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1. A Beloved Son of the Bloomsbury Group

30 kilometres to the west of Madrid lies a little farm village named Brunete whose population is about 2000. Houses stand in line around Plaza Major and vegetable fields are encircling the residential area. Plaza Major is just like a patio, having the church in the centre, the village offices and public institutions on both sides.

At the front of Plaza Major the memorial plates to the Franco's victory at the village of Brunete are set in the stone pillars standing on both sides of the steps to the church.

In that Battle of Brunete an ambulance driver in the British Medical Unit was killed. His death was a trivial incident, compared with estimated 23,000 casualties in the battle. ⁽¹⁾

Julian Bell was the name of the driver who died a serene death in the middle of the battle. Julian was born on 4 February 1908 on 46 Gordon Square in London as the first son of Mr. and Mrs. Bell. His father, Clive Bell, was a prominent critic of literature and art and the leader of the Bloomsbury Group, a radical group of intellectuals in the early 20th century. His mother, Vanessa, was a painter. He was a god sent child of the Bloomsbury, an authentic Bloomsbury Junior.

In Julian's boyhood, members of the Bloomsbury group often visited his house. They were the intellectuals of the time in England, including his uncle Leonard Woolf (1880-1969), his aunt Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), the novelist E. M. Forster (1879-1970), the painter Duncan Grant (1885-1978), the art critic Roger Fry (1866-1934), the biographer Lyton Strachery (1880-1932) and the

economist J. M. Keynes (1883-1946). His devoted mother had her precocious son get special education even before he was six years old. Grown ups around Julian were amazed at his extensive learning about history, astronomy, Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory, and Homer's *Odyssey*. Virginia Woolf loved her gifted nephew, appreciating his learning ability.

In September 1919 Julian entered Owens School, a prestigious preparatory school in London. Julian spent two years of boring school life there. Having finished the school, Julian wished to enter Eton College as most of his classmates did. But his parents objected so strongly that he was forced to give up.

Julian entered Leighton Park School, a Quaker public school in the suburbs of Reading. His parents chose the school because during World War I the Quaker Society of Friends refused to serve in the armed forces from their religious beliefs as conscientious objectors in concert with the appeal for pacifism by the Bloomsbury group.

The four year school life in the dorm at Leighton Park School was not very exciting for Julian. At the beginning of the school life he had already felt the sense of failure for not being able to enter Eton College. The teachers' policy of severe punishment and most students' opportunistic and obedient attitudes often disappointed him. Through the experiences in his school and dormitory life Julian came to lose his boyish cheerfulness and became more and more precocious. Holidays were the only time he would get pleasure. He was always looking forward to holidays when he could have a good time with the members of the Bloomsbury Group and satisfy his intellectual curiosity.

Julian's teacher of French language, T. C. Eliot recalled his public school life and remarked;

Very untidy, careless of his appearance, interested in ideas in a much more evident way than his schoolfellows.But this I don't mean that he was a snob, but the Bloomsbury atmosphere was not really the best preparation for the rough & tumble of a boarding school.⁽²⁾

During the public school days, though, there was once an occasion that meant a great deal to Julian's future. At a discussion of the school Julian made a speech on socialism and received the best award for the speech.

What made the fourteen-year-old boy talk about socialism? Though he was extraordinary precocious he was still too young to give a speech on such a social system.

In 1922, when Julian entered the public school, the Labour Party won 142 seats, three times more than before, in the general election, which made the Party the second largest to the Conservative Party in the Parliament. This great advance of the Labour Party had an effect on Julian, who determined to become a socialist. In his own words he "became a socialist at the age of fourteen."⁽³⁾ The fact was that Julian took no active part in actual political activities and remained a mere sympathizer of the Party in his Leighton Park days.

After his graduation from the school, Julian grew to dislike the authoritative and non-political atmosphere of the Bloomsbury Group and began to take a rebellious attitude towards the members.

His father arranged for Julian to study at Sorbonne in Paris for a year before his entering college. He lodged at Prof. M. Pinault at Quartier Latin. Prof. Pinault devotedly gave private lessons to the brilliant and curious boy in literature, history and politics. Julian told later that Prof. Pinault was "one of the nicest human beings I ever knew."⁽⁴⁾ The lodging house was the best place for his study. As time went on, Julian came to spend most of his time strolling around Paris instead of studying at his place or at Sorbonne. He explained that he should go around and widen his social horizons. Prof. Pinault gave him no admonition.

While strolling around Paris on one hand, Julian devoted himself to writing poems on the other. Then he published them which were neoclassic ones in the Georgian style, quite different from those written by young poets of his generation.

His parents were surprised at the news that their son was giving himself up to writing poems in Paris since he had never even talked about poetry at

home before.

After entering Cambridge University Julian continued writing poems, which were never highly evaluated by the members of the Bloomsbury Group except David Garnett (1892-1981). In 1938 the novelist gave Julian his words of appreciation, saying;

Julian was first of all a poet, hard thinking never made *him* thinker; but his poems are exact, clear, and perfectly expressive. In his poetry he has escaped from all his turmoil. He is the poet I like best of his generation.⁽⁵⁾

Virginia Wolf once referred to her nephew as 'Byronic'⁽⁶⁾, which she might have talked about Julian's broad — mindedness rather than of his poetry.

2. Between Literature and Politics

In October 1927 Julian was a freshman at Kings College of Cambridge University. He was tall, had a confident manner and evidently came of a good family. He felt refreshed, after having parted from his life in Paris which had been full of conflict between his inner self in search for his life work and people around him.

His choice of Kings College itself revealed Julian's attitude toward the Bloomsbury Group, for Kings College was more progressive than Trinity College which was the birthplace of the Bloomsbury Group.⁽⁷⁾

At college Julian specialized in history and English literature. Soon after the matriculation he began to lead an unrestrained and multifaceted life, being very active as a speaker of the student union and aspiring young poet.

In his second year Julian was selected for a member of the Society of Apostles, which was a very prestigious and confidential group of intellectuals. Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and Alfred Tennyson (1809-92) were once the members of the group. Every Saturday evening Julian attended its meeting and 'he really felt that he had reached the pinnacle of Cambridge

intellectualism.'⁽⁸⁾ He wrote poems and literary criticism for *The Venture*, *Cambridge Poetry*, *The Cambridge Review* and *New Signatures*. Reading, painting and driving a racing car were his favorite pastimes then.⁽⁹⁾ He lived in comfortable surroundings most of ordinary students never be able to when there were a lot of unemployed workers on the street.

In June 1930 Julian graduated from Kings College having passed the English Tripos and became a special student at the Graduate School there so as to prepare for his doctoral dissertation on Alexander Pope (1688-1744), a poet of the Classical English literature.

As his dissertation failed the examination, he was not nominated for the post of a research fellow, which had been his long-cherished wish to take.

While Julian was working hard for the dissertation, the British political world went into unprecedented confusion. In August 1931 the second MacDonald Labour Party Cabinet resigned in a mass and the National Government was born with the former prime minister Ramsey MacDonald himself as the prime minister of the new cabinet. MacDonald's conversion became the target of criticism by labourers, especially among young members of the Labour Party. They condemned him for his choice as an act of treachery to the working class. The Labour Party garnered only 46 seats including 6 un-nominated candidates, losing 241 seats in the general election on 27 October.

Julian took great interest in such a political situation. He busied himself with helping in the election campaign of a Labour Party candidate whose slogans were "Relief for Unemployment" and "Opposition to War." Julian wrote to John Lehemann, one of his friends, that he was fully engaged in politics and very exhausted after having canvassed by car for 14 hours covering 200 miles.⁽¹⁰⁾ To his disappointment the candidate he had backed up was defeated in the election.

Julian tried to obtain the doctor's degree again next year, in 1932. The title of his dissertation this time was "The Good and All That". He completed it in the autumn of 1933 and presented it with a changed title, "Some general considerations on ethical theory, with their application to aesthetics and

politics". Again he failed to pass the doctoral examination.

Now Julian had no choice but to give up his academic life at Cambridge University. For some time he was groping about in the dark for his future. He continued writing as a young promising critic and poet, whose first poetical works *Winter Movement* (Chatto & Windus, 1930) had been already published.⁽¹¹⁾ He was also devoted himself to reconstruct the half — collapsed local chapter of the Labour Party.⁽¹²⁾

Then Julian took some conspicuous political actions he had never done before. Until then he had never participated in any campaigns carried by the Communist Party. But on 11 November 1933 he took part in an antiwar demonstration organized by John Cornford and other Communist students. Julian made an armoured car of his Morris, which he used to drive with his love in before, and driving that car he repeatedly dashed into a group of the right-wing students who were trying to block the demonstration. The man who took the lead in the demonstration was Guy Burgess⁽¹³⁾, who later became a member of what is called 'Cambridge Ring' or 'Cambridge Five', a spy ring for the Soviet Union. There at Cambridge Guy held an Anti-War Exhibition and launched a campaign against the presentation of the film 'Our Fighting Navy'.

Later in 1951, he was found to be the ring — leader of 'the case of disappearance of a high official in the Foreign Office'. In 1984, a British film "Another Country" was produced, featuring him as a main character.⁽¹⁴⁾

Although taking part in the campaigns with Communist students, Julian's ill feeling against Communists never disappeared.

Julian wrote about the atmosphere at Cambridge in the 1933 December issue of *New Statesman and Nation*.

In the Cambridge that I first knew, in 1929 and 1930, the central subject of ordinary intelligent conversation was poetry. As far as I can remember we hardly ever talked or thought about politics. For one thing, we almost all of us had implicit confidence in Maynard Keynes's rosy prophecies of continually increasing capitalist prosperity.By the end of

1933, we have arrived at a situation in which almost the only subject of discussion is contemporary politics, and in which a very large majority of the more intelligent undergraduates are Communists or almost Communists.⁽¹⁵⁾

The Labour Party Julian had supported rapidly declined while the Communist Party made remarkable progress. Politics affected literature. Literary writings advocating political ideologies were now in the main stream of literature. When Julian refuted John Cornford's article, "The Class Front of Modern Art", appeared in *The Student Vanguard*, John refuted him back. Julian argued against John's refutation again as follows. (II, 6., March 1934)

I attempted to show:(1) That it is almost impossible in England today for anyone to write poetry that will be read by the present English working class;(2) That the younger revolutionary poets are in fact simply writing romantic-subjective poetry about their revolutionary feelings;(3) That this is not a particularly useful activity from the point of view of anyone wishing to bring about a revolution;(4) That it should be possible to write prose that would be directly useful and that would be read by the working class.

A further point that should be made is that there is no reason to suppose that the poetry written at present by romantic revolutionaries is likely to be judged more valuable in some future socialist states than the poetry at present being written by the romantic reactionaries. To assert that the arts are conditioned by the forms of society, or to prophesy the appearance of a great age of literature as a result of successful socialist revolution is one thing; it is quite another to infer a peculiar merit as poetry (or as propaganda) in the work of socialist writers. In one case there is a profound and all-embracing long-period change; in the other are personal conversion.

How many of our 'revolutionary' poets can be trusted not to turn Fascist?⁽¹⁶⁾

We may say that history proved Julian was right.

It is very regrettable that the two promising young men, Julian Bell and John Cornford, had too short lives to fully develop their talents with their own ideas of literature.

3. Julian's decision in China to Fight in the Spanish Civil War

At the end of August 1935 Julian received the news that he would be accepted as a professor of English at the National University of Wuhan in China for three years. Though regretting Julian's departure for China, V. Woolf admitted that academic life in China would be good for him in his future after his spending so many years in London and Cambridge.⁽¹⁷⁾ Julian went aboard a Japanese passenger ship called the Fushimi Maru at Marseilles and headed for China. Having arrived in China in October, he witnessed the real state of war and revolution amidst ongoing battles between China and Japan, which satisfied his curiosity more than literary works. At that time he compiled his own poems he had written after the publication of *Winter Movement* and published his second anthology *Work for the Winter*, 1936.⁽¹⁸⁾ In the middle of June 1936, Julian made a journey, sailing up the Yongzi River. He passed through Chongking and Chengtu, and managed to reach the border of Fu-Chien-lu in Tibet.

During this journey Julian heard in Chengtu the news of the outbreak of a war in Spain. At first it was reported as nothing but a military coup d'etat. As it was developing into a large-scale civil war, his anxiety and impatience grew.

Julian must have some hesitation to go and fight in the war. He did not take any immediate action. There might have been inadequate information of the war in China.

Coming back to Wuhan in the middle of September, Julian had a strong urge to go to Spain, feeling that Spain was 'the right place to be' for him.⁽¹⁹⁾ However, since this urge did not come from his reasonable thinking, he himself could not approve of it. It took him some more time to logically justify his own decision.

Before long Julian had to resign his post because of a sex scandal. Soon

after he arrived at his new post at Wuhan University, he fell passionately in love with a Chinese professor's wife. The two lovers ran away to Beijing but were caught by her husband on the spot. At the end of the term in December, Julian left the university because of 'family reasons' though the school administration tried in vain to persuade him to stay.

At the end of January 1937 Julian left China so as to join the International Brigade in Spain.

What made him decide to fight in the Spanish Civil War? As a liberalist he was apparently sympathetic to the Spanish Republic. But he was neither a firm antifascist like communists and socialists nor an idealistic fighter like volunteers from abroad. His decision seems to have been made with more practical motives.

Since Julian began teaching at Wuhan University he quit writing poems. He wrote to his uncle Leonard Woolf that he wished to become a politician rather than to devote himself to writing or the study of literature.⁽²⁰⁾ As a first step to that future goal he decided to go to war in Spain. He thought that he would gain a good reputation as a practical theorist among leftists in the political world if he had some experiences in the war. Besides he was very much interested in the Civil War. Reading newspapers arrived from Great Britain always a few days later than the published date, he traced the development of the War with some irritation. In his letter to his brother Quentin Bell from China, he wrote as follows, not referring to any political ideologies in the War.

Above all in the south, where the communications with Africa are exposed — and I should like to hear more of the guerillas. Of course if you can combine guerillas and mobile regulars and a solid defensive you ought to be safe to win - it's the peninsula formula.⁽²¹⁾

A few days later he wrote again to the brother about the strategy of the International Brigade fighting to defend Madrid under General Emilio Kleber's command, saying, 'I can't grasp he is being too clever, or why he hasn't pulled

the strings of the bag. I should have thought to battle Franco and force a surrender wouldn't be hard, and would finish the war.'⁽²²⁾ He even called General Kleber 'the armchair general' in the letter.

The real war situation in Spain was very different from what Julian thought. In fact newspapers he had read served as tools of propaganda for the blocs they supported and gave disinformation of the war.

As he decided to go to Spain, Julian felt strong desire to go as soon as possible. He wrote to one of his friends on 27 December; 'My ambition is to join the International Brigade.'⁽²³⁾ On the other hand, however, he wrote to his mother, frankly expressing his ambivalent inner feelings, at one time saying that he would go to Spain and at another that he had given it up. His aunt Virginia Woolf tried to persuade him into going back to China and continuing to teach at the university but not succeeded.⁽²⁴⁾

At the end of January 1937 Julian tried to go straight from China to Madrid through France without visiting England. He was so eager to rush out for defending Madrid and also he wished to avoid meeting his people at home who would undoubtedly try to persuade him out of the war. When his ship called at Colombo on February 20, Julian received a letter from his mother telling her anxiety about his going to Spain. One of his friends must have told her. Julian immediately sent her a telegram, saying "Undecided".⁽²⁵⁾

When the ship arrived at Marseilles, Julian landed and made arrangements to see his mother at Marie Mauron's who was a literary critic he had once visited during his stay in Paris. His mother's reply was that he should come back home at once as she would not go to Paris to see him. Following Mauron's advice, Julian reluctantly decide to come back to England.

4. A Member of the British Medical Unit

On 12 March 1937 Julian arrived in London in a lilac — coloured long silk robe so that he might persuade his parents and other Bloomsbury Group members who were steadfast pacifists. For a few days the family members didn't talk at all about Julian's intention to go to Spain. After a while Julian told

people around him his decision. They were surprised because by that time they began to feel relieved guessing that Julian might have given up going to Spain.

Mr. and Mrs. Woolf tried in vain to induce him to stay in England, introducing him an job or offering him a plan to publish his book with their own company, Hogarth Press.⁽²⁶⁾

It took some time for Julian to persuade his parents to consent his going to Spain because his explanation didn't have enough persuasiveness. He wanted to be in the International Brigade just because he wished to have an experience of fighting in a battle and get a chance to enter the political world. During the stay at home in England, he took the stump for a Labour Party candidate in Birmingham and even had a meeting with Hugh Dalton, a Labour Party executive, to see the possibility of his becoming a successful politician.

At activist gatherings of the Cambridge Student Body or at the Apostles meeting, Julian deliberately talked about strategies of the Spanish Civil War, mentioning nothing about anti-fascism ideology. He received very little support or sympathy.

D. Garnett and Keynes, both the members of the Bloomsbury Group, also asked Julian not to go to Spain, saying that it would be wiser and more effective to stay in London and prepare for the attack by Hitler. But Julian wouldn't hear them.

At Julian's home, his father who was a firm pacifist was against his decision and their relations were getting more and more strained.

Entreated by her sister Vanessa, Virginia Woolf introduced Julian to two writers who were taking the Spanish Republican side, Stephen Spender and Kingsley Martin. Both of them had just come back from Spain, having suffered many hardships on the Republican camp. They tried to persuade him to give up his decision, telling him how their war experiences had disillusioned them and suggested that it might be more meaningful for him to engage himself in rescue activities in England than going to Spain as the war situation was getting favourable to Franco.⁽²⁷⁾

However, Julian's firm determination never shaken in spite of such

reasonable advices and suggestions.

Julian's mother, Vanessa, also entreated him not to go to Spain. She was the only woman Julian respected except Jane Austin.⁽²⁸⁾ At last her entreaty made him give up taking part in the International Brigade as a volunteer soldier. Julian and his mother made a compromise with the conclusion that Julian should participate in the War as a driver of an ambulance on the British Medical Unit and write to his mother occasionally. During the stay at home Julian mastered first aid treatment, got the driver's license for larger vehicles and learned some Spanish conversational language. He even managed to see the Chinese professor's wife he once loved and several other young women he knew.

On 7 June 1937 Julian left London with several members of the Medical Unit in an ambulance loaded with medical instruments. Leaning out of the window, he waved people at the platform and said, "Goodbye until this time next year."⁽²⁹⁾

At that time the British Medical Unit was officially recognized as a non-combatant group and its members were easily allowed to enter Spain, with showing certain documents such as non-combatant pledge, the ambulance driver's license and medical qualification.

On 10 June the ambulance Julian drove entered Spain by way of France. Passing by the Mediterranean cities of Barcelona, Tarragona and Tortosa, the next day they arrived at Valencia, where the Republican government was.

Valencia was not the war front. As there was not much medical work to do the group spent quite peaceful days there, going to the mountain area to buy some eggs and other food or to see the bullfight in the ambulance car.

Julian wrote to his mother in his letter dated 13 June that Valencia was perfect place to see "a number of things at first hand one had only read about before."⁽³⁰⁾

Though Julian did not perceive any political change there in Valencia, latent antagonism within the Republican government began to cause fatal disintegration.

On 22 June Julian was ordered to move to the Madrid front where they were fighting to smash Franco's headquarters of Madrid encircling operation in the village of Brunete. In the vicinity of Madrid there were incessantly small-scale combats. Julian was so busy carrying wounded soldiers that he hardly had time to rest. He wrote to his mother that he had "a very hard two — days driving about 500 miles."⁽³¹⁾ It took him several days only to finish writing the letter because newly occurred emergencies repeatedly interrupted him. In the letter he wrote about his comrade Richard Rees and his own experiences in the battlefield, closing it with this; "I've discovered that I can fall asleep with my eyes open — or pretty near."⁽³²⁾ This was the last letter he wrote to his mother.

At dawn on 6 July, the Republican army's all — out attack at Brunete began with 80000 soldiers including those from the 12nd, 13th and 15th International Brigade, with 200 planes, 128 tanks and 188 cannons. Though a rumour of such an attack had been around for three months, still it was a surprise attack for Franco's army that were trying to capture Madrid.⁽³³⁾

The next day, the British Company of the 15th International Brigade occupied Villanueva de la Canada, about 5 kilometres to the north of Brunete. Julian's Medical Unit moved with the British Company. He was excitedly telling one of his comrades Richard Rees that an ambulance driver of the Medical Unit has an advantage over a Brigade combatant to be able to observe battles more objectively.

In this battlefield Julian happened to meet one of his classmates at Kings College, Doctor Archie Cochrane, at a field hospital in El Escorial in the northwest of Madrid when he carried some wounded soldiers there. It was a pleasant surprise for them, but both of them were so busy that they had to leave there to their posts having hardly any time to talk about each other.

In the morning of 15 July, the ambulance Julian drove carrying wounded soldiers was bombed and crashed. As there was no more ambulance car to be supplied, Julian volunteered to work as a stretcher-bearer, taking the command of a stretcher-bearer Company.

Three days passed without any big fight. In the morning of 18 July, a

transport truck was supplied to the stretcher-bearer Company. Julian immediately began to drive the truck coming and going between the front and the nearest field hospital to carry wounded soldiers. On the way in a village called Villanueva de la Canada, the truck was bombed and wrecked.

Later on that day after gunfire ceased, an anonymous wounded ambulance driver was carried on a stretcher to the field hospital in El Escorial. The doctor in charge, Dr. Archie Cochrane, asked his men to clean and disinfect the driver's body. Looking at his patient, the doctor was astonished. It was the grievous reunion of Julian and Archie. The doctor began to examine him at once. He got a fatal wound deep in his chest with the bullet. However, he still had a clear consciousness and was even cheerful. He spoke to the doctor, "Well, I always wanted a mistress and a chance to go to the war, and now I've had both."⁽³⁴⁾ Suddenly he began to speak something in French. According to Dr. Cochrane, it was a poem by Charles Baudelaire. Then he fell into a coma never to wake up again.

Julian's body was put in the mortuary of the El Escorial field hospital. At the news of his death Richard Rees rushed to the hospital and identified the body as his comrade Julian Bell. Rees writes about Julian's last moment that he was 'very pale and clean, almost marble — like, very calm and peaceful, almost as if he had fallen asleep when very cold.'⁽³⁵⁾ At the age of 29 Julian ended his short life in the middle of a battlefield after he fought at the risk of his life for just a month or so. His body was buried in the Fuencarral Cemetery situated to the north of Madrid.

5. The Battle of Brunete

To the south of Brunete was Villanueva de la Canada, the village where Julian Bell was shot in the war. The village spread out along Route 600 which runs north through bushes and vegetable fields to El Escorial.

At the time when Julian took part in the war in Spain, there occurred two incidents which exposed the real conditions within the Spanish Republic. How did Julian interpret and react to them?

One of the incidents was the street riots in Barcelona on the Republican side from 3 May to 8 May 1937, which was about a month before Julian entered the Spanish territory. The riots were revealed to the world by George Orwell in his memoir, *Homage to Catalonia* (1938).

There had been incessant internal opposition and struggles among the groups on the Republican side: the Stalinist — Communists (the PCE) that had risen their power over the Republicans as they had logistic channels to the Soviet Union and the Comintern; the Anarcho-Syndicalist Trades Union (the CNT) that would never accept the Communist's approach with the FAI as its political federation; the anti-Stalinist Communists (the POUM). The PCE advocated 'Victory of War' and 'Dispersion of Militia and Creation of Unitary Army', while the CNT and the POUM advocated Simultaneous Accomplishment of War and Social Revolution' and 'Refusal of Unitary Army and Maintenance of Militia'. Such opposition in basic policies led at last to the street riots on 3 May.

On 8 May the street fighting ceased with desperate announcement by the CNT: "Away with the barricades! Every citizen his paving stone! Back to normality!" Estimated casualties of the street fighting were officially announced as 400 dead and 1000 wounded.⁽³⁷⁾

After the Barcelona street fighting, the Stalinist — Communists not only got control of the Republican government but began to pursue in their own way those who were responsible for the riots, the so-called 'Anarcho-Trotskyist = Fascist' campaign. In that purge they introduced the ruthless inhuman Russian way against anti — Stalinist Communists.⁽³⁸⁾ They made the anarchists disbanded and the POUM illegalized. The POUM headquarters was closed and conveniently turned into a prison.⁽³⁹⁾

On 16 June the POUM leader Andres Nin, who had once been Trotsky's secretary⁽⁴⁰⁾, was arrested and killed after being tortured under the command of the Soviet NKVD Chief Alexander Orlov.⁽⁴¹⁾ In Spain and abroad people began a campaign with the voice of "Where is Nin?"⁽⁴²⁾, but it ended before long fruitlessly. The POUM tribunal on the Barcelona street fighting went on until February 1938.

The tyrannical way taken by the Communists in the purge on the Republican side broke into pieces people's revolutionary spirit which had once burst to put down the military revolt by the Spanish army at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. The purge conducted by the Communists crucially enlarged an irretrievable split on the Republican side.⁽⁴³⁾

After the purge, a surprise attack of Brunete was proposed and decided at the initiative of the Communists. The surprise attack had two strategic aims: to check the north operation of the Franco's army and to intercept their siege of Madrid on the west side. Guernica had already surrendered to Franco (on 26 April 1937), the capital of the Basque, Bilbao, had fallen (on 19 June 1937) and an attack of Santander, the city to the east of Bilbao, was on their next schedule.

The Brunete surprise attack was planned by a Russian military adviser and the Communist leaders. All commanders of the corps and divisions but one were now Communists and every brigade under a non-Communist commander should be supervised by a political commissar. In other words, the Battle of Brunete was fought for the Communists to confirm their political dominance and establish their military leadership on the Republican side.⁽⁴⁴⁾

The front of the battle had been scaled down in several — day intervals; on 6 July, on 12 July and on 26 July. The last battle was going to be fought at the village of Brunete where the front operational division of the Franco army was stationed.

When the Battle of Brunete ended, the Republicans gained an area of 7 kilometres deep along the front of 16 kilometres, but at the cost of about 23, 000 casualties and about 100 fighter and bomber aircraft. The Franco army lost 17,000 casualties and 23 fighter and bomber aircraft, and they had to postpone their Santander attack campaign in the north, though they succeeded in retaining the Madrid encircling formation. Both sides claimed a victory.

The battle lasted 20 days in the dry central part of Spanish land. It was certainly one of the fiercest battle among so many hard — fought battles in the Spanish Civil War, leaving the ghastly scene of about 40,000 dead bodies under the scorching sun.

The Republican army lost a lot of soldiers and weapons in the battle and yet they gained no firm victory. Among the Republicans there arose voices of distrust and complaints against the political and military leadership of the Communists.⁽⁴⁵⁾

In the International Brigades, complaints against the leaders grew stronger, too. The 13th International Brigade, consisted mainly Poles and Slavs, refused to return to the front. As a result, some soldiers in that brigade were shot to death as deserters under fire or as mutineers.⁽⁴⁶⁾ In another case a commander shot himself after trying in vain to regain control.⁽⁴⁷⁾ No one would have imagined such miserable conditions in November the year before when the International Brigade fought for the first time in defense of Madrid.

Among the Americans in the Lincoln Battalion of the 15th International Brigade, there was a Japanese volunteer named Jack Shirai who was engaged in cooking at the supply department. Around 1:00 in the afternoon of 11 June when he jumped out of the trench to remove a food supply vehicle under fierce attack, he was shot to death on the spot by a sniper. It happened to be Villanueva de la Canada where Julian Bell was fatally wounded. After the fight ceased on that day, Shirai was buried in the village with five American volunteers also killed in the battle. Shirai was an orphan from Hakodate or the vicinity of the city, Hokkaido and spent most of his youth as a sailor. After escaping from a ship at the New York harbour, he had worked as a cook in New York. Then he joined the first American volunteer group and left New York on 26 December 1936. After 6 months he ended his life at the supposed age of 37. A poem mourning his death was published on the 9 August 1937 issue and on the 4 October issue of *The Volunteer for Liberty*⁽⁴⁸⁾, a journal of the 15th International Brigade. In Japan Yoneo Sakai was the first journalist who reported Shirai's death in the Spanish Civil War in *Vagabond Reports* (Kaizousha, 1939).⁽⁴⁹⁾

6. Unretouched Portrait of Julian Bell

Julian entered Spain on 10 June 1937. Ten days before that day George Orwell escaped with bare life from the chase of the Spanish Communists. At

that time Barcelona as well as Valencia was under Soviet – like political terrorism, undercover policemen making forcible searches everywhere.

Behind the apparent cause to defend the Spanish Republic, Communists had another objective of their own for the Battle of Brunete, to establish their leadership among the Republicans. Were Julian aware of the Communists' intention while fighting in the battle? The British Medical Unit Julian belonged to was, though apparently humanitarian and politically neutral, in fact inclining towards the Communist Party. Considering that Julian devoted himself so earnestly to his duty in the Medical Unit and was quite satisfied with his life in the battleground and that he was killed in the midst of the battle, he might have paid little heed to the struggle for power within the Republican government.

In England the Communist Party and the Labour Party had very little to tie up with each other. During the Spanish Civil War the Communist Party opposed to the government's non-intervention policy and actively recruited volunteers to send to Spain, while the Labour Party did not outwardly oppose to the government policy but secretly supporting the Spanish Republicans and sending a small number of the party members to Spain as private volunteers. As mentioned before, the Left Book Club, which opened to provide useful books at low prices with the member labourers in 1936, came to recommend little books from the Labour Party side.

Julian had been a Labourite to the core since his college days and very sensitive to the actual conditions in and out of the party rather than to political ideologies. Therefore, it was somewhat strange if he was unaware of the alienation of the two parties and the Communists' pursuit of hegemony.

On 4 July 1937 the Second International Congress of Writers for the Defence of Culture was held in Valencia and distinguished writers gathered from 27 countries. The general master of the Congress was Dr. Negrin, the Spanish Prime Minister backed up by the Communists and the Soviet Union. He told at the Congress that Spanish soldiers were fighting for the country and the justice of mankind.⁽⁵⁰⁾ On 6 July, the first day of the Battle of Brunete, the meeting place was changed to Madrid, "The Heart of Spain". During the

Congress period a history play by Federico Garcia Lorca, *Mariana Pineda* was presented. A life model of the play was a woman who was executed on the charge of her cooperation with the Liberals in 1831.

Writers participating in the Congress had their own intentions to do in Spain. One of the participants, Stephen Spender, writes:

The public purpose of the Congress was to discuss the attitude of the Intellectuals of the World to the Spanish War. But there was also a hidden theme constantly discussed in private and almost as often dragged on to the open platform. This was: the Stalinist versus Andre Gide. For Gide had just published his famous *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.* in which he had made a detached and critical account of his impressions of a tour of Russia, where he had been the honoured and flattered guest of the Soviet Government. Far more sensational than the book itself was the fury with which it was received by Communists. Gide who, only a few weeks previously, had been hailed in the Communist Press as the greatest living French writer come to salute the Workers' Republic, became overnight a 'Fascist Monster', 'a self-confessed decadent bourgeois', and worse. The Writers' Congress was divided over the issue of Gide.⁽⁵¹⁾

Those writers had their own way to carry out their plans and hardly showed any consideration to others, saying that they were inspecting the front. Volunteer soldiers, who had been fighting in one place after another under fierce fire, frowned with displeasure at the writers' audacious attitudes. Julian's friends in London wrote to him about the Congress before its opening but he paid no attention to it. When Julian came to Spain, some men of letters such as Cornford, a poet Charles Donnelly and a critic Christopher Caudwell had already been killed in the Civil War. Julian's decision just to ignore the Congress was right. He had no time to spare for the 'Spoiled Children's Party'.⁽⁵²⁾

No writings by Julian during his stay in Spain except some letters to his mother and his good friends are left to us. Therefore we have no other way but

to surmise about the difference in Julian's life before entering Spain and after it. We may only glimpse some fragments of his life at the battleground from conversations with his driving companion, Richard Rees.

Rees said that the life in battle did not drive Julian to despair at all. He believed that the war experience there would give him some advantage for his future. He argued that social revolution by the proletariat would be impossible and that the upper and middle class people should be the pillar of such revolution. He also surprised Rees by saying that he never had been and never wished to be in the proletariat.⁽⁵³⁾

Since Julian was a widely recognized Labourite, such social idea of his may sound strange, but at that time British leaders of the Labour Party and of the Communist Party and their aides were mostly intellectuals and college graduates. Their real intentions were practically the same as that of Julian's. And in fact the experience of fighting in the Spanish Civil War often had a great influence on their later career as politicians. In fact until quite recently such experience had been one of the factors in appraising a socialist in Western Europe. In *the British Book for Memoirs of Parliament* such experience used to be marked down until just a while ago. In West Germany as well as in England the experience of fighting in the Spanish Civil War worked as a sort of trump card in entering upon a political career. When Willy Brandt first came forward as a candidate for Presidency, the anti – Brandt side sent up a trial balloon, saying 'Brandt never participated in the Spanish Civil War'. The Brandt side retorted that he had been active in the propaganda campaign in Barcelona during the Civil War period.⁽⁵⁴⁾

Julian's motive for going to Spain is not quite clear to us yet. Of course a man's motive should not be always simplified. Considering his abundantly gifted talent and such centripetally dashing tendency, he might have gone straightforwardly to the goal he had set ignoring his inner hesitation and doubt. He might have fallen into a fix where he had to force himself to act for his goal with declaring his conviction.

By exercising the privilege of such reckless youth Julian went to the

Spanish Civil War and left his untainted youthful portrait at the price of his life. It may well be said that Julian was happy without having seen the bitter result of the Spanish Civil War.

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