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DECEMBER 1982

Assisting Stravinsky

On a misunderstood collaboration

by Robert Craft

Mikhail Druskin's *IGOR STRAVINSKY: HIS LIFE, Works, and Views*, first published in the USSR in 1974 and now in England, with a translation by Martin Cooper (Cambridge University Press), has provoked me to write a long-overdue account of the part I played in the composer's life, especially during the crisis in his development in the early 1950s, after which, until the mid-1960s, my main function was to rehearse and co-conduct his concerts and recording sessions.

Druskin impresses the reader as a fair-minded critic who has thought deeply about Stravinsky and has original insights. This said, some of the book's premises are based on erroneous assumptions that must be corrected and that compel me to cite certain historical facts that Druskin strives conscientiously, but perforce blindly, to understand and explain. He writes:

In the composer's own hallowed phrase, quoted by Craft, "[*The Rake's Progress*] was the end of a trend." After this there was an abrupt change in Stravinsky's [style]. He wrote first the *Cantata* ... and then the *Septet*, in which he experimented for the first time with the use of a series. From now onwards his whole attitude to the New Viennese School was different ... What had in fact happened? Had Schoenberg's death had such a deep effect on him? Had he in fact wished to study dodecaphonic methods earlier and been embarrassed by the existence of a rival whose death alone could liberate him from this inhibition? There is no answer to a psychological question of this kind ... The questions that Druskin raises do have answers, some of them matters of record, to which he simply had no access. It is true that Schoenberg's death affected Stravinsky, but hardly to the degree suggested here. The composer of *Sacre* had such a powerful ego that he could soon put any death behind him, even that of his beloved daughter, after whose passing he almost immediately resumed work on his Symphony in C. In this regard, he brings to mind

Conrad's line " ... [life] will close upon a sorrow like the sea upon a dead body, no matter how much love has gone to the bottom."

It is true that Stravinsky and Schoenberg had been cast in opposition for four decades. Their so-called feud seems to have begun a year after their first meeting, in Berlin, in November of 1912 (Stravinsky to Delage, December 15, 1913: " ... I refuse to understand Schönberg who sees in Maler [sic] the greatest musician of our time"), but it was most publicized during the eleven years when they were neighbors in California. They had not met again, and had glimpsed each other only a few times. Although Stravinsky had always held his counterpart in the highest esteem, he could not have felt a deep personal loss when there had not been a personal association. Druskin's description of the reaction as "mourning" is inappropriate.

[**Return to "Redeeming the Rake"**](#)

When I first entered Stravinsky's household, in 1948, he was curious about Schoenberg but hid this fact, and the name was never mentioned. Neither Sol Babitz nor Ingolf Dahl, who were among Stravinsky's closest musical associates at the time, told him of their connection with the father of twelve-tone music. Babitz had played Schoenberg's Violin Concerto in Hollywood in 1941, and managed to conceal this from Stravinsky, and Dahl was no less secretive about conducting *Pierrot Lunaire*. Why, I wondered, did these two friends of Stravinsky's, the first to whom he introduced me in California, whisper and tiptoe when I raised the subject of Schoenberg? It was not long before I discovered that the name had been *verhoterz* for years, something everyone else knew. This explained Samuel Dushkin's flustered and embarrassed manner when I ran into him in April of 1950 at a New York performance of *A Survivor from Warsaw*. Dushkin, the violinist, who had become a very close friend of Stravinsky's on tours they made together in the 1930s, knew that I would refer to the meeting when I talked to Stravinsky. What still seems incredible, however, is that Stravinsky never learned that Erich Itor Kahn, who had worked with him on the piano reduction of *Jeu de cartes*, and who was Dushkin's accompanist, belonged to the Schoenberg school.

Visitors to the Stravinsky home, including Darius Milhaud, a friend of many years, also refrained from mentioning Schoenberg to Stravinsky, though I knew from Mrs. Schoenberg that Milhaud regularly called at their house when he was in Los Angeles. Even the far-from surreptitious Otto Klemperer never pronounced the name Schoenberg to Stravinsky. One day when the eminent

conductor came to lunch, I greeted him with, underarm, a serial score I was to conduct in an Evenings-on-the-Roof concert. He grabbed the music, glanced at it, pointed to the first notes, counted aloud from one to twelve, and said to me in his stentorian voice: "Nowadays no one is doing anything else." Stravinsky overheard this but made no reference to the twelve-tone vogue. During the meal, he did not inquire about Schoenberg, probably assuming that Klemperer would be going to his house as well. When Klemperer had left, Stravinsky and I examined the score together, but its serial aspect did not interest him at all.

An incident told me by Dahl indicates that Schoenberg's followers were as cautious as Stravinsky's in mentioning the "enemy" name. One day when Dahl knocked at the Schoenberg door, Richard Hoffmann, from Vienna, a pupil and distant relative of Schoenberg's, opened it and exclaimed: "Zomeone from ze ozzer camp." I did not find the story unusual, having heard others like it. I did wonder, however, if the cold war was being fueled by disciples, especially when Schoenberg defended Stravinsky against the abuse of René Leibowitz -- a Schoenberg disciple -- and, knowing which "camp" I was in, received me so cordially. But then, Schoenberg realized that the motive for my visit was pure admiration, and some member of his family must have told him that Mrs. Stravinsky herself had driven me there and waited in the car.

Nonetheless, subordinates usually echo their masters, and in this case must have known that no love was lost between them. It is reasonable to assume that the rivals themselves were jealous of each other: Schoenberg of Stravinsky's popularity, Stravinsky of Schoenberg's mystique with the intellectual elite. I think that I alone was aware that neither composer knew anything about the other's music, having realized that each of them had been unwilling to examine his own prejudice -- Schoenberg's being that Stravinsky depended on formulas and a bag of tricks, Stravinsky's that Schoenberg was a slave to a rigid, abstract system.

When did Stravinsky begin to explore Schoenberg's music and methods? The question is important, since Mikhail Druskin hypothesizes that Schoenberg's death was the crucial factor in freeing Stravinsky to do so. To me, the Freudian interpretation of Stravinsky's *volte-face* as a case of "creative mourning ... the ego's identification with the lost object" is mistaken, another of Freud's theories being

the one that applies: relief at the death of someone perceived as a threat.

Let me recall the events of the morning of July 14, 1951. When the secretary of the Evenings-on-the-Roof concerts telephoned me with the news of Schoenberg's death during the night, Mrs. Stravinsky went to her husband's studio to inform him and came back saying that he was deeply shocked. Within a few minutes, he sent a telegram of condolence to the widow. During lunch he hardly spoke, but he resumed his work in the afternoon. Later in the day, I heard indirectly that his message had been the first to be received, and that it was greatly appreciated. Later still, a member of the Schoenberg household told me about the memorial service, hinting that Stravinsky's attendance would be a welcome gesture. Though I think he wanted to go, he did not, his sense of irony probably intervening: after the two men had avoided each other for so long, the survivor's attendance might seem insensitive.

A few nights later, when the Stravinskys and I were having dinner at the house of Mrs. Mahler-Werfel, her sculptress daughter, Anna, unexpectedly stopped by on an errand. She had Schoenberg's death mask with her, and offered to show it to Stravinsky. He expressed interest but when he saw the image was visibly upset, and must have been badly shaken. Here, a foot away, was the face of the man who had haunted his thoughts since 1912, but whom he had scarcely seen, and never at close range. Schoenberg, after all, was the one composer who challenged Stravinsky's supremacy in twentieth-century music. Furthermore, the sculptress, who had taken the impression, told Stravinsky that he was the first to see it. As a superstitious man and a believer in patterns of coincidence, he must have been struck with thoughts of his own mortality.

I have already said that Stravinsky could quickly turn his energies to new projects; he had just done so after the death of Kussevitzky, a friend since 1917 -- though it must be admitted that in this instance what most unsettled Stravinsky was the harassment of reporters requesting statements. He was not asked for any tribute to Schoenberg, however, for which reason I wrote one (for the *Saturday Review*). Schoenberg's death receded rapidly in Stravinsky's mind as he prepared to leave for Europe two weeks later.

In September, in Venice, *The Rake's Progress* was regarded by most critics as the work of a master but also a throwback, the last flowering of a genre. After the

premiere, conducting concerts in Italy and Germany, Stravinsky found that he and Schoenberg were everywhere categorized as the reactionary and the progressive. What was worse, Stravinsky was acutely aware that the new generation was not interested in *The Rake*. While in Cologne, he heard tapes of Schoenberg's Violin Concerto (played by Tibor Varga) and of the Darmstadt performance of "The Golden Calf" (from *Moses and Aaron*); he listened attentively to both, expressing no reaction. (In an interview in Seattle not long after, Stravinsky said that the endless quality of atonality" was "repulsive" to him.) In contrast, a few days later, in Baden-Baden, when a recording of Webern's orchestra Variations was played for him, he asked to hear it three times in succession and showed more enthusiasm than I had ever seen from him about any contemporary music. In Rome, Stravinsky learned that even his future biographer Roman Vlad wrote twelve-tone music, and that Luigi Dallapiccola, a Schoenberg follower, had become Italy's most esteemed composer.

Back in the United States, Stravinsky was preoccupied with the Metropolitan Opera's plans to produce *The Rake's Progress* and with conducting the New York City Ballet. Schoenberg and Webern were momentarily set aside. Then, on February 24, 1952, at the University of Southern California, I conducted a performance of Schoenberg's Septet-suite, with Stravinsky present at all the rehearsals as well as the concert. This event was the turning point in his later musical evolution.

A week later, he asked to go for a drive to Palmdale, at that time a small Mojave Desert town, where the Stravinskys liked to eat spareribs and drink Bordeaux from thermos bottles in a cowboy-style restaurant. On the way home, he startled us, saying that he was afraid that he could no longer compose and he did not know what to do. For a moment he broke down and actually wept, whereupon Mrs. Stravinsky convinced him that these feelings and the musical problems, whatever they were, would pass. He referred obliquely to the powerful impression that the Schoenberg piece had made on him, and when he said that he wanted to learn more, I knew that the crisis was over; so far from being defeated, Stravinsky would emerge a new composer.

To divert him, I suggested that he undertake an orchestration of one of his pieces, advice he would have given someone else in the same situation. I said that the Concertino for String Quartet was a work that the younger generation much admired, and perhaps he could re-

instrumentate it, employing winds from the Octet and Cantata, which he had agreed to conduct in an autumn concert. The next day, he studied the Concertino with this idea in mind, but he had to shelve the project because he had a performance in Mexico on March 10 (an engagement that influenza forced him to postpone until the last week in the month). After returning to Los Angeles, he completed not only the Concertino for 12 Instruments but also the first ricercar of the Cantata, a manuscript page of which, with the setting of the words "and through the glass window shines the sun," he gave to me, inscribing it -- I believe in reference to the crisis -- "To Bob whom I love."

While Stravinsky was in Mexico, I arranged a meeting between Mrs. Stravinsky and Mrs. Schoenberg. This was made possible because of my acquaintance with Nuria, Schoenberg's attractive daughter, whom I had occasionally escorted to concerts, restaurants, and movies, and through whom I became a regular visitor to the Schoenberg house. While there, I learned a great deal from her mother, who knew her husband's music so well that in a matter of moments she could locate any passage in his sketchbooks; for example, when I showed her a sheet of manuscript for *Moses and Aaron* that I had acquired, she immediately found its place in the score.

On one of my first visits, she gave me a paper on which Schoenberg had written: "Do not discourage people, friends. They will 'break' the Schbg. clique -- Encourage Craft." (Schoenberg realized that the possessiveness of his "old guard" was against his best interests; the note was in response to a criticism of me in a letter from Fritz Stiedry.)

I asked Mrs. Stravinsky to invite Nuria and her mother to dinner. When we greeted them at the door, Mrs. Schoenberg said, very movingly: "This should have happened years ago." She asked to see Stravinsky's studio, and looked at everything very carefully. During dinner, at the Knickerbocker Hotel, the talk centered on the personal and character similarities -- which proved to be more important than the differences -- of the husbands. Mrs. Schoenberg had brought a gift for Stravinsky, a bottle of Schoenberg's favorite Knize toilet water, and was delighted to hear that it was also Stravinsky's brand.

In spite of the existence of some common ground between the two men, Mikhail Druskin's conclusion that Stravinsky was "attracted by Schoenberg's personality, his rock-like

conviction, his inflexible will" is wrong. To Stravinsky, the personality, as expressed in the music and in what he had read about Schoenberg, was not sympathetic. The real reason for Stravinsky's avowals of admiration later on was his indignation at the neglect and ill-treatment Schoenberg had suffered. Returning from Mexico, Stravinsky was pleased to hear about the evening, and soon the three of us went to the Schoenbergs' for dinner.

In Paris, in May of 1952, Stravinsky watched the same audience that had cheered Berg's *Wozzeck* hiss and boo Cocteau narrating his *Oedipus Rex* --though the target was not only Cocteau but the piece itself and its aesthetics, as I think the composer understood. In the same month, in Brussels, Stravinsky heard discussions about Webern between me and Paul Collaer, as well as a tape of Webern's *Das Angenlicht*, which he borrowed. Back in Hollywood, Stravinsky completed his Cantata and began the Septet, in which, for the first time, he used a series, and, in the last movement, suspended functions of the tonal system.

In the autumn of 1952, I conducted four Schoenberg memorial concerts at Evenings-on-the-Roof; Stravinsky attended these as well as the rehearsals and subsequent recording sessions of the Septet-Suite. All of the music was new to him, and he was so taken with the Serenade that he used a mandolin in *Agon* and a guitar in a new instrumentation of his Four Russian Songs. Yet the Septet-Suite, with its serial language, had the more profound influence on him, its Gigue movement directly inspiring the one in his own Septet. Writing to me on August 24, 1982, one of the players in those concerts of thirty years ago, Dan Christlieb, remembers the musicians' "awareness of that miraculous transformation [in Stravinsky]. We noticed that he could not resist leafing thru ... the scores you would lay on the table.... We knew how involved he was becoming when we were rehearsing the Schoenberg Quintet.... He sat on the couch with the score.... Remember when he said, after the 2nd day, this has to be the finest work for this combination ever written."

Coming to Los Angeles in the summer of 1953 for a season at the Greek Theatre, George Balanchine got in touch with Mrs. Schoenberg because he wanted to choreograph one of her husband's pieces. She invited Balanchine to dinner (which he barbecued himself). She also invited me, as a friend of his and because I could act as a bridge between the Russian and Austrian cultures and between the two arts -- she being ignorant about ballet, he

about Schoenberg's music. Stravinsky was not asked to come, not only because he was in the hospital after a minor operation; Schoenberg's music was the focus of the meeting, and the presence of Stravinsky would have inhibited Balanchine.

During the evening, I convinced both Balanchine and Mrs. Schoenberg that the best choice would be the *Begleitungsmusik, opus 34*. Balanchine avoided telling Stravinsky about the episode, and when I did so it was evident that he felt betrayed. Yet this latest proof of the increasing interest in Schoenberg's music motivated Stravinsky to study the serial technique in such books as Ernst Krenek's on twelve-tone counterpoint and Jelinek's analyses of chordal construction in the Septet-Suite.

When Stravinsky declined Mrs. Schoenberg's invitation to hear a tape of *Moses and Aaron* in company with other people, relations cooled. He sent her a courteous note, but she later refused his request for a copy of an early letter from him to her husband. Several years passed before they met again, this time at a dinner in the Stravinsky home, for which occasion she gave him a facsimile of the *Jacobsleiterscore* and a tape of the BBC performance. Perhaps Schoenberg's death *did* "liberate" Stravinsky, but not in Druskin's "psychological" sense. What really happened is that Schoenberg's music began to be performed only after his death -- in those first few years, more of it by me, I am proud to say, than by anyone else.

After that, the story switches from private to public annals. Upon hearing the *Canticum Sacrum* and *Threni*, Eugenio Montale, the poet, wrote: "By adopting the twelve-tone system, Stravinsky took the most perilous step in his career."

Now to the remainder of Mikhail Druskin's thesis:

People sometimes talk as though Craft were a kind of "tempter" in Stravinsky's life, the man who "converted" him to the serialist faith. This is manifest nonsense. When Craft first met Stravinsky who was already a world famous composer, he was twenty-four years old. He was gradually to become the composer's indispensable assistant, his travelling-companion, a not unbiased witness and correspondent of Stravinsky's last years, a kind of Eckermann to his Goethe, though a much more enterprising and masterful personality than Eckermann. We have no means of verifying anything that Craft has already written, or may in the future write, on the subject

of Stravinsky.... But can anyone seriously suppose that a composer who all his conscious life had composed in accordance with an inner artistic law which he had deliberately imposed on himself, who was spontaneous and impulsive in his ... aesthetic tastes -- that such a man would be untrue to his own character and allow himself to be persuaded by a young man who had not as yet in any way proved himself as an artist? Assistance must not be confused with influence. Craft could help Stravinsky to become better acquainted with the works and the methods of the New Viennese School, *with which he was very familiar*, but he could not, of course, direct or control the spiritual interests of a composer of genius. [Italics added.]

In the first place, much of what I have written about Stravinsky *can* be verified, both in his correspondence and by such witnesses as Balanchine, Paul Horgan, Stephen Spender, Rolf Liebermann, Lawrence Morton, et al., who were present during scenes described in my *Chronicle of a Friendship*. In the second place, whether or not I was an artist at age twenty-four -- or ever -- is inconsequential. What matters is that Stravinsky valued my musicianship enough to write to Toscanini asking him to give me the opportunity to guest-conduct the Symphony in C with the NBC orchestra; that Schoenberg not only expressed his confidence in me in letters but encouraged me to direct his *Pierrot Lunaire* and Septet-Suite; that Schoenberg's pupil Eduard Steuermann, who had played the piano parts in the premieres of both works, would not have agreed to perform them under me if, during rehearsals, he had not found me capable of conducting them; and that Edgard Varèse chose me to record *Arcana*, in preference to Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, who had already performed the piece several times (whereas my recording had to be made in three hours with a sight-reading orchestra). But how would Druskin know anything about all of this?

Surely it is a quality of youth to be strong in convictions, partly because of limited knowledge and experience. Another quality of twenty-four-year-olds, at least one of them, is outspokenness; I always revealed openly to Stravinsky my preferences in any music we discussed, including his. Having tried to compose before I met him, I regarded music with a composer's, rather than a conductor's, eye. He understood that I had nothing to say *in* music, but he must also have sensed that I had something useful to say to him *about* it. During our first sessions together at the piano, I began to realize that he trusted my

judgment when he asked my opinion about doubling a note in a chord, choosing between alternative courses in a modulation, or the advisability of repeating a figure. I was dumbfounded. Here was the man -- indeed, the god -- I had worshipped since my twelfth year, the man who *had* to know more about every aspect of music than I could ever learn. Was it possible that in the very crucible of his creation he was really seeking *my* confirmation? Until this began to happen regularly, I suspected that he was simply testing me.

In fact, Stravinsky was seeking my opinion precisely *because of* my age, my lack of position, and my non-alignment with any academic or other organization. I was slow to understand this, and that my elders had axes of their own to grind: careers as composers, conductors, and performers. If I had been his near contemporary, as was Arthur Lourie, his amanuensis in the 1920s, Stravinsky would probably not have exposed himself in this way. Moreover, since his coevals knew less than he did, had less imagination, and came from the same European culture, they had no new perspective to offer. He quickly saw that a member of a much younger generation, and a native American at that, could react in fresh and possibly stimulating ways. What must be admitted is that Stravinsky *wanted* to be influenced.

To some extent I "directed" and "controlled" Stravinsky -- but who could want the responsibility of advising Stravinsky in any way related to his art? In the years immediately following his death, I was torn with doubts, wondering if I had been right, not about repeating a phrase of music but in urging him to compose one piece rather than another; for, in truth, every Stravinsky opus after and including the Septet and *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* (1954) was undertaken as a result of discussions between us. The texts of *A Sermon, A Narrative, and A Prayer* were entirely my choice, and Stravinsky paid me for the work of selection.

Apart from subject matter, I sometimes went so far as to suggest forms that new pieces might take. A year or two after Stravinsky died, I looked through his manuscript sketchbook for *The Flood* and saw that in the center of it he had pasted several pages of my notes to him concerning the work, whereupon I impulsively tore them out. A few minutes later, I was distraught at what I had done, recognizing that he had wanted to give me credit for my contribution. My notes dealt with technical questions as well as musical symbolism, mentioning, for one example,

the music in the film sequence of *Lulu* as a retrograde model for the biblical storm scene in *The Flood*. I did not want my part in this to be known, but he did -- and it will be, since the manuscript had already been preserved on microfilm, a fact I had forgotten.

A FULL ACCOUNT OF WHAT MOST READERS WOULD call my "influence" on Stravinsky is too extensive for this article. I can only repeat to Druskin that without me Stravinsky would not have taken the path he did after *The Rake's Progress*. Those music-lovers preferring another opera (perhaps *Delia*, the libretto Auden wrote in the hope that Stravinsky would set it to music), more pas de deux, and some additional concerti will feel that they have been cheated; others, admirers of *Abraham and Isaac*, of the Variations and *Requiem Canticles*, will thank me for having challenged Stravinsky to give the best that was in him.

I understand the wish of Druskin to believe that his hero always discovered, cogitated, and acted completely independently. But Druskin's assertion that Stravinsky was "very familiar" with "the works and the methods of the New Viennese School" is breathtaking in its ignorance, not only of Stravinsky but also of American musical life from 1948 to 1953. When I met Stravinsky, he did not know a single measure of music by Schoenberg, Berg, or Webern, had no copy in his library of any of their pieces, and did not understand the meaning of a tone-row. Just before my arrival, Benjamin Bok, an aspiring young musician, son of a close friend of both the Stravinskys and the Aldous Huxleys, had come for lessons in composition. As it happened, the young man was uniquely interested in twelve-tone technique, and after a single session did not return, telling his mother, who told me, that Stravinsky did not know the first thing about this music.

Not only Druskin but most people do not realize how little the "New Viennese School" was known before the past decade, and how infrequent were the opportunities to become acquainted with it. In Stravinsky's entire career of concert touring in Europe and the United States before 1951, he had heard performances of only *Pierrot Lunaire* and the Chamber Symphony by Schoenberg, possibly of the early string quartet and violin pieces by Webern (at any rate, these were on programs with his own works), and of nothing at all by Berg (*Der Wein* shared a program with the Capriccio in Venice in 1934, but

Stravinsky was not in attendance). In Venice three years later, he happened to hear a rehearsal of Schoenberg's Septet-Suite, and told interviewers afterward that this was an experiment, not music.

In the recent survey "Stravinsky in Los Angeles" (Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, 1981), Lawrence Morton, a musicologist who in the mid-fifties and early sixties knew Stravinsky better than anyone else outside of the household, devotes several paragraphs to my position, calling me the last of a breed of associates cultivated by the composer since the early 1920s. I differed from the others, Morton says, in remaining very much longer than my predecessors, in being younger, and in having the status of an adopted child. But the Stravinskys and I were more like companions than parents and son. This was particularly evident in our almost constant travels. Although it was his as much as my avidity for new experience, without me Stravinsky probably would not have gone to African game parks, to Inca ruins, and on one of the first flights across the Pole.

Morton notes that one of the advantages of belonging to the Stravinsky ménage was the opportunity it gave me to mingle with the artistic and intellectual elite. But in truth, the Stravinskys were less interested in that society than I was, and the friendships with T. S. Eliot, Ortega y Gasset, Dylan Thomas, Alberto Giacometti, Christopher Isherwood, Gerald Heard, Isaiah Berlin, and many others began at my instigation, and were often continued by me. (I have twenty-two letters and cards from Sir Isaiah covering a short period in the late 1950s to 1962, whereas Stravinsky and Berlin had only a few exchanges of telegrams.) The Stravinskys had known the Huxleys before I appeared on the scene, but the period of their close friendship, during which they dined together two or three times a week, flourished thereafter.

Stravinsky never shed his Russian culture, of course, and in his exclusively refugee circle in Hollywood, 1940 to 1947, he was more French than American. It was my ignorance of his other languages that forced on Stravinsky the Anglo-American dimension, which eventually became more important to him than any except the Russian. When I entered the home, the library contained only a handful of books in English, whereas in a few years there were thousands, on every subject. In fact, the Stravinskys soon sold their eighteenth-century Voltaire *Oeuvres complètes* to make room for Henry James, Thoreau, and Melville; as well as many British authors. Stravinsky was a rapid

learner, and English soon became the language of his professional and literary life, though he continued to count money and baggage, and to converse with his wife, in Russian. Was his English sufficiently fluent to write books of "Conversations" without me? The answer is no, for which reason I helped him, as must always have been obvious to those familiar with the idiosyncratic wording in his correspondence (viz.: I would like to be through with the recording work that same day at lunch time, because I do not want to kill entirely myself" -- letter to Columbia Records, December 1, 1953). Druskin quotes from these books as if my part in them were exclusively that of the interrogator, but, though I no longer remember my exact contributions, certainly there were *some*, and without both of us the books would not exist.

Did I influence Stravinsky's politics? Yes, but only in two instances and I failed to convert this monarchist to democracy. The man who had hated and feared the Bolsheviks since 1917 required a great deal of encouragement before deciding to return to his native land in 1962, particularly when his White Russian friends were opposing the trip. Finally, is it plausible that without some very strong influence he would have outgrown his inherited Russian religious prejudices and composed a cantata in Hebrew, traveling to Israel for its performance?

I am indebted to Mikhail Druskin for inspiring me to "pull back the curtain" on my relationship with Stravinsky. Some readers will think I have pulled it back too far, and that I should not be my own advocate. I am well aware of the opinion that I "wormed" my way into Stravinsky's life, exploited him, put words into his mouth, and basked in his fame. But if such brickbats are the price of twenty-three years with Igor Stravinsky, I am willing to pay it. Not a day has passed since his death in which I have not sorely missed the exciting originality of his mind, the weight and concentration of his intelligence, the infectiousness of his buoyant spirit, and the guidance and the joy of making and listening to music with him.

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The Atlantic Monthly; December, 1982; Assisting Stravinsky; Volume 250, No. 6; pages 64-74.*