about the future: "I see something today that I didn't see fifty years ago: the threat of death, of oblivion, in the processes unfolding here."

Even for Scholem this admission is an unusually apocalyptic one, and its pessimism is relieved—though hardly reversed—by his repeated assertion that history has always worked in unpredictable ways, and that the survival of Judaism is for him still a "riddle." Scholem's achievement has been to elucidate aspects of that riddle and to live a life that demonstrates how a modern Jew can still contribute to that survival.

Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History
edited by Dick Wilson
(Cambridge University Press; 343 pp.; $19.95/$5.95)

Werner Cohn

One cannot help but be depressed by the failures of enlightened public opinion in the West to respond with any adequate strength to the enormity of the human rights problem in the People's Republic of China. Even Amnesty International has, to date, done next to nothing. The December, 1977, Bulletin of its Canadian section, for example, mentions hundreds of political executions in China in recent months but, as usual, buries the information among masses of appeals against right-wing governments and against the Soviet Union.

There has been concomitant failure of English-language sinology to assess the Maoist regime. As a nonsinologist, one looks at questions that, for the most part, are noncontroversial among the experts and realizes that the problem is essentially one of methodology.

The Western scholar has a hard time making sense of a culture in which he was not brought up. It is easy enough to come by bits and pieces of information ("facts"), but it is less easy to fit these into a framework that fits the pieces together. It seems that the lack of establishing such configurations has been attempted in three (sometimes overlapping) ways. For our present purpose they might be described as the xenophilous, the "normalizing," and the analytic.

The xenophilous approach, encountered in Western scholarship from time to time, is that of the enthusiast for strange new worlds. The scholar of voodoo, for example, becomes a voodoo adept (e.g., Deren). Among sinologists, the xenophilous approach—Maoist, to be more precise—is quite common. Its adepts seek to explain Chinese reality in terms of the categories, slogans, and moral certitudes of Maoist orthodoxy. This approach has its institutional framework—the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars—and readers who would like a taste of its recent productions might look at the ponderous new book by Stephen Andors.

The "normalizing" approach is in some ways the very opposite of this xenophilia. While the latter uncritically accepts the foreign and the strange, the normalizer, being more ethnocentric, insists on seeing other cultures by way of familiar categories. Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History is an outstanding example, although at points it reflects the xenophilous as well.

The normalizing approach is much more common than the xenophilous and is the dominant approach of British and American sinology. Disagreements among Chinese leaders are reported as if they were disagreements among American congressmen. For instance, no reference is usually made to the rather radically different methods of persuasion. Successes and failures of the Chinese economy are treated in the vocabulary of technical (Western) economics, with nary a mention of the huge role of forced labor. (On this, see Bao and Chelminski.) The overall impression created by this method is that contemporary China is, after all, something familiar, something quite normal.

An analytic approach, finally, is exemplified by Hannah Arendt's great book on Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia, The Origins of Totalitarianism.
Arendt insisted, first of all, that familiar categories of Western scholarship (such as "tyranny") are inadequate when applied to these new phenomena. She insisted, secondly, that the categories used by the Hitler and Stalin movements themselves (racial destiny, dialectical materialism) are equally inadequate as explanatory tools. Her own analytic armamentarium—summarized by the notion of totalitarianism—is familiar to all students of recent history. Of recent European history, that is. While critics have found it necessary to modify the notion of totalitarianism in many details (such objections are ably discussed by Schapiro), the basic approach proposed by Arendt is accepted by essentially all serious scholars in the fields of Nazi and Soviet studies. To use either a xenophilous or a normalizing approach in these areas would almost automatically, and rightly, label a writer as hopelessly naive or dangerously malicious. But analytic approaches are all but unknown in contemporary English-language sinology.

This was not always so. Two of the most influential journals that publish professional sinology—The China Quarterly in England and the U.S. Government's Problems of Communism—used analytic approaches to China until the early Sixties. The movement since then has been steadily toward a predominately "normalizing" stance. (Dick Wilson, editor of the volume under review, is also editor of The China Quarterly, which has many of the same contributors as Problems of Communism.) The only current sinology of which I am aware that consistently uses analytic approaches comes from France. An example is the excellent volume edited by Aubert.

Not all authors can be characterized as belonging to one or another of the three schools of approach. And the approaches sometimes overlap within the work of a given writer. But it is almost always possible to make an assignment to one of the three categories on the basis of how a writer handles the issue of terror and repression. The xenophilous approach simply ignores the issue; the "normalizing" approach brackets it off; the analytic view tries to come to terms with it.

The Wilson volume is devoted to an examination of the personality and role of Mao Tse-tung. The dominant tone of the various contributions is hagiographic. This is true not only for the minority of contributors who take the xenophilous view, but also for the others, whom I would classify as normalizing. Within this dominant hagiography, however, there are distinctly different attitudes toward terror. Some very brief examples illustrate the point.

Michel Oksenberg's chapter is entitled "The Political Leader." The author is a frequent contributor to Problems of Communism—for which, in fact, he wrote an admiring article (November-December, 1976) on Mao upon Mao's death. But Oksenberg does not adopt the stance of the Maoist adept. For one thing, he mentions what to Maoists is the unmentionable, namely, the book by Bao and Chełminski, which gives a detailed account of the huge forced labor system and its attendant terror. The citation of Bao and Chełminski, however, is in a hagiographic context. It is used to illustrate Oksenberg's point that "even prisoners revered the chairman." Thus the terror is made to fit into a more-or-less normal mold. The reference to Bao and Chełminski, moreover, protects Oksenberg from being accused of Maoism.

Mentioned by Werner Cohn

*Regards Froids Sura Cheine*, edited by Claude Aubert et al. (1976).

Two pages later Oksenberg offers a striking example of the normalizing method. Speaking of attitudes within Communist Chinese officialdom, he remarks: "Unfortunately, the necessary survey data is unavailable...." The reader is not informed that the survey methods of Western social scientists are entirely unthinkable in the totalitarian context. (On this point, see Whyte, Vogel, and Parish.) Again, the terror and censorship are implicitly acknowleded but are also bracketed off. As a result, the regime may appear normal to the Western reader; after all, are we not accustomed to finding survey data frequently "unavailable" in our own countries?

The contribution by John Gittings, "The Statesman," is of a somewhat different order than the rest. There is some criticism, from a Marxist point of view, of Mao. No mention whatever is made of the terror. I would rate this chapter as predominantly xenophilous, since it uses the categories and value judgments of orthodox Marxism-Leninism.

The more extreme example of xenophilia, however, is Edward Friedman's chapter, "The Innovator." His hagiography is unabashed: "...Mao was almost invariably responding in a uniquely creative and profoundly ethical way to deep political crises....Mao by the example of his struggle communicates the vigour of hope, the viability of possibility, the vision of justice." And, of course, it gives no hint of the repression, of the forced labor, of the mass executions. But for its use of idiomatic American English it could have appeared in the *Peking Review*.

Wilson's introduction, the interesting article on economic development by Christopher Howe and Kenneth R. Walker, and other contributions leave no doubt of this volume's dominantly normalizing tone. Students of mainland China will find the book useful; much of what can be known by Westerners about contemporary China is in some way alluded to. But the information given and the facts presented do not add up to a coherent picture of the workings of Chinese society. What is missing, quite simply, is analysis.

There is something engaging about Professor Oksenberg's regret that "unfortunately, the necessary survey data is unavailable..." It reminds one of the story, possibly apocryphal, of the good American liberal who insisted on wiring his congratulations to Stalin upon the latter's astounding victory at the polls. But finally that sort of behavior is less engaging or innocent than it is disingenuous.

One cannot know all the reasons for the shift in the American academic establishment from an analytic to (let us call it by its right name) a disingenuous approach toward China. *Problems of Communism* is published under official
U.S. Government auspices. Would it be too daring to speculate that the anti-Russian preoccupations of both Washington and Peking (John Gittings speaks in this book of Mao’s “anti-Soviet passion”) have something to do with the reluctance in official American circles to address the human rights problem in the People’s Republic? Why the enlightened British and American public refuses to face the Chinese Gulag is even more difficult to understand. No doubt there is some relationship between what enlightened people hold to be true and what the academic community offers them by way of intellectual fare.

There are some small signs, here and there and perhaps isolated, but striking nonetheless, of a shift in attitudes among some North American intellectuals. The popular book by Simon Leys, Chinese Shadows, [reviewed in the March issue of Worldview—Eds.] emphasizes some of the darker aspects of the Maoist regime and has been well received. (The New York Review of Books saw fit to publish large chunks from it.) Amnesty International has actually done somewhat more in recent months than it did in several preceding years: It has mentioned that there is a human rights problem in China. And the current wave of political executions has been fairly widely reported in the press from it. Amnesty International has actually done somewhat more in recent years: It has mentioned that there is a human rights problem in China. While the book is of primary interest to historians and political scientists, certain of its essays will have a broader appeal to citizens accustomed to thoughtful reflection on the fundamental justice of American society.

Chief among these is the volume’s closing essay, “Slavery and the Moral Foundations of the American Republic” by Herbert J. Storing. Here Storing brushes aside the common criticism that the concessions to slavery in the Constitution compromised the principles of the Declaration of Independence. Instead he makes a disturbingly persuasive argument that slavery represented the ultimate logic of the ethic of self-preservation that undergirds the Declaration. Storing’s essay keeps us from condemning the Founding Fathers as racist opportunists who struck “a pact with Satan”—as the abolitionists used to say—and urges us to examine the morally destructive potential of the individualism we share so proudly with our forebears.

Another essay of broad appeal is “Ethics and Politics: The American Way” by Martin Diamond. Diamond defines ethics in the classical sense of concern with character and examines the American political order to see if there is any concern with producing a certain form of human excellence. It finds it, fascinatingly, in the commercial spirit, which fosters not mere avrice, a vice, but acquisitiveness, a complex quality capable of generating “low but solid” virtues.

Throughout this book the reader will find moral reflections on the fundamental principles of the American Regime that are always informed and serious and at times profound and troubling.

—John A. Rohr

**Contribution**

**David Stern** is a Junior Fellow of the Society of Fellows at Harvard University.

**Werner Cohn** is Professor of Sociology at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

**John A. Rohr** (Briefly Noted) teaches political science at Governors State University, Illinois.

### Briefly Noted

**The Moral Foundations of the American Republic**
ed. by Robert H. Horwitz

(University of Virginia Press; 242 pp.; $15.00/$2.95)

This volume is one in the Public Affairs Series sponsored by the Public Affairs Forum at Kenyon College. It presents ten academic papers on the moral dimensions of the founding period of the American Republic. While the book is of primary interest to historians and political scientists, certain of its essays will have a broader appeal to citizens accustomed to thoughtful reflection on the fundamental justice of American society.

Chief among these is the volume’s closing essay, “Slavery and the Moral Foundations of the American Republic” by Herbert J. Storing. Here Storing brushes aside the common criticism that the concessions to slavery in the Constitution compromised the principles of the Declaration of Independence. Instead he makes a disturbingly persuasive argument that slavery represented the ultimate logic of the ethic of self-preservation that undergirds the Declaration. Storing’s essay keeps us from condemning the Founding Fathers as racist opportunists who struck “a pact with Satan”—as the abolitionists used to say—and urges us to examine the morally destructive potential of the individualism we share so proudly with our forebears.

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**In 1973 Fr. Dmitrii Dudko, a parish priest in Moscow, began this series of question-and-answer sermons as a “dialogue with the faithful.” So unusual was Dudko’s approach and so bold were his replies that the small church was soon filled to overflowing—until the inevitable state pressure removed Dudko from his parish. “Fr. Dudko’s sermons...leap the barrier of distance and strangeness of background. Even a reader who knows nothing at all of Russia and the Orthodox Church will find himself saying, ‘Now there’s a man with whom I’d go to the gates of hell.’” —Michael Bourdeaux, The Church Times

Those who have read this extraordinary document can be confident that somewhere in Russia today is a priest struggling to find the appropriate way to do what he must do, to preach the Gospel.” Richard J. Neuhaus, Worldview


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**Taking Rights Seriously**

by Ronald Dworkin

(Harvard University Press; 290 pp.; $12.00)

Most of these essays by H.L.A. Hart’s successor at Oxford were written during the past decade, several of them appearing in The New York Review of Books. Thus they deal with such controverted issues as conscientious objection to war, civil disobedience, protest demonstrations, and the beginning phases of the “affirmative discrimination” debate. The connecting argument is far from dated, however. Dworkin wants to challenge the “ruling theory” of law as it appears in positivism and Benthamite utilitarianism, and as it was advanced by his predecessor Hart. In this effort Dworkin makes large use of John Rawls’s notions of equality, thus tying into what is on its way to becoming a new “ruling theory.” While most of the
positions espoused by the author would likely be classified as "liberal," at the heart of his enterprise is an intuition that is shared by many "conservatives"—namely, that rights, and the law's ability to be right on rights, are linked to a mythical, perhaps ontological, understanding of reality itself. Dworkin is much more at ease with legal theory than with mythical, perhaps ontological, understanding relevant to moral discourse. Nonetheless, Taking Rights Seriously should be taken very seriously indeed, especially as the subject of human rights comes to the forefront in foreign policy thinking. Dworkin can help protect us from the danger that the new human rights emphasis will be viewed as a strategic gambit or metaphor for renewed cold war. The subject of rights, Dworkin argues persuasively, is at the foundation of our understanding of history, society, government, neighbor, and self.

Young Reinhold Niebuhr: His Early Writings—1911-1931
ed. by William G. Chrystal
(Eden Publishing House [St. Louis]; 250 pp.; $12.95)

Niebuhr was almost certainly the most politically influential religious thinker of his day, and students of his career will be grateful for this volume, which makes readily available the essays, sermons, and lectures by which his development can be traced. There are pitfalls here, such as Niebuhr's enthusiasm for the Wandervogel, the German youth movement that he was confident "augurs well for the future of the nation" but turned out to be the vanguard of Nazism. John Murray Cuddihy's recent critique of Niebuhr in No Offense: Civil Religion and Protestant Taste as one who was a snob at heart and was too eager to overcome the "provincialism" of his German Evangelical background receives considerable support from these documents, if that is the kind of argument one wants to make. But chiefly these writings are both complementary and complimentary to the later Niebuhr. He comes across as a young man of extraordinary intelligence, wide-ranging interests, and indomitable desire to relate religious insight to the world of his time and ours.

Reader's Response
(from page 2)

know that there are civilians within the scope of lethal effects, not who or where they are, in order to know that the circle of destruction should be drawn as close to the legitimate military target as possible. I, therefore, intimated in the same issue of Worldview ("Consider the Morning Glory") that the neutron bomb is a weapon that could be used to enhance discrimination in a possible future war.

Johnson's real target at this point is the lexical priority of judgments about discrimination over judgments of proportion. He later writes that the principle of discrimination, when based on charity, "requires an absolute distinction between combatant and noncombatant." Here the word "absolute"—as before the word "distinguished"—covers a confusion. Whether one believes that the principle of discrimination states a requirement of natural or common justice or believes (as I do) that discrimination in just war traditions is a derivative of justice illuminated by charity, is not at issue. That principle, in either case, requires that the wanted and the unwanted effects be simultaneous or immediate. To say this in no way diminishes the moral importance of taking long-range effects into account. To assume, as Johnson does, that civilizational effects are given proper weight if and only if primacy is ascribed to the principle of proportion is to beg a question that has to be proved. It is also unjust intellectual combat to obtain that easy victory by sending out—as a decoy to distract attention—a quite misleading

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