

B. Traven's **The Treasure of  
the Sierra Madre:**  
A Re-evaluation

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### **Abstract**

This paper concerns B. Traven's novel, **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** (1927). The work occupies an important place in the development of Traven's fiction for two main reasons-a) it is the last of his novels to deal directly with the outcasts of western industrialized civilization in the post- World War One years, and b) it marks the beginning of Traven's interest in cultural primitivism, particularly in the communalistic society of the Chiapas Indians of South Mexico. The discussion concentrates on the way in which Traven contrasts the decadence of American capitalist society (represented by the three gold prospectors) with the traditional values of the Indian commune. The paper attempts to identify those aspects of Indian life and thought which Traven saw as antidotes to the ills of modern 'civilized' society.

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Although **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** (1927)<sup>1</sup> is probably the best known of B. Traven's novels - thanks largely to John Huston's filmed version of 1947 - it remains overshadowed in the Traven canon by **The Death Ship** (1926), a more complex work which continues to arouse new critical interest for its insights into the disintegration of the Western psyche in the aftermath of World War I. Early reviews of **The Treasure** focussed heavily on it as a "rip-roaring adventure story", and on its parallels to the traditional "Radix Malorum" theme.<sup>2</sup> More recent assessments have dwelt on the novel's psychological aspects. In the lengthiest single analysis of the novel to date, Donald Chankin (1975) asserts that "the center of interest is in the psychological element, not... in the social commentary of a proletarian author"<sup>3</sup>-- a view which leads Chankin to some intricate psychoanalytical speculations and in the process to minimise the novel's importance as a political - cultural statement. Not so readily recognised by the critics, however, has been the fact that **The Treasure** marks an important stage in the development of Traven's thematic interests during the mid - and late 1920's. In **The Death Ship**, Traven had exposed the bankruptcy of the American Dream as part of the decay of Western civilization in general, but had offered no option except that of individual catharsis. Following a year later, **The Treasure** amplifies the theme of the failed American Dream and posits an alternative model of social organization in the primitive civilization of the Mexican Indians. In his concern with the attenuated American Dream and with the possibility of regeneration through an idyllic communalism, Traven was echoing the practice of various American writers of the 1920's who had written off the national myth and who were turning to various forms of the primitive as an antidote to a decadent culture and its discredited values.

The historical backdrop to the central drama of **The Treasure** is the pillage by white civilization (Spanish and, more recently, American) of Mexico's vast mineral wealth - principally, its gold. Traven punctuates his narrative with lurid tales of gold madness, of Conquistador at the throat of Conquistador and American prospector set against his partners in crazed lust for the yellow metal. It is a damning record of a culture hopelessly abandoned to materialism, greed, and treachery. The story's immediate context is American capital's rapacious exploitation of Mexican oil resources during the early 1920's. Characteristically, Traven comments on this manifestation of American economic imperialism through the vocabulary of despoilation and death, as in his image of the oil refineries which line the river side where Dobbs and Barber await their ferry crossing:

The refineries discharged clouds of smoke and gas. The gas got into lungs and windpipes and stung like sharp

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needles. Then everybody coughed, and when the wind carried these fumes over the city the whole population felt it lived in a lethal chamber. Newcomers who were not used to it felt apprehensive and nervous. They clutched their throats all the time and tried to sneeze or snort it out, and wondered what was up. Many of them felt as though they would die of this smarting poison in the throat and lungs. But those who knew it of old were glad to put up with it. So long as this acrid poison gas pervaded the town, gold ran through its streets and life was rosy, look at it how you liked.<sup>4</sup>

In similar terms, Traven later describes the irresistible energy of American technology as Dobbs and Barber help clear a remote bush site for the sinking of a new oil well. At times, Traven appears almost in awe of the sheer power and efficiency of the operation, but still leaves no doubt that this far-reaching tentacle of American big business is a massively destructive force. When a dynamo is installed at the site, "there was an island of brilliant illumination which turned night into day, where only a few weeks before the bush had lain undisturbed in its tropical isolation since the creation of the world. The quiet of night was destroyed and all life in the bush within the radius of the perpetual illumination began to sicken." (**Treasure**, p.39) The machine has entered the garden and, typically in Traven's vision, technological progress becomes synonymous with death, physical or spiritual.

Traven's trio of American down-and-outs-Dobbs, Curtin, and the veteran prospector, Howard - mirror the exploitative and acquisitive morality of modern American capitalism in their own search for riches. Traven clearly intends a parallel between the multi-million dollar operations of the giant oil corporations and the shoe-string prospecting venture of the three Americans. In the unbridled greed, unscrupulousness and violence which dominate their story, Traven sees a lurid reflection of a similarly predatory ethic in the plush board - rooms of Wall Street and Fifth Avenue. Forced into Mexico by a depressed capitalism north of the border, the gold-hunters are simultaneously victims and advocates of that system (Traven is painfully familiar with lumpenproletarian conservatism, and refers to it scathingly throughout his fiction). It is impossible, certainly, to see Traven's protagonists as in any way hostile to capitalism or its goals. Howard would appear the capitalist speculator par excellence, a man who has made and lost fortunes at gold-digging. "I've dug for gold in Alaska and found it," he says, "I've dug in British Columbia, in Australia, in Montana, in Colorado. And made my pile, too.. I've lost my last fifty thousand in oil." (**Treasure**, p. 46)

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The goldhunt is a straightforward capitalist venture, as Traven's choice of vocabulary indicates: they are "partners in an enterprise." (**Treasure**, p. 65) Their problem, initially, is one of capital - "you need capital first," says the experienced Howard, in order to embark on their proposed "line of business." (**Treasure**, p. 52) The problem is overcome by a pooling of their meagre financial resources, each making his own investment to their corporate working capital.

Eventually, the Americans' speculation is rewarded with profits of some fifty thousand dollars. At this point in the narrative, the three begin to fantasize on how to spend their hard earned wealth. Howard and Dobbs

spoke of going into partnership and opening a cinema together at Monterey or Tampico. Dobbs was to take charge of the artistic side, selecting the films, taking charge of the performances, writing the programmes and seeing to the music, while Howard was to be responsible for the business side, the cafe, the payments and receipts, the printing, the repairs and decoration of the building. (**Treasure**, p. 74)

Later, following his 'murder' of Curtin, Dobbs plans to use the proceeds of his gold sale "to start some enterprise, a factory or a ranch." (**Treasure**, p. 175) There is nothing here of the "anarchism" which one critic has found in both Dobbs and Howard.<sup>5</sup> They may be cast off by the capitalist system as superfluous to its operations, but the three Americans can hardly wait to renew their membership in it. This time, however, they will re-enter as entrepreneurs, petty capitalists, rather than as mere labourers.

It is this urge to regain a foothold in capitalist society which distinguishes the three gold-seekers in **The Treasure** from Gerard Gales, the protagonist of Traven's previous novel, **The Death Ship**. There, the downtrodden and dispossessed sailor-narrator, Gales, has seen through the American Dream and its Horatio Alger mythology. Following the magazine 'success stories' of the self-made millionaires, Gales has toiled at various jobs from the age of six, but he comments wryly that he is "still far from being the first president of the California Railroad and Steamship and Fruit Corporation." After fifty years of hard work, he says, "I might by then call myself a useful and honest citizen and a member of the lower middle-class, ready to buy a gas-station somewhere on a highway. A fine and noble prospect,"<sup>6</sup> he comments sarcastically. Eventually, he divorces himself altogether from American post World War I society and its ethics. For Gales, having nothing and being no-one are vital elements in his spiritual rescue. In the less metaphorical

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**Treasure**, the movement is in the opposite direction. At the outset, Dobbs is already close to meeting the requirements for spiritual salvation as dictated in **The Death Ship** - Dobbs "had less than nothing, for he was not even adequately or completely clothed, and clothing, to those in need, is a modest start towards capital" (**Treasure**, p. 5) The crucial difference between the two, of course, is that Gales is no longer "under the influence of the success stories of the builders of our nation" (**Death Ship**, p.9), has consciously rejected the American Dream. Dobbs, in contrast, sees no alternatives. He subscribes unquestioningly to capitalist values, and is quick to ridicule Curtin's respect for "honest labour" as "Bolshie notions". (**Treasure**, p. 164) Dobbs, in fact, is precisely that type of acquiescent, un-class-conscious proletarian that Traven rails against throughout **The Death Ship** - workers with "middle-class ideas they can't shake off." (**Death Ship**, p. 84)

It is on Dobbs and his gradual psychic disintegration that Traven's interest is focussed. Whereas both Howard and Curtin retain some belief in such concepts as fair play and the nobility of labour, Dobbs quickly emerges as the truly disruptive element, the first to resort to violence, the last to be touched by the conventional morality of a white Christian civilization which, in his eyes, makes him naturally superior to the Mexican Indian "vermin". In the snarling underdog Dobbs, greed and competitiveness are at their wildest. At pains to ensure that we do not see Dobbs's moral rottenness as some kind of aberration, Traven emphasises Dobbs's ordinariness, his representativeness as an average American working stiff. At the beginning of the tale, we are told that his "preoccupation was the one usual with so many of us - how to get hold of some money." (**Treasure**, p. 5) Later, when Dobbs evolves his idea of cheating Howard and Curtin out of the fruits of their labour, he is merely treating them according to the norms of the big labour contractors, one of whom had recently tried to trick Dobbs out of some wages. And at the end of the tale, with Dobbs's murderous treachery exposed, Howard is able to make a generous assessment of his ex-partner's conduct: "Actually," he says, "he wasn't a crook. At bottom he was a decent fellow." When Curtin objects that Dobbs had no conscience, Howard replies in significant terms - "He had just as much or just as little as the rest of us who know we have to use our elbows to get on top". (**Treasure**, p. 217)

Howard's words recall the standard turn - of - the - century naturalistic view of life as a crude battle for supremacy, but the old man acknowledges that Dobbs's behaviour has been conditioned by the imperatives imposed by the modern capitalist state. In one of Traven's characteristic tirades against the evils of capitalist civilization, Howard goes on:

'Conscience only shouts when it has good backing,

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That's the reason for prisons, hangmen and the pains of hell. Had the armament manufacturers, who made their money by helping the peoples of Europe to massacre each other, any conscience? Had Mr Wilson any conscience when he let fifty thousand of our young men be murdered because Wall Street was afraid of losing its money and the munition makers wanted to do even better business? If he had, it's the first I've heard of it. It's only the small fry who have to have a conscience; the others don't need one.' (**Treasure**, pp. 217-218)

Dobbs's moral degeneracy, therefore, is merely a reflection of a spiritually bankrupt society which places profit above all and which hails the ruthlessly greedy "oil magnates, steel kings, and railway lords" as "examples of energy, will - power and achievement." (**Treasure**, p. 165) Traven's emphasis on the correspondence between Dobbs and the social system that has produced him was noted by several early reviewers of the novel. The reviewer for the **New York Herald Tribune Books** wrote that "gold is a symbol of the evils of a system based on price and profit. For it was that system which made the weakling, Dobbs, a vicious and yellow underdog in the first place."<sup>7</sup>

Dobbs's lack of conscience is also traced to his brutalizing experience as a soldier in the First World War, to which Traven refers regularly in his fiction (most notably in **The Death Ship**) as a crucial watershed in the decline of western culture and its values. We learn that Dobbs emerged from his military service as a hero, having killed no fewer than twenty- three German soldiers without the slightest twinge of remorse. Dobbs recalls one particularly savage battle experience:

There was that time in the Argonne. A German machine-gun nest. Lord, how they stuck it!  
With two full companies we couldn't get near them. At last their losses were too heavy and they showed a rag of white. There were eleven of them still alive. As we went forward they put their hands up and laughed. They were true soldiers, and thought us the same. We bayoneted the lot like so many cattle. (**Treasure**, p. 173)

The atrocity dramatizes what must have been for Traven one of the most tragic aspects of the First World War - the destruction of working class internationalism, with proletarian pitted against proletarian as the paid assassins of the capitalist state. Dobbs's war experience has merely

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underlined for him the irrelevance of conscience in the modern state. "Soldiers and hangmen get their pay," he observes, which is "why their consciences don't trouble them, however many they may do in." (**Treasure**, p. 174) Small wonder, therefore, that after shooting Curtin down in cold blood, Dobbs "felt like an onlooker. Not for a moment did he feel any pity or even a pang of remorse. There was nothing to regret." (**Treasure**, p. 173)

In many respects, then, Dobbs represents a proletariat dehumanised and alienated by a capitalism grown fat on the organized mass-slaughter of World War I. But Dobbs's aggressive individualism is countered to some extent by the attitudes of his partners, Howard and Curtin, both of whom are shown still to attach some importance to the conventional decencies. When Dobbs suggests doing away with the stranger, Lacaud, Howard protests that it would be "a dirty trick" (**Treasure**, p. 83). Curtin, later, is shocked at Dobbs's scheme to deprive Howard of his share of the gold when the old man goes off to doctor a sick Indian child. "It isn't as if he stole it or picked it up," says Curtin, "or won it in a lottery or in the money market or at Monte Carlo. He got it out of the ground by honest labour, and hard labour too. There's not much I respect. But I have some respect for what a man has got by the toil of his own hands." (**Treasure**, p. 164) Seeing that Dobbs is ready to kill for the gold dust, Curtin realises that it is a case of "slay or be slain". But having decided to shoot Dobbs first, Curtin rejects the idea of making off with the dead man's share: "I won't have his bronze," thought Curtin, 'but I must put him out of the way. The old man shall have his share and I shall have mine, and that swine's I'll bury with him. I won't be the richer for him, but my life is worth as much as his.' Both Curtin and Howard are able to apply final limits to what is morally permissible in the pursuit of wealth, whereas the completely amoral Dobbs acknowledges no such restraints. In Traven's view of things, however, the moral scruples of Curtin and Howard are inevitably doomed in the face of Dobbs's singleminded greed. It is only through the ironic machinery of Traven's plot that Dobbs's avarice receives symbolic punishment when he is beheaded by the three Mestizos on the way to his golden future.

Traven's main narrative strategies in **The Death Ship** and **The Treasure** have a good deal in common. In both stories, Traven isolates a community of men beyond the bounds of civilized society and subjects them to a purgatorial ordeal through a life of toil, deprivation, and pain. The torture borne by the crew of the tramp steamer, the 'Yorikke' in **The Death Ship** is almost equalled by the torment of the prospectors in **The Treasure**. It was "the most miserable existence you can imagine," Traven stresses, and Dobbs "said one evening that he had felt more of a human being in the worst

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trenches in France.” (**Treasure**, p. 70) By releasing his sufferers from the controlling conditions of ‘civilization’ - aboard the ‘Yorikke’ or in the Mexican wilderness in **The Treasure** - Traven is able to examine his characters’ conduct with the social mask stripped away. In each situation there is the possibility for total authenticity of behaviour, a freedom from the need for pretence. In **The Death Ship**, Gales praises the death - trap ‘Yorikke’ as “no hypocrite. Your heart does not bleed tears when you do not feel heart - aches deeply and truly.. Your heart never lies.” (**Death Ship**, pp.263-264) And at one point in **The Treasure** Howard reminds his partners that in the wilderness “there’s no occasion for hypocrisy. It’s all clear and above board. In the towns there are all kinds of obstacles and restraints. Here there’s one obstacle - the life of the other man.” (**Treasure**, p. 68) By exposing his characters to this extreme pressure, Traven probes to the core of the modern personality, tracing its true potential for good (Gales’s compassion and saving self - awareness in **The Death Ship**) or for evil (Dobbs’s homicidal avarice in **The Treasure**).

One of Traven’s bleaker findings concerns the possibility for proletarian brotherhood. In **The Death Ship**, the hellish existence on board the ‘Yorikke’ does nothing to unite the oppressed ship - mates in anything like comradeship or class solidarity. “We did not like each other,” says Gales, and “we did not hate each other. Simply we could not and would not make friends or even comrades. Through Gales, Traven dismisses “communism and internationalism and eternal brotherhood of the working - class” as “Bunk”. (**Death Ship**, p. 232) Similarly, the Americans in **The Treasure** are unable to join in genuine camaraderie through their common suffering. As a community, they are tied only by economic relations, through a mutual concern for profit, and their real dependence on one another in order to make that profit a possibility. “They had scarcely ever given a thought to the possibility of being friends,” says Traven. “At best, they were partners in an enterprise. They had come together simply from motives of gain. And as soon as this motive ceased, their partnership would be dissolved.” The harsh conditions the three endure should have made them friends, “according to all the laws of human intercourse,” (**Treasure**, p. 65) Traven notes. But the most that is achieved is an enforced unity, typified by their private slang. Only at the end of their quest, after a year’s shared deprivation, do they feel “for the first time that they were bound together by a bond of friendship, comradeship and brotherhood. They felt that they would stand by each other even at the cost of their lives. They felt closer to each other than actual brothers”. (**Treasure**, p. 130) But these prove quite illusory feelings, and the fragile rapport of the American group is soon smashed as Dobbs’s destructive greed begins to assert itself. Whatever the ‘natural’ community that may temporarily have surfaced, Traven shows it to be insignificant in the

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face of the conditioning power of the capitalist state.

In 1926, B. Traven spent some time in the South Mexican state of Chiapas, working as a photographer on a government - sponsored scientific expedition led by Enrique Juan Palacios. Two years later Traven completed a travel work about the state, entitled **Land des Frühlings (Land of Spring)**, published in Germany by the Büchergilde Gutenberg, Berlin. It is clear from **Land** that what he had seen of the lives of the South Mexican Indians had made a deep impression on Traven. Like D.H. Lawrence, who had visited Mexico in 1924, Traven feared the destruction of personality by the regimenting power of the industrialized state, and found a kind of unadulterated individuality in the Mexican Indians, who seemed still to be leading lives completely at one with nature. But whereas Lawrence was obviously made uncomfortable by his contact with the Indians ("queer little savages",<sup>8</sup> he called them in one letter), Traven saw much to admire. Foremost among the various aspects of Indian life that appealed to him was their strong communal sense. "The interests of the Indian," he says, "never deviate from the interests of the community. His interests are identical with the interests of all, without his even being aware of the fact."<sup>9</sup> As Michael Baumann has written, in **Land** Traven "returns to the notion of the communal sense again and again and sets it off against European and American individualism.. A note of nostalgia for the communes of the past is sounded in **Land**, a longing for the way Traven believes the Indians on the North American continent used to live before the white man came and brought with him the institution of the state." (Baumann, 1977:80)

It is clear from **The Treasure** that what Traven thought he had found in the primitive communalism of the Chiapas Indians was a forrn of lost ideal against which to measure some of the deficiencies of modern capitalist society. Traven is particularly impressed by the Indians' long history of resistance to the white man's gold lust, and their ferocious determination to preserve their way of life from the alien influences of white civilization. Howard's cautionary story of the Green Water Mine illustrates this. We are told that in the first half of the eighteenth century the Green Water Mine in New Mexico was taken by the Spaniards from its Mexican owners "after the Indians had been forced by merciless tortures--tongues pulled out, skulls gimleted and other such Christian attentions-- to betray its whereabouts." The Indians laid a curse on the mine, and the Spaniards died to a man of various diseases, so that by 1762 the mine was lost. In 1886, the mine was rediscovered by American prospectors, all except one of whom were then murdered in an Indian attack. The mine again vanished. "Perhaps it had been buried again by a landslip or earthquake, or else the Indians had obliterated all trace of it," suggests Howard. "They did not want anyone in their territory; for a mine like that would have drawn men in hundreds to the

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spot, and thrown the whole neighborhood into such a tumult that nothing would have been left of the life they were accustomed to." (**Treasure**, p. 52)

What seems to interest Traven most is the Indians' traditional refusal to allocate any talismanic value to gold, their insistence that it has no intrinsic worth. This attitude is eloquently expressed by an Indian chieftain in another of Howard's tales, concerning the avaricious but unfortunate Donna Catalina Maria de Rodriguez. Unlike the Spaniards, the chieftain explains, "we have never made gold our master, we were never its slaves. We said: Gold is beautiful. And so we made rings of it and other adornments, and we adorned ourselves and our wives and our gods with it, because it has beauty. But we did not make it into money." Gold and silver, he continues, "are only good to look at. I can't put them into my belly when I am hungry, and so they have no value." (**Treasure**, p. 137) We do not know how much of Marx Traven actually read, if any, but the chieftain's words run interestingly close to Marx's statement in **Das Kapital** that gold is no exception to the labour theory of value - in other words, that the value of gold as a commodity is not intrinsic but is derived from the human labour expended in obtaining it.

The modern Indians in **The Treasure** may not have their forefathers' violent hostility to gold worship, but they do retain a way of assessing non-monetary value which is in stark contrast to the commodity fetishism of Dobbs and his companions. Dobbs understands this, for he explains to Barber at one point that the Indians "don't estimate wealth the way we do. It's a matter of a horse or a cow or two or a few goats. That's their wealth." (**Treasure**, p. 28) Similarly, the Indians also remain suspicious of 'business' as used in the white man's sense. After saving the life of an Indian child, Howard explains to the boy's father that "important business" will prevent him from accepting the Indian's offer of hospitality. The Indian objects that "business can always wait," and one of his companions adds that "business is tough, like the flesh of an old goat. Business makes trouble. Why do you want to make trouble for yourselves when you can have all you want with us?" (**Treasure**, p. 157) Howard's "medicine" has to be paid for, the Indians insist, but for them his assistance is not measurable in crude monetary terms.

Traven's depiction of the Chiapas Indians in **The Treasure** is selective, and quite impressionistic, and presents nothing like the more objective anthropological analysis offered in **Land des Frühlings**. There, although clearly impressed by the Indians' values and social organisation, Traven describes their daily lives in the drabest of terms. "The primitive life of an Indian commune may sound idyllic when one hears about it," he writes, but he cautions that "when one has to live in it, that life becomes so

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impoverished, sober, dry and colorless that a civilized man would not deem it worth living" (in Baumann, 1977:80)--an aspect of Indian life barely hinted at in the novel. In **The Treasure**, as Traven characterizes it, Indian society retains some important pre-capitalist features (its lack of class divisions, its communalistic harmony, and its preference for kin relationships rather than the contractual relationships of the market place) which obviously appealed to him as antidotes to modern capitalist society. It is significant, of course, that at the end of the novel, Traven has Howard and Curtin remain with the Indians rather than open a delicatessen shop in Tampico. Metaphorically, through their decision, Traven underlines his emphatic rejection of the American Dream and its criteria. But as far as the two Americans are concerned, their decision is prompted more by a wish to be "sure of board and lodging" for a while than by any real appreciation of the Indian outlook on life. Howard speaks so amusedly of his role in the village as healer and medicine man (his prescription for all ailments is hot water and lemon juice) that it is difficult to see his decision as really "a disengagement from Western civilization", (Chankin, 1975:55) as Donald Chankin has rather grandly defined it.

Also set in post-revolutionary Mexico, Traven's first novel, **The Cotton Pickers** (1926)<sup>10</sup>, had been his earliest attempt at depicting the lives of migrant laborers and down - and - outs, told in picaresque style through the ironic eyes of Gerard Gales, the American pro-Wobbly narrator. Following **The Death Ship**, **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** came as the third and last of Traven's novels to deal directly with the jetsam of post - war urban civilization. The bulk of Traven's later works, known collectively as 'The Jungle Novels',<sup>11</sup> would be set exclusively in the largely semi-feudal setting of rural Mexico, and would focus increasingly on the lives of the oppressed peon and Indian slave workers of the mahogany forests and their struggle for liberation. In its historical moment, therefore, **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** signals Traven's move away from the situation of the exploited in western capitalist society (a problem he had apparently found insoluble) and the beginning of his steady retreat to cultural primitivism and the experience of 'natural man'. If **The Death Ship** had shown individual freedom in the 'civilised' world as doomed, then **The Treasure** ends at least on a less despairing note, with the survival of the two Americans and their decision to enter the world of the Indians. It is, however, at best a tentative and somewhat ambiguous gesture on the Americans' part, and one is left to wonder as to the extent of the hope Traven holds out. He is certainly not suggesting that the 'civilised' world may redeem itself through the example of Indian society. Traven knows that it is too late for that. The exact quality of Traven's hope has perhaps best been put by D. Lynn, one of the more

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perceptive Traven commentators: "the Mexican Indians" writes Lynn, "in spite of external pressure, in spite of the slow, steady encroachment of industrialization with its attendant curses, still retain that inner bond of experience, a spiritual unity and continuity, a natural harmony which has not yet been disturbed.. Here the inner core of humanity is still intact."<sup>12</sup> In **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** the social values of the Indians present a fragile and short - term reprieve, but it was the most, realistically, that B. Traven had then to offer.

## Notes

1. First published as **Der Schatz der Sierra Madre**, by the Büchergilde Gutenberg, Berlin, 1927. The first English language edition was brought out in 1934 by Chatto and Windus, London.
2. See William Troy, "Radix Malorum", a review of **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** in **The Nation**, July 17, 1935, pp. 79-80.
3. Donald O. Chankin, **Anonymity and Death: the Fiction of B. Traven** (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), p. 45.
4. **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** (London: Granada Publishing, 1974), p. 21. Subsequent references are to the same edition.
5. See Charles H. Miller, "B. Traven, Pure Proletarian Writer", in **Proletarian Writers of the Thirties**, ed. D. Madden (Carbondale: S. Illinois University Press, 1968), pp. 114-133.
6. **The Death Ship** (London: Sphere Books, 1967), pp. 115, 9.
7. Review by Horace Gregory, in the **New York Herald Tribune Books**, June 9, 1935, p. 5.
8. Letter of November 15, 1924, in **D.H. Lawrence: Letters** (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1950), p. 151.
9. **Land des Frühlings** has not yet been translated into English. Traven's words are translated by Michael Baumann in "B. Traven: Realist and Prophet", **The Virginia Quarterly Review**, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Winter 1977), p. 77.
10. First appeared in German as **Der Wobbly** in Berlin, 1926. Published in English as **The Cotton-Pickers** (London: Robert Hale, 1956)
11. A Series of six novels (date of first English language publication in brackets): **Government** (1935), **The Carreta** (1936), **The Rebellion of the Hanged** (1952), **The General from the Jungle** (1954), **March to the Monteria** (1964). The last in the cycle, **Die Troza**, first appeared in German in 1936, but has yet to be translated into English.

12. D. Lynn, "The Works of B. Traven", in **Arena: a Literary Magazine**, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1950), P, 89.

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