

found, too tired to respond'. It would seem that there was little love lost between Mason and his co-workers on the magazine. Mason refers to volume 2 number 1 as 'our first regular issue', dissociating his enterprise from the earlier and more amateur efforts of students and other dabblers in literature and politics.

This is no time to be studying the tonal value of the minor works of T.E. Brown. It is the greatest hour in history. Now as never before there is interest to be found in the life about us. And now as never before we must try to see things coolly and steadily, unhampered by hope or fear. This is no time for optimism, no time for pessimism: the hour for realism is at hand.

Dismissive of the concerns Bertram and his fellow aesthetes, and corrupting Arnold into the jargon of the popular front, Mason had little patience with literature which did not further the political cause of Marxism. As Jean Allison recalled, when Mason addressed his first committee meeting as editor, 'he made it clear that our former literary gods were 'out' – D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, Middleton Murry, and Katherine Mansfield ... The new hero was another K.M. – Karl Marx; and capitalism and the bourgeoisie were the enemy.'³⁵

If Mason shook up the student literati he did not have things entirely his own way. He complained in a letter to John Stewart:

Yes, I am still father to the *Phoenix* – or, at any rate, am responsible for the juicy bits in it. There is a committee that cramps my style most horribly, or otherwise I should make things really move. As it is, I do all I can in the face of the Students' Association, the Literary Club, the Phoenix Committee, the College Council, the Prof. Board, the University Senate, public opinion, King George, Rex Fairburn, and Jehovah ...³⁶

Mason attempted to establish an open forum for the discussion of 'the major conflicts of the here and now' in order to 'give fair expression to their ideological aspects'. He warned 'There is no room here for the spinsterish monasticism of the newspapers', foreshadowing Kennaway Henderson's brief for *Tomorrow*.

Reviewing Mason's first number of *Phoenix* in *Craccum* (11 May 1933, p.5), Hector Monro, while disapproving of the turn towards 'the New Faith' of Marxism, did defend Mason against accusations that he had co-opted *Phoenix* for purely political ends, suggesting that 'Students who feel that the Club's magazine has become unduly political in trend ... should write for it themselves. At present the evangelists seem to be the only people with sufficient energy to keep *Phoenix* going.' However, with Mason's editorship and the move towards more radical comment and discussion, *Phoenix* became too extreme for the University College to tolerate.