CHAPTER IV
POLITICAL THEMES

In an interview with Mr. Lewis Nicholas ("Talk with Mr. MacLeish:"), MacLeish says, "For good or bad, all the things that have moved me about this country are political." It does not mean that MacLeish is a politician or a propagandist committed to some political ideology or party. If his play, The Fall of the City, Air Raid, The Trojan Horse, and Scratch deal with contemporary political issues, and if in all these plays the poet champions the cause of American democracy as against the totalitarian dictatorship from without and such internal perils to democracy as MaCarthyism from within, it is not in the ideologies about Nazism, Fascism or MaCarthyism that he soaks his plays, but in his socio-political experience of the times. Whatever in the world of happening and event affects the universal human element affects the artist as well. The socio-political evils that destroy the common humanity which the artist shares with his fellow-beings, impinge upon the artist's esthetic imagination with such a force as to demand at once an ethical answer.

In a time like ours when the human destiny presents itself in political terms, it is no wonder that the artists should dramatize the political issues so

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as to expose the political evils that curb the spirit of the individual human being on the one hand, and to demonstrate human values on the other. From this point of view, if MacLeish has defended American democracy throughout his career against external and internal political threats, the answer can be found not in his political ideas but in his deep humanitarian and moral values. The poet visualizes democracy not merely as a political ideology but a symbolic expression of non-material values like intellectual freedom and the worth and dignity of an individual which MacLeish holds in veneration as an artist and poet. Then, it is not surprising that he should come with a grave warning of the coming Nazi dictatorship if the people remain psychologically and spiritually powerless in The Fall of the City. Even in his non-dramatic poetry written during the third decade of the present century, MacLeish pleads for self-reliance and intellectual freedom of the people as against the dangers of dictatorship. For instance, in one of his poems from Public Speech, he writes:

Tell me, my patient friends, a waiters of messages,
From what other shore, from what stranger,
Whence, was the word to come? Who was to lesson you?
............................................................................ There is only you. There is no one else on the telephone: No one else on the air to whisper:
............................................................................ You have your eyes and what your eyes see is.
The earth you see is really the earth you are seeing.²

The poet is aware of the fact that the moment the people cease to think for them and admit the "burden of mystery" upon them, they will submit to a dictator. In one of his prose works, he points out:

We know - we can scarcely avoid knowing that there are millions of modern men who fear freedom or are frightened of the loneliness it implies or prefer to have their lives lived for them. If it were not so Hitler could never have come to power nor could the Communist states have survived.³

And *The Fall of the City* (1937) demonstrates this statement through history and allegory. In this play, MacLeish warns the modern Americans of the coming Fascist dictator by manipulating a historical parallel of the sixteenth century Aztec civilization which fell into the hands of a Spanish conqueror, Cortes. In using this historical material, however, the poet takes a lot of freedom with the actual events of the history as they had happened in the sixteenth century. He even distorts certain historical facts so as to render the events of the play relevant to the contemporary political situation. What attracts the poet to the history of the conquest of the Aztec city by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century is not the impressiveness or significance of its particular historical details, but its overall thematic relevance and

philosophical implications to the contemporary situation. In fact, the whole
history of the conquest has, as one historian puts it, "the air of fable rather
than of history! a legend of romance ---- a tale of the genii!" Then, it is no
wonder that MacLeish should exploit these potentialities to interpret the
modern political phenomenon of Fascism from a historical perspective.

What the attempts to do in The Fall of the City is to develop
systematically through allegory and history, his thesis that Fascist and Nazi
dictatorships do not occur because a Hitler or Mussolini decides to seize
power but because when a nation, rather, is psychologically and spiritually
empty, the dictators come in to fill that vacuum. This he does by effectively
using the role of the radio Announcer as a Greek chorus and by reducing the
people of the Plaza city, which falls at the end to a conqueror, to sheer
abstractions with no human justification whatsoever. Thus, the play starts
with the Announcer describing the weather and the enormous crowds
waiting for the Dead Woman to rise out of the tomb in a square in the center
of the Plaza city. The Dead Woman rising out of the tomb mechanically
repeats a prophecy in an archaic and vague lyric about death: "The city of
masterless men/Will take a master./There will be shouting then:/ Blood

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This prophecy of the Dead Woman makes the people run around the square "milling around us like cattle that small death." Then, the First Messenger arrives with the news of the advent of the conqueror: "East over sea-cross has/ All taken -- /Every country." He warns that a mighty conqueror has landed after overcoming all the lands east of the sea and that those he conquers lead the lives of unbelievable shame and degradation. Then, a minister comes on the platform and delivers a long and highly rhetorical speech in which he attempts to persuade the people to defend their city against the enemy not with force and weapons but with "weakness" and passive resistance. This is certainly a scornful reproach on the modern pacifism.

After the first Orator, the Priests offer religion as a panacea in times of crisis. With drums and songs, they promptly move the people to religious frenzy; the crowd dances to the pyramid, tears the clothes from a girl's "bare breast," drags her to the alter and "shrieks" in religious ecstasy. Finally, a brave honest, and intelligent man of action, the General, who is for the most part MacLeish’s mouth-piece, attempts to awaken the people to the value of freedom and the necessity to fight when the freedom of a whole nation is in danger:

6 Ibid. p.767.
7 “The Fall of the City, "Twenty Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre, p. 767.
There's nothing in this world worse --
Empty belly or purse or the
Pitiful hunger of children --
Than doing the strong Man's will!
The free will fight for their freedom.
They're free men first. They feed
Meager or fat but as free men.
Everything else comes after
Food: roof: craft --
Even the Sky and the light of it!

This last appeal of the General to fight and die for their liberty does not move the people of the city who symbolically stand for the people of our own time. Not one even listens to the General. Instead, they, as always in the play, scream and run around the square in terror. Since they are too terrified to fight and since they are too convinced that freedom does not work, it is no wonder that they declare:

Masterless men!.....
Masterless men
Must take a master!....
Order must master us! ......
Freedom's for fools:
Force is the certainty!
Freedom has eaten our strength and corrupted our virtues!

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8 The Fall of the City, "Twenty Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre" p.772
9 Ibid. p. 773.
When the dictator enters the city marching with the rattle of his empty metal, all the people lie among their burnt spears and the ashes of arrows. The Voice of the Announcer comes to comment on the moral significance of the play:

The helmet is hollow!
The metal is empty! The armor is empty! I tell you
There's no one at all there: there's only the metal: ....
........................................................................
The push of a stiff pole at the nipple would topple it.
They don't see! They lie on the paving. They lie in the Burnt spears: the ashes of arrows. They lie there......
They don't see or they Won't see. They are silent.....
The people invent their oppressors: They wish to believe in them.
They wish to be free of their freedom: released from their liberty: The long labor of liberty ended! They lie there!  

It is not the conqueror who has conquered the populace of the city, but it is the populace of the city which has conquered the conqueror. The play demonstrates that dictators are not strong and powerful but it is the weakness and irresponsibility of the people towards the cause of freedom that make the dictators powerful. "The people invent their oppressors".

Commenting on MacLeish's interpretation of Fascism in The Fall of the City, Randall Jarrell observes:

His play, by accident or design, completely disregard what anyone knows: that Fascism is a

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10 The Fall of the City, "Twenty Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre" p.774.
highly specialized economic and political manifestation
of a late stage of our own particular
economic system, capitalism; that it springs
from all kinds of real causes, not simply from
people's cowardice and stupidity, their shameful
longing to be slaves. Since he disregards all
the characteristics and essential aspects of our
culture, his explanation of how Fascism operates
seems not merely mistaken but childish.11

Jarrell's interpretation however, ignores the fact that The Fall of the City is
a radio play and the limitations under which a radio poet is obliged to work.
How is it possible for a radio writer to dramatize the whole range of the
complex Fascist phenomenon in a short radio play written for an half-hour
performance? Is MacLeish really not aware of the fact that "Fascism is a
highly specialized economic and political manifestation of a late stage of our
own particular economic system, capitalism"?

In more than one article, the poet points out that Fascism is a
concomitant result of the failure of the capitalistic system to organize its
economy in human terms. For instance, in one of his prose, works, he writes:

   Capitalism is responsible for this fascist class.
capitalism created it and consigned it to live in
the limbo between the world, seducing it from the
discipline of hand labor on the one side, denying
it the discipline of head labor on the other;

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depriving it, on the one side, of the realism, the hard-headedness, the piety, the traditional human wisdom, the salt sense, the kindness of those who labour the earth, and the earth's trees and the earth's metals, with their hands; depriving it, on the other, of that different kindness, that different knowledge, that different faith of those whose life is in the mind. But though capitalism created the fascist class, capitalism neither control it now nor use it

Fascism is capitalism's revenge upon itself....

Therefore, it is unfair to criticize MacLeish that he is unaware of the "real" and complex reasons for the rise of Fascism. In fact, the poet avoids the difficulties involved in dealing with Fascism in all its realistic and complex connotations by having recourse to a relatively primitive civilization with all its pyramids, spears, bows and human sacrifices. Thus, the story of the conquest of the Aztec people by the Spanish conqueror becomes the "prophetic" future history of the modern people. Moreover, the poet is not interested in the-socio-economic and political reasons for the rise of Fascism. What concerns him in the City is not these external causes which a prose dramatist may faithfully present but the deeper and underlying spiritual impotency of which Fascism is an external manifestation. It is this inner reality that MacLeish presents in his play. In other words, MacLeish's

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approach to Fascism is not that of a journalist or historian but that of a poet and artist.

Similarly, Jarrell criticizes MacLeish for not conforming to the historical facts. He argues that the play is "false on the literal Aztec level" for it is "plainly at variance with most of the facts." For example, he points out the impossible behaviour of the Priests who urge the people to turn to gods:

All this is unlikely enough on the literal level of the play--the Astec priests who cut the hearts from tens of thousands of prisoners are not likely to advise submission to an alien conqueror, a withdrawal from the world of action.

But, it is pertinent to ask whether a poet dealing with a contemporary subject imaginatively should conform to the historical facts as accurately as a journalist. It never occurs to him that MacLeish's approach to the history is not that of a historian but that of a poet who invents a fable or a plot out of historical events. The poet in dealing with the historical materials, in fact, alters, transposes and even invents incidents from his own imagination. In this connection, the views of Aristotle are worth our consideration:

..... the poet must be more the poet of his stores or Plots than of his verses....... And if he should come to take a subject from actual history, he is none the less a poet for that; since some

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13 Jarrell, pp. 267-279.  
14 Ibid., pp. 267-279.
historic occurrences may very well be in the probable and possible order of things; and it is in that aspect of them that he is their poet.\textsuperscript{15}

Finally, Jarrell points out the "romantic", the "exotic" and "sensational" devices employed by MacLeish and asks if they are necessary to a play about contemporary political reality: "This horse-less and metal-less city, with its spears and pyramids and cloaks of feathers; the corpse rising from the grave with its prophecy; the priests with their human sacrifice; the empty and all conquering suit of armor-are these necessary to a play about contemporary political reality, about Fascism?"\textsuperscript{16} Jarrell seems to have failed to notice the fact that MacLeish is not working in the tradition of realistic drama and that The Fall of the City is a poetic exploration of the problem of the dictatorship in its historical and philosophical perspective like Benet's They Burned the Books. In exploring the contemporary problem in poetic terms, MacLeish like Vincent Benet manipulates fact and fiction, present and past in such a way that the modern events acquire a universal significance.

Through these anti-realistic devices which the critic objects to, MacLeish "simplifies" the materials so as to avoid the difficult problem of establishing verisimilitude on the one hand and to impart a philosophical significance to the play on the other. Seen from this point of view, it is true,

\textsuperscript{16} Jarrell, pp. 267-279
the play, as the critic points out, dwindles into "a schematized, arbitrarily one-sided, and melodramatic over-simplification.....; a black and white political cartoon...."\(^{17}\) But, it is precisely, this "simplification," if not "over-simplification," and "black and white" texture and structure that a radio play demands. In this connection, the views of Louis MacNeice are worth consideration:

I found this borne out in practice when I was asked to make a radio adaption of Eisenstein's film _Alexander Nevsky_. This film, which disappointed some English intellectuals because of its lack of subtlety in characterisation, its complete innocence of psychological conflict, its primitive pattern of Black versus White, was for those very reasons easily transposed into a radio form.....\(^{18}\)

It has been pointed out by such critics as Jarrell, Cleanth Brooks, and Oscar Cargill that MacLeish's plays lack dramatic conflict. But in _The Fall of the City_, the lack of dramatic conflict is consistent with the theme of the play. When the author wants to present his theme that the populace of a city might surrender without a struggle to a tyrant or dictator because it is too terrified and confused to resist and when its people lack the power to discriminate between what is good and bad for themselves there cannot be a struggle and conflict in opinion. Similarly when the author wants to present

\(^{17}\) Jarrell, PP. 267-279.
the idea of dictatorship as a concomitant development of the people's longing for group conformity and a strict social order even at the cost of their individual freedom, there cannot be a single character with an individuality of its own. Understandably, there is not a single human figure that can draw either our sympathy or admiration. In fact, the play enacts the author's sense of a doom for a people devoid of all sense and understanding. They are even compared to animals when the Announcer describes them as "cattle that smell death." They are so hollow from within that no psychological conflict can be put in any of them. From this point of view, no criticism that the lack of characterization in the play as an artistic flaw becomes considers valid and convincing. By creating these abstractions, in fact, the poet deliberately avoids emotional identification of the auditors with the characters so that they can critically examine the attitudes and the actions of the characters. The lack of characterization in the play serves as a sort of "alimentation effect" technique which maintains a distance between the auditors and the events of the play, thus opening the ground for the auditors' critical response to the play, its events, and people.

An Air Raid, aroused by the Spanish Civil War bombing of the civilian centers by the Italian Air Force supporting General Franco's effort to

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19 "The Fall of the City," p. 767.
* Oscar Cargill, for example, writers: .... the author does not quite appreciate the fact that the necessary identification of the auditors with the people in the play is impossible while the latter are so slightly developed." Intellectual America: Ideas on the March (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), pp. 290-292.
overthrow the Spanish republic, MacLeish attacks the inhumanity of the Fascist bombers on the one hand and the mechanical nature of the modern war on the other. In one of his articles, "Poetry and Journalism," MacLeish points out:

> Journalism tends more and more with us toward an admirably dispassionate objectivity which presents the event in the colourless air of intellectual detachment at the cost of its emotional significance, and poetry, reacting to the same divisive influence but in an opposite direction, turns more and more to the emotional significance divorced from the event.\(^{20}\)

In *Air Raid*, the attempt of the poet has been to fuse the "event" with "its emotional significance" and poetry with journalism. He transforms the journalistic nature of the material of the Italian Air Force bombarding a Spanish town and victimizing thousands of women and children into a work of art. This he does by a complex manipulation of sound effects, music, whistles, sirens on the one hand and the "shrieking" voices of the women and the children on the other. In so doing, the poet makes the auditors of his play feel and see what a Fascist air-warfare can be in all its horror and brutality.

In order to present his sense of horror and indignation at the Fascist warfare in a glaring manner, the author presents through comment and the voices of women, the simple and rich life of the people of the town to serve

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as an ironic contrast to the brutality of the bombers. The picture of the life with all its innocence and simple pleasures as lived by the town folk carries the poet's conviction that "life is richest and best in all its elemental forms."²¹

Consider the lines in which MacLeish presents the simple and innocent life of the people of the town with a sense of nostalgia for that life:

Many sleep in the one house here:
They work in the fields: sleep in the village:
The men go out at dawn: return
to evening burning from the chimneys:
The women keep the town between
...............................................
They're filling the court with their talk:
They call back and forth from the windows:
They laugh behind the kitchen doors:
They rinse the shirts in the first real shine of the morning:
They talk-their arms to elbows in the tubs--²²

Against this description, the poet presents the voices of the women, Old Woman, and the Young Girls busy at their work in a summer morning. The women making fun of each others' husbands: "A man like yours with an eye like his for wandering/And you to talk! - you with that red-headed lollypop!,"²³ the Old woman brooding over the prospects of the fine morning "to make a crop of hay,"²⁴ and the young girls talking about their future

²³ Ibid., p. 9.
²⁴ Ibid., p. 9.
happiness in marriage -- all this emphasizes the simple and innocent life of these women and young girls.

It is against this innocent women and children, that the Fascists wage their war:

Strange and curious times these times we live in:
You watch from kitchens for the bloody signs:
You watch for breaking war above the washing on the lines.
In the old days they watched along the borders:
They called their warfare in the old days wars
And fought with men and men who fought were killed:
We call it peace and kill the women and the children.
Our women die in peace beneath the lintels of their doors.25

McLeish reiterates his theme-- the brutality of the Fascist warfare by contrasting it with the more humane and courageous wars of the ancient times. He strengthens this point when the Sick woman in the play recollects the goodness and humanity of the soldiers in the olden days when she was young:

They came when I was young once: I remember them.
............................................................................................................................
They had blue capes on their coats with scarlet linings:
They spoke together in another tongue:
They were slow and soft in their speech with laughter and looking......
............................................................................................................................

They gave us milk to drink form jars of metal.............26

As a contrast, her son does not cherish such a romantic view of the wars and the soldiers because he belongs to the present generation: "They kill the children when they come. I've read it."27

At this juncture, the directions read: "A siren sounds at a distance like a hoarse parody of the singing woman's voice: rising, shrieking, descending. It is repeated under the voices, nearer and lounder."28 As the siren indicates the coming for the bombers, the women of the town, instead of looking for the security measures, "lean there careless and talking:/ They shape their hair with their hands:/They stand there softly and simply"29 When the police Sergeant asks them to occupy the vaults to protect themselves, An Old Woman, replies:

Listen to me policeman!
Perhaps it's true they, re coming in their planes:
Perhaps it isn't true. But if it is
It's not for housewives in this town they're coming.30

The women of the town are not aware of the fact, as the Sergeant explains, that "The wars have changed with the world and not for better!"31

As in The Fall of the City, "This enemy is not the usual enemy! That this one is no general in a great coat/Conquer countries for the pride and praise: That

27 Ibid., p. 15.
28 Air Raid, p. 19.
29 Ibid., p. 21
30 Ibid., p. 24
31 Ibid., p. 26
this one conquers other things than countries!"\textsuperscript{32} Like the people \textbf{in the City}, the women of the town in this play to not take the Sergeant's words seriously; instead their "voices rise again in a great shriek of laughter."\textsuperscript{33}

In contrast to the Girls and the Women in the play, the Sergeant is a man of consciousness and experience. He is not only aware of the romantic wars of the past but also of the changing in the nature of the war with the change of time. While the women see the war in terms of their romantic past, their remembered glory of the bygone soldiers and their goodness, the Sergeant views the war with the full consciousness of the past and the present. In his consciousness of the true nature of the things and in his sense for the immediate and practical measures to be taken against the bombers, he resembles the General, in \textit{The Fall of the City}, who implores the people of the city to fight for their freedom.

As the Sergeant is busy in explaining the dangers of modern warfare to the uncomprehending women, the Announcer draws the attention of the auditors to "the roar of the planes" increasing "from moment to moment". Here, it is tribute to the poet's skill that he very successfully transforms the most technical aspects of the air-warfare into a poetic construction when the Announcer describes the approaching of the planes over the town:

\begin{quote}
We've got them now: we see them;
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{32} MacLeish, \textit{Air Raid} (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1938), p. 27.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p. 28.
They're out of the dazzle: they're flying
Fighting formation in column
Squadron following squadrons
Ten-fifteen squadrons
Bombing models mostly
Big ones: three motors .......
They're changing formation they're banking
Front wheeling to flank
The whole flight is banking
Flank anchored and climbing
Climbing bank into line....... 
The line swung like a lariat!34

As the planes come closer over the town, the women enter into the street and cry: "Show it our skirts in the street: it won't hurt us!/ Show it our softness!/ Show it our weakness:/ Show it our womanhood!"35 only to hear their hue and cry followed by "A crazy stammering of machine guns."36
Here, the poet makes an ingenious use of the sound effects and music by fusing them with "shrieking voices". The directions read as follows:

For an instant the shrieking voices of the women, the shattering noise of the guns and the huge scream of the planes are mingled, then the voices are gone and the guns are gone and the scream of the planes closes to a deep sustained music note level and long as silence.37

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34 Air Raid, pp. 32-33.
35 Ibid, p. 34.
36 Ibid., p. 35.
37 Air Raid, p. 35.
By this artistic manipulation of the sounds and voices on the one hand and "a deep sustained music note" fading into silence on the other, the poet suggests the central conflict of the play, the conflict between life and the agents of death -- the guns and the planes, between sound and silence. And the poet closing his play on a note of silence indicates the victory of death and disaster over life and preservation. Thus, MacLeish reiterates his theme not merely through words, but also through a skillful interplay of sounds and silence.

As in *The Fall of the City*, *Air Raid* follows a melodramatic structure in that it presents experience as an opposition of good and evil and of power and weakness. This dramatic structure R.B. Heilman calls as "monopathic structure". Comparing the "monopathic structure" of melodrama with "Polypathic structure of tragedy, he observes:

In melodrama, man is seen in his strength or in his weakness; in tragedy, in his strength and weakness at once. In melodrama, he is victorious or he is defeated; in tragedy, he experiences defeat in victory, or victory in defeat. In melodrama man is guilty or innocent; in tragedy, his guilt and innocence coexist. In melodrama, man is bad - that is, a villain - or good, whether as victor over evil or as a victim who does not deserve his fate; in tragedy, his goodness is intermingled with the power and
inclination to do evil.... As these comparisons suggest, it is possible to think of tragedy, in more than one respect, as resembling the mean between two extremes, drawing something from both, while melodrama tends to develop each extreme in its pure state. Tragedy, with its inclusive vision of good and evil, never sees man's excellence divorced from his proneness to love the wrong nor, on the other hand, does his capacity for spiritual recovery:...... But: melodrama, in separating good and evil and treating them as independent wholes, has a natural inclination towards the extreme monopathic attitudes....

In the light of the above analysis of the difference between the dramatic structures of tragedy and melodrama, Air Raid and The Fall of the City can be treated as melodramas. The poet instead of presenting the people in the City and the women of the town in Air Raid, both in their strength as well as weakness, simply presents the one and rejects the other. Thus, in the City the people are so overwhelmed with fear that they cannot persuade themselves to fight and they are so weak and cowardly that they invite the dictator. Similarly, in Air Raid, the women of the town are so weak and so innocent that the entire blame for their destruction can be put upon the Italian bombers. In the one case, the people of the city are entirely responsible for their defeat and in the other the bombers are so cruel and so

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38 Tragedy and Melodrama, p. 90
devoid of all humanity that they destroy the women with whom life has been more like itself. This easy classification of the good on the one side and the evil on the other, the innocent on the one side and the guilty on the other, precludes the tragic possibilities in both the plays.

The Women of the town, in Air Raid, who function as "collective protagonist", lack the tragic consciousness necessary for choosing between what is morally right and wrong and commit themselves to a particular line of direction which eventually destroys them. Since they lack tragic consciousness, they cannot act consciously. As such their destruction becomes meaningless and no truth can be forced out of it. Thus, at the end of the play, the destruction of the innocent women signifies no more than it evokes pity for these victims. The ultimate effect of the play is pathetic rather than tragic. If MacLeish had stretched his enquiry to show how this innocent women, in spite of their innocence, become responsible for their destruction, he would have pushed the "literature of disaster" into the realm of tragedy. John Peale Bishop expresses a similar opinion when he says,

Air, Raid, is true. It is not tragic. For, in taking consciousness away from his women, the author has denied them the possibility of tragedy. Where there is no awareness, nothing is tragic. There is no one in the play who can both acknowledge and sustain defeat. So that, at the end, it is as depressing as a catastrophe. It is depressing as
poetry has no right to be.\textsuperscript{39}

However, it has been none of the author's intentions to explore the tragic implications of the Fascist bombardment of the Spanish civilian centers. In fact, the poet registers his emotional protest against the inhumanity and brutality of the Fascist warfare. In so doing, he appeals to our sense of pity and horror: pity for the victims and horror at the mechanical and systematic annihilation of the life itself. This being the author's intention it is no wonder that he should cast his materials in a melodramatic form and structure. To quote Heilman, "In literature, melodrama is the principal vehicle of protest and dissent ...."\textsuperscript{40} He further points out:

\begin{quote}
What melodrama typically offers is the exaltation of victory, indignation at wrong doing, the pitiableness of the victims....., the despair of defeat, the shock of disaster, the sadness of death.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

Apart from the thematic concern of the author and his selection of the melodramatic form suitable to his theme, it must be pointed out that \textit{Air paid}, being a radio play, cannot handle those complex materials which can be assimilated in the "polypathic structure" of tragedy. As pointed out earlier, the radio medium because of its limitations of time and space,
demands "simplification" of the materials. In the words of the author of Media for the Millions,

...the mass communicator is compelled to simplify his material because of the limitations of time and space and because the receivers are not prepared, or do not want, to have the message communicate events in anything approaching their true complexity........The view of life thus presented is far less complex than life really is.⁴²

Seen from this technical point of view, MacLeish's theme and his selection of black and white melodramatic structure and the medium through which he sends down his play are quite consistent with one another.

As to the characterization in the play, there is not a single individual character with a life of its own. Like Eliot in The Family Reunion, MacLeish divides his characters not in terms of their individual characteristics but in terms of their awareness and response to the world and the events happening outside them. Like him, MacLeish divides his characters between the perceptive and the unperceptive characters. The perceptive ones are those who have a full understanding of the changed nature of the modern warfare as well as the romantic wars of the ancient days. The Sergeant and the Announcer can be placed in this category. The unperceptive characters are

those whose awareness of life is limited to a purely "vegetative" life of the simple and the earth-bound pleasures. They cannot transcend this level of their awareness to see the mechanical and atomic wars of today. The Women, Girls, Old Woman, Sick Woman can be placed in this category. Apart from this classification of the characters into groups, no attempt has been made by the author to individualize the characters within the group. Like Eliot, MacLeish manipulates the characters to represent the two aspects of human life. The life of the senses as represented by the unperceptive ones and the life of the spirit and minds a represented by the perceptive characters.

By showing the destruction of both types of the characters... the perceptive police Sergeant and the unperceptive women, Girls and the Old Woman-- in the air raid at the end of the play, MacLeish seems to have underscored the dangers of the Fascist warfare in which both the life of the senses as well as the spirit and the mind is at stake.

After dealing with the problem of Nazi dictatorship and the possible danger of its attraction among the people of the American Republic in terms of allegory and history in The Fall of the City and the inhumanity and brutality of the modern Fascist air-warfare in which the innocent women and children are methodically annihilated with no sympathy or kindness whatsoever in Air Raid, MacLeish, in the early fifties, exposes the evils of
MaCarthyism which substituted suspicion for the American trust in human nature and which imposed thought control and discouraged discussion of controversial issues in The Trojan Horse. As the poet turns to the sixteenth century history of the conquest of the Aztec city by the Spaniards to suggest a parallel to the contemporary political phenomenon of the rising dictatorship in the City, in The Trojan Horse, MacLeish turns to the Greek myth of the wooden horse to explore the political situation of America in the early fifties under the McCarthy hysteria.

In using the Greek myth of the wooden horse, MacLeish, however, fails to explore the internal relationship between the ancient and the modern. Instead of exploring the modern political hysteria of McCarthyism in the ancient myth with all its literary associations and in its "concreteness, "what he does is no more than to use the events of the myth and the skeletal outline of the story as an allegory of the current political events. In so doing, the myth becomes "Intellectualized". To quote Prescott,

As thought becomes conscious myth tends to become allegory; that is, instead of merely telling a story in which the burden of thought is implicit, the poet begins with the thought and contrives a story to embody it.  

And The Trojan Horse exemplifies such a treatment of myth by its author.

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A modern playwright using an ancient myth in a political context can write an effective play only when his aesthetic imagination operates through his ethical and political sense. The playwright thus working keeps the play from turning into a pure allegory, the characters into mere symbols and mythical situation from becoming merely "illustrative" of the contemporary situation. In other words, he avoids the play from becoming a parable. In this connection, a comparison between Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* and MacLeish's *The Trojan Horse* is revealing. Both the writers have similar objectives in recreating the past to examine the present. They both point in their plays the wrongs committed in the past that typify the wrongs committed in the contemporary world. To do this, while Miller turns to the Witch Hunt Trials of the sixteenth century Salem House, MacLeish turns to the Greek myth. Both of them have similarly attempted to expose the evils of McCarthyism as they divest the individuals of their freedom and to show the viability of the private conscience as against the mass conformity, and reason against fanaticism. Though their intentions are similar, the way they dramatize their themes reveals a marked difference.

Though many parallels to the contemporary political events can be found in the particular details of the Salem House, Miller is not primarily concerned with these external similarities. What concerns him most is the central theme-- the theme of "terror" as engendered by the Puritan orthodoxy
of the sixteenth century and its parallel in the contemporary political fanaticism of McCarthyism. By exploring this central theme common to both the societies in its complexity and depth, Miller reveals to us as to what happens to a society when it abdicates its reason and sound sense in favour of superstition and dogmatism. By dramatizing the dangers threatening anyone who dares to defend the accused in such an orthodox Puritan society, where there is the absence of adequate legal defense for the accused, and the prejudice of the investigators like Dan forth towards the convicts, the author transmutes "terror" into the characters, incidents and the whole situation itself. The author himself declares:

That so interior and subjective an emotion could have been so manifestly created from without was a marvel to me. It underlies every word in The Crucible.44

Miller does not talk about "terror" but dramatizes it as the characters are overpowered by it and as the events are motivated by this overwhelming fear. And the characters who manifest this "terror" are not abstractions but "life-like" human beings who have a psychological reality of their own. Their religious dogmatism and their capacity to hurt others are quite consistent against the cultural background of the Puritan society which the author presents in the play. Even if one is not aware of its contemporary significance, the meaning and the experience one gets in reading this play is

not lost much. That a play based upon myth and history should thus have integrity of its own and also hold true to the contemporary political situation can be attributed to the fact that Miller's aesthetic imagination operates through his political consciousness and moral sense, fusing the past with the present and the moral with the artistic.

In MacLeish's The Trojan Horse such a fusion of the artistic with the moral, the ancient with the contemporary is absent. MacLeish fails to do this because he lacks the depth and insight necessary for a playwright like Miller to probe into the core of the mythical situation and reveal its internal relationship to the contemporary political crisis. In addition to this, he lacks the dramatic instinct to concretize the mythical situation in depth as it illuminates the contemporary dilemma. Thus the play opens with First voice invoking the voice of Homer to "Tell me why that town is fallen:/ Tell me by what force it fell." \(^45\) And the scenes, events, and the comments of the Blind Man that follow the prologue are nothing more than a mere "illustration" of how "that town is fallen".

The plot of the play is very simple. The Trojan citizens, after ten years of war with Greeks, find an enormous wooden horse drifting towards the shore of Troy. Then, the Trojans divide among themselves in their opinion over the issue whether the horse must be hauled into the walls of Troy as a token of devotion to God or should it be toppled down from the high cliff

into the sea considering it as a treacherous device of the Greeks to destroy
the Trojan City. Laocoon, the priest of Apollo, pierces his javelin through
the hollow wooden horse to show that the Greeks are hiding in it. Though
the Trojans hear "a man's sudden muffled cry as suddenly stilled," from the
depths of the wooden horse, they would not "know" and "hear" it after
Laocoon, who questioned the holiness of the horse, has been thrown to the
serpents. Blind Man, who speaks for the author, comments:

    Whatever they heard they did not hear it.
    After that silence of Laocoon's
    Nothing they thought they knew is known.\footnote{47}

Then, the shouting warriors transport the wooden horse into the walls of
Troy, after the crowds are controlled with the threat of death. The play ends
with the song of a prophetic girl, Cassandra:

    What hand is that upon the bridle?
    What voice cries out Destroy! Destroy!
    Who rides the horse that has no rider?
    No other hand shall burn Troy!\footnote{48}

MacLeish uses this simple outline of the story of the wooden house as
a symbolic narrative of contemporary MaCarthyism. Thus, the Trojans
represent the Americans, Troy as the American Republic, Laocoon as the
self-reliant American liberal who believes in freedom of the mind and the
authority of the conscience as against mass conformity and public law, and

\footnote{47} Ibid. p. 390.
\footnote{48} Ibid. p 407.
the Councilors as the McCarthy followers who exploit the national hatred of Communism as a wooden horse to bring about the destruction of the Republic. The destruction of Troy at the end of the play by accepting a fallacy, becomes the "prophetic" future destruction of the American Republic by her own people. "No other hand shall burn Troy."\(^49\)

By this arbitrary, one-sided, and over-simplified descriptive account of the mythical horse and the destruction of Troy, MacLeish points out to the Americans that their Republic is in danger not from the Communist forces from without, but from their own fear of Communism and loss of belief in themselves as free people. Their loss of belief in freedom, on which the American Republic has been founded, allows politicians and Senators like McCarthy exploit this loss of belief in freedom and reason as a wooden horse to destroy the Republic. Therefore, the people should behave, MacLeish seems to recommend, like Laocoon who even accepts his death rather than abdicate his reason and conscience.

Apart from this dominant moral concern and a somewhat generalized mechanical parallel to the contemporary political crisis, no situation has been realized here and no internal relationship between the ancient and the contemporary has been revealed at all. All this points to the poet's lack of insight and dramatic talent. That the poet lacks the dramatic talent can be

illustrated from a number of passages in the play which are lyrical rather than dramatic. Consider, for example, the following lines of Helen:

In haste and darkness and desire
Borne from the bed-side down to ship,
And by the ship from shore, the oar-beat
Thudding in the thole pins like a heart,
Thick and thicker till the headland
Opened and the wind came, the ship shuddered
Rising the first sea-surge, and suddenly
Silence and the singing keel,
The sail set...⁵⁰

These recollections from her past have nothing to do with the fall of Troy or the central theme of the play. In other words, they are not pressed to serve and dramatic purpose or convey any dramatic meaning.

Yet another defect that arises out of the poet's lack of dramatic talent can be seen in his failure to convince us that his characters are deeply affected by the creeping fear of official tyranny and religious dogmatism. Instead of showing the characters as they are overwhelmed by the fear of mass hysteria, MacLeish lets them like about it. The Blind man, for example, explains: they "Bring that enormous image in/To make official patriots of us,/ Sweating our public love by law, /And all of us will fear each other."⁵¹

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 400.
Thus, MacLeish's play tends towards the descriptive and explanatory rather than the analytical, towards the lyrical rather than the dramatic.

However, at a fairly different level, the play is effective. Taking into consideration the fact that The Trojan Horse is a radio play and the limitations under which a radio poet works as well as the "monopathic" structure of a radio play in which the variations of the events and characters to reinforce the theme are not possible, it can be argued that MacLeish could not have helped but write a simplified political allegory. In fact, the poet's consciousness of his own lack of skill in handing the complex materials seems to have been one of the reasons why he so often to radio. The radio play being a less complex form of dramatic literature become easily amenable to the poet's talents and temperature. The evocative power of the human voices, the tonal variations, the sound effects over the air, however, compensate for the poet's lack of skill in dramatic construction. Moreover, the radio being "a mighty awakener of archaic memories, forces, and animosities,....."52, it is no wonder that it should also contribute towards the effectiveness of the play based upon the ancient myth. As such, The Trojan Horse would certainly give us the impression of its being a more solid and effective play when heard through a radio broadcast than when seen performed on the stage.

In 1970, finding a threat to the integrity of the American Republic by men on the contemporary left who put Liberty first and Union after and by those on the contemporary left who put Union first and Liberty nowhere, MacLeish composes a prose play, *Scratch*. In this play he turns to Stephen Vincent Benet's short story "The Devil and Daniel Webster" which appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1936. This short folk-tale of Benet provides him with a means to dramatize a significant period of American history (1850) which has its parallel political situation in the seventies of the modern America. This manipulation of a parallel between the ancient and the contemporary has been the central part of his technique as we have seen in *The Fall or the City* and *The Trojan Horse*.

In reviving Benet's folk tale, "The Devil and Daniel Webster," in his *Scratch*, MacLeish, however, modifies the role of Webster. In Benet's story Webster has appeared merely as a trial lawyer. In MacLeish's play this trial lawyer turns into his historical role as a Senator, for the political situation of the seventies has demanded such a modification. MacLeish himself declares in the "Foreword" to the play:

>The historic Webster demanded to be heard, for the historic Webster was the one man in that tragic time who had dared to face the contradiction. He understood, as even Emerson did not, that there is no choice between liberty and Union in America- that what the American people had done
when they established their self-governing state
was to refuse to choose between the freedom of man
and the government of men—what they had done
indeed was precisely the opposite: to choose both.
Webster had said so: 'Liberty and Union, now and
forever, one and inseparable.

It is because these words speak to our own
condition so explicitly, rebuke our official
cynicism and shallowness so stingingly, that
Benet's Webster turns into history's Webster
as we read the story now.⁵³

The story as narrated by Benet in his "The Devil and Daniel Webster"
runs as follows: Jabex Stone, a New Hampshire farmer, fed up with the
hardscrabble life of the rocky hills, sells his soul to the Devil, Scratch, for a
period of seven years' prosperity. When the bill of safe falls due, he applies
to Webster to save him from the Devil. The cause is tried at midnight at the
Old Stone farm with the Devil providing a jury and a judge of the dead and
damned. Webster's eloquence and reasoning convinces even them and the
verdict is given in favour of Jabez. This simple folk tale of Benet told
primarily for entertainment, McLeish exposes to the pressures of the
contemporary political reality and his dominant moral concern. In so doing,
the poet utilizes the historical details about Webster and his career as a
Senator and fuses them with the folk elements of Benet's story. As a result,

the play becomes a curious blend of fact and fiction, history and myth. MacLeish, in fact, uses the folk-tale of Benet as a framework in which his historical Webster enacts his political career as a Senator. The framework thus provided by the folk-tale gives the poet an opportunity to magnify the events of the pre-Civil War era in American history as well as enables him to present the historical role of Webster from a metaphysical point of view.

The play opens with Prologue in which MacLeish suggests the conflict between the powers of Darkness (Devil) and the Powers of Light (Daniel Webster, the American demi-god). The poet reiterates this conflict by repeating the images of light and darkness:

Webster:  
_rousing_  
Good morning, Jabez.

Jabez:  _It is_ - it's morning!

Scratch: _rousing in his turn_  
Morning! whoever heard of welcoming the morning? Beastliest moment of the blasted day! The blinding light!

groan  
Night's the time to wait for in this filthy world-- the evening's dim refusal -- the denying dark.\(^54\)

Against this suggested metaphysical conflict between the Dark forces and the forces of Light, MacLeish represents the career of Webster as a

\(^{54}\) MacLeish, _Scratch_, p. 2
Senator who has recently fought for the preservation of the Union in the Senate by appealing to the rules of the constitution and the "Fugitive Slave Law." This event arouses stinging criticism from both his followers and his opponents. His own admirer and "hired" man, Peterson, and many of his contemporaries like Emerson and Whittier attribute this act of Webster to a "compromise" with the Devil. Peterson informs him:

Don't you see, Daniel, why they bring the Devil into it? - Why they say you've yielded to the Tempter? They mean just that.\(^5^5\)

In spite of this criticism against him, Webster asserts the welfare of the country in the Union of the states. At this stage, he argues that "The Union is real. It exists..... trades...... traffics...... builds.... expands.... There has to be a country first before there's freedom in a country. And a country's difficult, ...it takes work to make it -- time -- patience -- intelligence -- good will."\(^5^6\)

As against the argument of Webster for the constitution, law, and the Union, Peterson pleads for the government which counts by men and not by the rules of constitution or court. In his early attitude, Webster is a mere politician and a cold statesman who visualizes welfare of the people under the law and Constitution. On the contrary, Peterson is a thorough who "counts by heads, by people" and not a statesman like Webster who count "by governments" This stated, rather than dramatized, conflict between the

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\(^5^5\) MacLeish, *Scratch*, p. 20
\(^5^6\) Ibid., pp. 28-29.
humanist Peterson and the law-abiding statesman, Webster, acquires a
metaphysical dimension when Webster, in the final scene, arguing the case
for Jubes against Scratch, the devil, comes to see how he himself has sold the
"soul" of his country by rejecting human liberty in favour of the preservation
of the Union, by violating the sanctity of the human spirit in restoring the
fugitive slaves to the servitude.

As Scratch, the devil of Benet's folk tale, meets Webster in his
backyard at Marshfield in the second scene and expresses his gratitude for
undertaking his "business" of turning hope into despair, humanity into a
diabolical law, the history merges into myth and folklore, the historic
Webster into a folk-hero. By this complex manipulation of myth and folklore
on the one hand and history on the other, MacLeish brings a theological and
metaphysical perspective to the purely political history of the 1850s. Thus,
the historic events of the pre-Civil War era are seen not as the outcome of
certain opposing political forces merely but the active involvement of some
supernatural forces. Webster himself declares in the final scene:

I've always known - we all do - that there's
ever in the universe. Purposeful evil. Not the
opposite of good or the defect of good but something
to which good itself is an irrelevance, a
fantasy- the wish for darkness underneath the
love of light. But to meet it face to face -- the
contemptuous derisive laughter! To learn that
what it laughs at is mankind -- man's life -- man's
hope of life!\textsuperscript{57}

The final scene in which Webster undertakes the soul-mortgage case
of Jabez to save him from the devil, serves him as an eye-opener. As he
proceeds to argue the case of Jabez, he finds that he himself and his republic
at large are also on trial. And the decision for one becomes the decision for
the rest. Webster explains to Jabez the evil intentions of the devil which are
fare more ambitious than ambitious than Webster had thought at the
beginning of the trial:

Webster : Take you! He's after bigger game.
You're nothing but the fish head in the
mink trap, Neighbor Stone!
Jabez: I know. I know now. He wants you.
Webster: More than me. If he can shame
the country with your shame he'll take the
country--make a butt and byword of our
talk of human decency, of human worth--
make fools of all of us.\textsuperscript{58}

Saving Jabez, thus, becomes more than a moral obligation. It becomes the
crucial issue of saving the Republic itself. Since Jabez cannot be saved
according to the letter of the law, since everything written in the bond
supports the plaintiff, Webster appeals to the sense of humanity in the jury.

\textsuperscript{57} MacLeish, Scratch, pp. 94-95.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, p. 94.
He comes to see the truth in the argument put up by Peterson in the first scene when he realizes:

He'd tell you: he tells me! Count by men, he says, and shame the Devil. He means the man comes first -- whatever man-- the last -- the least -- because he's last and least. He means the way to save the country is to save the man. He's right.

I guess there never was another way. 59

He comes to see "in myth" the mistakes committed by him "in history". Awakened thus, he brings the attention of the jury of the dead and damned not to the letter of the law, but to the miserable conditions under which Jabzez has sold his soul-the broken plow, the sweating horse, the terrible unending winters, the treacherous springs, the loneliness at dusk, the wind at night, and his children sick. He appeals to the sense of patriotism in the jury which, in fact, consists of members no other than the traitors in American history. He eloquence and humanity convince even them and arouse in them the patriotic spirit. Persuaded by Webster's impressive rehtoric, they give the verdict in favour of Jabez and by extension in favour of the Republic.

By this semi-biographical and semi-historical play in which the historic Webster learns a moral lesson, MacLeish urges his contemporaries to see their own mistakes as they are reflected in the historic career of Webster. The play suffers, however, from a basic contradiction which

59 MacLeish, Scratch, p. 95.
touches the heart of the play. On the one hand, the author declares in the foreword that Webster was the one man in those tragic times of the history who could understand that there was no choice between Liberty and the Union and that they were one and inseparable. It is for this reason, he says, that the historic role of Webster becomes more important to the present political crisis engendered by the quarrel between the Leftists and the Rightists in the contemporary politics. On the other hand, he shows in the play how historic Webster has been wrong in preserving the Union at the cost of human liberty. How are we to reconcile these contradictory views? It is then, no wonder that Henry Hewes reviewing the play in Saturday Review, found it "too ambiguous".

This ambiguity in the play seems to have emerged from the playwright's inadequate imaginative realization of the historical details from a consistent point of view. As in The Trojan Horse, instead of working the inside out, he does the opposite. Consequently, the play becomes more arbitrary and a high-flown rhetoric. MacLeish's failure in assimilating historical detail into an ordered meaning can be seen in the first act in which the dramatic meaning of Webster's political career gets drowned in the mass scale references to the historical facts and the tedious discussions between Peterson and Webster. In this connection, Brendan Gill's views are worth reproducing here:

The first act, in which Daniel, Webster carries on a highfalutin discussion of his recent political conduct with the learned hired man on his Marshfield farm, becomes a model of how not to fulfill the requirements of dramatic exposition; having been given far too much potted American history and far too little action, we begin to speculate on how pleasant it would be if the Devil, instead of offering Webster the greatest opportunity of his oratorical career, were to silence him forever.61

Yet another defect arising out of the uninterested conception of history can be observed in the lack of progression in the play. The action of the play is not dramatic in which one event logically springs from the other event, but "illustrative" in which the same material, situations and problems are repeated throughout the play. In other words, the dramatic construction tends to follow a pattern of repetition. For example the opposing views of Daniel Webster and Peterson on individual freedom and the law of constitution in the first scene are repeated in the discussion between the Devil and Daniel in the second scene. This repetition continues even into the final scene when Webster realizes how he himself and the American Republic are also on trial. These repeated arguments on the same issue contribute towards the static impression of the play.

The lack of progression in the play can also be attributed to the rhetorical bias of the playwright. Instead of affirming his democratic humanism as it passes through the test of dramatic logic and intellectual justification, he simply drowns the stage with the patriotic slogans and rhetorical speeches. Instead of arriving at a dramatic solution through resolving the opposites, he simply upholds the one and rejects the other. As a result the play ignores the theory that "contradiction is the power that moves things."\(^62\) Webster's swaying the jury of the dead and damned in favour of Jabez in the final scene by sheer profusion of words and patriotic rhetoric is dramatically unconvincing. His appeal lacks the intellectual toughness necessary for such a crucial decision on which the entire meaning of the play depends. Consider the lines in which Webster appeals to the sense of patriotism in the jury consisting of Colonel Burr, Captain Jim, Mr. Webb, Mr. Lynch, etc., all, of course, are traitors in American history:

There may be much in our Republic which enrages you--I speak to you, sir, Colonel Burr. There may be much. But honest indignation is not hate. It scorns the false to find the true and so it learns to love the true. As you have learned, in death, to love your country. Not, Colonel Burr, as you once thought, because she offered you an empire for your glory.\(^63\)

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\(^63\) *Scratch*, p. 107.
All this indicates that MacLeish has failed in writing an intense play
on a historical subject with contemporary echoes. Compared to other
historical plays like Miller's The Crucible and Robert Sherwood's Abe
Lincoln in Illinois, MacLeish's play dwindles into an abstract generalization
without a character or situation being realized. In Scratch, the author's defect
remains as serious as in his play, The Trojan Horse. In both the plays, he
fails to probe into the core of the situation as it presents in its internal
relationship to the contemporary situation. In this connection, the views of
Edwin Honig are illuminating when he says:

The dynamics of an obligation which compel
MacLeish to be 'true to his time', and which
compel him to create, are not penetrated by
the sense of a personally conceived imaginative
view to his materials, --a view which, in
heightening the reality of that fact, would
make it certain knowledge. The result is not
simply that he is forced into abstraction,
but that he is actually led to impose upon
the reality of that fact a pseudo-reality, an
unreality.

To sum up, MacLeish is one of the few American dramatists who have
attempted to bring a transpersonal and universal perspective to the
contemporary political themes by having recourse to ancient myth and

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history on the one hand and by subjecting the socio-political materials of his plays to the pressure of anti-realistic devices. This interest in myth and history on the part of the poet has been a conscious effort to partake of the world's greatest heritage and also make this heritage meaningful to the present political crisis. From this point of view, MacLeish's interest in the past is not an escape from the present in fact it is because he is so vitally concerned with the present that he uses the ancient myth and history to interpret the present dilemma of the modern man in the contemporary political world.

Like the French playwrights who have used the ancient myths and folklore on the modern stage in the early fifties, McLeish seems to have been concerned with the theatre of "situation" rather than "character". Jean-Paul Sartre, in one of his articles, expressing the intentions of the young French playwrights in creating a theatre of "situation", writes:

The theatre, as conceived of in the period between the two world wars, and as it is perhaps still thought of in the United today, is a theatre of characters. The analysis of characters and their confrontation was the theatre's chief concern. The so-called "situations" existed only for the purpose of throwing the characters into clearer relief. The best plays in this period were psychological studies of a coward, a liar, an ambitious man or a frustrated one....
The young playwrights of France do not believe men share a ready-made 'human nature' which may alter under the impact of a given situation... what nature but the situations in which man finds himself...  

He further points out:

As a successor to the theatre of characters
we want to have a theatre of situations that
are most common to human experience, those
which occur at least in the majority
of lives.

In this light, all MacLeish's political plays, The Fall of the City, The Trojan Horse and Scratch are attempts to explore the universality of human situation and the recurrent dilemma of the human spirit through myth and history. Thus, the problem of dictatorship, the inhumanity of man to man, and the internal perils to individual liberty and freedom which the poet treats in his plays are not merely problems of today but have occurred time and again, if in different form, throughout the history of human life.

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66 Ibid., p. 401.