

GABOR Aron

EAST OF HUMANITY . . .

EAST OF MAN by Dr. Aron Gabor

Translated by Kathleen Szasz.
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1975. 375 pages.

In *East of Man*, Dr. Aron Gabor does not mirror words. In phrases burdened with the bitterness of tragedy and through images reflecting the icy soul of Siberia, he explores the ironies of existence in captivity and life in a world where humanity ceases for want of a gram of bread.

"I am building a memorial to those whose problems are over. Those who are dead. Who were sold by Roosevelt, killed by Stalin. And to the hundred million Europeans who spend their days in a half-way station waiting to be noticed." With these words, an often explicit, always painfully honest, but chillingly realistic autobiography unfolds before us.

The existence of Arkady Matveyevich, the Hungarian in Russia, is revealed to us. It is clear from the start that it is only an existence, necessitated by the human spirit in its fight for survival, in surroundings which not only waste away the body but tear at the very foundations of sanity and humanity.

Arkady Matveyevich is the Hungarian, the Convict, the Bourgeois, as well as the Russian citizen, tractor driver and even road-building foreman and "outstanding worker" of the Trade Union of Siberian Forest Workers.

Arkady Matveyevich lives two lives. He knows the truth, but can not speak it; he sees the hypocrisy, but can not change it; he feels the hurt around him, but can not change it.

"Magyar Ujság" Cleveland, O.
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He comes to understand not only himself but also the world around him. As he does, we do also. Images coalesce around us, theories take form, feelings become real which existed but were never realized, since experience denied us access to them.

The Bourgeois understands life in Russia is geared to Russian words, Russian thought. Death, hunger, good and bad, all have different meanings to a Russian. Suffering becomes a way of life, to be welcomed like a good friend, and an integral part of the Russian spirit.

But the Bourgeois is torn by his own feelings. He longs for his homeland with a passion which gives him the reason to live. As he comes to realize this, we can share in his revelation and come to see that it is not blind chance that makes the world speak a hundred different languages and perceive, feel, touch, and apply the same concepts, in a hundred different ways. It is nature's way. It creates struggle, imparts life.

It gives reason to life and purpose to the spirit.

East of Man takes us through the struggle of one man with himself, an inhuman system, and God. In the process it exposes the evil in man, the baseness of a whole national system of forced labor camps, and a system dedicated to building a paper-thin facade of progress why denying the dignity of man. It also makes us realize and appreciate our yearning for a way of life, a nation, and heritage, that is denied to us because of communism. It identifies and taps that hidden energy in all of us seeking our purpose and makes us understand that we are born to our heritage.

This volume, the first of Dr. Gabor's works to appear in English, is not a spy thriller or a piece of fiction. It is an extremely serious work imbued with the exquisite detail of experience which requires total concentration and contemplation. It is not a work meant for casual reading.

It has a message for all those willing to hear, able to see and wanting to experience a part of life which would otherwise remain shrouded forever.

For truly, we are only human beings if we can learn from the past and chart a more noble course for the future.

Lél F. Somogyi

