

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

TCLC

261

Volume 261

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

**Criticism of the
Works of Novelists, Poets, Playwrights,
Short Story Writers, and Other Creative Writers
Who Lived between 1900 and 1999,
from the First Published Critical
Appraisals to Current Evaluations**



**Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism, Vol.
261**

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Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

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Preface

Since its inception *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (TCLC) has been purchased and used by some 10,000 school, public, and college or university libraries. TCLC has covered more than 1000 authors, representing over 60 nationalities and nearly 50,000 titles. No other reference source has surveyed the critical response to twentieth-century authors and literature as thoroughly as TCLC. In the words of one reviewer, “there is nothing comparable available.” TCLC “is a gold mine of information—dates, pseudonyms, biographical information, and criticism from books and periodicals—which many librarians would have difficulty assembling on their own.”

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TCLC is designed to serve as an introduction to authors who died between 1900 and 1999 and to the most significant interpretations of these author's works. Volumes published from 1978 through 1999 included authors who died between 1900 and 1960. The great poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, and philosophers of the period are frequently studied in high school and college literature courses. In organizing and reprinting the vast amount of critical material written on these authors, TCLC helps students develop valuable insight into literary history, promotes a better understanding of the texts, and sparks ideas for papers and assignments. Each entry in TCLC presents a comprehensive survey on an author's career or an individual work of literature and provides the user with a multiplicity of interpretations and assessments. Such variety allows students to pursue their own interests; furthermore, it fosters an awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

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TCLC is designed as a companion series to Gale's *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, (CLC) which reprints commentary on authors who died after 1999. Because of the different time periods under consideration, there is no duplication of material between CLC and TCLC.

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- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose

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- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism. Source citations in the Literary Criticism Series follow University of Chicago Press style, as outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Gale.

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An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *TCLC*. Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Gale also produces a paperbound edition of the *TCLC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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C. Day Lewis

1904-1972

(Born Cecil Day-Lewis; also wrote under pseudonym Nicholas Blake) English poet, novelist, critic, essayist, playwright, autobiographer, and translator.

The following entry provides an overview of Day Lewis's life and works. For additional information on his career, see *CLC*, Volumes 1, 6, and 10.

INTRODUCTION

Day Lewis is often remembered as one of Britain's leading poets of the 1930s and a principal member of the so-called Auden Group of writers, which included, in addition to Day Lewis, W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, and Louis MacNiece. For literary historians, perhaps more than critics, he is also remembered as the Poet Laureate of England from 1968 to 1972. During the turbulent years leading up to World War II, Day Lewis produced a number of significant volumes of verse, including *Transitional Poem* (1929), *From Feathers to Iron* (1932), and *The Magnetic Mountain* (1933), which reflect his left-wing political ideology and preoccupation with social themes. While his early poems treat subjects related to birth, death, the conflict between old and new world orders, and the harsh realities of modern existence, the author increasingly explored personal themes in his later work, which he expressed through more traditional verse. In addition to poetry, Day Lewis produced fiction under the pseudonym Nicholas Blake, eventually establishing a reputation as one of England's most popular and well-regarded detective novelists. While Day Lewis's reputation has waned since World War II, he remains, for some scholars, a significant figure of early twentieth-century British literature, respected for his craftsmanship and lyric virtuosity. Writing in 1977, Ian Parsons remarked that Day Lewis's skills "often enabled him to say rather complicated things with admirable precision, and to convey moods and feelings of much subtlety with an enviable discrimination."

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Day Lewis was born April 27, 1904, in Ballintubber, Ireland, to Kathleen Blake and Frank Cecil Day-Lewis, a minister of the Church of Ireland. After the family moved to England in 1908, Day Lewis's mother died,

leaving him in the care of his father and a maiden aunt. He was educated at home until the age of eight and then studied at Wilkie's in London and Sherborne School in Dorset. In 1923, Day Lewis was admitted to Wadham College, Oxford, where he met Rex Warner and W. H. Auden and was drawn into the postwar social idealism of Marxism. While still an undergraduate, Day Lewis self-published his first volume of poems, *Beechen Vigil, and Other Poems* (1925), followed by *Country Comets* in 1928. After graduating, the author taught for several years, holding posts at the Summer Fields School in Oxford and the Larchfield School at Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, as well as at the Cheltenham Junior School in Gloucestershire, where he remained until 1935. In 1927, Day Lewis officially dropped the hyphen from his last name, as a gesture of "inverted snobbery," and the following year married his first wife, Mary King. Their marriage ended in divorce in 1951, after which he married Jill Balcon, an actress.

During the 1930s, Day Lewis continued to write poetry and published one of his best-known collections, *From Feathers to Iron*. The author also began writing criticism and detective novels, the first of which, *A Question of Proof*, was published in 1935 under the pseudonym Nicholas Blake. His fiction was a success, enabling him to quit teaching and devote himself to writing full time. In all, Day Lewis wrote more than twenty novels in the detective genre during his career. Although he was a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain from 1935 to 1938, Day Lewis's affiliation with Marxism diminished greatly by the end of the decade. During the late 1930s and 1940s, the author continued to produce numerous volumes of poetry, as well as detective fiction, essays, criticism, and three traditional novels under his own name. In 1951, he was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford, where he served until 1956. In 1954, the author also worked as a director in the publishing firm Chatto and Windus. In the years that followed, Day Lewis received numerous accolades, including honorary degrees from the Universities of Exeter and Hull and Trinity College, in Dublin. Between 1964 and 1965, he also served as the Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard. His autobiography, *The Buried Day*, was published in 1960. In 1968, Day Lewis was appointed the Poet Laureate of England, a post he held until his death. In the final years of his life, the author maintained a demanding schedule, which included meetings, readings, broadcasts, and award presentations, and continued to produce fiction and poetry. His

health grew progressively weaker, however, as he suffered from high blood pressure, diabetes, and finally cancer. After passing into a coma, Day Lewis died on May 22, 1972.

MAJOR WORKS

Day Lewis's literary reputation rests, for the most part, on several volumes of poetry written during the early twentieth century. *Transitional Poem*, his first distinctive collection of verse, is comprised of a lyric sequence divided into four parts and explores the concept of the pursuit of wholeness from various perspectives. Generally considered a more mature work than Day Lewis's previous two volumes, *Transitional Poem* marks the progress of the author's attempt to reconcile ambition, love, desire, knowledge, and attachment to the natural world with the realities of modern existence. The collection combines modern, urban, and scientific imagery with elements taken from traditional romantic verse, which, for many scholars, is the work's most innovative characteristic. Day Lewis's next volume of poetry, *From Feathers to Iron*, was inspired by the birth of his first son. It is a lyrical sequence of meditative poems, many of which are addressed to the poet's wife or unborn child. The first four lyrics introduce the metaphor of the journey, which is applied to the union of the parents, as well as the child's journey toward birth. As the sequence progresses, the poet contemplates the contrast between the "feathery" world of the womb and the "iron" world to which his son will be born. For some critics, the collection also reflects Day Lewis's political leanings, particularly his commitment to ideas that could reform the world order and bring about rebirth. In another early collection of verse, *A Time to Dance, and Other Poems* (1935), Day Lewis sought to reconcile proletarian politics with romanticism. Many of the poems in the volume, including "In Me Two Worlds," "The Conflict," and "Johnny Head-in-the-Air," depict the conflict for the poet between the claims of the past and the claims of the future. The latter poem, written in ballad form, presents the image of a crossroads, where to the right resides a beautiful but dying land and to the left a harder road that leads to a better world. The title poem of the collection, an elegy for Day Lewis's friend, L. P. Hedges, connects the poet's grief with his anger regarding the hypocrisies and corruption of society. The author's personal concerns and political commitments are also combined in *Overtures to Death, and Other Poems* (1938), which contain poems written in response to the rise of fascism in Europe. Among his most effective political poems, "The Bombers" and "Newsreel" warn of death and destruction in impending war. Another poem in the collection, "The Nabara," a narrative of a sea battle during the Spanish Civil War, treats the

theme of heroic self-sacrifice. Following World War II, Day Lewis largely abandoned the political themes that dominated his earlier poetic works, focusing instead on personal themes and memories, particularly in his last volume of verse, *The Whispering Roots, and Other Poems* (1970).

Under the pseudonym Nicholas Blake, Day Lewis also achieved success in the popular detective fiction genre. For the most part, the Blake novels feature a recurring detective-protagonist named Nigel Strangeways, who is generally believed to be modeled after the author's friend and fellow-poet, W. H. Auden. A likeable and ordinary figure, Strangeways has an affinity for puns, mixed metaphors, and literary allusions, and is a master of reasoning, basing his deductions on the psychology of the people involved in his cases. Day Lewis introduced Strangeways in his first detective novel, *A Question of Proof*, which involves the murder of a boy at a preparatory school. One of his most respected detective novels, *The Beast Must Die* (1938), centers on the story of Felix Lane, a detective novelist who unsuccessfully plots to murder the hit-and-run driver that killed his son. When the driver is murdered by someone else, Strangeways is called in to investigate, along with Georgia Cavendish, a famous female explorer that the detective married in an earlier novel. *Minute for Murder* (1947), generally considered Day Lewis's masterpiece in the detective fiction genre, is inspired by the author's experiences working in the Ministry of Information during World War II. The novel takes place in the Visual Propaganda Division of the Ministry of Morale, between the defeats of Germany and Japan, and revolves around the murder of the director's secretary-mistress, who is poisoned in the presence of eight people, including Strangeways. While trying to determine the identity of the murderer, Strangeways is also mourning the death of his wife, Georgia, who was killed in the German blitz. Day Lewis also drew from his own experience for the setting of *End of Chapter* (1957), which takes place in a publishing firm not unlike Chatto and Windus. In this work, Strangeways investigates the murder of an unlikable popular writer, Millicent Miles, and develops a sympathy for the killer, who ultimately commits suicide. Day Lewis also wrote several popular novels without Strangeways, including his last work as Nicholas Blake, *The Private Wound* (1968). One of the author's most autobiographical novels, *The Private Wound* revolves around a passionate love affair recounted by Anglo-Irish writer Dominic Eyre, although the author also explores issues related to Irish politics, religion, and culture in the novel. As some scholars have noted, Day Lewis's background in poetry is evidenced in his fiction. In addition to literary allusions, leitmotifs, and arresting figures of speech, he experimented with point-of-view and narrative structure, and often presented non-linear time sequences in his detective works.

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Although Day Lewis began publishing poetry in the early 1920s, it was not until 1929, when Virginia and Leonard Woolf at Hogarth Press published *Transitional Poem*, that the author drew significant critical notice. Thereafter, he was increasingly regarded as an important new voice of radical poetics, drawing attention and praise with such politically themed collections as *From Feathers to Iron* and *The Magnetic Mountain*. Day Lewis's verse was often favorably compared with Auden's poetry, and it was during this time that he came to be regarded as a leading member of the Auden Group. While the author had earned the respect of critics for his poetry, his achievements did not result in financial independence. Instead, it was his detective fiction, beginning with the novel *A Question of Proof*, that first brought Day Lewis popularity and financial success. He was able to repeat this success throughout his career, and as Nicholas Blake became one of England's most admired detective novelists. While esteem for Day Lewis's novels was on the rise, respect for his poetry reached its pinnacle during the years before World War II, especially after the publication of his *Collected Poems, 1929-1933* (1935) and *A Time to Dance, and Other Poems*. After the war, Day Lewis's reputation waned, however, particularly among younger poets and literary critics. While some detractors described his work as imitative, others reacted against the shift towards romantic and traditional forms and themes that characterized his later verse. Nevertheless, Day Lewis increasingly received academic laurels and official accolades during the postwar years, the culmination of which was his appointment to the position of Poet Laureate of England in 1968.

In the years since his death, critical interest in Day Lewis has continued to decline, although a few scholars have persisted in their study of his work. A number of commentators, including Earl F. Bargainnier, MaryKay Mahoney, and Mary P. Freier, have concentrated on the author's detective fiction. While Freier studied Day Lewis's evolution as a detective novelist, Bargainnier emphasized the "lyric quality" of his novels and claimed that in current critical circles, his "position as a novelist of mystery fiction is as high in that genre as his position among twentieth-century English poets." Other commentators, such as Walter Nash and Eavan Boland, have revisited Day Lewis's poetic achievements during his career. In his 1993 study, Nash focused on the poet's often-overlooked later verse, while Boland, writing in 1998, addressed the question of Day Lewis's artistic merit, concluding that his "was a tender, unsavage, lyrical sensibility, stranded outside the courts and centuries and systems of faith where they might have prospered." Albert Gelpi and Bernard O'Donoghue probed the reasons for Day Lewis's critical neglect in recent years.

While Gelpi noted that Auden's success may have contributed to the marginalization of his contemporaries, including Day Lewis, O'Donoghue cited a "general bias against political writing" that has prevailed since the modernist period as a reason for the author's decline. Although today Day Lewis is generally regarded as a minor poet of the early twentieth century, for some scholars his various accomplishments deserve more lasting recognition. According to these critics, he is an important figure of modern British literature, whose vision and craftsmanship set him apart from other, more successful writers of the period. Gelpi, writing in 1998, praised Day Lewis's skill, as well as his ability to infuse "formal verse with the cadences of contemporary speech and the fractures of modern life," concluding that he is "a poet who belongs in the pantheon of modern poets."

 PRINCIPAL WORKS

- Beechen Vigil, and Other Poems* (poetry) 1925
- Country Comets* (poetry) 1928
- Transitional Poem* (poetry) 1929
- From Feathers to Iron* (poetry) 1932
- Dick Willoughby* (juvenile fiction) 1933
- The Magnetic Mountain* (poetry) 1933
- A Hope for Poetry* (criticism) 1934
- Collected Poems, 1929-1933* (poetry) 1935
- A Question of Proof* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1935
- Revolution in Writing* (essay) 1935
- A Time to Dance, and Other Poems* (poetry) 1935
- The Friendly Tree* (novel) 1936
- Noah and the Waters* (play) 1936
- Shell of Death* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1936; also published as *Thou Shell of Death*, 1936
- Starting Point* (novel) 1937
- There's Trouble Brewing* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1937
- The Beast Must Die* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1938
- *Overtures to Death, and Other Poems* (poetry) 1938
- Child of Misfortune* (novel) 1939
- The Smiler with the Knife* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1939
- Poems in Wartime* (poetry) 1940
- Selected Poems* (poetry) 1940
- The Summer Camp Mystery* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1940; also published as *Malice in Wonderland*, 1940
- The Corpse in the Snowman* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1941; also published as *The Case of the Abominable Snowman*, 1941
- *Word Over All* (poetry) 1943
- The Colloquial Element in English Poetry* (criticism) 1947
- Minute for Murder* [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1947
- The Poetic Image* (criticism) 1947

Collected Poems, 1929-1936 (poetry) 1948
Poems, 1943-1947 (poetry) 1948
Head of a Traveler [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1949
The Poet's Task (criticism) 1951
The Grand Manner (criticism) 1952
The Dreadful Hollow [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1953
An Italian Visit (poetry) 1953
The Lyrical Poetry of Thomas Hardy (criticism) 1953
Christmas Eve (poetry) 1954
Collected Poems (poetry) 1954
Notable Images of Virtue: Emily Bronte, George Meredith, W. B. Yeats (criticism) 1954
The Whisper in the Gloom [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1954
A Tangled Web [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1956
End of Chapter [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1957
The Newborn: D. M. B., 29th April, 1957 (poetry) 1957
Pegasus, and Other Poems (poetry) 1957
A Penknife in My Heart [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1958
The Widow's Cruise [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1959
The Buried Day (autobiography) 1960
A Book of English Lyrics (poetry) 1961
The Worm of Death [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1961
The Gate, and Other Poems (poetry) 1962
The Deadly Joker [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1963
On Not Saying Anything (poetry) 1964
Requiem for the Living (poetry) 1964
The Sad Variety [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1964
The Lyric Impulse (lectures) 1965
A Marriage Song for Albert and Barbara (poetry) 1965
The Room, and Other Poems (poetry) 1965
The Morning after Death [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1966
The Nicholas Blake Omnibus [as Nicholas Blake] (novels) 1966
The Abbey That Refused to Die (poetry) 1967
Selected Poems (poetry) 1967
Selections from His Poetry (poetry) 1967
The Private Wound [as Nicholas Blake] (novel) 1968
On Translating Poetry (lecture) 1970
The Poems of C. Day Lewis (poetry) 1970
The Whispering Roots, and Other Poems (poetry) 1970
The Complete Poems of C. Day Lewis (poetry) 1992

*These works were published together as *Short Is the Time Poems, 1936-1943* in 1945

CRITICISM

James G. Southworth (essay date October-December 1937)

SOURCE: Southworth, James G. "Cecil Day Lewis." *Sewanee Review* 45, no. 4 (October-December 1937): 469-83.

[In the following essay, Southworth assesses Day Lewis's poetic career, concluding that while his "politi-

cal ideology is frequently naïve," a few of his "love poems and several nature poems impregnated with revolutionary ideas" will "undoubtedly find a permanent place in our literature."]

Interesting as are the revolutionary aspects of Mr. Day Lewis's poetry, even more so is the story of their genesis and evolution. In the final analysis the value of his work will lie in the manner in which he tells that story; not in the political conclusions at which he arrived. His political ideology is frequently naïve; not so are those of love, beauty, and ambition. More important than his ideas, however, are the rich and diverse borrowings from nature for the illumination of his ideas. His is the predicament of a man standing between two worlds torn by his loyalties to each. Because he so deeply loves the best qualities of his natural heritage he will support a revolution in order that all may share the joys of that heritage.

His revolution of society aims at the liberation of the English underdog and a reduction of the excessive privileges of the aristocracy. Every class must have equal opportunities. Lawrence pounded at this idea in *Last Poems*. Before Lawrence others had put forward the same idea both in poetry and prose. To-day the subject is the common property of the group of poets of which Mr. Day Lewis is a member.

Progress has been made, but the conditions existing a century ago seemed no worse to the men of that day than do those of today seem to men like Mr. Day Lewis. Fulke Greville, himself a member of the privileged class, has given us a picture of English society that is still essentially true today. He wrote in 1829:

Poverty and vice and misery must always be found in a community like ours, but such frightful contrasts between the excess of luxury and splendor and these scenes of starvation and brutality ought not to be possible, but I am afraid there is more vice, more misery and penury in this country than in any other, and at the same time greater wealth. The contrasts are too striking, and such an unnatural, artificial, and unjust state of things neither can nor ought to be permanent. I am convinced that before many years elapse these things will produce some great convulsion.

'Convulsion' is too emotional a word to describe the great social changes that have already taken place; 'mutations' would be better. It is, however, the word that Mr. Day Lewis and his friends use to describe the means by which the social amelioration of the underprivileged for which they are working will be accomplished. The evolution of Mr. Day Lewis's awareness of the necessity for change, the statement of his aims, and the processes by which those aims may be accomplished are the subject-matter of his poetry.

He enunciates his general principles in *Transitional Poem*, gives frequent concrete examples of them in *From Feathers to Iron*, the poem dealing with the birth

of his son, elaborates his ideas in *The Magnetic Mountain*, adds significant details in some shorter poems of the volume *A Time to Dance*, attempts a symphonic synthesis of them in the title poem, "A Time to Dance," and re-states them in the idiom of the morality play in *Noah and the Waters*.¹ Since *The Magnetic Mountain* Mr. Day Lewis has done little except (by a re-statement of his ideas in different forms) to solidify his position.

The poet traces his emergence from the period of adolescent emotional pessimism to the period of sound thinking. It is the story of a thoughtful youth. No metamorphosis occurred. Because he possessed the lively sensibility of the poet, the change was more marked in him than in the average boy; but it was the result of normal processes—of the impact of four persons on a sensitive mind. A girl, by changing his lust to love, increased his comprehension; a philosopher, by teaching him dialectic, clarified his thinking and strengthened his reasoning powers; a harlot broadened his understanding of man; and a poet taught him that truths frequently result from inspiration. The result was, of course, inevitable. Discontent and ambition forced him out of himself to seek from a close contact with reality the underlying unity and harmony of the universe. His experiences, by leading him to probe the nature and power of desire, convinced him that it was the mind and not the heart that was credulous, and that only the inhabitants of the Ivory Tower (who see with the mind, not the heart) can be deluded into thinking that the deplorable social and political conditions are tolerable.

The poet, unable to find a rational explanation of the world, does not find the expanding universe made possible by science less wonderful or enthralling than the limited conception of an older generation. True wisdom or an understanding of the universe, possible only through sensuous and mystic sensation, requires a warm multiple personality disciplined by thought and expression. Truth cannot, therefore, be found in solitude. It is possible only in the "blind collisions" constantly present in city life, and then only to the person who knows every inch of the way, not only the high spots. This realization forced him to discard the traditional beliefs associated with the leisured class to which he belonged.

To strike out boldly and independently required courage, particularly in an age of "a fevered head and a cold heart" where the rulers are incapable, where those who are dissatisfied will do nothing to alleviate their dissatisfaction, and where the masses with power in their hands do not know how to be great. For his son's sake, however, he was willing to engage in the struggle for the creation of a new order, to alter the conditions under which in order to prosper a man must surrender his independence and intellectual integrity.

The task was not easy and Mr. Day Lewis communicates to us the constant struggle he waged with conflict-

ing emotional and mental loyalties. The quiet leisured life far from the conflicts between capital and labor was pleasant to him; but, believing that anyone who attempted neutrality would be crushed, that some choice was necessary, he cast his life with the workers. His sympathies and tastes inclined him to the old order; logically and intellectually he was of the new order. Reason won. It was, and is, the poet's belief that those who are fortunate in their positions in life, who have had the advantages and have also achieved great things, have lost sight of reality. They are not aware that the under-privileged workers, having received no share in the benefits, are becoming restless. Mr. Day Lewis, seeking a broadened humanity, exposes the obstacles to its achievement. He implies that a general application should be made from his own experience.

Four defendants of the traditional order impede his progress: his mother, "public school" education, formalized religion, and his wife. He acknowledges his debt to his mother for his early training, but rebels from her possessive instinct and insists that he be permitted to live his own life. Public school education is outmoded, is blind to strange or new ideas, stifles enthusiasm, and breeds a disinterested attitude toward suffering. The church has been wholly selfish in its aims; it has not championed the cause of the poor. His wife, believing that love should be enough, is unable to recognize that love is but a part of his life. The more important part, forever shut off from her, is the solitude in which his spirit struggles upwards.

Four enemies actively resist the advent of the new order: sex, the press, lack of faith, and the rejection of the active life. Man must overcome these before his spiritual nature can dominate his material one. Woman is the eternal Circe; the press "dopes" the masses and panders to their overweening love of the sensational; the systematic faith-lacking approach to religion prevents man from seeking God in nature and in the crises of life; the poet who lacks pride and a sense of power and who fails to remain in the fight (although not he but future generations reap the benefits) is as great an enemy as any.

Until Part IV of *The Magnetic Mountain* we have no positive statement of what must be done. The poet has given us with less detail than did Wordsworth in *The Prelude* an autobiographical account of his early mental and emotional development from boyhood to maturity and of his increasing awareness of the forces preventing mankind from achieving complete fulfillment. Anyone who expects a practical working plan from Mr. Day Lewis will be disappointed. He has no right to expect it.

Mr. Day Lewis is not the "hierophant of an unapprehended inspiration"; he has simply attempted a poetical treatment of the intellectual ideas made current by Ber-