no longer have to wonder how the great actors of Leitich's age performed their craft.

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<sup>140</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Vitaphone, the Talking Picture." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 7 Sept. 1926: 1-3. Print.

## Vitaphone, the Talking Picture

Fifty years ago human beings began conquering the issue of carrying the human voice across vast distances. At the time, most people prophesied, “it will only ever be a toy.” The radio followed in the telephone’s wake and people accepted it with amazing ease. People could hear music that was produced streets, cities, countries, and oceans away in their own homes while wearing house shoes and a housecoat. The development of the moving picture was taking its own path. It began with a modest and playful *laterna magica*<sup>141</sup> and today miles of film are rolling over the globe. Now the moving picture is part of the cultural revolution of our time. The silver screen can make its pictures as lifelike as possible with colors, movement, beauty and detail. Actors, writers, directors, operators, engineers, painters, and architects can all work together to make a perfect series of pictures. Those pictures can develop and perfect a concept. But their efforts will never produce a complete, living picture, because the moving picture screen is mute.

On the other hand, the silver screen’s little brother, radio, possesses all the richness of sound. With little poles and wires, the radio draws sound from the air like ethereal ghosts. But radio can only satisfy the ear and leaves the eye wanting.

People have tried throughout the last few years to combine the two devices in an effort to produce sound and picture, interwoven together like appear to us in reality. In the seclusion of laboratories men tested their ingenuity. Industrial enterprises fought zealously against their competitors, on the *qui vive*<sup>142</sup> for the new hit. They invested capital for experiments and employed armies of experts. The initial results were meager

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<sup>141</sup> Latin for “magic lantern”, an image projector developed in the 17th century.

<sup>142</sup> French, to be on the alert.

and insufficient. It just did not work out to have radio and the moving picture working hand in hand. Attempts were always botched due to a lack of absolute synchronization. And people these days are far too demanding for a half-baked product. They do not mind living without Goethe and Shakespeare in their midst, and would just as soon amuse themselves with the colorful joys of a magazine. But they will not settle for inferiority in technological matters. They have been spoiled by the imagination of inventive geniuses. They are constantly demanding new, never before seen, apparently impossible things from inventors. And the inventors deliver.

They did it again by finally confronting and conquering the immense problem of *synchronizing* sound and picture with complete simultaneity, and thus bringing moving, speaking pictures to life. When I say “brought into life,” that is exactly what I mean, for it was indeed a birth—the birth of a new art form—that we witnessed recently at the introduction of Vitaphone, the talking picture at the Warner Theater on Broadway in New York. It was the Vitaphone that first presented talking pictures. It was almost uncanny, ghost-like to have a theater packed full of listening spectators. An atomized beam of light and a screen. There was nothing else, no orchestra, no director, and yet the room was full of music. Violins cheered, harps moaned, cellos sang in rushing, full tones. Above it all, the trombones sounded fanfares from “Tannhäuser”<sup>143</sup> overture over it all. There was no orchestra, no director, and yet we saw them close enough to touch, alive in every muscle and nerve, lost in the thrall of their instruments, creating the very same music that we heard all around us.

Well-known soloists and scenes from operas followed. As is typical on this side of the ocean, the producers made an effort to provide a program full of variety and

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<sup>143</sup> Richard Wagner’s 1845 romantic Opera, Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg

diversity. It reminded me of a musical revue, but this time it had a deeper purpose. They were trying to demonstrate the many potential uses of the new invention. Gilda from “Rigoletto” made an appearance, played by a young star of the Metropolitan Opera, appeared. Her lips separated, she closed her eyes in thoughts of love and began to sing, and we were met with the sound that poured out of her half-opened, girlish mouth. As she sang she walked around in the garden, and then turned around, climbed the stairs, and the location of her voice modulated as well. She was alive, she sang for us. Then the image changed. We saw President Coolidge on the green grass in front of the White House. He began to speak in his nasal, New England accent. He looked away from the paper in his hand, somewhat bored as he gazed toward the audience, attempting to look this or that person directly in the eye. The encounter with the president was not at all lacking in its impact just because it was not occurring in real time.

The spectators generally fall prey to two feelings: They are so enchanted by the talking picture that they believe for a fleeting moment that they are in the same room as the speaker. Or they catch themselves observing the singer’s lips, the violinist’s fingers, and the director’s baton to see whether or not they perfectly match with the sound. If we can completely rely on the precision of the machine then the perfect illusion comes off badly for a moment when we apply an ambitious, artistic standard. This is especially true with instrumental music; maybe primarily with instrumental music. The Vitaphone appears to be best suited to the human voice. But the music of the “Tannhäuser” overture was originally played by a first-class ensemble. In the theater it

seemed muddy. The heavenly bliss of the violins lost all of its brilliance and the candy-sweetness of the piano and sforzando<sup>144</sup> drowned in the crashing of the sound waves.

But such imperfections at a debut do not take anything away from the meaning of the breakthrough. This new technology is more than a scientific triumph: it has the potential to revolutionize art and culture. As the connection between living images and sound, the Vitaphone could prove to be more disruptive to live theater than anything that has come before. But it only appears to be so and it will be temporary, because the dramatic arts will celebrate a resurrection in the movies; a pretty face or a good pair of dancer legs will no longer suffice to become a star in the movies. Dedication and real artistic effort will be necessary if an actor wants to keep up with the dual requirements of image and sound. That greater dedication, this refining toward perfection will increase the artistic ambitions of this illegitimate art form known as cinema. And, because of its unbelievable distribution, it will inspire greater artistic ambition in the masses. It will lose its role as a surrogate and draw closer to truth; it will turn away from the barbarous world of the arbitrary and turn toward the real essence of things. The audience's hunger for content, which constantly needs to be fed with new sensations, will be diverted into the realm of art. The two big icons of our era, the machine and the company, are always developing new ways to distribute inventions and art to the broadest possible number of consumers. So the question remains: does the ever-growing power of kitsch and shallowness thrive because of this system, or does it thrive in spite of this system?

Many people will tell you that kitsch and shallowness thrive in the system, and they curse machines and companies because they are ruining our minds. Perhaps those

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<sup>144</sup> Music terminology. Piano for quiet and sforzando for sudden accenting of a note.

people just being short-sighted in their bitterness and nostalgia. Man cannot live from business alone without intellectual nourishment. On the other hand, an obsession with mere aesthetics brings about decadence and the cultural exclusivity of a chosen class, a social order that seems to be passing into obscurity. But as soon as we can manage to distribute intellectually ennobling art in the same way that we distribute other commodities--efficiently, from the equators to the poles, and always in search of maximal profit--business will be made to serve an intellectual purpose. The movie industry today is one of the biggest, at least here in America. By continually improving itself for business reasons, it is improving its own business acumen; it is also increasing its potential as an arbiter of deeper values.

But at the same time, the Vitaphone is also a new path to immortality.

Even though Schiller's words once claimed that "posterity weaves no garlands for imitators," the Vitaphone transform the ephemeral art of the actor and the musician into a more durable kind of art. Their artistic endeavors, their hard-won but short-lived aesthetic triumphs, will become permanent, as if engraved. Orpheus, Walter von der Vogelweide, Corona Schrötter, Liszt, none of them would be mute and dead today. Famous speakers that have long slept in their graves would be accessible to us in all of their eloquent glory. And with them, the whole spirit of their bygone era. The deep and impenetrable sea of the past will be moved a little closer to future generations, and the past will appear so vividly in front of their eyes and ears as if it were a living part of the present.

## Introduction to "Ecce America!"<sup>145</sup>

The bold Latin words for "behold America" stood on the front page of the *Neue Freie Presse* on November 13th, 1926. Ann Marie Leitich plays on the statement made by Pontius Pilate as he presented Jesus of Nazareth to be judged by the Jews. Just as the Jews were quick to condemn Jesus, Leitich approaches her article in a manner that suggests that there are those who are quick to condemn America. In the case of this article, Leitich particularly argues against those who blame America for being the source of consumerism. "America is almost always blamed for having bringing all of this into the world, and for spreading it throughout the world." Leitich admits that it would be easy to point out American involvement in mass production and consumer culture. She focuses on the thing that America cannot buy: Europe's history and culture. America may have the dollar, but Europe has wisdom and culture. And yet American tourists return home from European vacations disappointed at having found bad imitations of Main Street and jazz music. Leitich's ultimate critique of Europe is that Europeans are choose to emulate American consumerism instead of teaching Americans how to pursue worthy causes other than financial success.

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<sup>145</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Ecce America!" *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 13 Nov. 1926: 1-3. Print.

## Ecce America!<sup>146</sup>

Ethereal warnings shoot up here and there in the thick, misty vapor like jets of flame. They are cries of outrage, sobs of resentful powerlessness. They complain about the gigantic surge of spiritual vapidness sweeping over the so-called civilized world. That surge is the shameless worship of the golden calf<sup>147</sup>, the brainless yet dangerously subtle ways of the *commis-voyageur*<sup>148</sup>. It is the lurid sleight of the hand behind masks of words. It is a self-important frenzy of activity. It is deceptively stocking everything with sleek luxury and machinery to make everyone forget about the cavernous void below them.

America is almost always blamed for having brought all of this into the world, and for spreading it throughout the world.

America does not deny its ominous role in the conception of such consumerism. America takes no offense, nor does it regret being forced into the role of the scapegoat. America does have a hard time understanding how it could possibly be guilty for Europe's frivolousness and delinquency. America considers Europe to be old enough to know what is good for her, what is bad for her, and what she owes to herself. America gapes in unwitting marvel that Europe would sell the one intangible treasure that America covets more than anything: Personality, a cultural identity that has been carefully formed starting deep in the soul and moving outwards. Europe is selling out her identity for cheap American products, like those greedy, grinning Indians who

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<sup>146</sup> Latin for "Behold America", play on the famous quote by Pontius Pilate when judging Jesus of Nazareth, quoted as having said "Ecce Homo" or "Behold the man" the title of one of Friedrich Nietzsche's most famous philosophical works.

<sup>147</sup> The idol mentioned in Exodus 32:4, made by Aaron for the Israelites who demanded an physical form of worship. The worship of the golden calf angered Moses and he proceeded to destroy it and have those who refused to end their worship of it killed.

<sup>148</sup> French for "travelling salesman".

swapped their lands and their livelihood in exchange for the conquistador's gaudy glass trinkets.

America is holding more in its hand than just money, the trump card of our era. America is also innately equipped with the confidence of youth, which is so disproportionately huge that it can easily overcome any nagging self-doubt or insecurity it might have had. And American looks on flattered and chuckling whenever Europe rushes to "participate in America's shortcomings," as Ernst Lothar recently stated so well in this column.

It may seem that way at first, for the eye is always drawn at first to the conspicuous evidence. It may seem that way at first, for the eye is always drawn at first to the most conspicuous evidence. Too many people have done just that--they have seen the golden prize that America has won by its unparalleled, record-breaking performance, and they want to downgrade that to a meaningless gold star on the forehead. But America is not as homogenous as people in Europe tend to think it is. A cross-section of America's soul reveals no single structure, but rather twists and turns, a play of colors, and clouds like one sees in marble.

Why do Americans go to Europe? What are they looking for over there?

Because Americans want to see a better play than "Abie's Irish Rose<sup>149</sup>", or one that another continent deemed worthy of seeing. Because a trip to Europe is the best means of spending money in a gentlemanly and preferably careless manner. Because everybody else is going over there... These and other reasons add up, but there is another. Americans go to Europe because Europe is different. And that is precisely it.

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<sup>149</sup> Broadway hit performed from 1922-1927, setting the record at the time for longest run in Broadway theater history.

Of course, Americans still want to find comfort, bathtubs, bellhops, and elevators in Europe, because Americans are the creators of the grandest comforts and therefore they cannot live without them. And they are not as mistaken as Europeans (especially particular hotel owners) believe them to be. But aside from that, Americans have a vague notion that Europe has more to offer them than just hotels and art galleries. There are already signs of that the better classes are growing tired of Paris, because they lack the right connections to see a different Paris than the one that they will find in Cook's<sup>150</sup> guide to the city. But Paris is Europe to most people. What did they find there? The same things they had at home. They wanted to escape from themselves and from their familiar surrounds for a while, and ended up stuck with themselves in the end. They found superficiality, kitsch, jazz, played for better or worse by people who did not understand its barbaric, lush rhythms. And the Europeans who danced to that jazz-- yes they had read a good book or two, but they had since forgotten all about it.

And they found their own ridiculous Main Street, the same boredom and vacuous entertainment that killed any aspirations that such a street might have had. One day soon they will come to Europe and find her chewing gum, because Europe is "Americanizing" herself. Please note the quotation marks surrounding "Americanizing." The real culprit here is, of course, the stacks of money that Europe wants and that America owns in great amounts. Europe sees America like Torquato Tasso's golden cloud of youth<sup>151</sup>, and she stands to lose her dignity--and worse, her head--if someone does not lead her out of the golden haze. What could not be worse or more catastrophic, she is losing her head. Europe has been acting like that bad businessman who would

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<sup>150</sup> Thomas Cook 1808-1892, founder of the Thomas Cook Group travel agency.

<sup>151</sup> From J.W. von Goethe's 1790 play Torquato Tasso. Tasso claims that the golden cloud of youth surrounds her head and she requires guidance.

rather take a few quick bucks right away than wait around for the fortune that the bank would eventually pay out. Europe is squandering her most prized possession, her character, her world view, idealism, art for art's sake, thoughts for thought's sake, and beauty for beauty's sake. She listens with half an ear across the ocean, grabs for certain items and tries them on without having taken a good look at them first. Europe has taken that worthy and eminently reachable American ideal, "Take every functional thing and make it beautiful," and watered it down into the hackneyed sentence: "Everything that is functional is beautiful." Oh, how that pains the ear of the sensitive listening. Europe is not only pragmatically selling out because she has no choice, but she is also neglecting and tramping the one thing that America tries in vain to buy with all of its wealth: tradition. She is throwing herself into the arms of materialism with an ugly, whorish gesture that Americans do not recognize because they are caught up in their naivety. Their gospel of material success - no matter what the masses or individuals do with it - is deeply rooted and anchored in a religious foundation. John Calvin said: If a man is rich, then it is the will of God that the man be rich and so God's blessing rests with his wealth.

Even if on both sides of the Atlantic, the sole criterion of the success is financial and wealth is the highest aspiration of human efforts, it still plays out differently here and over there. Even the root of the evil is different. Europeans chase after money because they are too poor, but Americans do it because they are too rich, and they got rich much too early. America worked and expanded itself incessantly. That work was superb as long as it was the goal and not the means. Today there is no grand mission anymore; America can only make more money, so money comprises all its efforts.

Because she is so busy making that money, she is distracted from any other endeavors.

And as in other aspects of modern civilization, the words of the poet ring true: “Master, deliver me from the spirits which I myself invoked!<sup>152</sup>”

It is clearly difficult transition from “made it” in the sense of completing a task to the “made it” in the sense of creation<sup>153</sup>.

And that why Europe should seize the present opportunity to impress Americans, and to help them get the full value out of our trading partnership. For the first time in history, Americans have grown weary of their country. Bored stiff... America senses a massive emptiness around itself and in itself and America does not know how to escape the void. A few weeks ago a few people let themselves be trampled down by police horses just to see the face of a dead hero of their little romantic dreams. It was the nondescript face of a young man with a low forehead and a charming smile. Rudolph Valentino’s smile conjured up everything for them that life still owed them. Despicable judges of the American psyche discounted the irreverent mob of a few hundred thousand with a scornful shrug of the shoulders. Perhaps it was more grim than scornful. The cry of those struck to the ground was a cry for help from the void.

The true and beautiful point of the old American ideals has been forgotten. They have sunken down to the level of catch phrases used in debates by politicians and others who crave power. The rite of Americanization has fallen into a lifeless routine and is in danger of becoming nothing more than a machine to produce cannon fodder, following the dubious European example from days of yore. Democracy is starting to become disreputable among intellectuals because of the corruption and the arrogance of two-bit

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<sup>152</sup> From J.W. von Goethe’s poem “The Magician’s Apprentice”

<sup>153</sup> From the two sense of the German word “schaffen”: the one with the past form “schaffte” (to accomplish), and the one with the past form “schuf” (to create).

crooks on the one hand and the indolence of the masses on the other. The foundations of opinion, which once seemed so secure, are now cracking and trembling.

And so it comes that Americans no longer know where to turn. They know that there is no more pioneer frontier left to cross, no worlds left to conquer, at least in the physical sense. For they had reached the inner limits of their great Mechanized civilization just when they had completed its external trappings, right as Europe first began to describe it in dithyrambic terms. And the Americans asked themselves: What next? What now?

In fact they started asking all kinds of things and started thinking about them, too. They began investigating life and found that life perplexed them as they had never before imagined. They dove headfirst in all kinds of things that were new or unusual or even just forbidden to them until then. They discovered “sex”, the sexual life. They got divorced. American authors put a stethoscope up to the ugly side of existence. They approached the stinginess and earthbound nature of feelings with grim intensity and a truly American one-hundred percent objectivity. Between Sherwood Anderson’s<sup>154</sup> destructive fervor and the sparkling sharpness that H.L. Menken<sup>155</sup> uses to raise a ruckus about each and every American stupidity, they have all become a vast, grey army of honest seekers. With the exception of the romantically ironic Cabell<sup>156</sup>, the Europeanizing Hergesheimer<sup>157</sup> and the Irish immigrant offspring Iren O’Neill<sup>158</sup> hardly any American intellectuals have reached the point of true artistry. Only rarely does a

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<sup>154</sup> Sherwood Anderson 1876-1941, American novelist.

<sup>155</sup> Henry Louis Mencken 1880-1956, American journalist, essayist, satirist, and critic of American life and culture. Known as the “Sage of Baltimore”.

<sup>156</sup> James Branch Cabell 1879-1958, American author of fantasy fiction and belles lettres.

<sup>157</sup> Joseph Hergesheimer 1880-1954, American writer known for naturalistic novels of decadent lifestyles,

<sup>158</sup> WHO?

true talent burst forth like a fountain out of the rank-and-file-masses, bearing witness to the hidden potential that still lies bound beneath the surface. Martha Ostenso's<sup>159</sup> superb book, "Wild Geese," recently released by a Viennese publisher, is just one example. Finally, in that book, one can start to recognize that other America, the one that exists beyond the jazz, the millionaires, and the brilliant sheen of its most superficial side.

America has jumped on jazz. Finally, something native, original, different from anything they have in Europe!

America built high-rises, and in the process has developed some excellent, original, even artistic ideas. But the curse of its fanaticism to move forward at record speed has allowed things to degrade down into superficiality. America's enormous power of expansion robs it of the ability to delve deeper. It has happened over and over. America barely begins to get a feel for the surface and then it moves on to something else. And so its attempts are never as rewarding as they should be because it never waits long enough to reach the core of a matter.

At the same time America overfeeds its drive for efficiency with concentration, even if it means getting stuck in the dead end of endless specialization that sees people only as torsos. That is how you look at a person and only see a torso. During a philosophical conference, President Lowell of Harvard remarked that "More is required than technical genius if we are to tear down the fences built by specialization. We need men that sit on the edge of everything and can survey the entire field of knowledge."

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<sup>159</sup> Martha Ostenso 1900-1963, Norwegian-born Canadian novelist and screenwriter who partially grew up in the United States.

Did Europe hear that? Of course the gifted men of Europe can no longer afford to sit at the crossroads and “extend their souls an invitation,” as America’s wise man Walt Whitman once put it. Now his wise words sit buried in pages on the top shelf of bookstores, buried under dust. The wise men of Europe will starve if they refuse to join in the dance around the golden calf, even if Europe can only afford a silver calf. They have to get comfortable with the taste of those wheels which squeak the loudest. Maybe they would not starve if they move closer to each other, if they would form a phalanx<sup>160</sup> together. We live in a century that belongs to the masses and has adopted the masses. Because of this, our century is as formless and barbaric as the masses themselves. It was bound to happen. The time was bound to come, and America is the herald announcing its coming. It is like dough waiting to rise. The dough requires yeast to rise. President Lowell said it: We need men, great men, great people.

The talented in Europe suffer under the Caudian yoke<sup>161</sup>. America’s talented are making money, because money alone determines success. Those who cannot make money can be of no worth and their cries fall on deaf ears. America will fail to be great as long as its best people are consumed by dollars and business and only go to the theater every now and then to unwind.

But Europeans should be teaching Americans how to accomplish something without being consumed by dollars and business, instead of just copying the Americans in their pursuits.

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<sup>160</sup>From Greek, meaning finger. A rectangular military formation in Ancient Greek warfare featuring a tight shield wall that allowed the unit to move forward as one without being penetrated.

<sup>161</sup> The Romans lost the second Semnite war at the battle of Caudiane Forks in 321 B.C., after which they had to pass under the yoke of Pontius Herennius in humiliation.

## Introduction to "The Great White Way"<sup>162</sup>

Broadway, the Great White Way, is more than just a theater district, reports Ann Tizia Leitich. She claims that Broadway is America's playground, its amusement park. Broadway has the benefit of a wealthy American audience. Leitich attests that there is enough money spent on Broadway that some theaters can play pieces of high art and others can play pieces for popular entertainment. She lists particular dramatists and plays of note that one can easily see along Broadway's crowded path. Leitich describes the various levels of quality that exist among the productions and among the theaters themselves. Three years after her *Neue Freie Presse* article, "Happenings on Broadway," Leitich can confirm her positive prognosis. Broadway has successfully reached maturity.

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<sup>162</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "The Great White Way." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 30 Jan. 1927: 32-33. Print.

## The Great White Way

by Ann Tizia Leitich (New York)

What a crowd! What a colorfully ragtag, pleasure-seeking crowd - just beaming with every color in the visible spectrum! Their loud voices squeal over the noise from the cars. They crawl all around the slowly moving cars, flowing like an unstoppable, roaring flood. Thicker waves gather; in some spots, about two or three buildings long. White electric light from the theatre marquees shine brilliant light down onto the crowd, brighter than the sun. This is Broadway. Broadway at 2 o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday and Saturday before the matinees begin.

The crowd includes chorus members from the shows who are going to eat well this winter; they have all the bravado of real actors. Sturdy housewives promenade arm-in-arm with their husbands, happy to take an afternoon off. Young bucks dot the crowd with their rigid hats and raccoon coats draped sloppily over a shoulder. Real coquettes stroll along in glorious fur coats; wanna-be coquettes stroll without them. The wives of the deli owners wear scintillating brooches in their hats. Giggling shop girls and delivery boys, giggle at each other. Car salesmen carry whiskey flasks in their hip pockets. People's uncles from Buffalo, aunts from Omaha are in town. Fresh-faced, lovely girls have done their makeup with all of the inimitable style of a New Yorker good-time girl<sup>163</sup>. Has-been actors stand out in the crowd, even as they try to disappear behind battered hats. You can see their weather-worn faces and the deep furrows that extend from their noses to their mouths. Their actor's lungs still need to breath in the air of the theater, even if it is just outside the doors. There are young people, male and

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<sup>163</sup> A flirtatious working-call woman. Leitich uses the French "grisette," which can have coquettish or whorish connotations.

female, with both finished and unfinished scripts in their pockets. They have made the pilgrimage to this dreamland, to this Mecca. Lu Chan We studies at Columbia and has his dainty, yellow beauty hanging on his arm. Ambrosine and Byron came from Harlem. They have saved up enough money to try to get a seat in the orchestra section with the white people.

Other cities can also brag about their crowds of people and their streets that are hammered to gravel by the constant drone of wheels and soles every day and every night, but they have no street like this one. Broadway. Broadway is not just New York's theater street; it is much more than that. It is a playground. It is the country's amusement park. It belongs to a wealthy, young population that has a childlike curiosity and, at the same time, a certain smugness. Broadway has been described countless times and yet still not enough, because the "Great White Way" is one of America's sightseeing wonders--it is different, original, unique. In spite of the many languages spoken by the crowds, Broadway is more authentically American than many other places.

The same scene is repeated at night, the only thing lacking is the sunshine. You can barely notice the sun's absence for any darkness left by the theaters is illuminated by the business world and the flaming words that are stacked up along its skyscrapers. The light cascades downward like Niagara Falls, bleaching the night's dark tones away from the cathedral of artificial light that vaults of the street.

It takes long enough to get around on foot during the theater hours, but it takes even longer in a car. Feisty taxis, smart coupes, proudly floating limousines all fill the road. Peeking through the car windows, you can almost see that set of people who would never dream of setting foot on the vulgar pavement of Broadway. They appear

from nowhere and disappear like unfinished dreams. All you can do is catch a quick glimpse of shimmering hair, sparkling eyes, the suggestion of a naked shoulder under a light fur wrap, top hats, an alpaca cane casually lying between someone's knees because American dandies take canes to the theater at night.

And Broadway's goods? Broadway's commodities in its seventy-two theaters? It is just as multi-colored in its conglomeration. There is something for everyone's taste, level of education, for every mood, for almost every race. Yes, there are both goods and commodities for sale. Americans can afford to put on good dramas for those with more discriminating tastes, as well as the popular pieces and spectacles for the masses. There is always someone willing to finance the usually inevitable deficit.

You want to be amused, relax, hear a few undemanding jokes, and see the sparkle of evening gowns and dazzling flesh? There are numerous revues with girls of unrivaled beauty. Do not worry yourself about the lady's long dress, buttoned up to the top of the high collar just under her chin. Watch, she is turning around and she has not a single flaw on her body, and not a single thread on it, either.

Oh, you want to see an operetta? A farce? A famous comedian? Is it possible that you have yet to see Abie's "Irish Rose"<sup>164</sup> which, every night for the last four years, has been showing the marriage of the garment industry with St. Patrick's own folk, cheered on by a perpetually enthusiastic audience? But you are right; you have time for Abie's "Irish Rose" since it will probably be performed until doomsday. Maybe you would like to see a murder drama, a Negro drama, or the excellent Hebrew Habima

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<sup>164</sup> Abie's Irish Rose, Broadway hit performed from 1922-1927, setting the record at the time for longest run in Broadway theater history.

Theater<sup>165</sup> from Moscow? Would you like to see a hit book, “Gentlemen prefer Blondes<sup>166</sup>,” that was rewritten for stage and is not really that successful as a play? Or perhaps you would prefer a *Chinese Theater in Chinatown*? How about one of the good, but not really exciting plays by the award-winning American, Howard<sup>167</sup>?

Or perhaps a witty, entertaining, spicy piece. The kind they refer to here as “risqué”. Naturally you can see that here as well. In fact, you will mostly find risqué pieces; we are not school children after all. In that case, I would hurry to get into of those shows if I were you. The mayor has threatened to come around with his big broom to sweep Broadway clean again. It is strange how now that I think about it, I cannot think of a single play that is simultaneously witty, entertaining, and spicy. The Hungarians<sup>168</sup> have gone. We were disappointed by Michael Arlen<sup>169</sup>, the Armenian-Londoner with the green hat. Noel Coward<sup>170</sup>, the versatile carpenter who provided a few decent shocks for Broadway last year, leaned toward the funnier side of a balance between unruly and undressed. Even he has gone quiet. Lonsdale<sup>171</sup> kept Vienna and Berlin entertained with his “Mrs. Cheney”<sup>172</sup> and is represented here as well. He is just a

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<sup>165</sup> The Habima Theater. The national theater of Israel, founded in Moscow in 1905 by Nahum Zernach.

<sup>166</sup> Gentlemen Prefer Blondes: The Illuminating Diary of a Professional Lady, Anita Loos 1925

<sup>167</sup> Bronson Howard 1842-1908, popular American dramatist. His most popular works included The Banker's Daughter (1878), Old Love Letters (1878), Young Mrs. Winthrop (1882), One of our Girls (1885), The Henrietta (1887; revived in 1913 as The New Henrietta), Shenandoah (1889), Aristocracy (1892)

<sup>168</sup> See footnotes on Molnar and Vadja below.

<sup>169</sup> Michael Arlen 1895-1956, Armenian essayist, short story writer, novelist, playwright, and scriptwriter known for his successes written in England in the 1920's.

<sup>170</sup> Sir Noel Pierce Coward 1899-1973, English playwright, composer, director, actor, and singer known for his wit and flamboyance.

<sup>171</sup> Frederick Lonsdale 1881-1954, English dramatist.

<sup>172</sup> The Last of Mrs. Cheney, 1925 Frederick Lonsdale play that was eventually adapted to film three times.

little milder; he is lacking some zest. Of course we also have “The Captive,”<sup>173</sup> but that is a very serious piece. Most people at the premiere knew nothing of the salty, risqué reputation it had on the continent and so they sat there fairly embarrassed and applauded because that is what you do if you do not want to look stupid. Many of them stood up at the end and had no idea what the whole thing was about or why the leading lady was so worked up the whole time. But people are still going to see it out of pure curiosity. *Molnar*<sup>174</sup>, the indispensable, is here with his “*Play at the Castle*.” *Vajda*<sup>175</sup> is quiet for now, which means he has disappeared into the anonymity of Hollywood in a sea of dollar bills. So what now?

Oh, how could I have forgotten: we have exactly what you are looking for right here. Wit, tingling with sophisticated irony, can be found in Somerset *Maugham's*<sup>176</sup> comedy “*The Constant Wife*”<sup>177</sup>. With his impeccable taste (he is, after all, an Englishman), Maugham keeps things balanced just on this side of frivolousness. His people think it crude to get upset about marital infidelity (of course, the wife’s infidelity is in question). As the wife follows her lover to Naples where he is going for an extended research trip, her husband sends her his blessing, “Have your honeymoon and for heaven’s sake come back when it is all happily over.”

“An evening’s entertainment.” But there are other things, as well. This year, Broadway did not have any of its usual little fetishes, like it had for Hungarians,

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<sup>173</sup> An English version of Edouard Bourdet's “La Prisonniere”, a play about a man whose wife leaves him for another woman. The American cast was arrested at the censoring of the play in on February 9th, 1927.

<sup>174</sup> Ferenc Molnar 1878-1952, Hungarian dramatist and novelist. His Americanized name is often given as Franz Molnar.

<sup>175</sup> Ernest Vajda 1886-1954, Hungarian actor, playwright, and novelist most famous for his screenplays.

<sup>176</sup> William Somerset Maugham 184-1965, English playwright, novelist, and short story writer.

<sup>177</sup> W. Somerset Maugham 1926, a comedy of manners.

Russians, and for the South Sea with all of their pining, dusky beauties who ruin white men with their love. Instead, Broadway is experimenting with other ventures. The Theatre Guild<sup>178</sup> began with a few original, tiny, intellectual troupes. Now it is a shining star of artistic quality and other theater troupes have grown out of this same movement. Most of them shy away from the lights of Broadway in old, abandoned playhouses or in cellars dispersed throughout the city. People do not care about the superficial shine here; they are admittedly intellectual, “*high-brow*.” This is where “*The Little Clay Cart*” was performed three years ago. This year the same piece was being seen with the title “*Vasantasena*.”<sup>179</sup> Right now Eva La Gallienne’s<sup>180</sup> newly founded *Repertoire Theater* is performing *Shakespeare*, *Chekhov*<sup>181</sup>, and *Benavente*<sup>182</sup> at cheap prices. *O’Neill*<sup>183</sup> is, of course, playing in the *Greenwich Theatre*. The *Theatre Guild* now owns three houses. One of them is among the most modern and beautiful theaters in New York. The *Guild* serves as a model for everyone who wants to make money from good, serious pieces. This season, the *Guild* opened with *Werfel*’s<sup>184</sup> “*Juarez and Maximilian*”<sup>185</sup> with a first-rate cast. The appeal of the piece is partially dependent upon historical allusions that are lost on most of the local audiences, even the more educated patrons who have a weakness for anything historical that goes beyond George Washington and Cleopatra. As a result, the majority of the public did not understand the subtleties of the

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<sup>178</sup> Theatrical society founded in New York in 1918.

<sup>179</sup> Mrcchakatika, “The Little Clay Cart” in English. A ten-act Sanskrit drama attributed to Sudraka about a wealthy courtesan named Vasantasena.

<sup>180</sup> Eva La Gallienne 1899-1991, theatrical actress, producer, and director.

<sup>181</sup> Anton Pavlovich Chekhov 1860-1904, Russian physician, dramatist and author.

<sup>182</sup> Jacinto Benavente y Martinez 1866-1954, Spanish dramatist who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1922.

<sup>183</sup> Eugene Gladstone O’Neill, American playwright and Nobel laureate in literature.

<sup>184</sup> Franz Viktor Werfel 1890-1945, Austro-Bohemian novelist, playwright, and poet.

<sup>185</sup> “Juarez and Maximilian” 1925 Franz Viktor Werfel, based on the conflict between Maximilian I and Benito Juarez in 1863.

performance. The Guild has the rights to all Shakespeare premieres here, and Shakespeare is certainly the better for it. The other works you can see from the Guild right now are “Pygmalion” and “The Brothers Karamazov.”

Another veritable hit that must be taken seriously is, “*The Constant Nymph*.” It is the dramatization of Margaret Kennedy’s 1924 novel of the same name. The exposition is set in Tyrol<sup>186</sup> in the home of a happy-unhappy singer. He has ten daughters dancing around the world, and one of them is Tessa, is the constant nymph. She is fifteen years old and loves a composer named Lewis Todd. But he is plucked up right in front of her eyes by a socially acceptable opponent and quickly married. He is not only a real artist, but a true man. And so it takes him some time to figure out that the opponent is no woman for him and he actually loves Tessa. He pursues her right away, but she ends up dying of a broken heart (and a bit of disappointment as well) in a boardinghouse in Brussels. The ending is somber and causes you to ponder. It shows us that the world is no proper abode for *constant nymphs*. It almost goes without saying that the dramatization cannot preserve the many merits of the novel.

The same goes for Theodor Dreiser’s “*American Tragedy*”<sup>187</sup> to a far greater degree. Clyde, a poor boy, is employed by his uncle in said uncle’s factory. He is plagued with dreadful loneliness. Although he is strictly forbidden from doing so, he strikes up an affair with a girl in the factory. Unfortunately Sandra finds out that he is an outsider in his uncle’s family. Sandra is a radiant, lovely woman with a lovely head of curls. She has dresses from Paris, is extremely proud, is the baby of the family, etc. Clyde appears to be the perfect diversion from her usual beaux. She also finds it

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<sup>186</sup> A historical region of Europe currently located in the Austrian and Italian Alps, also spelled “Tirol”.

<sup>187</sup> “An American Tragedy” 1925 Theodore Dreiser.

tantalizing that she could get a rise out of his family by getting involved with him. Then the game gets serious. Sandra really likes him. Yes, she even promises to elope with him. She thinks it is awfully romantic. For Clyde she is naturally the fulfillment of all of his wildest dreams. Now Clyde has one thought on his mind: how he rid himself of the factory girl that also wants to marry him because she is carrying his child? It is a simple matter: He can go with her on a canoe trip on an isolated lake. He will tip the canoe and let the girl drown. It would be an accident, right? And that is exactly what he does. Except Clyde is clumsy. They catch him for the deed, and he is sentenced to death and executed. Sandra and his uncle's family stand out at the trial through their absence.

That is the tale and it is also the play. It did not help the play to produce it in a theater of rough-hewn timbers; nor did it help to shroud it in unnecessary secrecy. This Clyde is nothing but a pitiful weakling. It is a shame to give up an entire evening to watch him. Dreiser cannot do anything about it. You may say what you like about the man that has become a star in Germany and America with his 800-page novel, "*American Tragedy*". It is a colossal work and cannot be compressed into a play. The tragedy is trying to make a work of art of that novel.

And now to finish things off with something amusing on Broadway: a duel. Yes, a duel between women, dresses, and graces. Two actresses, or, better said, an actress and a married couple that acts. Both parties are strangers here. They were both invited as guests to America and both are trying to country the country. They are both on stage in different productions right now: Agnes Sorel<sup>188</sup> and the couple Sacha Guitry<sup>189</sup> and

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<sup>188</sup> Agnes Sorel 1422-1450, was the favorite mistress of King Charles VII of France. The first officially recognized royal mistress. Sorel is the subject of various operas, operatic burletta, poems, etc.

<sup>189</sup> Alexandre-Pierre Georges "Sacha" Guitry 1885-1957, French stage actor, film actor, director, screenwriter, and playwright of the Boulevard theater.

Yvonna *Printemps*<sup>190</sup>. I am reminded of that famous stage duel when Sarah Bernhardt<sup>191</sup> and Duse<sup>192</sup> performed Magda<sup>193</sup> at the same time in London. Comparisons are odious, so says the English proverb. But it has to be said. Agnes Sorel drew the short straw. Nothing could have changed that, not Louis XV's bed on Broadway, not the venerable traditions of *comédie Française*, not even the diligent manager. The boulevardiers Sacha and Yvonne came, saw, and conquered. They played one of Mr. Guitry's sixty pieces, "Mozart" (or Mauzaht, as he says it). It is a three act affair consisting of delicately twisted merengue. The piece gives Yvonne the opportunity to demonstrate her talent in a pants role<sup>194</sup>. The applause in New York only confirms both of their roles. Yvonne is girlishly graceful and boyishly uninhibited, a little too boyish for the twenty-year-old Mauzaht.

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<sup>190</sup> Yvonne Printemps 1894-1977, French singer and actress.

<sup>191</sup> Sarah Bernhardt 1844-1923, French stage and early film actress, referred to as "the most famous actress the world has ever known."

<sup>192</sup> Eleonora Duse 1858-1924, Italian actress known simply as Duse.

<sup>193</sup> A common name for Hermann Sudermann's 1893 play "Heimat", held to be the most widely known and most successful drama of the late 19th century.

<sup>194</sup> "Hosenrolle" in Leitich's original, a role in which an actress appears in male clothing, or breeches.

## Introduction to “*Metropolis* in New York”<sup>195</sup>

As Ann Tizia Leitich reports, Fritz Lang’s 1927 film, *Metropolis*, was part of a German film sensation in America in the late 1920’s. The film received mixed reviews in America, and Leitich analyzes why it is that the Americans cannot quite understand *Metropolis*. She breaks down the difference between American and European critics. The American film industry also differs from Europe. The film producers in America have to make their money from the citizens of tiny towns across the country. Lang’s work is art. Leitich takes issue in particular with the way in which American critics must always compare one work to others. Leitich also lists specific examples of what aspects of the film would be foreign to American audiences, such as workers living underground. Lang’s work was not meant for pure entertainment, like a Hollywood movie. It is a thought-provoking film. Although the American public may have problems understanding *Metropolis*, but the New Yorkers know they saw something meaningful.

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<sup>195</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Metropolis in New York." *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* [Berlin] 22 Mar. 1927: 1. Print.

Metropolis in New York  
How Americans View the Film

by Ann Tizia Leitich

March in New York

The lamps are shining, competing with the bright midday sun. Floods of cars and people rush by. A long line slowly moves forward, step by step, snaking all the way around the corner down the next alleyway. At the front of the line is a glass box. Behind the glass sits a lovely girl with platinum blonde hair. She deftly exchanges half-dollars for tickets with incredible skill. The doorman is accompanied by two policemen today. All of this is for a theater, a movie palace. Above the entrance, flickering and flashing in gigantic, bright letters: "Metropolis."

Metropolis, the big UFA<sup>196</sup> film project, is showing on Broadway. Metropolis, the German film that the Americans have made into a *super production* with the help of Channing Pollock and the film has triumphed on Broadway. Originally, there were 16 reels of film, and the Americans have shortened the Broadway version to 9 reels. The wide street has seen just about everything. Broadway is blasé. And yet Broadway has never seen a film like this. After one week there is still no consensus among the critics. But this much is clear: they are overwhelmed, but not all of them are on the same side. Some retreat into the shadows of reserved judgments like a snail into its shell.

When "Faust" was released here a few months ago, the enthusiasm was universal, overwhelming, and almost incomprehensible in scope. Faust was not so daring and unusual, so critics could still show their proper excitement and give the film their unreserved praise. Especially in the last little while, when German actors and directors

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<sup>196</sup> Universum Film, AG a major producer of world cinema from its founding in 1917 until 1945.

are all the rage, marching into Hollywood and New York as if in a grand parade. And now, on Broadway, German words appeared in a recent American adaptation of a Sudermann<sup>197</sup> novel. That would have been unthinkable two years ago! But Metropolis... is something... that is completely different. It is...

Well, the Americans have never made anything like it. It would be saying too much to claim that they could not do something like it, because they have not even attempted it yet. They aim to meet the level of their audiences, and avoid going over their heads. They work hard on providing entertainment for the immense number of small towns that bring in all the money. And that is why the industry has been stuck for a while now. It is not pleasant to suddenly be confronted with this fact. It requires a certain humility and courage to be able to admit such a thing. And such humility is rare everywhere in the world, even among the critics.

On top of all that, you actually have to think while watching Metropolis, even though Channing Pollock gave the film a truly American introduction and American subtitles (The pedantic explanation of the colosseum, frozen still in the moonlight, certainly did not come from the studios at Neubabelsberg<sup>198</sup>). Pollack helped tailor the film to the American frame of mind, even after Thea von Harbou<sup>199</sup> had met him halfway by falling back on the tried and true movie recipe: Take a millionaire's son, add a girl from the working class, work toward a climactic handshake between capital and labor, but avoid the most important detail: How can the two sides really be reconciled?

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<sup>197</sup> Hermann Sudermann 1857-1928, German dramatist and novelist.

<sup>198</sup> The Babelsberg Film Studio, founded in 1912, the first large-scale film studio in the world.

<sup>199</sup> Thea Gabriele von Harbou 1888-1954, German actress, author, and film director. Author of Metropolis.

One critic was superbly sincere and stated exactly how he had felt. “Saturday, after the premiere of *Metropolis*, I had to painstakingly put myself back together. I was like a rag that had been torn to shreds. I had a sensation as if all of my feelings were put on the rack during that German movie... The film is so towering, overwhelming, and singular.” Mr. Breeland, who is known as a harsh critic and who does not mince words added his thoughts: “Above all, I had the impression that film has actually proved its right to exist... that the film can be a glorious parade-ground of ideas, much more effective than traditional theater... the German love Idealism allows them to make an epic from a machine.” In contrast, he laments the uniformity of the film, as it avoids even a splash of humor and bears down on the audience armored in heavy German seriousness.

Others call it, “fantastic, uncanny,” but all of them say, “interesting.” Most of them cannot avoid it - it is an American trait, never to let something be judged on its own merits; they always have to compare everything to other authors, novels, and works of art. Wells<sup>200</sup> is cited regularly; so is Mrs. Shelley’s novel “*Frankenstein*”; and of course Karel Čapek’s “*R.U.R*” that enjoyed a three-year run over here under the title “*Rotwang’s Universal Robots*<sup>201</sup>.” *Rotwang* made mechanized people and they rose up against their master and inventor. Critics here believe that the basic idea behind “*R.U.R.*” was used to make *Metropolis* because the same company that made *Metropolis* bought the rights to *R.U.R.* three years ago. Even the inventor in *Metropolis* is named *Rotwang*. I assume that he has a different name in the German original - (NFP Editor’s

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<sup>200</sup> H.G. Wells 1866-1946, English author.

<sup>201</sup> *Rossum’s Universal Robots*, 1920 Karel Čapek. This work coined the term robot from the Czech *robot*, meaning forced labor. Leitch erred in using the name *Rotwang* in the English title, as the English title of the Czech production was always *Rossum’s Universal Robots*.

note: No!) At the same time, others critics, who really should be better informed, show a severe misunderstanding in the relationship in the German-American UFA. They ascribe an American influence in the artistic stylings of the film. This does not seem to be accurate despite the fact that you cannot deny some shadows of America in Metropolis, especially in the topic of the film.

Mordaunt Hall<sup>202</sup> of the New York Times said, “It is a technical marvel with feet of clay, a picture as soulless as the manufactured woman of its story.” Another critic called it, “a social melodrama”. The accusation that Fritz Lang failed to bring movement and variation into the individual scenes is also fairly common. Aside from that, Metropolis has some things that are foreign to the American mentality. Workers in America cannot imagine people who would live underground; they live very close to the ground, even those who live in New York City. Americans do not tremble with fear at the sight of another person, as long as the person was born here.

The whole thing is a vision of a future Berlin, not a future New York, with the exception of the splendid streets and air highways. The noise of the city may be the same, but the soul of each city is different.

The actors were unanimously praised, especially Brigitte Helm<sup>203</sup>. She is on her way to becoming a queen of the silver screen. The least favorite is definitely Gustav Fröhlich<sup>204</sup>, the millionaire’s son. Americans, of both genders, cannot stand it when young men carry themselves with that certain manly serenity that hints of inner

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<sup>202</sup> Mordaunt Hall 1878-1973, the first regularly assigned film critic for the New York Times, active in said role from 1924-1934.

<sup>203</sup> Brigitte Helm 1906-1996, German actress best known for her double role as Maria and the robot version of Maria in Metropolis.

<sup>204</sup> Gustav Fröhlich 1902-1987, German actor best known for his role as Freder Fredersen in Metropolis.

strength and self-control. They have no patience for a hypersensitive man. And that is how many condemned Fröhlich.

And the good old public? They rubbed their eyes after the show like they had just been woken from a dream. It was as if they had been confronted with an unfamiliar experience. Much of the film had been cut, and so it was not always understandable. Yes, this public is not used to using so much of their brain at the movie theater. America's film producers have not trained their public to do so. And you really do have to think during Metropolis, and so the question arises whether the people in the Midwest, the land of corn fields, where the money is made, will bring the film the kind of success that it has seen in New York. One thing speaks in favor of a repeat success: "Metropolis has something for everyone." And so everyone should see it.

## Introduction to "The King of Kings"<sup>205</sup>

Ann Tizia Leitich already expressed her concern with Cecil DeMille's films in her article about his adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's *Anatol*. In this article, Leitich gives her take on his film adaptation of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Despite DeMille's tendency to create overly opulent scenes, Leitich admits that he has "brilliant ideas, real strength" (27). Leitich reports that DeMille did not abstain from lavish embellishments on the scriptural tale. According to Leitich, DeMille's most daring decision in making his film was to show the face of Jesus. All previous attempts for films to tell the tales of the Bible had only shown Jesus from angles where his face could not be seen. Leitich is pleased with DeMille's choice of an actor for Jesus. In fact, Leitich applauds the casting overall as matching her understanding of the twelve apostles and their personalities. She also commends the use of the actual words of the Evangelists instead of trying to write intertitles as was usual for American movies. Leitich's fear abated because DeMille had made a great film about Jesus despite his Hollywood flare.

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<sup>205</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "The King of Kings." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 22 May 1927: 27. Print.

## The King of Kings

### A Jesus Film

by Ann Tizia Leitich

Cecil DeMille's<sup>206</sup> chief press officer explained several times that the filming of this work as approached with the greatest "reverence". Unfortunately, the public is well-trained to treat such assertions in press releases lightly. De Mille is one of the most extravagant American film directors. You just have to remember how he depicts the lavish lifestyles of the wealthy for the everyday people in the audience. His film productions have shown millions of people the opulence of the upper classes as can only be shown on the silver screen. His fantasy world included immensely high marble halls where the fairy tale wealthy are supposed to live, pleasure gardens with outrageous indulgences, sumptuously hedonistic banquets with hordes of the kind of beautiful women you can only find in Hollywood. There is always, without fail, a banquet scene with some Otero<sup>207</sup> dancing on a table covered in flowers while impeccably dressed men stare, mesmerized by her legs. And then there is a scene where it's only quite natural for a couple in a Drecol<sup>208</sup> evening dress and a tuxedo from Regent Street<sup>209</sup> to jump into the lily pond.

And you will also remember DeMille's "The Ten Commandments."<sup>210</sup> You might also remember that he received a very warm, if not exactly enthusiastic, critique. Even then, they knew: This man has brilliant ideas, real strength, and he does not even need

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<sup>206</sup> Cecil B. DeMille, academy award winning director best known for The Ten Commandments.

<sup>207</sup> Carolina "La Belle" Otero, Spanish courtesan and dancer. She arguably became the world's first film star when featured in a one minute segment of a Lumiere Brothers production dancing La Valse Brillante.

<sup>208</sup> Baron Christoff von Drecol, fashion designer for the Viennese Imperial Court.

<sup>209</sup> One of the major shopping streets in London's West End.

<sup>210</sup> In reference to his 1923 silent film and not his 1956 film starring Charlton Heston and Yul Brynner.

the fancy swimming pools and the sea of pretty starlet shoulders. But even considering his artistic reputation, you cannot help but feel reluctant when you hear the words: “The King of Kings. A Production by Cecil de Mille.”

*That is because the “King of Kings is Jesus of Nazareth.”*

This is the first time that someone has let an actor perform Jesus - except, of course, in naively religious passion plays out in the countryside. And it had to happen in cinema. When the novel “Ben Hur<sup>211</sup>” was made into a film a few years ago, they still shied away from putting Jesus up on the screen. Only his miracle-working hand was visible. It was left to the imagination and the mind of the individual to conceive of the rest of his physical appearance. It was not only a tactful idea on the part of the director, but also an effective one. But de Mille does not possess the kind of restraint that is necessary to omit a vivid image and to instead rely upon the imagination and memories of the audience. Nonetheless, it really must be said: His Jesus film is an exceptional work.

You enter the theater with, to put it lightly, mixed feelings. Reluctant, maybe even more than that--maybe even a bit afraid, secretly clenching your fists in your coat pockets. How can he possibly have the sheer audacity?

It’s unnecessary to describe the feelings of the devout. But even the not-so-religious feel a tad pious at a moment like this, unless someone happens to be a total cynic. And then there are the artists. This film does not only take on the basic problem of humanity and divinity, but this is also the greatest drama in all of human history. The person who dares to undertake such a thing must have complete confidence in his own abilities. It is a common fact that any attempt to bring great people to life in literature

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<sup>211</sup> In reference to the 1925 film by MGM Studios.

seldom succeeds - and I mean only creative literature and not biographical or historical. And even those require someone like Tacitus, Carlyle<sup>212</sup> or Ranke<sup>213</sup>. But in the case of Jesus of Nazareth every qualm and concern is immeasurably magnified. Anyone who plans on reenacting Jesus' story must possess more than reason, intellect, a sound concept, generosity and imagination. Above all, he must possess reverence for his subject. And reverence is an herb that does not happen to thrive in our modern air today. It tends to grow particularly poorly in areas where a Valentino<sup>214</sup> and a Pola Negri<sup>215</sup> have become millionaires.

Audiences could rest assured that DeMille would take the familiar Bible story and exploit it in a way that would seem appropriate and even impressive to his fellow filmmakers. But this would not mean that he is not capable of completely ruining the story, either. But he kept himself from doing just that. His film is not only one of the best cinematic dramas ever made, it is also the most moving. And that is not due to its unique character, but despite it. The director had to maintain perfect balance between heaven and earth. He had to face the constant danger of heading into tactlessness on the one side or into superficiality and frivolity on the other. Either way he would have lost his chance to make any sort of impact on anyone, and to squander the unique power of this particular image. It would have been to remove that shining brilliance that makes this different from every other picture.

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<sup>212</sup> Thomas Carlyle, Scottish historian during the Victorian era, author of "The French Revolution: A History" (1837), which Charles Dickens used to write "A Tale of Two Cities".

<sup>213</sup> Leopold von Ranke, German historian and founder of modern science of source-based historical writing.

<sup>214</sup> Italian-born Hollywood star and sex symbol during the 1920's.

<sup>215</sup> Polish stage and film actress who became the first European film star invited to act in Hollywood.

With all due respect to the director and the screenwriter, I cannot refrain from mentioning that they had to tread a very fine line in order to avoid stumbling into the kind of mess that people had feared from the beginning of the project. Take, for example, the first scene: a dinner hosted by the voluptuous courtesan Mary Magdalene. In perfect DeMilleian style, Mary rides up in an incredible chariot<sup>216</sup> drawn by six zebras. She's half naked, standing under a loosely-wrapped robe as she gallops up to the peculiar carpenter who stands between her and her ambitious, handsome lover, Judas Iscariot. A vivid and powerful picture, for certain. Especially considering the contrast to the following picture: the hovel where Jesus heals. But...

And there are other similar scenes. De Mille loves crowds; he has superb control of them. But that is also why he often introduces them into scenes where they do not belong. Like when Jesus chases the money changers out the temple. Oxen, cows, and sheep appear. Many, many oxen, cows, and sheep. Even more oxen, cows, sheep... an endless commotion, a flood of animals that comes out of nowhere and suddenly bursts out from between the pillars of the temple! The punishment for DeMille's directing was laughter in the auditorium. And then there were storm and the darkness. Even here a little less would have been better. But these pale in comparison to the sadistic scenes where Jesus is beaten, mocked, crowned with thorns, and crucified. It was completely excruciating. It does not take much more to "Ecce Homo", to behold the man, for his face encompasses all martyrs.

The actor who portrayed Jesus could hardly have been better. It was H.B. Warner, who greatly contributed to the film's success with his dignified and simple

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<sup>216</sup> Leitch's original calls it a "sechsspännigen Zebraquadriga", but a quadriga specifically connotes a chariot drawn by four horses and would therefore be a misnomer.

interpretation. He has a handsome head; a long, narrow skull. He has the sensitive hands of a thinker, not small or dainty, no laggard's hands. His eyes are large, bright, and kind. Eyes that know both pain and tolerance. His mouth is Abraham Lincoln's mouth. Only the forehead does not quite suit the roll. It has too little surface area, too little intellectual intensity. But somehow Warner manages it anyway.

Altogether, the cast was chosen from the rich variety of American humanity with infinite care and refined knowledge. The twelve apostles were a collection of important character faces. They only varied from the historical accounts with Judas' appearance. For sentimental reasons, he had to be beautiful, young, and driven. Caiaphas'<sup>217</sup> despicably greedy son is portrayed by good old Schildkraut<sup>218</sup> with astounding self-denial. Mary Magdalene seduces the youthful, oriental beau. The way in which Jesus is introduced is subtly beautiful. We catch our first glimpse of him through the eyes of a small, poor blind girl whose sight he has just restored. She can be truly happy because the light she had dreamt of seeing beamed toward her from Jesus' face.

One of the best scenes of movement, suspense, and harrowing emotion is when Peter denies Jesus three times as he is led through the arcade by centurions. Another is in the temple, when Jesus gazes contemplatively at a thin layer of flour on the stone floor. He proceeds to write down the sins of each of the people surrounding him one by one as they let stones fall from their hands that they had brought expressly to stone the adulteress. It was a skillful and commendable idea of the screenwriter to avoid using

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<sup>217</sup> de Mille's version sets Judas Iscariot as the son of the Roman-appointed High Priest of the Jews, thought to have organized the plot to kill Jesus.

<sup>218</sup> Joseph Schildkraut, Austrian-born stage and film actor.

the hideous American movie *titles*. Instead, she used as much of the Evangelist's<sup>219</sup> succinct lines.

As the unmistakable verdict was passed, it practically knocked the audience flat. They sat silent, as if in a church. Luckily, most of them did not notice the mistakes in the film; they were only smitten by its indisputable strengths.

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<sup>219</sup> The writers of the four Gospels, the first four books of the New Testament of the Bible that describe the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

## Introduction to "The Hero"<sup>220</sup>

Ann Tizia Leitch reports in this article on the New York reception of Charles Lindbergh. Lindbergh had just become the first man to complete a trans-Atlantic flight in an airplane. Leitch describes Lindbergh as a reluctant hero. He acknowledges his adoring public, but he does not appear to enjoy it. He has been made a hero for his deeds, but he did not seek to become a hero. She writes, "He despises playing a role that was prescribed to him today that is not part of his true character" Leitch compares Lindbergh's parade, riding through New York City on the back of a car, to the triumphant parades of great Roman generals (21). This comparison points out a glaring contrast: Lindbergh did not conquer another country or win a great battle. The American people had recognized the greatness of a feat of human ingenuity. War-torn Europe could have their war heroes, but America had a hero of the skies. Lindbergh was no ego-centric warrior. Leitch reports, "He avoids the ominous word 'I'. He says 'we' instead and he means himself and the plane" (21). Leitch finds just that combination of man and machine to be the great victory celebrated at Lindbergh's New York reception.

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<sup>220</sup> Leitch, Ann Tizia. "The Hero." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 3 July 1927: 21. Print.

## The Hero

### Lindbergh's Reception in New York

By Ann Tizia Leitich (New York)

New York, that spoiled child, was bitterly disappointed as she heard that she would not be the first one to greet Lindbergh. The warship that carried him over the ocean flew up the Potomac and landed in Washington first. The President and the Capitol bestowed him the regards, thanks, and honor of the nation. But New York would not have to wait too long. New York would have its chance to greet its honored guest and beloved celebrity, just as fresh and exciting as if he had come here first. He arrived in Washington on Saturday, and he flew to New York the following Monday.

The hero was awaited by the biggest city in the world, with its talent for festive receptions. New York was wrapped in stars and stripes, quivering and breathless in anticipation. Uncounted pictures of the man lined the windows and display cases, like icons of the Madonna on Corpus Christi. The day started out cloudy and threatening to rain, but it later transformed into clear skies and golden sunlight. "Lindbergh Weather" defied all of the prophecies and fickle patterns of our early summer climate. *The image of his arrival unfolded in the glorious, beautiful harbor.* The only disturbance to the majestic scene was the indescribable, insane, barbaric greeting of the sirens, canons, whistles, and signal horns. The fire department boats shot out fountains, aeroplanes zipped through the air, and several hundred ships of every shape and size glided forward on the water. It was to be a nautical honor guard for the young, brilliant admiral of the air. But then the people grew so eager to see him that the crowds got out of control. It was a miracle that nothing bad occurred.

The path from the sea up to Central Park, a Via Triumphalis<sup>221</sup>, was made up of an outrageous frenzy of color, an arsenal of cannons, pure rapture. The stony columns of the skyscrapers that usually light up the evening sky were simply outdone. There were clusters of people sky-high on the roofs, sitting and cowering, standing and kneeling, risking their lives on the ledges of every building on every story. Not one window was empty. There were innumerable clapping hands, waving arms. Cries of welcome sounded from three million throats so possessed, so unconscious, so frenetic that it bordered on ecstasy and it caused some to tear up. Colorful strands of ticker-tape fluttered regally over the chasm of the streets below, flowing down the walls, trees and cars like entwined garlands of flowers. These multi-colored paper snakes that serve as ammunition for New York's unique enthusiasm. Flags waved in stars and stripes. Then there came the confetti. It looked like white moths prancing above the long, dark street-canyon of lower Broadway. They trickled like dusty, silver rain onto the mundane vastness of Fifth Avenue. People tossed the little white pieces of paper without number from the rooftops and windows and the sunlight gave them a magical sheen.

In a slowly-driven automobile, in the burning sun, Lindbergh sat bareheaded as always. He looked a bit tired, a bit pale, a little more stooped than usual as he bowed to the others. Despite that, they appeared so much smaller than him due to his height and slender build. His face and head are thoroughly Swedish. While there is a frenzy all around him, he looks straight ahead of himself like someone who has to endure something detestable. *He does not acknowledge anyone nor express his thanks to the right or the left. He doesn't wave, he doesn't laugh.* Despite that, or perhaps because of that, he is just as inexpressibly loveable as always. He sits during the entire procession

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<sup>221</sup> The street in Rome where victorious generals led their captives prior to execution and enslavement.

– almost seven kilometers long – on the narrow back edge of the open car so that everyone can see him better. A sacrifice that he must offer the audience. Normally he doesn't make any kind of concessions for the sake of "publicity" or that thousand-armed, relentless tumor known as the public. *He refused to kiss his mother the day before last in light of the crowds who would feed on the sentimentality of the scene.* He despises playing a role that was prescribed to him today that is not part of his true character. And he does not possess the attribute that would help other people bare a similar martyrdom: vanity. *This young man has an absolute lack of vanity.* "He is stunned" wrote the newspapers afterwards and they did him a gross injustice in doing so. They probably did it on purpose because they knew no other way to express to their readers his composure, his sure, modest, unshakeable balance as a superior human being.

And then, just for a moment, he showed his little, beaming smile that the Americans call "the grin" and that simply enchanted Europe. A policeman had grabbed a man with a camera who had slipped his way up to the car. Now the officer was shoveling the man, despite his grotesque protestations, back into the rows of the public. That was when Lindy laughed cordially and turned to comment to the Irish mayor of New York who was sitting next to him on the edge of the car. The mayor was wearing his top hat just the slightest bit tipped away from his face while the tails of his cutaway hung down over the car.

There was a time when triumphant victors like Lindbergh rode on luxurious, jewel-encrusted horses. Winged helmets adorned their heads; slaves trudged ahead of them with whipped backs and bound hands. Their armor gleamed. And there was a time, it was not so long ago, they rode in state coaches, they looked resplendent in gold-

braided uniforms. But our hero wore the same, not-so-new serge<sup>222</sup> suit that he wore two days ago as they drove him down Pennsylvania Avenue. Meanwhile, Washington jokes in the smugness of the capitol that no one there crosses the road alone expressly to see a celebrity, yet three hundred thousand heads stood staring in the glowing heat of the sun at 92 degrees in the shade. And in front of himself, on his knees, he was holding the same soft, grey felt hat that he wore at the side of President Doumergue, in front of the King of Belgium, in Buckingham Palace, and between the two gleaming black silk and matte grey top hats at the most elegant reunion of the Old Continent, the Derby in Epsom.

15,000 soldiers marched in front of him in the parade. You could see the picturesque Empire Uniforms of the old New York National Guard, the West Point cadets with their drilled, youthful strides. 15,000 children stood on the steps of the library that looks like the Acropolis. 25,000 awaited the flyer on the Paradeplatz in Central Park. The youth should welcome the youth.

Don't speak ill of New York for deploying massive crowds and vehemence. Crowds and vehemence are integral to New York. It is New York's personal genius to contain them, to shape them, to rule over them. New York was egged on by ambition to make this reception an extraordinary one. But it was not ambition alone. This was for New York's own hero. America's hero. Let the Swedes and the Irish and the Scotts scuffle over bragging rights, along with whoever else lent some blood to make him. America gave birth to him, America is proud of him like any mother would be. And he did his mother proud. He showed Europe the best side of an American and what the world can expect from America. Words would never have been able to do what he did.

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<sup>222</sup> A type of worsted fabric made from woolen yarn, similar to gabardine.

That required action and the action required a man – a hero. The man was there. He was always there, amid the nameless, an American among Americans. But his deed tore him from obscurity for the whole world to see, his humanity brightly lit and utterly visible to everyone. And the world saw that his humanity was pure and clear as a crystal.

That is the reason he was given a reception like none other in living memory, and it was not because he was a champion. From the very beginning he gave wings to others' imaginations as only an extraordinary individual, a genius, can do. He tore them out of their seats. He emerged suddenly from the *Verborgenheit* of an existence as an army flyer onto Roosevelt Field near New York in front of bickering pilots and aeroplane owners. He flew without much ado and without much preparation. Alone.

Everywhere he goes, he finds the right word, the right gesture, with a naturalness that forces smug statesmen to acknowledge him. As he glided down from the clouds onto Le Bourget with a few bits of sandwich and letters of introduction in his pocket (because he didn't "know anyone in Paris") he said modestly, yet once again with the confidence of a distinguished person: "I am Charles Lindbergh."

He avoids the ominous word "I". He says "we" instead and he means himself and the plane. Oh, it's possible, quite probable even, that he was schooled somewhat by dapper diplomats in the American embassy. But there are some things that cannot be taught. Someone may have suggested or told him what he should say to the crowd of three hundred thousand in Washington. But the way that he stood next to President Coolidge, next to Mrs. Coolidge as she applauded him in her own charming candor, next to the dignitaries of the nation, the way he walked up to the radio transmitters on the platform and set his warm gaze toward the crowd and simultaneously swept his view

over them, the way that he spoke with such clear, glorious surety, you would never have ever doubted that this man wouldn't do what some other man had whispered into his ear.

Isn't it wonderful – a hero whose hands aren't dripping with blood, who left no tears in his wake, who caused no graves to be dug! When considering this triumph of man and machine, who can still say that ours is a pitiful time? Those crowds came today to see a spectacle; but as they left, it was a procession. They didn't pay homage to a champion, but a hero. What a difference! And, what progress!

When people have no heroes to applaud, to interview, to describe, then they deify the champions. They have to applaud something, they have to deify something. On their monotone, mass-produced scale of life, they only get the blissful notion of light from above in the moments when heroes come before them. And the crowds accept champions in the place of heroes because they could only ever comprehend the physical and emotional aspects, never the spiritual. That is the reason why Lindbergh's great predecessor died chained and suffering in the deprivation of dungeon walls, because in Columbus' day such deeds appeared to be witchcraft. But today, the immense horizon that technology opens up and technology itself are accessible to all.

“We, the plane and I.” The plane that was the end product of twenty different companies, an anonymous work, a work of cooperation: “The Spirit of St. Louis.” The name that the flying captain gave his flyer was prophetic. It's also the “Spirit of America”.

That mechanical hero, the pure prototype of the new man had to come from America, from all the parts of America. He came straight from a valley on the Mississippi, the great Midwest, where man is just as close to machines as he is to nature.

He was born in Michigan, studied in Wisconsin, served in Mississippi. All of those places are parts of him now. The genius and the machine.

Leonardo da Vinci could only dream of such things. “We, the plane and I,” realized those dreams in the much-reviled twentieth century, in the glorious twentieth century.

## Introduction to "On Carefree Island"<sup>223</sup>

Whereas Leitch tends to talk down America's immense wealth, this article is a report on a polo match on Long Island. Leitch paints a picture of Long Island as the play world of the wealthy. Well-manicured lawns, opulent roadways, impressive mansions, and a polo match to top it all off. Leitch gives great attention to describe the peaceful and ornate world of Long Island before coming to the match itself. In Leitch's description, Polo becomes a symbol of Long Island's exclusivity. Only those with the means to pay the hefty entrance fees for the various seating could afford to attend. Unlike the fans at Babe Ruth's baseball games in Manhattan, the cheapest tickets sold for \$6.60, limiting the audience to a mere 40,000 at the match between the Americans and the English. The event was also more than just a game. It was a fashion show for the elite, including the owners of the horses. The game at Meadowbrook became a meeting of America and England's aristocracy. Leitch's report on a polo match becomes a journey into the world of wealthy Americans.

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<sup>223</sup> Leitch, Ann Tizia. "On Carefree Island." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 16 Oct. 1927: 32. Print.

## On Carefree Island

### International Polo on Long Island

By Ann Tizia Leitich

She lies next to New York: long, prone, as if blissfully resting. Sunlight pours over her, sea breezes sweep through her, water surrounds her. She lies there like a step between New York and the ocean. She is a sigh of relief before the boundlessness of open sea begins, a chance to linger in the green before sinking into blue and grey: Long Island. A stone's throw from New York's skyscrapers, looming and sending threats of work. The smiling kingdom of Long Island begins beyond the East River, which really isn't a river, but a narrow tidal strait<sup>224</sup>. Fantastic bridges, resilient and graceful, hold the two islands together, reinforced by iron. The insanity of life in New York hisses and snarls across the iron cables. The sounds roar from being compressed and stacked together high above the water. They are the sounds of millions of people on the sidewalks, roads, rails, and tracks. The pulse of the city gradually fades away like the stars. Long Island soaks it up and transforms it into smiles.

Brooklyn, the city on the opposite shore, does not take long to pass through. Somewhere to the right, the street forks towards Coney Island and Manhattan Beach, the greatest playground ever owned by millions of city-dwellers. We leave it behind us on the right, and pass green space, building sites, houses, rows and blocks, colonies of little homes - this is, after all, a place for real estate investors. 50 dollars cash for a house! Then the little housing colonies fade and mansions come into sight. Gardens, rocking chairs, parasols, men playing golf in white knickerbockers. White and green:

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<sup>224</sup> Leitich states that the East River is a sound, or "Meeressund," but the East River is a strait connecting the Long Island Sound to the Upper New York Bay.

what a cheery, soothing combination! Tennis courts, aeroplanes crisscrossing over our heads, meadows of yellow flowers and over macadamized roads<sup>225</sup> in black, we see rushing giant beetles: cars. Larger gardens, more expensive homes, English lawns<sup>226</sup>, white pillars on front porches nestled behind trees, the fragrant stillness of manicured parks, men and women on horseback. Luxurious hotels with cabarets and dances under the large elm trees next to the street; small lodging houses for car trips. Then suddenly - pale blue and endless, boundless - the ocean.

That is Long Island, the carefree island. Here you will find Mitchel Field<sup>227</sup> and Westbury<sup>228</sup> with its large hangars, and the vast Belmont Park<sup>229</sup>, famous for its international horse races. Half an hour away, in the middle of meadows and groves, is the Meadowbrook Club, the aristocratic side of Long Island. The old, grand, colonial-style clubhouse was not always a clubhouse. It once led a more private existence. Green lawns stretch out far and wide, nothing but green lawns, simply embarrassing. There are the fenced enclosures to the side. They look like the fencing on a ranch or around a little timber cottage. These are stalls, and the sound of neighing rings out while the air tastes of horses. They are here because this is the home of polo in America. The Meadowbrook Club is a polo club.

### An Exclusive Game

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<sup>225</sup> Road building technique named after Scottish engineer John Loudon MacAdam, recognizable from the small, uniform stones covered in a binding material for the surface.

<sup>226</sup> Also mentioned in other articles by Lietich, a clear sign of wealth due to the labor-intensive upkeep of cut grass at the time.

<sup>227</sup> Also known as Mitchel Air Force Base, initially established as Hazelhurst Aviation Field #2. It was officially decommissioned in 1961 and now houses a multi-use complex.

<sup>228</sup> In reference to Roosevelt Field, originally named Hazelhurst Field. In operation until May 31, 1951.

<sup>229</sup> A major thoroughbred horse-racing facility, located in Elmont, New York. In operation since 1905.

This is the place where the Englishmen, who traveled 21,000 kilometers from India, were beaten by the Americans 13:3. No one could explain the reason behind such a defeat. But, just as ever, the English remained chivalrous, and their distinction lent even more radiance to the scene in Meadowbrook. Above all, they endowed the place with an international touch, something difficult to maintain in America, except at a gathering of voters in New York's immigrant neighborhoods.

On that day, there were 40,000 people outside. That is a relatively small number of people in comparison with the hundred thousand that go to see Babe Ruth play baseball or the ample half million that went to see Dempsey secure his million dollar paycheck. But those are mass events. On the other hand, as previously stated, the Meadowbrook Club is aristocratic soil and polo is the sport of English nobility. With that in mind, 40,000 is plenty. Of course, not everyone came for the polo, although a considerable percent really must have had an understanding of polo. Otherwise the "cheers" would not have been so prompt and unanimous. Otherwise they wouldn't have followed the game so precisely without losing the slightest bit of interest. But many still came for other reasons.

Because they would be able to see the new *autumn fashion*<sup>230</sup>, Long Island New York's *four hundred* and their guests. Because it was a splendid, blue, afternoon, laced with salty breezes. Because the feeling was as light and fickle as a feather in the wind, in the way that only autumn on the coast can make it. And because, on that point, it was the weekend, Saturday, and you might as well go to a polo game as anywhere else. And because you are allowed to feel like you look smart. And finally, because *Colonel Sir*

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<sup>230</sup> Leitch uses "Herbsttoiletten" that could mean either grooming and makeup in general (the dated "morning toilet" in English) or a type of women's gown for the autumn season.

*Sajjan Singh*<sup>231</sup>, the Maharaja<sup>232</sup> of Ratlam<sup>233</sup>, head of the Raiputs in Malwa<sup>234</sup> and Regent<sup>235</sup> of Rewa<sup>236</sup>, would be in attendance with his aide-de-camp<sup>237</sup> and three servants in order to see his pony, Robina, in the match. His highness was also so gracious, genuine, colorfully flamboyant, condescending, and exotic enough to appear in his private box wearing a fanciful combination of English and Indian clothing. He even came early to allow himself to be photographed. He wore a delightful turban with tassels. Some were greener than the glaring turf and others were a more dazzling orange than the most beautiful golden petals on the chiffon dresses worn by the women. He smiled all the while as they took the photographs and the people walked across the lawn like pilgrims, losing themselves on the high, sky-blue platform where he stood.

#### The Society and Fashion Parade

There was a good crowd of Americans, the upper end of the tax bracket all the way down to those who could no longer afford \$6.60 for a seat. Those were the cheapest tickets sold. There were only a few children stumbling along, holding the hand of parents who had no servants to watch them, only a few horrid dresses, only a few Fords, only a few people who drove in up in their shirt sleeves: all in all a very distinguished crowd. The fashionable elegance was almost exclusively to be found in the boxes where the *good and best names* were displayed: De Lancey, Vanderbilt, Clinton Mackenzie<sup>238</sup>,

<sup>231</sup> Major-General Maharaja Sajjan Singh of Ratlam, 1880-1947. British Indian Army officer and first Maharaja of the Ratlam State, a princely state in British India, part of the Malwa agency of Central India.

<sup>232</sup> Sanskrit for "great king" or "high king".

<sup>233</sup> A princely state in British India, part of the Malwa agency of Central India.

<sup>234</sup> A plateau region in northwest India.

<sup>235</sup> He served as regent from October 1918 to October 1922.

<sup>236</sup> A civil district in central India.

<sup>237</sup> French for camp assistant, usually the foremost personal aid of a given dignitary.

<sup>238</sup> J. Clinton MacKenzie, architect

Princess Rospigliosi<sup>239</sup>, Brokaw, Cushing, Ambrose Clark<sup>240</sup>, the Honorable William Waldorf Astor<sup>241</sup>, etc. There is hardly any other time in the year when the best of American society can all be found in the vicinity of Long Island, New York, or close by. Some have come back from Europe or from trips in the mountains or from yacht outings on the St. Lawrence River. They are all enjoying autumn on their respective Long Island estates before they stop off at Park Avenue, New York's elegant millionaire street. The words "go home" can rarely ever be used by these most modern international nomads.

Meadowbrook is located in the middle of an immense garden region where one mansion estate follows the next, with proper spacing for aristocratic standards. It's an extravagant, cheerful arcadia with playboy automobiles whirring all around. The residents are using the international polo match as an opportunity to invite guests from the city or a more distant coastal *villagiature*<sup>242</sup> to lunch. After their meal, they ride to the polo match with their guests in a limousine. Although elegance was well represented throughout, the occasion was lacking that finishing touch that could have transformed the event into a fashion show. Most events in America are lacking that same element, at least here in the East where the people descended primarily from puritans and Dutch jonkheers<sup>243</sup>. Due to their background, the ladies of the "smart set" don extremely conservative dresses at public occasions. Naturally they wear the *newest and most expensive styles*, but they primarily adhere to the strict guidelines of midmorning fashion, meaning straight-cut coats, small felt hats, the most simplistic footwear, long

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<sup>239</sup> American-born Mary Jennings Reid Packhurst

<sup>240</sup> F. Ambrose Clark, American equestrian

<sup>241</sup> 2nd Viscount Astor, an American-born British politician and nobleman

<sup>242</sup> French for a holiday home from the Italian *villeggiatura*, meaning holiday or vacation

<sup>243</sup> Dutch honorific title meaning "young lord" or "esquire", similar to the German "Junker". The city of Yonkers, NY is so called due to its founder, Adriaen van der Donck, being known as "the Jonker".

sable or marten stoles with no buttons. Another reason that this is no fashion show could be that the two classes that carry Europe's indulgence of luxury to extremes are the exhibitionists: coquettes and famous actresses. The former do not exist here and the latter, at best, play the social role of a private individual.

I really shouldn't neglect to include a word about the men, but alas, it is too late. Although the gravel is still crunching with the sound of approaching automobiles, the sound of applause is growing louder from the boxes. That is the sign that the first noble, slender ponies are being paraded around the arena. Their grooms lead them proudly. Among them are the Anglo-Indians in tight black jodhpurs<sup>244</sup> with their bright turbans shining. It's a lovely little tribute paid to the animals. Then the stars of the two teams mount them as the crowd, attentive but in no way breathless, concentrates its gaze on the impending match. The Stars and Stripes wave in unison with the Union Jack while aeroplanes circle overhead. Now the tiny, shiny, white ball reigns supreme on the green turf: sought after, pursued, chased.

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<sup>244</sup> A style of riding pants, originating from Jodhpur, India.

## Introduction to "New York's Bohemian Neighborhood"<sup>245</sup>

According to Ann Tizia Leitich, Greenwich Village was already a place for wannabe artists and free spirits. Those Americans who wished to escape the lifestyle of "Babbitts" and those keeping up with the Joneses found their refuge in the Village. Leitich tells the tale of a part of town for those seeking to break out of the daily grind of American life. The Village was even a place where whites would sit down and eat together with mulattos and blacks. Leitich applauds the good intentions of the Village, but she laments that it never reached the same artistic status it always sought. Some of the greatest works of American literature were written within the boundaries of Greenwich Village. Some of the most terribly boring and mundane articles and stories written by American hands were also produced there. Greenwich Village did not quite make it to the status of Montparnasse. The real Bohemians of America moved to Paris long ago, when the going was still good.

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<sup>245</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "New York's Bohemian Neighborhood." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 16 Dec. 1928: 36. Print.

New York's Bohemian Neighborhood  
The Rise and Fall in Greenwich Village

By Ann Tizia Leitich

Of course you know Mr. Babbitt, right? To put it briefly but not quite accurately, Babbitt is the American term for a *Spießbürger*<sup>246</sup>. He's the man constantly looking to earn more and more money. His desire for dollars does not stem, however, from a love of money, but from a love of making money. His desire is actually so great that he has no energy left for any other interests - except perhaps for golfing. Since Mr. Babbitt expends so much energy, or, as the Americans would call it, "pep", to make himself the center of attention, he has control over everyday life in America. In order to counter such a force, his counterpart has also risen up: the American intellectual, *the young intellectual*. Mostly these young people are, or intend to be, authors. They despise money. Usually this distaste is shattered to pieces at the same time that they publish their first successful story. Naturally, it was the publisher who shattered such an ideal with a very promising contract. But it's the thought that counts and it usually remains as a thought, because most of the young intellectuals will never be very successful. And that is because the general public never understands true art, do they? And it is a question of art, culture, understanding, and, above all else, intellectuality for these young intellectuals. It is exactly these things that go right over the heads of the Babbitts of the world. And that is why, from the outset, the young intellectuals could not live where the Babbitts do. Babbitts live in towering, hoity-toity apartment hotels. They go on, block after block, with their patterned marble entrances, thousands of cookie-cutter windows, service kitchens, refrigerators, silent servants, room service. Each apartment

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<sup>246</sup> German term for the petit bourgeois

fits the same fine-tuned, squeaky-clean Babbitt-Bathroom-Civilization. No, thank you very much, but the whole atmosphere smothers any hope of inspiration or development of the mind. And so they fled. The exorbitant rent, my God, that didn't even come into question. They searched for something else, something completely different. They sought with unquenchable yearning for something that would remind them of the city they had never seen: Paris. They wanted to find a place like Montmartre<sup>247</sup> (it was still Montmartre back in the day) with angular alleyways, low-roofed taverns, and little old houses. Even the air would be conducive to deep thoughts. This is the place where a person could finally evolve, far away from the paths traversed by millions each day, those monotonous Babbitt streets.

They sought and they found an old part of New York, but not the oldest. It was called Greenwich Village, from 4th to 14th Street. This area somehow remained protected from the omnipotent, omnipresent threat of "business" that boomed all around. Those little old houses have stood since New York was first settled, and they have always been occupied by poor people. They lean up against two long-forgotten, but excellent hotels with the best food in New York. They are the Lafayette Hotel<sup>248</sup> and Brevoort Hotel<sup>249</sup>. Equally old and time-honored (that means about 75 years old) are a few rows of neatly kept patrician homes. Compared to the shabbiness surrounding them, they stand confidently with their nobly polished brass door handles and knockers

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<sup>247</sup> Mount of the martyr, a famous hill in Paris where St. Denis was decapitated. Known as a nightclub district.

<sup>248</sup> Located at 33 University Place. Known for its excellent French cuisine. The owner, Raymond Orteig, provided the prize money for Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight to Paris.

<sup>249</sup> Located on Fifth Avenue between East 8th and 9th Street. Demolished in 1954.

shining. The young Sturm und Drangers<sup>250</sup> are not bothered by the fact that here, on the north side of Washington Square, the wealthy class of a more frugal time once resided in these little palaces. That was a time when the wealthy knew how to behave themselves. They were forgiven for the wealth that fate had given to them. For a few dollars the poor intellectuals rented apartments and small rooms that were everywhere to be found in the little, rundown houses that had been built at the same time as the palaces. The new residents felt as close as kinship to the old money. In place of the word “shabby,” they invented the word “quaint.” They furnished cavernous rooms according to their own individual styles. There were none of the well-known attic garrets for poets, because there aren’t any in America. Depending on the imagination and taste of a given person, they are either delightful or horrible. Either way, they were cheap. “Chintz” (cretonne)<sup>251</sup> attained highest honors and the rooms were proudly hailed as “studios”. Everyone had a kitchenette, a tiny cooking space built into the wall, because everyone had to remain independent. How could you allow yourself to be bound by the silly hours of a boarding house kitchen?

*“Epater le bourgeois!”<sup>252</sup>”*

They did whatever they liked; they were artists. The citizens of New York put on their hats when they went out onto the streets. That was not necessary in “The Village;” they were among their own kind. And what did a hat matter anyway? The only things that really mattered were the thoughts brewing beneath those hats. Men and women

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<sup>250</sup> Play on the German literary movement, Sturm und Drang, or Storm and Stress, with a strong emphasis on personal subjectivity and free emotional exploration as opposed to contemporary Enlightenment thought based on empiricism and rationalism.

<sup>251</sup> Leitch mislabels chintz as cretonne. Both are sturdy, printed cloths, but cretonne is considerably stouter.

<sup>252</sup> French for “shock the bourgeois”. The rally cry of French Decadent poets such as Baudelaire.

could only live together if they were married? A ridiculous Babbitt law. And for that very reason, those living in the Village endeavored to make a mockery of it. Out of spite, men openly lived together with their girlfriends. Those who didn't have a girlfriend acquired one right away, because otherwise the others might end up thinking that they were the kind of people who could be easily bullied by conformity. And above all else, it was important to confront the common prejudices and platitudes of the outside world. Never let anyone call your bluff, never beat around the bush. If the Babbitts point their fingers at us then it's all the better. What better way to make clear the difference between us and them? Whatever else happens, we must not end up as common and usual as the Babbitts, not for the entire world. We must not simply tell a story from the beginning, like they would, we must start at the end. *Be open-minded and blasé no matter what the cost!* Others look down upon the latest immigrants from Europe and their funny names? Come to us, here you will find understanding and acceptance. *Others refuse to sit at the same table as Negroes and mulattoes? There is no "Color Line" in Greenwich Village". Here, you are what you are.*

And that is how Greenwich Village, simply referred to as "The Village" by its inhabitants, became *the artistic, radical Bohemian neighborhood of New York, the Bohemian neighborhood of America.* Their intentions were good. There has been a good deal of artistic, intellectual, and just plain human snobbery, but aside from all of that, there has also been a great deal of true longing for beauty and actual talent. There was plenty of incompetence that disguised itself as artistic uniqueness and plenty of

sincere nostalgia on the part of intellectuals who see themselves as *out of place* in a time when energy and will are lauded, not the mind<sup>253</sup>.

### The Theater in a Horse Stable

Greenwich Village had lofty demands. They erected a theater in what used to be a horse stable, the Provincetown Playhouse<sup>254</sup>. They made no attempt to disguise the original stable feel of the building, on the contrary. I recently sat in there during the theater's fourteenth season. I was on a wooden bench located in the orchestra that seemed to have been chosen for how hard it was. I ruined my vision trying to read the program in the light of a tiny acetylene lamp hanging on the wall, just like in a horse shed. Just a few blocks away, the streets were flooded by electric lights. While German Expressionists were first given a chance to speak just a few years ago; more and more people have concerned themselves with discovering secret, home-grown talent. One such example is Eugene O'Neill<sup>255</sup>, who found his way to the public via the Provincetown Playhouse. Every playwright who "can depict life in an individual and original way," is cordially invited to submit their works. The true success lies in the fact that the pieces presented here are mostly unintelligible. But you can never tell; any day now, the next O'Neill could take off from this stage.

Lots of material is written within the confines of the Village. The atmosphere is saturated with typewriters. Besides plays, novels abound, both published and unpublished. In America, no one says to himself, "I think I have what it takes to become a write." No, Americans state, "*I will become an author.*" And so they buy themselves

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<sup>253</sup> Leitch uses a play on a quote by Friedrich Schiller, "Posterity weaves no garlands for imitators." by stating "... a time that weaves garlands for energy and will rather than for the mind."

<sup>254</sup> Originally located at 139 MacDougal Street and currently at 133 MacDougal Street.

<sup>255</sup> Eugene Gladstone O'Neill, American playwright and Nobel laureate in literature.

typewriters on installment plans. Of course poetry is also cultivated here, and it is even published quite often in ultramodern magazines like “The Dial”<sup>256</sup>. “The Unconscious” is very popular (*from Freud’s Unbewusste* and the much-adored works of James Joyce like *Ulysses*, that only exist in America in copies smuggled into the country). Many of the most mundane short stories and routine articles are also written in the Village. Fodder for the masses, of course. But that’s bringing home the bacon, and there are some monetary lows to which those from Greenwich Village will sink in their writing.

“Come on in!”

And so, like I said, the “Village” was well-intentioned. But its undoing was found in the fact that it never really became what it wanted to be. It shifted immediately from an attempt to become an artists’ quarter to being a caricature of itself. The main problem: it was discovered. Maybe that desperate old widow was to blame. She was the one who put together a poorly lit *tea room* with a little bit of borrowed cash in a dilapidated house on a corner of Washington Square. This *tea room* became a pioneer of its kind. Now not only Greenwich Village, but all of New York is inundated with *tea rooms*. The “Village” found tea rooms interesting and patronized them heavily (they were quite cheap). *And from thence the legend was spread abroad that you could see a total artist and Bohemian sitting in one of these dives*. Not quite like in Le Dome and La Rotonde on Montparnasse<sup>257</sup>, but nonetheless similar. And then it became chic to show off a tea room to your visiting friends and family from Buffalo or Grand Rapids as one of the sightseeing stops in New York. *The Village began its career as an evening*

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<sup>256</sup> Published intermittently from 1880 to 1929. It began as the main publication for the American Transcendentalists and was an outlet for modern literature from 1920-1929.

<sup>257</sup> Artistic center of Paris between 1910 and the onset of World War II, centered around cafes such as Le Dome and La Rotonde.

*circus act* and, because it was lacking the established personalities of Montmartre and Montparnasse, that is how it brought itself to ruin.

Tea rooms began to spring up all throughout the winding alleys of the Village. They were not elegant like the elegant, swanky cafes uptown. They were private, humble, narrow, and intimate. They had gnarled entrances, little barred windows, lanterns on the tables, and minimal furniture. They even had eerie, grotesque, or even sleazy names like “Graybeard the Pirate,” “The Big Kangaroo,” or “The Love Nest.” And they didn’t remain mere tea rooms. New York doesn’t much care for “tea.” Social life in New York doesn’t even begin until after seven in the evening, and it was always clear that they couldn’t rely solely upon the few tea-drinking artists in the area. And so they started having dinners and dancing; the tea rooms became “inns.” And they were soon accompanied by legions of little shops. They were *quaint shops* where a tremendous tangle of bric-a-brac was peddled under the label “antiques.” And that just is still being sold to this day, because the face of the “Village” now has to be made up with the rouge and lipstick of the past.

And this whole show is just for the hundreds of thousands of tourists that come to New York from the provincial areas like Buffalo and Grand Rapids. The New Yorkers themselves are blasé and smug to let themselves be fooled for too long. They can see through the paper flower garlands and the interestingly shabby outfits of the waiters and doormen. They know that the real artists snuck out long ago in the Rembrandtian twilight of the streets in the Village. They have, one and all, *immigrated to Montparnasse* where a very respectable *colony of American Bohemians* is located today. And it is of no consequence to them that the “studios” between 4th and 14th Street are becoming fewer and more expensive. It doesn’t matter to them that the

Village was discovered for a second time, and this time by those destructive sworn enemies of tradition: real estate agents.

This time the block of old patricians living north of Washington Square are at fault. They consciously refused to follow the fashion trek uptown. Instead, they followed the constantly sought-after trend of being truly distinguished. And so now, next to the brownstone houses and humble studios converted from stables, we see different kind of architecture in the Village. These white edifices shoot up fifty stories in the air, and are staffed by doormen with epaulets. The streets and walkways in front of them have carpets and marquees. They feature marble halls and rooftop gardens. In short, these buildings are a spectacle of superb and symbolic beauty.

And those intellectuals who did remain in the Village are like castaways on a desert island. Otto H. Kahn, that patron of the arts, has a plan to build the oppressed Villagers a sensible, but substantially cheaper, place for lodging<sup>258</sup>. And thus comes the end of the little studios and the “quaint atmosphere!”

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<sup>258</sup> Leitich uses the historical but obscure term, caravanserai, a roadside inn for caravans and pilgrims.

## Introduction to “America Reads What America Likes”<sup>259</sup>

In the spring of 1928 Ann Tizia Leitich defended the American desire to read according to the dictates of one’s own conscience. In a tactful move, Leitich introduces her article with a quote from Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew*, defending the fact that one must enjoy what one reads in order to find any use in it. The proposed issue is that the American desire to read for pleasure would combine with American consumerism to transform literature into an industry. Leitich asks why that is an issue. And so she elaborates on what it is the American public enjoys reading and how it is not as harmful or degrading to literature as one might think. Leitich describes the styles and genres most popular in America and they tend to be educational in their subject matter. She explores biographies, outlines on science and philosophy, encyclopedias, and digests. Leitich shows the weaker side of each of these genres while ultimately defending them under the pretense that education need be accessible to all. Leitich states, “Culture is meant *for everyone*.” Educating the uneducated and uncultured helps fulfill the distribution of culture to everyone. Leitich points out the absurdity of fearing a literary industry: “Books are offering the uneducated and those hungry for education great opportunities. *This is a movement in favor of books!*” The American demand for literature that provides one with a general education and understanding of cultures is actually commendable. Leitich contends that literature, as an aspect of culture, is not exclusive. Leitich defends the notion that American literary demands may not stand up to the standards of European academics, but that does not make them deplorable.

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<sup>259</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. “America Reads What America Likes.” *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 17 Mar. 1928: 29. Print.

## America Reads What America Likes

“No profit is where is no pleasure ta'en,  
In brief, sir, study what you most affect.”<sup>260</sup>

“There is no profit in reading something that you do not enjoy; so read what you like.” stated Shakespeare in the sixteenth century. And the American reading public of the twentieth century has decided to act on those words. They read what they like. In the eyes of some, they are found to be guilty of a serious offense. We could call those certain individuals the literary puritans. They immediately find likable works suspicious, as well as the people who read them. Aside from the puritans, the American reading public does not enjoy a particularly good reputation among other groups, as well. Of course the critics chalk up the fact that Americans read what they like - although others do as well - the critics also hold it against the Americans that the American people have immense purchasing power. “Combined with the American commercial mindset, it leads to the production of goods directed towards the American taste. That cannot be. *It lowers the status of literature to be that of an industry.*”

“That cannot be”-- why not? The question is worthy of closer inspection.

The popular taste in literature is the subject of quite a discussion these days. This popular taste reflects a hunger for reading material, but a hunger that can only be sated by a certain kind of mental nourishment that is palatable to the masses. The education can simply no longer afford to condemn the masses and to trivialize their needs. Nor can they continue to criticize those authors who deign to write to such readers. If the majority of mankind were left to the charlatans, there would be no hope for the future. It is important for us to familiarize ourselves with the new forms of literature that have

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<sup>260</sup> From William Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew.

come into being to meet the needs of intellectually immature readers. These readers (who are not, it must be noted, cognitively inferior in any way) must be invited to take part in the great intellectual discoveries of our time. Nowhere has this project been so clearly and passionately discussed as in America. I am not talking about what people in America call “fiction”, or novels, novellas, short stories, etc. The Zane Greys<sup>261</sup> and Harold Bell Wrights<sup>262</sup> are just as much of a revolt against the previous century as the Elinor Glyns<sup>263</sup> and Courths-Mahlers<sup>264</sup> who made the world of novels and the world of imagination accessible to their readers. But today the readers’ demands are loftier than before. They demand access to all of the knowledge and wisdom of humanity.

### The Booming Biography Business

It all began with biographies with an interest in the human aspects of extraordinary people. When the Englishman, Lytton Strachey<sup>265</sup>, wrote his standard work about Queen Victoria, biographies were for a very particular audience. That audience suddenly experienced an unexpected growth spurt. Lytton Strachey became a “bestseller”. And of course he had his successors. The most skilled of his fellow countrymen was *Philip Guedalla*<sup>266</sup>. Emil Ludwig<sup>267</sup> follows in a close second. *But it was in America where the biography saw booming sales like nowhere else ever before.* Americans devoured accounts of Napoleon’s life. Well, of course they did. Napoleon

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<sup>261</sup> Pearl Zane Grey 1872-1939, American author best known for popular Western adventure novels.

<sup>262</sup> Harold Bell Wright 1872-1944, said to have been the first American writer to have sold a million copies of a novel and the first person to have become a millionaire by writing novels.

<sup>263</sup> Elinor Glyn 1864-1943 British novelist known for pioneering women’s mass market erotic fiction. She popularized the concept of having “it”.

<sup>264</sup> Hedwig Courths-Mahler 1867-1950, German authoress known for sentimental trivial literature.

<sup>265</sup> Giles Lytton Strachey 1880-1932, known for the psychological insights in his 1921 biography of Queen Victoria.

<sup>266</sup> Philip Guedalla 1889-1944, British barrister and historian.

<sup>267</sup> Emil Ludwig 1881-1948, Famed German biographer.

has always fascinated Americans. They also perceive Wilhelm II<sup>268</sup> as a kind of bogeyman, leading them to want to unravel his secrets. But what about *Goethe*, whose name they could not even pronounce? Americans are reading Goethe now, albeit Ludwig's Goethe, but either way...

“It would be better if they knew nothing of Goethe than to get to know some two-dimensional Olympian. It's blasphemy to utter the name of a person you will never know anything about.”

That is the big question. It used to be correct to assume so, but that is not true anymore.

### Pocket-Sized Science and Philosophy

The popularized biography became a groundbreaking success. Does it not just graze over the surface history? Why should the common people not enjoy reading history, assuming it could be presented in an intuitive, interesting way? History could be brought alive if an author were to endow historical figures with the normal, ordinary attributes that historians and scholars stripped from them over the decades. And once more, an Englishman broke new ground for this idea. He was even a man of literature: H.G. Wells. He wrote an *outline* of the history of the world and he made it attractive to everyone. Even people who grow nauseous hearing the word “history” could read Wells, even those who suffered from the trauma of having to memorize the dates of the Punic Wars<sup>269</sup> and the genealogical tables of the Romanov-Ruriks<sup>270</sup> could read Wells. And even the Americans - the most historically ignorant people on earth - suddenly began reading history with gusto. They were forced to admit that their horizons existed, and

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<sup>268</sup> Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm Viktor Albert 1859-1941, the last German Emperor and King of Prussia.

<sup>269</sup> A series of wars fought between Rome and Carthage from 246 to 146 BC.

<sup>270</sup> A main branch of the Rurik Tsar Dynasty, including Peter III and Catherine the Great.

they had expanded them. That was just the beginning; Wells followed with an “*Outline of Science*”. He was capable of presenting all of the benchmarks of *science* in guise of mainstream events. There followed an *Outline of Human History*, and *Outline of the Bible*, and the most famous *Outline of Philosophy*<sup>271</sup>! The latter made its author Will Durant a wealthy man. But that is by no means an exhaustive list. Americans are consumers, and the enormous amount of digests of varied type show that the supply is equal to the demand.

### Literature as an Industry

Like most things American, this digest literature is trying to encroach on Europe. “It is a plague,” I recently heard a sophisticated man state regarding a recently published cultural history. “Nothing is safe from them, nothing is sacred, history, science, technology, religion, they attempt it all, they infect it all with their *industrial literature*. That is no cultural history, that is a superficial collection of witty remarks.” Someone interjected, “Perhaps it is the only way to make cultural history accessible to a broad group of readers.” He received the answer, “Then they should just leave them be. Why should we care what happens to them?”

Maybe not, Herr Professor, but these people need you, your insights, and your experience. And you demand that “these people” read scientific works, that they find aesthetic pleasure in works of art, and that they comprehend poetry that requires a subtle, nuanced literary sensibility. They are not trained to grasp works that demand intellectual labor. They do not measure up to that level of mental work. That is why they tend to react to you like a hungry, toothless infant who is offered a delicious roasted

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<sup>271</sup> Published under the title, “The Story of Philosophy”.

capon<sup>272</sup>. Just like that infant, they do not know what to do with what you have offered them. They are lacking the organs for it, or better yet, their organs are undeveloped and childlike. But they are mentally and aesthetically hungry. In fact, the lowest tier of humanity suffers most from that kind of hunger. The hunger nags and they are aware of it. It drives them to broaden their horizons. They are grateful to those who reveal new things to them in terms that they can understand. Many people today are feverishly working to raise consciousness of the many possibilities of literature. Books are providing new and far-reaching opportunities to less educated people who want to improve their minds. *This is a movement in favor of books!* The authors and teachers have the sole responsibility to lead them down the right paths. Not all of them will feel the call, and that is the way it should be. The issue at hand is simply this: we cannot afford to look down our noses at authors who write books for the uneducated masses, either because these authors have unique pedagogical talents or because they have an inherent inclination or predisposition that leads them down that path. Mankind can no longer be separated into the educated and the uneducated, humans and scoundrels, just like we can no longer be separated into aristocrats and commoners. It took one hundred and fifty years to understand that the masses must take part in civilization. But now we have to understand that they have to take part in culture. This desire and its fulfillment mark a new day, a new era. We are in the middle of a new era and we cannot forget that fact. You can see it more clearly in America because the efforts of the masses in Europe are almost always closely tied to politics and are lost in the political stew. The Americans are free of political entanglement so that the purely essential, social, and human aspects emerge without any confusion as to what they are.

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<sup>272</sup> A rooster which has been castrated to improve the gastronomical quality of its flesh.

## Education for All!

Culture is the sum of all *the great accomplishments of the human spirit*. Culture is meant *for everyone*. The consumption of culture is part and parcel of the “greatest possible happiness” that Thomas Jefferson, that irrepressible Democrat, philosopher, esthete<sup>273</sup> from Virginia declared to be the cornerstone of the American republic. He set it forth in the magnificent Declaration of Independence. It is such a modern thought that not even all of us today can comprehend it. It is no longer a matter of the educated class claiming rights to all of the intellectual commodities of this world just because they were given the time, atmosphere, and tradition to acquire culture. The ability to enjoy and comprehend the sensory as well as the cerebral requires training. That type of training demands proper time, surroundings, and instruction. Americans are reaching the point where they have the time they need. They are lacking in everything else. It might help to explain what I mean if I tell a short story about an experience that was nothing more than a single, poignantly helpless glimpse.

I met a pretty young schoolteacher from Chicago in The Hague, Netherlands. She had barely arrived at her hotel before she rushed off to the famous Mauritshuis Museum<sup>274</sup>. On the way over, she told me that she came to see Rembrandt’s painting “The Anatomy Lesson.” In her Art History course at college in Chicago that it is one of the most sublime paintings and she was so excited to see it in person. I could see in her face that she was expecting an experience, a revelation. Jan Steen, Potter and the rest had wasted their time painting if they expected her to notice them. She ran by them all

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<sup>273</sup> A follower of Aestheticism, a movement supporting the emphasis of aesthetic values more than socio-political themes for the arts.

<sup>274</sup> The Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, housing paintings by Johannes Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Jan Steen, Paulus Potter, Frans Hals, and Hans Holbein the Younger.

through the halls. She stood in front of Rembrandt's famed painting and she stared at it for minutes. Then she turned to me and asked, "Is this it? Are you sure?" The radiance of her face was doused and an unparalleled helplessness filled her eyes. She could not comprehend the beauty of the picture, no matter how hard she longed to.

#### Accelerated Courses in General Education

"The best way to educate young people is to never speak to them regarding talents, styles, or trends, but to attempt to interest their minds in religious, political, social, scientific, and historical questions." Those were the words of Renan<sup>275</sup>, and for our century we can leave out the word "young" and just talk about all people. And that is the purpose and sense in "digest literature". Whenever we notice that the massive demand for mass literature has created a tasteless industrial gel out of human spirit, or that it is all part of materialistic exploitation, we just have to remember that there is no realm that is completely free of the filthy taint of business. The closest literary relative of the outlines are the more popular encyclopedias. They are sold by sales agents rather than in stores because they tend to be bought in installments. It would be ridiculous to deny that these too have produced some lousy pieces as well. But the President Emeritus of Harvard University just published a set and the protagonist of the intellectuals, H. L. Mencken<sup>276</sup> did not find it below him to participate in an encyclopedic project. Well-liked and unintentionally humoristic subvarieties of the encyclopedias are the *accelerated education courses*. They include such titles as "Educating Yourself in Fifteen Minutes a Day" or "The Pocket University". They are a

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<sup>275</sup> Joseph Ernest Renan 1823-1892, French expert of Middle Eastern ancient languages and civilizations, known for his political theories concerning national identity.

<sup>276</sup> Henry Louis Mencken 1880-1956, American journalist, essayist, satirist, and critic of American life and culture. Known as the "Sage of Baltimore".

calendar and a compendium, respectively. The calendar prescribes a certain chapter of world literature or science each day that the owner can find in the compendium. The pioneer of this type was Elbert *Hubbard*<sup>277</sup> with his “Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Men,” a naive matter for the educated but a welcome help to the poor souls who fail to find their bearings in the mysterious land of books. “What should we read? How can we read properly so that we can understand and learn something from our reading?” That is what the people asked. Elbert Hubbard helped them and he became a rich man. His successors occupy an entire city with their own printers, publishers, schools, recreation homes, etc.<sup>278</sup>

#### Getting Attention with an Efficient Title

Another similar company that began with nothing for capital is the collection of “Little Blue Books”. It is the most democratic publisher in the world, because its little volumes cost five to ten cents. They recently sold their one-hundred-millionth volume. Around that same time, the publisher, Mr. Haldeman-Julius<sup>279</sup>, released a critical observation of the taste of his audience. For example, he stated: *A good title alone is worth gold*. If a volume does not catch on at first, it will be sent to the hospital to receive a new title. “The Life of Dubarry” limped miserably on in to the title hospital, was renamed “The Life of the French King’s Mistress,” and has been published and sold en masse. “The Art of Controversy,” collected dust, but under the title, “How Can I Train Myself to be a Logical Speaker?” it was 30,000 copies sold in a year. The top of the list of topics are sex and love. Close on their heels follows “Cultivating a Personality”

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<sup>277</sup> Elbert Green Hubbard 1856-1915, American traveling salesman author, and artisan. Leitch erroneously names him Elemer and Elmer Hubbard.

<sup>278</sup> East Aurora, New York

<sup>279</sup> Emanuel Julius-Haldeman 1889-1951, best known as the head of Haldeman-Julius publications, creator of the pamphlet series, “Little Blue Books”

(language, looks, knowledge, etc.). There are titles like: How Can I Improve My English? How can I Utilize My Free Time? How Can I Avoid Being a Wallflower? (and even) How can I Combat My Own Stupidity? Humor comes in at third place for popularity, followed by books about celebrities and religious topics.

But there is a higher level that is still below the standards of the literary elite. That is the “Book of the Month Club.” Members pay a flat rate to receive the best book each month according to renowned literary figures. The “Book of the Month Club” already has so many members that an author who is lucky enough to have his books chosen for it can be sure to sell considerably more copies than otherwise. Incidentally, something similar existed early in Germany in the *Buchgemeinschaften* founded by the Wegweiser publishing house.

But to come back to the “outlines” here at the end, I would state that they are the basic concept upon which all of the mass-produced forms of literature are based. I have one open in front of me that has been translated into German. I would suggest it to the fiercest of skeptics. It is a history of the U.S.A. “*From Columbus to Coolidge*” written by the Dutch-American Hendrik van Loon<sup>280</sup>. He is a brilliant expert when it comes to writing historical abridgements. It is refreshing to read his historical writings. For example, the title of one chapter is “Thomas Jefferson Closes an Important Real Estate Deal with the Emperor Napoleon.” Real estate deal? Everyone can understand that. An American president makes deals with Napoleon? That is interesting to everyone. It is all about the famed “Louisiana Purchase.” At the signing, Napoleon claimed to have created the chance for a future equal opponent of England. But Hendrik van Loon does not write this style of history to attract those interested in real estate deals. He writes in

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<sup>280</sup> Hendrik Willem van Loon 1882-1944, Dutch-American historian and journalist.

this way because he believes that *history is created by people and their fates and must be told from a human viewpoint, not an academic one.* And he writes for the people, not for academics and their disciples.

## Introduction to "The 'Latter-Day Saints'"<sup>281</sup>

As one who claimed to have seen America in ways that most had not, Ann Tizia Leitich eventually made her way out West to Utah. Leitich tells a short history of the Latter-Day Saints and their trek to the Utah Territory. She had already heard her own fill of stereotypes telling of wild harems and cults. As she puts it, "The difference between the stereotypes and reality was striking." Leitich describes a flourishing city in the middle of the desert. The Mormons are industrious, civil, and cultured. They play the great works of Mozart and Handel in their Tabernacle and she had no trouble finding people who spoke perfect German thanks to the many men who had served as missionaries abroad. Leitich concentrates on dismissing the stereotypes that she found to be untrue by reporting on what she did encounter. She also reports on the landscape of Utah itself. She tells of the sensation of trying to swim in the Great Salt Lake and the beauty of a cabin high on the North side of Mount Timpanogos. Ultimately, Leitich describes the Latter-Day Saints as a uniquely American religious group.

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<sup>281</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "The "Latter-Day Saints"" *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 14 Apr. 1929: 32. Print.

## The “Latter-Day Saints”

### A Visit to the Mormons

by Ann Tizia Leitich

In the museum of the great Temple in Salt Lake City I met Levi Edgar Young<sup>282</sup>, a professor of Mormon History, standing in front of a codex with yellowed pages. The scholar showed me the treasures in the collection, along with findings of Indian artifacts. He spoke to me in flawless German; he had studied in Leipzig and Berlin. I was still a bit confused by the surprises I had encountered earlier in the day: a ride through the thriving city located in the middle of the desert, a tour of the university on the mountainside that was founded in 1850<sup>283</sup> and a visit to the mighty capitol building that is filled with glorious architecture and with different products from the state. I was also surprised by the unique vista from the Capitol’s pillared terrace: the city, the glimmering white desert, the copper-red of the mountains. All of it was so magnificent, firmly established, self-confident, sensible, abundant, and so dedicated to life. And here I had expected the Mormons to be some sort of chanting, crotchety eccentrics that live in the middle of an outlandish harem. The difference between the stereotypes and reality was striking.

I was only allowed to see the temple from the outside; no non-Mormon is allowed to enter the building. It is the most expensive house of God in America. It is not only a place of reverence, but simultaneously the granite headquarters of the Mormon Church, with an immensely complicated and powerful hierarchy of two different kinds of presidencies. At its head stands a presidency of three men. One of them is the President

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<sup>282</sup> Levi-Edgar Young, 1874-1963. General Authority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and member of the history faculty at the University of Utah.

<sup>283</sup> The University of Utah

of the Church, infallible as a prophet, seer, and revelator, a mystical rank full of mysterious power.

Strangers are allowed in the Tabernacle, however. That is where we listened to the daily organ performance at 12 o'clock. Besides hearing Handel and Mozart, we got to hear old familiar tunes like "Ännchen von Tharau"<sup>284</sup>. The pure, beautiful tones of the organ are world famous for sounding so similar to human voices. Listeners are lulled away by the clarity and sweetness of the tones. After the performance, we had lunch in a hotel just past the monument with the noble Ute chief, Massasoit, who once helped the Mormons sitting at its base. High above him on the pedestal stands Brigham Young in stone, the great uncle of Edgar Levi. He was one of the most interesting figures in American history: patriarch, organizer, founder of a State.

#### The City in the Desert

"This is the place,<sup>285</sup>" said Brigham Young in 1847 at the height of a pass from which they first saw the basin. It was after months of rambling through the wilderness with a small group of exhausted followers. They stood face to face with the percussive emptiness of the steppe. Every tree visible at the time is now a stump that has been framed and groomed as a precious relic in the middle of the city. His little loyal flock didn't doubt the wisdom of his decision for an instant and they pounded their tent stakes into the barren ground. Their blind trust was not misled. Was it a lucky coincidence; was it intuitive knowledge, the prophetic gift of their leader that they revered as a divine emissary? It could not have been knowledge of the area, because Brigham

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<sup>284</sup> Low-German folk song from the 17th century, translated into High German by Johann Gottfried Herder in 1778. The melody known in Leitch's time was composed in 1827 by Friedrich Silcher

<sup>285</sup> The earliest account of what Young stated was recorded in 1880 by church historian Wilford Woodruff. Woodruff's account quotes Young having stated, "It is enough. This is the right place. Drive on."

Young saw it then for the first time just as any other American. It was legally part of Mexico, but shortly after the Mormon settlement, it broke off and became part of the United States. So it would have been impossible for Brigham Young to have known that the desert soil was just waiting for water to become exceptionally fertile, that the high mountain valleys a few hours away were full of rushing spring water, that the mountains surrounding them held precious ore. The latter would not have interested him. He understood people well and would have wanted to avoid shaking the steadfastness of the Mormon character with quick riches. For that very reason he banned the pursuit of ore, and put emphasis on his people developing a harmonious personality with peaceful cultivation of the land. They became happy and strong. And he followed through with all of it, even though they didn't just stick with agriculture.

You really can say "he" followed through with it, because Salt Lake City, the new Zion, blossomed rapidly under his rule. As history now reports, it was the successful founding of a religious patriarchal state. Brigham Young appears to have had first-rank organizational talent and even if he didn't accomplish everything he had planned (his goal was a vast, independent Mormon nation from the Rockies to the Pacific) he still fulfilled his boldest prophecies. He developed Salt Lake City and Utah. In certain respects, Utah is still a state within a state where the original structure of a patriarchal-communistic theocracy is still clearly apparent under the guise of normal American politics. And unlike other less-fortunate organizers, he was able to abundantly enjoy the fruits of his labor himself.

Europeans and Americans are familiar with the Mormons primarily as proponents of polygamy. The monstrous and risqué legends about them are widespread. Besides that, people know little of them. Perhaps, at best, people think

that they grow out long beards and that their elders and priests sit enthroned in mystical seclusion and celebrate secretive ceremonies within their famous granite temples. The frequently mentioned topic of polygamy goes all the way back to the actual founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith<sup>286</sup>, an imaginative and visionary dreamer who appears to have had abilities of suggestion similar to those of Brigham Young. But Smith was utterly lacking in comparison to the character and organizational talent of Young. He claimed to have found a buried book with the help of revelations: The Book of Mormon. The book supposedly had the true teachings of Christ written in it. His followers named themselves Mormons after the book. They also call themselves “Latter-Day Saints”. Joseph Smith was lecherous man and some of them followed his example and had more than one wife. They were persecuted and driven from place to place. After Joseph Smith was murdered, Brigham Young seized leadership of the group. He roamed as far as he had to until he found a place that was far enough away from persecution that he could guarantee undisturbed development. *This is the place...*

#### Tall Tales and Reality

Brigham Young had seventeen wives and over sixty children. He could afford to do so because he had become quite rich. One encounters his wealth at every turn in Salt Lake City, especially at his homes and gardens that are now displayed as dignified sightseeing points. There is no doubt that polygamy conformed to his own inclinations, but he made it a law for *economic reasons*. The first Mormons were pioneer farmers and farmers need hands to work the land. Another woman is another worker. This is the simple and not at all salacious explanation for Mormon polygamy. It was another of

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<sup>286</sup> Leitich's original has his name as “John Smith”, a common error. The correct name, Joseph Smith, has been used in replacement throughout the article.

Brigham Young's ingenious concepts. And in order to neutralize any and all objections from the women from the start, a religious law was proclaimed that stated that *women who did not marry could not gain salvation*. The United States Government outlawed *polygamy* in 1890. In 1904 *the president of the Mormon Church abolished it for the whole Mormon Church*. And so there is no more official polygamy in Utah anymore. And as far as unofficial polygamy, well, that doesn't just occur in Utah.

Also, Mormons don't grow long beards. They are very much like other Americans. They are an extraordinarily good-looking, healthy and jovial people. Although the total number of their followers is on the rise and the leading families have far more children than others of other confessions, they are in the minority in Salt Lake City these days. The city has churches for thirty-eight other religions and sects. That does not prevent the Mormons from leaving their imprint on the city. There are two things that the Mormon ethics try to develop in people: *a pursuit of spirituality and accountability*. You will find these two attributes during a simple ride through the city. Our young guide, a student at the University of Utah, told us, "We're proud that our school superintendents have a higher salary than our governor and that the \$300,000 surplus from the three million dollar state budget was paid back." We marveled at where so much money could come from, looking at the wide streets with lovely villas and the utter lack of poverty. He stated his opinion: "First it came from the ground as grain and fruit. And then it came from the ground again, this time as ore. Last year Utah led the American states in silver production, was in second place for lead and third place for copper. Large coal deposits are still untapped and the abundance of

phosphates in the stone here will render it unnecessary to adopt German fertilizers<sup>287</sup>.” And suddenly he added in German: “Are you from Berlin? I lived over there for two years as a missionary.”

A half hour car ride from Salt Lake City is The Great Salt Lake, glistening under the glowing light of the sun. On its salt-encrusted shore is Saltair, the tidiest and most beautiful public bath house. It has thousands of stalls with thousands of freshwater showers, an unparalleled modern convenience and luxury. Taking a dip in the Salt Lake is the loveliest thing there is. You cannot sink because you are carried by the salt in the water. And if you still try to swim, you pop out of the water like some gulping fish.

After visiting the sparkling bath in Salt Lake we drove one and a half hours to Dr. Young’s cabin. It’s located among dark pines in a lovely valley 1300 meters high at the foot of the great snow-capped mountain, Timpanogos. This mountain dispenses the many gallons of clear water to the Mormons that they need to maintain their life and prosperity. And here in the glow of the flickering fireplace, we spoke of how extraordinary ideas and extraordinary personalities in Utah brought extraordinary things to pass. Even the foundational ideals of America were thought up by individuals. And we spoke of how America did not hide its light under a bushel. We discussed how America was the home of significant men past and present, and we joked about how Americans always talk a lot about oil barons and football kings.

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<sup>287</sup> In reference to the German, Fritz Haber’s, synthesis of ammonia for use in fertilizers and explosives, winning him a Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

## Introduction to "The Indian Woman's Secret"<sup>288</sup>

This article is a book review of Oliver La Farge's 1929 novel *Laughing Boy*. Leitich has a distinct advantage in reporting on the novel, because she claims to have heard the story told by Oliver La Farge himself. She heard the tale not far from the prehistoric sites of the American Southwest. Contesting the monotony and uniformity for which America is often criticized, Leitich tells of the Navajo people who struggle to preserve their own culture on their ancestral lands. Not only the people make this part of America different from the urban uniformity found elsewhere in the United States, Leitich also describes the natural wonders of the Southwest to her readers in Europe. The Grand Canyon, Casa Grande, and the Petrified Forest are the remnants of landscapes and peoples who once existed here. La Farge's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel criticizes the attempts to force white American culture on the Navajo. Leitich gives a summary of the tragic love story of two Navajo: Slim Girl and Laughing Boy. Their story shows depths and trials of American people that go far beyond the white-washed America of Main Street.

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<sup>288</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "The Indian Woman's Secret." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 17 Aug. 1930: 21. Print.

## The Indian Woman's Secret

A Novel about the Red Race

by Ann Tizia Leitich

People say that life in the United States is nothing more than dull monotony. They point to the mass urbanization in big cities as an example. Each metropolis is ruled by the same, superficial drive of activity. People don't talk about what can be found deep down inside, because in the larger cities...

But I'm not here to talk about American cities. I just want to tell a story. It's not a true story in the sense that the people or events that I will tell you about are not based on the lives of actual individuals. "Laughing Boy", "Slim Girl", and my other characters never lived, but their brothers and sisters in spirit still live today as they have for centuries. They live, laugh, and love, just as we will learn from my characters.

It's a fairytale land that encompasses a region of the United States. The story was told to me by a native of the same region where the story is set. That district is the American Southwest. It's the setting of America's prehistory, a massive area of over 300,000 square miles. It is the most curious story on earth.

Oliver La Farge is a twenty-eight-year-old American. His friends, the Navajo Indians, call him "Big Brownie." He has Chingachgook's nose<sup>289</sup>, the bushy eyebrows of a woodsman, the large eyes of a poet, the sensitive mouth, and infinitely expressive hands of a descendant of the most cultivated race. He has dedicated himself to archaeological studies in Arizona, Mexico, and Central America. He researches sites from the prehistoric era of a continent that is becoming ever more important in the

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<sup>289</sup> The archetype of the noble savage, a Mohican chief in James Fenimore Cooper's *Leather Stocking Tales*, father of the last Mohican.

history of mankind. His studies and the sites where he completes them have not only has an internal, but also an external effect on the young researcher. Oliver La Farge looks similar to the indigenous people of the land, the Navajo. The grounds on which they live, those 300,000 square miles of New Mexico, Arizona, and part of California, are imbued with colossal elemental powers. Many people claim that this land is a desert. On train rides from New York to Los Angeles, these people close the curtains over the windows of their Pullman car<sup>290</sup> for the day and night it takes to cross the region. They say it isn't worth it to look out. Of course that keeps them from seeing what it really is: a grandiose high plateau, with canyons cutting through its face. The canyons are riverbeds that are sometimes dried up and sometimes still flowing with life. It's a picture of a unique land of erosion, shimmering in enchanting colors. The colors are not only present in the rainy season when the flowers are blooming. The fantastically shaped boulders here blossom in phenomenal colors of pastel blue, rose red, peacock grey, each more amazing than the last. The Americans have built a direct rail route to a natural wonder, the Grand Canyon that sits in the middle of the rose red desert.

### The Petrified Forest

In and near this desert are fields of cotton, corn, melons, and peach trees. The rivers throughout the region have been diverted, brilliantly dammed for irrigation. Slowly but surely, ancient conduits are coming back to life. Endless pine forests cover the heights over 2000 meters above sea level. Blocky, three-hundred-year-old Spanish churches spring up from the ground. Their roof beams are the trunks of giant trees, the likes of which are no longer known. Similar trunks from the primeval world lie felled in

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<sup>290</sup> American term for a sleeper car of a train manufactured by the Pullman Company from 1867 to 1968.

mile-long stacks. The fossilized trees are the gems of the famous “Petrified Forest”. You also find infinite solitude, silence, mysterious landscapes, unexplained pictographs of animals on stone, ruins in the sand, and ruins in the cliffs. They are traces of mysterious “cliff dwellers<sup>291</sup>” and the “Communists of Casa Grande”<sup>292</sup> who disappeared without a trace. You will also find the 1500 year old skeletal remnants of the first American apartment building. The adobe brick villages of the Pueblo Indians are small and squalid, but they are built in the terraced style of Mayan temples, those same temples that inspired architects in Chicago and New York to build their own concrete temples that reach up into the heavens. Whether they knew it or not, they copied that style. A few places in this part of America--like Santa Fe and Albuquerque--have hotels, bathrooms, and cars. The hotels are built in the Indian adobe style, that Native American, ancient style. The remains of Spanish architecture are disappearing. Only the adobe mission churches are standing, alone in the desert.

And the story? Oh, I haven’t forgotten about that. This has all been part of my story. I’m just saving the best part, the part about love, for later.

Santa Fe is the oldest city in the union. It was built in 1606. But even in the middle of the sixteenth century the Spanish and Mexican conquistadors trekked through the territory to search for the legendary “seven golden cities of Cibola”. The Spanish Padres built churches for the Indians and it was not unusual for them to end up getting killed for their trouble, because the natives were more stubborn than their brothers in Mexico and Central America. They remain more stubborn to this day. Then the gold

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<sup>291</sup> The Anasazi people, traditionally thought to have upheld an egalitarian, communal society within their pueblos and pre-pueblo villages. This theory is currently debated, the greatest opponent of the communist theory being Dr. Stephen Lekson.

<sup>292</sup> The Hohokam people.

began to flow in Santa Fe as the city became the trading center between the Anglo-Saxon north and the Spanish south. And eventually there were trains and automobiles, and Yankees with their Indian schools.

Yankees also accomplished a lot with railroads and cars - just not a lot with the schools. North of Santa Fe live 35,000 Navajos, “the Arabs of America.” The Navajo have an estimated two million herd animals. They literally live their independent and ancient lifestyle on their ancestral lands. On land that wasn’t taken from them because it was too poor. Many of them have yet to see a single railroad, automobile, or Yankee in their lives. And the story of our young Navajo couple that Oliver La Farge told me takes place among them. In the meantime, the story has appeared in book form<sup>293</sup> and won the 1930 Pulitzer Prize.

It begins with the young Indian woman, Slim Girl, who attended the government school for Indians. She hated school, like they all do. She meets the “Laughing Boy”, who never went to an Indian school. He is also not an orphan like our poor Slim Girl. He lives with his people far away from the railroad in the northern part of Navajo lands where there are no Whites. He was taught how to forge bracelets, necklaces, and earrings from silver. While he roves idly about for hours or days (like they all do) he listens carefully to the voices deep within that whisper beautiful patterns to him that he can use in his creations. But he never strains himself too much; his life is easy and happy with day-long feasts full of song and dance. That is the main point: life is beautiful when harmoniously ingrained into nature. In his language it is said: *Bik’e hozoni*<sup>294</sup>.

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<sup>293</sup> Oliver La Farge: “Laughing Boy.” Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston (original footnote from Leitch’s article.

<sup>294</sup> *Bik’e Hozhoni*, Navajo words literally meaning, “beautiful country” or “beautiful land”.

## Revenge on the Whites

When Laughing Boy confesses to Slim Girl that he would like to marry her, she becomes very contemplative. He is also very much to Slim Girl's liking, but marrying him would mean that she would have to become a "blanket Indian". The Indians who have not adopted the ways of the white man are called "blanket Indians" because their traditional clothing is a self-woven blanket. For her, the marriage would mean that she, an American girl, would have to return to being a squaw. The thought captivates her and is strangely enticing. It isn't the first time the thought had crossed her mind, but Laughing Boy could now make that thought into a reality. All of the money and loathsome kindness that the Americans had used to raise her their way would be lost... That would be her revenge! A feeling of triumph, but also of deep joy, washes over her. She will go home for the first time and he will be the light that shines on the paths where life was once worth living. Everything else is ugly. He will wipe out everything else. He has a great, personal magic and she has learned much that will be useful to them. Together, they will lead a beautiful life with that which he is and that which she knows.

She has a little money. She could do a lot with a little money; she had learned just that already. But it isn't enough. She needs more. Yes, she must arrange everything so that she can secretly earn money for a while longer.

And so they move northward, to T'o Tlakai, where the complicated marriage ceremonies will take place. Those come only after the bride has introduced herself to the clan and has been accepted by them. For the first time, Laughing Boy's crystal clear disposition is a little worried. How will his people receive the girl? As one who has accepted the customs of the white Americans, her status is lower in the eyes of the proud Navajo. Slim Girl senses his anxiety, yet she is secretly happy as she thinks to herself:

“I’ll show him that I am all his and that I belong wholly to his people.” The decision rests on the shoulders of Laughing Boy’s mother and his mother’s brothers. His father may only give advice, because the Navajos are ruled by the original form of human society: Matriarchy.

### Paths that Lead Astray

After days of agonizing separation, everything has gone over smoothly. Tradition demands that the bride remain hidden from the prospective groom until the decision has been made. With permission granted, Laughing Boy embraces his Slim Girl and says, “They thought you were an American with no manners...” They move back south and take up residence just outside of the city. The young woman routinely goes down to the city to sell the work of her hands, jewelry and hand-woven blankets. He is more than happy to leave that task up to her. He does not long for human contact; he is well and truly happy. And he doesn’t suspect that she isn’t just selling jewelry and woven blankets in the city. Each time she comes back, she is filled with secret fears. She tells herself that it is the last time she will do it. She asks herself why she still does it. She is content - they talk together, they sing together, they are quiet together. What long, rich, glorious silence. It is a happiness that will never run out. Why, then, does she endanger it over and over again?

And then she stays too long. One day Laughing Boy sees her with the man that had been her lover before and all along. He shoots and strikes the man as he tries to escape. She cries and tells him that she sacrificed herself so that they could both live better lives. He is silent for days on end, but her sweet sorrow forces him to forgive her. They move once and for all back north with all of their belongings stacked high on the backs of a few horses. He’s on one horse; she’s on another. He appears to have

forgotten all of his own suffering. His soul is spread on his face as bright as the landscape that surrounds them. But her face is shaded by new doubts and new fears:

“Could it be possible that I...”

Isn't it lovely to wander through solitude together? Suddenly the silence is interrupted by a shot. He took his revenge on the young woman and he hit her dead on. The American shot her from behind in an ambush. She holds herself up on the horse for a short while before sinking to the ground. She has never been as happy as she is in this moment. She knows that she must die. “Now I'm free of the fear that I could never have a child... It's for the best. I have saved my soul through you, Laughing Boy.”

He buries her on the top of a mesa and holds vigil for the dead for four days and four nights. He doesn't cry because “it ended in beauty.” She will always be with him.

“Nozhoji.”<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> *Nozhonji*, Navajo meaning “beauty way” or “the good way”. Usually a ceremony of beauty all around. Also refers to beauty above me, below me, and surrounding me.

Introduction to "On the Run from Boredom: The World as a Machine"<sup>296</sup>

It is the beginning of the Great Depression, America is bored, and Ann Tizia Leitich knows why. America exploded with success and now there is a serious gap. Leitich describes how the high standard of living for most Americans has left them wanting, searching. Americans had created a simple, peaceful world for themselves. And that world was not enough. Americans are searching for anything to take away their boredom, even developing serious drinking habits in the process. Leitich claims that America spent so much time mechanizing the world, they cannot find the mysteries in life anymore. She says that Americans lost the connection to their own emotions. But it is in the regular people that Leitich sees a rejection of the emotionless, capital-based successes of their nation. She notes this rejection in the remarkable book sales from authors who criticize America's Main Street culture. Ultimately, Leitich hopes that the economic situation that began to turn for the worse a year earlier in 1930 will help awaken the people. She hopes it will help them prioritize their lives anew so they can reconnect with themselves.

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<sup>296</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "On the Run from Boredom: The World as a Machine." *Neue Freie Presse*[Vienna] 29

<sup>296</sup>Nov. 1931: 31-32. Print.

## On the Run from Boredom

### The World as a Machine

by Ann Tizia Leitich

From the American perspective, which is to say the viewpoint of the United States, manifestations of our time are seen in oversized, dramatic proportions. With that in mind, the following observations also pertain to Europe, albeit on a much smaller scale.

It was all so magnificently thought out and just as well calculated. *By the year 1950 New York City would have twenty million inhabitants and every stenotypist would have her own airplane while every paperboy would have his own television set.* The highest standard of living, that most reverently worshipped child of “*prosperity*” would be realized on all levels of society. Was not everyone on the right path to be able to mathematically solve their problems on the smooth surface of a desk, whether they be political problems, or social, or economic, or emotional. Everything had been accounted for, analyzed, abstracted, katalogiserit, mikroskopiert, rationalisiert--all of these verbs that German borrows from other languages. Our mother tongue is just too simple and sentimental for such ambitious procedures. Each and every thing had its rational place and its own clearly outlined label. Any possible error had been ruled out. “*Business*” ruled the world as an untiring, oversized machine, and business was ruled by the agonizing precision of the index card system. Gone were the days of daring, visionary enterprises. The captains of business grew a stately paunch that led their doctors to prescribe them to do daily exercises on an electric horse. It was only natural that human beings would have to adapt themselves to generic schematization in this world of machines. Their brains were psychometrically examined and measured according to

quality. The decisive factor was almost always mathematical aptitude, to the exclusion of all other mental processes. Mr. A, with an intelligence level of 120, would someday end up at least as a CEO, if not Al Capone's rival. On the other hand, Mr. B, with a "quotient" of 70, could at best hope for a chance to get into the poorhouse. Their hearts became ledgers with columns strictly separated between the "to do" list and the "done" list. Again and again they worked out the cubic root of their feelings until they became little more than negative values. They took an x-ray of their emotions and found that erotic feelings appeared only as "*love in a primitive state.*" It was labeled as a phenomenon from the age of the Neanderthals, a mere biological function as natural and devoid of mystery as hunger. Music became resounding integral calculations, or, when appropriate, music merely served as a nerve stimulant and reverted back to jungle tom-toms. Poets got hair trimmed *à la* "*successful businessman*", caught the first train to Hollywood, and spent every day from nine to five writing the intertitles for spy movies. But at a quarter past five they were all on the golf course. Writers in America worked according to tried and true formulas for short stories. Meanwhile, in Germany, they were writing novels with a protractor and a slide rule, letting fully-formed characters spring out of their heads, personas clad in shining armor like Pallas Athena on Zeus' head. The Bohemians (the American variety, because Germany could not afford them at the time) lived in Greenwich Village and Montparnasse, subsisting on the proceeds of their estates (as long as their fathers saw to it) and practiced the art of debate much like their comrades in Russia once did. And even though the Bohemians were tunes to a different musical key than the Russians, both of the debates resounded with similar refrain of disappointment. But the Bohemians brought something entirely new to the mixture: boredom.

“What will we do with ourselves?”

Boredom has always existed. It emerged every now and then, people dealt with it, it was harmless. *But ever since people invented machines, they have been trying to use machines to escape from boredom.* But in the end they cannot escape from it, rather they sink even deeper into boredom. “*I’m so bored,*” a young man said as he returned from a trip around the world on a luxury liner, a yacht, and an airplane. The North Pole and South Pole have been discovered. Admiral Byrd is the last hero from a bygone age of discovery, an era whose romance and mystery has long been lost. His romanticism spread out in every direction. Now he hands out trophies and prizes at beauty contests. Cook’s<sup>297</sup> tourists are camping deep in the heart of Africa. There are no more worlds to conquer.

But what is even worse is that *twenty million unemployed people do not know what to do with their time.* The days spread out before them in frightening, demoralizing dreariness. *Tsunamis of boredom came crashing down over America.* Wave after wave of boredom inundated the entire country, and not even America’s twenty-five million cars, thousands of airplanes, motorboats, yachts, radios, Aphrodisian bathrooms, and palatial warehouse stores could stop the boredom that downed its citizens. The Swedes eventually awarded Sinclair Lewis<sup>298</sup> with a Nobel Prize for Literature, a move of great wisdom. Ten years ago he laid his hands in the hidden wounds of our civilization as he published his book, “*Main Street.*” When they read it, Americans clapped with loud applause. *It is just like that, isn’t it? He said it so well!* But what he captured with the book was *America’s boredom.*

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<sup>297</sup> Thomas Cook 1808-1892, founder of the Thomas Cook Group travel agency.

<sup>298</sup> Harry Sinclair Lewis, 1885-1951. American Novelist, short-story writer, and playwright. The first American to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Wait, I think I hear someone objecting: “Women are so fickle! Five years ago, even two years ago, you told us tales about America’s mighty abundance!”

That is correct. And even today I could still go on and on about this abundance. The fullness and richness are still there, enchanting and stimulating. *New York has been so busy building that it still has to grow into its armies of skyscrapers.* America’s scholars and artists did not abandon their work so that they could put food on the table. They gave up their passions and chained themselves to the galley of commerce because they wanted bigger mansions and more exotic vacations. At first they felt triumph and joy, but those sensations lasted but a moment, because a house was quickly built on the other side of the street that cost more. So they had no choice but to keep up with the Joneses. And why not? What else was there to do?

#### The Eroticism of Earning Money

In the shadow of the high rises of Fifth Avenue I asked a brilliant man: “America’s best minds are building higher and higher, making more and more millions of dollars that they have no idea how to spend. To what end? What for?” And the brilliant man said, “Don’t you know? *These towers were built by boredom.*” He could just as easily have said that fantasy must spread up and out into the air in order to expand, because there is no way for it to achieve any depth. “*Earning money is an erotic affair for a man,*” one American business writer wrote. You could not say that sentence without the European Sigmund *Freud*, but it gets to the heart of a very American problem. Because around here, any energy that might have to do with emotions is quickly diverted into business. Only emptiness remains. By advancing sober-mindedness and making everything cerebral, they have banished any kind of mystery. The rampant American doctrines of production, technology, and “living-

above-your means” have depleted the country’s emotional reserves. But emotions provide the one true creative aspect in life. In “The Magic Mountain”<sup>299</sup> Thomas Mann states that man is godlike only as long as he can still feel. But the man of today is like an architect who can no longer see the solid ground from the top of his tower. He cannot find his way to the base of his creation.

But the common folk are closer to the earth. The average man and woman have tried to get in touch with their feelings by seeking after thrills, which popular psychologists would call “*avenues of escape*.” In place of their former national hero, the successful captain of industry who could no longer control his own fantasy, they worship figures from the mercenary world of mass culture, heroes who have nothing to do with I.Q. tests and business plans. The common man and woman worshipped romance and love, which still, in spite of Marlene’s<sup>300</sup> legs, remained pure in their eyes. They fell head over heels for writers who knew how to find the perfect mixture of strength and syrupy sweetness. They made these authors wildly popular. In the twenty years of his career as an author, Zane Grey<sup>301</sup> sold 11,288,399 copies of his novels. Harold Bell Wright<sup>302</sup> in all of his kitsch is only somewhat behind Zane Grey in terms of his sales because his books were not as widely translated. And those people who did not get caught up in mass culture could always sit around and make fun of *prohibition*. By mentioning prohibition, we can finally get around to mentioning women. What did the women, who

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<sup>299</sup> The Magic Mountain (Der Zauberberg) 1924, Thomas Mann. Considered one of the most influential works of 20th century German literature.

<sup>300</sup> Marlene Dietrich, 1901-1922, German-American actress and singer.

<sup>301</sup> Pearl Zane Grey 1872-1939, American author best known for popular Western adventure novels.

<sup>302</sup> Harold Bell Wright 1872-1944, said to have been the first American writer to have sold a million copies of a novel and the first person to have become a millionaire by writing novels.

are so much closer to nature, do to impede the mechanization of the world? How could they endure it all?

### And the Women?

Now women are very thankful to the masculine/mechanical world for liberating them from the chains of sentimentality. To show their thanks, women have, in turn, let themselves be dominated and seduced once more by the very same technological world. They denied the accusation that one Manager made that they are just “*clock-watchers*” and not fellow temple servants to the shrine of *Business*. He said they just wanted to earn money in order to make themselves prettier. And they were correct in denying those accusations. To make sure that this accusation did not stick, the secretaries enthusiastically declared that they would dedicate themselves anew to their sole purpose in life: to write “in acknowledgement of your letter from the 11th” forty times each day. *They provided the Babbitt with a worthy feminine equivalent* and they shamed him with the radical nature of their erotic flippancy that mostly consisted of big talk. Things got pretty bad for a while. We were not far removed from the kind of complete “liberation” that you hear from Russia: Women being completely assimilated into men’s rational and technical world. The women there have taken it so far that they are not only allowed to serve as soldiers, they are required to serve! But America’s frustrated women, vaguely dissatisfied with the oppressive rationality around them, discovered the intoxicating feeling that comes out of a bottle. Alcohol revolutionized their entire inner life. “*Have a little drinkie,*” has become a slogan for the bored, blasé, and disappointed. “*It isn’t until after I have had something to drink,*” Andre Maurois<sup>303</sup> has one of his

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<sup>303</sup> Andre Maurois 1885-1967, born Emile Salomon Wilhelm Herzog, French author. He is also the author of the article that follows this one in Neue Freie Presse.

American characters say, “*that I can finally be myself.*” They do not experience the type of inebriation that Dionysus<sup>304</sup> inspires, because they drink whiskey, not wine. Either way, it still felt liberating. Alcohol released a person from the shackles of their rational boredom, blurred contours and boundaries, and enhanced their possibilities of experience. Of course they had hangovers, but they saw it as a necessary evil. A glass of whiskey makes it easier for a girl to snuggle up to a young man’s shoulder and whisper the words, “*You are wonderful.*” That same young man has manicured hands, a Ford car, and works in a factory at the assembly line. He is healthy and handsome. But Chevalier<sup>305</sup> was different... and Buddy Rogers<sup>306</sup>, too. And every once in a while, a girl just wants to be swept off her feet, for God’s sake. Why does love exist if you are not able to become twice as alive through it! *The most modern and overstimulated women in the world began to search for something wonderful.* In the sparkling rationality of the civilization that had captured her man and led him away, she mustered her strength, made the most of her assets, dressed up in the most seductive clothing, spoke with dark and titillating tones, made her eyes shimmer with yearning, filled her apartment with flowers and incense and waited for...him. She wanted to enchant him, to overpower him, to drag him back into the emotional realm. The film and theater branches called her new creation *sex appeal*. But the term is a bit of a misnomer, because the women were not intent on sex, but rather eroticism. It is what Rabindranath Tagore<sup>307</sup> calls “*shafti.*” Without women’s power of enchantment, “the creative process in society would dry up and men would be relegated to the life of a machine.”

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<sup>304</sup> Dionysus, the Greek god of the grape harvest, winemaking, wine, and epiphanies.

<sup>305</sup> Maurice Auguste Chevalier, 1888-1972, French actor, singer, entertainer, and Sprechgesang performer.

<sup>306</sup> Charles Edward “Buddy” Rogers, 1904-1999, American actor and jazz musician.

<sup>307</sup> Rabindranath Tagore 1861-1941, Bengali polymath.

But much of that is now in the recent past. Since business and the *deification of material success* have suffered some serious setbacks, maybe people will be less compelled to always be buying or selling. They may be poorer in matters of money, but they will be wealthier in terms of time. What will they do to fill up this time? What will they do to create new “*thrills*” when they can no longer live beyond their means? Perhaps the very modern *School of “a thousand Geniuses”* in California will give them some pointers from their newest education program: “*The Cultivation of Emotions.*”

## Introduction to “Dinner for Madame Secretary of Labor”<sup>308</sup>

As witness to many distinctly American events, Ann Tizia Leitich reported primarily on aspects of America that she saw as positive. In the fall of 1933, Leitich told her readers of a dinner in honor of Frances Perkins, the first female member of the president’s cabinet. Leitich describes the lavish dinner preparations and accommodations for the evenings, but that is not her focus. The dinner is in recognition of a woman reaching previously unconquered heights in America. In Leitich’s eyes, Frances Perkins is more than just a politician; Perkins is a strong and unique individual. Perkins is neither overly sentimental nor overbearingly logical. As Leitich puts it, “She combines intelligence, experience and the human warmth of temperate common sense.” It is this point that Leitich drives in forming her ideal of an accomplished woman. Perkins does not strive to fulfill “vague sentimentalities that... the American people consider to be typically feminine” nor does she try to “to show the world that she is just as knowledgeable and logical as a man.” Leitich supports the idea that women use their inherent abilities to succeed, and not try to become a stereotype, masculine or feminine.

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<sup>308</sup> Leitich, Ann Tizia. "Dinner for Madame Secretary of Labor." *Neue Freie Presse* [Vienna] 24 Sept. 1933: 26. Print.

## Dinner for Madame Secretary of Labor

by Ann Tizia Leitich

The headquarters of the Democratic Party of the State of New York hosted a dinner in honor of Mrs. - or said correctly like an American - Miss Frances Perkins. She was recently appointed as Madame Secretary of Labor. A monumental dinner like this one requires weeks of preparation. An entire floor of the party building on Madison Avenue has been buzzing like a bee hive for the last fourteen days. Typewriters rattle, secretaries in fetching outfits scurry to and fro, men with unkempt cowlicks bark orders, all of the telephones in each room rings at the same time. In all this chaos, they keep up the American practice of leaving the doors to every room wide open.

The task of providing food for the two thousand guests naturally lies in the competent hands of the Maître d' of the Commodore Hotel. For this task, he has his very own *banquet master*. That man's job is solely to arrange banquets. On several occasions, he has handled multiple banquets of a few thousand people each day, because Americans are relentlessly visiting "conventions," conferences, and meetings. The food at these banquets is never bad. The reputation of the hotel relies on that fact. But it is never really good either; that would be almost impossible with mass production on that scale. The menu is almost always the same: mock turtle soup, roasted chicken, salad, ice cream, and cake. The number of chickens that have to bite the bullet for banquets in America is immense. They even taste as if they suspected their grim fate during the course of their short chicken lives. They still have meat on their bones, but they lack any trace of that delectable chicken flavor that should have been stored in their flesh. They come nowhere near the European animals that produce such rich flavors from a carefree, individual life of living each day to its fullest.

The organization of culinary delights for the banquet does not really concern the committee, but they are concerned about other topics. The guest list must be meticulously filtered, because the dinner for the new Secretary of Labor is officially being thrown by the leading figures in politics, welfare, and labor. Among them are the representatives from the excellent women's organizations and one distinguished representative from each of the organizations where women have made significant achievements. And so there must be in attendance: a poetess, an authoress, a female composer, a female painter, a female lawyer, a female doctor, etc. The Democratic Party is very supportive of women. Members of the party even sometimes allow women the right to have an opinion that differs from that of men. With Roosevelt II and his choice of Frances Perkins, a new era has begun for men and women (even if they do not yet know it, or do not wish to know it). The only issue is that I think the two think that those two groups have yet to notice it, because they do not wish to notice it. Women have had to deal with the fallout from their wild exploits in the early years of emancipation. In America (and not only in Germany), people have had a negative reaction to women's political engagement. Anyone who utters the words "equal rights" or "matriarchy" these days is seen partially as an old fashioned person and partially as a perverse and insurrectional creature.

Of course the most important questions leading up to the dinner were: Who will be speaking, what will he (or she) speak about, and who will be seated at the two elevated tables of honor? Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt tops the list. The First Lady of the land will express her own recognition of her feminine compatriot. Frances Perkins will assume the highest position ever bestowed upon a woman in the United States. With the First Lady's approval comes the recognition of every other woman in the country.

The dinner is being held in the great ballroom in the Commodore Hotel. Two long tables of honor stand covered in garlands on the parquet floor. Between the silver and glass place settings, the evening gowns with their low-cut backs shimmer and shine. It is quite easy to notice the predominance of older women. The majority of the crowd is made up of white and grey heads. Despite the fact that they are grey and white, or perhaps because they are, they appear just as carefully styled as the few young heads. The youth is sparsely represented here. Rather than politics and the accomplishments of female energy and intelligence, the young women tend to be interested in entirely different subjects altogether. Mrs. Roosevelt arrived in the same Eleanor-blue dress that she wore at the inaugural address. She does such things inconspicuously, but most definitely on purpose. I now see Frances Perkins for the first time without a hat. Perhaps I am not alone in this. We all doubt that she feels completely comfortable here without her beloved bicorn<sup>309</sup>. Normally, she wears her hat while working and it has become a timeless distinction for her over the years. Miss Perkins had received a corsage with the most beautiful orchids from the White House as a gift from Mrs. Roosevelt. Whereas other American women are so keen on pinning orchids on themselves, Miss Perkins delicately placed them on the table with a smile.

She is a woman in her mid-forties, a typical New England woman with a clear mind. She avoids all kinds of quack remedies and she despises coquetry. On the other hand, she is really a typical woman of the Western World with her energy, her truly democratic attitude towards life, and her flexibility in assessing the conditions of given situations. Nothing about her set in stone. She possesses all this and more. She is outstandingly intelligent and has a wealth of experience in the field of social labor - that,

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<sup>309</sup> A double-pointed military hat, most famously worn by military leaders of the Napoleonic Era.

perhaps, is her greatest quality that she takes with her into her new office. That is also where she differs most greatly and most noticeably from the other women in the administration. Most of them were model students that brought practically nothing distinct or new with them.

Miss Perkins began her career as a social welfare worker and later became the chief of the newly founded Crime Prevention Bureau in New York. In fact, while she was serving in that office, she told me dreadful details concerning the dance halls in the state of New York. Afterwards, she was the labor commissioner of the state of New York. Her goal then, as now, was always to pass the law for a minimum wage and to humanize the relationship between employers and employees. Luckily, she is neither a woman who devotes herself to the vague sentimentalities that a section of the American people consider to be typically feminine, nor is she a woman that wishes to show the world that she is just as knowledgeable and logical as a man. She is also not afraid to admit that a woman is just as likely as a man to get in over her head in certain situations. She combines intelligence, experience and the human warmth of temperate common sense. And it is this specific talent of common sense that women need today more than ever, but they do not seem to have discovered it just yet. (The modern term in Germany for women's common sense has the sentimental title of "volksmütterliche Kraft"<sup>310</sup>.) Miss Perkins is campaigning for unemployment insurance these days. President Roosevelt recently proposed to gather a few hundred thousand unemployed men into camps where they would be taken care of paid a dollar a day to work on public projects. When the labor unions and a great deal of congressmen raised serious opposition to the proposal, it was she who forced the change in mentality. "Let us be realistic," she said in response

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<sup>310</sup> Roughly "ethnic maternal instinct"

to one man's objections that it was not a plan to tempt men away from their families into camps, "it would be quite good for some families if the man were to be gone for a while." Miss Perkins is regularly part of the "newsreels," or blaring weekly shows that allow important public figures to share a few words. Those who have "seen" her there have not received the right impression of her. Most people in the newsreels appear to be buffoons dressed up as intellectuals<sup>311</sup> Although public speaking is as natural to Frances Perkins as breathing is to most normal human beings, the newsreels lead one to believe she is just another buffoon. In any case, the "talkies" don't seem to capture her invigorating normalcy. She is miles away from the intellectual arrogance that most outstanding women love to parade, and we know just how devastating an effect that can have.

Miss Perkins is married and has a sixteen-year-old daughter. Her husband's last name is Wilson, not Perkins. That fact alone was cause for a big uproar in Washington. When Madame Secretary of Labor wished to sign her documents with her maiden name, as she has always done, they cringed and used the law to prohibit her from committing such an unsettling deed. She complied and remained Frances Perkins all the same. She signed the name "Wilson," but is only addressed as Miss Perkins. A fact that you could accept as a sign of sorts, if you wanted to.

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<sup>311</sup> Leitch uses the German idiom which would literally mean, "They walk around on mental stilts". This phrase was often used to describe those who attended salons, but were intellectually too inferior to properly contribute to the salon itself.

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