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ON THREE INTERPRETATIONS OF CHAUCER'S *THE FRANKLIN'S TALE*

By S. Mallikarjunan

Department of English, University of Saugor

The variety and the extent of Chaucerian criticism year after year bears witness to the extraordinary fascination exercised by the author—Chaucer's astrology and astronomy, his grammar and usage, the probable originals of his tales and the possible originals of his characters, the internal organization, the dramatic propriety, and the mutual relationships of the tales have all been subjects of research and imaginative reconstruction; nor is speculation at an end as to the order of the tales and even their assignment to the tellers. Was the Franklin's tale told before the Wife of Bath told hers? And was her own tale not perhaps meant for the Shipman? Why did the Second Nun call herself an 'unworthy sone of Eve', and the Man of Law relate a tale in verse after announcing that he would speak in prose? Some day perhaps these questions will be answered beyond all doubt as perhaps would be even the song the Sirens sang and the name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among the women. Meanwhile the effort goes on towards finding and establishing greater cohesion, reconciling not only the elements within the tales into more meaningful patterns but the tales themselves to one another and to their tellers so that we can have a perfect picture of well-told tales, suitable to their narrators and to their context—in short, 'the whole consort dancing together'.

The three critical articles specifically considered here present different approaches to the Franklin's tale. One finds a dramatic justification for the apparent inconsistencies in the tale; another analyzes it in terms of the conventions of courtly love, and finds therein Chaucer's criticism of that code; and the third interprets it in terms of the philosophic concept of order. What they have in common—it seems to me—is that they make the tale pointless in itself as a tale.

Professor R. M. Lumiansky's article on *The Character and*

Performance of Chaucer's Franklin[1] finds, for the 'incongruities' in the Franklin's tale, a dramatic justification in the character of the Franklin and the circumstances in which he narrates it. The author draws our attention to the four sections of *The Canterbury Tales* in which the Franklin figures—the sketch of thirty lines in the General Prologue, the conversation between him and the Squire and the Host, his prologue to the tale, and the tale itself. He bases his theory on the conception of the Franklin as a worthy man of practical sense, somewhat below the rank of nobility and with a somewhat pathetic and eager concern with 'gentillesse', the manners and codes of that higher class to which he yearns to belong.[2] This is seen in his complimentary remarks to the Squire and his regret that his own son does not care to acquire 'gentillesse'. The Host's rude interruption at this point, 'Straw for your gentillesse!' and the Franklin's meek acceptance of the rebuke are interpreted by the author as indications of the Host's impatience with the Franklin's unbecoming concern with such high matters and the Franklin's own realization that it might appear so. This gives us a picture of the Franklin as a man very much concerned with 'gentillesse' but anxious also to avoid being thought of as giving himself airs. He is also a man of practical sense with a tale of romance and magic to tell, and he has the further difficulty of wanting to please the aristocratic members of the company with a courtly tale without, at the same time, prejudicing the rest. Hence, says R.M. Lumiansky, the 'modesty' prologue in which the Franklin apologizes for his lack of rhetoric even as he sets out to tell a tale dear to the 'olde gentil Britouns'. His interpretation, he says, is incompatible both with the idea of a Breton lay as the original of the tale and with G.L. Kittredge's theory that Chaucer used this tale to set forth his view of the perfect marriage. His own view is that 'the story Chaucer prepared especially for the Franklin had great originality in that it presents an attempted combination of the two current systems for relationship between men and women—courtly love and marriage.... It is at the same time a courtly love *demande d'amour* stressing "gentillesse" and an attempt at defining the ideal marital situation. That such an uneasy combination does not come off successfully should surprise no one;

neither should the assigning of this sort of failure to the Franklin surprise anyone who bears in mind the dramatic principles Chaucer regularly employed in *The Canterbury Tales*. For we can be sure that Chaucer intended this as a dramatic performance by the Franklin.'[3]

According to him, Chaucer perhaps took the bare outline from Menedon's tale in Boccaccio's *Filocolo* and added many details similar to those found in Breton lays,[4] and while the sources no doubt contribute the atmosphere of courtly love, they do not account for the Franklin's extended treatment of marriage. He notes also that the *Filocolo* story merely ends with the question as to who was the most generous but the Franklin's tale has Aurelius[5] drawing the moral that every wife should be careful of her promises, and a description by the Franklin of the happy reunion of Arveragus and Dorigen. Indeed throughout the tale we find this mixture of courtly and practical elements. Arveragus marries Dorigen after a courtly wooing but courtly elements are carried into their marriage, which is in danger from them—Arveragus' knightly quest for honour and the task which Dorigen sets Aurelius in courtly and jesting fashion. Dorigen too shows the combination of contradictory elements: wifely in her grief over her husband's absence but a courtly lady in the task she sets Aurelius. Her long formal complaint is in the tradition of medieval romance but she becomes wifely and realistic in confessing her predicament voluntarily to her husband. In this formal complaint, the author says, she is testing one aspect of courtly tradition and abandoning it in favour of more realistic behaviour. 'And in her actions here we see that for the moment at least the Franklin's understanding of a workable marriage overcomes his interest in what he thinks is the proper behaviour for noble folk.'[6] Similarly the author sees in the remarks of the Franklin on magic the intrusion of his practical sense. He finds it also significant that at the end the couple are referred to as 'Arveragus and his wife' and not 'Arveragus and his lady' as in the earlier part.[7] The Franklin's comments on the workability of the marriage, he feels, 'builds up a pattern which is in opposition to courtly love elements' so that the *demande d'amour* seems out of place when it comes, and we are unable to accept Arveragus as the most noble

in this story, as his counterpart in the *Filocolo* story is judged to be. The tale is thus all along in difficulties because of the nature of its material, the character of the Franklin and the circumstances of its narration, and, in the author's opinion, becomes therefore dramatically appropriate.

Professor C. Hugh Holman in his article, *Courtly Love in the Merchant's and the Franklin's Tales*,[8] expresses the opinion that the two tales 'become recto and verso of the same page representing complementary aspects of Chaucer's portrayal of love' and that 'Whether they are or are not in the schema of a marriage debate, both are certainly concerned with people caught in the conflict between the demands of matrimony and the courts of love.' He feels also that 'the employment he gave courtly love conventions in the Merchant's and the Franklin's tales indicates a criticism of and some distaste for courtly love.'[9] Elements of courtly love are found in the Franklin's tale but there are significant points at which the rules of courtly love are repudiated. Arveragus and Dorigen are happily married in defiance of the dictum of Andreas Capellanus that 'One must not love one's own wife but must love the wife of some other man.' The poet himself is found to applaud their decision to give up all thought of 'maistrie', that bone of contention in the courtly tradition. Aurelius is, of course, the typical lover of the courtly tradition, but the real difference in the story is made by Dorigen who, unlike May in the other story, is determined to be faithful to her husband. Her reply to Aurelius, Hugh Holman says, is 'utter treason to the religion of love'. Likewise, Arveragus' perfect faith in his wife is a repudiation of courtly love psychology which declares that 'A man in love is always apprehensive . . . .' Chaucer, he says, early in the story, enlists our sympathies *against* the courtly lover and *for* the preservation of the institution which courtly love attacked—marriage. The hero is the husband, the heroine the wife, the triumph that of conjugal love.[10] In essence, Hugh Holman sees in the tale Chaucer's criticism of the courtly love tradition and an expression of his faith 'that human dignity and sincere love create the true beauty, grace and charm of life'.

Professor Edwin B. Benjamin, in his article on *The Concept*

of Order in the Franklin's Tale,[11] is somewhat in agreement with both G.L. Kittredge and R.M. Lumiansky in describing the tale as being not only 'a fit conclusion to the Marriage Group' but admirably suited to 'the ambiguous social status of the Franklin himself' in 'its combination of somewhat conflicting values and conventions'.[12] His point is that it is one of the most philosophical in the *Canterbury Tales*, that as in '*King Lear* or *Paradise Lost*, the action can be analyzed in terms of the concept of order'[13] and that, though the treatment is novelistic rather than tragic or epic, the tale is none the less satisfactory. He looks upon it as a story in which a state of harmony is disrupted by various factors and is later re-established on a somewhat different basis. According to him, the 'disorder is introduced primarily by the moral weakness of the characters themselves; and the state of chaos is specifically tied in with the order of the universe.'[14] He feels that Dorigen's excessive grief over her husband's absence arises from a lack of 'womanly submission'; that, in questioning the purpose of the rocks, she is questioning the 'order of the universe' and that the fault is fundamentally 'the sin of pride'. Then there is Aurelius who prays to Apollo to change the order of the universe for him. The author finds it significant that Apollo does not help him and that he has to accomplish his ends with the help of 'more dubious forces' in the shape of the clerk of Orleans. When the illusion is accomplished, 'the whole little world is sadly out of whack; unlawful love has prevailed through the aid of illusion.'[15] It is now Dorigen's part to mourn over the disappearance of the rocks against which she had complained. One feels, says the author, like echoing Raphael's stern rebuke in *Paradise Lost*: 'Accuse not Nature; she hath done her part; / Do thou but thine.' (vii. 561-2). He would consider the long formal complaint of Dorigen at this point 'an attempt on Chaucer's part to find an objective correlative for the state of chaos that now prevails.'[16] Dorigen, like Adam, has erred; and order and harmony are re-established only when Arveragus with his moral firmness decides the course, for 'self-sacrifice once started is infectious . . .'; and 'through man's unselfishness order has finally prevailed.'[17] The author is conscious of the fact that he has not perhaps done justice 'to the tone in which it is

presented', but he feels that Chaucer has handled this theme here with the 'greatest delicacy and restraint'.

In spite of their differences regarding the intention and the success of the tale, these articles are agreed in the opinion that there is a confusion or a conflict of conventions in the tale and, in consequence, in undervaluing or disregarding the question towards which it seems to be directed and with which it ends. The practical sense and the over-cautiousness of the Franklin, the circumstances of the narration and the incompatibility of the two conventions are responsible for incongruities which so completely disrupt the courtly tale that, to R.M. Lumiansky, the *demande d'amour* comes strangely out of place. In seeing the tale as a criticism of the courtly love tradition, Hugh Holman's interpretation has made the question at the end a negligible aberration; and by interpreting it in the light of a philosophical and moral concept of order, E.B. Benjamin makes the question not only irrelevant but nearly impertinent, though he would perhaps award the palm to Arveragus.

What alien mores have entered into this originally courtly tale, either as incongruities or by way of challenging comparison? These, apparently, are the Franklin's extended treatment of marriage, his enthusiastic description of the conjugal felicity of Arveragus and Dorigen at the beginning and again at the end of the story, possibly Dorigen's own long lament, eloquently considering the death-before-dishonour theme, and the 'moral'. Are these such as to damage the courtly tale irreparably—for however excellent a purpose—as R.M. Lumiansky feels, or even to establish a rival convention so firmly as to become an adverse criticism of the courtly tradition on which the tale is founded, as Hugh Holman thinks? Do they indeed go so far as to make us disregard altogether the courtly elements of the tale and encourage us to interpret it in philosophical and moral terms, as E.B. Benjamin does?

E.B. Benjamin's view, which sees the philosophical concept of order, with its corollary of a moral order, as a possible structural principle of the tale, is, I feel, the least tenable of these interpretations. He himself grants that his interpretation does not perhaps do justice to the tone in which the story is presented;

and the very courtly basis of the tale and the question with which it ends militate strongly against entertaining that view, however provisionally and with whatever qualifications. As it stands, it cannot be philosophical or moral and also satisfactory at the same time, as E.B. Benjamin feels it is. Considered as a vehicle for a philosophical or moral concept, the tale is basically unsuitable; nor, perhaps, can we find greater propriety in the choice of the Franklin as narrator for a tale of profound import.

Hugh Holman's view of the tale, as one presenting Chaucer's distaste for and criticism of courtly love and vindicating conjugal virtues, is almost equally difficult to accept, though it grants, at best, a parallel and not a central status to conventional morality. It is open to the same basic objections, and in almost the same degree, as E.B. Benjamin's view. The drift of the tale and, especially, the question at the end deny any intention on the part of Chaucer of giving expression to his preference for the convention of marriage over that of courtly love. The narration, no less than the basic plot, forbids such a conclusion. Dorigen's folly may have been spared but we must expect, surely, in a tale so intended, that Aurelius' love-torments for a married woman would not be delineated with eloquence or obvious sympathy, and that words of condemnation would not be spared at least when he resorts to trickery in order to accomplish the success of an illicit passion. But not only are these opportunities missed by a narrator, much given to both rhetoric and sententiousness, but we find him specially complimenting Aurelius[18] when he makes his noble gesture as demanded by the plot. And even the clerk of Orleans who had engineered the illusion for a fee is not slighted when his turn comes—he is allowed to make a noble little speech and is duly accepted as a candidate for honour along with Arveragus and Aurelius. In a story so constituted and so told, no interpolations or amplifications by the Franklin can vindicate a rival standard to that of courtly love which determines the drift of the tale and makes the question at the end possible. They may, however, make it a courtly tale poorly told—deliberately and dramatically so, as Professor Lumiansky feels—and it is this possibility that needs to be examined at some length.

The dramatic nature of the Franklin's performance has been brought out most convincingly indeed by Professor Lumiansky, with a careful account of the character of the Franklin and the circumstances of the narration. A conflict in the Franklin's mind is undeniable, if not between his aristocratic yearnings and his practical sense,[19] at least because of his anxiety to please the aristocratic members of the company without offending the rest. He is engaged obviously in an attempt to establish himself in both worlds. This explains his rhetorical flourishes as well as his 'sensible' observations. But do these interpolations and amplifications of the Franklin—which make his narration so excellent a dramatic performance—disrupt the courtly tale so much that the *demande d'amour* comes strangely out of place?

It seems to me possible to find in the Franklin's performance a tale told well enough and in keeping with its context and his character. The Franklin's interest in 'gentillesse' is obvious; a little before he begins his tale, he has been rudely snubbed by the Host; he has apologized excessively meekly and even flattered the Host; and then come his prologue and his tale. He is again apologetic in his prologue over his ignorance of rhetoric. Considering that he goes on to tell a tale of 'gentillesse', garnishing it with rhetorical flourishes, it appears that his apology and the flattery offered to the Host and his modest prologue arise partly at least from an ironical intention and not wholly from a nervous desire to avoid the appearance of putting on airs.

The tale is set naturally in the only possible world for it, the world of courtly love, where alone, after such things have happened, one can ask, with all propriety and with the expectation of a lively discussion, which of the persons concerned in it was the most generous. Equally important for ensuring the maximum effect of the crisis is the postulate of an apparently unusual phenomenon in that world, a happily married couple very much in love with each other. They are in that world as happy misfits, and any resemblance between these non-conformists of that world and respectable conformists in another is merely a coincidence.[20] The enthusiastic description of their conjugal felicity may be structurally justified, for her difficulty in keeping her promise

and her husband's nobility in advising her to do so are thereby seen more poignantly than in the *Filocolo* story. The Franklin's own comments on marriage in general are an elaboration very much in the convention of leisurely narrative and constitute an improvization justified by the context; they afford him also a chance to make clear to one part of his audience that his views on marriage are sound. And the passage containing these comments (ii. 761-86) is connected logically and grammatically to the story by the line: 'And therefore hath this wise, worthy knyght....' If these lines are found to reflect the Franklin's or even Chaucer's own views on marriage, the fact would not detract from their propriety in the narration—and they speak, moreover, of a wise adjustment in marriage rather than, it may be noted, any moral aspect of that relationship. This prevents it, I believe, from setting up standards of judgment inimical to the drift of the story. The Franklin's little aside on magic, likewise, need not be considered a disturbance to the tale for, after all, only an illusion was needed for the purposes of the story. The Franklin's demurrer here is in the manner of a humorous aside—quite in the narrative tradition of disowning responsibility for incredible elements in a tale or for the speech and behaviour of the characters. Chaucer himself does this for example in the *Prologue* where, with exaggerated concern, he disclaims responsibility for the bawdiness of speech of certain of the pilgrims. Even if we take it as a serious denial of belief in magic—an attempt by the Franklin to establish his soundness—it provides an interesting sidelight on the Franklin's character and makes it a dramatic performance but does not, in my opinion, set up a standard of commonsense in opposition to the magical element in the tale. The rocks are perfectly satisfactory as rocks. Dorigen's obsession with them is accounted for by her love for her husband and this, in turn, explains why that task rather than any other suggested itself to her. It has the effect, as has been noticed, of making her rash promise not only a courteous softening of her refusal but in itself an expression of love for her husband.[21] And, seeing that all ends well, it occasions a happy bit of irony in her embarrassment at the disappearance of the very rocks against which she had com-

plained. Dorigen's long complaint after the disappearance of the rocks is also conventional and gives the Franklin another opportunity for exhibiting some more of his acquaintance with rhetoric after pleading ignorance of that art. This, however, is the one place where the moral virtue of chastity is invoked; and though it occurs rather late in the day, it could have become an incongruity dangerous to the spirit of the tale. But there is an air of exaggeration in this long lament, as in the earlier complaint of Dorigen against the rocks, which robs it of its seriousness, and prevents it from setting up the romantic moral ethic of death-before-dishonour.[22] Whether we attribute it to Dorigen's love of exaggeration or to the Franklin's love of exhibiting his not very judicious command of rhetoric, it is faintly—and properly, in keeping with the atmosphere of the tale—funny. As for the only 'moral' of the tale—that women should be careful of their promises—it seems to me to be mock-serious in that context, and is, in any case, a matter of prudence rather than of ethics. It is incapable of invoking standards of judgment alien to the spirit of the story. In the perfectly satisfactory ending, there is perhaps a certain irony in that the plebian clerk, far below the rank of nobility, is contender in honour with a knight and a squire—whereby it seems the Franklin demonstrated that he cared but a straw for the Host's objection.[23]

REFERENCES

1. *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Vol. XX, No. 4, July 1951.
2. He interprets 'worthy' as a complimentary epithet in the description of the Franklin as a 'worthy vavasour', since it follows the list of the high offices held by him, which are themselves proof of ability. However, it is not certain that it was so meant, for his playing 'St. Julian' in his country could well have accounted for those honours. I find it difficult to imagine how the Host, a person obviously capable of making shrewd assessments of worth, could have been rude to a man not only wealthy but capable and sensible.
3. Ibid. p. 350.
4. Jerome W. Archer, *On Chaucer's Source for 'Arveragus' in the Franklin's Tale* (*PMLA*, March 1950, pp.318-22). Mr.Archer points out that King Arveragus' great love for his wife Genuissa is mentioned in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, and also that in Layamon's *Brut*, the wife's love for the husband is emphasized

in an account where the importance of the plighted word is elaborated. He would not rule out the possibility of a Breton lay having been the source for this tale.

5. The New Cambridge Edition of Chaucer (the 2nd edition of 1957) by Prof. F. N. Robinson has been used as the text for this paper and all line references are to this edition.

   1. 1541 : 'But every wyf be war of hire biheeste'—which is the 'moral'—is here uttered by the Franklin and not by Aurelius. This, however, does not affect Prof. Lumiansky's argument.

6. P. 354 of the article under discussion.
7. The Franklin's description, 'He cherisseth her as though she were a queene...' (l. 1554, *The Franklin's Tale*) contradicts this impression and makes it difficult to presume any change in their attitudes.
8. Originally appeared in *ELH*, xviii, 1951; pp. 241-52. References in this paper are to this article reprinted in *Chaucer: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. E. Wagenknecht (OUP, 1959).
9. Ibid. p. 243.
10. Ibid. p. 248.
11. *PQ*, xxxviii, I, Jan. 1959, pp. 119-24.
12. Ibid. p. 119.
13. Ibid. p. 119.
14. Ibid. p. 119.
15. Ibid. p. 120.
16. Ibid. p. 121.
17. Ibid. p. 123.
18. *The Franklin's Tale*, 11. 1543-4:

    Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede
    As wel as kan a knyght, withouten drede.

19. Ref. footnote no. 2 *ante*.
20. At one point, however, there seems to be a departure from the pagan setting. The 'Eterne God' to whom Dorigen addresses herself in her complaint against the rocks seems to suggest the God of the Genesis who made man in His own image (11. 879, 880) rather than one of the pagan gods. Did the Franklin (or Chaucer) choose for Dorigen the God proper for a good wife to address herself to? It does reflect on the Franklin's sense of propriety in his eager amplifications, but I do not think it can seriously disturb the tale.
21. Charles A. Owen, 'Crucial Passages in Five Canterbury Tales' from *Chaucer: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. E. Wagenknecht (OUP, 1959).
22. In his notes on 1. 1367 ff., Prof. Robinson cites Prof. Manly's view that in the excessive accumulation of exempla in Dorigen's lament, Chaucer apparently intended a parody of the formal rhetorical complaint. And we may note that it suits the Franklin whose love of rhetoric is not particularly restrained by judgment.
23. I am indebted to my fellow-student at the University of Chicago, Mr. John Drew (of Farningham, Kent), for this suggestion.

CASTIGLIONE'S *COURTIER* AND ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE

By S. L. Kudchedkar

'To joyne learnying with cumlie exercises, Conto Baldesoer Castiglione in his booke, Cortegiane, doth trimly teache: which booke, advisedlie read, and diligentlie folowed, but one yeare at home in England, would do a yong gentleman more good, I wisse, then three yeares travell abrode spent in Italie.'[1] So says Roger Ascham in *The Scholemaster* in 1570 and Castiglione's *Courtier*[2] must indeed be reckoned as one of the formative books of the sixteenth century. As Castiglione describes him, the Courtier's is a figure typical of the Renaissance, representing an ideal of human conduct, the equivalent of which has not been seen before or since. The 'new conception of the duties and opportunities of the individual in society'[3] which influenced men like da Vinci, Sidney and Raleigh, at once courtiers, scholars, soldiers, artists and men of affairs, is most fully set forth in *The Courtier*, a representative book of the time and 'the most important single contribution to a diffusion of Italian values'.[4] It was translated into English for the first time by Sir Thomas Hoby and all references that follow are to his text.

Baldassare Castiglione was born in the state of Mantua in 1478. Much of his life was spent in the midst of fighting and intrigue, attempting to promote by honest means the interests of masters whose own tortuous policies and methods defeated his attempts. Beginning in the service of the Marquis of Mantua, Castiglione at his death in 1529 was the representative of the Pope at the Spanish Court. It was only for a brief period of four years, from 1504 to 1508, that the ideal courtier had the satisfaction of serving one whom he could regard as the ideal prince, Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino. At his court were gathered, during this brief spell of peace and prosperity that Urbino enjoyed, a set of excellent and noble wits, several of whom were exiles from their own states. Castiglione's book is not only an account of the ideal courtier

A paper read before the Bombay English Association in October 1961.

but a tribute to the Court of Urbino and to those friends who met every evening in the presence of the duchess for their pastimes and diversions. Castiglione's purpose is to 'fashion such a Courtier, as the Prince that shall be worthie to have him in his service, although his state be but small, may notwithstanding be called a mighty Lord.'[5] The book is cast into the form of dialogues held on four successive nights, following upon a visit by the Pope to the city of Urbino. Castiglione himself is known to have been present on the occasion, though he makes out that he was away. Various pastimes are proposed, some frivolous, some serious, until the company determines to discuss the qualities of a good courtier.

The courtier, it is generally agreed, is to be of noble birth. He must by nature have 'not onely a wit, and a comely shape of person and countenance, but also a certaine grace ... that shall make him at the first sight acceptable'.[6] When questioned as to how this grace may be acquired, the speaker answers that it consists in an air of effortlessness, for that is 'a verie arte, that appeareth not to be arte'.[7] The courtier must not be over-curious or precise but must cultivate simplicity. He is to be sociable and is to join in the pastimes of the company, but must be 'wittie and discreete' in his behaviour. His principal profession is to be in 'feates of armes'. He must therefore possess a stout courage and in the face of the enemy 'show himselfe most fierce, bitter, and evermore with the first'.[8] In every other place 'lowly, sober, and circumspect, fleeing above all things, bragging and unshameful praysing himself'.[9] He is to be skilful in the use of weapons and in bodily sports.

When turning to the virtues of the mind we are told that the courtier should be 'an honest man and well meaning',[10] for in this are comprehended all other qualities such as goodness, wisdom, manliness and temperance. Many accomplishments besides prowess in arms are expected of him. He must be a scholar with an understanding of Greek as well as Latin, well read in the poets, orators and historiographers. And he is likewise to practise the arts himself, as a writer of prose and verse, a musician, a painter. For though he may not excel in any of these, if he is a practitioner himself, he will

be better able to understand and judge of the works of others.

Much discussion in *Il Cortegiano* centres round the relations of the courtier with his prince. His first task is to reverence his prince, to serve him and be pliable to please him. He may, by thus purchasing the prince's good will, speak his mind freely, directing him to good courses and preserving him from evil. This is the end to which the courtier should apply himself, failing which all his accomplishments are of little value. For 'there is no treasure that doth so universally profit, as doth a good prince, nor any mischiefe so universally hurt, as an ill prince'.[11] The prince must strive to maintain justice and act as the guardian of his people's interests. If he wages war, it should not be for his own glory but to preserve his people from tyranny. Indeed there can be no greater praise for a prince than to call him a good governor. If however by ill luck the courtier chances to serve a wicked prince, it is legitimate for him to forsake his service, so long as he does not desert him in a war or other crisis. In no case is the courtier to do evil at the lord's command, for his duty does not bind him to carry out commands which tend to the lord's own shame and dishonour.

It will be seen that in the course of discussing the relations of the courtier with his prince, Castiglione has set before us his portrait of the ideal prince. Machiavelli's *Prince* was written within a few years of Castiglione's book and the two provide a very interesting contrast in values.

Castiglione also devotes a section to the gentlewoman of the Court. She is to share with the courtier several accomplishments and qualities of the mind, while her demeanour should show womanly sweetness and circumspection. Apart from the fulfilment of her tasks as a housewife, the gentlewoman of the court has other demands made upon her. She requires above all things a 'readie liveliness of wit'[12] and a sweetness in language whereby she may delight and entertain. She must preserve a difficult mean between squeamishness and excessive familiarity. Lest it be felt that the function which Castiglione assigns the gentlewoman is essentially trivial, we find that she is also endowed with virtues such as 'stayednesse, noblenesse of courage, temperance, strength of the minde, wisdom',[13] sterling virtues which will

make her worthy to be esteemed and loved by the courtier. For women are the source of delight and comfort and their love is an incentive to noble deeds. 'Who woteth not that without women no contentation or delite can be felt in all this life of ours? which (set them aside) were rude, and without all sweetnesse, and rougher than the life of forrest wilde beastes?'[14] This exaltation of woman and of love continues in the Elizabethan sonnet.

Love is a major theme in *The Book of the Courtier*. It is an uplifting force. 'And certes it is not possible, that in the hart of man, where once is entered the flame of love, there shoulde at any time raigne cowardlinesse. For he that loveth, alwaies coveteth to make himselfe as lovely as he can, and evermore dreadeth that he take no foile, that shoulde make him little set by: and passeth not to goe a thousand times in a day to his death, to declare him selfe worthie of that love.'[15] The courtier must apply himself wholly to serve and to please his beloved, 'make his owne desires, servants: and his verie soule, like an obedient handmaiden.'[16] He is to do nothing that will offend the woman and must make his love known through 'signes and tokens'. The woman for her part, if she returns his love, is to show him all tokens of love except such as may encourage him to hope for dishonest matters. But if she be a married woman, unhappily married through no fault of her own, who chances to love another, she is to grant her lover nothing else but the mind and to reveal her love neither by word nor gesture.

The discussion on love leads the company to consider whether love can have any place in the life of the courtier when no longer young. This gives an occasion for an oration by Pietro Bembo on Platonic Love, a subject on which he had himself published a book of dialogues. Bembo declares that old men may in fact love more happily than young. For the love of young men, which proceeds from the appetite, can never lead to the same quietness and satisfaction as does the love proper to older men, which proceeds from the reason. Love is defined as 'a coveting to enjoy beautie' and beauty being 'an influence of the heavenly bountifulnesse'[17] is always good. The sensual lover falls into most deep error when he supposes the body to be the principal cause of beauty

and by coveting the body he can never gain satisfaction. But the reasonable lover not only delights in the beauty of his beloved in her presence but he can 'frame it within his imagination sundred from all matter'[18] and thus have it with him day and night.

Reasonable love itself, however, is but 'a stayre . . . to climbe up to another farre higher than it'.[19] The lover is to pass from the contemplation of the beauty of one particular body to the beholding of universal beauty. From this stage again he is to proceed further; his soul beholds her own substance and sees in herself a shining beam of the heavenly beauty. Finally, the soul, forsaking both the senses and reason, partakes of the nature of the angels and through the understanding (the highest of the faculties) 'she seeth the maine sea of the pure heavenly beautie and receiveth it into her'.[20]

The dialogues related in this book with so much liveliness appear to be a fairly faithful account of actual discussions that took place in 1506. Castiglione probably began work on the book soon after and completed it in 1516. Published in 1528, the *Libro del Cortegiano* immediately became popular and went through forty editions in the sixteenth century. Translations into various other European languages were soon undertaken. Hoby's translation, published in 1561, went into four editions in Elizabeth's lifetime. And as Hoby testifies in his introductory epistle, the book was familiar to English readers even in the original. 'This Courtier hath long strayed about this Realme . . .', he tells us, 'but now . . . he is become an Englishman . . . .'[21] The book was thus part of the mental climate in which the Elizabethans grew up. The ideal it sets before us, reflected in actual life in a man like Sir Philip Sidney, is represented in literature in *The Faerie Queene* and *The Arcadia*.

It is well known that Spenser's *Hymns of Love and Beauty* draw much of their doctrine from Bembo's oration on Platonic Love. Again the portrait of the rightful courtier in *Mother Hubberds Tale*[22] corresponds very closely in its details with Castiglione's account. Of more interest however is the actual embodiment of the ideal courtier in *The Faerie Queene*. I propose here to concentrate on Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* in which Sir Calidore, the Knight of Courtesy, subdues the

Blatant Beast, a monster which represents Slander. Sir Calidore corresponds to Castiglione's ideal courtier and emerges as much more of a living human being than any of the other male knights. This may be because he represents a social type rather than an abstract virtue.

Let us look at him when he is first described at the faery court.

> But mongst them all was none more courteous Knight,
> Then Calidore, beloved over all,
> In whom it seemes, that gentlenesse of spright
> And manners mylde were planted naturall;
> To which he adding comely guize withall,
> And gracious speach, did steale men's hearts away.
> Nathlesse thereto he was full stout and tall,
> And well approv'd in batteilous affray,
> That him did much renowme, and far his fame display.
>
> Ne was there Knight, ne was there Lady found
> In Faery Court, but him did deare embrace,
> For his fair usage and conditions sound,
> The which in all mens liking gayned place,
> And with the greatest purchast greatest grace:
> Which he could wisely use, and well apply,
> To please the best, and th'evill to embase.
> For he loathd leasing, and base flattery,
> And loved simple truth and stedfast honesty.
>
> (*The Faerie Queene*, VI. i. 2-3)

Calidore is popular because of his gentleness, mild manners and gracious speech. So was Castiglione's courtier. He is sociable and knows how 'to beare (himself) aright to all of each degree'. Hating flattery he none the less seeks to please those whom he serves and thereby influence them to the good. So gracious is he that he humbles the evil. Again and again did Castiglione's speakers insist that the courtier must have a certain grace. For Spenser and for Castiglione, such grace is given by nature but both agree that those that have it not may by effort and diligence acquire something of it. The first enemy whom Calidore has to overcome is the proud Briana who humiliates knights and ladies as they pass beside her castle gates. After her overthrow he is forbearing in the

face of her taunts and succeeds in making her repent, a contrast to the ruthless punishment of evil meted out by Spenser's other knights.

Several cantos follow in which we lose sight of Calidore though we witness the evil wrought by the Blatant Beast. As is usual with Spenser, he treats of a virtue by depicting the vices in contrast with it and the degradation of the human personality that they bring about. He thus creates disgust and aversion for the vice and throws the virtue into greater relief. Passages which, if one regarded the poem as a mere narrative of adventures, would appear to be digressions are thus seen to be closely related to the theme. We are shown for instance the recreant knight Turpine whose turpitude manifests itself in refusing help to the distressed and in attacking unarmed knights. He is in every respect the opposite of the knight of courtesy. As a contrast to Turpine we find the savage man, with his natural courtesy and hospitality clothed in an uncouth form. There is Mirabella, condemned to mockery and disdain for showing discourtesy to her suitors. And at the other extreme is Serena who having rashly yielded to her lover's entreaties has exposed herself to the attack of the Blatant Beast. None can heal her until she learns how to heal herself of the wounds of infamy, by shunning the occasion, ruling the passions and restraining the will—a lesson which Castiglione's gentlewoman could have taught her.

When we see the hero Calidore again he is amongst shepherds, drawn to live amongst them by the attractions of the pastoral life itself but also by those of the fair shepherdess Pastorella. Like a true knight of courtesy he praises his rival in his mistress's presence and seeks friendship with him. One of the most striking moments in *The Faerie Queene* is when Calidore comes upon the Graces dancing before Colin Clout. They vanish at his appearance, they will dance only for the poet, not for him. But he has been granted a vision of them and one cannot envisage any other of Spenser's knights ever having such a vision. Castiglione's courtier too, we remember, was a lover of the arts.

However charming pastoral life may be, its peace is shattered when robbers attack. Calidore, though he has found contentment there, knows that it is not really the life for

him, the courtier is a man of the world and has a social function to fulfil. So he returns to face the stresses of the world and combat wrong-doing as Castiglione and his companions did before him after their brief years of content at Urbino.

Sidney's *Arcadia* is another work which gains in interest when seen in relation to Castiglione's book. The *Arcadia* in its revised form contains at least four knights who possess in a large measure the qualities of the ideal courtier. Sidney himself speaks of the book as an idle work and a trifle. His friend Fulke Greville, on the other hand, in his life of Sidney, declares that 'his end ... was not vanishing pleasure alone but moral images and examples'.[23] It is likely that even if Sidney began the writing of his romance for the sake of entertainment, rather than with any specific didactic intention as Spenser did, his serious interests and his own values and beliefs soon found expression in his work.

The two central figures of the romance, the Princes Pyrocles and Musidorus, are surely designed to represent the ideal courtier. They are brave, courteous, ready to defend the weak and to fight in any just cause and in friendship utterly devoted to one another, each invariably yielding the pre-eminence to the other. (Castiglione too had exalted friendship.) Their behaviour as lovers is exemplary by Castiglione's standards. Each applies himself wholly to serve the beloved, Philoclea in the one case, Pamela in the other, and subordinates his desires to hers. His love inspires him to courage and fortitude. The idea of love as an ennobling and educative force which was so eloquently set forth in *The Courtier* is not only represented in the behaviour of the two princes but is more explicity discussed.[24] Musidorus comes upon Pyrocles disguised as an Amazon and discovers that his friend is smitten with love for Philoclea. Musidorus himself is as yet heart-whole and so he expostulates with his friend and rails at love, whereupon Pyrocles replies in terms very similar to those we have seen in *The Courtier*.

As Spenser makes his virtues appear more dazzling by contrasting them with their opposites, so does Sidney. The whole-hearted submission of Musidorus and Pyrocles to the will of the princesses contrasts with the way they are treated by Amphialus. When Amphialus finds Pamela and Philoclea

imprisoned in his castle by his mother, he regrets the deed, yet he continues to detain them and take up arms against his kind, so utterly is his reason overthrown by his love for Philoclea. In all other respects Amphialus is a noble figure, brave, courteous, upright, self-effacing. He is full of respect when he speaks to Philoclea and kills himself in remorse when he learns she has been tortured by his mother. But love in his case has taken the form of selfish desire, a failing which has brought him low and brought pain and loss to countless others.

I have spoken of Musidorus and Pyrocles as representations of the ideal courtier. Yet one is not impressed as much by them as by Castiglione's ideal figure, since most of the time they are shown only in one aspect and relationship, as despairing lovers. Perhaps Sidney himself found them somewhat ridiculous and sought to redress the balance in his revised *Arcadia* by narrating their earlier adventures and military exploits. The balance is not completely achieved however and the portrayal of these two remains one-sided. Consequently, the knight who most completely reflects the ideal is a subordinate figure, Argalus. He is the perfect lover, as evidenced by his loyalty to his beloved Parthenia when she is disfigured by the poison his rival has smeared on her face. On the other hand, after he is happily married to Parthenia, he does not hold back when the king appeals for aid against Amphialus, as a result of which both he and Parthenia are slain. Argalus thus emerges as the most complete, balanced courtier in *Arcadia*.

No consideration of Elizabethan literature can ignore the drama. It has been argued that without Castiglione we should not have had Hamlet, that here we have the high exemplar of the ideal of courtiership in English literature.[25] Hamlet undoubtedly has many of the gifts of Castiglione's courtier, 'the courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword'. He is witty, courteous, a discriminating lover of plays and a loyal friend and is considered worthy of a soldier's burial. But one whose

> native hue of resolution
> Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought

does not to my mind produce the same over-all impression that Castiglione's idealized figure does. Indeed perhaps one should not expect to find such a figure in tragedy. While *Hamlet* offers no proof of Shakespeare's familiarity with Castiglione's book, a striking resemblance can be seen between the heroines of Shakespeare's romantic comedies and Castiglione's gentlewoman of the court. When the Lord Julian speaks of the gentlewoman, again and again one feels he is anticipating Rosalind or Portia or Viola. And the sparkling dialogue of the romantic comedies is reminiscent of the manner in which Castiglione's characters discuss their subject, with good-humoured wit and banter and the intermixture of numerous anecdotes.

Another field of writing in which Castiglione's influence may be traced is the Elizabethan sonnet. While the idolizing of the mistress and the utter devotion of the lover to her service, which we find both in *The Courtier* and the sonnets, are part of the Provencal-cum-Petrarchan tradition, Castiglione's view of love (the Renaissance view) marks a significant development in two respects. The account of Platonic love as experienced by old men and the justification of the worship of the mistress on the grounds that in her is seen a reflection of the heavenly beauty, these things form no part of the medieval tradition of courtly love. Again the idealization of love in the Provencal lyric or Arthurian romance is, as C. S. Lewis puts it, 'an idealization of adultery'[26] and the code of courtly love is in opposition to the moral code enforced by the Church. But for Castiglione love is not a law unto itself; the lover conforms to the moral law. It is in these respects that the Elizabethan sonnet can be fruitfully considered in relation to the ideas about love expressed in *The Courtier*.

The heroine of a sonnet sequence such as Spenser's *Amoretti*, supremely beautiful and virtuous, is not to be judged as a realistic portrayal of an actual woman. Spenser might have said, as Donne did in defence of his elegies on Elizabeth Drury, that he 'described the Idea of a Woman, and not as she was'. In the closing section of *The Courtier* where Bembo speaks of how old men may love with more satisfaction than the young, he maintains that a human face appears beautiful

because of the presence of the heavenly bountifulness which is manifested in it. Beauty is therefore always good and in worshipping the beautiful the lover worships the good. This is akin to Plato's view that the lover recognizes in his beloved the idea of pure beauty which his soul had known in her pre-natal condition. The beloved therefore inspires him with awe and reverence. That it is the reflection of the heavenly beauty in the beloved which makes the lover adore her is made clear in the following sonnet from the *Amoretti*.

> Men call you fayre, and you do credit it,
> For that your selfe ye dayly such doe see:
> But the trew fayre, that is the gentle wit,
> And vertuous mind, is much more praysed of me.
> For all the rest, how ever fayre it be,
> Shall turne to nought and loose that glorious hew:
> But onely that is permanent and free
> From frayle corruption, that doth flesh ensew,
> That is true beautie: that doth argue you
> To be divine and borne of heavenly seed:
> Deriv'd from that fayre Spirit, from whom al true
> And perfect beauty did at first proceed.
> He onely fayre, and what he fayre hath made,
> All other fayre lyke flowers untymely fade.

Shakespeare in his sonnets addressed to the friend is far bolder in his claims. For while others have seen in the beloved a manifestation of the Idea of Beauty, to Shakespeare his friend is himself the Idea of which others are reflections. Such is the claim made for him in the sonnet beginning

> What is your substance, whereof are you made
> That millions of strange shadows on you tend.

where all beautiful things are regarded as imitations or shadows of the friend. Again in

> When in the Chronicle of wasted time
> I see descriptions of the fairest wights,

all descriptions of beautiful men and women of the past

are considered to be but prophecies and prefigurings of the friend.

Shakespeare's self-effacement and humility in some of the sonnets call to mind another memorable section in *The Courtier* where the lover is told to 'make his verie soul like an obedient handmaiden'. This attitude which we have already come upon in the *Arcadia* is also seen in *Astrophel and Stella*. We are again reminded of *The Courtier* in the latter half of that sequence where Astrophel celebrates how 'Stella hath, with words where faith doth shine, of her high heart given me the monarchy.' The gift is conditionally given, 'while virtuous course I take'. In the song 'In a grove most rich of shade' and the sonnet beginning 'When I was forc'd from Stella ever dear' both Astrophel and Stella suffer through Stella's determination to remain true to 'iron laws of duty'. The married woman may 'grant her lover nothing else but the mind' Castiglione had declared and Sidney's Stella follows his teaching.

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'HIS HEROES ARE MEN'

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'The latest generations of men will find new meanings in Shakespeare, new elucidations of their own human being.' As a transcendentalist Carlyle would accept that Being itself would involve a changeless something, an everlasting affirmation, as a historian Carlyle knows that men's ideas of what constitutes their own *human* being are subject to constant change. These changes are reflected notably in the course followed by Shakesperian criticism, and the truth of Carlyle's remark is proved by its ever-increasing volume. Ben Jonson knew that Shakespeare would always speak to men. He certainly spoke to his own contemporaries. He speaks to us as ours with many voices, and not content with that we attempt to resuscitate the contemporary who spoke to Dryden, to Johnson, to Coleridge and Bradley.

For Dryden Shakespeare had the largest and most comprehensive soul. Dr. Johnson had to admonish the eighteenth-century readers of Shakespeare thus: 'Among his other Excellencies it ought to be remarked, because it has hitherto been unnoticed, that his Heroes are Men, that Love and Hatred, the Hopes and Fears of his Chief Personages are such as are common to other human Beings, and not like those which later Times have exhibited, peculiar to Phantoms that strut upon the stage.' Coleridge singled out in Shakespeare 'this advantage over all other dramatists—that he has availed himself of his psychological genius to develop all the minutiae of the human heart: showing us the thing that, to common observers, he seems solely intent upon, he makes visible what we should not otherwise have seen.' As critics both Dr. Johnson and Coleridge looked for the eternal and the enduring in a work of art; but their view of what constitutes the eternal and enduring differed widely. While Dr. Johnson took Shakespeare to task for a defective morality, Coleridge felt he 'is rather to be looked upon as a prophet than a poet'. The dramas of Shakespeare appeared to Goethe 'the work

of a celestial genius, who mixed with mankind in order to make us acquainted in the gentlest way with ourselves. They are no poems! The reader seems to have open before him the immense book of fate;—against which the busiest life is beating, so as to drive the leaves backwards and forwards with violence.' To turn to Carlyle once again: 'There is more in Shakespeare's intellect than we have yet seen. It is what I call an unconscious intellect: there is more virtue in it than he himself is aware of.... Shakespeare's Art is not Artifice; the noblest worth of it is not there by plan or pre-contrivance. It grows up from the deeps of Nature, through the noble sincere soul who is the voice of Nature.'

From all these assertions it would appear that from Ben Jonson onwards critics have felt, however they may differ temperamentally and philosophically, that Shakespeare possesses a quality, sometimes felt to be magical sometimes even religious, of universality; and that this gift expresses itself in the truth with which human beings are conceived and presented—presented speaking and even acting out an incomparable poetry. Why then this continuing quarrel with Bradley because he saw in these plays a great mass of 'human nature in commotion'? In 1952 Dr. Leavis had 'gathered' that the disrespect for Bradley has gone out of fashion, adding in hissing parenthesis that 'as a matter of fact he is still a very potent and mischievous influence'. Actually the carping against Bradley continues and Mr. Holloway[1] in turn speaks sternly of Dr. Leavis' essay on *Othello*: 'This—another attempt, be it noted, to don the tattered plumes of Bradley, and wing with them back before the play opens, or to and fro over a character's whole career—will not do.' Actually in this book Mr. Holloway dons the plumes of Sir James Frazer, Malinowski, Durkheim and dives straight down into the dark backward and abysm of our collective personality and brings up victim monsters, fertility myths, the ritual eradication of evil—and all for a new interpretation of Shakespeare's tragedies.

This is not to deny that the findings of modern Shakespearian scholars are exciting, very exciting; or that the influence of the historical and critical approach has been at once sobering and stimulating. Much in these labours

has enriched our understanding of Shakespeare and of ourselves. Nor will we deny that Bradley was apt to 'read the plays backwards', as Professor J. Dover Wilson would say, and to ignore the demands of dramatic structure. We all know that Bradley went wrong in some of his assumptions and conclusions because he did not know what we do today, among other things, about Elizabethan theatrical conditions and the sources of the plays. These shortcomings, however, in no way invalidate his profound critical insight both into character and poetry, nor dim the splendours of his prose. How right he was when he showed us Shakespeare concentrating 'attention on the obscure regions of Man's being, on phenomena which make it seem that he is in the power of secret forces lurking below, and independent of his consciousness and will.' Mr. Holloway, in spite of his anti-Bradleyism, in this book, attempts to isolate some of these lurking forces which are the concern of primitive anthropology and modern psychology.

Modern learning, growing and accumulating under the name of the social sciences, is busy exploring not only the obscurer regions of man's being but whatever regions in which he has appeared to operate at most stages of his evolution. These preoccupations are reflected vividly in the proliferation of Shakespearian scholarship; sometimes the proliferation is apt to become saprophytic. We range far and wide in our search of a *true* way of reading Shakespeare. Our own preoccupation with myth and symbol, with allegory and interpretation made possible by depth psychology, both Freudian and Jungian, directs our attention constantly towards Shakespeare's imagery.

Whenever we want to make a significant point, whether it is to show how mediaevalism is still a potent force or to show how Shakespeare symbolizes the New Man, we point to a significant image. Since Professor Knight and Dr. Caroline Spurgeon began their work in the thirties, Shakespeare's use of image and symbol is being examined for recurring pattern and design, not only for a glimpse of Shakespeare's own mind, for a kind of mental biography, but also for ascertaining the total impact of a play. We forget that Bradley also showed how imagery illuminates character and controls the atmosphere

of the tragedies. Mr. Holloway, in order to show that Hamlet acts in conspicuous isolation as the play proceeds, points out, not convincingly, that Hamlet is likened often to the lonely moon, the single star. He adds cautiously that 'the contribution is not prominent but it is there'. Mr. Holloway finds a new image in *Macbeth* which symbolizes his rebellion against Nature, 'his journey in the direction of Universal chaos. It is that of riders and horses, and it seems to have gone unnoticed by critics up to now.' He quotes from the much used *Homily against Wilful Rebellion*, and calls to mind what the armed rider and the horse itself stood for in Shakespeare's society, as for millennia before, 'the signal embodiment of violence, warfare, brigandage, revolt'.

Some interesting trends, sometimes contradictory, are to be discovered in this plethora of scholarship. Stemming from Coleridge and made possible by modern psychology is the subjective school which does not stop at interpreting a work through the pattern of its recurrent imagery. This treatment is extended to the entire body of the plays, and we are directed to discount the literal sense and concentrate on the discovery of 'philosophical patterns'. We are told to look for 'theological significances' in the way Shakespeare organizes his plots and shapes his characters. A fairly recent book on Shakespeare tells us that his heroines are love symbols, and the hero's moral progress is to be measured by his relations with the heroine. Surely this is to allegorize away flesh and blood and action off the stage and to substitute one's own anaemic preconceptions.

On the other hand the comparative and historical method insists that we read Shakespeare as an Elizabethan would. One asks with Professor Trilling if this is ever possible? We read the plays in the light of the Elizabethan conception of a necessary interrelation between man, the social body and the cosmos, and of the awe the Elizabethans felt at the sanctity of 'degree'. We go on to ask what was their view of history, of the state, of kingship, of nature, of sin, of love. We attempt to discover Shakespeare's politics, to formulate a 'Shakespearian Ethic'. We examine his mediaevalism, his learning, his Biblical knowledge. How did he symbolize his times, how did he dramatize the New Man and the changing concept of nature

and society? We look upon his great plays as the *Novum Organum* of Elizabethan thought. His poetry is dissected with equal ruthlessness. 'The Poetry of Allusion' is now commanding attention. This again is understandable as the obscurity of so many allusions has been cleared away by careful and minute research.

The danger that attends this critical school is the fragmentation of the meaning of the plays that it encourages—and consequently a distortion of interpretation. Not only is the entire body of his work put into limbecks in the Shakespeare laboratory, but each individual play is so dissolved—and 'character' or 'motive' or 'symbolic imagery' or 'world picture' or 'element of the folk tale' extracted. Mr. Holloway, it would appear, attempts to put the tragedies in a crucible which may be labelled *The Golden Bough*.

Fortunately for critical health there is a counteracting tendency. Mr. Eliot, Mr. Fluchère and Professor Knights insist that the plays form a coherent whole and they originate in and express a developing attitude to life. While accepting the findings of the many schools at their just value, sensitive critics like Professor Knights represent a movement away from this concentration on local values and temporary imperatives to an appreciation of Shakespeare's conception of Time and Death and Love—the deeper realities. We are led back in the finest recent works on Shakespeare, particularly that of Professor Knights and Mr. Traversi, to the view that Shakespearian tragedy is religious drama. Their conclusions are not so very different from those of Coleridge, Keats and Goethe. They however annoy Mr. Holloway. He speaks of them as the 'moralist' critics, accuses them of making Shakespeare's work an excuse for airing their private morality, of having created a 'plethora of metaphorical statements about Shakespeare'. He feels the need of a few 'literal ones'. So we read the book hoping that these will follow and find Mr. Holloway outdoing those he accuses. Having taken Mr. Bateson to task for daring to refer to values being embodied in the tragedies, he deplores the present tendency to ignore the 'what-happens' of a literary work. He promises us descriptions of the 'what-happens' kind in respect of a number of Shakespeare's tragedies. These will be at first literal but we

find him saying, to our surprise, that as the discussion proceeds we are to expect observations which are metaphorical rather than literal. He will examine the metaphors for 'all that is misleading, as well as for their illuminating potentialities'.

Again Mr. Holloway turns upon the critics of the 'moralist' school, because to judge by them Shakespeare seems barely to have been conscious of the 'nodal points' of contemporary morality. The seventeenth century was remarkable for its moral and religious thinking, says Mr. Holloway, and the moralist critics are so much creatures of their own times that they are judging Shakespeare's morality by the very different moral emphases of our civilization. Considering what has just been listed as the many fields in which Shakespearian scholarship has been operating, this is surprising—but then this book is full of surprises. Mr. Holloway's own preoccupation with Elizabethan modes of thought is not particularly productive. Nothing much is added to our understanding by seeing Othello's 'affronted indignation' at his wife's supposed infidelity against the background of the Elizabethan prayer-book or a passage from Latimer's *First Sermon before King Edward VI* (1549). The modern reader cannot keep on pretending that he is an Elizabethan, and that therefore he must look upon Othello as a great and good man only according to the conception of greatness he has gathered from Renaissance manuals of conduct. Surely Shakespeare's grasp of the human situation is so firm, that temporary conceptions reaching down to what is essential and basic to our humanity are clearly articulated in the play.

In the same way Hamlet is made by Mr. Holloway a mere creature of his times. In order to read *Hamlet* accurately we are told we must recover an idea which we have lost, but which lay 'at the centre of things in Shakespeare's own time'. This is the idea of Fortune appearing so wayward in its outward seeming, yet operating under the direction of Divine Justice, and the allied idea of Retributive Justice. I am not certain that mankind has ever wholly discarded these ideas, or that they are so very alien to us to-day. So also with *Macbeth*. Mr. Holloway admits that the interpretation that Macbeth depicts disorder spreading through a whole kingdom is a commonplace. Nevertheless he scolds critics for not having

noticed 'that the coming of Birnam Wood to Dunsinane is a vivid emblem of this, a dumbshow of nature overturning anti-nature at the climax of the play.' He mentions Professor Knights' suggestion that in this scene 'nature becomes unnatural to rid itself of Macbeth'. But this does not satisfy Mr. Holloway. He insists that we take note that to a contemporary audience the scene presented to them but not to us was the familiar sight of 'a Maying procession, celebrating the triumph of life over the sere and the yellow leaf of winter.' Is there not a serious danger that we will entirely forget to be ourselves as readers if we pursue this line too far? Will we not swamp our reading by flooding it with contemporary feelings, conceptions and reactions—which are after all reconstructed by us, and we are far from being certain that they did exist in the way we imagine they did?

This however is not the major contention of this book. We are not to stop at the contemporary; we are to go much much further back. The major thesis is that a pattern of primitive myths and rituals is to be discovered in Shakespeare's tragic drama. We are invited to look upon the tragic heroes as ritual victims, scapegoats, lords of misrule. They begin by being the cynosure of all eyes; the progress of the play is a symbol of their descent from humanity. Macbeth, Coriolanus, even Lear turn into monsters. Eventually the hero becomes the ritual victim of a sacrifical fertility ceremony, and Shakespeare's perplexed and suffering human beings are tortured anew by Mr. Holloway to fit into his scheme of stock ideas taken from fashionable anthropology, first made familiar by Sir James Frazer's memorable work.

Mention has already been made of previous attempts to study Shakespeare's imagination by the discovery of archetypal images which dominate a play; as also by the application of morbid psychology to his characters in order to answer the charge of inconsistency in characterization made by earlier 'realist' critics. Mr. Holloway has been anticipated in a much more acceptable manner by Professor J. Dover Wilson's anthropological interpretation of Falstaff as the sacrificial object in a fertility ritual. This latest attempt by Mr. Holloway to relate the tragedies to primitive thinking is a gross misuse of the 'liberty of interpretation'. It was Dr. Johnson who

said that 'he that has read Shakespeare with Attention, will perhaps find little new in the crouded world'; but in search for all that is ancient in 'our crouded world', we need not dig right down to our tribal roots in order to understand Shakespeare. Now that we have raised this elaborate highly-wrought superstructure of learning, is it not time to call for a little self-discipline? Perhaps we need an imaginative simplicity, such as Bradley possessed, a nakedness of spirit, if we wish to lay ourselves open to Shakespeare's great poetry and some shedding of our learning to remember that 'His Heroes are Men'.

It is not that there are no fine moments in Mr. Holloway's book. They arrive when he drops his learned preoccupations and lets the poetry and the humanity of the plays seize him, as he does in the parallel he draws between *Job* and *King Lear*; or while insisting that Othello's last speech must be looked upon as a conventional genre, he forgets his time-bound preoccupations and lets the poetry reveal Othello as a man at once humbled and transfigured.

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WEBSTER'S MASQUE OF MADMEN: AN EXAMINATION

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The Madmen scene (IV. ii) in *The Duchess of Malfi* has not received the attention and study it deserves from students of Webster. It is not merely an episode in a series of tortures inflicted on the Duchess, as Lamb[1] was inclined to think, nor just an additional distraction as Hazlitt[2] regarded it. It is the very crux of the play and is central to our understanding of it. An examination of it is rewarding and revelatory of 'infinite richess in a little room'.[3] The brief scene of the Madmen with their dismal howls and obscene talk is symbolic of the psychic condition of Ferdinand. One finds it difficult to agree with the remarks of Dr. F. L. Lucas[4] that the conventional Elizabethan notion of madness as comic, 'was used to deepen tragic pity and terror'. It is obvious that the scene is on a different level from that, say, of the 'grave diggers'[5] or that of 'the drunken porter'[6] of Shakespeare. Ferdinand deliberately intends it as an additional instrument of torture of the Duchess and her maid Cariola refers to it as 'This tyranny' (IV. ii. 4) which had not been employed till that moment. It is, therefore, of a piece with other devices of torment like the extension of the dead man's hand for the Duchess to kiss, and the showing of the wax figures of Antonio and his children as dead. These are grisly incidents which produce horror rather than terror. Nor can we accept, without a substantial qualification in the present context, the view of Professor Leech[7] that madness is used as an 'image of unrelieved and terrible chaos'. In so far as Ferdinand's mind is in a state of turmoil, it is chaotic, no doubt. But since a definite process and pattern of thought can be discerned in the choice of the madmen and their conversation, the scene succeeds in projecting effectively the flux and ferment in the mind of Ferdinand. Mr. Frederick Allen[8] is nearer the mark when he refers to 'the element of ghastly horror', and of psychological interest. But he regards the scene as providing an escape

for the Duchess from the maddening frenzy of silent thought'. The madmen scene has been devised by Ferdinand as an (engine of torture) for the Duchess and, therefore, in the phrase of Mr. T. S. Eliot, it is the 'objective correlative' of what happens within him.

> I am resol'vd
> To remove forth the common Hospitall
> All the mad-folke and place them near her lodging;
> There let them practise together, sing and daunce,
> And act their gambols to the full o'th'moon.
>
> (IV. i. 151-5)

It is consistent with the character of Ferdinand that he should think of madmen, because he is himself mad. Even before the actual outbreak of Lycanthropia in Act V, Ferdinand is anything but normal. He is crazed in mind, liable to violent emotional upheavals and behaves like a maniac.

Of the eight lunatics that make up the noisy crew, the four who participate in the chatter have been identified by Dr. Lucas[9] by their professions on the basis of the servants' description and their own remarks. They are an astrologer, a lawyer, a priest and a doctor. They are the concrete symbols churned up from a mind agitated by the flux and motion of preying thoughts and shadowy impulses.

Ferdinand is opposed to the marriage of the widowed Duchess and sternly prohibits it, as the very idea draws 'a stream of gall quite through (his) heart' (IV. ii. 306). The thought of the birth of a son to the Duchess is, therefore, unbearable to him. The letter that he receives from Bosola, supported by the horoscope of the child, cast by Antonio, cuts him to the quick. He carries 'the figure for's nativity' (II. ii. 92) close to his heart. In Act II. v, Ferdinand enters frantically waving the letter and thumps his heart on the spot where he has stowed away the astrological readings and explodes,

> Here's the cursed day
> To prompt my memory, and here't shall stick
> Till of her bleeding heart, I make a spunge
> To wipe it out.
>
> (II. v. 19-22)

It is this festering thought of the birth of a son to the Duchess that shapes itself as the mad astrologer.

Ferdinand is conscious that his conduct is thoroughly reprehensible in law. There was no legal sanction for his prohibition of the marriage. Her banishment from Ancona and the seizure of her dukedom are contrived and grossly unjust. The confiscation of the estate of Antonio is no less illegal. He is haunted by an evil conscience and feels that his actions are warranted neither by man nor God. He is at times subject to disquieting thoughts concerning the validity of man-made laws against natural laws. Referring to the Duchess' children, he says,

> For though our nationall law distinguish Bastards
> From true legitimate issue: compassionate nature
> Makes them all equall. (IV. i. 42-44)

He is conscious at the back of his mind that the ends of justice have been perverted by the very person, who as the Duke, should have been the fountain-head and dispenser of law to the people. Delio's comment

> Then the Law to him
> Is like a fowle blacke cob-web to a Spider—
> He makes it his dwelling, and a prison
> To entangle those shall feede him. (I. i. 180-3)

establishes one aspect of Ferdinand's character which is borne out by his conduct in the play. There is no better commentary on the self-acknowledged illegality of his persecution and murder of the Duchess than the fierce questions that he thunders at Bosola:

> —Was I her Judge?
> Did any ceremoniall forme of Lawe
> Doombe her to not-Being? did a compleat Jury
> Deliver her conviction up i' th' Court?
> Where shalt thou find this judgement registered,
> Unlesse in Hell? (IV. ii. 322-7)

It is the uneasy feeling that 'the office of justice is perverted

quite' (IV. ii. 329) by him, that is juxtaposed by the mad lawyer.

Just as the secular laws are vitiated by him, Ferdinand is conscious that the ethical and ecclesiastical codes have been grossly violated by his brother and partner in crime, the Cardinal. Indeed, Webster has conceived of the Arragonian brothers as complementary characters in wickedness, the one noisy and explosive and the other unruffled but more dangerous. Bosola, the most clear-sighted of all the characters in the play, says of them

> He, and his brother, are like Plum-trees (grow crooked over standing-pooles). (I. i. 50)

and later on refers to their vengeance 'Like two chained bullets still goes arm in arm' (IV. ii. 347). The Cardinal is a perfect Machiavellian who uses religion as a cloak to conceal his sins. He transgresses the prelate's vow of celibacy by his amorous intrigue with Julia. He corrupts his office as a Cardinal by procuring the banishment of the fugitives from Ancona and by the seizure of the duchy on the ground of 'looseness' of the Duchess. Antonio's estate is

> not forfeyted
> By course of lawe; but ravish'd from his throate
> By the Cardinal's entreaty. (V. i. 47-49)

and it is recommended to be given to Julia 'as salary for his lust' (V. i. 58). It is he who counsels the murder of the Duchess, 'though the full of all the engagement seemed to grow from Ferdinand' (V. ii. 108-9). The enormities of the Cardinal however, are revealed more fully in the last act of the play. Ferdinand is, obviously, brooding on the iniquity that is perpetrated in the realm of the spirit, whose visible symbol is the Church no less grossly than in the world of affairs. This idea acquires a great measure of plausibility from the remarks of Bosola to the Cardinal later in the play.

> When thou kill'd'st thy sister,
> Thou tookst from Justice her most equall ballance,
> And left her naught but her sword. (V. v. 52-54)

If justice be not found in the house of God where else can it be found? The Church bereft of spiritual power and reeking with sin is on the same dead level as the world of common men. It is the total absence of justice and the wholesale corruption on the spiritual plane throwing the world back into its first chaos that is projected by the mad priest.

The mad doctor juxtaposes a complex of impulses seething in Ferdinand's mind. He is the healer whose skill is desperately needed to cure a world of crumbling values of its *malaise*. Ferdinand lives in a world of cruelty, lust and spoliation, where neither religion nor law has any sanctity. A redemption of the sorry scheme of things is needed, but it is nowhere in sight. 'Intemperate agues make physicians cruel' (IV. i. 170) moralizes Ferdinand in a different context. But that particular reflection lends itself to a general application to the disordered world he lives in.

In addition to this general reflection, the figure of the doctor reveals how Ferdinand's mind broods on the marriage of the Duchess. It was Bosola, his spy, who applied the physician's test of offering musk-smelling apricots to the Duchess to ascertain if she were pregnant and the Duke should have known of it from the letter sent by him. Although Ferdinand repudiates the suggestion of Bosola that 'some sorcery' (III. i. 79) might have been practised on the Duchess, in his retort

> Can your faith give way
> To thinke there's powre in potions, or in Charmes,
> To make us love, whether we will or no?
>
> (III. i. 82-84)

yet he cannot reject the possibility out of hand, and the doubt keeps on troubling him. The mediaeval doctors were a curious combination of the physician, the astrologer and the sorcerer, who had to prepare potions and charms for their patients and Ferdinand's speech refers to this versatile species of healers. Again, when Ferdinand's mind dwells on the tainted blood of the Duchess, his choler rises and in a stormy speech he wishes to burn out the disease in her or

to drain the blood as the only means of her rehabilitation.

> Apply desperate physicke—
> We must not now use Balsamum, but fire,
> The smarting cupping-glasse, for that's the meane
> To purge infected blood, (such blood as hers). (II. v. 33-36)

The figure of the mad doctor projects Ferdinand's obsession with the duchess, with an occasional flash-back at general corruption and the need for remedy.

Regarding the nature and substance of the talk of the madmen, it is only apparently incoherent. The staple of their conversation is sin, lust and punishment, the central thought with which Ferdinand himself is oppressed, because he never speaks of it nor gratifies it. The talk of the madmen throws up quite a few images and associated ideas that can be pieced together into a pattern and related to the mind of Ferdinand. They can also be connected with some of the earlier cognate passages in the play.

'Doomsday not come yet?' (IV. ii. 77) wonders the mad astrologer, suggesting at once the idea of impending doom and destruction of the world, as a punishment for its sin and corruption. The question stirs in us a hazy recollection of a line spoken by Ferdinand earlier in the play—'It is some sin in us heaven doth revenge by her' (II. v. 84). The astrologer's reference to a 'perspective' (a telescope) to draw doomsday nearer, and to a glass 'that shall set the world on fire upon an instant'—the glass refers to a lens here—harks us back to similar earlier images used in the context of illicit love and by implication suggests that lust is the sin that the astrologer has in mind. In this connection we are reminded of the caustic utterances of the Cardinal on the inconstancy of women.

> Sooth, generally for woemen,
> A man might strive to make glasse malleable,
> Ere he should make them fixed. (II. iv. 20-22)

There is an equivocal pun on 'male able'. Harping on the same theme he continues,

We had need goe borrow that fantastiqe glasse
Invented by Galileo, the Florentine,
To view another spacious world i'th'Moone,
And looke to find a constant woman there. (II. iv. 24-27)

The idea of setting the world on fire, suggests by association a cognate idea expressed in the frenzied threats of Ferdinand when he thinks of the guilty love of the Duchess.

We must not now use Balsamum, but fire (II. v. 34)

and

I would have their bodies
Burn't in a coal-pit, with the ventage stop'd,
Or dippe the sheetes they lie in, in pitch or sulphure,
Wrap them in't and then light them like a match.
(II. v. 87-91)

The astrologer's 'I cannot sleep: my pillow is stuffed with a litter of porcupines', is a far-away echo of Ferdinand's efforts at composing his agitated spirits.

I'll go, sleepe
Till I know who leapes my sister, I'll not stirre.
(II. v. 100-1)

It reminds us of the Cardinal's rebuke

You have divers men, who never yet exprest
Their strong desire of rest, but by unrest,
By vexing of themselves. (II. v. 77-79)

Viewed in this manner the astrologer's speech ceases to be the ejaculation of a madman, but resolves itself into a comprehensible idea, viz. the conception of sin and more especially the sin of lust which is one of the dominating thoughts of Ferdinand.

The three speeches that follow emphasize the same primary idea of lust even more clearly and directly. The mad lawyer's image of Hell as a glass-house with the devils continually

blowing up women's souls on hollow irons evokes the idea of sin and punishment inseparable from Hell and devils and suggests unlawful passion, and the impregnation of women. This passage recalls to our mind, by association, an equally gross but parallel passage with similar image spoken by Bosola of a young woman 'Who had a monstrous desire to see a glass-house' (II. ii. 6) 'Only to know what strange instrument it was should swell up glass to the fashion of a woman's belly' (II. ii. 9).

The proclamation of the mad priest that he will 'lie with every woman in his parish the tenth night' (IV. ii. 84) reiterates the notion of lust, while the phrase 'the tenth night' taken in conjunction with 'I'll tithe them over like haycocks' (IV. ii. 85) connects it with Bosola's 'tithe-pig' passage in which he refers to rapacity, which is one of the dominating motives of Ferdinand's conduct. Speaking of the lower instincts which are common to the high and the low alike, Bosola says that 'the like passions sway them; the same reason that makes a vicar go to law for a tithe-pig and undo his neighbours, makes them spoil a whole province and batter down goodly cities with their cannon' (II. i. 106-9).

The mad doctor's protest aginst the deceit of the apothecary because he is a cuckold (IV. ii. 95-97) holds up the idea of unlawful passion. At the same time, by quick association, it reminds us of the pathetic dilapidated gentleman Castruccio whose wife is the Cardinal's mistress, to whom Delio makes his overtures.

> I would wish you
> (At such time as you are non-resident
> With your husband), my mistris.
>
> (II. iv. 100-2)

The difference in 'degree' between the physician and the apothecary that is suggested is due to the position of Castruccio who is obviously a gentleman of the Court of Ferdinand and lives on terms of familiarity with the Duke and the Cardinal, while Delio is a friend of Antonio, who is only a steward of the Duchess. The disgusting cure that is offered to 'Puritans that have sore throats with over-straining' (IV. ii. 89) by the apothecary, is an expression of contempt

for the sanctimonious hypocrisy of the clergy in general, who are loud in preaching the word of God, while setting it at naught in their own personal lives. The passage adverts to the clerical politician, the Cardinal—(that the Cardinal is a Catholic and not a Puritan does not invalidate the argument, as the Cardinal and the Puritan share the common vice of hypocrisy)—who plays a leading part in the nefarious intrigues of the Court and adopts the same methods in the Church. Antonio's description of the Cardinal bears out this statement. 'He laies worse plots for them than ever was impos'd on Hercules: for he strewes in his way Flatterers, Panders, Intelligencers, Atheists and a thousand such politicall Monsters: he should have beene Pope; but instead of comming to it by the primitive decency of the Church, he did bestow bribes so largely and so impudently, as if he would have carried it away without heaven's knowledge' (I. i. 160-6).

The subsequent references of the astrologer to heraldry and the 'crest of a wood-cock with the brains picked out on it' (IV. ii. 92-93), by their association with rank and degree, remind us of the family pride of the Arragonian brothers, which is one of the motives for their revenge against the Duchess. The nature of the crest proposed promptly reminds us of the silly cuckold Castruccio whose 'very main of... ambition' (II. i. 3) is to be 'taken for an eminent courtier'. The wood-cock is proverbially stupid and with the brains removed, it is the picture of imbecility and hence a fitting coat of arms to Castruccio. Even this passage projects lust, which has become a fixation with Ferdinand, because Castruccio is synonymous with cuckoldry in the play.

Unlawful love is constantly kept before us in the later images of 'a snuffling knave', with 'his hand in a wench's placket' (IV. ii. 102) suggesting clerical licentiousness, and the Coach that arrived in the small hours of the morning bringing the wife of the mad priest and a large feather bed (IV. ii. 106). Irreligion and drunkenness of the clergy suggesting general corruption, are glanced at in the speech of the mad priest who declares that 'Greek is turned Turk' (IV. ii. 94) and postulates that 'he who drinks but to satisfy nature is damned' (IV. ii. 98). The brief discussion on the corrosive effects of the law among the madmen (IV. ii. 97)

reminds us of the legal chicanery of the Arragonian brothers and the punishment in store for them. It also adverts to the misalliance of the Duchess, an act of social challenge, and the inevitable suffering she undergoes as a punishment.

The strange potions concocted with hideous ingredients of devil's nails, raven's eggs and three hundred milch-bats and a suppository that made 'a soap-boiler costive' (IV. ii. 112) are the subject of a talk in the last three speeches of the madmen. They produce a repulsive feeling and by association recall a similar passage spoken by Bosola to an old lady. He enumerates 'the fat of serpents, spawn of snakes, Jew's spittle and their young children's ordure' (II. i. 38-39) as the ingredients of a face make-up for women to conceal their age and ugliness. It seems likely, therefore, that Ferdinand was thinking of some of the common vices of the world like pretence, duplicity, double-dealing, dishonesty and falsehood, all of which he possesses in abundant measure. It is Ferdinand who advises Bosola to keep his 'old garb of melancholy' (I. i. 303) because

> This will gaine
> Accesse to private lodgings, where your selfe
> May (like a politique dormouse— (I. i. 305-7)

He advocates pretence as an expedient when he states

> I'll go sleepe—
> Till I know who leapes my sister, I'll not stirre:
> That knowne, I'll finde Scorpions to string my whips,
> And fix her in a generall eclipse. (II. v. 99-102)

Later, he pretends to be unaffected by the scandals about the Duchess and by sheer duplicity and falsehood lulls her into a sense of security.

> Let me be ever deafe to't:
> One of Pasquils' paper-bullets, court calumney,
> A pestilent aire which Princes pallaces
> Are seldom purg'd of: Yet, say that it were true,
> I powre it into your bosome, my fix'd love

> Would strongly excuse, extenuate, may deny
> Faults were they apparent in you: go be safe
> In your owne innocency. (III. i. 58-65)

His double-dealing acquires fiendish proportions when he professes to the Duchess 'I come to seal my peace with you' (IV. i. 51), and extends a dead man's hand in a dark chamber for her to kiss. It is reasonable to believe therefore, that Ferdinand was making an inner appraisal of his own conduct, which is conveyed to us by the strange symbols of medical ingredients.

An examination of the madmen's talk is revelatory of the main currents in the maelstrom of Ferdinand's mind. They may be set down as lechery, secular and clerical corruption, family-pride, avarice and hypocrisy with a fear of retribution.

Webster's technique in evoking and conveying the concepts in this scene, is in advance of his times. He uses imagery, symbolism and association of ideas in the madmen scene, and a comprehensible pattern of ideas is revealed on a close study.

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ADAPTATIONS OF SHAKESPEARE AND HIS CRITICS, 1660-1790

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Does an age understand Shakespeare? If this question is asked in respect of the Restoration, or the eighteenth century or the romantic age, we should of course consider its literary criticism, for this is the best of which the age was capable; but in doing so, we should consider the attitude of this criticism to the numerous adaptations which, between 1670 and 1830, frequently superseded the plays in the theatre. Also important is the extent to which the practice and principles of adaptation were in each period influenced by responsible critical opinion.

To consider the second question first. The usefulness of adaptations as an index of literary taste is generally admitted. Perverse they often are; it is precisely because they are so, that they do not lack historical interest. But they are not all perverse; at any rate, they do not show the same kind of perversity. Impatient of those who tamper with the plays, the student of Shakespeare may dismiss them all with a contemptuous shrug; whereas if he studied the various motives from which they were made, he could collect valuable materials for a history of criticism. He could see, for instance, that in the later eighteenth century adaptations were generally made on principles other than those which had directed the work of Dryden, Shadwell, Tate and Cibber. The emergence in criticism then of a sense of responsibility did not put an end to the atrocious practice of altering the plays, but we should draw attention to the fact that it nearly did so; and did so, partly because it withdrew from this practice the support of specious theory.

In the late seventeenth century, and for long since then, adaptations had been allowed to have a basis in literary theory. While Dryden vindicated the greatness of English poets in controversy with the partisans of the ancients and the French, and laid the foundations of an English criticism,

he was (not to mince matters) also convinced that Chaucer and Shakespeare, not being in all respects good enough by Restoration standards, stood in need of improvement. This fact is glossed over by some of Dryden's editors and critics, among whom is Montague Summers: explaining the aberrations of men who yielded 'to none in their admiration of Shakespeare', he thinks of two reasons and no third. First, the 'picture stage had replaced the platform stage, and the picture stage necessitated the revision of plays, which were written for another method of presentation, but were now to be interpreted by another theatrical medium.' Secondly, 'such revision was generally undertaken in accordance with the taste of the day', from the quite practical consideration that Elizabethan plays had to be made acceptable to a Restoration audience.[1] This account of the matter is misleading, because the Restoration adapters—judging by their own account of their work—were in the main influenced by simple artistic considerations. Dryden's principal reason for rewriting *The Tempest*, as he explains in the Preface, was the happy perception of Sir William Davenant that 'somewhat might be added to the Design of Shakespear': a parallel plot, 'namely, that of a Man who had never seen a Woman; that by this means those two Characters of Innocence and Love might the more illustrate and commend each other.'[2] Of *Troilus and Cressida* he writes: 'The tragedy which I have undertaken to correct was in all probability one of his first endeavours on the stage.' The play starts promisingly, but it seems Shakespeare 'grew weary of his task', and lost interest in the characters; further, Cressida, a false woman, 'is not punished.' But the 'play was Shakespeare's', and it is because 'there appeared in some places of it the admirable genius of the author' that Dryden 'undertook to remove that heap of rubbish under which many excellent thoughts lay wholly buried.' He 'new-modelled the plot', excluded from it many 'unnecessary' characters, 'improved' others and 'added' one. He preserved the unities of time and place within each act, so as not to outrage probability; and he 'so ordered' the scenes, 'that there is a coherence of them with one another, and a dependence on the main design'. Some of them are 'wholly new'; others wholly or partly 'altered' from Shakes-

peare. It was also Dryden's care to have 'refined' the language, 'which before was obsolete.'[3]

Dryden's sentiments about Shakespeare were shared by his fellow playwrights. Where Dryden erred, we could not expect that they would not err with him. Allardyce Nicoll refers in a paper to Shadwell who declared in the title of his adaptation of *Timon of Athens* that he had made it into a play: *Timon of Athens, the Man-Hater, Made into a Play.*[4] Richard Duke, in verses prefixed to Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida*, suggested that he had turned the 'dirt' of Shakespeare's play into gold, while Sir George Raynsford had much the same thing to say of Tate's adaptation of *Coriolanus*, namely that he

> Only ventures to make Gold from Oar,
> And turn to Money, that lay dead before.[5]

This has the merit of being candid; Tate had turned Shakespeare's play into a play which succeeded because it should succeed. Tate himself has been raised by history to a position of bad eminence, while we now hear little of Shadwell and D'Urfey as adapters of Shakespeare, though they erred not less egregiously—Tate's present notoriety being in direct proportion to the amazing popularity enjoyed for a hundred and fifty years by his version of *King Lear*. Little is now heard also of Tate's own *The Sicilian Usurper*, an adaptation of *Richard II*, where again the claim is made that Shakespeare's play leaves room for improvement, this being a reason for altering it. 'Charmed with the many Beauties I discovered in it, which I knew wou'd become the Stage', he set himself the task of removing its principal defect, which is this: that it represents King Richard 'in the worst colours of History', that is, as 'dissolute, unadviseable, devoted to Ease and Luxury.' Further, 'old Gaunt' should not have been made to speak disrespectfully to the King in Act II, Scene i. Anxious perhaps that his own version (1681) should not give offence to royalty (though he gives another explanation, which may be the true one), Tate makes Gaunt palliate Richard's 'miscarriages' in such words as these:

> Your Sycophants bred from your Childhood with you,

> Have such Advantage had to work upon you,
> That scarce your Failings can be called your Faults.
> (Adaptation, II. i)

It is important in view of what emotions a Tragedy should arouse, that Richard should speak and act like a King, and act 'with Resolution and Justice.' As the King's action in seizing old Gaunt's property,

> Say what ye will, we Seize into our Hands
> His Plate, his Goods, his Money and his Lands

was not just, and further as some mention had to be made of 'so material a part' of the story—the King's action being 'the very Basis of Bullingbrook's Usurpation', Tate supposes 'the foresaid Revennues to be borrow'd onely for the present Exigence, not Extorted.'

> Be Heav'n our Judge, we mean him fair,
> And shortly will with Interest restore
> The Loan our suddain Streights make necessary.

Tate goes on to explain that his 'Design was to engage the pitty of the Audience for him in his Distress.' This excellent end could never have been achieved 'had I not before shewn him a Wise, Active and Just Prince.' For the same reason, he had not allowed even traitors and conspirators to use 'detracting Language' of 'the person whom I design'd to place in the Love and Compassion of the Audience.'[6]

[Tate's grounds for altering *Richard II* were unusual even for an age of rash adapters, most of whom thought they had done enough when they had remedied the defects of unity of action, time and place or refined the sentiments and the language or adjusted the scales of poetic justice, whereas Tate in this particular instance laid his hand on the heart of the tragedy. But on the basic question that Shakespeare was being improved by them, some perhaps had even less misgivings than Tate. John Dennis rewrote *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and published it in 1702 under the title *The Comical Gallant*; it had a long Dedicatory Epistle for Preface, but the Preface is in effect an ambitious critical treatise—*A Large Account*

of the Taste in Poetry, he called it. In setting forth his reasons for altering Shakespeare, he wrote: 'And indeed the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, as it has great Beauties, so it has strange Defects, which tho they past at first for the sake of the Beauties, yet will come to be less endured as the Stage grows more regular.' There are 'no less than three Actions in it that are independant one of another', and there is 'more than one insignificant Scene'; and the style 'in some places is stiff and forced and affected.' He went on to say: 'In the alteration I have endeavoured to Correct the foresaid Errours'; but if this was immodest, he exceeded himself when he presently added, 'I have alter'd every thing which I disliked, and retain'd every thing which I or my Friends approved of', or when he finally declared that his justification for rewriting the play is that it 'is not so Despicable as to be Incapable of Improvement, . . . not so admirable, as not to stand in need of any.'[7]

In illustrating the Restoration adapters' conviction that they had improved Shakespeare, we have restricted ourselves to men whose representative character cannot be questioned. There is nothing to prevent a few wrong-headed individuals from doing what they like, and it is reasonable to think that their actions disgrace them, not their age; but an age can be judged by the actions of men whom it respected and liked. Not to mention Dryden, great in whatever he attempted except when he turned aside to rewrite Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton, the others were men of no small reputation in their own day, both as authors and adapters. Who now remembers Tate as anything but an adapter of *King Lear*? And yet he was the author of two fairly successful plays, from one of which entitled, *Brutus of Alba: or, the Enchanted Lovers*, a long extract was given by Lamb when he availed himself of Garrick's famous collection of plays (bequeathed to the British Museum) to supplement the *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*.[8] Dennis was dubbed a dunce by Pope, but in his time he had an established reputation as a critic, and the eminence enjoyed by him was perhaps the cause of Pope's animosity. As for Davenant, Shadwell, and Cibber, though time has shorn them of much of their glory, they are allowed even today to be respectable minor authors.

After 1700, a change, if it came, was a change for the worse. Colley Cibber's *Richard III* (1700), George Granville's *The Jew of Venice*, altered from *The Merchant of Venice* (1701), Betterton's *2 Henry IV* (1704),—these three apart, the eighteenth century failed to produce in its first half a single adaptation which could compare in stage popularity with the work of the Restoration. But there was no dearth of undistinguished work: *As You Like It*, for instance, was turned by Charles Johnson into *Love in a Forest* and *Much Ado* by James Miller into *The Universal Passion*; while among other plays similarly treated were *Henry V* (Aaron Hill), *Measure for Measure* (Charles Gildon), and *Romeo and Juliet* (Theophilus Cibber). The period did not distinguish itself in this kind of work, but obviously had no disinclination for it. Moreover, it was addicted to adaptations in the theatre to an extent not approached in any other period; till about 1740, Dryden and Davenant's version of *The Tempest*, the former's *Troilus and Cressida*, the latter's *Macbeth*, Otway's *Caius Marius* (*Romeo and Juliet*), Shadwell's *Timon of Athens*, Cibber's *Richard III*, Betterton's *2 Henry IV*, and Granville's *The Jew of Venice* completely excluded from the stage the original plays, though about this time some of them were partially rehabilitated. Percy Fitzgerald, biographer of Garrick, tells an amusing anecdote about Quin, the celebrated actor, that when he was told that Garrick was going to revive *Macbeth* as Shakespeare wrote it, he exclaimed in surprise, 'What! do not I play "Macbeth" as written by Shakespeare?'[9] The eighteenth century saw the first performance of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in 1744, of *The Tempest* in 1746, of *The Merchant of Venice* in 1741, and of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1748. Many other plays the first half of the century had not the opportunity of seeing at all, except as altered by some 'improving' hand. Only a few plays escaped the fate of being rewritten, and were performed without interpolations; among them were *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar*.[10]

In the second half of the century the theatres generally gave Shakespeare's plays, the plays as they are, not rewritten, though not without omissions. The reduction of the 'apron', which meant the withdrawal of the stage from the audience and increased the distance between them and the actors,

created a taste for pantomime, spectacle and song; and was mainly responsible for the conversion of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* into operas.[11] Happily however, there was in their case no pretence that the result was a substitute of Shakespeare—was in fact anything else than opera. More than any other man of his time, Garrick offended against Shakespeare by adapting *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* for the stage; but his sins were truly sins of omission (not of commission), for in all he added not more than a hundred lines to *Romeo and Juliet* and fifty lines to *Hamlet*. The stage versions of most plays published by J. Bell about 1770, later by others (W. Oxdale, Harrison & Co., Bathurst etc.) are Shakespeare, with omissions. C. Beecher Hogan says that there were only three instances of the rewriting of Shakespeare during the period 1751-1800, Sheridan's *Coriolanus* (1754), Hawkins's *Cymbeline* (1759) and Cumberland's *Timon of Athens* (1771), and that none of them 'was really successful.'[12]

If omissions and minor transpositions are condoned (they cannot be altogether avoided in adapting plays for a stage for which they were not intended), the eighteenth century in its second half presented in the theatre what Shakespeare wrote, though there were a few unfortunate exceptions. Hogan's fact-finding researches reveal an amazing difference in this regard from the first half of the century. In two separate volumes, one for 1701-1750, the other for 1751-1800, he groups the plays alphabetically, listing for each play *every* performance, and indicating the complete casts, whenever available, for the performance, as well as the text of the version used; while appendixes tabulate this information for easy reference. For a just appreciation of the situation, one should follow with Hogan the fortunes of each play in the theatre. To consider here some of those plays which had been known only in Restoration versions till about 1740, Davenant's *Macbeth* was acted but once after 1750, against 270 performances of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*; while during the same period, 1751-1800, Lansdowne's *The Jew of Venice* was performed 6 times (all in 1754), the original 237 times; *The Tempest* as an opera, 13 times, the original 114 times; *2 Henry IV* in an adaptation once, the original 61 times.[13] But *King Lear* was known only as altered by Garrick or Colman

(with many restorations), and *Richard III* only in Cibber's version. The only play in respect of which the second half of the century is at a disadvantage compared with the first half is *Hamlet*. There had been no attempt to alter it till Garrick; but what a poor reception did it get, compared with the popularity enjoyed in the first half of the century by the wretched Restoration versions of some of the finest plays? It was acted only 34 times, the original 309 times.[14] If we ignore the operatic versions (of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*) which were frankly designed for a specific kind of entertainment, the two really conspicuous exceptions to a return to Shakespeare after the middle of the century were *King Lear* and *Richard III*; though a good deal can be said for Colman's *Lear*.

A wrong idea of this period may be formed by merely enumerating the adaptations made then of the different plays of Shakespeare. In the first place, we should distinguish between an acting version of a play which can be charged only with omissions, and the rewriting of it; in the second place, we have to enquire what success attended the rewriting of a play, either with readers or with playgoers.

That in the second half of the eighteenth century important developments took place in Shakespearian criticism and scholarship seemed to me to justify an *a priori* assumption about important changes in the practice of adaptation; and it was to test the correctness of this assumption, which involves an interesting point about the influence of academic opinion on theatrical practice, that I first turned to Malone's *Historical Account of the English Stage*. There appeared in outline the story—which has now emerged with such completeness from the fully documented volumes of C. B. Hogan, by their completeness virtually superseding the labours of G.C.D. Odell and Hazelton Spencer—the story how the theatres about 1740 began to go back to Shakespeare. First, most of the adaptations which had been popular were one after another discarded. Secondly, between 1750 and 1785, comparatively few new adaptations were brought forward, and it cannot be too strongly insisted upon that all but four or five restricted themselves to pruning the plays to the requirements of representation on the eighteenth-century stage;

very significant was the absence of suggestions that they were an 'improvement' on Shakespeare. Few of the adapters argued elaborately, in prefaces and prologues (as the Restoration men had done), that they had remedied deficiencies and removed blemishes. They were meddling with Shakespeare, and knew it, and their work was generally given to the world without the publicity, and the self-laudation, of a critical preface. Garrick refrained from publishing his *Hamlet*. Colman's *King Lear* carried a preface or Advertisement, but it justified Shakespeare, not the adapters. It is a fact of some interest that the two important adapters of the period, Colman and Garrick, were theatre managers. The producer's point of view can be separated from that of the literary adapter, and it is one—that is, what is frankly and unambiguously a producer's point of view is one—which even our age has shown itself willing to consider both on the stage and the screen. The point of view of the Restoration adapters, we shall remind ourselves, was literary. They thought they were producing new works of art—plays which were better than Shakespeare's—not simply versions for use in the theatre; but the Shakespearian scholarship of the mid- and late eighteenth century created a climate of opinion, in which adaptation on any other grounds than suitability for representation was felt by all but the most ambitious to be a hazardous undertaking.

A fact which can be considered here is the difference which a critic of Dryden's eminence can make to a situation. It is worth speculating what the history of Shakespeare in the Restoration theatre would have been had not the foremost critic of the period set the fashion of altering and improving him and found good reasons for doing so. Sheltered behind Dryden's example, adaptation flourished, reaping the benefits of an alliance with criticism. There was also Dennis, in his time a considerable critic and a reckless adapter. Mention should further be made of the fact that the practice had the approval of critics like Langbaine[15] who never tried their hand at it, and consequently could be expected to view it with a measure of detachment; however, this fact should not be made much of, as Langbaine was not an influential critic. But one fact stands out. It is that *in Johnson's*

time adaptation was deprived of the patronage of, and of the benefits of an alliance with, criticism.

First, we may consider for a moment the attitude of one who had not the learning of a Johnson or a Steevens but, indisputably had merit of another sort—that which belongs to one who represents the common man of his age. This is Thomas Davies, author of *Dramatic Miscellanies* (1783-1784). The title-page informs us that the three volumes of the book consist of 'Critical Observations on Several Plays of Shakespeare: with a Review of His Principal Characters, and those of Various Eminent Writers, as Represented by Mr. Garrick and other Celebrated Comedians.' He follows in some detail the stage history of *King Lear*; and his interest in the subject is evidenced by the fact that he recovers from *Roscius Anglicanus* the information that 'about the year 1663, *King Lear* was acted, at the Duke's Theatre, as *Shakespeare wrote it.*' He says that Tate is 'to be laughed at for his vanity, in pretending to mend Shakespeare', and that Colman's restorations are 'judicious'. But his commonplace mind shows itself when he prefers for representation Garrick's version to Colman's, whose superior critical discernment he, however, acknowledges. On the point that he will have the play at all altered only in representation, he is quite explicit. Garrick 'well understood what would best please the taste of an audience' when he retained Tate's love-story; and if the final scenes 'are really so afflicting to a mind of sensibility in the closet [he is referring to Dr. Johnson who said that he could not endure to read them], what would they produce in action?'[16]

Davies ridicules suggestions made by Restoration adapters that they had 'improved' Shakespeare. Colley Cibber's *Papal Tyranny* was altered from *King John*, and 'Colley's vanity so far transported him, that, in his Dedication, he told Lord Chesterfield, he had endeavoured to make his play more like one "than what he found it in Shakespeare".'[17] Of the songs, which Davenant in rewriting *Macbeth* had given to the witches,[18] Davies is barely tolerant; not of the other alterations, including 'a scene between Macbeth and his Lady, upon the most serious and important subject, where poverty of sentiment is only exceeded by wretchedness of rhyme.' He

quite frankly describes Davenant as an 'ill-instructed admirer of Shakespeare' who 'disfigured the whole piece', and his opinion is that *Macbeth* had been popular in the theatre notwithstanding all the 'added deformities and sad mutilations' because a good deal of the original had been 'retained'. 'Happily', says Davies, Garrick 'restored' the play to the stage 'almost' as Shakespeare wrote it.[19]

He is uncompromisingly critical of Garrick's alteration of *Hamlet*, of which he gives the details, and regrets that Garrick should have 'thrown out' the grave-diggers. Claudius is both a coward and a villain, but Garrick, feeling that he is not impressive on the stage, made him a brave man, not realizing that 'the brave villain like Richard III' we 'hate' but 'cannot despise'; whereas we ought to despise Claudius. To these and other changes 'the audience submitted during the life of the alterer,' but it clearly did not 'approve' of them, and 'soon called for Hamlet as it had been acted from time immemorial.'[20]

Francis Gentleman (if he is the author of *The Dramatic Censor*, 1770) is more tolerant of alterations than most critics of his time.[21] But he is not significant enough to be considered as an exception. Common critical opinion was on the whole averse to alterations (though it did not object, and perhaps excusably, to minor *omissions* in an acting version). Reviewing the reception of the opera which Garrick had made of *The Tempest* (1766), G. W. Stone gives extracts from Murphy's *Life of Garrick*, Tate Wilkinson's *Memoirs* and Theophilus Cibber's *Two Dissertations upon the Theatres*; in them the regret is expressed that a great play should have been suffered 'to dwindle into an opera.' (So Murphy put it.)[22] The opera was a failure (it was given only for six nights), and G. W. Stone shows that there is evidence that 'Garrick himself did not relish being mentioned in connection with it.'[23]

To consider now the attitude of responsible criticism—that alone by which an age can claim to be judged—to adaptations. Dr. Johnson's references to them in the *Lives of the English Poets* are laconic; either he mentions them without comment ('The same year [1680] produced *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*; much of which is borrowed from the *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakespeare'), or in his comments he

practises economy to such an extent that he leaves us guessing about his views. Among George Granville's works was '*The Jew of Venice*, altered from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* (1701)'. A little later we get just one sentence: 'In his *Jew of Venice*, as Rowe remarks, the character of Shylock is made comick, and we are prompted to laughter instead of detestation.' Dr. Johnson is almost as reticent about the Dryden-Davenant version of *The Tempest* in which 'to Shakespeare's monster Caliban is added a sister-monster Sycroax; and a woman, who, in the original play, had never seen a man, is in this brought acquainted with a man that had never seen a woman.'[24] It cannot be said with confidence that the tone of this reference is not ironical. Perhaps the only other reference in the *Lives* to alterations is a sentence about Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida*, where Johnson approvingly quotes Langbaine's remark that 'the last scene in the third act is a masterpiece.'[25]

Dr. Johnson is clearly disinclined to enter into a discussion of the practice of altering Shakespeare, possibly because Shakespeare is not his subject in the *Lives*, but Dryden and Otway and George Granville—each of whom in his time played many parts, that of an alterer of Shakespeare being just one of them.[26]

In all the writings of Johnson, Capell, Steevens, Tyrwhitt and Malone I have gone through, I have found not a word (that quotation from Langbaine about Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida* excepted) which could be supposed to countenance this practice. We could hardly expect less of men whose integrity as Shakespearian scholars was as much beyond question as that of the finest men which the present century has produced.

Editors can ignore adapters, and the Shakespearian editors of the eighteenth century generally do. But incidental observations from them—when they are discussing a point which interests them as editors—give clear indications of their mind. Answering the question whether Shakespeare's plays were popular on the Restoration Stage, Capell observes: 'That Shakespeare, the true and genuine Shakespeare, was not much relish'd is plain from the many alterations of him, that were brought upon the stage by some of those gentle-

men [Tate, Shadwell and Otway], and by others within that period.'[27] Steevens complains that Shakespeare was also little read, in proof of which he refers to Tate, who 'in his dedication to the altered play of King Lear, speaks of the original as an obscure piece.' And matters did not improve in the time of Addison who 'having occasion to quote a few lines out of Macbeth was content to receive them from D'Avenant's alteration of that celebrated drama, in which almost every original beauty is either awkwardly disguised, or arbitrarily omitted.'[28]

As editor of Shakespeare, Malone takes no notice of adapters in the Preface, but as historian of the English stage he says many words—hard and true words—about them. In the concluding paragraphs of the *Historical Account of the English Stage*, he reviews the fortunes of Shakespeare's plays in the theatre since the Restoration, and in doing so refers to the versions which were made of many of them. *King Lear*, *Timon of Athens*, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*, were the 'only' plays 'exhibited at the theatre in Dorset Gardens' between 1671 and 1682, and the last three 'were not represented in their original state, but as altered by D'Avenant and Shadwell.' At the new theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, opened in 1682, it was the fate of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 'to be transformed into an opera.' After referring to Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida* and Lacy's *The Taming of the Shrew*, he speaks of Tate's and D'Urfey's 'miserable alterations' of *Coriolanus*, *King Richard II*, *King Lear* and *Cymbeline*; of Otway's *Caius Marius* which had 'usurped the place' of *Romeo and Juliet* for 'near seventy years' since its production in 1680 and Granville's *Jew of Venice* which had 'kept possession of the stage from the time of its first exhibition in 1701, to the year 1741'; also of Dryden's *All For Love* 'performed instead of' *Antony and Cleopatra* from 1678 to 1759 and D'Avenant's *Macbeth* 'preferred' to Shakespeare's play 'from its first exhibition in 1663' for nearly eighty years. Finally, Cibber's *Richard III* had been since its revival at Haymarket in 1710, 'represented, I believe, more frequently than any of our author's dramas, except *Hamlet*.' Malone seems to think that the appearance of Rowe's edition in 1709 stimulated popular interest in Shakespeare, for 'the exhibition of his plays became

much more frequent than before.' But taste continued to be perverse. 'Such was the wretched taste of the audience of those days, that in many instances the contemptible alterations of his pieces were preferred to the originals.' Instances of plays being revived in their Restoration versions, after they had been withdrawn from the stage for fairly long periods, were not rare. A change came about 1740. *2 King Henry IV*, 'which had for fifty years been driven from the scene by the play which Mr. Betterton substituted in its place,' and *King Henry V* 'as originally written' were produced in 1738 at Covent Garden; and in 1741 *The Merchant of Venice* 'was once more restored to the scene' at Drury Lane. Since that time several factors had contributed to make Shakespeare better understood, so that 'our poet's reputation . . . is now fixed upon a basis, which neither the lapse of time nor the fluctuation of opinion will ever be able to shake'; and one of these factors, says Malone, had been 'the frequent representation of his plays in nearly their original state'.[29]

This history of Shakespeare's plays in the theatre since the Restoration has not been adequately noticed in modern works on the subject. Its interest, apart from that of good history, is that Malone here pronounces the verdict of the responsible criticism of his age upon the alterations of Shakespeare and their scandalous popularity in the theatre till a little before the middle of the eighteenth century.

The present essay was intended to ask two questions. One is about the adaptations of Shakespeare's plays; the other, about the attitude of criticism to them. As regards the first: a great improvement was noticed in the second half of the eighteenth century; in the first decades of the nineteenth, the position deteriorated but slightly, but it deteriorated. Kemble, the first important figure of the romantic era in the Shakespearian theatre, was, by the standards of the later eighteenth century, an irresponsible adapter. About 1790 he reversed the healthy trends in Shakespearian production. This is capable of proof by examining his version of almost every play. It was *not before the fourth decade of the nineteenth century* that Shakespeare was presented in the theatre in a better

text than the eighteenth century in its second half had known. The first three decades did not know better than to give Shakespeare in a text just as good, or just as bad; and in some notable instances—*King Lear* and *The Tempest*—in a text a good deal worse.[30] The literary criticism of the romantic period frowned upon the adaptations which were then popular in the theatre, but on the question whether adaptation with a view to improvement was at all feasible or permissible, it showed some accommodation, whereas Malone (for instance) had showed none. Though irresponsible interference with Shakespeare's plays in the theatre has in some quarters continued into our century (not to mention the added evil of frequent misrepresentation on the screen), it is also true that it is our century, and our century only, which has theatres specially devoted to the high ideal of presenting the plays with complete faithfulness to the text and in conditions somewhat approximating to the Elizabethan theatre. Present-day Shakespearian scholarship has given to the contemporary theatre this high ideal. It has been rewarded with the discovery that given proper conditions, the more faithfully Shakespeare's plays are presented, the more effective they are in the theatre. The later eighteenth century in presenting Shakespeare's plays on its own stage cannot be blamed for having pruned them for convenience; it generally *refrained from doing more.* What is of interest to the Shakespearian scholarship and the Shakespearian theatre of the present period is that the notion of fidelity in representation had sprung up in the earlier period and that *the criticism of that period had a positive attitude* in the matter.

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13. Hogan, Vol. II, Appendix C.
14. Ibid. Appendix C.
15. Gerard Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets*, 1691 (*Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J. E. Spingarn, Oxford, 1908-1909, III, 144).
16. *Dramatic Miscellanies*, II, 260-5.
17. Ibid. I, 3.
18. Davenant's version has, in addition to the songs which the Folio Stage Directions give to the witches, a new scene (in Act II) on a heath, with Macduff, Lady Macduff, a Servant, and the Witches who sing and dance. (The New Variorum edition of *Macbeth* gives Davenant's version which appeared under the title: *Macbeth, a Tragedy. With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Songs*. London, 1674).
19. *Dramatic Miscellanies*, II, 115-17.
20. Davies, III, 145-7.
21. *The Dramatic Censor*, I, 3-4, 149-50, 171-2, 187-8, 360, 368; II, 76. Francis Gentleman was the author of the very extraordinary suggestion that 'a committee of able critics' should as a joint enterprise prepare an 'edition' of Shakespeare, from which the 'insignificant and offensive passages' were to be eliminated, so as to bring Shakespeare's 'merit into a more compact, uniform view.' This wish, first expressed in the essay on *Othello*, was repeated when he came to write of *Cymbeline* (I, 149-50; II, 76). But Francis Gentleman was behind his times, and not on this particular question of adaptation only. For instance, in 1770 he was still concerned to find if Shakespeare observed the unities of time and place; it would be hard to remember another man who was, at that time,
22. G. W. Stone, 'Shakespeare's *Tempest* at Drury Lane during Garrick's Management', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, VII (Winter, 1956), 3.

23. Ibid. pp. 2, 5.
24. *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. G. B. Hill (Oxford, 1905), I, 245; II, 290; I, 341.
25. Cited in *Lives*, I, 356.
26. In excusing himself for not having mentioned Garrick in his writings, Dr. Johnson explained to Boswell that *one* reason was that he had 'altered Shakespeare.' (*Boswell's Life of Johnson*, ed. G. B. Hill, Oxford, 1887, II, 92).
27. Capell's introduction (Boswell's Variorum edition, I, 130). The same point is made by Malone in a note on Macbeth's soliloquy 'If it were done, when 'tis done...' (I. vii). From Dryden's "assertion" (that there are "bombast speeches" in *Macbeth* which "are not to be understood") and 'the verbal alterations made by him and Sir W. D'Avenant, in some of our author's plays I think it clearly applies that Dryden and the other poets of the time of Charles II were not very deeply skilled in the language of their predecessors and that Shakespeare was not so well understood fifty years after his death, as he is at this day.' (Boswell's Variorum edition, XI, 75-76).
28. Steevens, Advertisement, 1773 (Boswell, I, 179-80).
29. Malone, *An Historical Account of the English Stage* (Boswell, III, 287-94).
30. This conclusion was arrived at, after studying the stage history of the separate plays in the New Variorum edition, in the New Cambridge edition and in C. B. Hogan's *Shakespeare in the Theatre*. Only in respect of one play perhaps, *The Winter's Tale*, a definite improvement could be marked. It may be added that in the heyday of romantic criticism Frederic Reynolds turned more of Shakespeare's plays into operas than Colman and Garrick together did, and that his depredations exceeded theirs both in violence and extent.

THE ARGUMENT ON POETIC JUSTICE

(Addison *versus* Dennis)

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It is indeed a moot point whether Addison was a mere amateur in the field of criticism or an amateur who gave as good an account of himself as professional critics such as Dennis. Critical estimates have varied from the enthusiastic outburst of J. G. Robertson that in the suggestive papers on the imagination Addison had 'laid the foundation of the whole romantic aesthetics in England'[1] to the tone of condescending disapproval adopted by T. S. Eliot when he refers to the 'embarrassing mediocrity'[2] of Addison's mind. The truth would seem to lie somewhere between these two extremes. Strictly speaking, Addison should be taken rather as a sounding-board of the changes that were coming over Augustan criticism than as one who consciously anticipated changes.

Viewed in this light, his clash with Dennis over the question of poetic justice has every attribute rather of a preliminary engagement than of a full-scale battle. Understandably, therefore, Addison is willing to start the quarrel but not anxious to carry it on, nor is he particularly anxious to secure a victory for his side. Having set the ball rolling, he is quite content to step aside and let others carry on the quarrel to the best of their ability. Indeed he shows no uncommon curiosity even to find out which side has won; though, of course, he has no doubts in his mind which side deserves to win. All this was, one might say, a part of his approach to critical problems. That he was sometimes amateurish is probably true, but it is equally true that he had the amateur's infallible knack of seizing the main point in a controversy and holding fast to it till others came to see his point of view. His attack on the concept of poetic justice is a good illustration of this statement.

Addison strongly disapproved of the notion of '*English* Writers of Tragedy' that they were 'obliged to an equal

Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, and an impartial Execution of Poetical Justice.'[3] This conflicted with his view that in a tragedy:

> A virtuous Man (says *Seneca*) strugling with Misfortunes, is such a Spectacle as Gods might look upon with Pleasure: And such a Pleasure it is which one meets with in the Representation of a well-written Tragedy.[4]

Steele had said more or less the same thing a little over a year before in the *Tatler*, No. 82:

> The contemplation of distresses of this sort softens the mind of man, and makes the heart better.... For this reason the wise Athenians, in their theatrical performances, laid before the eyes of the people the greatest afflictions which could befall human life, and insensibly polished their tempers by such representations. Among the modern, indeed there has arisen a chimerical method of disposing the fortune of the persons represented, according to what they call poetical justice; and letting none be unhappy, but those who deserve it.

As a matter of fact, both Addison and Steele are echoing the changing critical opinion of the early eighteenth century. Almost a decade earlier, Rowe in the Epistle Dedicatory to *The Ambitious Step-mother* (1701) had said that he had deliberately chosen not to save Artaxerxes and Amestris, the two virtuous characters in his play; for, had he done so, he would have 'destroy'd the greatest occasion for Compassion in the whole Play'. At the same time, in deference to the critical beliefs of his time, Rowe thought it expedient to affirm that 'That which they call the Poetical Justice, is, I think, strictly observ'd, the two principal Contrivers of Evil, the Statesman and Priest, are punish'd with death; and the Queen is depos'd from her authority by her own Son; which, I suppose, will be allowed as the severest mortification that could happen to a woman of her Imperious temper.' But this is, as even a cursory reading of the play shows, special pleading; and the truth of the matter is that Rowe's genuine belief, both in theory and practice, was that the audience 'should be struck with Terror in several parts of the Play,

but always Conclude and go away with Pity.' As a matter of fact, Rowe's emphasis on the tender and the pathetic is evidence of the changing tastes of the theatre-going audiences in the beginning of the century.

That the taste of the audiences was changing is now generally accepted. If Rowe felt it necessary to pay lip service to poetic justice while focussing all his care and attention on arousing the feelings of pity, Addison and Steele went a stage further. They stated their disapproval of poetic justice without hesitation. Steele protested against the method which lets 'none be unhappy, but those who deserve it'. Addison in a rare burst of self-assertion called poetic justice 'a ridiculous Doctrine in Modern Criticism'[5] for no other reason than that the '*English* Writers of Tragedy are possessed with a Notion, that when they represent a virtuous or innocent Person in Distress, they ought not to leave him till they have delivered him out of his Troubles, or made him triumph over his Enemies.'[6] And he went on to explain himself:

> as the principal Design of Tragedy is to raise Commiseration and Terror in the Minds of the Audience, we shall defeat this great End, if we always make Virtue and Innocence happy and successful. Whatever Crosses and Disappointments a good Man suffers in the Body of the Tragedy, they will make but small Impression on our Minds, when we know that in the last Act he is to arrive at the End of his Wishes and Desires.[7]

Addison was entirely correct in saying that if virtue and innocence were always happy and successful, there could be no tragedy. However, lest we should start imagining that here Addison was being faithful to Aristotle, we have only to recall his statement, quoted earlier, that the theme of a tragedy should be 'a virtuous Man strugling with Misfortunes'. The fact of the matter is that Addison, like almost every critic in that age, is interpreting Aristotle to suit his argument. Though in the above passage Addison has said that 'the principal Design of Tragedy is to raise Commiseration and Terror', his own emphasis falls on commiseration rather than on terror. He says:

> *Aristotle* considers the Tragedies that were written in either of

> these Kinds, and observes, that those which ended unhappily, had always pleased the People, and carried away the Prize in the publick Disputes of the Stage, from those that ended happily. Terror and Commiseration leave a pleasing Anguish in the Mind; and fix the Audience in such a serious Composure of Thought, as is much more lasting and delightful than any little transient Starts of Joy and Satisfaction. Accordingly we find, that more of our *English* Tragedies have succeeded, in which the Favourites of the Audience sink under their Calamities, than those in which they recover themselves out of them.[8]

Such being Addison's view of tragedy, it is not in the least surprising that he should record his preference for those plays in which the distress of virtuous characters is emphasized. These are Otway's *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserved*, Lee's *Alexander the Great* and *Theodosius*, Dryden's *All for Love* and *Oedipus* (in collaboration with Lee), and Southerne's *Oroonoko*. Of Shakespeare's plays, he mentions two, *Othello* and *King Lear*. The mention of the last play is particularly significant, because Addison also takes the opportunity to protest against Tate's mutilation of Shakespeare's masterpiece. But from all this Addison does not go on to insist that tragedies with a happy ending are not to be classed as genuine tragedies or are to be rejected out of hand. Only, according to him, they are less moving.

What is the moral to be drawn from the foregoing discussion? Addison answers in these words:

> I do not therefore dispute against this way [with happy ending] of writing Tragedies, but against the criticism that would establish this as the only Method; and by that Means would very much cramp the *English* Tragedy, and perhaps give a wrong Bent to the Genius of our Writers.[9]

This is indeed a far cry from the mood of indignation against poetic justice which made him describe it as 'a ridiculous Doctrine in Modern Criticism'. From being shrill and emphatic, Addison's tone is now mild and tentative. Though still opposed to poetic justice, he qualifies his criticism of it. He is, as a matter of fact, prepared to admit that a tragedy can have a plan of construction other than the one which

he considers to be the most affecting and, hence, the best.

That Addison should have felt obliged to adopt such a flexible attitude is, in some degree, a recognition of the potency of the concept of poetic justice in the early years of the eighteenth century. With its neatly-formulated scheme of appropriate rewards and punishments for good and evil characters respectively, it served to still the emotional and spiritual disquiet of the neo-classic temperament. But as is well known, at the turn of the seventeenth century the neo-classic temperament began to develop a new sensitivity to misery and distress which it found highly satisfying. Addison[10] was no exception to this. In fact, he was especially sensitive to these new influences and can be regarded as an index of what was happening at that time in this sphere.

It is no accident, for instance, that Addison says nothing (at any rate in the 40th number of the *Spectator* where he first raised this issue) about the rewarding of the virtuous or the punishment of the wicked in tragedy—two poles of reasoning between which Dennis's mind moves all the time. Addison protests against the rescue of the innocent, for according to his way of thinking—and feeling—it is by dwelling upon the distress of the innocent that tragedy can be made 'one of the most delightful and most improving Entertainments'.[11] More than this, tragedy, according to him, has a certain purifying effect on man, for he says:

> Diversions of this kind [tragedies] wear out of our Thoughts everything that is mean and little. They cherish and cultivate that Humanity which is the ornament of our Nature. They soften insolence, sooth Affliction, and subdue the Mind to the Dispensations of Providence.[12]

II

Dennis had very different ideas about the function of tragedy and the role of Providence. In 1701, he had said:

> I conceive that every Tragedy, ought to be a very Solemn Lecture, inculcating a particular Providence, and shewing it plainly protecting the Good, and chastizing the Bad, or at least the Violent; and that, if it is otherwise, it is either an

> empty Amusement, or a scandalous and pernicious Libel upon the Government of the World.[13]

Dennis makes this statement while comparing the *Oedipus* of Sophocles and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. He finds the former 'Just and Regular' whereas the latter, according to him, is 'very Extravagant and Irregular'.[14] More important than this, however, is his opinion that *Oedipus* is 'very Religious' whereas *Julius Caesar* is 'Irreligious'. His conception of what is religious—and irreligious—is particularly severe and narrow, indeed suspiciously similar to Rymer's way of thinking. He says:

> The killing of *Julius Caesar* in *Shakespear*, is either a Murder, or a Lawful Action; if the killing of *Caesar* is a Lawful Action, then the killing of *Brutus* and *Cassius* is downright Murder; and the Poet has been guilty of polluting the Scene, with the Blood of the very Best and Last of the *Romans*. But if the killing of *Caesar* is Murder, and *Brutus* and *Cassius* are very justly punish'd for it, then *Shakespear* is, on the other Side, answerable for introducing so many Noble *Romans*, committing, in the Face of an Audience, a very horrible Murder, and only punishing Two of them; which Proceeding gives an Occasion to the People, to draw a dangerous Inference from it, which may be destructive to Government, and to Human Society.[15]

Dennis is here speaking a language that was beginning to be 'dated' even in his own lifetime. That every tragedy should set an 'example' and inculcate 'a particular Providence' was a kind of argument that was best understood in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Thereafter the critical climate began to change. For Dennis, therefore, to restate the argument in the beginning of the eighteenth century, indeed to seek to build a whole superstructure of ideas partly on this basis as he did in *The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry*, could not but create a gap between his own thinking and that of his age. To realize that such a gap existed is the first step towards understanding Dennis's criticism. Indeed it would not be too much to say that the clash between Addison and Dennis over the place of poetic justice in drama is an illustration of this gap.

In the critical system of Dennis, the concept of poetic justice occupied a central place. Actually his belief in it is linked up with his identification of religion with poetry, his lofty conception of the moral responsibility of a poet and his belief in God, Providence, and future rewards and punishments. In the course of his reply to Collier, he had said in passing:

> Poetick Justice would be a Jest if it were not an Image of the Divine, and if it did not consequently suppose the Being of a God and Providence. It supposes too the Immortality of the Soul, and future Rewards and Punishments.[16]

Rymer for all his didactic fervour had not managed to elevate poetic justice to the plane where it could be described as 'an Image of the Divine'. His preoccupations had been more mundane and consequently less metaphysical. This is not to imply that Dennis's metaphysics was very profound or very original. It does imply one thing however, that Dennis's critical principles made a body of well-integrated thought and formed a part of his wider outlook on life and literature. To detach them, one from the other, was neither feasible nor acceptable to Dennis. Indeed Dennis clung to them so fast and so fanatically, more especially in the later years of his life, that what started on his part as bold modifications of neo-classical canons ended up by being a set of hide-bound, case-hardened formulas. It was most natural, therefore, that Dennis should have defended poetic justice when it was attacked by Addison, particularly as he imagined that any attack on the rules was an indirect attack on himself and that the man behind this attack was Steele who, Dennis believed, was conducting a campaign to undermine his reputation.[17] At any rate, Dennis in his reply to the 40th number of the *Spectator* expressed himself both explicitly and uncompromisingly on the subject of poetic justice. His defence of poetic justice is not only the best-known document of its kind in the eighteenth century but is the last explicit defence of this concept in that century. As a matter of fact, Addison's attack on poetic justice was the opening shot of a campaign (though not so self-conscious as the phrase might suggest) that kept on

mounting till by the end of the century, poetic justice lost almost all vitality as an active critical principle. However, it was not till the birth of genuine tragedy in the modern period—in the hands of Ibsen and others—that it was completely displaced.

While dealing with Dennis's defence of poetic justice, it should not be necessary to say anything about his claim that the authority for poetic justice is to be found in Aristotle. Nobody believes this today, nor is it particularly important to show that Dennis is misrepresenting Aristotle here. What is important to note here is Dennis's opinion that 'poetical Justice is not only founded in Reason and Nature [which Addison had disputed], but is itself the Foundation of all the Rules, ev'n of Tragedy itself.'[18] And he continued:

> For what Tragedy can there be without a Fable? or what Fable without a Moral? or what Moral without poetical Justice? What Moral, where the Good and the Bad are confounded by Destiny, and perish alike promiscuously. Thus we see this Doctrine of poetical Justice is more founded in Reason and Nature than all the rest of the poetical Rules together.[19]

To dismiss it as a circular argument as C. C. Green[20] does is to ignore the fact that, as explained above, the concept of poetic justice occupied pride of place in Dennis's critical thinking. It was so much an integral part of his philosophical outlook that Dennis simply could not imagine any kind of serious writing (such as tragedy indubitably is) which did not portray that 'Rule and Order, and Harmony, which we find in the visible Creation.'[21] Probably this over-earnest approach of his was one of the reasons why Dennis found himself out of sympathy with compositions like Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*. The more positive aspect of this approach is however to be seen in his appreciation of the reason why Homer and Virgil were really 'Renowned Masters'. According to him:

> They were clearly convinc'd, that nothing could transmit their Immortal Works to Posterity, but something like that harmonious Order which maintains the Universe; that it was partly to that, they were to owe that wondrous Merit, which

> could be able to render their Fame eternal, to extend and perpetuate the very Languages in which they writ, and to illustrate the Glory of their Countries by their own.[22]

And for the same reason as he praised Homer and Virgil, he condemned Shakespeare. Unlike them, Shakespeare did not portray 'that harmonious Order which maintains the Universe', and therefore his plays had to be altered to suit Dennis's notion of 'Providence'. In a letter to Sir Richard Blackmore, he defined 'Providence' as that disposition of events wherein 'He who does good, and perseveres in it, shall always be Rewarded, and he who does ill and perseveres in it, shall always be punish'd.'[23] To leave no room for ambiguity, he explained:

> That the foresaid Reward must always attend and crown good Actions, not sometimes only, for then it would follow, that sometimes a perseverence in good Actions has no Reward, which would take away all Poetical Instruction, and indeed every sort of Moral Instruction, resolving Providence into Chance or Fate.[24]

III

To ensure that 'Providence' was under no circumstance resolved into 'chance or Fate', Dennis put forward two interlocked arguments in his letter to the *Spectator* on poetic justice. Addison had said that 'Good and Evil happen alike to all Men on this side the Grave.'[25] This Dennis described as 'not only a very false but a dangerous Assertion'.[26] Both Addison's assertion and Dennis's counter-assertion are significant and in their respective ways reveal their approaches to the concept of poetic justice and also their underlying motives and sympathies. Addison with his notion that the ideal here of a tragedy should be 'a virtuous or innocent Person in Distress'[27] did not want the fate of a character to depend upon his deserts. Dennis, on the other hand, insisted that rewards and punishments should be strictly in proportion to the deserts of the characters. With his unqualified belief in the notion of an infallible 'Providence', he could not have thought otherwise. Indeed for Dennis to have accepted Addison's contention in

any way would have meant abandoning his position that every tragedy ought to inculcate 'a particular Providence'. Here were two mutually exclusive points of view. This is how Dennis explained his:

> the more Virtue a Man has the more he commands his Passions; but the Virtuous alone command them. The Wicked take the utmost Care to dissemble and conceal them;... Man is too finite, too shallow, and too empty a Creature to know another Man thoroughly, to know the Creature of an infinite Creator; but dramatical Persons are Creatures of which a Poet is himself the Creator.... The Creatures of a poetical Creator have no Dissimulation and no Reserve. We see their Passions in all their Height, and in all their Deformity; and when they are unfortunate, we are never to seek for the Cause.[28]

The accent of Dennis's argument is on the discovery and punishment of the wicked and in case there be any doubt left that, according to him, this is the main function of tragedy, he develops the argument further in the next two paragraphs:

> But suppose I should grant that there is not always an equal Distribution of Affliction and Happiness here below. Man is a Creature who was created immortal, and a Creature consequently that will find a Compensation in Futurity for any seeming Inequality in his Destiny here. But the Creatures of a poetical Creator are imaginary and transitory; they have no longer Duration than the Representation of their respective Fables; and consequently, if they offend, they must be punish'd during that Representation. And therefore we are very far from pretending that poetical Justice is an equal Representation of the Justice of the Almighty.
>
> We freely confess that 'tis but a very narrow and a very imperfect Type of it; so very narrow, and so very imperfect, that 'tis forc'd by temporal to represent eternal Punishments; and therefore when we shew a Man unfortunate in Tragedy, for not restraining his Passions, we mean that every one will for such Neglect, unless he timely repents, be infallibly punished by infinite Justice either here or hereafter.[29]

This is clearly at variance with what Rymer thought on

the subject. For Rymer, poetic justice was a refinement upon historical justice; for Dennis, poetic justice is only an imperfect substitute for 'the Justice of the Almighty'. Rymer's own words are:

> The *Poets* consider'd, that naturally men were affected with *pitty*, when they saw others suffer more than their fault deserv'd; and *vice*, they thought, could never be painted too ugly and frightful; therefore, whether they would move *pitty*, or make *vice* detested, it concern'd them to be somewhat of the severest in the punishments they inflicted. Now, because their hands were tied, that they could not punish beyond such a degree; they were oblig'd to have a strict eye on their Malefactor, that he transgrest not too far, that he committed not *two* crimes, when but responsible for *one*; nor, indeed, be so far guilty, as by the Law to deserve death. For though *historical Justice* might rest there; yet *poetical Justice* could not be so content. It would require that the satisfaction be compleat and full, e're the *Malefactor* goes the *Stage*, and nothing left to God Almighty, and another World. Nor will it suffer that the Spectators *trust* the *Poet* for a *Hell* behind the *Scenes*; the fire must roar in the conscience of the *Criminal*, the *fiends* and *furies* be conjur'd up to their faces, with a world of *machine* and horrid spectacles; and yet the *Criminal* could never move *pitty*.[30]

It appears that Rymer is more sensitive to the aesthetic issues involved in the practice of poetic justice than Dennis. Also, Rymer understands clearly that the manipulation of sympathy for or against a character is an extremely important consideration in a tragedy and due attention must be paid to it. Indeed, to hark back to Addison, it might be said that Addison, as distinct from Dennis, paid rather undue attention to this aspect of the question when, in common with the changing critical climate of the age, he regarded tragedy as primarily the spectacle of a 'virtuous Man struggling with Misfortunes'.[31] And logically enough, therefore, Addison ignored Dennis's loud protestations that the function of tragedy was to inculcate 'a particular Providence' and concentrated on the pleasure to be got from the sight of offended virtue and injured innocence. In the 548th number of the *Spectator* which is commonly regarded as Addison's

reply to Dennis's defence of poetic justice, Addison wrote:

> The most perfect Man has Vices enough to draw down Punishments upon his Head, and to justifie Providence in regard to any Miseries that may befall him. For this reason I cannot think, but that the Instruction and Moral are much finer, where a Man who is virtuous in the main of his Character falls into Distress, and sinks under the Blows of Fortune at the end of a Tragedy, than when he is represented as Happy and Triumphant.

That Addison and Dennis are thinking on completely different lines and that this is because of their different conceptions of tragedy, becomes fully evident from the following passage where Addison continues his argument:

> Such an Example corrects the Insolence of Human Nature, softens the Mind of the Beholder with Sentiments of Pity and Compassion, comforts him under his own private Affliction, and teaches him not to judge of Mens Virtues by their Successes. I cannot think of one real Hero in all Antiquity so far raised above Infirmities, that he might not be very naturally represented in a Tragedy as plunged in Misfortunes and Calamities. The Poet may still find out some prevailing Passion or Indiscretion in his Character, and shew it in such a manner, as will sufficiently acquit the Gods of any Injustice in his Sufferings.

Thus in contrast to Dennis's view that 'the Wicked take the utmost Care to conceal and dissemble' their passions, and therefore 'we neither know what our Neighbours are, nor what they really suffer,' Addison says that 'the most perfect Man has Vices enough to draw down Punishments upon his Head,' and that he cannot think of even 'one real Hero in all Antiquity so far raised above Human Infirmities, that he might not be very naturally represented in a Tragedy as plunged in Misfortunes and Calamities.' Both of them argue from different premises and have different objectives. Addison, partly because he is less dogmatic and partly because the new approach to tragedy had yet to win widespread acceptance, is willing to make concessions to Dennis's point of view. In concluding his reply to Dennis, therefore, Addison

states that his last discussion of poetic justice (in the 40th number of the *Spectator*) was

> so far against the Rule of Poetical Justice as to affirm that good Men may meet with an unhappy Catastrophe in Tragedy, it does not say that ill Men may go off unpunish'd. The Reason for this Distinction is very plain, namely, because the best of Men are vicious enough to justifie Providence for any Misfortunes and Afflictions which may befall them, but there are many Men so Criminal that they can have no Claim or Pretence to Happiness. The best of Men may deserve Punishment, but the worst of Men cannot deserve Happiness.

IV

This did not mollify Dennis, however. He returned to the attack in his *Remarks upon Cato*, with impenitent fervour and in his characteristic manner said:

> 'Tis certainly the Duty of every Tragick Poet, by an exact Distribution of a Poetical Justice to imitate the Divine Dispensation, and to inculcate a particular Providence. 'Tis true indeed upon the Stage of the World the Wicked sometimes prosper, and the Guiltless suffer. But that is permitted by the Governour of the World, to shew from the Attribute of his infinite Justice that there is a compensation in Futurity, to prove the Immortality of the Human Soul, and the Certainty of future Rewards and Punishments. But the Poetical Persons in Tragedy exist no longer than the Reading or the Representation; the whole Extent of their Entity is circumscribed by those; and therefore during that Reading or Representation, according to their Merits or Demerits, they must be punish'd or rewarded. If this is not done, there is no impartial Distribution of Poetical Justice, no instructive Lecture of a particular Providence, and no Imitation of the Divine Dispensation. And yet the Author of this Tragedy does not only run counter to this, in the Fate of his principal Character, but every where throughout it, makes Virtue suffer, and Vice triumph; for not only *Cato* is vanquish'd by *Caesar*, but the Treachery and Perfidiousness of *Syphax* prevails over the honest Simplicity and the Credulity of *Juba*, and the sly Subtlety and Dissimulation of *Portius* over the generous Frankness and Open-heartedness of *Marcus*.[32]

That Dennis should have castigated *Cato* in such violent terms is no cause for surprise. Indeed this was his characteristic tone and shows him at his strongest as well as his weakest. In the case of *Cato*, however, he had a strong temptation to come down sharply on Addison's play. Whether or not Addison in his attack on poetic justice in the 40th *Spectator* had prepared the ground for this play, as alleged by Dennis,[33] the fact remains that *Cato* is written in defiance of the theory of poetic justice. Cato, a thoroughly virtuous character, comes to a sad end and for no fault of his. Actually, being a Stoic, he was hardly suitable as the hero of a tragedy. Nor was Dennis the only one in that age to object to Cato's suitability as a hero.[34] The question at issue therefore was which kind of tragedy, the one advocated by Addison or Dennis, should be written? Addison, as stated above, held that tragedy should show the spectacle of a 'virtuous Man strugling with Misfortunes' which definition is, without much difficulty, applicable to *Cato*. Pope in his prologue to this play had made out this very point and in almost the same language:

> A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
> And greatly falling with a falling state!

Thus, once more, we are faced with a situation in which both Addison and Dennis are travelling along parallel lines. From the critical point of view, what is significant in the whole controversy is Addison's willingness to meet Dennis half-way and Dennis's utter unwillingness to consider Addison's point of view. Addison was against poetic justice not because he wanted wicked characters to go off unpunished but because the spectacle of a 'virtuous Man strugling with Misfortunes' gave him the kind of pleasure he expected from tragedy. To see Addison's point of view however required a degree of critical resilience and freedom from dogma which Dennis conspicuously lacked, and hence this stalemate between the two.

Had Dennis not been so inflexible in his approach or, to put it another way, had he been able to respond, with some degree of understanding, to the changing critical currents of the times, he would have recognized that the older critical

attitude to tragedy was decaying and a new one emerging. With his firmly rooted belief in the rules, Dennis was not only out of sympathy with the new approach but was plainly outraged by it. Though the analogy between Addison's attack on poetic justice and Leonard Welsted's attack on rules in general is not very exact, E. N. Hooker's comment on Dennis's reaction to Welsted's critical position sums up the situation admirably:

> Not until after 1720 do we find in England a broad and sweeping attack upon all rule, law, precedent, and standards in art; and when Dennis encountered such an attack in the dedicatory epistle attached to Welsted's *Epistles, Odes, &c*, he floundered helplessly before it, unable to comprehend the revolution in taste which it heralded.[35]

That a revolution in taste was under way is clear beyond question. Addison who stood on the threshold of the century which was to witness such a revolution could not, in the very nature of things, have foreseen the extent to which established ideas would undergo a transformation. Writing in 1780, W. Craig, one of the contributors to the *Mirror* (No. 77), pointedly referred to Addison's attack on poetic justice in the 40th number of the *Spectator* and observed that since Addison had not been able to develop his argument fully, he was going to do so at the point where Addison had left off. And he wrote:

> There is implanted in the mind of every man a desire that virtue should be followed by reward, and vice by punishment. But this desire, like every other, gathers new strength by opposition, and rises upon resistance. When, therefore, a virtuous man, amidst all his virtue, is represented as unhappy, that anxiety which we feel for his happiness becomes so much the greater; the more undeserved calamities he meets with, the higher is that principle raised, by which we desire that he should attain an adequate reward;...
>
> On the other hand, with regard to the vicious, nothing excites so strongly our indignation against vice, or our desire that it should be punished, as our beholding the vicious successful, and, in the midst of his crimes, enjoying prosperity. Were we always to see the vicious man meeting with a proper punish-

> ment for his guilt, wretched and unhappy, our eagerness for his punishment would subside, and our hatred against him would be converted into pity; his guilt would be forgot, and his misfortunes only would affect us....
>
> There can be no good reason, therefore, for observing the rules of what is called *poetical justice*. The effect which a departure from these rules produces, affords the highest possible testimony in favour of virtue. It shews, that, where virtue meets with calamities and disappointments, this, instead of lessening it in our estimation, only attaches us so much the more warmly to its interests; and that, where vice is successful, instead of creating a feeling in its favour, this only increases our indignation against it. Were virtue always fortunate, were vice always unprosperous, that principle would be enfeebled, by which we desire the reward of the one, and the punishment of the other.

It only remains to add that after his *Remarks on Cato*, there was no further argument between Dennis and Addison regarding poetic justice. Both of them allowed the argument to lapse; perhaps there was little more that either of them could add to what had already been said. For quite some decades after this controversy, poetic justice continued to be accepted as an integral part of the neo-classical theory of drama. It was only with the effective emergence of sentimentalism in the second half of the century that it came to be displaced. But as happens invariably in the history of ideas, the process of the displacement of one idea by another takes place neither suddenly nor without opposition. In this instance, it was Dennis who offered opposition which was both skilful and stubborn. In a way, his opposition helped to define the issues fairly clearly in the beginning of the century. Those who participated in this controversy later in the century, preferred, in the main, to repeat the arguments first advanced by Addison and Dennis. Richardson virtually reproduced Addison's attack on poetic justice in the postscript to *Clarissa*. That no one of the stature of Richardson paid a similar compliment to Dennis is to be explained by the fact that, henceforward, the concept of poetic justice was on the decline, and not many voices were raised in its favour. And yet, whoever undertook to defend poetic justice turned to Dennis. To such people Dennis

provided something more than mere arguments; he infected them, though mildly, with his crusading zeal in defence of poetic justice.

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KEATS AND THE CONCEPT OF SPACE

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In the passage 'Wherein lies happiness' in Book I in *Endymion*, Keats says, 'In that which becks/ Our minds to fellowship divine, / A fellowship with essence; till we shine, / Full alchemiz'd, and free of space'.[1] Does Keats mean by being 'free of space' a state of perfect empathy as is suggested by Newell Ford?[2] Or is Keats suggesting that *space*, as an empirical category, is an obstacle in the apprehension of vital, as opposed to dead, knowledge about life?[3] Before commenting on the meaning of being 'free of space' I would like to quote a few more passages where the word *space* is used with specific implications:[4]

> I merely put *pro forma*, for there is no such thing as time and space, which by the way came forcibly upon me on seeing for the first hour the lake and Mountains of Winander.[5]

> The going on of the world make(s) me dizzy—There you are with Birkbeck—here I am with Brown—sometimes I fancy an immense separation, and sometimes, as at present, a direct communication of Spirit with you. That will be one of the grandeurs of immortality—there will be no space and consequently the only commerce between spirits will be by their intelligence of each other.[6]

> Search, Thea, search
> Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them round
> Upon all space: space starr'd, and lorn of light;
> Space region'd with life-air; and barren void;
> Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.[7]

Does Keats think that the sense of separateness is conditioned by our apprehension of things in space? Does he suggest that so long as the idea of space persists, states of existences with their empirical identity and, consequent separateness, persist? Is the attachment to *space* the cause of

the agonized cry of Saturn in *Hyperion*? Would, then, a state of happiness and knowledge, a state of 'fellowship divine,/ A fellowship with essence' begin with the attempt to transcend space and time? And would it ultimately lead to the discovery of the fundamental unity of existences and the meaning of life?

The consciousness of *space* as an obstacle in the pursuit of truth appears to be the prime motif behind the principle of Negative Capability. To claim this principle with Middleton Murry as the basis of Keats's religion[8] is to ask for too elastic a definition of religion; and to consider it as merely an aesthetic principle embracing trust in the imagination, objective detachment, passiveness and sympathetic identification,[9] is to reduce the comprehensiveness of Keats's assumptions. In fact the principle of Negative Capability enunciates a philosophy of knowledge and of life which recognizes the distinction between 'empirical self' and 'non-empirical self', a distinction which Keats affirms by the use of the words 'Identity' and 'No Identity'. He uses the word 'Identity' quite often in his letters. An analysis of those statements can be illuminating. Here are the contexts:

> His [Tom's] identity presses upon me so all day that I am obliged to go out. (To Dilke, 21 September 1818).[10]

> When I am in a room with People if ever I am free from speculating on creations of my own brain, then not myself goes home to myself: but the identity of every one in the room begins to (*for* so) press upon me that I am in a very little time an(ni)hilated. (To Woodhouse, 27 October 1818).[11]

> You will mention Fanny—her character is not formed, her identity does not press upon me as yours does. (To George and Georgiana Keats, October 1818).[12]

> I have been so little used to writing lately that I am afraid you will not smoke my meaning so I will give an example—Suppose Brown or Haslam or any one whom I understand in the nether degree to what I do you, were in America, they would be so much the farther from me in proportion as their identity was less impressed upon me. (To George and Georgiana Keats, December 1818—4 January 1819).[13]

> ...but to have nothing to do, and to be surrounded with unpleasant human identities; who press upon one just enough to prevent one getting into a lazy position. (Journal Letter, 1819).[14]

> That Dilke was a Man who cannot feel he has a personal identity unless he has made up his Mind about every thing. The only means of strengthening one's intellect is to make up one's mind about nothing—to let the mind be a thoroughfare for all thoughts. (To George and Georgiana Keats, September 1819).[15]

> A Poet is the most unpoetical of any thing in existence; because he has no Identity—he is continually in for—and filling some other Body—The Sun, the Moon, the Sea and Men and Women who are creatures of impulse are poetical and have about them an unchangeable attribute—the poet has none; no identity—he is certainly the most unpoetical of all God's Creatures. If then he has *no self*. . . . (To Woodhouse, 27 October 1818).[16]

Does not Keats suggest by 'Identity' a well-formed empirical self with its distinguishing attributes, its 'determined Character'?[17] This interpretation is evidenced by Keats's comments on Dilke's character: 'That Dilke was a Man who cannot feel he has a personal identity unless he has made up his Mind about every thing.' And it is further corroborated by the contrast that Keats makes between men of 'Power'[18] and men of 'Achievement',[19] between 'those who have a proper self' (identity) and those who have 'no self' (no identity). Whether this distinction 'sprang out of a conflict in Keats's age between the empirical philosophy of Hobbes, Locke and Hartley and the transcendental philosophy of Kant, Fichte and Schelling'[20] is difficult to affirm, but it is definite that Keats recognizes the cultivation of 'no identity' as essential in the discovery of the truth about life. The wooing of 'identity', the empirical self, that which is in *space*, leads only to dead knowledge. The empirical self is always keen to enfold experience into a rational pattern, what Keats calls with reference to Coleridge, 'an irritable reaching after fact and reason—Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the Penetralium of mystery, from

being incapable of remaining content with half knowledge. This pursued through Volumes would perhaps take us no farther than this....'[21] If, however, the 'no self' is achieved, man is free from the bondage of empirical space and on the way of enlightenment, to a fellowship with essence, the realization that 'every human [being] might become great, and Humanity instead of being a wide heath of Furze and Briars with here and there a remote Oak or Pine, would become a grand democracy of Forest Trees.'[22] Is it with such thoughts in his mind that Keats writes to Reynolds (19 February 1818): 'The Minds of Mortals are so different and bent on such diverse journeys that it may at first appear impossible for any common taste and fellowship to exist between two or three under these suppositions. It is however quite the contrary. Minds would leave each other in contrary directions, traverse each other in numberless points, and at last greet each other at the journey's end. An old Man and a child would talk together and the old Man be led on his path and the child left thinking. Man should not dispute or assert but whisper results to his neighbour'?[23]

Related to the distinction between 'self' and 'no self' and indirectly dealing with the problem of space as an empirical category is the sceptical mood of Keats, 'the ability to be in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.'[24] In his letter to Reynolds (19 February 1818) Keats says: 'Now it is more noble to sit like Jove than fly like Mercury—let us not therefore go hurrying about and collecting honey, bee-like buzzing here and there impatiently from a knowledge of what is to be aimed at; but let us open our leaves like a flower and be passive and receptive—budding patiently under the eye of Apollo and taking hints from every noble insect that favours us with a visit—sap will be given us for meat and dew for drink.'[25] And further he writes to Bailey (13 March 1818): 'Aye this may be carried—but what am I talking of—it is an old maxim of mine and of course must be well known that every point of thought is the Centre of an intellectual world—the two uppermost thoughts in a Man's mind are the two poles of his World—he revolves on them and every thing is southward or northward to him through their means.

We take but three steps from feathers to iron. Now my dear fellow, I must once for all tell you I have not one Idea of the truth of any of my speculations . . .'[26] Obviously, Keats accepts the sceptical mood as a process of truth-seeking, because this mood is free from the dogmatism of the empirical self. In the sceptic pattern 'every point of thought is the centre of an intellectual world', the pivot from which the mind radiates into the melting multiplicity. It is the rallying point of insights into truth and, ultimately, the cohering point of insights. It carries within it the germ of a power capable of gleaning and formulating the gleanings towards truth, a truth that has been reached by relinquishing 'identity', the 'proper self'. No wonder Keats writes to Reynolds (19 February 1818): 'When Man has arrived at a certain ripeness in intellect any one grand and spiritual passage serves him as a starting-post towards all "the two-and-thirty Palaces." How happy is such a voyage of conception, what delicious diligent Indolence! A doze upon the sofa does not hinder it, and a nap upon Clover engenders ethereal finger-pointing—the prattle of a child gives it wings, and the converse of middle-age a strength to beat them—a strain of music conducts to "an odd angle of the Isle", and when the leaves whisper it puts a girdle round the earth.'[27] So then with Keats every thought, every sensation is the centre of an intellectual world, a centre which enfolds within itself a world whose perception 'is an increase in knowledge and know all things.'[28] Is that why Keats exclaims 'O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thought?'[29] I wonder if Albert Gerard is not right in suggesting, 'In this passage, much more is at stake than the philosophy of poetry or the psychology of the poetic character: nothing less, in fact, than a philosophy of knowledge and of life. In the context in which those words are set, there is nothing to suggest that the writer was thinking primarily of the poet as opposed to the philosopher. What we do find in the letter is rather a Keatsian version of Coleridge's distinction between dead and vital knowledge . . . . If we demand a definition of the word "sensation" as Keats used it, I think we should have to describe it as experience aware of itself.'[30]

Of course, the sceptical mood, the capacity to keep the

mind 'a thoroughfare' for all thoughts and sensations is not an end in itself. It is only an exploratory process, 'Adam's Dream—he awoke and found it truth.'[31] It is urgent but not confused, discriminatory but not baffled, progressive and not static. 'It is a gradual stepping of the imagination' as Keats calls it, rather than a striving to impose a preconceived rational pattern. Unhedged by the empirical self, by a determined way of perception, every experience is a further unfolding of truth. Undoubtedly, the search for truth through scepticism invariably involves a struggle. Margaret Willey in her book *The Subtle Knot* says, 'The Sceptical moment ... lies in this struggle of the Human Soul in its search for truth. It is the feeling of bewilderment and drift, the discovery that we have lost our moorings, the desolation, the emptiness and loneliness which are sure to follow.'[32] Keats passes through all these in his sceptical approach but, instead of attaching undue ache to 'the desolation, the emptiness and loneliness which are sure to follow', he sacramented his scepticism as the only mode of knowing the truth that could be proved on the pulse. To get extensive knowledge that 'takes away the heat and fever and helps by widening Speculation, to ease the Burden of the Mystery,'[33] one must maintain modest ignorance, a quality Keats bestows on his Apollo, 'Fearless yet in aching ignorance,'[34] an ignorance which is unobstrusive and reaches out to truth 'as leaves come to a tree.'[35] In the sceptical pattern every thought is the centre of an intellectual world, because it looks forward to a new freedom, a new expansiveness unhedged by empirical self or *space*.

Paradoxical though it may sound, the sceptical moment is revelatory as the mystic's dark night of the soul. So at least Keats seems to believe. That is why the sceptical tone pervades his letters.[36] He could be sceptical even about poetry and consider it 'a mere Jack O'Lanthern'. The ethereal things he longed for could be called 'No-things'. The only things about which Keats is never sceptical are 'the Holiness of the Heart's affections' and the 'truth of imagination'.[37] Thus the inquisitive doubt coupled with the negation of the empirical self strengthens the impulse towards knowledge and makes Keats realize that there are 'innumberable com-

positions and decompositions which take place between the intellect and its thousand materials before it arrives at that trembling delicate and snail-horn perception of Beauty.'[38] The conditions of such a situation may be strenuous but they are honest, painful but true, because they release the self from its bondage of *space*, and reveal the fundamental unity of all existences.

Some of these assumptions Keats expresses in his *Hymn to Pan*. Despite the pretty paganism that Wordsworth discovered in the Hymn, there is an excitement in the lines:

> Be still the unimaginable lodge,
> For solitary thinkings; such as dodge,
> Conception to the very borne of Heaven
> Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven
> That spreading in this dull and clodded earth
> Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth;
> Be still a symbol of Immensity;
> A firmament reflected in the sea;
> An element filling the space between;
> An unknown but no more.[39]

Although the pagan spirit still permeates this passage, the significance becomes clear if it be recalled that Pan is 'Forester Divine', 'Breather round our farms', 'Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds', and

> Dread opener of the mysterious doors
> Leading to Universal knowledge.[40]

Does Keats suggest that there is a unity in Nature, a continuum which when thrown into space gives rise to separateness of things? What dodges conception to the very bourne of Heaven and then leaves the naked brain is the attempt to understand Pan as a distinct entity rather than as an immensity: 'An element filling the space between'. If the brain is perplexed and retarded, it is because the brain is accustomed to conceptualize things separated from the durable unity. It is by 'solitary thinking' that the apprehension of Unity, of which Pan is a symbol, is possible. Then the isolated existences in the external world begin to melt one into another and the

mysterious doors are opened, 'leading to Universal knowledge'. Thus, Pan symbolically represents for Keats the unity of Being, the unity of existences, though it is only a self-sufficient unity. (The idea of a progressively self-transcending unity of Nature is developed later in the speech of Oceanus in *Hyperion*).

Obviously, then, Keats thinks that *space* is an obstacle in the apprehension of the unity of existences and, consequently, in the discovery of vital, as opposed to dead, knowledge about life. Perhaps, the realization of the unity of existences was an essential prerequisite for knowledge in an age which felt that the traditional frames of value-judgements were no more valid. Living in the early years of the nineteenth century Keats, like the other Romantic poets, discovers himself in a world of flux, of rapid change and instability. And like the other Romantics, Keats accepts the unity of Nature as the first datum of consciousness. After all, the break-up of the classical ideas; the shift from the Newtonian universe of dead and inanimate things to a universe as a process, permanent, durable and mysteriously wonderful; the change in the mental outlook from things fixed, absolute, in empirically determinable relationships, to things in flux,[41] were bound to urge the poet to link himself with the universe as the first step towards the understanding of life. Under the stress and urgency of a disintegrating world, the universe, as it surrounds us, had to be imagined as a unity with no contradictions. Moreover, in the immediate perspective of the eighteenth century, it had to be asserted with a more or less dogmatic aggressiveness. The rationalists of the eighteenth century had reduced the universe of nature to a mere collection of objects, fixed in space and time, related to man, if at all, through the Associationist Principle. Hartley's theory of Association and the general principle that 'logic is the essence of thinking'[42] had rejected not only the doctrine of innate ideas of the mind, but also, the inherent link between all created things. To assert the unity of Nature was to assert the unity of all created things and, consequently, pave the way for a faith in which man and nature could give meaning to life.[43]

Keats shares these views with the other Romantics but he does not, like them, re-absorb this unity of Nature into a

God or Divine Intelligence. He keeps it, as in *Hyperion*, a progressive self-transcending unity, a vast process with no end except a ceaseless unfolding to improved life, with no principles except the necessity to create;[44] or transposes it from the environmental contexts, as in the *Odes*, into a realm where time and space are automatically negated so that he can declare with perfect conviction: Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty.

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   > This point I sincerely wish to consider because I think it is a grander system of salvation than the chrystiain religion—or rather it is a system of Spirit-creation. This is effected by three grand materials acting the one upon the other for a series of years. These three Materials are the *Intellegence—the human heart* (as distinguished from intelligence or mind) and the *World* or *Elemental space* suited for the proper action of *Mind and Heart*.... *The Letters of John Keats*, edited by Maurice Buxton Forman (Oxford, Fourth edition, 1952), Journal Letter, p. 335. Hereafter referred to as *Letters*.

   > And the voice
   > Of Coelus, from the universal space,
   > Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear.
   > (*Works*, Hyperion, Bk. I, p. 286, ll. 306-8)

   > Symbols divine,
   > Manifestations of that beauteous life
   > Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal space.
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THE THEME OF DESTITUTION IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY LITERATURE

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My subject is one that needs, I think, to be led up to gradually. The prominence of the theme of destitution in twentieth-century literature is part of a general shift in literary tendencies that has been going on for some time. I must therefore ask you to bear with me if my approach appears circuitous and prolonged.

Aristotle made a simple distinction between tragedy and comedy: the first, he said, gave a picture of men better than we are, the second a picture of men worse than we are.[1] What he means by 'better' is not simply 'more magnanimous' (though in general it seems to include that) but 'more highly organised', 'more coherent', 'more fully representative of the type', than we can find in nature. But he mentions also the possibility of a third type of imaginative writing—that which represents people 'just as we are'. This is an incidental mention near the beginning of *The Poetics*, but he returns briefly to the matter later when commenting on the diversity of literary aims: a tragic writer, he declares, 'must necessarily in all instances represent things in one or other of three aspects, either as they were or are, or as they are said or thought to be or to have been, or as they ought to be'. He proceeds to quote Sophocles to the effect that he 'drew men as they ought to be, and Euripides as they were'.[2] It is not easy to reconcile this later passage with the earlier one. To represent 'things as they were or are' is close indeed to representing people 'just as we are', but in the later instance Aristotle suggests that this kind of writing may be found in tragedy, while in the earlier instance it stands apart from both tragedy and comedy. Certainly the implication seems to be that this kind of writing is not normal in tragedy, and not normal (though occasionally found) in literature generally. Nevertheless, Euripides is associated with it.

We should, I think, further explore the distinction between

tragedy and comedy for a moment. Tragedy is concerned with the potentiality of man: for Aristotle, it was, with epic, the form that assisted Nature, that showed man as Nature wanted him to be rather than as at the moment he was. Comedy, on the other hand, was concerned with reducing the human level, subtracting something from man's present position. Tragedy aims, moreover, at inclusiveness; it must give us a notion of men whom we can recognise as belonging to the same species as ourselves, as sharing the same basic situations as ourselves, but it must also make us recognise these tragic figures as more fully achieved beings than we are. It includes, in fact, the actual along with the potential. But comedy deliberately excludes certain things which we are aware of in human nature and in the human situation. It will have nothing to do with a sense of human greatness, which we can indeed be conscious of in actual men and women, however imperfect and blurred it may appear; and it does not recognise the darkest aspects of the human situation, it induces us to forget the things that most profoundly cause fear. The tragic and comic kinds of writing have had notably different histories. There has never been an age when comic writing of a sort did not in some measure flourish, but tragedy has come into full existence only at certain times. Tragedy depends on a power to see a precarious balance between man and the universe, and this power comes to men sporadically, largely through historical circumstance.

The tragic writer must have a sharp sense of human greatness, and also an ample sense of the nature of the cosmos. Not, indeed, that he can be expected to understand, to see the root cause of, the totality of things: rather, he must be able to feel on his pulses what it is like to exist in a world where men are born and love and hate and suffer and die, where they beget children and make friends and lose them, where memory is a valued possession and a shrew, where hope is continually (but not uniformly) proved vain, where man does not know the full story of his past or the precise pattern of his future, where guesses are frequent concerning unseen powers in the cosmos, where there is a dream with a long tradition that somehow man can survive death, where man's habitation is an infinitesimal part of cosmic space,

just as his time is a moment. It seems that a consciousness of these things presses hardest when a long-established religious faith is losing something of its vitality. At such a time the universe will appear more graspable because it can still be thought of anthropomorphically. The mind will be free to respond to experience, because not hedged-in by the hard and straight lines of dogma; on the other hand, the existence of a religious faith in a condition of reduced intensity will give men terms to think and feel in.

This seems to have been the case in Athens in the fifth century B.C. and in London around 1600. Euripides had not much regard for the gods, and probably Sophocles had not much more. Yet Euripides, in considering the forces that could work in the human mind, that could warp that mind and lead it to destruction, was conveniently able to associate such forces with the names of Aphrodite, Artemis, and the rest. The forces were alive through their ready identification with traditional Olympian figures. So, for Shakespeare and his contemporaries, the universe was alive in being charged with still powerful Christian feeling, and yet simultaneously could be felt to be, in its totality, unknowable and unfriendly. Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedy often insists on the darkness that encompasses human life, on the fact that any statement concerning man's ultimate destiny is a guess. And there is, too, a full expression of the terror of this darkness, this mystery. Thus in *Measure for Measure* the condemned Claudio speaks of the facts of the grave and the fearful guesses that go along with these facts:

> Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
> To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
> This sensible warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
> To bathe in fiery floods or to reside
> In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;
> To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,
> And blown with restless violence round about
> The pendent world; or to be worse than worst
> Of those that lawless and incertain thought
> Imagine howling.
>
> (III. i. 118–28)

So Hamlet can speak of how we may restrain ourselves from an otherwise attractive suicide because we do not know what may follow it:

> For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
> Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
> The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
> When he himself might his quietus make
> With a bare bodkin? Who would these fardels bear,
> To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
> But that the dread of something after death—
> The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
> No traveller returns—puzzles the will,
> And makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of?
>
> (III. i. 70–82)

And John Webster's Vittoria cries at the moment of her death:

> My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
> Is driven I know not whither.
>
> (V. vi. 48–9)

Hamlet's utterance and Vittoria's are curiously free from any reference to Christian belief; Claudio's employs some of the Christian notions concerning damned spirits; but all three of these speeches are given a keen edge through the fact that in their time the sense of the darkness co-exists with the widespread acceptance of church authority. Belief for some men may have become a half-belief, but in that form it made the darkness more disturbing.

At the same time the writers of this period could feel enthusiastic concerning the actuality and the potentiality of man himself. They admired human daring, human beauty, the human capacity for knowledge, the very fact of human consciousness. Though they were well aware of the guilt and shabbiness that man could also exhibit, they could become excited by the mere contemplation of the human personality and the human body. To illustrate this, of course, we need

only remind ourselves of some other words that Hamlet uses:

> What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?
>
> (II. ii. 315–21)

It is a balanced utterance, because it puts strong weight on the anti-climactic 'quintessence of dust', which thus counterpoises the high claims just made. Nevertheless, although there is a precariousness in it, the speaker indicates the possibility of enthusiasm for the fact of human existence. This enthusiasm, thus itself qualified by a recognition that man belongs with the earth, stands over against the sense of terror with which the human situation is regarded, a situation made graspable and poignant through being felt in Christian terms but no longer fully apprehended within the diagrammatic scheme of a secure faith.

It has seemed necessary to look first at the nature of tragedy, because in considering recent tendencies in writing one of the most obvious things that emerge is that since the seventeenth century tragedy has appeared only imperfectly or fugitively. Comedy, as I have indicated, remains a common enough form of writing, but I shall suggest that recent literature can be most fully understood if it is seen in relation to a new kind of division in writing, a division quite distinct from that made by Aristotle between tragedy and comedy. My suggestion is that from the middle of the seventeenth century we have seen a bifurcation between what I shall call the literature of metaphysical assertion and the literature of human record.

These terms will become clearer if I at once provide illustrations. To the literature of metaphysical assertion belong Pope's *Essay on Man*, Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. In each of these poems, and in others like them, there is much incidental record of genuinely observed and deeply experienced fact, but the dominant purpose of the writing is to demonstrate a world-

scheme. Pope places man at the middle-point of the Great Chain of Being; Wordsworth traces the reciprocal relations of Nature and the human mind, and, with little specific reference to Christianity, declares for an omnipresent divine principle and a human capacity for growing into communion with, indeed into an embodiment of, this principle; Tennyson voices his generation's doubts as well as his personal grief for the loss of his friend, and then he makes a leap into orthodox faith and sees the universe once again in traditional terms; Eliot explores the nature of consciousness, both consciousness of the immediate event and consciousness of the barely perceptible divine presence. All these poets aim at realising a general picture of the universe: particular details of experience, though often eloquently referred to, are incidental to their purpose.

The literature of human record stands at the opposed extreme. Here it is the isolated observed fact or nexus of facts that is at the centre. The Elizabethans and Jacobeans illustrate this kind of writing, particularly in the love-poems of Donne and the plays of Middleton and Fletcher. The two dramatists write tragedy at times, but it is tragedy of a peculiar sort, a tragedy stressing much more the details of the particular situation and the particular character's experience than the total human situation. Middleton and Fletcher are among the most reserved of dramatists, in that they give us little inkling of their ultimate thoughts about the world. They record what they see, and leave it to us, if we will, to make our own deductions from their particulars to the human situation as a whole. And though Shakespeare is a more traditional dramatist than they are, writing tragedies which imply, though often obscurely, a world-view, there are some of his plays—notably *Troilus and Cressida*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Merchant of Venice*—where he seems to withhold comment, to insist neither on a tragic nor on a comic attitude, but to let the record speak for itself. But although we can thus find this literature of human record evident around the year 1600—that is, along with the greatest tragic writing of modern times—it grows much stronger from the time of the Restoration period. Most particularly we can see it in the new form of the novel, which began in the eighteenth century

and came to full maturity in the nineteenth. In these books man is seen in an almost purely social context—reference to the cosmos is casual and commonly inert—and there is little attempt to present characters 'above our own level of goodness'. Fielding's Tom Jones is the key-figure for eighteenth-century fiction, a good fellow, not proof against vice, a congenial companion, capable of a not over-passionate love, a genuine but not profound friendship. There is nothing of the potential in him, nor is he made more absurd than we recognise ourselves to be. The fact that the novel is a comparatively new form of literature, that no rules for its composition are provided by ancient precept or example, has led to a condition of freedom often approaching formlessness. For this reason it is peculiarly suitable for the kind of writing that I have called the literature of human record. Within its commonly loose structure, the author can record the things he sees without being much preoccupied with their total implication. And it is, I think, significant that today we see in the field of the novel the highest level of nineteenth-century accomplishment—in Russia, in France, in England, in the United States.

Yet it may be argued that some major novelists, most notably Tolstoy, have had a strong sense of the totality of existence, that they have used their novels as a means of conveying this sense of the whole, that the particulars they record are mere illustrations, though finely and passionately perceived illustrations, of a general thesis. But in such cases, and I think certainly in Tolstoy's, there is often a clash between what the writer consciously wishes to achieve and what he actually gives us. This matter has been discussed by Isaiah Berlin in *The Hedgehog and the Fox*. The title of this book is taken from a line written by the Greek poet Archilochus, 'The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing'. Berlin associates this with the idea that there are some writers (hedgehogs) who have a faculty of total perception, a concern with a world-view that dominates their work and confers its own life upon the particular characters and situations and events that they present to us, and that there are other writers (foxes) who lack the constancy that such a world-view can give but who are capable of a host of separate

acts of perception, capable of illuminating, almost at random, the diverse phenomena of the world. It will be evident that, in the classification I have used, the writers who give us the literature of metaphysical assertion are, in Berlin's terms, hedgehogs, and that the writers who give us the literature of human record are foxes. But it is Isaiah Berlin's thesis that Tolstoy was a fox who wanted to be, who passionately strove to be, a hedgehog:

> The hypothesis I wish to offer is that Tolstoy was by nature a fox, but believed in being a hedgehog; that his gifts and achievements are one thing, and his beliefs, and consequently his interpretation of his own achievement, another; and that consequently his ideals have led him, and those whom his genius for persuasion has taken in, into a systematic misinterpretation of what he and others were doing or should be doing.[3]

But if Tolstoy is an apparent, rather than a real, exception to the rule that the nineteenth-century novel was the special province of the literature of human record, one must agree at once that we have a real exception in Dostoievsky. He is perhaps the last great Christian writer of Europe, the man for whom life was irradiated by a central, as he thought it a revealed, perception.

Other exceptions, of a more partial kind, can be found. There is in England Thomas Hardy, who tried to bring the novel into relation with the tragic world-view. His achievement was considerable, yet his most ambitious books give us the sense of being artificial constructs. He overtly insists that we must see his Tess in the light of Greek tragedy, his Jude in the light of the *Book of Job*. The tragic status cannot be sufficiently conveyed in terms of the characters and situations themselves: these have to be reinforced by the deliberate echoes of, and allusions to, works of an earlier time to which tragedy essentially belonged. And in America Herman Melville, at least in *Moby Dick*, aimed at a tragic effect, wanting the record of the Pequod's story, of Ahab's story, to be an illustration of a mythical conflict between human and non-human forces in the universe. But, for all its grand fascination, the book is an uneasy one: Melville is, particularly in the earlier chapters,

compelled to resort to facetiousness in order to win us over to his side. It appears that he knows he is doing something alien to his own place and time. In fact, the occasional books that strive after the tragic effect, and sometimes come near to its full achievement, highlight the special affinity that exists between the literature of human record and the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novel.

In the twentieth century we have seen an extension into all literary fields of what was characteristic of the novel in the nineteenth century. Aldous Huxley has put this forcefully in his argument that the modern writer wants to put on paper, as well as he can, the 'Whole Truth'. To do this, he cannot accept in advance any preconceived notion about the universe, even the tragic one. And he must not be limited by the exclusion of any sort of material, however little it may at first appear to harmonise with the other material he uses:

> In recent times literature has become more and more acutely conscious of the Whole Truth—of the great oceans of irrelevant things, events and thoughts stretching endlessly away in every direction from whatever island point (a character, a story) the author may choose to contemplate. To impose the kind of arbitrary limitations, which must be imposed by any one who wants to write a tragedy, has become more and more difficult —is now indeed, for those who are at all sensitive to contemporaneity, almost impossible.... Of all the important works of contemporary literature not one is a pure tragedy. There is no contemporary writer of significance who does not prefer to state or imply the Whole Truth.[4]

In fact, we can see as now coming into full existence that third type of writing which Aristotle seems to have incidentally recognised in certain plays of Euripides, a type of writing which shows men like ourselves in a purely human and social context. This does not mean that many twentieth-century writers do not, in their private capacities, adhere to a particular religious faith or to some other kind of world-view. In their writings, indeed, they may from time to time assert or imply the validity of their belief. But what most of them basically present to us, what comes alive in their writings, is a picture of men—neither particularly good nor particularly bad—in an observable

world. And this world is one where the limits of human capacity are emphasised.

Sometimes the picture will be in a measure comic or satiric, as in many of Eliot's earlier poems. But we must not too readily apply the label 'comic' to this kind of writing. *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* has incidental comic touches, but it is not a comic poem. In the following passage we have a denial of tragedy, an assertion of human folly, but we have also the suggestion that the man speaking is not someone apart from ourselves whom we can safely laugh at. Prufrock, rather, speaks for us: he is a fairly clear-sighted, though distressingly short-sighted, man; and he is a man who suffers:

> No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
> Am an attendant lord, one that will do
> To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
> Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
> Deferential, glad to be of use,
> Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
> Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
> At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
> Almost, at times, the Fool.

Shakespeare made Hamlet see mankind as simultaneously great and little, like a god and yet a quintessence of dust. The modern writer sees men groping in the dark. At the best they will experience moments when the justification of human life seems almost achieved, but these will be only moments, to be lost as soon as known. Eliot has given authoritative expression to this idea of the momentary near-justification, in Part V of *The Waste Land*. The sudden impulse of generous giving, the hint of communication between one human being and another, the experience of exercising control over one's own mind and body and the things that come into relation with them—these experiences provide the modest affirmations that the poem offers:

> Ganga was sunken, and the limp leaves
> Waited for rain, while the black clouds
> Gathered far distant, over Himavant.
> The jungle crouched, humped in silence.

Then spoke the thunder
DA
Datta: what have we given?
My friend, blood shaking my heart
The awful daring of a moment's surrender
Which an age of prudence can never retract
By this, and this only, we have existed
Which is not to be found in our obituaries
Or in memories draped by the beneficent spider
Or under seals broken by the lean solicitor
In our empty rooms
DA
Dayadhvam: I have heard the key
Turn in the door once and turn once only
We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison
Only at nightfall, aethereal rumours
Revive for a moment a broken Coriolanus
DA
Damyata: The boat responded
Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar
The sea was calm, your heart would have responded
Gaily, when invited, beating obedient
To controlling hands.

But, because these things are momentary, because the land is dry and waste again after the sudden descent of the rain, no firm world-view is suggested: the experience—of giving, of sympathy, of control—is, Eliot suggests, unquestionably good, but it is not felt as surely indicative of a general scheme.

At its most extreme and most pessimistic, this kind of literature is to be found in the plays and novels of Samuel Beckett. This writer indeed is persistently concerned with the denuding of man. *Waiting for Godot* has for its two chief characters two tramps who represent an extreme of destitution. They have only the open air to live in, only the sky for a roof, their clothes are rags, the world is their enemy, giving them an occasional raw vegetable to eat, an occasional beating to endure. They contemplate suicide: their world includes a tree to hang themselves from, but they have no rope. They wait hopelessly for the Godot who said he would come. In *Endgame*, Beckett imagines human life as a whole almost at an end: of its four

characters, two live (and finally die) in dustbins, another is motionless throughout, with a blood-stained handkerchief on his head, the fourth is an embittered servant who at length finds himself alone in a destroyed world. In *Krapp's Last Tape* the single character is a man who for many years has recorded a message to himself on his birthday, thus summing up his situation at annual intervals. All that he does now, in his extreme old age, is to drink, to eat bananas, and to listen to the things he has recorded over the years. One thing that we must not miss in Beckett is his persistent indication of a striving for personal relationship. Apart from their hope, which is not a hope, that Godot will come and things will then be different, the two tramps of *Waiting for Godot* have only one possession to which they cling, their companionship with each other. At one moment when they are considering suicide, they become frightened because the rope they might somehow find would perhaps hang one of them successfully and then break with the other: that degree of desolation, the state of being quite alone, they cannot endure to think of. In *Endgame* there is no affection, but there is a sense of people being tied to one another, driven to one another. In *Krapp's Last Tape*, the records on tape that Krapp has made become alive to him when they recall his highly unsatisfactory experiences of contact with another human being. This contact, in fact or in memory or in imagination, is for Beckett what is left when everything else is gone.

It is understandable that twentieth-century literature should be particularly concerned with considering man in a state of destitution, in a state where he has been deprived and denuded of all the things that commonly go to make life comfortable and to disguise it. In our time we have indeed had knowledge of extreme cases of deprivation. There have been wars fought over a good part of the earth's surface, destroying the land and its inhabitants and the things that man has made to live by. There have been concentration camps where life was lived at the very limit of subsistence or below it, where the exercise of human feeling, the sense of human oneness, was proscribed. We have now the threat of the ending of human life on earth: we are living now under a collective sentence of death from which there may or may not be a chance of

reprieve. Inevitably, therefore, we have developed a special interest in looking at life in a state of destitution, a state where nearly everything has gone.

Of course, this is not a new theme in literature: Shakespeare, particularly in *King Lear* and in *Timon of Athens*, considered what it was like when a man of high rank, a king of Britain or an Athenian noble, lost all his power and wealth and found himself facing the hostility of nature. Lear meets a mad beggar covered only in rags, and thinks of him as 'the thing itself', man reduced to his essentials, without all the trappings that he customarily disguises himself with. But this preoccupation has recently grown intense. The two famous novels of Albert Camus, *La Peste* and *L'Etranger*, have respectively shown us a city cut off by plague from contact with the outside world and a man under sentence of death. In both instances life is robbed of its normal indefiniteness: the characters have to think of themselves as about to die, even if some of them will survive the plague, even if the condemned man is reprieved. Or we may consider Jean-Paul Sartre's play *Huis Clos*, where he presents to us three people in hell, not physically tormented but condemned to live for eternity with each other in the same room: there even the possibility of solitude is taken away from man. Or there are the novels of Ivy Compton-Burnett, where horror is deliberately prosified, where passion and suffering are without dignity: this writer takes away from her characters the possibility of an ultimate self-respect, the possibility that the individual man or woman has importance or meaning. And Angus Wilson's novel *The Middle Age of Mrs. Eliot* is a study in bereavement. The Eliots, husband and wife, had a good marriage—not perfect, but good, a marriage we can believe in—and the husband was suddenly and accidentally killed while they were travelling together. The book then traces what happens to the wife. There is the condition of initial shock in which Madge Eliot cannot grasp what has happened. Then she makes what appears to be a rapid recovery: she occupies herself busily, she mixes freely with other people, but it becomes evident that her state of mind is unsteady, fevered: one by one, she breaks off relations with her friends, she finds the world repellent, she comes to a point of breakdown. The novel is remarkable in its presentation

of the central figure, a woman who for the greater part of the book is not properly aware of the loss that is destroying her. Or we may think of Muriel Spark's novel *Memento Mori*, where nearly every character is over seventy and the shifts and failings of old age are shrewdly observed: the gradual loss of physical power, the increasing indifference to the condition of other people, the petty greed for the moment and what it can offer—all things that are afflictions of age—are traced in one or another of the characters of the book. Or there is Graham Greene's *A Burnt-out Case*, a study in emotional exhaustion, presenting a man who has come to a stage where he is capable of glimpsing what a human relationship might be, but no longer capable of experiencing it. Or we can think of the way in which Bertolt Brecht aimed at the withholding of human sympathy from the characters of his plays. Perhaps this is the ultimate in destitution, when the very spectator in the theatre is persuaded not to engage himself over-much with the character presented. And Brecht sometimes aimed at this most rigorously. When he found that the original audience for *Mother Courage* were sympathetically moved by the scene in which Mother Courage tore up the expensive officers' shirts in her stock in order to provide bandages for the men wounded in the battle, he determined to destroy this sympathy by a re-writing of the scene: in the now authorised text, Mother Courage refuses to let the shirts be torn up, and the soldiers have to take them by force.

In all these instances the writer seems to be saying: 'Let me take away from my characters the comforts and supports they have grown accustomed to, and then let me see what happens to them.' So the customary assumption that our life is of indefinite duration (in *La Peste* and *L'Etranger*), the possibility of sometimes being by oneself (in *Huis Clos*), the maintaining of a fragile self-respect (in the novels of Ivy Compton-Burnett), the support that marriage can give (in *The Middle Age of Mrs. Eliot*), the physical and mental powers that we unthinkingly possess until we grow old (in *Memento Mori*), the ability to feel (in *A Burnt-out Case*), the assumption that a theatre-audience will respond sympathetically to the presentation of hardship (in *Mother Courage*)—all these things are taken away, and we are invited to see what life is like without them.

In recent literature there is a paradox in the concern with the social context, the web of human relationships, along with a strong doubt of their genuineness or fruitfulness. In all the novels and plays I have just mentioned we see people anxious to form links with other people, yet at the same time the triviality of such links is insisted on. This paradox has become particularly obvious in the plays recently written by a number of young writers in England, writers who, uneven as their work often is, have given us more hope for the English theatre than we have had for some time. Among these writers I should like to mention Harold Pinter, Arnold Wesker, John Mortimer, and N. F. Simpson. They are not a cohesive group: rather, the four I have named represent noticeably different attitudes and dramatic techniques. Wesker has a Wordsworthian preoccupation with simple feelings and with the human urge to experience those feelings; Mortimer is especially conscious of the poignancy of failure in human relationships, but he is technically less adventurous than the others and he stresses the comic element in failure; Simpson gets surrealist fun out of seeing the world as a jigsaw puzzle arranged in the wrong way, implying that the 'right way' is just as absurd; Pinter has some resemblance to Beckett but with greater sensitivity to the individual's plight. All of them, however, are concerned with the human failure to come into proper contact with other people, to realise the nagging dream of a satisfactorily shared life.

I should like to draw particular attention to that moment in Pinter's play (*The Caretaker*) when Aston tells the tramp Davies the story of his madness and the shock-treatment that he had to submit to. He does this in a long speech which runs to three and a half pages in the printed text. It is a speech that, for the audience, is painful in the extreme: more than anything else in the play, it makes Aston an image of suffering, and his suffering comes to stand for all the suffering that the world inflicts on what it cannot understand and therefore dare not tolerate. But while he is speaking Davies sleeps: the man directly addressed pays no attention: only we, on the other side of the barrier which separates the stage from the auditorium, make our hesitating response. A curious edge is given to this kind of writing — the writing that stresses the

fragility, the near-impossibility, of satisfactory human relationships—when it is presented in a theatre, with human beings present as spectators and listeners, with living actors playing the parts of the frustrated and inhibited characters. The humanness of the figures we see on the stage, their oneness with the audience, stand out against the play's implication that each man is a stranger, a foreigner, in a world of inattentive beings. As always, the drama flourishes on paradox.

Yet this is part of the larger paradox, that the denuding so characteristic of modern literature goes along with the urge to find what is left. Here indeed Shakespeare has provided us with the archetypal situation in *King Lear*. The old king is stripped of everything, even of his reason, and to the very end of the play there are ever further extensions of the limit of human suffering. And Shakespeare seems to be asking, What will be left when every comfort and support is taken away? So in Beckett and in the other writers I have referred to, the animating impulse is not merely to denude, but to see what we can find left when destitution has become complete. This element in contemporary literature gives it a special urgency, and at its best an authority, the authority of the search for a means of justifying human life. It is the literature of human record, but perhaps it is beginning to be a little more than that, perhaps it is beginning to move once again in the direction of tragedy. We might indeed envisage a modern tragedy in which man was seen in juxtaposition with a universe which he himself has contaminated and distorted, having given to it a kind of life that destroys. But that is to hazard a guess at a problematical future. For the moment we can at least claim to have among us a remarkable number of writers who are concerned with presenting what they see in the world they live in, who have displayed the behaviour of men and women in conditions that take away their usual pretences, their usual self-assurance. The first master of this kind of writing was Euripides, and the Hellenistic world in its decline had a special love for his plays. We should not be indifferent to the work of some of his descendants who are amongst us.

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2. Ibid. Ch. XXV.
3. *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (Mentor Books edition), 1957, p. 11.
4. *Music at Night and Other Essays*, 1949, pp. 16-17. Huxley draws specific attention to Fielding as an earlier writer who concerns himself with the 'Whole Truth'.

LITERARY HISTORY AND HISTORICAL CRITICISM

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Literary History is a phrase that is freely and sometimes recklessly used. Perhaps its popularity is increasing because the area it covers is uncertain and because its unavoidable vagueness is convenient in covering hiatuses in ones's thought. The simplest approach to Literary History is to regard it as identical with the History of Literature. This indeed seems to be the approach adopted by Edwin Greenlaw in his well-known book, *The Province of English Literary History*. But even if one does not share the Royal Society's view of language in the seventeenth century, it does seem confusing to invent a term merely to denote a discipline, that is already denoted by a term in common usage. The conclusion must be that something slightly different is meant though those who assert or at least imply the difference are not always aware of its character or origins. It seems safer to proceed on the assumption that the persistent use of the term Literary History does involve a recognition that our approach to the History of English Literature has changed and that the new phrase is the symptom of these changes. Even if the territory we are exploring remains unaltered new instruments are being used and are perhaps being used in accordance with different standards.

The most straightforward way of regarding these differences is to suggest that the older discipline placed the emphasis on literature while the newer one places it on history. This is, of course, an antithesis too pure to be entirely real; most literary scholars succeed in avoiding both extremes and in producing a mixture which is pragmatically effective even if it is logically suspect. Nevertheless it is not incorrect to say that until recently, the ideal to which a history of literature sought to approximate was to see the great works of literature *sub specie aeternitatis* with their historic setting largely as a kind of scenic effect. What mattered in masterpieces

was their quality of timelessness; though race, milieu and moment contributed to the character of a work of art, the work of art was more than the sum of these causes and could not even be predicted from these causes. Indeed historical circumstances were often seen as impediments to an author's timeless genius. If Shakespeare sinned occasionally it was because he had to please the groundlings but the essential quality of his greatness lay in his ability to transcend the vulgar taste while seeming nominally to satisfy its requirements. If Milton succeeded in writing *Paradise Lost* it was because the immortal and indomitable poet had triumphed through the grand style over the seventeenth-century Puritan.

This vision of Literature had come under attack even in the nineteenth century but in our own time it has been subjected to singularly heavy pressures. For one thing it has become difficult to read the history of literary criticism without becoming acutely aware of the variability of literary judgements. Poets have been praised and damned for the same reasons and they can be either praised or damned for reasons that are clearly contradictory. In a short paper such as this I shall refrain from collecting the evidence; but all of you will be aware of evidence enough to make critical relativism not only a respectable theory but to some almost the only theory that seems in control of the facts. Moreover, apart from the academic relativism of literary theorists such as Professor Pottle there is the applied relativism of poetical practitioners such as Eliot. Eliot, you will remember, conceives of existing works of art as forming 'an ideal order among themselves which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them.' Thus the production of a really new work of literature involves rewriting the history of literature at least to the extent that this history is informed by and embodies judgements of value. Eliot to his credit stops short of this conclusion but it is there for anyone whose sense of logic outweighs his sense of prudence. Indeed much of the best of our criticism is clearly created by and relative to a need, the need being to bring about the specific conditions which are necessary *at that time* for the renewal of literature. Such criticism is committed in

the best sense and owes its perceptiveness to the validity of its commitment.

Confronted thus, by the explicit relativism of the hi[illegible]cal critic and the implicit relativism of the man engaged in writing, the scholar is tempted to redefine his discipline so that evaluations are minimized within it. The history of literature becomes Literary History, the patient and systematic relating of cause to consequence and of text to context. The historian restricts himself to the descriptive side of the problem, the study of social and possibly individual genetics, the climate of ideas and its effect upon the art work, the interpenetration of the inherited form, the contemporary experience, the sensibility of the author and the responses of his audience. His concern is with accounting for the work of art, in telling you how it came to be what it is. His interest is in facts or at least with that part of the facts which is accessible to the techniques of the social sciences. Evaluation is left to the literary critic. A separation is thus set up and even if the literary historian and the literary critic both happen to be inhabitants of the same mind they indulge in activities which it is thought useful to keep distinct.

Not everybody however agrees to the distinction. Leavis for instance proposes not only that the literary critic should be sovereign in the kingdom but also that he should be the kingdom's only inhabitant; no literary historians are to be permitted but where historical knowledge is required for literary understanding the critic can temporarily don the historian's hat. Bateson, on the other hand, believes that the literary historian should have primacy partly because the historical discipline purges one of subjectivity, but more fundamentally because only the historian can ascertain the original meaning of a work of art and so translate that meaning into contemporary terms. Until this authorized translation is provided, the critic is in danger of reading not the poem which the author actually wrote, but a private poem made up of the same words.

Against this background the plea which I should like to make is not for sovereignty, sole possession or hierarchic interdependence but for a reasonable and constructive alliance. First of all any study of literary relationships is valuable for

its own sake. It is provincial to suggest that these studies should only be licensed when they serve the higher ends of literary criticism. In any case even when literary history is completely segregated from literary criticism (as it is indeed by Professor Lovejoy), it still looks to literature 'particularly in its more concrete forms' to 'discover the inward thoughts of a generation'. The words are Whitehead's and are quoted with approval by Lovejoy. Literature in other words is the most trustworthy and most specific expression of the forces and pressures of intellectual history. It is the deepest revelation of the sensibility of an age. To object to its being studied in this manner and independently of the needs of literary criticism, is simply to object to the study of history as such.

At this point, an analogy with the Sciences may be helpful. No one dreams of arguing that pure science should be prohibited, or that scientific research should only be allowed when it purports to serve some practical application. On the contrary it is widely recognized that pure science not only creates an infra-structure for applied science but can often be of direct practical use, even though practical use is not its object. In the same way studies in literary history may have an effect on literary criticism even when they are explicitly dissociated from it. Professor Lovejoy's book had no *literary* purpose but it made possible a series of studies in which the aesthetic effect of literary works has been modified because their structure of ideas was better understood. Research on the Elizabethan conception of kingship has changed our appreciation of Shakespeare's History Plays, but the research was not always undertaken with that purpose in view. If we can understand *Paradise Lost* better today than in the past it is surely because we are more fully aware of the character and nuances of seventeenth-century Puritanism; yet the studies which initiated this better understanding were historical rather than literary in the first place.

Literary history has, therefore, a general relevance to literary criticism; but it also has a particular relevance even when its explicit purpose is only to describe and define. This is because many disagreements about works of literature are not really disagreements about how to value something that

has already been fully and indisputably described. They are disagreements about the description itself, disagreements about what the work of art actually is. They are disputes about the work's intention and the relation of structure and texture to that intention. It is in the area of these disputes that the literary historian performs a critical task. Time can obscure and even invert an author's intention, transform the meanings and overtones of the words he uses, alter decisively and confusingly the instinctively calculated impact of his ideas. It is for the historian to make the required corrections and to oblige the critic to recognize what the author meant. Shelley saw Milton morally upside down and perhaps because of this was convinced of his greatness; but it is our responsibility to see him right end up even if this changes our view of his achievement. In fact however to describe an author's work accurately, authentically and completely is usually to win more than half the critical battle. When the inevitability of a work of literature has been established, when one has made clear the laws which inform it and the logic to which it answers, it is not usual to complain that the inevitability itself is of an inferior order. The mere fact of inevitability is frequent enough and the critical dialogue which reveals that inevitability is likely to end in total agreement. Even when stubborn and ultimate differences of valuation exist these should be no more than the residue of discourse, the limitation of disagreement to clearly-defined essentials. And when inevitability cannot be established the extent and character of the failure can be made clear. The historical discipline then helps to ensure that the failure is correctly described and that it is in fact a failure of achievement rather than a failure in the reader's understanding.

At this stage it may be useful to lay down two assumptions. The first, which I believe has not been disputed, is that a poem is intended to be read. The second, which is warmly disputed, is that what a poem means is what it means to the ideal reader. Several years ago I tried to apply those principles to a reconsideration of *Paradise Lost* and it is therefore encouraging to find Bateson reaching conclusions which are essentially similar though he develops them to a point where I hesitate to follow him. Specifically Bateson says that poetry

'only exists in the poet-reader relationship' and that 'the ideal reader approximates as closely as possible to one of the more intelligent of the poem's original readers.' The difficulties here are evident. Professor Cleanth Brooks has already pointed out that Dr. Johnson was perhaps not the ideal reader of Gray and it is only too easy to multiply similar examples. Milton's 'fit audience though few' was definitely not the Restoration audience. Keats has been read much more ideally by Middleton Murry than by the *Quarterly Review*. And writers are not more reliable than reviewers. Yeats, a great poet by any standard, has been strikingly imperceptive in his remarks on Eliot. What then is the ideal reader? He is perhaps the person capable of extracting the maximum aesthetic yield from a work of literature. He is the man able to describe the poem best in the comprehensive sense in which I have used the word 'description'. To do this he has to be a critic. He needs the critic's responsiveness, his sense of discrimination, his flair for detecting significant internal relationships. But he must also be a historian with the historical imagination needed to respond to a poem, not on a basis haphazardly chosen, but on the secure ground of the poem's original growth. His response must be passed through the response of the writer's contemporaries though it may not be that response entirely or exclusively. To plead for this combination, to set up the conception of an ideal response is of course to let in absolute values by the back door as Professor Brooks has so acutely recognized. But the back door is labelled Literary History. Thus in the thrust towards objectivity, the full and exact description, the judgement reconciled to the judgements of the past, the historian and the critic necessarily combine. I venture to set aside as profitless the question of who is to be called the senior partner.

NORTH'S *THE MORALL PHILOSOPHIE OF DONI*

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In 1570 Sir Thomas North, the translator of Plutarch's *Lives*, published a book called *The Morall Philosophie of Doni*. A translation of Doni's Italian work, this book is an evidence of the migration of stories and fables from India to Europe. It was a very popular book since up to A.D. 1888 it was translated into as many as 38 languages, in 112 different versions, which had passed into 180 editions.

What is this book and how did it travel from India to England so far back as the Elizabethan times? Unfortunately, the Indian original is lost and we can only conjecture its lineaments from what remains of it in the European translations and other similar works. It is thought that the original was some kind of *Mirror for Magistrates* in thirteen books containing animal fables and stories which were presumably derived from the *Jātakas* (Buddhist Birth Stories), the *Panchatantra* and the *Kathā Sarit Sāgar*. Its author is variously named as Bidpai, Sendebar, Nadrab, Bendebel, Barduben etc.[1] He is thought to have told these stories to his king in order to inculcate virtue in him and to prepare him for correct diplomatic behaviour. From the Indian language the book was translated into old Pehlevi by one Barzoye (Berozias of North's book) on the orders of King Khosru Nushirvan of Persia, *c.* A.D. 550 (Anestres Castri in North).[2] From old Pehlevi it was translated into Arabic by Abdullah al-Mokaffa *c.* A.D. 750. From this Arabic version came the Greek version of Simeon Seth, *c.* A.D. 1080 and the Hebrew version of R. Joel. From the Hebrew version came the well-known Latin translation by John of Capua known as *Directorium Vite Humane*. This was translated into Spanish under the heading *Examplario c.* A.D. 1493. From this was derived the Italian

version of Doni known as *La Moral Philosophia* (A.D. 1552).

North's version contains 39 stories of different lengths which open out of each other like Chinese boxes. Apart from the preface entitled *To the Reader*, there are three poems which precede the text. One of them is an Italian sonnet called '*Al Lettore G.B.*' and the two poems are, 'T.N. to the Reader' and 'E.C. to the Reader'. The Italian sonnet commends North's translation. T.N., however, tells the reader that,

> God gave such grace to beasts, that they should Indian
> speech attaine
> And then they learnde Italian tongue, and now at length
> they can,
> By help of NORTH, speake English well to every Englishman
> In English now they teach us wit.

E.C. asks the readers to receive 'this learned Booke' with thankfulness. There follows the *Prologue* which after briefly tracing the history of the book in its peregrinations through various tongues, commends the book for its 'Royall wisdome, spirituall doctrine and infinite instructions and examples for man to live well.'[3] It contains five stories which besides preaching virtue, stress the need of shrewdness in life. *The Argument of the Booke* tells us of the difficulties which Berozias experienced and the adventures he had in smuggling the book out of India.

North shows talent in compressing the book and in wise omissions. The book is divided into four parts which comprise 34 stories. The core of the book is contained in parts two and three which correspond directly to the first book of *Panchatantra* and the second book of *Hitopadesha*. Because the Italian version is derived from Spanish the place-names and at times even the names of the characters show the Spanish or the mixed stamp. (Pirinei, Pampilona, Nauarra, Verrucola dell amiraglio, Malagigi, Chiarino, Baccheretto, etc.) The two oxen in the Sanskrit original, *Sanjivaka* and *Nandaka*, become Chiarino (Arabic *Shanzabeh*, Latin *Senseba*) and Incoronata (Arabic *Banzabeh*, Latin *Chenedba*). The two Indian jackals, Karkataka and Damanaka, become the anonymous ass and mule. At times, however, the English colouring is

seen in such words as '*his Moyleship*', North's name for the Indian jackal, *Damanak*. Keith-Falconer traces all these changes covering the book's track through the various languages.[4]

Of the 39 stories in North's book only 18 are animal fables. The stories are placed in the Oriental framework for story telling, in which the end of one story is made both the cause and the starting point of the following story. It is a peculiarity of the Eastern fable that the moral of the first story is emphasized by another story which both amplifies and extends it. Thus unlike the Western fable the effect of heavy moralizing or of rather naïve lessons drawn from a story is avoided here. The Eastern fable is more complex and gives lessons in statecraft and teaches the reader all the shrewdness that he may need for success in this not too simple world. And yet the Eastern fable does not preach expediency as the only virtue; on the contrary, it tells us about the ways of the world and the need for all wise men to protect their own interests without becoming either immoral or wicked.

The book was obviously popular during the Elizabethan times for it ran into a second edition in 1601. The Elizabethans had an almost insatiable appetite for stories and the literary adventurers of the time like their counterparts Raleigh and Drake roamed far and wide in search of 'nuggets of gold'. It is, therefore, not unlikely that some of these stories were used by Jacobean and Caroline dramatists as plots for their dramas.

North's book is important also because he occupies an important position in the development of English prose. North combines Greene's ease and Hooker's dignity and avoids Lyly's over-ornamentation and the exaggerated Ciceronianisms of Berners, Elliot and Ascham. North's 'Worshipfull Moyle' has the style and the grace of an Elizabethan courtier.

> Victorious Prince, your opinion is no less good than just and I lyke it well that your minde agreeth with the greatnesse of your crowne; but I stande in great feare that this your carnell holynesse will fall out verie hurtfull for your Kingdome. Sure generall honestie banisheth from euery one murder; but private profite calleth it againe. (p. 163)

At times his sentences have the flavour of fine homilies:

> To be alone it griueth vs: to be accompanied it troubleth vs; to live long it werieth vs; and sufficient contenteth vs not.

The vigour of his prose is noticeable in speeches like these:

> My Lorde Chiarino, and brother deare (I will giue thee a watche word to serue thy turne at neede) When thou shall come before the Kinge, if perchaunce thou finde him very suspicious, and that he cast his deadly eyes on thee and bende his short eares, standing upright to heare what thou sayest, or if any words thou speakest maketh him cast vp his heade, or hang it downe: then (trust me) beware of him that he playe thee not some part, therefore carie thy eyes before thee and looke to his fingers, and stand to thy defence lyke a worthy Champion.

North's story-telling is marked by ease, precision and lucidity, and the book which should be interesting primarily to Indian scholars for the first literary link it provides between India and Britain, remains to be studied properly.

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THE PHILOSOPHER OF NATURE IN *RASSELAS* XXII

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The philosopher of Nature in *Rasselas* XXII was identified without any hesitation with Rousseau by the older editors of Dr. Johnson. Birkbeck Hill,[1] for example, had no doubt that Johnson had the Rousseau of the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1754) in mind.

The correspondence between the two, however, is very far from being close. Moreover when we compare Johnson's remarks on Rousseau in Boswell's *Life* with Chapter XXII of *Rasselas* we find that the tone is quite different. Whereas Rousseau is regarded as an enemy of society, the philosopher is accused only of unintelligibility. The philosopher at any rate represents harmless nonsense, unlike Rousseau whose nonsense was quite *dangerous*, according to Johnson.

Mr C. A. Moore, in *Backgrounds of English Literature 1700-1760*,[2] is more convincing when he identifies the philosopher of Nature with Shaftesbury.

In fact the pronouncements of Johnson's philosopher do not refer to any *one* philosopher, either contemporary or ancient. On analysis the speech can be broken up into at least three parts. The three parts seem to represent three different philosophies. It appears to the present writer that the following passage presents the Stoic view:

> He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire; he will receive and reject with equability of temper, and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe.

The general drift of this statement would have been acceptable to Johnson. It was a worthy (Stoic) aim to build up a fortress against 'the delusions of hope' and the 'importunities of desire'. The only error in this quest for the 'equability of temper' was that it rated the strength of reason in

man too highly. Johnson was in sympathy with this aim so frequently expressed by the Stoics:

> ...to live according to Nature, is not to be disturbed with Passions, and to behave...upon all occasions with moderate Reason.[3]
> The only way then to preserve one's Liberty, is to restrain one's own Passions, and to have neither Desire nor Aversion for any thing in the power of others.[4]...

Johnson had already shown in Chapter XVIII of *Rasselas* that this aim was unrealistic. Human beings were vulnerable and reasons was quite incapable (by itself) of withstanding the assaults of passion.

The second part of the philosopher's speech has obvious parallels in the writings of the third Earl of Shaftesbury. Johnson's philosopher, in anticipation of Wordsworth, advises his imaginary followers to follow the birds and the beasts who trust their instincts:

> Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove; let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct: they obey their guide, and are happy.

To this form of cultural primitivism there is a parallel in 'An Inquiry Concerning Merit or Virtue':

> In the other species of creatures around us, there is found generally an exact proportionableness, constancy, and regularity in all their passions and affections;...Even those creatures of prey who live farthest out of society, maintain, we see, such a conduct towards one another as is exactly suitable to the good of their own species. Whilst man, notwithstanding the assistance of religion and the direction of laws, is often found to live in less *conformity with Nature*...[5] (Italics mine.)

To assert that the instincts were safer guides than reason, religion or the law was to repudiate 'the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science'.[6]

The third part of the philosopher's speech professes to expound the precise meaning of his slogan:

> To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to *the fitness arising from the relations and qualities* of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things. (Italics mine.)

Here the target of Johnson's attack is Deism. It appears that the precise passage that Johnson had in mind is in Tindal's *Christianity as Old as the Creation*:[7]

> In short, if *the Relations between Things, and the Fitness resulting from thence*, be not the sole Rule of God's Actions, must not God be an arbitrary Being? and then what a miserable Condition will Mankind be in! (Italics mine.)

Johnson had no faith in a morality which dispensed with revelation. Moreover he felt that ethics could not be treated as a pure science. He opposed the Deists who sought to make it a kind of geometry, internally consistent but having no reference to human beings.

Johnson's review on Jenyns's *Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (1757) throws some light on this matter. It is significant that the quotation from Jenyns, prefaced by a hearty approval, glances at the moral geometry of Deism. This, according to Jenyns (and Johnson), is one of the unsatisfactory explanations of the nature and essence of evil and good:

> 'Some have placed it (i.e. virtue) in conformity to truth, some to *the fitness of things*, and others to the will of God. But all this is merely superficial: they resolve us not why truth, or *the fitness of things*, are either eligible (i.e. fit to be chosen) or obligatory, or why God should require us to act in one manner rather than another. The true reason of which can possibly be no other than this, because some actions produce happiness, and others misery... '[8] (Italics mine.)

Before quoting this passage, Johnson not only recommends it to the reader, he identifies himself whole-heartedly with it:

> He (i.e. Jenyns) offers a criterion of action, on account of virtue and vice, for which I have often contended, and which must be embraced by all who are willing to know why they act, or why they forbear to give any reason of their conduct to themselves or others.[9]

Virtue, according to Jenyns and Johnson, must introduce happiness into the world and vice misery. Any system of morality that ignores this fundamental fact of human experience deals 'but in pompous nonsense'.

The philosopher of nature in *Rasselas* XXII is found to be unintelligible by the prince because of this. The orotund phrases of the philosopher fail to relate virtue and vice to human happiness and misery.

The speech of the philosopher of Nature then is calculated to ridicule three schools of philosophy. These three schools were not always distinguished from one another by their interpreters or critics. For example, the association between Stoicism and Shaftesbury is noticeable in Hume's essay, 'The Stoic':

> But does the sage always preserve himself in this philosophical indifference...No; he knows that in this sullen *Apathy*, neither true wisdom nor true happiness can be found. He feels too strongly the charm of the social affections ever to counteract so sweet, so natural, so virtuous a propensity. Even when bathed in tears,...he yet rejoices in the generous disposition...[10]

This is very remote indeed from the severity of Epictetus and Seneca. Such indulgence in the sentiment of benevolence is alien to Stoicism in its classical form. It seems to approximate far more closely to the benevolency of Shaftesbury.

The identification between Deism and Shaftesbury has a much stronger basis. The moral and aesthetic geometry of Tindal had been anticipated by Shaftesbury:

> This too is certain, that the admiration and love of order, harmony and proportion, in whatever kind, is naturally improving to the temper, advantageous to social affection, and

highly assistant to virtue, which is itself no other than the love of order and beauty in society.[11]

In conclusion then we may say that although the philosopher of nature's pronouncements echo the views of three schools of philosophy, the connecting link, if we wish to look for it, is Shaftesbury.

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SHYLOCK'S LANGUAGE

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This paper attempts to study how the use of language combines the necessities of plot with the revelation of individuality in one of Shakespeare's characters, viz. Shylock; it also attempts to show how Shylock's language is differentiated from that of the other characters in *The Merchant of Venice*.

This play seems to be deliberately bathed in music; the two great moments of emotion and romance are introduced by music; besides, the whole play is pervaded by repeated suggestions of either music or the effects of music. The music of the spheres finds its counterpart in the harmony of 'immortal souls'. The man 'that hath no music in himself' (*MV*, V. i. 83) and is unmoved by it should not be trusted. This statement stands comparison with Casear's mistrust of Cassius; 'he hears no music'; 'such men . . . are dangerous'. (*JC*, I. ii. 204). In such a world of music, the only discordant note in *The Merchant of Venice* is Shylock. It is he that orders Jessica to 'lock up my doors, and when you hear the drum/And the vile squealing of the wry neck'd fife/Clamber not you up to the casements then.' (*MV*, II. v. 29-31). More pointedly, however, he mentions:

> Let not the sound of shallow fopp'ry enter
> My sober house.
>
> (*MV*, II. v. 34-35)

Shylock, then, appears as a harsh and alien element in a world of sweet sounds and sights; he appears to have nothing to do in the world he finds himself in. In the world of love and friendship, romance and music, he is obviously an alien element.

It is significant that at his very first appearance, Shylock speaks prose and discusses the loan. The first words he utters are, characteristically, those referring to money:

> The thousand ducats, well.
> ...For three months, well.
> ...Antonio shall be bound, well. (*MV*, I. iii. 1 ff)

Shylock is represented, no doubt, as considering Bassanio's proposals. But the repetition of the monosyllabic 'well' and the repetition also of Bassanio's phrases, without so much as an attempt at changing the words, at once reveals a mind that is cautious. He is evidently suspicious; he did not expect such a request from Antonio and though Bassanio displays great anxiety—'will you pleasure me? Shall I have your answer?' (*MV*, I. iii. 4)—Shylock merely repeats Bassanio's proposals: 'Three thousand ducats for three months, and Antonio bound.' (*MV*, I. iii. 6). While Shylock is in no mood to oblige him, Bassanio is unable to hide his impatience:

> Your answer to that? (*MV*, I. iii. 10)

Shylock's next utterance is no reply, but indicates the brooding of an obsessed mind: 'Antonio is a good man.' (*MV*, I. iii. 11).

The language of Shylock here is simple and direct. The non-commital words, brief and repetitious, reveal Shylock's hesitation to comment as well as his understandable distrust of the entire transaction as Bassanio proposes. Nevertheless, the business instinct of the Jew is active as seen by his 'good' as applied to Antonio. He does not mean that Antonio is a 'virtuous' man, but merely as 'sufficient surety or security' for his amount; this somewhat special meaning of the word 'good' is given by Shylock himself:

> 'No, no, no, no, my meaning in saying he is a *good* man, is to have you understand me that he is *sufficient*' (*MV*, I. iii. 14; italics mine); thus 'good' means, for Shylock, 'commercially sound'. We may note here that the word, '*sufficient*', is also used, not in its general sense, but in the technical sense of 'surety'.

It does not take long for Shylock to analyze the facts of the situation and grasp the essentials: 'His [Antonio's] means are in supposition; he hath an Argosy bount to Tripolis... to Indies... at Mexico... England, and other ventures he

has *squandered* abroad.' (*MV*, I. iii. 19; italics mine). The word, *squandered*, usually means 'scattered'; Shakespeare's only other use of this word, however, seems to be in apposition to 'wise':

> The wise man's folly is anatomised
> Even by the *squandering* glances of the fool.
> (*As You Like It*, II. vii. 56-57)

Evidently it is to Antonio's carelessness in matters of money that Shylock pointedly refers here.

It is interesting to note that Shylock does not react violently to a situation; however, there are certain occasions when he bursts out in fury. On those occasions, the language is sharp, with short, bitter phrases, repetitious and obsessive:

> Yes, to smell pork, to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into; I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. (*MV*, I. iii. 29ff)

All these short phrases coming in such quick succession press just one point, that he does not associate himself with Christians. Though he moves in a limited range, he moves very swiftly and effectively. His religious frenzy is unmistakable. Besides this, we may note that his use of the word, *Nazarite*, in preference to, *Nazarene*, is characteristic.

'Nazarene' means 'one belonging to Nazareth', while 'Nazarite' means 'one who separates himself' or 'one who took certain vows of abstinence'. Whatever Shylock means by it, the use of this particular word is peculiar to him. Again, the phrase, 'so following', instead of the usual 'so forth', individualizes Shylock's language. It may be noted in passing, however, that Shylock does not stick to his principles; he does eat with the Christians later on.

> But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
> The prodigal Christian (*MV*, II. v. 14-15)

As soon as Antonio enters, Shylock's hatred and fury

gush forth in a torrent of eloquent poetry, in contrast with his hesitant, cautious prose in his conversation with Bassanio:

> How like a fawning *publican* he looks!
> I hate him for he is a Christian.
> But more for that in *low simplicity*
> He lends out money gratis, and brings down
> The rate of *usance* here with us in Venice.
> If I can *catch him once upon the hip*,
> I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
> He hates our sacred nation, and he rails
> (Even there where men most do congregate)
> On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift
> What he calls interest; cursed be my tribe
> If I forgive him.
>
> (*MV*, I. iii. 36 ff; italics mine.)

These eleven lines make a major contribution to the plot of the story. The motive power for the drama is to be found here. Shylock is presented here in all the stark, ugly simplicity of the legend with which Shakespeare's audience was familiar. A cold logic runs through the entire speech. The ideas are presented in correct logical sequence, and in an unadorned and effective language. This is a feature of all the speeches of Shylock in the drama, and their power stems from the intense realism which pervades them.

Besides the revelation of character traits, this soliloquy has several words and phrases which immediately set off Shylock from others in the play. The word, *publican*, occurs in Shakespeare only here and is appropriately used; 'publican' refers to 'a servant of the Gentile oppressors who robbed the Jews of the lawful gains'; Shylock scorns the publican in Luke xviii, 10-14, who fawned on God. The phrase, *low simplicity*, which means 'base, mean foolishness', is reminiscent of the *Jew of Malta*:

> Aye, Policy! that's their profession,
> And not simplicity, as they suggest. (*JM*, ii. 161-2)

The phrase, *upon the hip*, is derived from wrestling; Shylock's mind visualizes and transforms his enmity to the physical plane. This act of wrestling, wherein Antonio is caught 'at

a disadvantage' might also refer to Jacob's wrestling with the angel in Genesis xxxii. Incidentally, it might be noted here that Shylock's speeches are frequently reminiscent of and make many allusions to the *Old Testament*. Shylock's use of the word, *usance*, is again characteristic; he uses it in the sense of 'interest', a word which he uses only to mark off Antonio's speech: 'What you call interest' or 'what he [Antonio] calls interest'; 'no, not *interest*, not as you would say *interest*.' (*MV*, I. iii. 71-72). Shylock prefers to use words such as 'thrift' ('my well-won thrift', justifying it too!). Thrift was a virtue in the eyes of the citizens then; Shylock refers to his ancestor, Jacob, who 'thrived'. Shylock also uses '*advantage*' (*MV*, I. iii. 64) as another circumlocution for usury or interest. Shakespeare uses this word, *advantage*, in the same sense in *King John*; cf:

> There is a soul counts thee her creditor
> And with *advantage* means to pay thy love.
> (*KJ*, III. iii. 57; italics mine.)

'Excess' is another word which Shylock uses for usury (*MV*, I. iii. 37).

Shylock is anxious to 'catch Antonio on the hip'; even more anxious is he to hide his feelings. The prose he uses when he encounters Antonio is full of pauses and broken phrases: 'I forgot.' (pause) '... three months...' (pause). Evidently Shylock finds it impossible to speak to Antonio without betraying his rage; so he tries to speak very pleasantly with Bassanio. But his suppressed emotions must find an outlet, and they emerge in passionate verse:

> When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep
> .....if men steal it not. (*MV*, I. iii. 66-85)

This is a remarkable passage in many ways. The digression makes Antonio terribly impatient, but that is a matter of deep satisfaction to Shylock who prides in his ancestry. He alone, as already mentioned, of all the characters in the play, has his Old Testament at his fingers' ends, and references to it are scattered throughout his speeches. He swears by Jacob's staff and by the holy Sabbath:

> By Jacob's staff I swear
> I have no mind of feasting forth tonight. (*MV*, II. v. 36-37)
> And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
> To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
> (*MV*, IV. i. 36-37)

He calls Launcelot 'Hagar's off-spring':

> What says that fool of Hagar's off-spring? ha?
> (*MV*, II. v. 43)

In the speech (*MV*, I. iii. 70-85) Shylock's reference to his ancestor, Abraham, closely follows the argument in the *Jew of Malta*:

> These are blessings promis'd to the Jews,
> And herein was old Abraham's happiness.
> (*JM*, I. i. 103-4)

But Shylock refers to his ancestor twice in the play, and both times he refers to him as 'Abram', and not 'Abraham':

> This Jacob from our holy *Abram* was (*MV*, I. iii. 67)

> O father *Abram*, what these Christians are
> (*MV*, I. iii. 156; italics mine.)

Lines 70-85 in I, iii have many other Biblical allusions. It is Shylock alone who uses the word, '*eanling*' which means 'new-born lambs'; again, it is he alone who uses the phrase, 'eaning time' (*MV*, I. iii. 82). It is he alone who uses the word, 'Pill'd', in the sense of 'stripped' (incidentally, the word is used only in this play) reminiscent of Genesis xxx, 37. Shylock's use of the word, *fulsome* ('He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes', *MV*, I. iii. 81) for 'rank' (lustful) is the only instance of that signification discovered by the editors of the New English Dictionary.

The Merchant of Venice is remarkable for its high proportion of poetical images, eighty out of a total of a hundred and thirteen, some of them of great beauty and perhaps the best known in Shakespeare. Bassanio and Portia are responsible

for nearly half of them. Shylock, by contrast, does not generally use images; his language is usually harsh, intensely realistic, and quite plain; but the extraordinary power of his language springs from his arrangement of closely linked ideas and their repetition. In a passage in which Shylock's burning, but suppressed, emotions burst out like an erupting volcano, in passionate verse (*MV*, I. iii. 100ff), he uses the image of the dog five times in seventeen lines (*MV*, I. iii. 106-23). This pointed reference to 'dog' repeatedly is the outcome of his deepest feeling and sums up symbolically the motive for his whole action. This image of dog recurs again and again in the play:

> Thou call'dst me dog, before thou hadst a cause;
> But since I am a dog, beware my fangs. (*MV*, III. iii. 6-7)

Again in the trial scene,

> Which (like your asses, and your dogs and mules)
> You use in abject and in slavish parts. (*MV*, IV. i. 93-94)

His mind is intensely concentrated on itself; some of the key words are repeated rhythmically almost with hypnotic effect:

> You have rated me about my *moneys* and usances...Shylock, we would have *moneys*...*moneys* is your suit...you call'd me cut-throat *dog* Hath a *dog money*? Is it possible a *cur* lends *three thousand ducats*...you called me a *dog*...I'll lend thus much *moneys*. (*MV*, I. iii. 100 ff, italics mine.)

It may be noted that it is Shylock alone that uses the plural form of the word 'money'; this use is so characteristic that the Oxford Dictionary glosses this word, 'moneys' as 'From Shakespeare onwards the use of the plural for the singular has been attributed to Jews, whose pronunciation is sometimes ridiculed by the spelling "monish".'

In the short scene, *MV*, II. v, where Shylock addresses thirty-four lines to Jessica, eleven are about masques; six are about Launcelot, and in the seventeen lines that are left, he calls Jessica by her name about eight times. He loves

his daughter and the repetition of her name so many times in that short space tells us something of the affection of this lonely man. Touching as this is, the very core of Shylock's being is filled with thoughts of *money*, *house*, and *usance*. He calls her 'Jessica, my girl,' but even as the tenderness of his affection is realized, the next phrase reveals the real man:

> Jessica,
> these are my keys! (*MV*, II. v. 11-12)
>
> Jessica, my girl,
> Look to my house. (*MV*. II. v. 14-15)
>
> Hear you me, Jessica,
> Lock up my doors. (*MV*, II. v. 28-29)

It is interesting to note, in passing, Shylock's attachment to his house; in the very first scene, he says:

> See to my *house* left in the fearful guard
> Of an unthrifty knave. (*MV*, I. iii. 171-2)
>
> Look to my *house* (*MV*, II. v. 16)
>
> Lock up my *doors* (*MV*, II. v. 29)
>
> Stop my house's ears, I mean my casements (*MV*, II. v. 34)
>
> Let not the sound of shallow fopp'ry enter
> My sober *house*. (*MV*, II. v. 35-36)
>
> Shut doors after you. (*MV*, II. v. 52)

And finally,

> You take my *house*, when you do take the prop that doth sustain my *house*. (*MV*, IV. i. 371-2)

No other character in the play repeats thoughts and phrases like this. Shylock is thus given a language altogether different from the rest of the characters; in a short speech of sixteen lines, Act III, Sc. iii, he mentions '*bond*' six times, and refuses four times to hear other people speak.

> *I'll have my bond*, speak not against *my bond*,
> I'have sworn an oath, that *I will have my bond*.

> . . . *I'll have my bond*, I will not hear thee speak.
> *I'll have my bond* and therefore speak no more.
> . . . I'll have no speaking, *I will have my bond.*
>
> (*MV*, III. iii. 5 ff)

This hypnotic power which is the cumulative effect of sheer rhythmic repetition, often forces a deadly logic, by a neat arrangement of ideas:

> Some men there are love not a gaping pig!
> Some that mar if they behold a cat!
> And others when the bagpipe sings in the nose,
> Cannot contain their urine. . . .
> As there is no firm reason to be rendered
> Why he cannot abide a gaping pig,
> Why he a harmless necessary cat,
> Why he a woollen bagpipe, but of force
> Must yield to such inevitable shame,
> . . . So can I give no reason, nor I will not.
>
> (*MV*, IV. i. 47 ff)

When Shylock speaks to the Duke, he speaks as an equal. There is no circumlocution in his language. He knows too well that if only there was the slightest legal weakness in his case, the Christians would have exploited it fully. But he has faith that even the Christians will respect the law of the land:

> What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
>
> (*MV*, IV. i. 89)

This question is followed by an assertion:

> The pound of flesh, which I demand of him
> Is dearly bought; it is mine, and I will have it.
>
> (*MV*, IV. i. 99-100)

His language comprises simple words familiar to everyone, with no ambiguity anywhere:

> If you deny me, fie upon your law!
> There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
> I stand for judgment. Answer: shall I have it?
>
> (*MV*, IV. i. 101-2)

Dreadful silence follows these plain words which, nevertheless, have immense power to hold the court spell-bound:

> If you deny it, let the danger light
> Upon your charter and your city's freedom!
> (*MV*, IV. i. 38-39)

Look at the confidence of this man which he expresses mostly in monosyllables:

> There is no power in the tongue of man
> To alter me. (*MV*, IV. i. 237-8)

The irony of it was that it was the tongue of woman that altered him! But even Portia is no match for him in the power of sheer logical statement and the brilliance of his arguments. Nowhere in the play is there even an attempt to face his deadly logic. Indeed, he is the most intellectual character in the play. He is overpowered not by Portia's intellect, but by the mere trick of the law; Portia does not practise the 'mercy' she wants the Jew to show in that well-known passage. She plays upon his fanatical trust in the bond and slowly leads him to her disastrous trap.

Apart from the simplicity, bluntness and power of the words he utters, we find that the vocabulary of Shylock is sharply differentiated from that of others; he uses certain words in a very different sense from that of anyone else in the play. The following are a few significant examples:

Rated, in the sense of *reproved*, *reviled*. (*MV*, I. iii. 102)

Use, in the double sense (i) the simple sense of employment and (ii) interest. (*MV*, I. iii. 108)

Moneys, this plural, as we have already noted, is very rare in Shakespeare. (*MV*, I. iii. 103)

Misbeliever, used by Shylock alone. (*MV*, I. iii. 106)

Mine own, Biblical echo: (*MV*, I. iii. 108)

> ('Is is not lawful for me to do
> What I will with *mine own*'
> (Matthew xx, 15; italics mine.)

Rheum, used for saliva. (*MV*, I. iii. 102)

Single bond, a single bond is a bond without a condition; Shylock uses this phrase craftily to make his subsequent condition seem a mere nothing; or, as he himself puts it, 'a merry sport'. (*MV*, I. iii. 141)

Equal pound, Shylock alone uses 'equal' to mean 'exact'. (*MV*, I. iii. 144)

Estimable, for 'valuable' (a very rare use). (*MV*, I. iii. 162)

Rend apparel *out*, this syntax is peculiar; Shakespeare generally uses *Rend* only. (*MV*, II. v. 5)

Synagogue. Like Shylock's other Biblical words, *Nazarite*, *Publican*, and *Pill'd*, 'Synagogue' does not occur elsewhere in Shakespeare. (*MV*, III. i. 119)

The language of Shylock, while it is clearly distinguished from that of others, individualizes his character and is made appropriate to the varying moods of this character.

Abbreviations used:

JC : *Julius Caesar*
JM : *Jew of Malta*
KJ : *King John*
MV : *The Merchant of Venice*

Wherever I have referred to 'meanings' of certain words, they have been checked with those given in the Oxford English Dictionary.

M. E. *DRINKEN*, AND *DRINK* IN GEORGE HERBERT

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The search for imagery and its patterns in literature, a process which forms part of the 'New Criticism', goes on apace. Often new light is shed on the work subjected to such scrutiny; meaningful patterns spring to life, and the critics earn our gratitude by showing us these patterns and thus increasing our awareness of the organic beauty of the work. At other times, however, the reader feels, with some justification, that the critic's subtlety has outstripped his author's ingenuity; he has put into the work more than was there to begin with. To be committed to an interpretation should presuppose an exhaustive study of the source material being interpreted; but this is where some critics fall short.

An interesting and characteristic instance is a misreading of a mediaeval religious lyric by Professor Rosemond Tuve in her book *A Reading of George Herbert*.[1] The main theme of the book is the closeness of Herbert's poetry to mediaeval styles, and its relevance to today's interests. On page 38 Professor Tuve quotes lyric 15 from Carleton Brown's *Religious Lyrics of the XIV Century*,[2] the first stanza of which is as follows:

> Ich the vedde and shrudde the;
> And thou wyth eysyl drinkest to me,
> And wyth spere styngest me.
> My volk, what habbe y do the?[3]

The poem is of a lyrical type associated with the so-called 'Reproaches of Christ', a liturgical form for Good Friday in the ancient Christian Church. The biblical reference in the quoted stanza is to Christ at his crucifixion being offered vinegar soaked in a sponge on the end of a reed when he was thirsty.[4] Its affinity to the dramatic monologue is clear, even from this short extract; and Professor Tuve draws a

parallel between it and Herbert's colloquial styles for exalted subjects.

Professor Tuve, however, misinterprets the line

> And thou wyth eysyl drinkest to me

by saying that 'the vinegar as a kind of toast which "thou drinkest to me", is typical of what happens in this tradition, and long before Herbert used it.'[5] In fact such an interpretation is unscriptural and makes no good sense; but *drink* used causatively to mean 'to hand or present a person beverage for his use; to give drink to' is well attested,[6] and gives the correct meaning here. It is strange that this did not occur to Professor Tuve, particularly since she quotes, without comment, exactly similar uses of *drink* later in the same poem:

> Of the ston ich dronk to the;
> And thou wyth galle drincst to me:[7]

The biblical references here are (a) to God commanding Moses to strike a rock in the wilderness, and then giving him water from the rock for the children of Israel and their herds;[8] and (b) to Christ being offered vinegar mixed with gall when he arrived at the place of his crucifixion—but 'when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink..'[9]

The references are unequivocal, and the use of *drink* must be causative here. I do not think that Professor Tuve draws any similar use (or supposed misuse) from Herbert, and it is not clear whether or not she intended to do so. The most obvious parallel in Herbert is stanza 60 of his own poem on the recriminatory theme:[10]

> They gave me vinegar mingled with gall,
> But more with malice; yet, when they did call,
> With Manna, Angels' food, I fed them all:
> *Was ever grief like mine?*

Here the biblical reference is carefully followed; the 'reproaches' theme is integrally bound up with a firm display of antitheses in subtle variations of similar actions ('you do

this to me; I did that for you')—but where the toasting is thought to be implied remains unclear.

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3. 'I feed and clothe you, and you give me vinegar to drink, and pierce me with a spear. My people, what have I done to you?'
4. *Matthew*, 27, 48.
5. Tuve, op.cit. p. 39.
6. OED, *s.n. drink*, 13a.
7. 'I gave you drink out of the rock; and you give me gall to drink.'
8. *Numbers*, 20, 7 ff.
9. *Matthew*, 27, 34.
10. 'The Sacrifice', *The Temple*, No. 4.

JANE AUSTEN—THE FEMINIST SENSIBILITY

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The eighteenth century, with Elizabeth Elstob and her 'blue-stockings' in the early decades, and with Clara Reeve, Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth and Mary Wollestonecraft in the last decades, witnessed the rise of Feminism in England, if not as a widespread social movement, at least as a generally accepted ideal. Jane Austen, no social reformer or political thinker, had no affiliations with contemporary Feminism; yet on closer scrutiny it is easy to see that her novels constitute essentially a study in woman's psychology. This introduction of the element of feminine awareness, however latent and implicit, emerges as a new mode of perception in her novels. We become conscious of a thoughtful and intelligent woman's reactions to her environments. Thus it is that the disabilties of women—their subordination to men, their lack of education, their economic dependence and the resultant frustration, their preoccupation with marriage and husband-hunting—become manifest in her novels. Indeed she is so much preoccupied with the problem of intelligent womanhood that she hardly, if ever, has an inclination to feel much concern for men. No wonder, she sometimes portrays her men only as seen through the eyes of her women characters, so much so that they often fail to acquire any distinct identity of their own.

There is hardly any novel that does not establish the derivative value of men. For instance, it is only through Elizabeth Bennet's sensitive awareness that we become conscious of her father's peculiar temperament—his shortcomings as father and husband. Bingley and Darcy, in *Pride and Prejudice*, are merely the projections of the feminine consciousness. They acquire a distinct individuality of their own only when they come in close contact with various women characters. Details about Edmund's character are supplied through the casual observations of Mary Crawford and the emotional responses of

Fanny Price, with an occasional definitive stroke contributed by his sisters and aunt. Again, the good sense and mature judgment of Mr. Knightley becomes recognizable only through the appreciative understanding of Emma. In brief, she portrays all her heroes only as the kind of men liked or disapproved by women of sensitivity and taste.

If she concerns herself with men, their idleness, their temperamental unsuitability to certain professions, it is because the destinies of her women are closely linked up with their attitudes. It is from this point of view that she ironically exposes the social foibles of her times. For instance, Edward exclaims:

> I do assure you...that I have long thought on this point.... It has been, and is, and probably will always be a heavy misfortune to me, that I have had no necessary business to engage me, no profession to give me employment or afford me anything like independence. But unfortunately...idleness was pronounced on the whole to be the most advantageous and honourable... (*Sense and Sensibility*, p. 61)

In fact, Jane Austen is rather vague about the professions of her heroes. It is very seldom that she offers any concrete details about their employments and incomes. Even when Mrs. Bennet mentions Bingley's or Darcy's income, and eulogizes their eligibility as husbands for her daughters, she remains amusingly vague about their precise financial status.

'Exceed their income! My dear Mr Bennet,' cried his wife, 'What are you talking of? Why he has four or five thousands a year, and very likely more.' (*Pride and Prejudice*, p. 440)

Darcy, Bingley and Knightley are men of property; Edmund, Edward and Henry Tilney are clergymen. It is only in *Persuasion* that the hero is distinctly associated with a particular profession—the Navy. Law the authoress considers completely beyond her depths, and she reserves it for Walter Elliot, who stands out as a corrupt man 'without heart or conscience; a designing, wary, cold-blooded being who thinks only of himself.' (*Persuasion*, p. 1330). Obviously Jane Austen has no patience with such men, nor has she any definite understanding of such professions. Therefore she dismisses the profession of law rather summarily and, as if impelled by an

instinctively feminist urge, prevents her heroines from marrying into it.

Jane Austen is essentially interested in her own sex only, because she finds it possible to share its small worries and little secrets. For instance Anne Eliot says, 'We each begin, probably with *a little bias for our own sex*; and upon that bias build every circumstance in favour of it which occurred *within our own circle*.' (*Persuasion*, p. 1353. Italics mine.) William Frederick Pollock also observes that "no instance occurs of a scene in which men only are present.'[1]

In her novels we come across women, not in relation to men, but in a more intimate relationship amongst members of their own sex. It is seldom that we observe men conversing with other men alone, but wherever women are shown talking to each other, the novelist supplies a wealth of intimate details which make such scenes come fully alive. Here her all-pervasive irony comes into full play, and she presents an entire range of feminine relationships. There is, for instance, the steady and sensible kind of friendship between Elizabeth Bennet and Charlotte Lucas, or between Anne Elliot and Lady Russel. Or we have the forced and circumstantial kind of friendship between Fanny Price and Mary Crawford.

Although Jane Austen never espoused any cause formally, she was none the less conscious of the great discrepancy between the education of the two sexes. She noticed that whereas every possible care was lavished upon the education of the brothers, the sisters were left to fend for themselves, with the help of an occasional governess. In *Pride and Prejudice* Lady Catherine asks Elizabeth Bennet: 'Then who taught you? Who attended to you? . . .You must have been neglected.' To this Miss Bennet replies, 'Compared to some families, I believe we were; but such as wished to learn never wanted the means. We were always encouraged to read . . .' (p. 330). In fact, from her own experience Jane Austen had realized how the educational backwardness of women had stunted their personality. No wonder, when the Reverend James Stanier Clarke, Librarian to the Prince Regent, suggested to Jane Austen possibilities of introducing into her novels more accomplished heroes, she replied, not without an admixture of irony:

> Such a man's conversation must at times be on subjects of science and philosophy, of which I know nothing; or at least occasionally abundant in quotations and allusions which a woman, who, like me knows only her mother tongue, and has read little in that, would be totally without the power of giving. A classical education, or at any rate a very extensive acquaintance with English literature, ancient and modern, appears to be quite indispensable for the person who would do any justice to your clergymen...and I think I may boast myself to be...the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress.[2]

In the light of this statement it should be easy to understand why Jane Austen's heroines develop interests of a limited nature. Lydia at sixteen has a mind full of nothing but officers and balls. Isabella Thorpe, in *Northanger Abbey*, is always preoccupied with empty pretensions of wit, vanity and self-admiration, while Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park*, is saved from becoming a demure prig by her cousin Edmund. So little was presumed to make a young woman of those times look accomplished that Bingley sums up the entire concept of 'accomplished womanhood' in a few words:

> It is amazing to me how young ladies can have patience to be so very accomplished as they all are...Yes, all of them I think. They can paint tables, cover screens, and net purses. I scarcely know anyone who cannot do all this, and I am sure, I never heard a young lady spoken of for the first time, without being informed that she was very accomplished.
>
> (*Pride and Prejudice*, p. 253)

Even when Darcy or Miss Bingley attempted to draw up a list of feminine accomplishments, the range remained limited to 'a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing and the modern languages.' (*Pride and Prejudice*, p. 253). Yet, when Jane Fairfax in *Emma*, a paragon of all these accomplishments, is confronted with the problem of supporting herself, she is inevitably left with the choice either to marry Frank Churchill or become a governess, the only profession open to 'respectable and accomplished' women of that age. Jane Austen, though conscious of the innumerable restrictions imposed by society on the members of her sex, is prudent

enough to let her heroines hunt for husbands rather than look for jobs.

Jane Austen, as mentioned earlier, was too genuine a creative artist to get involved in the contemporary social or political problems. But the disabilities that women of her times suffered from moved her very intensely. Although 'her characters are none of them reformers',[3] there is an unmistakable undercurrent of feminine disapproval of 'masculine aggressiveness', revealed through oblique irony, or sometimes through direct statement. Without being a committed feminist, she aided the cause of women's emancipation by a charming display of good manners. Her approach to this problem was urbane and realistic. The weapons she utilized were consistent with the spirit of social comedy. Meredith, in his *Essay on Comedy*, observes that 'the laughter of comedy is impersonal and of unrivalled politeness.'[4] Jane Austen retains her politeness, she also retains her laughter, but she often finds it difficult to transcend her 'personal' reactions against privileges and monopolies enjoyed by the other sex. Interpreted in terms of this latent feminism, her novels acquire a new coherence and significance.

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THE TWO POETS IN BROWNING'S *PARACELSUS*

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In the note at the end of *Paracelsus*, Browning writes:

> The liberties I have taken with my subject are very trifling, and the reader may slip the foregoing scenes between the leaves of any memoir of Paracelsus he pleases, by way of commentary.

From this statement one would infer that Browning, in his poetic treatment of his theme, adheres closely to his historical sources which deal with the achievements and failures of Paracelsus as a man of philosophy and medicine. But the fact is that the hero of the poem, as we find him and as we believe it to be quite in the fitness of things, has more affinities with his youthful creator—sharing his high hopes and ambitions in life—than with his original in history. Hall Griffin, dwelling at length upon some of these affinities, has rightly observed that 'the most important source of all is Robert Browning', and that '*Paracelsus* is a poetic commentary upon the facts of a life which he had sympathetically studied.' The purpose of this paper is to supplement what Hall Griffin has said in conclusion of his findings: it is to show that *Paracelsus* is equally a commentary upon the poet himself. In other words, Paracelsus, with all his grounding in history, is also a mouthpiece of the young poet's cogitations on his own art which he was still learning to master.

Most critics have regarded the poem as a dramatization of the renaissance and the romantic temper of infinite aspiration, linking it up with the various poetic treatments of the Faust and Prometheus legends. They have dwelt upon the contrast between Paracelsus the knower and Aprile the lover, as two variants of the same temper—as two extreme human attitudes which need to be harmonized in order to make for success in life. Although the validity of their observations can hardly be doubted, it may still be argued that the

two figures have more affinities than points of contrast and that they represent two poetic attitudes to life and art which at the outset seem to conflict but are at last found to complement and supplement each other.

Though treading their different paths, the two characters are conscious of their mutual affinities and common aims. In Book II, Aprile tells Paracelsus that he is 'dowered even as thou', and so wonders if the philosopher ever harboured any thought of envy towards him: 'My king! and envious thoughts could outrage thee?' (II. 1.612). And indeed Paracelsus has no reason to be envious of him:

> Degrade me after all,
> To an aspirant after fame, not truth—
> To all but envy of thy fate, be sure! (II. 370-2)

He even looks upon him, at first sight, as his superior when he asks:

> Art thou the sage, I only seemed to be
> Myself of after-time, my very self
> With sight a little clearer, strength more firm? (II. 347-9)

Aprile too, who like *Pauline's* poet-hero or the young Sordello in the early unreflective stage just sings with an impulse but without any central idea to guide him, hopes that with the maturity of mind in later life he will become a philosopher-poet, a seer, a prophet—what he believes his friend Paracelsus to be. But he recognizes the superiority of Paracelsus to himself not as a philosopher merely but as a poet too. This fact is proved when, having dilated upon his mighty ambition to try all the arts, he concludes:

> If thou hast ne'er
> Conceived this mighty aim, this full desire,
> Thou hast not passed my trial, and thou art
> No king of mine. (II. 487-90)

He presumes that the similarly gifted Paracelsus has not only set for himself identical aims, but also acquired a similar experience of the pursuit of art. And sincerely believing, as

he does, that Paracelsus is a fuller and a greater poet than he, he rightly calls him the king. Paracelsus is king in much the same sense in which the hero of *Sordello* in Book V (ll. 506-77) interprets the poet's claim to royalty. It is as a thinker that the poet inspires inferior men and deserves the homage of a mere singer like Aprile, 'Who is ordained to follow *in my* [Paracelsus's] track' (II. 365). Accordingly, Aprile hails him as 'dear master', 'Dear lord, Aprile's lord'.

That Paracelsus is a poet is further evidenced by the fact that on meeting him Aprile refers to his 'solemn songs', which he hopes

> would have their need
> In after time, that I should hear the earth
> Exult in thee and echo with thy praise,
> While I am laid forgotten in my grave. (*II. 360-3*)

Paracelsus is a poet of ideas like Sordello whose solemn songs may not be appreciated in his time by people, who, following Naddo and his tribe, demand poems of commonsense. Like Sordello, he 'precedes his age' in the realm of thought.

Furthermore, several times Aprile addresses Paracelsus as a poet, and asks him to sing (see II. ll. 373, 374, 378, 572 and 631). Paracelsus's merit as a poet is proved beyond any shadow of doubt in Book III when he sings two fine songs before Festus. In Book IV he himself admits: 'I make songs' (l. 226).

Indeed, we find that in the poem while Aprile is painted as a fashioner, as an objective poet, having his prototype in Eglamor of *Sordello*, Paracelsus is portrayed as a subjective or 'metaphysical' poet like Sordello. Aprile regards himself inferior to the poet-thinker, because he merely paints things without knowing their inner significance. But he erroneously thinks Paracelsus to be a perfect poet, for his friend has several shortcomings even as he himself has. Paracelsus is able to penetrate the depths of his own soul, but he is impervious to the 'still, sad music of humanity':

> Love, hope, fear, faith—these make humanity,
> These are its sign and note and character,
> And these I have lost. (III. 1028-30)

Domineering egotism and passion for fame account for his failure equally as for that of Sordello in the other poem. Both Aprile and Paracelsus fail, not because of any defect in their aims, but because of their half-assimilated sense of life.

As a subjective poet, Browning's Paracelsus prefigures his Sordello in several ways. In *Sordello*, we witness the transition of a poet from egotism to altruism. In *Paracelsus* too, the hero at last realizes the value of humanity and love and longs for a better and fuller life in which egotism and ambition are subordinated to deep human sympathies. These poems postulate Browning's theory of the possible fusion of the two kinds of poetic faculty—the subjective and the objective—'the two halves of one dissevered world', a theory which, stated more clearly a decade later in the *Essay on Shelley*, inspired him to develop his special technique of the dramatic monologue. Furthermore, through the failures of the two pairs of poets in these poems, Browning demonstrates the weaknesses of both pure poetry and functional poetry, and also anticipates his later theory of the 'oblique' method of teaching in art, which found expression in 'Transcendentalism', 'Fra Lippo Lippi' (ll. 319-22), *The Ring and the Book*, Book XII, ll. 837-63, and 'Of Pacchiarotto' (st. xxii).

That *Paracelsus* and *Sordello* occupied Browning's creative energies simultaneously for a while accounts for the numerous parallels, both conceptual and verbal, between the two poems. It also explains his treatment of the historical sources in *Paracelsus*. In *Sordello* Book V, he bases the poet's claim to royalty on his power of thinking in advance of his times, and treats the poet and the thinker as identical. It is small wonder therefore that in *Paracelsus* he projects his conception of the poet-thinker in the philosopher of history. Following the tradition, Browning no doubt introduces the hero as a seeker after absolute knowledge and as a great innovator in medicine, and meticulously heaps detail upon detail for the sake of verisimilitude and historical perspective, but as the story proceeds, we find that this aspect of his personality wears thin and is ultimately merged into the higher ideal of poet-hood. The earlier Paracelsus—an egotistic subjective poet, who is anxious to uplift humanity without himself coming down to the common level, learns his lesson from the fate of Aprile,

the objective poet, who pursues beauty for its own sake and fails for want of a central idea. Later on, he speaks of his own maturer self—the 'dear child of after days'—who will have been chastened by his early errors and who will no longer hate the past or his people, but will pursue his goal, motivated by Festus's idea of love—love which is 'strong from weakness' and which, being synonymous with deep human sympathy for the widest commonalty spread, conditions the birth of great art. Like Browning, in his dramatic monologues, he will now endeavour:

> To trace love's faint beginnings in mankind,
> To know even hate is but a mark of love's,
> To see a good in evil, and a hope
> In ill-success; to sympathize, be proud
> Of their half-reasons, faint aspirings, dim
> Struggles for truth, their poorest fallacies,
> Their prejudices and fears and cares and doubts;
> All with a touch of nobleness, despite
> Their error, upward tending all though weak. (Book V)

Paracelsus, thus viewed, presents Browning's ideal of poethood—of a complete human personality, harmonizing aesthetic and philosophical sensibilities.

D. H. LAWRENCE AND THE IMPRESSIONISTIC TECHNIQUE

By H. S. Saxena

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Painting in Europe, especially in France, had become the leading art in the second half of the nineteenth century and it has been correctly maintained that the great poets of this period were the impressionist painters.[1] It dominated all the other arts as the most progressive art of the age. In the first collective exhibition of the impressionist painters in 1874, a handful of geniuses displayed works of art, which could be placed beside the great literary works of the century. The main concern of these painters was to convey, with the utmost purity possible, their sensations of the external world as it appeared to them at the moment of experience, not allowing themselves to be disturbed by the knowledge of their permanent form and colour. They reacted against the superiority of the line and volume over sensation and saw their subjects differently from their predecessors—less in terms of the sharp outline and more in terms of the indeterminate mass that strikes the eye. It may be said that D. H. Lawrence extended this technique of the impressionist painters to the novel in his attempt to describe the subjective experience of his characters and their sensations in the presence of one another. He renders life exactly as he himself experiences it, not as it is experienced by the intellect or as it appears to the informed eye. In a letter to H. C., in 1909, Lawrence even admits an accusation of impressionism. 'Suddenly, in a world full of tones and tints and shadows I see a colour and it vibrates on my retina. I dip a brush in it and say, "See, that's the colour." '[2]

Lawrence was himself a painter and treated painting as a serious art medium, although it was suggested at one time that he began to paint towards the end of his career because paint was a better pornographic material than ink. His sister Ada mentions in her book *Young Lorenzo* that he began to paint when he was fifteen or sixteen, before he began to

write novels or articles. Painting was a happy relaxation to him. Lawrence's most important essay on the novel 'Morality and the Novel', begins with an example taken from a painter, not a novelist:

> The business of art is to reveal the relation between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment.... When Van Gogh paints sunflowers, he reveals, or achieves, the vivid relation between himself, as man, and the sunflower, as sunflower, at that quick moment of time.[3]

The hero of Lawrence's autobiographical novel is also interested in painting and discusses why one of his sketches is better than the other. 'It's because—it's because there is scarcely any shadow in it; it's more shimmery, as if I had painted the shimmering protoplasm in the leaves and everywhere, and not the stiffness of the shape. That seems dead to me. Only this shimmeriness is the real living. The shape is a dead crust. The shimmer is inside really.'[4] Lawrence's characters also have no clear outlines and are wavering and blurred in their relationship with each other, which is never governed by simple logic. Observing how one colour melted into another in nature, Manet declared 'there are no lines in nature' and in his pictures he abandoned the convention of the outline and shaped his forms by a modelling obtained by a subtle gradation of tints which fused into one another. Lawrence's characters can be compared to the bottles in Manet's famous picture 'A bar at the Folies-Bergere'. All the bottles in this picture are seen simultaneously in relation to each other: it is a synthesis not an addition. The conventional technique would have been to look at each bottle, glass, flower or fruit separately on the canvas—sometimes risking the honey while attempting to preserve the wax. 'Everything in this world is relative to everything else. And every living thing is related to every other living thing.'[5] So wrote Lawrence in one of his essays and all his writings confirm this statement. When Jack Grant rides after the kangaroo in *The Boy in the Bush*, one has the feeling that something in the landscape has passed into him, and something of him has passed into the landscape. The opening passages of *The*

Rainbow provide a general account of the Brangwen family in their relation to surroundings:

> They felt the rush of the sap in spring, they knew the wave which cannot halt, but every year throws forward the seed to begetting, and, falling back, leaves the young-born on the earth. They knew the intercourse between heaven and earth, sunshine drawn into the breast and bowels, the rain sucked up in the daytime, nakedness that comes under the wind in autumn, showing the birds' nests no longer worth hiding. Their life inter-relations were such; feeling the pulse and body of the soil, that opened to their furrow for the grain, and became smooth and supple after their ploughing, and clung to their feet with a weight that pulled like desire, lying hard and unresponsive when the crops were to be shorn away. The young corn waved and was silken, and the lustre slid along the limbs of the men who saw it. They took the udder of the cows, the cows yielded milk and pulse against the hands of the men, the pulse of the blood of the teats of the cows beat into the hands of the men.[6]

Lawrence's landscapes too, like the impressionist pictures, are not visually clear but are peculiarly radiant and full. Here is a shimmering passage from *The Trespasser*—Lawrence's second novel, remarkable for the descriptions of the Isle of Wight whose natural beauties impress themselves deeply on the main characters:

> He looked round, and the sea was blue as a periwinkle flower, while gold and white and blood-red sails lit here and there upon the blueness. Standing on the deck, he gave himself to the breeze and to the sea, feeling like one of the ruddy sails —as if he were part of it all. All his body radiated amid the large, magnificent sea-moon like a piece of colour.[7]

The play of reflected light and illuminated shadows is an important feature of impressionist pictures. The opening lines of Lawrence's first published short story, *A Prelude* (1907), illustrate how 'the tones and tints and shadows' vibrated on his retina:

> In the kitchen of a small farm a little woman sat cutting bread and butter. The glow of the clear, ruddy fire was on her shin-

ing cheek and white apron; but grey hair will not take the warm caress of firelight.[8]

Other characteristics of the impressionistic technique are a rapid and rough sketching, and loose and abrupt strokes of the bursh. Impressionist painting also has a quality which makes it appear instinctive—a rendering due to the inspiration of the moment rather than to conscious planning or forethought. This kind of planning was alien to Lawrence's temperament, who wrote by inspiration, 'as though possessed by a deamon'.[9] Virginia Woolf also believes that 'One never catches Lawrence—this is one of his most remarkable qualities—"arranging". Words, scenes flow as fast and direct as he merely traced them with a free rapid hand on sheet after sheet. Not a sentence seems thought about twice; not a word added for its effect on the architecture of the phrase.'[10] A passage from the journals of Arnold Bennett will help to bring out the difference between the two techniques:

> Yesterday I finished making a list of all social, political and artistic events, which I thought possibly useful for my novel between 1872 and 1882. Tedious bore, for a trifling ultimate result in the book. But necessary.[11]

Bennett considered this planning necessary, but even he was not blind to the new technique:

> We went to Paris on Friday for a dinner at Roy Devereux's. I bought Octave Mirabeau's *La 628-E8*, and read it with immense gusto. It reinforced the impression that has been growing on me for some time that I waste a vast lot of ideas and impressions because I have not *quite* got the trick of throwing them into form instantly and of intensifying them to a degree sufficiently poetical. If I forced myself to exert the necessary energy and skill for a short time I should arrive at it.
>
> Both Taine's various travels and his book of Mirabeau's are nothing but impressions simply *patched* together; and much of their charm and verity lies in that. I made the experiment on returning from Paris yesterday of writing my sensations of the morning. I did about 1,000 words, of *heightened* stuff in about 40 minutes, and thought it pretty good. But it must be dashed down, written with the utmost possible rapidity. Therefore I

> fear I should have to abandon this format of page and this handwriting for something larger and more cursive. And this I should regret.[12]

Bennett's mistake was to think that impressions can be fully conveyed merely by an efficient inventory of details. A clever photograph of a chameleon only shows the irrelevant minute details in sharp and clever outline, but it does not give us any idea of its power of changing its colour rapidly according to its surroundings. Lawrence's characters, in the same way, can only be understood in relation to their environments. They have a kind of mysterious awareness of one another, and currents of understanding pass between them even when they do not speak a single word. The word 'aware' repeats itself too often. Numerous examples can be cited:

> He had the quality of a young black cat, intent, unnoticeable, and yet his presence gradually made himself felt, stealthily and powerfully took hold of her. He called not to her, but to something in her, which responded subtly, out of her unconscious darkness.[13]

> In the Empire one evening he sat next to two girls. He was *aware* of the one beside him.[14]

> He talked to her, but with a little indifference, since he was scarcely *aware* of her.[15]

> And he remained wrathful and distinct from her, unchanged outwardly to her, but underneath a solid power of antagonism to her of which she became gradually *aware*. And it irritated her to be made *aware* of him as a separate power. . . . He walked about for days stiffened with resistance to her, stiff with a will to destroy her as she was. Then suddenly out of nowhere, there was connection between them again. It came on him as he was working in the fields. The tension, the bond, burst, and the passionate flood broke forward into a tremendous, magnificent rush, so that he felt he could snap off the trees as he passed, and create the world afresh.[16]

Lawrence does not dissect or explain sensation but tries to render it whole and pure. What his characters do or say or feel can never be analyzed in logical terms. For example, in *The Rainbow*, when Anna's father tells her that William

Brangwen is coming to church with her, 'Anna glanced at the strange youth again. She felt him waiting there for her to notice him. He was hovering on the edge of her consciousness, ready to come in. She did not want to look at him. She was antagonistic to him.'[17] Lawrence does not care to explain why she was antagonistic. He once told Earl Brewster that 'it is not the incidents which befall a character that are important but what the character is.'[18] He felt that a catalogue of externals will not render the essential, inner truth and adopted new methods to project his spontaneous sensory impressions. The following lines are also typical of Lawrence—'Still she set towards him like a quivering needle. All her life was directed by her *awareness* of him, her wakefulness to his being. And she was against her mother.'[19] The reason of this dislike is again not explained. In the first chapter of *Sons and Lovers*, Gertrude Coppard meets Walter Morel, the miner from Erewash valley, and '... the dusky, golden softness of this man's sensuous flame of life, that flowed off his flesh like the flame of a candle, not baffled but gripped into incandescence by thought and spirit as her life was, seemed to her something wonderful, beyond her.'[20] It may be said, borrowing Lawrence's own metaphor in the above passage, that he tries to render the actual feel of life, the flame for ever flowing, rather than the shape and composition of the candle.

It has been observed that Lawrence was, like Hardy and Bennett, a close observer of life and possessed the Dickensian faculty of creating unforgettable characters. If he had liked 'he might have been a new kind of Dickens of the Midlands.'[21] But even at his most objective Lawrence was never content merely to observe. His characters, with very few exceptions, are mere bundles of instincts with hardly any distinct shapes. They have been compared to various wireless stations. Each receives and transmits waves of electrical energy and differs from others chiefly in respect of its wave-length. Lawrence himself explains this in his *Fantasia of the Unconscious*:

> The connection is as direct and as subtle as between the Marconi stations. A family, if you like, is a group of wireless stations, all adjusted to the same, or very much the same

> vibration. All the time they quiver with the interchange, there is one long endless flow of vitalistic communication between members of one family, a long strange *rapport*, a sort of life-unison. It is a ripple of life through many bodies as though one body.[22]

Lawrence's problem as a novelist was to render this 'endless flow of vitalistic communication' by translating into language, the drama of instincts. He was able to do this by adopting a peculiar style—a style which does not render things so much as the *feeling* of things. Certain words repeat themselves too often. The words 'dark' and 'black', for instance, occur in every page of *The Rainbow* and sometimes carry the impact of a fully realized symbol. Another favourite word seems to be 'electric'. This is how the sensations of a man who has been robbed are described:

> As he was going home, suddenly, just as he was passing the Bargelle, he stopped. He stopped and put his hand to his breast pocket.... It was as if lightning ran through him at that moment, as if a fluid *electricity* rushed down his limbs, through the sluice of his knee and out of his feet, leaving him standing there almost unconscious.... Feeling quite weak and faint, as if he had really been struck by evil *electric* fluid, he walked on.[23]

The following passages, each from *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, describe the sensations of lovers in similar language. They also illustrate Lawrence's habit of not concentrating on the mere externals of human behaviour:

> She turned on him blindly and destructively and he became a mad creature, black and *electric* with fury. The dark storms rose in him, his eyes glowed black and evil, he was fiendish in his thwarted soul.[24]

> ... and a living fire ran through her, from him darkly. It was a dark flood of *electric* passion she released from him, drew into herself. She had established a rich new circuit, a new current of passional energy between the two of them, released from the darkest poles of the body and established in perfect circuit. It was a dark fire of *electricity* that rushed from him to her, and flooded them both with rich satisfaction.[25]

As is evident from these lines, Lawrence does not present any intellectual analysis or literal reproduction of surfaces. A subtle evocation of atmosphere is substituted for 'an enormous stress upon the fabric of things.'[26] This involves a series of reductions and simplifications, and is in a way responsible for the elimination of a conventional plot. The novels of D. H. Lawrence may contain a 'thousand elementary faults'[27] but they present men and women in their true relation with their circumambient universe. This may be considered the chief contribution of Lawrence when the dust generated by virulent denunciation and equally passionate defence has settled down.

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BOOK REVIEWS

JOYCEANA: CRITIQUES, CRITICISM AND AESTHETICS

Bergson and the Stream of Consciousness Novel, by Shiv K. Kumar, Ph.D. (Cantab.), Blackie & Son, London, 1962, pp. 174, 18s. 6d. net.

Joyce's Portrait: Criticism & Critiques, ed. Thomas E. Connolly, The University of Buffalo, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1962, pp. 335, $ 2.40 (Paperback).

Portraits of an Artist: A Casebook on James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, ed. William F. Morris and Clifford A. Nault Jr., The Odyssey Press Inc., New York, pp. 298 (Paperback). Price not mentioned.

Indian Inspiration of James Joyce, by B. P. Misra, M.A., Ph.D. (Dublin), Distributors: Gaya Prasad & Sons, Booksellers and Publishers, Agra, pp. 60, Rs. 4/-.

HENRY JAMES, in his progress towards an *art of the novel*, did not live to write the last and the concluding chapter. It was James Joyce who did that. Henry James insisted that the novel must be written by a writer who has a sense of reality and an exceptionally broad mind. 'Humanity is immense, and reality has a myriad forms', he said. A novelist must write from experience. Experience is never limited and it is never complete. If one must write from experience one must also remember that a work of art is in essence a seed. The novelist must learn to grow the seed. Form in a work of fiction is like the form in a flower. The novelist must allow the seed to blossom according to its own natural and innate law into characters and incidents.

James Joyce arrived on the novelistic scene rather late. He arrived with a big horse-drawn cart, as it were, and dumped a huge quantity of the raw material of life in the middle of

the highway of modern fiction. His apearance was sudden, at least, so it seemed at that time. To some he was shockingly pedestrian and commonplace, vulgar even. But nobody could think of a possible connexion between the pile of garbage (that is what it was called in the beginning) so unceremoniously dumped on the highroad and the softly-lighted and heavily-curtained correct drawing-rooms of Henry James. But if this connexion went unnoticed it was surely not the fault of Joyce.

James Joyce was indeed one of the greatest experimenters. But he was an experimenter in the best English tradition. Like James he remained, to the last day of his life, preoccupied with the technique, the form, the style and the medium of fictional articulation. As a self-conscious and dedicated literary artist he endeavoured to confer upon language a complete autonomy and create a verbal vision of life that cuts across both time and space. He worked steadily and worked for a long period. He was hardworking and conscientious to a degree. From the simple and poetic stories of *Dubliners* to the near-mystic and polyphonic *Finnegans Wake* is indeed a far cry. But to ignore the definite progression in the Joycean technique that this passage indicates would indeed mean critical bankruptcy.

Of late, serious scholars in India and abroad have started paying James Joyce the critical attention he so unavoidably deserves. The four volumes under review bear an eloquent testimony to this reawakened interest in the Joycean method and technique of fictional writing. This is without doubt an extremely healthy sign. Dr. Shiv K. Kumar of Osmania University, Hyderabad, India, has indeed made a significant contribution to the study of what may be called the roots and essentials of fictional articulation vis-à-vis the technique of the stream of consciousness. Dr. Kumar takes his stand on Bergsonian aesthetics and spares no pains in quoting the relevant verses and chapters from Bergson himself. He endeavours to establish the Bergsonian canon. He does not however try to establish Bergson's 'direct influence on the novelist I discuss; I am rather concerned to bring out the *parallelism* between the notion of the stream of consciousness

as it appears in these novelists and the Bergsonian concept of flux.' (p. viii). Dr. Kumar's study is divided into five distinct chapters, of which the chapter entitled *Bergson's Theory of the Novel*, is easily the most illuminating. In fact in this chapter is to be found the central thesis of this study. The *Introductory* chapter is also well-written and it endeavours to give readers a clear indication as to how to proceed along the path which is literally cluttered with all kinds of theories, critiques and criticisms, some brilliant no doubt, but many unfortunately nothing more than certain pet hypotheses and recalcitrant data put into their progenitors' favourite moulds. This is probably as it should be—because the subject is difficult and any early formulation of a literary or technical theory cannot but be tendentious and one-sided. But it must be said to the credit of Dr. Kumar that he has not allowed the stupendous mass of available theories to side-track him from his chosen path. Bergson's basic concept of *durational flux*, Dr. Kumar contends and succeeds in proving, has left a profound impress on most of the significant novelists of our time, namely, Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf.

Dr. Shiv K. Kumar writes with scholastic detachment even when he has a point to make. What is more, he often makes it. He has also packed into this rather slender volume a large amount of source and primary materials, which would be of great help to scholars in India who do not have easy access to the libraries and MSS-collections in Europe and the U.S.A. Dr. Kumar's study is a definite contribution to the Joycean cause and a fillip to its proper study. Dr. Kumar evidently knows as much about this subject as anybody else in this country and elsewhere. The publishers are also to be congratulated on their neat and faultless production of the book.

The second volume, *Joyce's Portrait: Criticism & Critiques*, by Professor Thomas E. Connolly of the University of Buffalo, U.S.A., is also proof positive of the great interest evinced by scholars and general readers in things Joycean in the States and elsewhere. The present volume is 'designed as a companion to the novel for all readers, both academic and

non-academic' and Professor Connolly has tried to present in a handy format some of the most significant critical essays on James Joyce and particularly on Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The book is divided into four main parts: (1) *General Studies*, containing three essays by Harry Levin, Hugh Kenner and Dorothy Van Ghent. (2) *Special Studies*, containing essays by Joseph Prescott, Richard Ellman, Grant H. Redford, Eugene M. Waith, C. G. Anderson, Caroline Gordon, Jane H. Jack and Barbara Seward. (3) *The Aesthetic Theory*, containing essays by A. D. Hope, Irene Hendry Chayes, Geddies MacGregor, Haskell M. Block, H. M. McLuhan, Thomas E. Connolly, Maurice Beebe and J. Mitchel Morse. (4) *Appendices*, containing essays by Dorothy Van Ghent and Peter Spielburg. The volume contains besides these main sections an extremely useful *Bibliography*.

It would not be out of place to mention that though the present volume follows, more or less, the pattern set by that earlier collection of critical studies entitled *James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism* (New York, Vanguard Press, 1948), it marks an improvement as well by both enlarging the scope and by including some of the most recent writings from the pages of periodicals. The Editor has done a neat job of it and placed all Joyce-lovers in gratitude to him.

Now about some of the essays in this volume. Of course, Harry Levin's *The Artist*, Hugh Kenner's *The Portrait in Perspective* and Dorothy Van Ghent's *On A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, are all well-known masterpieces. Of the rest, the following which are not so well-known or easily available, G. H. Redford's *The Role of Structure in Joyce's Portrait*, Jane H. Jack's *Art and A Portrait of the Artist*, A. D. Hope's *The Esthetic Theory of James Joyce*, Irene H. Chayes's *Joyce's Epiphanies* and Maurice Beebe's *Joyce and Aquinas: The Theory of Aesthetics*, need special mention. These latter would be of particular interest to scholars trying to untie the knotty problems of Joycean aesthetics and technique.

I am sorry I cannot be half as enthusiastic about *Portraits of an Artist: A Casebook on James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, as about the previous volumes. The editors were apparently prompted to compile the present 'Casebook'

on Joyce with an eye to the needs of undergraduates in the U.S.A. The word 'Casebook' has a clinical or rather psychopathological ring about it and does not seem to be a very happy nomenclature for what is intended to be a 'note-book'. The editors are very clear about their intentions—they want this volume to be 'not a susbtitute for teaching but a supplement to it.' We should leave it at that.

The volume however contains some of the most important critical essays on James Joyce's *Portrait* arranged in a very cleverly graded and graduated manner. This is sure to be extremely helpful to a newcomer to Joyce. Joyce to an undergraduate is bound to be tough and even baffling. This compilation will help him to solve some of the formidable complexities of Joyce's method and manner of writing and at the same time it will enable him to understand Joyce better. This compilation is not just a collection of critical essays—it is as I have noted before, a guide-book to Joyce written specifically to drill the undergraduate in a particular manner so that he can both understand and enjoy this masterpiece by Joyce. Special mention should be made of excerpts from the writings of the following authors: William Powell Jones, Edward Garnett, Theodore Spencer, Shiv K. Kumar and Melvin Friedman (some essays included by Professor Connolly in his collection are also to be found in this volume). Part VIII of the book entitled *Aids and Suggestions* will be of particular interest to students everywhere.

Dr. B. P. Misra's little brochure on *Indian Inspiration of James Joyce* certainly tries to focus our attention to a rather neglected aspect of the Joycean tangle. But there is very little in what he says which can be called *new* excepting in the matter of details. Dr. Misra, it appears to me, has made rather a half-hearted attempt. His tone too is half-apologetic. There is no need for it. I for one would expect Dr. Misra to launch a full-scale and frontal attack on this subject. Joyce certainly was influenced by Indian philosophy—I do not think any serious student of Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* would challenge this statement. What is needed, however, is a book—a real research document—that can point out in concrete terms the nature, scope, and extent of this 'inspiration'.

I must congratulate Dr. Misra for what he has done, but I shall look forward to something far more elaborate and whole-hearted than is to be found in this rather clumsily produced and badly printed brochure.

Calcutta SISIR CHATTERJEE

W. B. YEATS: HIS POETRY AND THOUGHT

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W. B. Yeats, 1865-1939, by Joseph Hone, pp. ix+504, Macmillan & Co., London, second edition, 1962, 30 sh.

Poems of W. B. Yeats, selected with an introduction and notes by A. Norman Jeffares, pp. xxii+261, Macmillan & Co., London, 7 sh. 6 d.

The fascination that Yeats's poetry exercises on the Indian mind cannot be attributed solely to the fact that the poet was himself attracted to Indian thought and belief. 'I have fed upon the philosophy of the *Upanishads* all my life,' said Yeats (*See* Joseph Hone, *W. B. Yeats*, p. 459) but he refused to concur with his Indian visitor's opinion that India's problem 'is not so much to get into conflicts as to get out of them.' Yeats theatrically insisted on antinomies, 'took up Sato's sword, and unsheathed it dramatically and shouted, "Conflict, more conflict."' His was the desire for that much-pervasive paradox of life of which an instance was 'a girl that knew all Dante once' bearing children to a dunce. He found tragedy absent in Indian poetry, a grievous absence from his point of view, since, as he said, 'nothing matters except the heroic mind', and the heroic mind expresses itself most adequately in tragedy. Yeats, one fears, had the mis-

fortune of approaching Indian values by the side door of religious mysticism rather than the *buland-darwaza* (the grand gateway) of the Indian epics. Mohini Chatterjee and Purohit Swami concentrated on *yoga* and quiescence; Tagore's multi-dimensional vitality was reduced for Yeats (as the introduction to *Gītānjali* shows) to a single dimension, that of the meditative mystic in his gentle hermitage. No wonder then that his resilient personality which, granted 'an old man's frenzy', would fret against what he conceived to be the central Indian attitude to life and must remake itself once again, even as it had remade itself several times in the past, through the tension of contrary values. Had not his own early attraction for esoteric Christianity confined him to esoteric Hinduism, had he allowed his natural poetic response to things free play by passing beyond Theosophist interpretations of Patanjali to the Indian epic, the *Mahābhārata*, he would have found abundant illustrations of his heroic-tragic view of life there, found men and women comparable to Cuchulain and Emer and Oisin and Conchubar and Deirdre. Rejecting *yogic* quiescence and monism, if Yeats still returned again and again to Indian thought with a frequency and ardour that we do not find in his devotion to any other non-Irish thought, could it have been on account of some abysmal antinomy, some magnetic lure of opposites, within Yeats's own personality, or was there somewhere an unacknowledged affinity with what he sometimes derided—the soul at the still point?

So much for Yeats. What about the countless Indian scholars and writers and general readers for whom the appeal of Yeats is irresistible? I myself know of some ten Indian scholars, beginning from Dr. A. C. Bose (whose meeting with Yeats is described by Hone) and Dr. Narayana Menon, who have done their doctoral theses on Yeats; the finest Bengali poet of the post-Tagorean generation, the late Jivanananda Das, found a kindred spirit in Yeats. It is not difficult for the perceptive Indian reader to discover affinities between his own tradition and the Irish. I do not refer merely to the fact that from 1905 onwards the Indian terrorist drew nourishment from the exploits of the Irish Revolutionaries so that such names as Griffiths, Collins and MacSwinney came to be as well-known in India as Khudiram, Bhagat Singh

and Benoy Bose. There are more undefinable yet powerful parallels of outlook and habits between the Irish peasantry and the Indian, the Irish landed gentry and the Indian. And there is a deep and vivid interrelation in the folk-cultures of both countries, between myth and legends on the one hand and the objective reality on the other. If, as Yeats says (*Later Poems*, Macmillan ed., 1922, p. 355), the gods of ancient Ireland, the Tuatha De Danaan, the Sidhe, still ride the country as of old, the Indian (nurtured on rural beliefs) would not be surprised. In a letter to *The Outlook* (16 April 1898), Yeats wrote: 'The Irish peasant has invented, or somebody has invented for him, a vague, though not altogether unphilosophical, reconciliation between his Paganism and his Christianity.' This is a perfectly understandable proposition in a tradition like ours where monistic metaphysics and rarefied ethics have continually compromised with popular, tribal and local beliefs and practices thus evolving that amorphous entity called Hinduism. The dream that Willie Yeats and Maud Gonne dreamt (vide *Scattering Branches*, ed. Stephen Gwynn, 1940, p. 23), the dream of a Castle of the Heroes, would not be unintelligible to the Indian mind. Irish legends retold by Standish O'Grady and Lady Gregory have their counterparts in Indian folklore. The Playboy of the Western World has an opposite number in the Eastern. With all their hard-headed realism, the Irish peasant as well as the Indian can glide in a moment from the phenomenal world to the world of imagination.

This is rather a lengthy preamble for a review-article, but it has to have at least this length because I consider Yeats's life-long concern with Indian thought central to his own thoughts, whether as affinity or polarity. It seems to me notable that each one of his three important Indian contacts —with the Theosophist-Vedantist Mohini Chatterjee in the eighteen-eighties, with the humanist Rabindranath Tagore before the first World War, with the *sannyasi* Shri Purohit Swami in the nineteen-thirties—signified each time a spiritual churning before the onset of a new phase of his poetry. 'His mind was full of Asia,' says Joseph Hone (*W. B. Yeats*, p. 444) and it should be worth while for some Indian scholar to examine how much and how significantly the poet's mind

was full of Asia. I understand that a scholar from Allahabad worked in Cambridge and another gentleman from East Pakistan worked in Nottingham on Yeats's Irish background, but, to the best of my knowledge, their findings have not yet been published. An Indian scholar working in India might, for example, look into Mohini Chatterjee's papers and his considerable book-collection which have been carefully preserved by his son in his Calcutta home; the son's reminiscences published about two years ago in the Bengali weekly, *Desh*, offer some useful information on the friendship between Chatterjee and Yeats. Fact-finding scholarship, one may venture to suggest, is no unworthy facet of academic criticism; on the contrary, it can serve as a ballast to cloistered criticism. Professor Stock who has lived in India for years and worked on her study of Yeats mainly, I presume, in Calcutta, is aware of the problem of India's significance for Yeats and finds the poet rejecting what she considers to be the Indian attitude to life. That may very well have been the case. Influence-hunting is a tricky business in literary criticism and it would be wild to hold that Eliot is a Hindu because he has used the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* in his poetry or that Tagore derived his humanism from Amiel and Lowes Dickinson. That Yeats had a sufficient fund of intellectual and spiritual authority nearer home in Ireland and in Western Europe generally and need not have accepted alien thought is an entirely plausible hypothesis and, I think, Miss Stock justly emphasizes Yeats's Irishism. Earlier writers on Yeats too have done so and one remembers the opening sentence of F. R. Higgins's essay in *Scattering Branches*: 'Ireland was the moulder of Yeats's mind, as it eventually became the sounding-board for most of his verse and great stimulating impact on his life.' I suspect however that Professor Stock's notion of the Indian attitude to life (if at all it be possible to pin-point a single Indian attitude to life) is inadequate and even unfair. To make my point clear, let me quote a paragraph from her book.

> One thing Yeats certainly believed was that the source of all things is in mind, that human minds are in some way a part of that source and the world they look out on in some way an

> emanation or reflection of it. He believed in consequence that the mind, turned away from the phenomenal world, might have more direct access to ultimate reality and thence even a reinforced power over the phenomenal world itself. For this world, in its relation to reality, was what ultimately interested him: he was not disposed to cry 'Om! Om!' and let the world go to blazes. (p. 149)

In the first two sentences above, Miss Stock has stated Yeats's belief, a belief that would surprise no Indian. To cite an instance out of many, King Janaka turned away from the phenomenal world and thereby attained a reinforced power over that very world. The second part of the last sentence however is not an objective statement or a statement relating to Yeats but is Miss Stock's comment on the supposed Indian practice of uttering 'Om! Om!' heedless of what happens to the material world. If I have some understanding of English which is not my own language, the phrase 'go to blazes' implies a tone of denigration, a tone that is unwarranted and irrelevant in the context of the use of 'Om'—believed by Indians to be the primal sound mystically identifiable with the Ultimate—of which the meaning has eluded Miss Stock. I am therefore doubtful of her understanding of Indian thought and therefore also of her interpretation of India's significance for Yeats. My doubt deepens when I read the following sentence:

> 'The old, confident, joyous world' is not the Brahmin's vision of deliverance; but if there is one enduring faith that runs through Yeats's work from first to last, it is this poetic joy in the world and in the very act of living. (p. 82)

I am not sure whether the statement of the first clause expresses Miss Stock's view or Yeats's; I have not been able to trace it to the poet. In any case, of the innumerable expressions in Indian literature of the joy of life, of joy as the all-entwining principle of life and of creative life too, I shall refer to only two passages. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* (III/6) says, "Ānando Brahmeti vyajānāt; ānandādhyeva khalvimāni bhutāni jāyante; ānandena jātāni jivanti; ānandam prayanti abhisambishanti" (He knew that ānandam, Joy, is

the *Brahman;* from Joy are born all living things, by Joy they are nourished, towards Joy they move and in Joy they are absorbed.) And one of the best-known songs of Tagore (one of several hundreds on similar themes) begins thus: "Tār anta nāi go je ānande garā āmār anga/Tār anu-paramānu pela kata ālor sanga". (There is no limit to the Joy of which these limbs are made; its atoms and molecules have found the company of innumerable pencils of light; O, there's no limit, no limit to this Joy!) The old, confident joyous world is the foundation of countless songs and poems of medieval saints of this country, of our folk-poems and ballads, all, in the last analysis, emanating from the Upanishadic spirit of Joy in the widest commonalty spread.

If Professor Stock is aware of the problem of India's significance for Yeats, Dr. Chatterjee is just not interested in it although in the preface he states that one of the two chief aims of his book is to show the development of Yeats's mind and art. Lest however my plea for an examination by an Indian scholar of the Indian element of Yeats's mind and art should be felt to be too much of a bee in my bonnet, let me point out that in his concentration on verbal analysis, Dr. Chatterjee has left unexamined quite a few other aspects of Yeats's mind directly related to the aims of this book. Thus, while he rightly says that 'no study of Yeats's life and personality would be complete without a reference to his critical ideas and views on poetry', he gives us no more than a two-page long bald reference, overlooking the relevant essays of *Ideas of Good and Evil*, and the correspondences with Lady Dorothy Wellesley, Sturge Moore, Florence Farr and Bernard Shaw. All these are primary materials for research. Again, his pages trying 'to explain at the beginning what we mean by symbolism and symbolist poetry', fail to satisfy. The authorities to whom Dr. Chatterjee looks up in his search for a definition of symbolism—Arthur Symons, Edmund Wilson, C. M. Bowra and Cecil Day Lewis—do not carry half as much weight in regard to this subject as Coleridge (who never figures even once in this book), Whitehead (mentioned once in another context), Urban, Cassirer and Maritain. Apart from this, I find Dr. Chatterjee's treatment of the subject

unsatisfactory in another respect. He is too preoccupied with the French Symbolists to spare any thought for Blake in this context although Yeats started on the symbolist track with Spenser and Shelley as guides and presently passed on to Blake whose influence more than any one else's moulded his symbolism. The introduction to Blake that Yeats had received in early life from his father, grew in the nineties through his association with Edwin J. Ellis (the complete Blakeite) and the Linnells, his discovery of the Mss of 'Vala', and finally, his production (with Ellis as the collaborator) of a three-volume edition of Blake on which Geoffrey Keynes's authoritative opinion is that 'the chief value of these volumes lies in the interpretation of the symbolism.' Yeats's explorings in the ideas of Boehme and Swedenborg owed their impetus in no small measure to his readings in Blake. Blake rather than the French Symbolists is the archetype for Yeatsian symbolism.

Dr. Chatterjee and Professor Stock adopt more or less the same method of organizing their material: a chronological survey of Yeats's works and analyses of selected poems, emerging through the survey and the analyses to a patterned judgment. Both of them, restricting their scope to the poems only, have left untouched *The Shadowy Waters* and *Deirdre* and the later verse-plays. Neither of them has explored any new historical or biographical or bibliographical material; both of them aim at explicatory and interpretative criticism and there again, their assessment of the achievement of the poet is nothing unusual or unexpected. In a limited way, perhaps the two books are complementary. The student or the general reader launched on a study of Yeats's poetry will find Professor Stock's book primarily concerned with the poet's thought and Dr. Chatterjee's book with verbal artistry. Dr. Chatterjee's enthusiasm for his hero is infectious although he does less than justice to Walter de la Mare, A.E., Eliot and Auden when he compares them with his poet. His comparison of Yeats with the Decadents is forceful and suggestive; his comparative study of the early and later styles would reinforce the empirical observations of the general reader; he is among the few writers on Yeats who have recognized the importance of the ballads. The explicatory comments on some poems—particularly on 'Upon a House Shaken by the

Land Agitation', 'The Peacock', 'The Magi', 'The Cold Heaven', 'No Second Troy', 'The Tower', 'Veronica's Napkin' and 'The Second Coming'—can sharpen one's response to these poems. The Appendix called 'Visions and Revisions' (a journalese alliteration) could have been exciting and rewarding by being more detailed and exact. Though committed to the examination of Yeats's craftsmanship, Dr. Chatterjee does not make use of Alspach and Allt's *Variorum Yeats*. He says that the Ms. of this book was prepared in 1951-53, but the book itself has come out in 1962, leaving him plenty of time for consulting and exploiting the Variorum. His view of the Yeatsian poetic process is particularly remarkable when he says (p. 22 and elsewhere) that in spite of the complexity of the thought-pattern of the later poetry, the prevailing impression is not one of harmony and fulfilment but of an unsolved antinomy out of which a tragic vision emerges. Dr. Chatterjee thinks that Yeats's greatness as a poet does not lie in his ideas but in the novelty and complexity of his image-patterns (p. 99). To this downright assertion we may contrapose Professor Stock's wise statements:

> They [Yeats's beliefs] do not matter, only in the sense that the reader need not mistake Yeats's faith for his own. The poetry would be impossible without them, and in themselves they are neither incoherent nor ignoble nor weak nor indifferent to the heritage of the race. (p. 241)
>
> Although one need not share a poet's beliefs to enjoy his poetry, the enjoyment is marred if the poet himself is suspected of shamming. (p. 190)

And Professor Stock's standpoint is confirmed by the poet's own statement: 'My belief must go into what I write, even if I estrange friends' (Hone, *Yeats*, p. 471). The main endeavour of Professor Stock is so to co-ordinate, explain, analyze and evaluate Yeats's ideas as to render them quite understandable and perhaps also (at least to some) acceptable. According to her the continuous theme of Yeats is a wrestling-match between the soul in eternity and the soul in time (a duality that Dr. Chatterjee too has insisted on), or the self or the heart as the poet variously calls it (p. 201). To elucidate this continuous theme, she sets about presenting the ideas in *A*

Vision in an orderly fashion. To my mind, her two chapters on *A Vision* are indispensable to a steady understanding of a book about which contrary opinions abound but without understanding which one is always conscious of uneasy lacunae in one's response to the poems. The ideas of *A Vision* are also skilfully related to the ideas of a number of poems.

Professor Stock's wise and perceptive response to Yeats's poetry comes out in a number of aphoristic statements such as the following: Action is the soul of legend as it is of drama (p. 21); To interpret life through myth one must find life as significant as myth, (p. 31); If a man is to write greatly he must believe that greatness is real, or realizable, outside his writings (p. 76); It was his luck, or his talent, to dream of fine things and then wake and discover them (p. 99); A philosophic synthesis cannot be faked and foisted on men whose actual values it does not fit (p. 161); To call Yeats a great poet is no longer daring, but the word needs explanation when it is used of a near-contemporary who has not yet had his *chance of oblivion* (p. 237, italics mine). Literary criticism of the poetry of wisdom has been in this instance transmuted into personal wisdom.

Joseph Hone's biography of Yeats, first published in 1943, was long out of print and has now appeared in a second edition which, as far as I can see, is virtually a reprint of the first except for a brief epilogue which describes the bringing back of the poet's body in September 1948 from Roquebrune to Drumcliffe. For years our only source for the poet's biography, Hone's book is still useful and therefore the second edition is to be welcomed.

Poems of W. B. Yeats, selected with an Introduction and Notes by Dr. A. N. Jeffares for Macmillan's Scholar's Library series, makes it possible for the Boards of Studies in English of Indian universities to have at last a satisfactory edition for use in the class-room. The poems selected are such as can bring the student in touch with the best of Yeats's poetry and yet encourage him to read and discover more on his own; the Introduction briefly, but competently sketches the course of Yeats's life and works; the Notes are useful and

stimulating, clearing up allusions, referring to suggestive and significant opinions of other critics, and commenting upon central ideas and symbols. Thus, the Notes to 'The Fascination of What's Difficult' and 'Upon a House Shaken by the Land Agitation' (to cite only two examples) quote the prose drafts and a reader seeking, as Dr. Chatterjee seeks, to examine the poet's craftsmanship, can and must compare the prose draft with the artefact. Occasionally, an odd piece of information, not accessible to us in India an perhaps not also to others, illuminates an obscure allusion: thus, it is interesting to learn (p. 221) that the Gonnes' cat was called Minnaloushe, so that the poem 'The Cat and the Moon' becomes more intelligible than before. Being told (p. 239) that at the time the poem 'Blood and the Moon' was composed, the top room of Thoor Ballylee was unfinished and, presently, concrete was substituted for an ornate roof, we find the difficulty in understanding the opening lines of the poem removed. The meaning of symbols is deftly suggested, for instance, in the Notes to 'The Four Ages of Man' (250) and 'The Second Coming' (225). This is an admirable edition indeed.

A. Bose

Calcutta

Indian Writing in English by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, pp. xi+440, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1962.

This is an admirable introduction to that literary development which has been variously named as 'Anglo-Indian', 'Indo-Anglian', and 'Indo-English', without the battle of names being quite fought out. It incorporates a course of lectures which Professor Iyengar gave in January-March 1958 at the invitation of the University of Leeds to her post-graduate students in the Department of English. Given originally from notes and books, the lectures were written out soon afterwards, while they still retained some of their immediacy of appeal and their colloquial flavour. To those who are acquainted with Professor Iyengar's previous work on the subject, the lectures will have an added interest as 'revaluations'.

The plan of the lectures is to see the truth about Indo-Anglian literature 'dawn' under a dispassionate review. Dr. Iyengar is designedly modest in stating its claims or else his 'may be we shall see some good in it' would have to be dismissed as a less acceptable appraisal of Indo-Anglian literature than, say, the late Mr. V. N. Bhusan's statement: 'Indo-English Literature is now an established fact.... Poetry, drama, fiction, criticism—in all these branches of creative writing our authors have produced solid and significant work.' Dr. Iyengar's end, besides, would be found to have forgotten his beginning, since his final findings far outweigh Mr. Bhusan's easy assurances. He finds, for instance, in *The Life Divine* and *Savitri* works comparable to the *Divina Commedia*, believes that the not too far off 'incantatory' development of English poetry predicted by Shri Aurobindo will manifest itself first in Indo-Anglian poetry which, in this new development, will be of great use to English literature in its attempt to achieve a global comprehension. On a lower plane, he regards Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* as almost a new kind of fiction, R. K. Narayan's description of Krishna's married life as 'one of the most moving and flawless pieces of writing in modern fiction', and would almost not be surprised if the 'centre of gravity' of English literature shifted some day to Madras.

The talks are a happy blend of criticism, biography and social and political history shading insensibly into one another. While dealing with the rise and development of Indo-Anglian literature, they give a clear sketch of its political and social background. The whole story of India's losing herself to find herself under the impact of Western culture is told by Professor Iyengar with a complete mastery of detail. The talks on 'The Beginnings: Rammohan Ray', 'The Renaissance in India', 'Sri Aurobindo', 'Mahatma Gandhi', 'Gandhi Literature' and 'Jawaharlal Nehru' give the whole history of Indo-British relations over a period of one hundred and fifty years and explain why though the English have withdrawn from India, English has remained, and Indian writing in English is still on the increase.

The remaining talks deal with Indo-Anglian literature more specifically as literature. The least enthusiastic among them

is the one dealing with Indo-Anglian drama which is admittedly poor both in quality and quantity. The talk on 'The Other Harmony' is based on an incomplete bibliography, and may be thought to have done less than justice to Indo-Anglian philosophy and literary criticism. The chapters on the novelists are fuller, excellent in their appraisement of the distinctive features of the Indo-Anglian novel as a *genre* but would appear to be a little too generous in praise. The poets have been discussed with a refreshing certitude about their worth. There is no exaggeration in the claims that Rabindranath, even on the strength of his translations, is with the world's greatest, and that Shri Aurobindo has given to English literature its greatest philosophical poem. Equally discerning are the author's estimates of Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Iqbal, but in thinking that the 'technical perfection of Manmohan's poems is perhaps their best title to remembrance', he fails to give the value to the profound human significance of Manmohan Ghosh's *Songs of Love and Death*. Ramesh Chunder Dutt and a few others seem to get more than their due, but no one would grudge the space given to the Moderns, for the future is clearly with the more promising among them. Professor Iyengar has a word of praise for them all although he rightly disapproves of the iconoclasm showing itself here and there. The most illuminating talks in the series are those on Shri Aurobindo and his writings. They are a miracle of interpretative criticism and constitute the best brief introduction to Shri Aurobindo's system of thought and its configuration in poetry.

That in a study of such compass the reader should be left yearning here and there for a fuller treatment of a writer or a subject is inevitable. The present reviewer's regret is that the author has not dealt adequately with Raja Rammohun Ray's prose which James Mill is said to have preferred to Bentham's. He also feels that a more detailed study of Vivian Derozio, the fountainhead of Indo-Anglian poetry, of Kashi Prasad Ghosh, its first exemplar (who, by the way, was also the first Indo-Anglian critic) and of Michael Madhusudan Dutt who by a recoil from it found his own authentic voice, or the members of the Dutt family (to which the talented Toru Dutt belonged) who formed almost a school, would have

shed a clearer light on the obscure beginnings of Indo-Anglian poetry.

Occasional slips too are perhaps unavoidable in a survey of this kind. The following are easily rectified:

(*a*) Manmohan Ghosh did not go to Cambridge. He was an Oxonian.

(*b*) The title of Malabari's book of poems is *Indian Muse in English Garb* and not *English Verse*.

(*c*) Rabindranath was a voracious reader, contrary to the current belief. The first eight thousand volumes with which the Viswabharati Library opened were all gifts of the poet and bore his marginal comments in pencil.

(*d*) Rammohun Ray is called a *Mahapurusha* in ch. ii but is denied the greatness in ch. iii.

Professor Iyengar's studies have more than demonstrated the *bona fides* of Indo-Anglian literature and have not only proved the inevitability of its origin but have also asserted its right to continue and attain an increasing fulfilment in the years to come. It is surprising, therefore, that he should choose for it, after years of deliberation, a nondescript name which has virtually no connotation. The names usually given to it, on the contrary, whatever their limitations, recall its origin in the cultural fusion of East and West and so suggest a standard. Even if we should object to one and all of them, we should take care not to uproot ourselves from the cultural contact which has spiritually liberated both India and England and has paved the way to a global understanding. If, instead, we repudiate this origin, and try to be egregiously Indian—which can only be a pose in these latter days—our eccentricity may well, in course of time, come to mock Dorothy Richardson's 'in making English compulsory, we did...make a gift to India and thus at least to the whole world' with Caliban's 'You taught me language and my profit on't Is I know how to curse'. Indo-Anglian literature, in its essential achievement, needs no new aesthetics for its evaluation, and Professor Iyengar has happily judged it only by accepted standards, greatly to the benefit of his readers in East and West.

Calcutta S. N. Ray

Capell and Malone, and Modern Critical Bibliography, by Sailendra Kumar Sen, pp. 52, Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1960, Rs 3.00.

This is a brochure rather than a book, consisting of 30 pages of text, 6 pages of Notes, and 16 pages of an Appendix which gives extracts from Capell, Malone and Tyrwhitt; Capell and Malone discuss the authenticity of the quartos and folios and the final principles on which an editor should determine the text of Shakespeare, while Tyrwhitt describes the various editions of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* from Caxton to Urry as a prolegomena to his own edition. With an austerely single-track aim and a well-disciplined objectivity of temper, Mr. Sen refuses to pad up his useful though limited thesis which should be of interest to all whom the problem and history of Shakespeare-editing fascinate. Mr. Sen convincingly argues that there is no justice in the criticism of McKerrow and Greg that all 18th century editors of Shakespeare were too eclectic for modern standards. In fact, Capell and Malone understood the merits of the old editions and were anxious to ascertain a text that could be accepted as something nearest to the text that Shakespeare had written. Quoting some words from Malone, Mr. Sen says, 'One fancies, as one reads this passage, that one is being introduced to Shakespearean textual criticism by Greg or Dover Wilson or McKerrow.' In other words, Mr. Sen concludes, these two Shakespeare editors of the 18th century had anticipated (despite a number of understandable limitations) the basic premises of modern editorial scholarship.

There is a brief commendatory foreword to this little book by Professor Allardyce Nicoll.

Calcutta A. Bose

Bibliographical Guide to the Study of the Literature of the U.S.A., by Clarence Gohdes, pp. 102, Duke University Press, Durham, N.C., 1959, $ 2.50.

Recent American Literature, by Donald Heiney, pp. 609, Barron's Educational Series, New York, Fourth Printing, 1961, $ 1.95.

These two books, each in its own way, should be useful to the departments of English of those Indian universities and colleges which have already been providing instruction in American literature or propose to do so. If our libraries are far from satisfactorily stocked with original works and essential secondary materials related to the teaching and study of American literature, it is not always entirely because there is a dearth of funds; funds are no more lacking for this particular purpose than they are for most academic requirements in India. Perhaps the chief deterrent for our departments of English is the lack of handy bibliographies. American publishing houses, unlike their British counterparts, usually do not send us their annual or seasonal catalogues. Few of our departments would take the trouble of rummaging through the volumes of the Periodical Index. The highly selective readers' bibliography appended to the *Literary History of the United States* by Robert E. Spiller, Willard Thorpe *et al*, has so far been the staple source for many departmental booklists. I have no doubt that Clarence Gohdes's *Bibliographical Guide* will be a boon to all academic libraries in this country engaged in building up a collection of American literature. The *Guide* is divided into 35 sections, e.g. Definition of Literary and Related Terms; Library of Congress Catalogues; Book Trade and Publishing; Transcendentalism in the U.S.; Poetry; Drama and Theatre; Folklore in the U.S., and so on. Occasionally, there are cross-references and brief descriptive comments on particular titles, and the book has been so printed that the verso of a leaf prints the titles of the list while the recto is a blank on which the reader can enter his own notes and addenda.

Donald Heiney's book, one of a well-known educational series and published originally in 1958, also offers a selective list of reading material under author-headings, yet

the chief use of this handbook rests on its concentration on individual authors classified under the various phases of literary development. A few paragraphs of broad assessment of the characteristics of an author; a few words on essential biographical facts; several pages on the principal works furnishing the student with able summaries—thus goes the business-like presentation of the important American writers from 1880 on. A useful compendium, but let me hope that our students will not consider this book the end of scholarship in American literature but merely a means that aims at leading them to the actual texts.

Calcutta A. Bose

The Sound Structures of English and Bengali, by Muhammad Abdul Hai and W. J. Ball, pp. 96, University of Dacca, 1961, Rs. 8.00.

The value of this timely and original contribution to the methods of teaching English as a second language must not be blurred by its inelegant physical appearance. Mr. Hai, a scholar of Linguistics and the Head of the department of Bengali at the University of Dacca, is the author of a pioneer and competent work on Bengali Phonetics, *Nasals and Nasalization in Bengali*; his colleague Mr. Ball is the British Council's Education Officer in East Pakistan whose vivid interest in the problems of teaching English to those whose mother tongue it is not, is evident in his useful book on *Colloquial Idiom*. The book under review is a comparative study of the sound-structures of English and Bengali aimed at helping Bengali students to 'differentiate between sounds and speech patterns that are alike in both languages and those, usually more numerous, that are unlike.' The authors say in the Preface: 'We have written not for the Linguistic expert but for students; and not for the fortunate few whose English has been moulded by residence for some period in an English-speaking environment, but for those who have to learn English the hard way.' This eminently sensible aim is worked out through a number

of chapters which, I find, fall under six major sections. In the first section, the authors lead from a very brief reference to the hypothesis of a cognation between English and Bengali that existed millenniums ago, to a diagram showing the Mouth and the Organs of Speech, and to a description of the main Sounds of Speech, phonetic symbols and phonemes. Next they describe the vowel sounds in Bengali and English and the diphthongs. The third section deals with consonants; the fourth with nasals, fricatives, laterals (both 'dark' and 'clear'), affricates, and semi-vowels. The fifth section consists of valuable chapters on sounds common to English and Bengali, English sounds not heard in Standard Bengali, Bengali sounds not heard in Standard English, and English sounds as attempted by Bengali speakers. This last chapter is reduced to an excellent chart showing every English sound (vowel, diphthong, plosives, fricatives &c. &c.); each sound illustrated by a few key words; the correct pronunciation of these key words indicated in phonetic spelling; the Bengali attempt to pronounce these English words indicated in phonetic spelling; and some suggestive notes against each sound. I find these notes occasionally very interesting inasmuch as they (obviously thanks to Mr. Hai's experience of Bengali speech) show how although standard Bengali fails to come up to an English sound, dialectal Bengali (e.g., Dacca cockney) may sometimes do so. The last section dealing with intonation patterns and stress, has a lengthy chart giving examples of intonation patterns; the examples are brought under four heads, the type of assertion that the given sentence is (e.g., questions, statement &c. &c.), graphical representation of the intonation, the mood or context of the given sentence, a description of the graph of the pattern.

Now that in addition to the Central Institute of English at Hyderabad, several regional institutes are coming up, I think it would substantially help us develop effective methods of teaching English to Indian children if we were to study the sound patterns of the various Indian Languages and even of Anglo-Indian English ('For Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly, After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe'). It is not enough to talk of the gravitational pull of the mother tongue; it is necessary to make the learner conscious of (at

least) the principal differences between his own language and the foreign language. The book under review is a notable beginning of such comparative studies to be followed up, let me hope, by further studies to be undertaken by these authors and/or others.

Calcutta A. Bose

BRIEF NOTICES

Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature, ed. Buddhadeva Bose (Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University, Calcutta), vol. i, 1961; vol. ii, 1962.

This journal obviously covers an area much wider than the area that concerns the *IJES* but the first volume contains two articles directly on aspects of English Literature: Satyendranath Ray's on 'Rossetti's poetry and painting: a correlated study' and David McCutchion's on 'Creation and Contrivance: Dryden's adaptation of *Antony and Cleopatra* set against the background of the age.' In the second volume, David McCutchion's article 'Beast or Angel? Romantic ambiguities in Goethe, Musset, Stendhal and Yeats' has a perceptive analysis of Yeats's antinomies; Naresh Guha's article on 'Five Poems in *Songs of Experience*' is a rewarding study in explication. This journal should attract scholars in English literature in India and elsewhere.

Journal of the M. S. University of Baroda, ed. V. Y. Kantak, vol. xi, no. i, April 1962, Baroda.

Of the two articles in this volume strictly concerned with English Studies, 'Towards an understanding of E. M. Forster' by E. L. Roderigues concentrates on Forster's works; 'The Ethical Basis of Ben Jonson's Plays' by M.G. Krishnamurthy consults a number of other critics and scholars in an attempt to explain Jonsonian ethics.

Studies in Romanticism, ed. David Bonnell Green, published by the Graduate School, Boston University; quarterly; vol. i, no. 1, Autumn 1961; vol. i, no 2, Winter 1962; vol. i, no. 3, Spring 1962; vol. i, no. 4, Summer 1962.

This journal, ranging widely and most knowledgeably over the infinite manifestations of Romanticism, should be of great use to those Indian scholars (and their number is legion) who are devoted to a study of Romantic art and thought.

Calcutta A. Bose

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

S. MALLIKARJUNAN, of the Department of English of the University of Saugor, has lately returned from a study tour in the U. S. A.

S. L. KUDCHEDKAR. M.A. of the University of Bombay, trained in the University of London Institute of Education. Mrs. Kudchedkar is now the Head of the English Dept. of the Maharshi Dayanand College of Bombay. Her paper was read before the English Association of Bombay.

K. WOOD. Mrs. Wood is Professor and Head of the English Department in the Elphinstone College of Bombay.

J. S. SASTRI is a Reader in the Dept. of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

SAILENDRA KUMAR SEN, a part-time lecturer in the post-graduate Department of English in the University of Calcutta, is at present the Principal of the Government College in Darjeeling; he has recently been awarded the D. Litt. degree on the basis of his work on eighteenth century criticism.

AMRIK SINGH, who took his doctorate from the University of London, is on the staff of the University of Delhi.

M. M. BHALLA is in St. Stephen's College, Delhi.

CLIFFORD LEECH. Professor Leech read this paper at the XIIth conference of the Indian Association for English Studies held in 1961 at Mysore.

B. RAJAN, Professor and Head of the Dept. of English in the University of Delhi, read this paper at a symposium on Literary History and Literary Criticism organized by our Mysore conference.

T. P. CHITANAND, who did research in the University of London, is the Head of the English Dept. of the Arts College of Vallabh Viswavidyalaya.

H. N. L. Sastri, who did research in Toronto, is on the staff of the Central Institute of English at Hyderabad.

Bernard Lott is the Director of Studies in the Central Institute of English, Hyderabad.

Anita S. Kumar is on the staff of the Women's College, Hyderabad. Mrs. Kumar was in U. K. some time ago doing research.

O. P. Govil did his doctoral research on Browning at the Aligarh University and is now a Reader in English in that university.

H. S. Saxena, who was in U.K. on a British Council scholarship, is a member of the Dept. of English of the University of Allahabad.

S. Chatterjee, Reader in English at the Jadavpur University of Calcutta, did his Ph.D. in London and is the author of several books on Fiction.

S. N. Ray, Ph.D., London, was the Head of the Dept. of English of the Dacca University and since retirement, has been connected with several educational experiments in the country.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

The Indian Journal of English Studies is, for the present, being issued once a year but the Indian Association for English Studies of which this Journal is the official organ, hopes, in course of time, to increase the frequency of its publication.

The Editorial Committee welcomes articles on all areas and branches of English Studies; the articles should be of a high standard of scholarship embodying the results of original investigations and independent and fresh thinking. References, based on standard editions of texts, must be placed at the end of the article and must be prepared in conformity with the *MLA Style Sheet.* Contributions, two copies of which are to be sent, must be neatly typewritten in double space on one side of the paper only. The Editorial Committee's decision on the acceptance or rejection or modification of articles shall be final. Rejected articles will not be returned. Contributors will receive ten complimentary offprints; those wishing to buy additional copies, should inform Professor Bose at the time they send their articles. All articles intended for publication in the 1963 issue should be sent not later than the 15th July 1963 to:

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