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CONTENTS

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THE DOOR IN *HAMLET*, THAT JANUS OF PLAYS

The several references to the door which occur in the course of *Hamlet* are well worth noting. For one thing, they figure in contexts where a noticeable use is made of that prominent feature of the Shakespearian stage facade, the two or rather three (as evidence other than the Swan stage sketch indicates) solid stage doors;[1] it is as though Shakespeare had an eye on the stage door when he introduced these references. For another, the references to doors make for a notable resonance with the motif of constraint, confinement or enclosure as in a prison[1A] which is recurrent in the imagery, dramatic movement and action of the play and particularly in relation to the character of Hamlet. An obvious physical feature of the stage, the door in *Hamlet*, as verbal idea and actual stage image, turns out to be not merely a rudimentary means of exit and entrance but a visual pointer of significances, a participant in the action sometimes and a backdrop against which is communicated the sense of Denmark being a prison to Hamlet. In fact, the references to doors may be said to foreground the energies of a sense built up in the play of the pressure of confinement and constraint.

The sentries' challenges, which 'attack' the play's dramatic mood of mysteriousness and interrogation in the opening scene, are directed to those who enter; direct entrance announcements like 'look where he comes' or indirect ones by way of the sentries' challenges as here call the spectators' attention to the entering characters and to the stage doors through which they enter. The Ghost's entry was also probab-

ly through the stage door rather than through the door of the stage trap from below, in keeping with the dignity of this stage ghost as constrasted with almost all other contemporary stage ghosts. The Ghost's entry is unintentionally but in a deliberate effect of dramatic surprise pointed up by Bernardo's deictic gesture of his raised hand towards 'yond same star that's westward from the pole'. The Ghost's entrances and exits, in this scene as well as the two scenes of its appearance to and its meeting with Hamlet, are through the stage door in all probability,[2] and its passage in and out almost everytime is carefully drawn attention to by the other characters as also its *hic et ubique* movements (I. i. 142-43). In the first two (I. i. & I. iv.) out of the three scenes in Act I in which the Ghost makes its entry, the Ghost has its station and also makes its movements upstage close to the stage door; hence the characters like Horatio, Marcellus or Hamlet in I. iv. move some distance towards it to challenge or meet it, and their remarks about the Ghost's gestures and mevements are calculated to help the spectators to note them.

In the scenes of Hamlet's meeting with the Ghost, the Ghost and Hamlet first go out through one of the stage doors as Hamlet follows the Ghost, vigorously brushing aside Horatio and Marcellus (I. iv. 86 s. d.). Hamlet and the Ghost enter for the next scene through another stage door soon after, thereby indicating in terms of an Elizabethan convention of going out through one door and entering through another to denote a change of locality that they now appear in 'another part of the platform' (as the editorially interpolared stage direction would put it), in a removed place where the Ghost makes its revelation and gives its command to Hamlet in confidence.[3] Apart from his murder, in the Ghost's account, taking place in the enclosed garden, the *locus amoenus* thus turning into a place of death as in the *Dance of Death* tradition (as, again, in the dumb-show and the play of the Mousetrap), the Ghost has come from his confinement in the 'prison-house' of Purgatory (I. v. 14). Ophelia's 'inset' account of Hamlet's distracted entry into her room and his silent and

prolonged perusal of her face (II. i. 77-100) contains as a most interesting part of its verbal evocation the details of how Hamlet, bafflingly Janus-faced, walked away from Ophelia at the end with his face turned towards her and his eyes still gazing on her face, seeing without his eyes his way towards the door

> ...with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
> He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
> For out o' doors he went without their help,
> And to the last bended their light on me. (II.i. 97-100)

During Polonius's first encounter with Hamlet in his state of distraction, there is an interesting exploitation of the stage door with reference to the stage space. Polonius, in accordance with the old world belief that open air would be injurious to the health of invalids, wants to cajole Hamlet indoors, 'Will you walk out of the air, my lord'? (II ii 212). Polonius wants to lead Hamlet 'within' out of the 'open stage' without through the stage door, but Hamlet stays on, countering Polonius's request with the words

> Into my grave?

meaning, 'out of the air into the enclosed 'private place' of the grave?' The reply piquantly links with the sense of enclosement or entrapment as in a prison which Hamlet feels in the play on the one hand, and with Hamlet's preoccupation with death, later materializing in his leap into Ophelia's grave, on the other.

Indeed, the paradoxical phenomenon which strongly emerges in the play in terms of theatrical space is that the 'open stage', of which Hamlet is the centre, represents the prison-house of the court of Elsinore and the country of Denmark and the stage doors which lead *'within'* are the exits leading out of th claustrophobic world of Hamlet if not of *Hamlet*. This paradoxical suggestion comes through prominently in Hamlet's exchange with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern which comes soon after Polonius's offer to lead him 'out of the air'.

Hamlet : ...what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guildenstern : Prison, my lord!

Hamlet : Denmark's a prison.

Rosencrantz : Then is the world one.

Hamlet : A goodly one: in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst.

Rosencrantz : We think not so, my lord.

Hamlet : Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so; to me it is a prison.

Hamlet : O God; I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I had bad dreams.

(II.ii.250-265)

In the scene of the 'lawful espials' (III. i.) Hamlet in his rejection of Ophelia's love and in his indulgence in a display of his distraction and near-cynical disgust advises Ophelia to take to a nunnery (probably in the primary sense rather than the punning meaning of the term), and thus to take to a life of withdrawal and immured existence. The repetitions (at III. i, 135, 144, 147 and 158) of Hamlet's exhortation to her to go into a nunnery are so graded and spaced out that before repeating his injunction Hamlet every time moves towards the door making as if to go only to come back lunging towards Ophelia to drive home his command, resulting in a repeated to and for movement of himself between Ophelia and the door.[4] Hamlet's advice to her father (who is overhearing the interview in Claudius's company, without the knowledge, *pace* Dover Wilson, of Hamlet) is that he should keep himself indoors for his safety, ironically for the subsequent killing by Hamlet of Polonius as the old man eavesdrops on Hamlet and Gertrude in her chamber.

Hamlet : Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere but in's own house. (III.i. 137-139)

Hamlet's appellation, 'the Mousetrap', for his play meshes well with the play of *Hamlet's* network of associations of hunting, rival watchings and entrapment. In the enclosed scene of Hamlet's interview with his mother, Gertrude feels

helplessly trapped before she experiences real remorse, and Polonius who smuggles himself behind the arras in the closed chamber gets killed like a rat. On the sudden indoor appearance of the Ghost 'in a night-gown' (as the First Quarto stage direction indicates what it looked like on at least some contemporary stages), it could be heard and seen by Hamlet only. When he tries to point out its presence to Gertrude, it starts making its exit through the stage door

> Why, look you there; look, how it steals away;
> My father, in his habit as he liv'd;
> Look! where he goes, even now, out at the portal. (III.iv. 133-135)

The sense of pressure closing in on Claudius mounts in the second half of the play as after the play of the Mousetrap he moves from the tableaulike situation of his kneeling at prayer without being able to feel true penitence[5] through his response to the death of Polonius to the scene (IV. v.) in which Claudius is surprised by Laertes in revolt as avenger of his father's death. In this scene, the stage door, a continuously present visual reinforcement in the play of the imagistic and dramatic impression of the world of Hamlet feeling like a prison-house, becomes a participant in the drama. As the noise of Laertes and his supporters rushing in revolt against the king approaches, King Claudius commands :

> Where are my switzers? Let them guard the door. (IV.v. 97)

As the Gentleman relates how Laertes and his 'rabble' 'overbear your officers' and his men call Laertes king, there is a fresh bout of noise, and the king himself announces,

> The doors are broke (IV.v. III)

and Laertes in arms enters, and the Danes following him try to rush in through all the stage doors. Even as he demands, 'Where is the King?', he advises his followers

> ...Sirs, stand you all without (IV.v. 112)

i.e., 'within' in the parlance of stage directions.
The exchange goes on

The Danes : No, let's come in.
Laertes : I pray you, give me leave.
The Danes : We will, we will. (IV.v. 113-15)

And the followers of Laertes make their exit through the doors or 'retire without the doors' in Capell's stage direction. After directing them 'to keep the door', Laertes confronts Claudius.[6]

Finally, towards the end of the play at the moment of his anagnorisis about one of Claudius's new villainies, the poisoned drink, upon his dying mother's warning, Hamlet commands

O villainy; Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery; seek it out (V.ii 327-328)

only to be told by Laertes the whole truth about Claudius's design including the poisoning of the foil. Hamlet feels and expresses the constriction of death overcoming him in the words

.. this fell sergeant, death
Is strict in his arreast (V.ii. 350-351)

But Horatio envisages flights of angels singing the sweet prince to his rest presumably in ethereal air.

The door in *Hamlet* may thus be seen to be an interesting lead-in though not a major doorway into some central significances of the play. The subliminal sense or tactile sensation of the pressure of the 'closed spaces' set against 'open spaces' communicated by the play, is subtly reinforced by the verbal and theatrical functions of the door in *Hamlet*. The change from the closed to the open universe, from the geocentric to the heliocentric world-view, was in process at the time of writing of the play: Hamlet's verses to Ophelia with the line

'Doubt that the sun doth move'

affirm the older view.[7] Yet, the play, a Janus-like crossroads in this as in other respects, can be regarded as making its hints and guesses in the direction of the change in world -view. At any rate, we have in the play striking instances of the stage doors being exploited to good purpose. Though the

dramatist refrains in *Hamlet* from using the off-stage noise of knockings at the door as he does to forceful effect in *Macbeth* or towards the end of *Richard II*, the visual presence of the doors develops in the play's dynamics an interesting dialectical relationship with the verbal invoking of doors several times and with the strong suggestion which emerges in the play through imagery, rhythm, movement and action of the state of being closed in. Moreover, the paradoxical reversal of status between 'within' and 'without' suggested by the verbal and theatrical use of the door in the play fits in with its emphasis on the confusions of 'inner' and 'outer,' of reality and appearance.

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NOTES

1. G. F. Reynolds, *On Shakespeare's Stage* ed. R. E. Knaub (Denver: Univ of Colorado Press, 1967), p. 30 and Richard Hosley, 'The Discovery-Space in Shakespeare's Globe.' *Shakespeare Survey*, 12 (1959); pp. 35-46 and 'A Reconstruction of the Fortune Playhouse *The Elizabethan Theatre VI* (London; Macmillan, 1978), pp. 1-20 and *The Elizabethan Theatre VII* (London; Macmillan, 1980), pp. 1-20. The Fortune playhouse had three stage doors; since we know it was modelled on the Globe, the Globe would also have had three stage doors J. W. Saunders, 'Staging at the Globe, 1599-1613'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*,10(1960),pp.401-425,suggests two doors but also access to the stage through the two side wings. Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Stage* (Cambridge, 1970), allows for the possibility of the 'discovery space' or 'inner stage' if there were one at all having served as a third means of entrance (p.139). The hall screen of the great halls or great houses had two or three doors. Ernest L.Rhodes, *Henslowe's Rose:the Stage and Staging* surmises that the stage of the Rose had five doors. That the Blackfriars' stage as well as the Fortune stage had three doors can be gathered from the stage directions in *Eastward Ho'* (a Blackfriars' play) and *The Roaring Girl* (a Fortune play) :

> Enter Master Touchstone, and Quicksilver at Several dores... At the middle dore, Enter Golding discovering a Goldsmith's shoppe and walking short turns before it
>
> (the opening s.d. in *Eastward Ho!*)

(If the engraving in Robert Fludd's *Ars Memoria* (1623, Plate 7) is that of the Blackfriars if not of the Globe as Frances Yates thought it represents three doors on the stage facade)

> The three shops open in a ranke...
> apothecaries, Fether shop, Sempster's...
> (*The Roaring Girl*, iii scene)

The reference in *Pericles* to 'one door' and 'the other' seems to indicate two doors, as does Jasper Mayne's specification of two doors in his tribute to Ben Jonson (1638) :

> The Stage was still a Stage, two entrances
> Were not two parts oth' World, disjoyn'd by Seas

The arras or stage hangings could have covered the central door. It was perhaps used for the purposes of 'discovery' very infrequently if at all.

Quotations in this essay are from the text of *Hamlet* in the Oxford Shakespeare, ed. W. J. Craig

1A. The motif of the prison-house or the tightly closed in space in the play has been illuminatingly elucidated by R. A. Foakes, *Hamlet* and the Court of Elsinore', *Shakespeare Survey*, 9 (1956), pp. 35-43

2. It is perhaps only later, that is towards the end of I. v., that the Ghost comes to speak from under the stage 'in the cellarage' by which time Hamlet in his tension-ridden state after the Ghost's revelation starts calling it with levity 'old mole' and truepenny'.

3. On the applicability of this staging convention at this point in *Hamlet* see G. F. Reynolds, Two conventions of the Elizabethan Stage', *Modern Philology*, 17 (1919-20), p. 39

4. See Nevil Coghill, *Shakespeare's Professional Skills* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 18

5. 'O limned soul, that struggling to be free/Are more engaged' (III, ii. 68-69)

6. Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages*, Volume Two 1576 to 1660, Part II (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972) comments thus : 'In a truly theatrical sense the door (? doors) become the dominant "Character" in this scene by being made the focal point of attention in dialogue'. (p. 192)

7. T.J.B. Spencer, 'Shakespeare : The Elizabethan Theatre-Poet', *The Elizabethan Theatre I*, ed. David Galloway. (London: Macmillan 1969), p. 10, calls Hamlet's verses an example of a 'metaphysical' poem which implies the doubt felt by 'an up-to-the-date intellectual' of the period in the face of the change from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican cosmogony.

A. A. Ansari

CYMBELINE : THE DESIGN OF HARMONY

Deeply rooted in the Romance tradition, with minor variations played on it, the relationship between Posthumus and Imogen in *Cymbeline*, is a troubled one from the very beginning. It is overcast by tragic shadows which are lifted off it only towards the end when the unravelling of the knotted threads of action takes place and the continued tension is relaxed. It is a thorn in the Queen's flesh who wanted Imogen to be married to her own son, Cloten, with a former husband; it has also provoked her father, Cymbeline's resentment, for Posthumus ('a poor but worthy gentleman') is an outsider and does not rank highly in the social hierarchy. The details of his secret marriage with Imogen are barely specified, only the fact of his banishment from Cymbeline's court and her imprisonment in the palace under the cruel eye of her step-mother are mentioned, and the repercussions on those around them are obliquely hinted at. Their leave-taking and Pisanio's accompanying him some distance is presented with vividness and is evocative of a degree of pathos. After getting confirmation from Pisanio that he did strain his eyes till Posthumus's figure had been reduced to as little 'as a crow, or less', Imogen underlines her probable or contemplated reaction in case she were there thus :

> I would have broke mine eye-strings, crack'd them, but
> To look upon him, till the diminution
> Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle:
> Nay, followed him, till he had melted from
> The smallness of a gnat, to air; and then
> Have turn'd mine eye, and wept.'[1] I,iv. 18–23

This bespeaks Imogen's intense self-absorption in Posthumus and also echoes, in respect of relativity of vision, Gloucester's

looking down from the height of the cliff in Cornwall in *King Lear* (IV,vi)

In the scene which shifts to a feast in Rome and where Posthumus is introduced to, by Philario, and joins in futile altercation, fraught with dangerous consequences, with the cynical and crafty Iachimo, an unseemly and heated discussion ensues between the two as to the comparative merit of their country mistresses in point of chastity and loyalty to their lovers. Piqued by Posthumus's glorification of Imogen, the 'unparagon'd she, in extravagant rashness, proclaiming her 'to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant, qualified and less attemptable than any the rarest of our ladies in France' (I,v,56-59), Iachimo pounces upon him and maliciously resolves to destroy what he presumes to be his smugness. He is the serpent who slinks into his garden of Eden and is bent upon dismantling his edifice of love fold by fold. The fantastic and risky adventure conceived by his devillish Italian brain for seducing Imogen and thus shatter Posthumus's secure self-confidence, has in it some of the elements of the Romantic imbroglio. Reaching Cymbeline's court with Posthumus's letter of 'commendation for my more free entertainment' (and one is simply amazed why should Posthumus or any man of integrity and rectitude for that matter compose such a letter)he proceeds, in a cautious, exploratory way (not unlike Eve's toad) towards Imogen, indulging in outrageous flattery of her incomparable loveliness of form, and casting aspersions on Posthumus: he is traduced, indirectly, for his profligacy and proved to be living in a sty of corruption in Rome. Though the ignoble attempt at seduction of her ends in a fiasco yet he succeeds in ingratiating himself into her favour by assuring her that he had only been trying to put her fidelity on trial and had become convinced that her chastity was immaculate and her honour inviolable. He further worms himself into her confidence and seeks permission to put the trunk containing some precious gifts into her bed-chamber just for the night. By a cheap and incredible trick he gets himself furtively secreted into the trunk and emerges from it at mid-night when Imogen, who had been reading

through Tereus's tale of the violation of Philomel, falls fast asleep. After he prepares an inventory of the contents and location of the bed-chamber and notes with meticulous care the particulars of her physical parts he returns to Rome with a view to falsely reporting back to Posthumus that he had enjoyed her carnally. All the little shreds of evidence he had been able to amass are cunningly made to fall into a coherent whole and their itemized disclosure has the effect of throwing Posthumus into a violent perturbation. He, however, tries at every step (and in this he is supported by Philario) to discount whatever evidence goes against him, thus despairingly clutching at any straw of hope that comes his way till he is finally thrown overboard and succumbs before the testimony of the 'mole cinque-spotted' on her left breast, allegedly seen and kissed by Iachimo. The tension which is thus generated in him is not unlike the morbid spasm of jealousy experienced by Othello and later on by Leontes in almost identical situations. He also ejaculates his firm resolve, not unlike Othello, to tear her limb by limb, if he got Imogen within his grasp, instantaneously. Juxtaposed to this bout of frenzy one perceives in Imogen only the symptoms of broken-heartedness : she is hardly moved by any impulse of retaliation. She is, on the contrary, very much like Chaucer's Patient Griselda, a model of mute suffering and unresisting endurance. Her devotion to Posthumus is the very breath of her life, and on being branded as a potential prostitute she later reacts thus :

> False to his bed? What is it to be false?
> To lie in watch there, and to think on him?
> To weep 'twixt clock and clock? If sleep charge Nature,
> To break it with a fearful dream of him,
> And cry myself awake? false to's bed, is it? III, iv, 41-45

Corresponding to the symbolic handkerchief the loss of which casts Othello's faith in Desdemona's invulnerability into ruins, the proferring of the bracelet-'a manacle of love'-which Iachimo swears to have taken off Imogen's arm without any resistance on her part is the source of the terribly gnawing conflict between faith and scepticism in Posthumus. But more

than the bracelet as part of the loss of wager, it is the pointed reference to the mole which sweeps him off his balance and he is plunged into a mood of searing melancholy and bewilderment:

> Let there be no honour
> Where there is beauty : truth, where semblance; love,
> Where there's another man. The vows of women
> Of no more bondage be to where they are made
> Than they are to their virtues, which is nothing.
> O, above measure false! II, iv, 108-113

To Philario's counsel of forbearance he tartly replies: 'Never talk on't : / She hath been colted by him' (II,iv, 133–34) and these bridge lines lead on to his indulging in a savage diatribe against women in general thus:

> for there's no motion
> That tends to vice in man, but I affirm
> It is the woman's part: be it lying, note it,
> The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving; hers:
> Lust, and rank thoughts, hers, hers: revenges, hers:
> Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
> Nice longing, slanders, mutability;...
> For even to vice
> They are not constant, bur are changing still; II, iv, 172-181

Here Posthumus's rantings reach the boiling-point and he is driven to the verge of utter incoherence and distraction.

Parallel to the work-a-day world of the court which is contaminated by the manoeuvrings of the wicked Queen on the one hand and the Michaveliian craftiness of the Italian Iachimo on the other is the idyllic world which is presided over by Belarius and his two 'adopted' sons-the Princes whom he got kidnapped as an act of vengeance against Cymbeline when he was banished on an unidentified charge of treason. Guiderius and Arviragus, brought up in a cave in Wales and protected against the taint of corruption which cleaves to the urban and sophisticated mode of existence, are like the flowers that bloom in the desert. This exposure to the elemental forces is both deliberate and part of the artistic economy of the play.

The Princes are at any rate like Arcadian figures (though Guiderius's killing of Cloten neutralizes that impression to some extent) rather than fully-drawn, substantial characters, and the purpose of their creation seems to underline the fact that human nature, allowed to develop free of all taboos and constraints and in an idyllic setting, is most likely to retain its pristine glow of innocence. For all three of them the cave they live in constitutes the utmost 'bourn' of their heaven and earth; it is the orbit within which their genius operates. Their life is untouched by indulgence in self-regarding instincts and is pervaded by and conducive to primal concord and harmony. Hunting is the outdoor activity which absorbs them and satisfaction of the limited needs pertaining to simple and spontaneous living brings them solace and a sense of self-fulfilment. Life in these idyllic surroundings is regulated by the processes of Nature in their varying rhythms and is uncomplicated, unlike life at the court by human perversity and all those stratagems and manoeuvrings which it involves and engenders. Even so it is subjected, for instance, by Guiderius, who is acutely aware of its exclusivizingness, to a sort of critical irony:

> but unto us it is
> A cell of ignorance, travelling a-bed,
> A prison, or a debtor that not dares
> To stride a limit. III,iii, 32-35

and Arviragus misses in it the flavour of excitement and the dynamics of human struggle: 'What pleasure, sir, we find in life, to lock it/From action and adventure''(IV, iv, 3-4). The 'odd and distinctive music' (F.R. Leavis) of this life arises from a sort of reductionism: whatever its fascination it tends to be narrow and circumscribed and does not concern itself with a wide spectrum of experiences. Arviragus puts it interestingly thus:' our cage/ We make a quire, as doth the prison'd bird,/ And sing our bondage freely' (III,iii, 41-43). It is exposed to a kind of hardness and there is something frugal about the landscape it provides. The fact that there is eventually a return

to Cymbeline's court while through the skilful crowding and heterogeneity of events the resolution of all complexities is effected indicates the insufficiency of the pastoral ideal inspite of its having a therapeutic function in a benign environment. This seems to be in consonance with and is a repetition of what occurs in *As You Like It*, too, and the later Romances, in general. Also the dirge which is sung over the hypothetically dead body of Imogen by Belarius and his two 'adopted' sons and the exploitation of the delicately floral imagery for the purpose represents more the mingling of the romantic sentiment and fancy than the complex music which subsumes the dissonant and the rigorous also within the fabric of the sensuously delicate and the sentimental. It is, therefore, far less compellingly beautiful than what one gets in *The Winter's Tale* passage. It may however be added that the care and solicitude which is so generously lavished upon Imogen by the dwellers of the cave she strays into contrasts so sharply with the malice of the masterful and acrimonious Queen of the court.

The depiction of Imogen's bed-chamber upon which Iachimo descends in a clandestine way by playing a fantastic trick is reminiscent of Enobarbus's highly stylized description of 'the barge' Cleopatra sat in on Cydnus. Doubtless it may possibly have served as a literary analogue for such masterpieces of verbal art as Belinda's Toilet scene in *The Rape of the Lock* and *The Game of Chess* in *The Waste Land*. In many Shakespearian contexts images of art sometimes evoke a sense of over-ripeness and seductive sensuousness as well as of opulence and multitudinousness. Here fancy seems to outstrip Nature in the impression of enormous fecundity that it creates so much so that Iachimo puts it laconically thus: 'the cutter/Was as another Nature, dumb'. The compressed description of it vouchsafed to Poshumus is an epitome of suggestibility and is firmly rivetted in the memory:

> First, her bed-chamber,...
> it was hang'd
> With tapestry of silk and silver,....

> The chimney
> Is south the chamber, and the chimney-piece,
> Chaste Dian, bathing : never saw I figures
> So likely to report themselves;...
> The roof o' th' chamber
> With golden cherubins is fretted. Her andirons
> (I had forgot them)were two winking Cupids
> Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely
> Depending on their brands, II, iv, 67-91

Here the tapestry, woven of 'silk and silver', the chimney-piece contatning the figure of Diana, bathing, overlooking the imagined scene of adultery, the carved golden cherubins on the roof and the andirons, visualized as winking Cupids–all evidences of human artifice and ingenuity correspond to the marmoreal beauty of Imogen. What is most striking is that whereas in the *Antony and Cleopatra* passage even the elemental Nature seems to be enamoured of Cleopatra's beauty here all the perceptual objects in the bed-room of Imogen have become cooperants in the 'conspiracy of suggestiveness' against her. The two outcast Princes, as implied earlier, reflect proximity to Nature in all its unadorned simplicity as well as its power to replenish itself. Nature is the primal source of fecundity, the unlimited potential for growth, and feeds and nourishes art in all its infinite individuations. In the last scene of the play, the meeting of Imogen with the Princes, shaking hands with them across the abysm of Time, is more or less equivalent to the uniting, on the symbolic level, of Fancy and Nature. Both are complementary to each other and contribute to the over-all design of harmony Or, in other words, art is an outgrowth of Nature which is pure potentiality and fancy or Art is approximately analogous to what Andrew Marvell designates as 'squaring' and 'hewing' of Nature. The products of Art or Fancy derive their invigorating power from the plenitude of Nature, and similarly, pastoralism is not rejected but assimilated into the civilized order or courtliness.

Posthumus, the protagonist, whose trials and tribulations and final rehabilitation or purgation are the stuff out of which

this late comedy has been evolved is one who is naive, amorous and highly effervescent by temperament. His besetting sin is impulsiveness and lack of steady judgment and he is, therefore, not only easily eliminated by the Queen but also outwitted and bamboozled by the wily Iachimo. Early in the play an idealized portrait of him is offered by the First Gentleman to the following effect :

> I do not think
> So fair an outward, and such stuff within
> Endows a man, but he. I, i, 22-24

Given by an expository character it is intended to be probed into, tested and qualified by the subsequent concatenation of events. Another estimate offered by the 'yellow Iachimo'is also worth a glance :

> He sits 'mongst men like a descended god;
> He hath a kind of honour sets him off,
> More than a mortal seeming. I, vii. 169-71

It is however not difficult to perceive that this disingenuous utterance is part of that deliberate theatricality which is so characteristic of this play. By speaking of Posthumus in such hyperbolical terms he is, designedly, bent upon creating an effect : to flatter and win Imogen over to his own nefarious ends. Not godhead but exuberance, volatility and recklessness are the distinctive traits of his personality. He has an unswerving faith in the chastity and constancy of Imogen and is firmly persuaded that this faith can never suffer a jolt. But he allows himself to be trapped by the audacity of the lecherous and cynical Iachimo into accepting the wager proposed by the latter. This, however, argues not only an undue trust in the supposed feminine infallibility but more than that a very poor insignt into the tactic of a cheat and a dissembler. Posthumus's inborn naivety is brought out in a number of contexts: inspite of averring at an early stage: 'My mistress exceeds in goodness the hugeness of your unworthy thinking' (I,v, 141–42) he easily lends credence to the palpable lies, the false accusations made against Imogen, without checking the credentials of a

man with whom he has had only a slight acquaintance. He even pays him a grudging tribute: 'and praise/Be given to your remembrance' (II,iv, 93–94) even when the latter is engaged in dealing him one death-blow after another. Posthumus can easily be imposed upon, and is liable to being over-wrought and may, perhaps, be precipitated into taking an extreme position. But there is some point in what Iachimo says about him later: 'a nobler sir ne'er lived/'Twixt sky and ground' (V,v, 145–46) and this is reinforced by Posthumus's attitude *apropos of* Iachimo towards the very end:

> Kneel not to me :
> The power that I have on you, is to spare you :
> The malice towards you, to forgive you. Live
> And deal with others better. V, v, 418-21

In a manner of speaking Posthumus may also be visualized as a paradigm of Nature in so far as he is guided by his generous and unpolluted instincts, unencrusted over by custom or hypocrisy or malice. As against him Iachimo's personality is a distillation of treachery: he is a trickster who can very well manipulate things which are likely to yield him rich dividends. It may also be added that evil in his case is not so much motivated and activized by objects and persons existing outside him as by his own inner promptings. The way he can put up with any piece of effrontery, coaxes and succeeds in smoothing over the frayed nerves of Imogen after having been repulsed in his initial nasty and calculated onslaught on her is an index of his initiative and resourcefulness to retrieve the lost ground and push himself through. If Imogen, possessed of finesse and sophistication, be deemed a representative of art in a commendable sense, Iachimo objectifies in himself all that is unsavoury and revolting in it.

Both Cloten and the Queen are embodiments of malevolence: the former is cast in his mother's mould but is neither so impeccable in manoeuvring nor is he so far-sighted. In him boorishness marries with petulance and naked self-interest.

Imogen puts her finger in the right place when she says that she will have 'no more ado'.

> With that harsh, noble, simple nothing,
> That Cloten, whose love-suit hath been to me
> As fearful as a siege
> III, iv, 134-36

In 'noble', it goes without saying, are contained all the imaginable nuances of contempt and ridicule that are evoked by him. And in the last line is betrayed the paranoid-schizoid personality of Imogen. It is from the brutal and egoistic world of Cloten that she must needs escape with an eye on sheer self-preservation He would pursue his quarry with insistent self-concern and dogged perseverance and is wholly impervious to the impact of fine feelings. He tends to be volatile and is nervously overwrought: his single ambition in life and the animating impulse behind all his endeavours is to secure Imogen for himself, for this may pave his way as heir to succession to the throne. He is far from being the cynosure of Cymbeline's court, for he entirely lacks both inborn virtues and those social graces one is at pains to cultivate. He is loud in address and uncouth in manners and has, perhaps, been incalcitrant to good breeding. 'An arrogant piece of flesh' in Guiderius's eyes, he is 'the dark consummate flower of a nobility or court society that is rotten to the core'.[2] He very much resembles Caliban who represents the 'unhewn' matter, the mere brute energy which does not let itself be subjected to any process of modification or refinement. If being vague and intangible, Imogen may create the illusion of an ethereal spirit, Cloten evokes the image of the muddy earth—something which is adhesive and intractable, a mere lump of clay.

Antipodal as they look Posthumus and Cloten have, amazingly, *apropos of* Imogen, several points of contact with each other: both of them begin with expressions of fervent and genuine love and end up with vows of vengeance against her. Equally their minds grow opaque and perverted in the face of

disillusionment and the submerged brutality and sexual aggressiveness of the primitive man forces itself out of the veneer of civilized behaviour. Early in the play, while invoking the musicians to seek to awaken Imogen by playing upon their musical instruments Cloten betrays his sensual and diseased imagination thus: 'Come on, tune: if you can penetrate her with your fingering, so: we'll try with tongue too: if none will do, let her remain: but I'll never give o'er'(II,iii, 13–15). And his aligning the erotic experience with a gruesome delight in physical violence is exhibited in a mad resolve thus: 'With that suit upon my back, will I ravish her: first kill him, and in her eyes; there shall she see my valour, which will then be a torment to her contempt. He on the ground, my speech of insultment ended on his dead body, and when my lust hath dined (which, as I say, to vex her I will execute in the clothes that she so prais'd) to the court I'll knock her back, foot her home again. She hath despis'd me rejoicingly, and I'll be merry in my revenge' (III, v, 138-47). Similarly, Posthumus, when the mood of frenzy is on him, deciding without any compunction and with out being bothered if things as represented to him have even a semblance of truth about them, bursts forth thus:

> O, that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal !
> I will go there and do 't, i' 'th court, before
> Her father, I'll do something— II, iv 148—50

'I'll do something' echoes the turgidity and inchoateness of a Lear when the latter was prompted to wreak vengeance against his two monstrously ungrateful daughters. Obscenity and misogyny which Posthumus seems to share with Cloten are brought out in his utterance at the time when he feels convinced of Imogen's infidelity thus:

> that I thought her
> As chaste as unsunn'd snow. O, all the devils!
> This yellow Iachimo, in an hour, was't not ?
> Or less; at first? Perchance he spoke not, but
> Like a full-acorn'd boar, a German one,
> Cried, "O" I and mounted; found no opposition

> But what he look'd for should oppose and she
> Should from encounter guard. II, iv, 164-71

Not unlike Edmund, Cloten maintains and insists that he is, both physically and otherwise, too, indistinguishable from Posthumus and hence it is doubtless scandalous that Imogen, because devoid of sense of discrimination, should prefer Posthumus to himself: 'for it is not vain-glory for a man and his glass to confer in his own chamber; I mean, the lines of my body are as well drawn as his; no less yonug, more strong, not beneath him in fortunes, beyond him in the advantage of the time, above him in worth, alike conversant in general services, and more remarkable in single oppositions; yet this imperseverant thing loves him in my despite. What mortality is!' (IV,i, 7-15). Imogen's hugging the headless corpse of Cloten mistakenly, in Milford-Haven, though essentially a piece of grotesquerie, looks explicable in vlew of the fact that Posthumus has become merged, physically as well as psychically, with Cloten. The comic overtones of the incident are brought out in Imogen's rapturous owning of Cloten's body—his physical framework is visualized in terms of gods of the Greek pantheon, Mercury, Mars, Hercules and Jove—as if it were, like his garments, that of Posthumus;

> A headless man? The garments of Posthumus?
> I know the shape of's leg : this is his hand:
> His foot Mercurial: his Martial thigh:
> The brawns of Hercules : but his Jovial face—
> Murder in heaven! How-? 'Tis gone. IV, ii, 308—312

Distressingly and lamentably she equates the garments and the body wiht the man—the mere externals with the thing-in-itself. It seems as if Posthumus and Cloten have become for Imogen disjointed halves of a single psychic entity, and in her ludicrous naivety she is unable to disentangle the one from the other.

The Queen is seen all the time hovering over the scene of action like a malignant presence. In her manoeuvrings and subtle handling of things she is no match for Lady Macbeth: while evil in the former is merely aberrant, in the latter it is

quintessential. She moves on an altogether lower plane of artifice and is incapable of implanting and nourishing the seeds of evil in Cloten as Lady Macbeth does in the case of her celebrated husband. She is interested in getting poisonous concoctions made out of herbs and wild flowers to be administered to her enemies as restoratives. Her one persistent preoccupation, the idea that follows her mind like a shadow, is how to get Posthumus dislodged so as to make it possible for Cloten to marry Imogen. Her relationship with the King is simple and unambiguous:

> I never do him wrong
> But he does buy my injuries, to be friends:
> Pays dear for my offences. I, ii, 35—37

Hers is a domineering personality and, like all disingenuous persons, she makes a display of her histrionic talent, masking her evil designs under the garb of amiability and suavity. She is capable of playing a dual, strategic role: assuring the king of her adherence to his person and policies and also pretending to be solicitous for Imogen's good while hating them both from the inmost depths of her heart. She constantly keeps a vigilant eye on Cloten's future prospects which can be safeguarded only by undermining their respective positions. Posthumus is to her no better than a baisilisk, the very sight of him is obnoxious to her and the sooner he is crushed and destroyed the better. She partly succeeds in her stratagems not so much because of her own acuteness of mind as owing to the imperCipience of her colourless and imbecile husband. It is only in the climactic scene of the play (when the Queen is dead) and through the startling revelations of Cornelius, borne witness to by her own women, that her incalculable perfidy is exposed to the general view and the King realizes at long last the touching simplicity of his own mindless being.

Another aspect of the negative role of the Queen is brought out when Caius Lucius, the ambassador of King Augustus Caesar and commander of the Roman forces, arrives in Cymbeline's court and negotiations start regarding denial of payment

of the tribute now which had been paid earlier by Britain since the time of Cassibelane. Cymbeline does not evince any political sagacity but allows the situation to drift irresponsibly into the hands of the Queen and Cloten both of whom demonstrate a kind of defiant patriotism. Cymbeline's resistance to Rome is obviously stiffened by the parade of jingoism jointly made by the two of them with a bang. He is left with no option but to turn down Lucius's request peremptorily-a gesture which vicariously reflects the haughtiness of the Queen and Cloten, and this has naturally the effect of escalating the situation. The fact of Cloten's empty-headedness is stressed unequivocally in Act I Scene ii,particularly in the asides of the Second Gentleman, and the Second Lord confirms this perception subsequently by adding:

> That such a crafty devil as is his mother
> Should yield the world this ass! a woman that
> Bears all down with her brain and this her son
> Cannot take two from twenty, for his heart,
> And leave eighteen. II, i 51 –55

In spite of his stupidity he is partly redeemed, however, by two of his utterances which are marked by witty sarcasm and a lively evocation of the incongruous. Supporting the Queen and addressing himself to Lucius he speaks to this effect: 'There be many Caesars ere such another Julius: Britain's a world by itself and we will nothing pay for wearing our own noses' (III, i, 12-14). And further on: 'Why tribute? Why should we pay tribute? If Caesar can hide the sun from us with a blanket, or put the moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for light: else, sir, no more tribute, pray you now' (III, i, 43-46). Simeon's comment in this regard is rather intersting: 'Most of the difficulty evaporates if we recognize Cloten as a fool relative rather than a fool absolute'.[3] That is, he concedes that he 'deviates into sense' occasionally and notes the occurrenc of the 'lucid intervals' in his otherwise befogged mind. But I think R.A. Foakes[4] goes to the heart of the matter when he accounts for the discrepancy between the strutting charlatan that Cloten is and the spiciness of the two curt

observations he makes in the light of the deliberate lack of consistency in characterization which is so notable in this play and is of a piece with its planned artistic strategy. It may be added that the Queen also manages to speak with an accent of authentic poetry in an effort to defend the sovereignty of Britain thus :

> Remember, sir, my liege,
> The kings your ancestors, together with
> The natural bravery of your isle, which stands
> As Neptune's park, ribb'd and pal'd in
> With rocks unscoleable and roaring waters,
> With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats.
> But suck them up to th' topmast. III, i, 17—23

The Queen and Cloten who seem to excel each other in snubbing Caius Lucius eventually succeed in closing all doors of settlement between Britain and Rome and Cymbeline's timid capitulation before the Queen's goading brings into relief his losthsome uxuriousness. The issue at stake has been the throwing off the yoke of Roman ascendancy and achievement of a kind of deliverance of Britain. The unavoidable battle takes place off-stage and the triumph of the British is not an easy or perfunctory one as it comes at the end of a fierce confrontation. The description of the varying fortunes of the battle is put into the mouth of Posthumus who for once comes to life while pointing out how the British soldiers first turned their backs upon the enemy but later vindicated themselves by taking the offensive and fighting to the last ditch. The rhythm of the verse bounces up and becomes charged with vigour and vivacity both when the Britons are shown to be repulsed :

> all flying
> Through a strait lane; the enemy full-hearted,
> Lolling the tongue with slaught' ring, having work
> More plentiful than tools to do't, struck down
> Some mortally, some slightly touch'd, some falling
> Merely through fear, that the strait pass was damn'd
> With dead men, hurt behind, and cowards living
> To die with length'and shame. V, iii, 6-14

and when they recover as if miraculously and turn the tide of the battle against their opponents :

> and now our cowards
> Like fragments in hard voyages became
> The life o' th' need: having found the back-door open
> Of the unguarded hearts, heavens, how they wound!
> Some slain before, some dying, some their friends
> O'er-borne i' th' former wave, ten chas'd by one,
> Are now each one the slaughter-man of twenty; V, iii, 42-49

The upshot of it is the triumph of the Britons and what is intended through it is not just the patching up of the vexed question of tribute but the reinstatement of Belarius — 'an ancient soldier',the Princes-'the two striplings', and Posthumus himself who is referred to as :

> the poor soldier that so richly fought,
> Whose rags sham'd gilded arms, whose naked breast
> Stepp'd before targes of proof, V, v, 3-5

The amazing military exploits and the wholly unanticipated succour tendered by them to Cymbeline have been legitimately highlighted. Mention may also be made at this point of the 'strait lane' image which acquires, through constant reiteration, a symbolic overtone as the Providential channel of recovery. Now that both the Queen and Cloten – the chief architects of the concept of British suzerainty and bulwarks of the opposition to Rome – are dead, Cymbeline, even when poised for victory, agrees to honour the age-old commitment and this effects his voluntary return to the *pax romana*. On the political level, this results in strengthening the ties of kinship between the two nations and also underlines the British proclivity towards tolerance and compassion even in the midst of the mire and blood in which the whole atmosphere is soaked. On the personal level, Belarius, the two Princes and Posthumus are brought back into the fold and reintegrated with it. After having lived through the Dark Night of the Soul – the intermittent phases of gloom, despair and soul–searching-Posthumus at long last achieves a sort of apotheosis and stands

vindicated in Cymbeline's view who now is enabled to shed his earlier and deplorable purblindness. Both of them are rejoined to Imogen, and 'the two striplings' are knit together to the parent stock and the broken arch of familial relationship is reconstituted. War in this context may be regarded not as a means of dispersion or destruction, doing damage to both sides, but as a passage to restitution. It is also to be noted that while all other fissures in the fabric of the social organism have been more or less covered up through understanding, patience and accommodation to one another, Iachimo alone, ruthlessly exposed by self-confession, remains outside the charmed circle and does not fit into the design of harmony.

Towards the end the attempt at focusing on the fact of reconciliation, harmony and reconstitution is very apparent and unmistakable. Posthumus's dream of his relations and Jupiter's apparition, descending in thunder and lightning, are like two mirrors set up for reflecting the future course of events. The latter is in the nature of an epiphany and belongs to the same category of extra-mundane mechanism–a sort of ceremonial pageantry–as the Statue Scene in *The Winter's Tale*,but is certainly far less effective and convincing, It does link up with the complex knot of all that is unexpected, incredible and bizarre in the play and yet it does not quite serve the purpose of clarification and illumination. Earlier, however, the image of regeneratioh–which is not inconsistent with the motif of pastoralism–arises out of the supposed death of Imogen which had been accepted as an incontrovertible fact by most of the characters all along. When questioned by Belarius as to how he found her, Arviragus, with his sharply articulated aesthetic sensibility (in marked contrast with the matter-of-factness of Guiderius) speaks to the following effect:

> Stark, as you see :
> Thus smiling, as some fly had tickled slumber,
> Not as death's dart, being laugh'd at : IV, ii, 209-211

In this death-like sleep lie embedded the seeds of regeneration:

'feeding/A little life with dried tubers' (Cf. *The Waste Land*). In spite of the mirage of death life continues to flourish at the subterranean level, and contribution to the idea of unification is made unwittingly by the newly recognized two brothers of Imogen: Guiderius and Arviragus. Although Cymbeline, unlike Imogen, has had no experience of even feigned death, yet in being reunited with his supposedly lost 'sons' and daughter, and reconciled to Posthumus, after following the lone and meandering path of mistrust and moral confusion and eventually accepting the burden of his own sin, he, too, becomes partaker of the thrill of new life being ushered in and undergoes the experience of a sort of baptism. Posthumus has been referred to as an eagle ('I chose an eagle/And did avoid a puttock') with an unflinching gaze–something which connotes both radiance and stength–and Imogen as a phoenix ('She is alone the Arabian bird') which is reborn out of its own ashes. Both these basic symbols, with all the richness of concretion that gathers around them, link up with the other elements of structure in helping to build up the ultimate design of harmony (or 'harmonized experience') in the play.

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Maqbool Hasan Khan

WALTER RALEIGH'S SHAKESPEARIAN CRITICISM*

The reputation of Sir Walter Raleigh as a Shakespearian critic has had to contend against the growing sophistication of approach and method and against increasing specialisation brought about through the intensive academic study of Shakespeare. It is a little ironical that the first Professor of English at Oxford and the author of a notable academic study of Shakespeare in the once popular English Men of Letters series should have been relegated to shades of relative oblivion by a 'movement' of which he was among the distinguished pioneers. Raleigh made worthwhile contribution to the study of literature; his appreciative book on Milton, for instance, not only tried to squeeze the last drop of significance out of what the nineteenth century regarded as Milton's 'thought' but also paved the way for a post-Romantic revaluation of the poet. Besides being landmarks in their respective fields his other books went a long way in liberating the study of literature from the nineteenth century academic concern with philological studies. The finest compliment paid to criticism is to absorb its insights to form part of the general currency of opinion about an author or a subject, and this is what has happened to a large extent with Raleigh's studies of Wordsworth and Shakespeare.

Whatever his other failings—as a person or as a critic—Raleigh cannot be accused of at least two intellectual vices:

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fruitless schematisation and dilettantism. Bradley is great-by any standards; the creator of a magnificent intellectual edifice on the basis of a sensitive reading of the plays and (contrary to popular impression) sound scholarship. *Shakespearean Tragedy*, nevertheless, does leave us with a sense of considerable unease as to the very perfection of its formal structure. Shakespeare's pragmatic, improvising art, we feel with Raleigh, does not perhaps permit us the search for such self-consistent coherence. Or, possibly, what irritates us is all a matter of style, a question of the appropriate tone that suggests the subject is a popular dramatist and not a philosophical document. Writing his little book on Shakespeare under the towering shadow of *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Raleigh could not but have been conscious of the many differences between his approach and that of Bradley. The fact, however, that he does not even remotely try to formulate a theory of Shakespearian tragedy, comedy, or (following Dowden) even an explanatory hypothesis of Shakespeare's personality does not emanate from the desire to be different; as elsewhere in Raleigh's criticism, it is part of a healthy impressionism, an objective appreciation and of a slightly anti-romantic Johnsonian common sense.

Raleigh had a gift for phrasing as a natural concomitant of critical insight and wrote, as Kenneth Muir notes[1], in a pleasant style. 'Monument to dead ideas' about *Paradise Lost* sticks in the memory even when all else is forgotten of Raleigh's *Milton*. 'The Machiavels of private life'[2] about Boccaccio and his sixteenth century Italian disciples suggests clues to Shakespeare's growing disenchantment with romance in a way that goes beyond mere narrative indebtedness. No doubt, there are occasions when Raleigh is obliged to camouflage a certain inadequacy or failure of thought in vague rhetorical gestures: 'Plays like those of Shakespeare cannot be written in cold blood; they call forth the man's whole energies, and take toll of the last farthing of his wealth of sympathy and experience' (*Shakespeare*, p. 163). Incidentally, it is in the context of the old-fashioned theme of Shakespeare's

self-revelation that most of the rhetoric occurs: 'no man can walk abroad save on his own shadow' (p. 7) and 'what we do know of him is so essential that it seems impersonal' (p. 6). Perhaps it was not Raleigh's fault. The Romantic insight as to the confluence of personality and experience in art had in course of time degenerated so as to exclude the intermediacy of imagination, and it was the poetic–critical revolution of the 'twenties that was to reveal finally the naivety of the personalist stance in criticism.

Raleigh's relapse into rhetoric is not too frequent and, except on the subjects to which he had not really applied his mind, the general tenour of his book sounds congenial both to the modern reader as well as the trained scholar. The probable reason for such appeal lies in the fact that, notwithstanding Raleigh's impatience with unproductive and hair-splitting scholarship, he was no dilettante. Though at an early stage in his life he did contemplate a journalistic career for himself, he would not have been, one feels, very happy to play the role of an errand-boy of the world of learning. Raleigh's commitment to scholarly and critical pursuits, though marked by enthusiasm rather than exactness and diligence, was yet always well-informed and, as we shall presently see in the case of Shakespeare, up-to-date in almost all the problems relating to the subject.

Enthusiasm, indeed, and commitment to the experiential bearings of literature were the marked features of Raleigh's creed— if that is the word for a simple matter of instinct. Raleigh's career as a critic was parallelled by his achievement as a teacher, and both were marked by a commitment to an appreciation of the best in literature. In one of his early letters he defines his role as a teacher in the following words: 'To make people old or young care for ... the principal English poets.'[3] 'Literature', he once rematked in a casual aside, 'is the record of man's adventures on the edge of things' (*Letters*, I, xii). This, however, does not represent the spirit in which he had undertaken to write his book on Shakespeare. His attitude was marked by striking humility, willingness to do

hard work and the desire to remain as close to the facts as his keen generalising intellect would permit him. In a letter to John Sampson (6. II. 1906) he tells him about his forthcoming book in his characteristic vein of self-deflation: 'It is a sad little book on W.S. But the word 'evince' doesn't occur in it, and the cliches are kept down in number. I 've just struck out 'profound' before 'thought'. There is no such thing, except in melodrama; there's only thought'. A little earlier the task seemed more daunting and the concern with his style, this time syntax, more serious: 'I wish I could get that *Shakespeare* begun. I fear I am getting middle-aged and shant capture the zest. Moreover I am sick of my own syntax. It's stiff and monotonous, and I can't change it. Everything I write seems pretentious' (*Letters*, II, 292). Still earlier (30. 8. 1903) in a long letter to John Sampson about the projected *Shakespeare* immediately after the offer had been made Raleigh speaks of 'the crowds of motives and deterrents' in his mind. That he did not want to write in a series might probably have been due to the fact that the format would thus be dictated by the requirements of the series. The popular English Men of Letters series obliged its contributors not to give the biographical details of the author in a separate chapter but, as far as possible, to view his work as an extension of his life and personality. The series was as typical of the critical attitudes and assumptions of its age as some of the modern series are of our own. It may, however, be pointed out that Raleigh was only too willing to combine biography with critical assessment since, like Dowden before him thougn not perhaps so naively, he subscribed to the view of Shakespeare's self-revelation in his work. We shall soon see in some detail how Raleigh treated this nineteenth century critical theme; it is enough to mention here that this reluctance to write in a series was not due to his disagreement with the biographical method of criticism.

Raleigh considered himself to be well-equipped for the task. 'If I am to have a fling at Bill', he continues in the same letter, 'it may be now or never.' The kind of knowledge he considered supreme did not come with years. 'When I sit down to

mature, I just quietly rot'. His appreciation of the work of Shakespeare in its experiential bearings was already complete. Years would only deaden the sharpness of perception and the ability for enjoyment. Scholarship may gain but criticism would only be a loser: 'Look at Aldis Wright. He is a learned, dumb man, with a contempt for speech.' So far as he himself was concerned his scholarly equipment for writing a critical work on Shakespeare was quite adequate: 'The bother would be to keep the details out. ... I know too much.' There is no doubt that Raleigh had mastered the contemporary Shakespeare scholarship in all its essentials. He knew enough about the problems in Shakespeare studies to be able to make judicious use of his knowledge for critical purposes without going wrong on the facts or putting them in wrong perspectives. In Elizabethan voyagers and adventurers he took an abiding interest, important not only in itself but also serving as his means of access to the by-lanes of minor Elizabethan literature. He did not share with some of his Victorian predecessors a contempt for the stage and cared so much to know about the real conditions in which Shakespeare's plays were written as to be able to modify Shakespeare's image as the Seer or the Moralist. Similarly, of textual stucies he knew enough to be able to see that the nineteenth century Attribution studies were really motivated by a form of bardolatory. He himself subscribed to a version of the Revision theory and made some interesting textual comments two years before the publication of the first major modern bibliographical venture, Pollard's study of the folios and quartos. Of Shakespeare's life proper and the records and documents on which it is based Raleigh had made a careful study. Though not a scholar himself, he took a lively interest in scholarly problems relating to Shakespeare's life in order to form an Impression of Shakespeare's personality as well as to fulfil obligations of the series to which he was contributing his book. His acquaintance with Shakespeare lore and scholarship extended from Rowe and the eighteenth century editors (including Malone) to Halliwell-Phillipps and Furnivall. There is no specific evidence in the

text— the book is popular, without notes or references– but one has a feeling that Raleigh's main debt is to Halliwell-Phillipps though most of the interpretation of records and the choice of traditions is Raleigh's own. Certain facts were generally underplayed, if not suppressed, in Victorian lives of Shakespeare; Raleigh includes them though he had misgivings about the readers' reaction. In a letter to John Sampson (24 July 1906) Raleigh told him about the first two chapters of his book and wrote: 'I can already hear the Chorus of Snorts that will greet it because it casually mentions some little things that have always been known to the few,— but not to the crew'. This attempt to 'humanise' Shakespeare is, incidentally, part of Raleigh's desire to move out of the Romantic and Victorian grooves in Shakespeare appreciation. That Raleigh is a transitional figure, say between Bradley and Stoll, would be more apparent when we come to discuss problems like the relative value of character-study, but what must be stressed at this stage is the fact that as part of his equipment as Shakespeare critic there was the willingness to question, and go beyond, current fashions and orthodoxies. In the letter quoted earlier (30 August 1903), Raleigh writes to Sampson: 'Everyone gets trapped in fashion. Look at Johnson's great essay and the long passage on the Unities. Had he lived a century later he would have given the unities one sentence.' It is part of Raleigh's healthy objectivity that, among other things and notwithstanding his great regard for Bradley's subtlety and intellectual powers, he could see through the Morgann-Bradley character-study and realize that it was as much a fashion, only tangentially related to the facts of Shakespearian drama, as the discussion of the neo-classical Unities had been in the eighteenth century.

II

Raleigh, however, could not entirely eschew fashion from his discussion of Shakespearian themes and topics in his book.

He had indeed asked one of his correspondents to supply him with a list of subjects that he would like to see discussed in the book but the reason why he chose Shakespeare's self-revelation as one such item may not entirely have been due to his correspondent's suggestion. Dowden's biographical method, as exemplified in his *Shakespeare, His Mind and Art*, had become a powerful orthodoxy in the closing years of the nineteenth century. His developmental design and the biographical interpretation of some of the plays had pervaded the general appreciation of Shakespeare, specially the numerous lives and essays that were written for popular consumption. The method reached its nadir of romanticized vulgarization in Frank Harris's *The Man Shakespeare and His Tragic Life-Story* (1909), only two years after the publication of Raleigh's *Shakespeare*. By the end of the century Dowden had become one of the most respected Shakespearian critics and scholars, the Arden editor of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, besides being the author of a number of collection of essays. His biographical approach was adopted by other distinguished critics. Even the cool and careful Bradley was not above making a casual biographical aside in his *Shakespearian Tragedy*[4] though of the man Shakespeare he chose not to speak in his great impersonal book. Raleigh himself had great regard for Dowden. In a letter to W. Macneile Dixon (3 March 1907) he wrote: 'I should like to send one [copy of my book] to Dowden, who was my earliest teacher. Of course I don't sing his tune exactly; he wouldn't wish for that, but I am sure that bits and shades and echoes of a book like his get into all later criticism. Where he has really made his mark his view is incorporated in a kind of commonplace of orthodoxy and he soon loses all credit for it.' Thinking so highly of Dowden as he, and so many others in his age did, it was but natural for him to introduce the subject of self-revelation which Dowden had done so much to popularise. It must have seemed natural for Raleigh, as it had been natural for Dowden, to think of the 'roots' and the 'origin' of Shakespeare's work as lying in his mind or personality: the scientific, botanical metaphor has captured critical imagination

in an age that saw tremendous developments in the field of biology. The subject of self-revelation that appears so unpromising to us in our age of objective correlatives and symbolic forms did, however, have a context of significant ideas in the nineteenth century. The close proximity between personality and experience, or rather the authentication of experience through the medium of personality had been a great Romantic insight dispersed in critical writings right from the close of the eighteenth century as well as enshrined in works like *The Prelude*. The idea of self-revelation in art had the critical support of men like Herder, Schiller, Goethe, the Schlegels, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keble, Carlyle and Newman—the men who shaped the mind of the nineteenth century and wove the pattern of its complex of ideas.

It is in such a context of ideas that Raleigh's—and Dowden's-discussion of the subject of Shakespeare's self-revelation should be approached. There is little doubt that such views as find expression in the opening chapter of Raleigh's book cannot now be discussed sympathetically except in a historical context. Raleigh, however, writes with conviction supported as he was by the great authority of Dowden: 'Yet Shakespeare was a man, and a writer: there was no escape for him; when he wrote, it was himself that he related to paper, his own mind that he revealed' (*Shakespeare*, p. 5). This is pure Dowdhn though in one or two important respects Raleigh differs from his mentor. One of the implications of the biographical method as applied to Shakespeare or to other writers of fiction is that the creative self of the author reveals itself through identification with particular characters in his work. At the simplest level such identification may assume the form of disguised biography. Such, however, is not the case with Shakespeare as the known biographical facts are extremely meagre. Identification could only be at the deepest level. Dowden had attpmpted to identify Shakespeare at this 'essential' level-in a purely subjective manner–with two of his creations: Romeo and Hamlet. Raleigh is a little more cau-

tious and attempts no such close identification.[5] On the contrary, he believes Shakespeare to have dispersed himself throughout his work, giving to one character his wit, to another his philosophic doubt, to still another his love of action or his deeply ingrained simplicity and constancy. Raleigh thus finds Shakespearian traits not only in the procrastinating Hamlet or the indecisive Richard II but also in men of action like Hotspur. This slight deviation in Raleigh gives perhaps some indication of an attempt to move away from simplistic notions of self-revelation and come close to the concept of empathy that was first formulated by Coleridge.

Dowden's earliest formulations of the biograpical method had led him to conclude that the interpretation of the plays in the light of a conception of Shakespeare's personality, however subjective and therefore unreliable, is yet a very different proposition from the attempt to reconstruct an imaginative biography of Shakespeare on the basis of the 'evidence' in the plays. Dowden did so implicitly since, being a pioneer of the biographical method, he could not then have realised to what wrong uses the method could be put. The concluding years of the century saw a number of attempts at the reconstruction of imaginative biographies of Shakespeare. Thus, it was only proper for Raleigh to warn his reader: 'If we attempt to argue backwards and to recreate [Shakespeare's] personal history from a study of his cosmic wisdom, we fall into a trap' (p. 10). That Raleigh himself did not remain long in the blind alley is a measure of his critical wisdom since the sentimentalising strain in Shakespeare criticism was much more common then than it has been since.

What, according to Raleigh, are the contents of Shakespeare's inner personality–the easily comprehensible, externally visible idiosyncrasies and weaknesses are impossible to recapture-are revealed in his works 'The truth is', says Raleigh, 'that Shakespeare, by revealing his whole mind to us, has given us just cause to complain that his mind is not small enough to be comprehended with ease' (p. 17). This is sensible enough, and Raleigh here writes with Keats's description of the 'Men of

Genius'in mind: 'they have not any individuality, any determined Character.' 'Shakespeare was that rarest of all things, a whole man', says Raleigh (p. 19). What Raleigh means by wholeness is nothing but Shakespeare's universal sympathy, the ability to share divergent viewpoints, to feel with the saint and the sensualist all at the same time. It also means that Shakespeare has no single, self–consistent and definable view of life This, however, is no invitation to chaos in the matter of interpreting particular plays or Shakespeare's works in general. Raleigh himself came to believe that a certain sense of fate dominates the tragedies and, in his excellent analysis of *Measure for Measure*, he showed how Shakespeare's view of life and sensuality came close to Christian belief. How could then Shakespeare be all things to all men? How could he be a seer and a sceptic both at the same time? In Raleigh the problem is unresolved, and it remains unresolved unless one undertakes-which Raleigh did not-to go beyond ideological structures and edifices to the more ideal world where poetic imagination really operates.

Raleigh is on firmer, more objective, ground when he attempts to base his conception of the man Shakespeare on contemporary references to his geniality. 'The tradition of geniality clings to his name like a faded perfume' (p.14). 'This is not speculation, but' truth', says Raleigh, and he is right. But he goes on to suggest that without the humility that must have accompanied his geniality Shakespeare could not collect his dramatic materials—the various world of men and women in the plays. Unaware of what would now be regarded as intricate critical problems Raleigh goes on to suggest that a man of harsher temperament and narrower sympathies might have 'propitiated' Cordelia but could never have come 'within earshot of the soliloquy of Autolycus' (p. 14). It is difficult to reconcile such critical naivety with so much evidenee of the freshness and modernity of outlook elsewhere in the book, specially in its crucial fifth chapter.

Raleigh envisages, following Taine and Dowden, an inner conflict in Shakespeare's personality. The impression is strong

that here, like Dowden, Raleigh is doing exactly what he himself had regarded as untenable–arguing backwards from the plays to a hypothetical personality. Dowden had based his argument on a subjective identification of Romeo and Hamlet with Shakespeare and had hence discovered in the latter a conflict between Reason and Affection. Raleigh has a different interpretation of *Hamlet* and so his diagnosis of Shakespeare's inner conflict is also different. What beset Shakespeare, according to Raleigh, was a conflict between the life of action and that of imagination. 'The central drama of [Shakespeare's] mind is the tragedy of the life of imagination' (p. 15). Shakespeare's strongest ambition was to be a seer and a contemplative, without a personality of his own. The call to action would come in his moments of greatest weakness when the hold of the imagination was the strongest. His will thus being paralysed, the inevitable result would be tragedy. That was the tragedy in his life and that was the tragedy he delineated best in his plays.

Raleigh, it may be recalled, was conscious of the role of fashion in criticism. He did so because he himself had tried to disengage Shakespeare appreciation from the current romantic adulation. 'Since the rise of Romantic criticism, the appreciation of Shakespeare has become a kind of auction, where the highest bidder, however extravagant, carries off the prize' (p. 4). He could see through Romantic fallacies because he had made a careful study of 'the cool and manly utterances' of critics like Johnson. It is difficult to see why he failed to notice the value of the neoclassical tact in maintaining that biography and criticism are separate propositions.

III

It may be worthwhile to consider briefly in what way Raleigh's assumptions about Shakespeare's self-revelation affect his interpretation of the poems and plays. Does he think, for instance, that particular plays or groups of plays deserve

special attention because they might be more crucially related to some aspect of Shakespeare's personality. Did he, too, like Dowden and others in the nineteenth century, find Hamlet interesting because it reveals and dramatizes some inner conflict in Shakespeare's personality? Is his interpretation of the last plays, to consider another possibility, affected in any way by sentimental notions about Shakespeare's final period?

To begin with the sonnets. Quite expectedly he challenges the view, held by Sir Sidney Lee among others, that the sonnets are conventional exercises, 'roaming over the dramatic possibilities of life, and finding deep expression for some of its imagined crises' (p. 88). Raleigh does not accept this view; if conventional, they are very bad poetry since the imaginary situations assumed in them lack the one essential quality of conventional poetry, the clarity of dramatic outline. 'There is nothing else conventional about them, except their critics, (p. 90). He subscribes to Dowden's view that the poems are personal: 'I believe', Dowden had said, 'that Shakespeare's Sonnets express his own feelings in his own person' (p.87).

Their autobiographical character notwithstanding, the situation underlying them cannot now possibly be reconstructed except through fanciful conjecture. Raleigh would, therefore, disapprove of any attempt at the identification of the persons involved: he gives the 'story' in its barest outline, only as much as is necessary for the enjoyment of the poetry in the sonnets. It is at this stage that he makes the significant comment: 'Poetry is not biograpny' (p.91). Critical insight, one is reminded, is not a gift from the gods given gratis to favoured individuals before poetry is born. Raleigh was probably trying to make sense of his experience of poetry in the light of his own dictum, quoted earlier: 'No man can walk abroad save on his own shadow'. Poems may be occasioned by particular experiences but what ultimately matters is the poetry, not the occasion. And so Raleigh says about the sonnets: 'Their occasion is a thing of the past; their theme is eternal' (p. 92).

In the criticism of the last plays, however, Raleigh remains a prisoner of his personalist preconceptions and of his own

critical metaphors. The opening pages of the last chapter read more like an account of the inner biography of Shakespeare than a criticism of his plays.[6] The tragic period was one of spiritual stress: 'no man can explore the possibilities of suffering, as Shakespeare did, to the dark end, without peril to his own soul' (p. 210). We sympathise with Shakespeare's characters in the tragedies when we apprehend 'the madness that threatens them'. 'But there is a far worse terror when it begins to appear that Shakespeare himself is not aloof and secure; that his foothold is precarious on the edge that overlooks the gulf' (p. 211). Moreover, what about the excessive feeling of disgust with sex in plays like *King Lear*, *Timon of Athens* and *Hamlet*? Some of this disgust may be dramatically justified. 'But the passion goes far beyond its occasion, to condemn ... all the business and desire of the race of man' (p. 211). Shakespeare's great achievement in the tragedies is, paradoxically enough, the product of a period of disease and ill-health.

The pervading sense of quiet and happiness in the last plays, Raleigh continues, is a reflection of a 'change in the mind' of the author. The inner biography that the critic is attempting to write now happily fuses into the criticism of the plays. The subjects of the last plays, Raleigh rightly points out, are still tragic but shaped to a fortunate end. Wrongs are immense, yet the forces of destruction do not prevail, and the end is tragi-comic bringing forgiveness and reunion. The last plays are different from the early comedies as here the 'new-found happiness is a happiness wrung from experience' (p. 209). A certain disenchanted 'kindliness' and 'tolerance' replaces the gaiety and charm of the early comedies. This characterisation of Shakespeare's Romances, it may be pointed out, is Victorian and Dowdenesque and has been incorporated with slight modifications into modern appraisals of the work of Shakespeare's final period. The excessive note of solemnity in the modern criticism of the last plays, specially during the middle decades of the present century, had, as pointed out by Philip Edwards,[7] too long an innings. The origins, however, of the feeling that

the last plays somehow possess a crucial experiential bearing—whether related to Shakespeare's personal experiences or not—are to be found in the nineteenth century. The feeling persists through Raleigh to be reinforcsd later in the symbolic and mythical studies of the plays.

In themselves Raleigh's comments on the Romances are of little consequence since they are brief and general. Owing to his personalist preoccupations he ignores the possibility, highlighted by Thorndike[8] a few years earlier, that the peculiar themes and structure of the last plays might have had something to do with changes in current theatrical fashions. To change for reasons other than those relating to inner compulsions would have appeared to Raleigh as totally unbecoming of the greatest of poets. That Raleigh does not so much as mention any other possibility goes only to show that the hold of the Romantic Poet, the Poet that looks into his heart and writes, was still strong on the critical imagination.[9]

IV

The view just expressed has, however, to be a little modified. Self-revelation apart, Raleigh elsewhere reveals a remarkable freedom from current modes of Shakespeare appreciation, and it is in such freedom that the permanent value of his book lies. It has just been pointed out that Raleigh would not care to consider the possibility that changes in Shakespeare's work could have been caused by theatrical exigencies. This, however, is not the whole truth. A more balanced statement of Raleigh's position would envisage a Shakespeare that was, his creative urge notwithstanding, ever willing to make compromises. Shakespeare does still have a private life, deep personal convictions and a strong commitment to the value of experience. However, a pragmatist, he could easily adjust his vision to the requirements of popular entertainment. Moreover, he had scant regard for abstract schemes, tragic or comic. ('The

attempt to find a theoretic basis for the great tragedies has never been attended with the smallest success'-p. 213). Shakespeare, to sum up Raleigh's position, was a poet of vision still but of a vision that could be mediated through a form of popular entertainment.

Raleigh thus does lay stress on the exigencies of the theatre. Not that he was the first to have done so, though he certainly was among the earliest, if not the first, to have changed what was generally a complaint into a compliment. The neoclassical critics generally attributed what they considered to be Shakespeare's faults to the unfortunate circumstances under which he wrote his works. The divine Shakespeare of the Romantics and the nineteenth century was a figure Bowdlerised out of his historical context. The chapter in Dowden's book that deals with the Elizabethan background of Shakespeare's work is the weakest. Scholarship in the late nineteenth century was generally preoccupied with philological and linguistic studies, with questions of prosody and scansion, and with the preparation of the critical editions of some of Shakespeare's contemporaries. The lack of interest in Shakespeare's theatre is symbolised by the self-complacent contemporary attitude towards the design and conventions of the Victorian theatre. Lack of knowledge, therefore, combined with the conviction that Shakespeare was free and did not abide our question led to a critical approach that paid little attention to how Shakespeare's work might have been shaped by the circumstances of its birth.

For lack of direct reference in the book or comment in Raleigh's works elsewhere it is difficult to say if he was aware of the Elizabethan Stage Society work of William Poel. Whether so or not, a mild Elizabethan Revival breeze does seem to blow through his chapter on Shakespeare's theatre. One of his complaints against Shakespearian critics is that they seem to pay little regard to the conditions and conventions of Shakespeare's stage. Those who are familiar with the chronology of the works of Bradley and E.E. Stoll would naturally be interested in what Raleigh has to say here: '... those critics who study

[Shakespeare] in a philosophical vacuum are always liable to err by treating the fashions of his theatre as if they were a part of his creative genius' (p. 94). That Raleigh is here thinking of Bradley and his *Shakespearian Tragedy* is very likely. We know from his letters that Raleigh's impatience with Bradleian schematisation was genuine, and that the book by his senior Oxford colleague made him react in ways that he could not easily analyse. Bradley's gifts were enormous—his unusual attention to detail, his ability to work with large hypotheses, his success in appearing cool and rational but combining it with remarkable imaginative insight which was also characterised by warmth and passion. Compared with him Raleigh appeared almost casual. Even the small proportions of his book on Shakespeare appeared dauntingto him at the deliberative stage: 'I shall never have peace or freedom till I sit down and write a book called 'Shakespeare'. I don't want to: I prefer smaller jobs' (*Lettres*, p. 295). That certainly was not mere humility on Raleigh's part. If Shakespeare is the greatest of the creative writers in English, it is not because he had some abstruse, esoteric philosophy, or philosophy not esoteric but philosophy still, that could be deciphered with the help of other philosophies; Shakespeare's kind of drama marks the apotheosis of improvisation that moves from imperfection to imperfection and yet achieves a comprehensiveness unparalleled anywhere else. Something very like this view is implied in Raleigh's criticism of Shakespeare. Raleigh may appear casual and he may not have possessed the intellectual gifts of a Bradley, but as a critic he could easily adjust his sensibility to the essence of an artist's work, and in Shakespeare's case he understood that the imposition of unity was a form of escape from critical responsibility. To desist from schematisation and yet to be able to do justice to the comprehensiveness of Shakespeare's work must, therefore, have appeared daunting to Raleigh, and the desire to do 'smaller jobs' was thus an indication of critical integrity and not mere humility.

Raleigh's letter to D. Nichol Smith (20 January 1918) about Bradley is interesting as it brings into focus not only Raleigh's

but many other readers' impatience with Bradley and Bradley's kind of criticism: 'I don't know how it is, he interests me all the time, and all the time he irritates me. I believe it is the religious strain in him. Come to think of it, he treats his text exactly as preachers treat the Bible. Twist it to get the juice out.' Bradley had, so it appeared to Raleigh, manipulated Shakespeare's text in order to give it greater philosophical and psychological coherence than it actually possessed, ignoring at the same time peculiarities that were the source of Shakespeare's real strength. This is where critics like E.E. Stoll would have agreed with Raleigh. The hint that theatrical fashions played their part in shaping Shakespeare's work and the insistence that story, and not character, is of prime importance in Shakespearian drama must have provided support to Stoll in his crusade against the Bradleian concept of verisimilitude and psychological consistency.

Raleigh was not, unlike Poel and Granville-Barker, a theatre enthusiast, but, among the literary critics, he was perhaps the first to give due recognition to Shakespeare's stage-craft. The brief outline of the development of the actors' companies given in the chapter on 'The Theatre', though sketchy and hardly useful now, still makes the valid point that the origins of Shakespeare's art are popular and not courtly. The point was much more relevant and valuable at the end of the Victorian era and in the years immediately following the publication of *Shakespearian Tragedy*. Its importance may be missed now except by those with a concern for the development of critical approaches and attitudes to Shakespeare.

Raleigh's treatment of the subject is marked by freshness, insight and enthusiasm. What makes it more significant and interesting is the fact that Raleigh seeks to combine the study of the peculiar poetic and atmospheric effects in Shakespeare's plays with keen attention to points of stage-craft. The comments, for example, on the opening scenes in Shakespeare, specially on the opening scene in *Othello* (p. 123) and the analysis, in terms of stage effect, of the scene of the conspirators'

meeting in Brutus's orchard in Act II of *Julius Caesar* are illuminating and still worth study. Raleigh also notes the connection between the lack of realism in the contemporary stage presentation in Elizabethan theatre and the poetic nature of Shakespearian drama. The absence of actresses on the Elizabethan stage was vital to the peculiar poetic nature of Shakespeare's plays. Raleigh significantly remarks: 'With the disappearance of the boy-players the poetic drama died in England, and it has had no second life' (p.120). This, combined with the recognition that music may provide a valid analogy for the structure of Shakespeare's greater plays, suggests that Raleigh is not far from the formative years of the modernist revolution in critical sensibility. How important the musical analogy was for Raleigh as the principle of construction in Shakespeare (perhaps as a corrective to Bradley's dialectical and structuralist theory) may be gathered from the following passage which may be quoted in full :

> The development of Shakespeare's greater plays is curiously musical in its logic; the statement and interweaving of the themes, the variations and repetitions, the quiet melodies that are heard in the intervals, and the gradual increase of complexity until the subtle discourse of the earlier scenes is swallowed up in the full blare of the reunited orchestra—all this ordered beauty was made possible by the strict subordination of stage effects to the needs and methods of poetry. (p. 123)

It is after reading a passage like the above or some of the all too brief analyses of the plays here or elsewhere in the book that one is obliged to turn to Raleigh's life and begin to wonder what it was that made him give up the study of Shakespeare: 'I can't read Shakespeare any more', Raleigh wrote to W. Macneile Dixon (8 September 1913). Whatever the reason there can be little doubt that in Raleigh's turning away from Shakespeare (and literary study) we lost a critic who was perhaps better suited than many of his contemporaries to preside over the rejuvenation of Shakespeare study and appreciation in modern times.

One or two points that still remain to be discussed in support of the view that Raleigh's *Shakespeare* is less Victorian

than modern inspite of its concern with themes like self-revelation include his attempt to de-emphasise the Bradleian schematisation of Shakespeare. Bradley, it is generally agreed, represents the culmination of critical tendencies that originated at the end of the eighteenth century. This, however, would be more readily granted so far as the study of character is concerned. What is not generally recognised is the fact that Bradley's attempt to 'philosophise' Shakespeare, to see in the substance of his mature tragedies the inscrutable working of Moral Necessity, too, had its not so distant origin in the Coleridgian adulation of the philosophical Shakespeare. Coleridge's insight about the great poet also being a great philosopher was reinforced by the unity-hunting nineteenth century German criticism of Shakespeare, and both exercised a deep influence on the Victorian Shakespearian criticism making it conscious of the need to explore Shakespeare's philosophical bearings. Other historical factors combined to encourage the late Victorians to see Shakespeare in their image. The tragic dramatist of Bradley's conception, the philosopher-moralist who brooded over the actions of men and found in them the deterministic pattern of character–wil–catastrophe, the poet transported out of his Elizabethan context into the post-Darwinian ethos of pessimistic humanism, was in fact the culmination of the romantic and Victorian tendencies to invent, if one failed to discover, a deeply philosophical Shakespeare, a visionary whose shaping imagination dealt with the world of ideals rather than the mere imitator of Nature and of men and manners that he had been in the eighteenth century. 'The Substance of Shakespearian Tragedy' is thus the last document of the romantic criticism of Shakespeare in England, and the critic who sought to de-emphasise what Bradley had endeavoured to bring into the centre may certainly be said to have opened up fresh possibilities for exploration.

Raleigh's reaction against *Shakespearian Tragedy* takes many forms. He goes back to Johnson to suggest that there is an essentail continuity between the comedies and tragedies

of Shakespeare. Both kinds of plays 'might be best arranged on a graduated scale'. Further, 'the echoes that pass from the one to the other make a strange collection' (p. 129). Benedick, for example, speaks the language of Hamlet. There are tragic elements—themes, situations, characters-in the early comedies as well as the late Romances. The tragic mode of feeling, of looking sympathetically at man as a suffering being, is therefore habitual with Shakespeare. Comparing him with Montaigne Raleigh says: Shakespeare's 'ultimate sympathies are with human frailty, human simplicity, human unreason; and it is to these that he gives the last word. He has what Montaigne shows no trace of, a capacity for tragic thought' (p.76). Thus for Raleigh Shakespeare's tragic thought was characterised by sympathy and acquiescence, two of its most notable features. What is important, however, is the fact that Shakespeare's tragic sympathies are what may be called regulative and not constitutive. In Bradley and elsewhere, on the other hand, they acquire an abstract and schematised intellectual coherence which is not true to the facts of Shakespearian drama. In the face of the nineteenth century worship of Shakespeare as the quintessential Sage,Raleigh contends that Shakespearian tragedy has no doctrine, theory, metaphysic or morals. The Clown's song in *Twelfth Night* gives a foreboding of tragedy; the storm, however, soon rises, 'and blows all laughter out of the plays, except the laughter of the fool' (p. 132). Are Shakespearian heroes morally responsible agents? Is there a Moral Order in the universe? Is Necessity blank or moral? Is character destiny? Is there a coherent doctrine in Tragedy? 'All doctrines and theories concerning the place of man in the universe, and the origin of evil, are a poor and partial business compared with that dazzling vision of the pitiful estate of humanity which is revealed by Tragedy' (p. 196). 'Shakespeare's philosophy was the philosophy of the shepherd Corin', and Lear's tragic ordeal taught him just that. It is obvious that Raleigh has here rescued Shakespeare from the speculative moralists of the nineteenth century, though it is not so obvious that he has

delivered him into the hands of the image and myth hunters of the present age.

There is no reason to disagree with the opinion of D. Nichol Smith expressed in the Preface to the collection of Raliegh's letters that the fifth chapter of his *Shakespeare* gives to Raleigh a secure place among Shakespeare critics. We have already considered some of the factors that make Raleigh's approach so fresh and illuminating. What remains, however, to highlight is probably of greater significance in the history of Shakespeare criticism and of considerable value in itself.

Deriving their theory from the Renaissance commentators of Aristotle, the neoclassical critics of Shakespeare had mainly concerned themselves with considerations of the formal aspects of the plays of Shakespeare—apart, of course, from their praise of Shakespeare as the great imitator of Nature. The shift away from the theory of decorum which had till then dominated whatever character criticism there was coincided with the growth of psychological thought in terms of a causal nexus between will and deed. The focalisation of thought on thought itself— a slow development in general philosophy originating at the time of the Renaissance—was hastened in the eighteenth century, encouraged as the process was in the field of general critical ideas by developments in prose fiction. It was in such related fields that the critics of Shakespeare found substace for their intuitive feeling about Shakespeare's truth to Nature. It was thus that the theory of psychological verisimilitude came into existence to dominate Shakespeare criticism for a little more than a century. In their concern to highlight the human reality of fictional characters, critics from Morgann to Bradley tended to forget that the characters were only part of the total artistic design in a play, and that the dramatic truth to life was only a fiction, a part of the artistic illusion. All this, of course, has been a part of general awareness since the day when L.C. Knights tried to laugh Shakespeare critics out of their excessive concern with character. However, it was not so in 1907, only three years

after the publication of Bradley's great study of Shakespeare's tragic characters. It is, therefore, to Raleigh's credit that notwithstanding his lack of interest in theoretical issues and, unlike Stoll, without much support from continental theorising about drama or fiction, he could, merely on the strength of his own objective integrity, realize that what must have mattered most to a popular dramatist of the Elizabethan age was not character but story. In saying this Raleigh was not trying to be a neo-Aristotelian; he was only seeking to be true to the facts of Shakespearian drama.

Raleigh does concede that different dramatists may have different starting-points: a character, a moral, a philosophy of life, an atmosphere, a sentiment. In Shakespeare's case however, it was always a story, or, as Stoll called it a few years later, a striking situation. In another respect also Raleigh anticipates later criticism—both Stoll and Granville-Barker. He lays stress on the fact that the opening scenes in many of Shakespeare's plays are in the nature of postulates, introduced without regard to their probability or psychological truth. Raleigh says this without appearing to controvert the many character critics of the nineteenth century, including Bradley, who had attempted to justify what they thought was Shakespeare's covert art in the opening scenes. Bradley's Shakespeare is a much more careful and deliberate artist than the one envisaged by Raleigh. In his lecture on *King Lear* Bradley does his best to defend the position that the behaviour of both Cordelia and Lear in the opening scene of the play is entirely in character; it is the critics who are at fault since they ignore the many hints given by the dramatist. Even Bradley, however, has to concede that the broad impression left on the mind is one of improperly motivated behaviour. Raleigh, on the other hand, is probably right in suggesting that here, as in some other plays, Shakespeare is least concerned with probability of situation or truth of character. His interest in character actually begins only after he has delineated a striking situation. 'Until the situation is created he cannot go to work on his characters',

(p. 134). To spend thought on Cordelia's character in the opening scene, says Raleigh, is to forget Shakespeare. Cordelia's is 'a character invented for the situation, so that to argue from the character to the plot is to invert the true order of things in the artist's mind' (p. 135).

Raleigh is likely to have given some thought to the problems relating to characterisation in drama. Patrick Murray has shown that he was among the earliest critics to have suggested that characters in Shakespeare have no independent existence.[10] Raleigh's approach to the problem is subtle and probably takes note of developments in critical theory relating to early modern fiction. That he was the author of a book on the English novel is of some moment in relation to his criticism of Shakespeare. It has not so far been noted that in an excellent passage on Shakespeare's characterisation (p. 152) Raleigh makes use of the concept of the point of view and shows how Shakespeare's adoption of the point of view of a particular character or that of a group of characters guides the audience sympathy towards them or other characters. 'Moreover, the point of view shifts as the years pass by' (p. 152). The parents of the lovers are not in focus in *Romeo and Juliet;* in the Romances, on the other hand, our sympathies shift towards the older generation. We do not feel the passion of Ferdinand and Miranda as we do that of Romeo and Juliet. Miranda is, in fact, Prospero's Miranda.

Raleigh is quite clear about the degree of analysis required in character study by different kinds of characters. To write analytically of Bassanio's character, for example, is to go beyond Shakespeare's intentions; he is lightly sketched, not in the round but only in relation to the other characters. Subsidiary characters in the major plays, too, need to be considered in the light of their role and not as full-fledged characters in their own right. It is while elaborating these points pertaining to character study that Raleigh protests against the tendency towards excessive subtlety in the interpretation of Shakespeare. His is a voice of sanity and of common sense, and though while making these comments he is thinking mostly

of the nineteenth century interpretations of Shakespeare's characters, the point is relevant still since it could easily be elaborated into a view of Shakespeare's poetics. 'Shakespeare is subtle', says Raleigh, 'fearfully and wonderfully subtle; and he is sometimes obscure, lamentably obscure. But in spite of all this, most of his plays make a distinct and immediate impression, by which, in the main, the play is to be judged. The impression is the play' (p. 155).

No discussion of Raleigh's Shakespearian criticism would be complete without some account of his excellent appraisal of *Measure for Measure*. That there was something in the play that touched him to the quick would not only suggest that Raleigh was a post–Victorian but also that he was deeply sensitised to all that is best in Christian ethics, not as dogma but as living experience. Raleigh's comments on the play are also characterised by his appreciation of its artistic design, something not very common till the present age. The subtle point, for example, that there is no central character in the play to guide our sympathy goes a long way to explain the problematic nature of the play and to throw light on the reason why it has perplexed so many readers. Almost all the characters are sympathetically presented, yet 'there is no single character through whose eyes we can see the questions at issue as Shakespeare saw them'. Raleigh denies centrality to the Duke; he is a shirker who learns a thing or two from Lucio. This indirectly suggests that Raleigh would have remained out of sympathy with some modern attempts to read obtrusive allegories in the play. To treat the Duke as a Christ-figure, as Wilson Knight and, to some extent, F. R. Leavis do, is to miss some of Shakespeare's irony and to deprive Lucio of some of our sympnthy. Raleigh would have no antipathy for any one, but, at the same time, no glorification either. What, then, about the picture of Isabella as a saint against the background of a dark Vienna, an interpretation in traditional Christian terms? 'The picture makes a good enough Christmas card, but it is no Shakespeare' (p. 166). Vienna is not unredeemably dark, nor is Isabella saintly (R. W. Chambers notwithstanding[11]). Isabella stands

apart, Raleigh contends, and has too little stake in humanity. Her ideal of chastity is not that of Shakespeare. It is not by accident that Shakespeare calls Isabella back from the threshold of the nunnery' (p. 171) and marries her off to the Duke.

In his comments on Angelo and the low-life characters Raleigh surprisingly anticipates Leavis's great essay on *Measure for Measure*. Angelo is a self-deceiver, not a hypocrite. 'At a crisis, the real man surprises the play-actor, and pushes him aside' (p. 169), Claudio, too, is not wicked, merely human. About the low-life characters the crucial question to ask is: why does Shakespeare make them humorous if the intention is to paint a world of utter moral degeneration? 'This world of Vienna, as Shakespeare paints it, is not a black world; it is a weak world, full of little vanities and stupidities, regardful of custom, fond of pleasure, idle, and abundantly human. No one need go far to find it' (pp. 166-67). Law and authority are viewed ironically in the play. 'The law is strict, but the offence that it condemns is knit up with humanity' (p. 172). The play, for Raleigh, vivifies the Christian view of life and morality. For most people Christianity is a mere lifeless code. 'A few, like Shakespeare, discover it for themselves, as it was first discovered, by an anguish of thought and sympathy; so that their words are a revelation, and the gospel is born anew, (p.173).

The fact that in his criticism of Shakespeare Raleigh still seems preoccupied with some Victorian concerns may be balancpd against the more important truth that in some other respects he explores fresh avenues in the continuing Shakespearian debate. Gifted with a sensibility eminently suited to the study of literature, he was encouraged to approach Shakespeare in a new perspective by his readings in the history of the novel and in the pre-romantic criticism of Shakespeare. To his own enjoyment of Shakespeare he owed the insight that Shakespeare's 'philosophy', in the ultimate analysis, is

another name for his celebration of the eternal verities.

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1. Kennth Muir, 'Fifty Years of Shakespearian Criticism: 1900-1950'. *Shakespeare Survey 4* (Cambridge, 1951), p. 5
2. Walter Raleigh, *Shakespeare*, English Men of Letters Series (London, 1907)
3. *The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh (1879-1922)*, edited by Lady Raleigh with a Preface by David Nichol Smith, 2 vols. (London, 1926) vol I, p. 142
4. See Bradley's comment on Hamlet's humour: 'The truth probably is that it was the kind of humour most natural to Shakespeare himself, and that here, as in some other traits of the poet's greatest creation, we come into close contact with Shakespeare the man' (*Shakespearian Tragedy*, p. 152)
5. Raleigh, however, does attempt afew biographical identifications. Polonius's sage maxims might have come from the not unkindly memories of John Shakespeare (p. 31). Further, 'it is impossible to escape the thought that we are indebted to Judith Shakespeare for something of the beauty and simplicity which appear in Miranda and Perdita ...' (p. 61)
6. A charitable view of such criticism in Raleigh, as in Dowden, would suggest that the inner biography is intended to bring out the experiential bearings of the plays. It is the Victorian counterpart of the modern thematic criticism. The point has been discussed in the present author's *Edward Dowden's Shakespearian Criticism* (Aligarh: Educational Book House, 1986).
7. See Philip Edwards, 'Shakespeare's Romances: 1900-1957', *Shakespeare Survey* 11 (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 1-18
8. A. H. Thorndike, *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher upon Shakespeare* (Worcester, Mass., 1901).
9. Raleigh does probably take notice of Lytton Strachey's unorthodox view about Shakespeare's final period as one of boredom. Shakespeare's grip, says Raleigh, 'on the hard facts of life was loosened by fatigue' (p. 211)
10. *The Shakespeare Scene* (London, 1969), p. 5
11. 'Never does Shakespeare seem more passionately to identify himself with any of his characters than he does with Isabel'. R. W. Chambers, 'Measure for Measure', in *Man's Unconquerable Mind* (London, 1939), p. 286

Christine Gomez

THE MALCONTENT OUTSIDER IN BRITISH DRAMA—JACOBEAN AND MODERN

An outsider may be defined as an individual who is alienated at various levels, from other individuals and society, from the human predicament in a hostile universe and from himself. Sometimes in British drama the malcontent character-type has been used to represent various levels of alienation. This is seen especially in the Jacobean age and in the 1950s. A malcontent is one who feels discontented with the milieu in which he is placed and rails at the individuals and society around him in a virulent manner. However all malcontents are not outsiders. Only if the malcontent goes through the experience of alienation from men, society, life and self, can he be called an outsider.

When the malcontent is not just a stereotype satirist but is also an outsider, he moves from being a *Zeitkritiker* or stringent critic of his own age and society to a position of world-weariness and hatred of life itself. His railing at society becomes an image of a deeper alienation from the nature of things and from the human condition. This is what distinguishes the malcontent outsider from the usual satirists and anatomizers of social folly in drama. In Jacobean drama, the malcontent outsider experiences self-alienation too, which is dramatically expressed as a tension between his public role as malcontent and his personal identity as an individual. He develops the technique of viewing himself and his actions ironically. As a performer he dissociates his actions from his judgment. A tendency towards role-play is seen in the malcontent outsider of modern drama also. The dichotomy between the role and the individual is an effective image of the

self-division inherent in the alienated person[1].

L. C. Knights[2] points out that the rising cost of living and the tightening of the money-market brought about a steep cut in the hospitality of the gentry and aristocracy, which rendered homeless a large band of retainers and professional men depending on patronage. The increase in educational facilities without a corresponding increase in preferments left many disappointed men of thwarted ambition in its trail. The instability of courtly favour and the existence of corrupt practices in political and public life gave rise to bitter discontent. Thus a growing number of younger sons, scholars, soldiers, minor officials, would-be politicians and courtiers found themselves to be the superfluous men of society and the hangers-on and caterpillars of the commonwealth. These become the scoffing malcontents of the age who are also reflected in its literature.

The Jacobean age witnessed the disintegration of the chivalric code, courtly values and the feudal system. These were being replaced gradually by commercial values and pragmatism. The malcontent is a character who is aware of the death of one culture and watches the emergence of another. He records the change. But he himself is not committed to either scale of values. He is repelled by the ruthless self-seeking and corruption of society. But he is unable to reject its values and take a firm stand in favour of the past idealistic code. He is a very ambiguous figure. He condemns the corruption of socidty and yet he too partakes of it. He is self-divided between what he knows ought to be done and what he actually does. This is dramaticlly represented as a dichotomy between the person and the role in Jacobean Malcontent outsiders like Malevole, Vindice and Bosola.

The intellectual tradition of melancholy and Machiavellian cynicism about human weaknesses may also be related to the emergence of the malcontent character. Agnes Latham regards the melancholic stance as a legitimate response to the stresses of an age of transition. 'It marked one off from the coarse-fibred mindless crowd'[3] The Jacobean malcontent's vision is distorted by cynicism which comes close to the Machiavellian

stance. The malcontent thinks the worst of people because he is aware of the vast gulf between what man believes he ought to be and what he actually is.

The similarity between the Jacobean vision and the modern predicament has been often pointed out.[4] The horror of the Second World War and the atrocities committed on man by man had shaken the faith and almost destroyed the hope of thinking and feeling individuals. Shock and disgust were felt at the inhumanity of man which would have been enough to make any sensitive individual a malcontent Outsider. Britain's loss of empire and the disillusionment with the Labourite dream of a New Jerusalem which never came true left both the older and the younger generations in Britain in a state of bewilderment. These vague feelings of unrest gradually found an outlet in demonstrations and protest marches. The year 1956 which witnessed the staging of *Look Back in Anger* was a year of politcal unrest. The despotic suppression of the Hungarian freedom struggle which was watched by the whole world in silence, Britain's loss of face in the Suez debacle, the mass campaigns in England against capital punishment and the demand for nuclear disarmament were some of the significant happenings of the year.[5] Protest was therefore in the air and the emergence of the malcontent Outsider as the Angry Young Man of British drama merely crystallized what was already in solution in contemporary society.

In John Marston's play, *The Malcontent*, the malcontent Outsider takes up the centre of the stage so that the play is entitled after him. Here the malcontent is viewed as a role-player. The role of the malcontent Malevole is claimed to have been adopted to further the aims of the individual, Altofronto. But in the course of the play a subtle transformation takes place, making one wonder if continual role-play has eaten into the inner self leaving only an empty shell.

In the early scenes the traditional characteristics of malcontent are assumed by Malevole. He levels his battery of abuse at the usual targets of a malcontent—religion, court follies and women. He abuses the court society in general and also

hurls his invectives on individuals like Bilioso, Ferrardo and Maquerelle. Like Bosola who keeps awake at night and prowls around the court, Malevole, too, is on nightwatch at court. He comments on this malcontent characteristic of sleeplessness, almost standing outside the role and referring to it in the third person:

> ..... In night all creatures sleep;
> Only the malcontent, that 'gainst his fate
> Repines and quarrels, alas, he's goodman tell-clock!
>
> (III. ii. 10-12)

Though Malevole fulfils the requirements of the malcontent character, whenever he is alone or with Celso he is at pains to clarify that he is only playing a role. For example he refers to his malcontent pose as 'this disguise' (I, iv, 30) and 'this affected strain' (I. iii, 161). The audience is repeatedly assured by Duke Altofronto that the malcontent role has been assumed by him only as a means of regaining his kingdom by bringing wrong-doers to repentance. The impression which Altofronto/ Malevole strives to convey is that of a positive reformer masquerading as a negative railing malcontent. But strangely enough, when Malevole rails, he reveals a fascination for the abomination under attack. For example, Malevole's description of the cuckold's plight to Pietro in I. iii. and his portrayal of the seductive pleasures of the palace in III. ii are couched in language which reveals the speaker's excited involvement in the corruption that is being depicted. The description of the palace pleasures in III. ii is set out in language which partakes of the evil fascination attributed to the palace atmosphere. The alluring power of that which is condemned becomes clear.

> When in an Italian lascivious palace, a lady guardianless
> Left to the push of all allurement,
> The strongest insights to immodesty —
> To have her bound, incensed with wanton sweets,
> Her veins filled high with heating delicates,
> Soft rest, sweet music, amorous masquerers,
> Lascivious banquets, sin itself gilt o'er—
>
> (III, ii, 33-39)

The language describing the temptations to the various senses

is itself intensely sensuous and suggestive. As G. K. Hunter claims, Malevole 'is essentially immersed in the world he condemns'; 'his immersion in vice is integral to his character and to the play''[6]

World-weariness and disgust which distinguish an Outsider's *Weltanschauung* are expressed by Malevole, especially in his speeches to Pietro in IV. iv and IV. v. These speeches of *de contempta Mundi* have a ring of sincerity arising from the speaker's personal experience of alienation and are not just a pose. In IV. v. 107–118 the tone of revulsion approaches nausea in the rapid succession of excretory images. Here Marston uses an imitative or organic form in style by expressing existential nausea in terms of images of physical disgust. The description of the world as 'draught', 'muck-hill' and 'dung-pit' and of man as 'slime' suggest a violent retching impulse in the speaker:

> Think this; this earth is the only grave and Golgotha wherein all things that live must rot; 'Tis but the draught wherein the heavenly bodies discharge their corruption; The very muck-hill on which the sublunary orbs cast their excrements. Man is the slime of this dunng-pit'... (IV, v, 107-111)

Perhaps Malevole exaggerates, but the entire speech cannot be dismissed as mere acting for the benefit of Pietro, to draw him to repentance. There is in it a savage irony that is born out of embittered estrangement. The existential alienation and absurd vision of the Outsider are conveyed through the very language that he uses. Malevole's rhetoric—the disordered images, sudden shifts in stylistic level and phantasmagoric processions of satiric figures—provides a mirror of the corrupted world.[7] Thus in Malevole we have a man who claims that he is only playing at being a malcontent for some lofty purpose. But in the course of the play he turns out to be a genuine malcontent Outsider.

It is subtly conveyed in the course of the play that the malcontent role gains the upper hand over the inner self. The satiric view of the world as put forward by Malevole is assigned more effective language and offered more scope than the providential vision of the universe, glimpses of which

Altofronto ineffectively tries to communicate. The play reveals the subtle subconscious influence which continual role-play has had over the individual. His inner self, like the dyer's hand, is subdued to the role it works in. In Malevole the role identity dominates, reducing Altofronto almost to a non-entity, a structural frame to hold the play together and draw it to a morally satisfactory close. We see here a subtle form of self-alienation, where the assumption of a role gradually alienates the individual from his inner self.

In Act V Malevole/Altofronto suddenly becomes weary of his role. It is almost a 'boundary situation'[8] where the individual becomes aware of the absurdity of his own existence—

> O God how loathsome this toying is to me;
> That a duke should be forced to fool it; (V, iii, 41-42)

The passage expresses the duke's horror at seeing the role overwhelming the individual. Finally when he has to step out of the role and take on the identity of Altofronto, the play-universe is, as it were, rapidly dismantled and put away.

The alienation of this malcontent Outsider affects the structure of the play. The Pirandello-like beginning of the play arises out of the theme of role-play. The Induction emphasizes the essentially theatrical nature of the entire spectacle and introduces the actors in their own identities at first. Dramatic illusion is deliberately undermined at the very beginning so as to emphasize the quality of theatrical performance involved in role-play. This emphasis on the theatricality of the play's action is the structural equivalent of the role-playing by the self-estranged malcontent Outsider. The alienation of the malcontent Outsider makes him view everything around him as a nightmare. The entire play could be taken as Malevole's dream. He is the central consciousness brooding over the play and overwhelming it. The play is what he sees in dreams. The traditional revenge structure is here subverted into an absurd phantasmagoria by the conversion of the revenger into a self-estranged Outsider alienated from the universe and human existence.

The opening situation in Cyril Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* is a visual image of Vindice's isolation in the court. His lone figure holding a colloquy with a skull is in stark contrast to the gaily attired court-procession which passes by with torchlight. The opening soliloquy of the play focuses on the triple function of Vindice as a malcontent condemning the licentiousness of the court, as a revenger resolved on avenging the murder of his beloved by the lustful old Duke and an Outsider alienated from human existence and his own inner self. Constant brooding over his proposed revenge has alienated him from his better nature. Nurturing hatred within him has poisoned whatever was good and noble in his love for Gloriana. Rather than taking pride in her virtue, he gloats over her beauty for its capacity to seduce even 'the uprightest man' (I. i. 23). This unconscious alienation from the better self is expressed later in the gradual encroachment of the inner self by the assumed role. The soliloquy addressed to the skull (I. i. 45-48) contains also a hint of Vindice's later alienation from human existence. The skull is a reminder that prosperity, wealth, luxury and pleasure will all be ultimately reduced to bare bones, making all human enjoyment meaningless and absurd.

Vindice's vision of court corruption is essentially bifocal. He condemns the lechery and immorality prevalent at court, yet he is irresistibly drawn towards a contemplation of it and his imagination is fired at the very thought of evil. This is seen in his speech in II, ii, when he is alone with Hippolito. Here he apostrophizes night as the onlooker of sins of lust. The vigorous language reveals that the imagination is quickened and brings forth phantasmagoric apparitions in rapid succession. The speech rhythm gains momentum until it explodes in feverish repetition :

> Now 'tis full sea abed over the world;
> There's juggling of all sides. Some that were maids
> E'en at sunset are now perhaps i' th' toll-book.
> This woman in immodest thin apparel
> Lets in her friend by water; here a dame,

Cunning, nails leather hinges to a door,
To avoid proclamation; now cuckolds are
A coining, apace, apace, apace, apace; (II, ii, 136-143)

The alienation of Vindice from his inner self because of the assumption of a malcontent pander's role as Piato is worked out in the play. Vindice/Piato's speeches in the Temptation scene II.i. illustrate the self-division between the brother-son anxious about the integrity of his sister and mother and the pander who is the devil's advocate. The dangerous attractiveness of his seductive arguments reveals that Vindice is aliented from his better self. Just as Altofronto's vision is less compelling than Malevole's so also Vindice's virtuous inclinations are feebler than his assumed evil which becomes an obsession with him. In his attempt to thrive in a corrupt society by pretending to subscribe to its degenerate values, he allows himself to be tainted by the very evil that he condemns.

The existential alienation of Vindice, a few notes of which had been sounded in his opening soliloquy with the skull, swells into a somber aria in III. V. Constant contemplation over the skull of his dead mistress has led Vindice to thoughts about the vanity of life. The skull becomes a visible symbol of the horror and dissolution of Death, which makes all human endeavour seem absurd. Feminine vanity and face-painting, the perennial target of malcontents, is shown to be an image of the absurd when it is juxtaposed with the grinning mockery of the skull to which all complexion care must ultimately be reduced.

... and is not she absurd,
Whose fortunes are upon their faces set,
That fear no other god but wind and wet? (III, v, 63-65)

In Vindice's famous 'silk-worm' speech, the skull is shown to be the only ultimate reality towards which everything is directed, in exchange for which everything else is lost.[9] It is a vision of the world as Golgotha, the place of skulls, but the tone is not horror-struck[10] but witty, a legacy of the metaphysical poets:

Does the silk-worm expend her yellow labours
For thee? for thee does she undo herself?
Are lordships sold to maintain ladyships
For the poor benefit of a bewitching minute? (III, v, 72-75)

The toil involved in acquiring wealth and luxury is futile when it is set against the skeleton to which the woman once draped in yellow silk is finally reduced. She who was beautified by the labour of the silk–worm has now been reduced to bare bones by other worms. Male infatuation and the consequent sale of ancestral property to buy a lady's favour become a grotesque mockery, for the pleasure so dearly bought is momentary. The skull becomes the central symbol of Vindice's alienation from existence. It is also the means by which he arrives at an absurd vision of human existence as folly, futility or madness.

As the title of the play indicates, the play is a revenge tragedy. When the alienation theme and the Outsider figure enter it, the revenge structure is modified. As an alienated Outsider Vindice leads a very active life of the imagination, to the extent of creating a fantasy world of his own. He constantly launches on flights of imagination and has to be recalled to earth by his pedestrian brother. The line of action is continually diverted and the pattern of flight and recall is imposed on the revenge structure. For example in III. v., carried away by the lively apprehension of his intended revenge on the old Duke, Vindice rapturously exclaims, 'O sweei, delectable, rare, happy, ravishing', to the bewilderment of Hippolito. Again a little later Vindice loses himself in a realm of speculation thus:

I am lost again, you cannot find me yet;
I'm in a throng of happy apprehensions (III, v. 28-30)

Thus when the basic revenge structure of this play is crossed with the Outsider theme, the traditional figure of the malcontent revenger gains in depth. He becomes a complex figure, selfestranged and alienated from the human predicament. The

pattern of flight and recall, the tension between fascination and repulsion, the ambivalent irony of playing multiple roles are all introduced into the revenge construct because of the Outsider theme.

Flamineo in *The White Devil* feels alienated from the society in the midst of which he is placed. He rails against bribery, the degeneration of religion adulterated with policy, usury among Christians, allotment of multiple benefices to favourites and the sale of titles and coats-of-arms. Like many another malcontent, Flamineo is also bitterly cynical about woman's virtue and attributes promiscuity to all.

In Flamineo there is no dichotomy between role and self except for a momentary glimpse of remorse and strange stirrings of compassion and conscience in V. iv. 107-115.

In his last moments Flamineo approaches what might be called alienation from human existence. This is seen in his attitude to dealh. When Lodovico questions him, 'What dost think on?' Flamineo replies in a strange condition of quiescence:

> Nothing; of nothing; leave thy idle questions,
> I am i' th' way to study a long silence.
> To prate were idle, I remember nothing.
> Ther's nothing of so infinite vexation
> As man's own thoughts. (V, vi, 203-207)

Here death is viewed as the ultimate nothingness and so Flamineo empties himself of everything—speech, memory and thought—when he goes to meet it. There is a complete detachment from life. Death, the long silence and Nothing assume a reality denied to life and 'prating'.

In the manner of an Outsider who rejects all precedent, example or pre-existent systems and asserts instead the validity of his individual existence alone, Flamineo declares,

> I doe not looke
> Who went before, nor who shall follow mee;
> Noe, at my selfe I will begin and end. (V, vi, 256-258)

But soon he is forced to admit the inadequacy of man's stand of self-sufficiency and confesses bewilderment.

> While wee looke up to Heaven, wee confound
> Knowledge with knowledge, O, I am in a mist: (V, vi, 259-260)

Here he realises that when man looks up to heaven he can get confused between the experiential and practical knowledge which he had derived from his own existence and the knowledge of religious revelation which can be accepted only in faith. As death approaches, man is unable to keep the two kinds of knowledge distinct and separate. They fuse in his mind and envelop him in confusion, chaos and a hazy mist which seems to prove that life is really unknowable. Here as Una Ellis-Fermor observes, 'Flamineo makes an admission of the reality of the unseen world he resolves to exclude'.[11]

In the portrayal of Flamineo as a malcontent Outsider, there is a greater emphasis on the sociological background which produced him than on the representation of his deeper alienation from self or from existence. The social and economic conditions which produced such malcontents from among the impoverished aristocrats are sketched in this play. Flamineo's description of his family background gives a picture of impoverished nobility trying to salvage itself from its ruins. His father had sold his landed property and lived regally out of the proceedings, leaving the son with a taste for high life but with no means to support it. The son had sued for favour at Court without any result. Lacking preferment he had become a parasitical hanger—on. Disappointment makes him discontented and embittered until he is willing to undertake the worst villainy in the play provided he can gain advancement by it. Repeated failure in his struggle to uplift himself economically has hardened him into an amoral cynic and disbeliever in the older value system still upheld by his virtuous mother and brother. The play thus contains a socio-economic explanation for Flamineo's rejection of the virtuous ways of the past which seem to him to be ineffectual and his adoption of the corruption of the present though he condemns it.

When the play The Duchess of Malfi begins Bosola is a recognized malcontent or 'court-gall' who rails at court-evils. But as Antonio shrewdly diagnoses, Bosola's discontent arises 'not for simple love of Piety', but out of a foul melancholy caused by neglect and frustration. His personal animosity against the Cardinal who had cheated him out of his reward after having employed him in a murder, is soon generalised into a condemnation of the corrupt court practices of his age. He rails at the faults of eminent courtiers and launches on a venemous attack on women and their follies. In Act II his denunciation is directed at Castruccio and an old lady, in whom he crucifies the sins of their class and sex. The vitality and energy of his vituperative language reveals a relish for what he condemns. This characteristic could perhaps be traced to the Jacobean tendency 'to gloat over the thing' one 'condemns'.[12]

From the beginning of the play there is a strain of self-mockery in Bosola, which later deepens into self-estrangement in the dichotomy between role and self. When at the end he tries to relinquish the role and be true to his inner self his efforts meet with failure. In the very first scene Bosola exposes the hollowness of his attempt to justify his role as Ferdinand's spy on the plea of gratitude and loyalty to one's pay-master.

> Oh, that to avoid ingratitude
> For the good deed you have done me, I must doe
> All the ill man can invent; thus the Divell
> Candies all sinners (o'er) and what Heaven terms vile,
> That he names complementall. (I, i, 297–301)

Two voices are heard in this speech—the defence of the performing self in the first half and the mockery of the detached critical self, the 'unkind self'[13] in the second half. This voice of self-disparagement which is an indication of self-division is heard again in 'Sometimes the Divell doth preach' (I. i. 317). This technique of ironic self-criticism is pherhaps developed to suppress self-revulsion. The irony is almost a safety-device which deflects the self-hatred which would otherwise arise from a realization of having debased one's talents. In Act IV Bosola's

self-alienation takes the form of a dichotomy between the role and the person. Though he ruthlessly executes cruelty on the Duchess in his role as Ferdinand's hired villain a new self seems to emerge, which is moved to feel admiration and compassion for the Duchess. The lyrical, appreciative tone of his description of her is a far cry from his usual cynical railing :

> ... a behaviour so noble
> As gives a majestie to adversitie;
> You may discerne the shape of lovelinesse
> More perfect, in her teares, than in her smiles. (IV, i, 6-9)

He pleads with Ferdinand to have pity on her. Ferdinand observes the change in Bosola and comments on it. It is almost as if a new self is emerging, of whose existence Bosola himself may not have been aware. The use of masks by Bosola in this Act is just a visible symbol of the various selves contending within him. Yet despite Bosola's admiration of her calm acceptance of her death, he gives the order of strangling to the executioner, keeping his inner self apart from his role. When he demands his reward from Ferdinand it is as if he views his past only as a professional service performed in return for payment in his role as a hired villain.

At first Bosola expresses an estrangement from the human condition as part of his role as the railing malcontent in Act II. Later in Act IV he adopts an attitude of existential alienation in order to draw the Duchess to an acceptance of death. But at the end this becomes his own personal experience and he sees man as a helpless creature in a hostile universe. Even in Act II the tone of disgust and nausea at the human condition becomes too intense to be just a pose.

> Though we are eaten up of lice and wormes,
> And though continually we beare about us
> A rotten and dead body, we delight
> To hide it in rich tissew. (II, i. 57-60)

Though spoken to Castruccio and the old lady in order to keep up his reputation as a malcontent, the sense of violent revulsion conveyed through the image of every man carrying along a rotting corpse fed upon by lice and worms, bespeaks a funda-

mental horrified estrangement from the human predicament. In Act IV, in his guise as a tomb-maker, Bosola expatiates on the fragility of human existence, especially on the corruption of the body. He presents a vision of man condemned to perpetual imprisonment in an alien and delimiting universe. The images of putrefaction, corruption, hollowness and imprisonment powerfully project an alienating vision of human existence on earth. Next as the bell-man, Bosola gives specific instructions to the Duchess to prepare herself for death, loosening her hold on life. That she might do it all the more willingly she is presented with a picture of life as mere futility, folly and vain struggle:

> Of what is't fooles make such vaine keeping?
> Sin their conception, their birth, weeping;
> Their life, a general mist of error,
> Their death, a hideous storme of terror. (IV, ii. 188-191)

Act V of *The Duchess of Malfi* draws together the various kinds of alienation revealed by Bosola throughout the play. Here again he appears as a malcontent railing at the injustice at court since his 'service' has gone unrewarded. In the last Act he decides to put an end to his self-estrangement by being true to his inner self. But he learns to his great agony in V. iv that it is too late to change his course. The original choice of evil seems irrevocable. Despite all his good intentions to help Antonio, Bosola finds himself to be the unwitting murderer of Antonio. The killing of Antonio against his will brings him to a confrontation with the absurdity of existence. It seems to prove to him the helplessness of man in the face of irrational and blind forces in the universe which toss him around like a tennis-ball. It is an almost absurd vision of a hostile and perverse universe which thwarts man's desires. Finally Bosola decides to be his own example and exist as himself, denying all sense of history or precedent in the Outsider manner:

> I will not imitate things glorious,
> No more than base; I'll be mine owne example. (V, iv, 94-95)

In all the four Jacobean malcontent Outsiders studied here,

it is the theme of alienation which lifts the dramatic stereotype of the malcontent above his usual villainous role and makes him a complex creature, self-divided, self-estranged and alienated from the human predicament in the universe. In all of them the sense of personal injustice predominates. They rail at a society which neglected them or did not do justice to them. Except for Malevole who claims to reform society the others are totally negative in their attitude to it. In all these malcontents there is a widening gulf between the public role and the private inclinations. This separation of the role from the person is an effective image of the Outsider's self-alienation. It is as if a part of the divided self stands aloof and comments on the performing self.

The bitterness and anger towards life expressed by the Jacobean malcontent Outsiders may be traced to the post-Renaissance gloom and disillusionment. The many references to the socio-economic background which gave birth to the Jacobean malcontent Outsider and the attention paid to it in drama suggests an attempt on the part of the age to understand the malcontent and examine what went wrong with him. When the malcontent is not portrayed stereotypically but is probed sensitively, there is an amazing objectivity in the portrayal. He is neither condemned outright as a villain nor glorified nor apotheosized. He is treated objectively as an individual and his inner workings are explored.

The Angry Young Man of the nineteen fifties may perhaps be taken as a modern variant of the earlier malcontent Outsider. Perhaps, in drama too, as in human occurrences, history repeats itself. Certain archetypal patterns, structures, themes, characters or images may be featured repeatedly in the theatre, with interesting and sometimes original variations. There might be a principle of eternal recurrence at work in dramatic figures; Jimmy Porter in *Look Back in Anger* and George Dillon in *The Epitaph for George Dillon* by John Osborne in collaboration with Anthony Creighton may be studied as latter-day reincarnations of the malcontent Outsider. They are both

presented as discontented young men railing at the society in the midst of which they have been placed.

The opening speech of Jimmy Porter reveals that Jimmy has had faint intimations of absurdity. He realizes that man's endless round of repetitious activity is rather like the eternally recurring futile task of Sisyphus. His weariness at the meaningless repetitive acts of a mechanical life, his acute and painful consciousness of being swept by the tide of time and flux, his realization that his youth is slipping away and that he belongs to Time are all discoveries which betoken an Outsider who has had a glimpse of the absurd.[14] Structurally this theme of the sameness of things is conveyed through the symmetry between the beginnings of Acts I and III—the same room, the same setting, the same two men hidden behind the Sunday newspapers, the same ironing board but a different woman behind it. Jimmy wants others also to realize this horror and absurdity of existence. The lack of response maddens him and estranges him from others. Though Alison his wife is the immediate target of his railing and abuse, as the play develops, it is seen that he crucifies her family, her class and the contemporary malaise in her.

Jimmy Porter's discontent with his age takes the form of rebellion. His rebellion is expressed as non-conformist behaviour which deliberately flouts all bourgeois conventions and as vituperative railing against the establishment. He runs a sweet-shop which upsets middle-class notions about respectable jobs. His verbal attack spreads far and wide bringing within its range almost every aspect of contemporary social life. Sunday papers, bishops, the H-bomb, evangelist revival meetings, lack of enthusiasm, the romantic evocations of the Edwardian age, all forms of 'phoneyness', the social structure, women, church-bells, researchers in anthropology and Shakespeare, people who cannot appreciate jazz, people who have not had the beneficial experience of watching someone die, 'auntie Wordsworth' and 'living in the American age' are all lashed at savagely by this irreverent young man. He is thus alienated from contemporary society at every point.

The remedy suggested by Jimmy Porter to shake people out of their slumber of inert indifference or self-delusion, is to witness the death of a dear one at close quarters. This experience would force them to face reality as it is and would also humanize them. According to Jimmy, 'Anyone who's never watched somebody die is suffering from a pretty bad case of virginity'. (p. 57) His first encounter with death had been when he was ten years old, and had watched his father die. That agonizing traumatic experience had taught him more about life than anything else. It is against this background that we can understand his terrible wish that his wife Alison should conceive and then lose her child. He believed that only death and the pain of loss could jolt her out of her lethargy and complacent somnolence and force her to feel the anguish of existence. In his opinion the encounter with death and the pain of loss is a salutary experience which can arouse man out of his self-anaesthesia and compel him to face reality and feel the pain and suffering of human existence. However, at the end of the play, when his cruel wish for Alison comes true and she lies grovelling before him in pain, torn out of her neutrality and quiescent sleep, he is unable to bear the spectacle. It is thus seen that Jimmy Porter's social and interpersonal alienation arises primarily from his vision of human life. His awareness of the futility and pain of existence makes him impatient of those who deny the horror of existence and try to escape from the pain of living.

A feature shared by Jimmy Porter in common with other malcontent Outsiders is a fundamental estrangement from women. One of the ways in which this expresses itself in many of them is a savage condemnation of female face-painting. Bosola associates women's make-up paraphernalia with witchcraft. Vindice juxtaposes the skull with feminine vanity and realises the absurdity of existence. Jimmy Porter, too, in the time-honoured fashion of the malcontent Outsider launches on an attack on women at their dressing-table. (p. 24). The articles on the dressing-table are 'weapons', everyday actions are 'a sort of

assault course on your sensibilities', and a visit to the lavatory is 'like a medieval siege' (pp. 24-25). To Jimmy Porter, woman appears to be a destructive aggressor, as seen in the use of the war-imagery. His subconscious terror of women surfaces again on P. 37 in the form of a sexual antagonism and an obsessive fear of the womb. Jimmy's primitive fear of woman as a threat to his existence is manifested in the image of the sleeping python-female. Alison's customary quiescence is given a sinister twist by identifying it with the python's immobility after swallowing its prey. 'She'll go on sleeping and devouring until there's nothing left of me' (p. 38). It is almost as if he is trying to work out some irrational, archetypal terror in this way.

The soliloquy and monologue which had served the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists in portraying the alienation and isolation of a character, are reintroduced as a major dramatic device by Osborne. Jimmy Porter's long monologues convey his inability to relate to and communicate with the world around him. For long stretches of time, his voice fills the stage with raging torrents which drown other voices and the action. These lengthy tirades disrupt the traditional naturalistic framework. The dramatic form being affected by the Outsider figure is parallel to the play's universe being shaken by the Outsider. The naturalistic structure being disrupted by the Outsider's long monologue and rhetoric is symbolic of the traditional society in the play being attacked by the Outsider. The traditional structure of the well-made play is restrictive in that it admits mainly the exploration of individual relationships.[15] But the Outsider must give expression not onty to his interpersonal alienation but also to his estrangement from society, self and existence itself.

George Dillon in *Epitaph for George Dillon* is thus seen to have the malcontent's grudge against society for not recognizing his merit. In working out his social and interpersonal alienation, the author deliberately loads the dice in his favour, by making the other characters who represent society into caricatures. The Elliotts with whom George lives are almost

like cartoon figures of the newly rich petit bourgeois in the midst of whose middle-class suburban mediocrity George feels himself to be an Outsider. The visitors to the Elliott home stand for certain common social attitudes which further highlight George's alienation. Mr. Geoffrey Colwyn–Stuart represents the religious view and is pushed into the play just for a confrontation with George (pp. 47-48). Mr. Webb from the National Assistance Board is introdubed solely to represent the insider's complacency and his total incomprehension of the Outsider. The last visitor is Barney Evans, the successful producer of violent sex-filled melodramas. Though George disagrees with his views, at the end of the play he is doomed for the rest of his life to write pot-boilers to Barney's specifications. He is the broken Outsider-artist who gives up the struggle and compromises with society.

George Dillon's self-estrangement becomes so acute that he seems to be performing all the time. Ruth comments on his constant play-acting and the consequent loss of touch with reality (p. 64). His profession as an actor becomes almost second nature to him and he is constantly trying out roles. George gives his star performance before Ruth in the last Act. Filled with anguish at his absurd situation as the Elliotts' son-in-law turning out pot-boilers for Barney Evans, George seeks relief in tragic-clowning-the strategy of the grotesque. He gives a tragic–absurd image of himself as a broken, mad Lear, who needs stronger elastic to keep his tights on. 'The less sure we are of our pathetic little divine rights, the stronger the elastic we should use' (p. 87). Here the *Godot* image of collapsed trousers as a symbol of man's loss of dignity seems to hang unspoken in the air. Then comes the disintegration of the play-actor's universe. He tells Ruth 'you've seen the whole, shabby, solemn pretence now. This is where you came in. For God's sake go'. (p. 87) In the absence of the traditional eulogizing companion of the hero, he speaks his own epitaph. It draws into focus his personal relationships, his overpowering sense of the futility and the meaninglessness of his own existence and his permanent self-estrangement :

> Shall I recite my epitaph to you? Yes, do recite your epitaph to me. Here lies the body of George Dillon, aged 34-or there abouts-who thought, who hoped, he was that mysterious, ridiculous being called an artist. He never allowed himself one day of peace. He worshipped the physical things of this world, and was betrayed by his own body. He loved also the things of the mind, but his own mind was a cripple from the waist down. He achieved nothing he set out to do. He made no one happy, no one looked up with excitement when he entered the room. He was always troubled with wind around his heart, but he loved no one successfully. He was a bit of a bore, and frankly rather useless. But the germs loved him. (p. 87)

A comparison of the Angry Young Men of the fifties with the Jacobean malcontent Outsiders illuminates the similarity between the two. Both are products of contemporary social situations whose striking similarity has already been pointed out. Vindice, Flamineo, Bosola, Jimmy and George are all educated young men caught within a social structure which does not provide them with an employment commensurate with their education. Denied social recognition the Jacobean malcontent finally stooped to the position of a hired villain for the sake of advancement. A similar self-debasement may be traced in Jimmy's running of a sweet-stall and George's success as a writer of pot-boilers which is a matter of cynical relish to him as Bosola's villainy was to him. All of them are discontented with the society which has not recognized their merit. They feel estranged from society and attack it virulently in energetic and lively language. The railing Outsider in both the ages is revealed as an ambivalent figure who might even carry the taint of society's faults which he himself had condemned. While Vindice and Bosola are fascinated by the evil which they deride, Jimmy Porter and George Dillon are attracted by the society which they condemn. Jimmy feels drawn towards the peace of the Edwardian era and George Dillon is tempted by the unthinking but comfortable middle-class existence.

The anger in the modern Outsider cannot be focused on any particular person because his grievance cannot be attributed to afew individuals. Lacking a concrete target, his hatred is diffused and he lashes out at everything almost

indiscriminately. Vindice had said that when a man's external enemies are no more, it is time for him to die, because after that man would become his own worst enemy. Jimmy Porter and George Dillon seem to be placed in this condition, where lacking any concrete external enemies, they turn against themselves and hurt themselves in a self-destructive manner. Thus Vindice's last stage may be seen as the modern Angry Young Man's first one.

Vindice, Malevole and Bosola are all role-players. A tension is maintained between the public role and the private self with some ambiguity about the relationship between the two. In George Dillon there is an awareness of enacting a role and his irony at his own expense is a measure of his self-alienation. Jimmy Porter's constant attitudinizing in a bitterly cynical vein is a mask behind which he hides a sensitive personality, hurt by betrayal and pain. In both the ages the Outsider's self-estrangement and self-division are dramatically conveyed through role-play.

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NOTES & REFERENCES

1. Cf. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubledey Anchor, 1959), P. 236. 'To the degree that the individual maintains a show before others that he himself does not believe, he can come to experience a special kind of alienation from self'.
2. L. C. Knights, *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson*, rev. ed. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1957), pp. 315-332
3. Agnes Latham, ed., *As You Like It* (London: Methuen, 1975), P. lxvi
4. Cf. F. L. Lucas, ed., *The White Devil* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1927), P. 36. Also G. B. Harrison, ed., *Webster and Ford : Selected Plays* (London: Dent, Everyman's Library, 1933), P. xiii
5. Cf. A. E. DYSON, 'General Editor's Comments' *Casebook: John Osborne: Look Back in Anger*, ed. John Russell Taylor (London: Macmillan, 1968) P. 22
6. G.K. Hunter, ed., *The Malcontent* (London: Methuen, 1975) pp. lxvi—lxvii

7. Cf. Ibid P. IV
8. Cf. The concept of 'Grenzsituation or 'boundary situation' in Karl Jaspers. Cited by Edwin Latzel, 'The Concept of 'ultimate situation' in Jaspers' Philosophy', *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, Ed. P.A. Schilpp (La Salle, Illinois : Open Court Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 177-208
9. Cf. L.G. Salingar, '*The Revenger's Tragedy* and the Morality Tradition', Scrutiny, VI (1937-38), P. 419. 'Vendice's irony turns in this speech on the ambiguities of the word 'for' referring both to equivalence in exchange and to purpose or result'.
10. Cf. T. S. Eliot's judgment on the play and T. B. Tomlinson's critique of it.
    T. S. Eliot, *Selected, Essays*, 3rd enlarged ed., (London : Faber and Faber, 1951), pp. 189-190
    T. B. Tomlinson, *A Study of Elizbethan and Jacobean Tragedy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 98
11. Una Ellis – Fermor, *Jacobean Drama*, p. 172
22. T.B. Tomlinson, *A Study of Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy*, p.105
13. Cf. William Shakespeare, Troilus and Cressida, III. ii. 159 for 'unkind self'. Phrase adopted by James Ronald Stroud in 'Shakespeare's Unkind Selves: A Study of Self, Self-Knowledge and Decorum in Shakespearean Drama'. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 38, 12 (June 1978), P. 7351A. 'more complex dissidents are distinguished by possessing a detached, insightful, non-participant, critical 'unkind self', in conflict with a performing self.
14. Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, tr. Justin O'Brien (London: Hamish Hamilton, (1955), pp. 18-20
15. George E. Wellwarth, *The Theatre of Protest and Paradox : Development in the Avant-Garde Drama* (London : Maogibbon and Kee, 1965), P. 221

Kathleen Raine

SUFFERING ACCORDING TO BLAKE'S ILLUSTRATIONS OF JOB

I have sometimes thought that the Christian Church has dwelt somewhat morbidly upon the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the Cross to the exclusion of the transcendent joy of the Resurrection—however one may understand that Mystery. Especially I have been disgusted by a strain of masochism, or sadism, or both, in the Catholic post-counter-reformation cult of the Stations of the Cross. Blake in fact—although in many ways he admired the theocracy of the Catholic Church—specifically objected to what he saw as a worship of the dead body of Jesus Christ:

> He took on Sin in the Virgin's womb,
> And put it off on the Cross & Tomb
> To be Worship'd by the Church of Rome. (E. G. B. K. 749)

This excessive dwelling on the bodily sufferings and death of Jesus is not found in the Greek or Russian Orthodox churches in which the risen Pantocrator reigns in glory, depicted in the dome, representing the heavens: nor indeed in the great Gothic cathedrals; one may remember the Christ Enthroned over the great West Door of Chartres and many besides. I have been inclined to contrast this post-reformation and counter-reformation dwelling upon mortal pain and death with the Indian Shiva's dance of immortal life, of life and death as one single cycle, and the Vedantic definition of the essential being, the indwelling spirit of life, as *sat-chit-ananda*, being-consciousness—bliss.

And yet it can be seen otherwise—that only in the figure of Jesus Christ, whom Blake, following Swedenborg, calls 'the Divine Humanity', God in human form, are we shown the

divine being entering fully into the experience of human suffering. Prince Siddhartha, the enlightened prince who became the Buddha, knew compassion, and taught release from suffering: but if the figure of Jesus is–as I believe–the supreme revelation of the divine nature sacrificing itself, it is because, as man, he knew and transcended total suffering; and is in every human being the divine presence which accepts, and also transcends suffering and mortality.

Having said this, I must begin again. Blake was indeed 'a worshipper of Jesus'—those are his words. For him, Jesus is above all the divine principle in every human being. This is clear throughout his writings.

> And all must love the human form
> In heathen, turk or jew,
> Where Mercy, Love and Pity dwell,
> There God is dwelling too.

In his last great Prophetic poem, *Jerusalem*, where he wrote of the eternal battle between Jesus, the Divine Humanity, and Satan, the selfhood, the human empirical ego, of Satan he wrote,

> He wither'd up the Human Form
> By laws of sacrifice for sin,
> Till it became a Mortal Worm,
> But O! translucent all within.
> The Divine Vision still was seen,
> Still was the Human Form Divine,
> Weeping in weak & mortal clay,
> O Jesus, still the Form was thine.

Jesus is the universal Christ within, 'Jesus the Imagination', the holy deathless one called by Jung – the Self, the innate Imagination Blake calls 'the Human existence itself', as contrasted with 'Satan the selfhood', whom he calls 'the mind of the natural frame' the God of this world, the empirical human ego. As such the imagination, the transcendent Self, does not suffer, is never born and never dies, being eternal and immortal spirit. Suffering is essentially human; and we suffer—so Blake saw it – precisely because, and in so far as, we have lost sight of, lost our sense of participation with, that true

Self, 'the True Man' who is not the mortal worm but immortal spirit. The natural body Satan calls the true man is but the garment we wear:

> Truly, my Satan, thou art but a dunce
> And dost not know the garment from the man...

Because we identify ourselves not with that in us which is immortal but with the ego, 'the worm of sixty winters', in Blake's phrase, and 'seventy inches long', therefore we suffer.

Therefore it is that in his great work on suffering, the twenty-two engravings illustrating the Book of Job made towards the end of his life—in his sixties—Blake chose the theme not of the mystery of the Crucifixion of Jesus, the divine nature, but the sufferings of poor mortal Job, of Everyman confronting the mysteries of God, whom he worshipped and sought to understand, but did not know face to face. Like most of us—all of us—Job is confronting the mystery of being itself, in whose power he is, whom he has never denied, whom he has tried to reach towards, to obey, to understand. Why then has this blameless man to suffer as he does? *The Book of Job* is indeed the story of Everyman; is not Kafka's K, in *The Trial*, a son of Job? K, if you remember, discovers one day that a trial process has been opened against him: why? Of what, and by whom, is he accused? Poor K feels himself to be utterly blameless; so did Job. Is God then a monster of wanton cruelty? Those of you who have read Jung's *Answer to Job* will remember that Jung, who as a doctor, a healer, is on Job's side—does see in God a mixture of all qualities, good and evil. Jung on the whole takes the view that Job's was the better character, that suffering mortal Everyman could teach God a lesson or two. There have been times when many of us have felt the same impulse to challenge a God who has made things as they are. Somewhere Elias Canetti—like Kafka, a Jew—has written that the Last Judgment will be when humanity rises up and judges God. Well, may be; there are different levels, heights and depths, real enough to those who are in them.

> ... What seems to Be, Is, To those to whom
> It seems to Be, & is productive of the most dreadful
> Consequences to those to whom it seems to Be, even of
> Torments, Despair, Eternal Death ... J. 36. 51. K. 663

But only in the supreme state do we see things as they are; the rest are 'states that are not, but ah! seem to be.' By this' Blake writes,

> '... It will be seen that I do not consider either the Just or the Wicked to be in a Supreme State, but to be every one of them States of the Sleep which the Soul may fall into in its deadly dreams of Good & Evil when it leaves Paradise following the Serpent'. (V L J. K. 614)

Such, according to Blake, is the state of Job; and his story is of the attainment of enlightenment through what Blake calls a 'Last Judgment', in which the Imagination, the Divine Humanity, passes judgment on mortal things.

Suffering, for Blake: is a state of ignorance: that is, of the supreme state, ignorance of God; who is, for Blake, the God within. In the Churches Blake saw the God of this World—the god of the moral law—worshipped; the way to discover the Divine Humanity is not through morality and observance but by spiritual rebirth. Blake prefaced *Jerusalem* with his own testimony as to the possibility, the reality, of this enlightenment; and as a preface to our study of Job we may see his words as signifying Blake's right to speak from his own knowledge of the mystery of the God within.

> The Spirit of Jesus is continual forgiveness of Sin: he who waits to be righteous before he enters into the Saviour's kingdom, the Divine Body, will never enter there. I am perhaps the most sinful of men. I pretend not to holiness: yet I pretend to love, to see, to converse with daily as man with man, & the more to have an interest with the Friend of Sinners. (J. 3. K. 621)

Such is the secret of liberation; to rise into that state of 'contemplative thought' which Blake names Imagination; to England's Everyman he says he should 'leave mortal things': 'then would he arise from his Grave, then he would meet the Lord in the Air & then he would be happy'. Blake sees happiness as our proper state, within reach of all who are prepared to 'leave mortal things' for the kingdom of the Divine Humanity.

Suffering, for Blake—who knew much suffering in his own life and saw much in his own war–afflicted world–is not, as some would have it, a state of final wisdom, a heroic recognition of things as they are. No, the supreme state is happiness, and Blake too uses the word, 'bliss'.

> And trees & birds & beasts & men behold their eternal joy.
> Arise, you little glancing wings, and sing your infant joy:
> Arise, and drink your bliss; for every thing that lives is holy:
> (VD A. K. 195)

What, then, of the sufferings of Job? Here it must be said that there is no question of whether or not Blake correctly interpreted the intentions of the author of the Book of Job, or whether his understanding conforms either with Christian or Jewish orthodoxy. In fact there have been both Christian and Jewish commentators who have shared Blake's view that Job was not a figure of innocence exposed to sufferings wantonly inflicted, because, in Jung's words, Satan had a bet with God. There have been many others who have taken many different views. To Blake, then, Job was not, as for Jung, God's moral superior; he was, on the contrary, blinded by self-righteousness, to Blake of all things the most abhorrent. A virtuous selfhood—a virtuous and self–righteous ego—is the contrary of the Divine Humanity, and as he calls the one Jesus, the Imagination, so he names the other, unambiguously, Satan, the Selfhood. Thus the parts are cast for the drama enacted by Job (and reenacted in all ages), Satan, the Selfhood, the human ego, and the indwelling Divine Humanity. In addition to these we have Job's wife, his *anima*, his soul–image. Here Blake changes the Bible story, in which Job's wife fails him and is replaced, in the end of the drama, by another and presumably better, wife. But Blake, thinking no doubt of his own faithful Catherine, makes her the sharer of all Job's sufferings, of his enlightenment, and his final happiness. Besides these, there are Job's three friends, and the young man, Klihu, who correspond, in Blake's own symbolic mythology, to the Four Zoas, the' four mighty ones who are in every breast,' known to Jungian psychology as reason, feeling, sense and intuition. Thus in Blake's setting-forth of the story of Job it

is an inner experience, an inner drama, that we are witnessing. Jung has gone so far as to suggest—and Blake shared this view – that even events of the outer world are, properly understood, events of the soul; for 'body is that portion of soul perceived by the five senses'. I mention this here, in passing, lest it should be objected that Blake's is an escapist view. But if even events of the outer world are deemed to mirror events of the soul (and not vice versa as our materialist orthodoxy supposes) then we cannot make a distinction between inner and outer. What, such objectors might say, about 'real' suffering—wars, cancer, poverty and economic conditions? Real indeed: but, Blake would answer (and so would every spiritual tradition)

> ...every Natural Effect has a Spiritual Cause, and Not
> A Natural; for a Natural Cause only seems: it is a Delusion
> Of Ulro...

What about bombs then? In that context Jung has pointed out what an extremely powerful and dangerous cause the human psyche is: bombs and the rest of those modern marvels of technology don't happen in the course of nature: human beings make bombs, they do not just make themselves in test-tubes. Not natural causes but human choice has made these things; collective choice it may be but we cannot for that reason dissociate ourselves from it.

But again I digress: in Blake's telling of the story of Job we have the story of an inner event; an event within the soul of the old Biblical character of Job, but also, for Blake. above all and specifically a drama he saw being enacted in the collective soul of the English nation, the Giant Albion. Blake was concerned above all to deliver his prophetic message to his own nation—to us, assembled here in the church where he was baptised. That message is indeed universal, but it is also specific. In my book *The Human Face of God* I have set forth the many parallels between the visual symbolic depictions of the drama of Job, and the text of the *Prophetic Books*. Blake's diagnosis of the sickness and suffering of Job is not different

from his diagnosis of the 'sickness of Albion'—the spiritual sickness of the English nation under the domination of the materialist philosophy imposed by the rationalist ego, oblivious of spiritual causes.

The title–page of the twenty two engravings reads: 'Illustrations of the Book of Job'. A flight of seven winged spirits supports the title and these signify the *elohim*, the seven spirits of God whom Christians know as the sevenfold Holy Spirit, Cabalists as the seven lower Sephiroth (the Trinity, completing the Sephirothal number ten, are in the uncreated world). Thus at the outset Blake proclaims in a symbol his belief in spiritual causes; 'Nature is a vision of the Science of the Elohim', he wrote in the poem *Milton*. Each spirit is in turn active on each of the days of creation–the theme is taken up magnificently on Plate 14. Six of the spirits on the title-page show their faces; the seventh turns away, its face averted; why?

In Blake's work no detail is accidental: his seventh spirit has not yet come, the creation is incomplete, for the kingdom of the Divine Humanity has not yet been established, in Jesus Christ. This sets the scene for the drama of Job's search for the face of God-the human face of God.

With the first plate, the human actors in the story appear; a dignified family portrait of Job in his prosperity, with his wife and his seven sons and three daughters, his flocks of sheep grazing in the background. Job and his wife sit side by side, the holy books open before them; but a marginal text below reads, 'The Letter killeth, The Spirit giveth life'. Job and his family live by the letter of the law. On the great tree of life which shelters them, hang musical instruments, unused–the spiritual gifts which they have neglected, while following the letter of the law. However, outwardly all is well.

In the second plate we are shown the inner aspect of things, which is somewhat different. Blake follows Tradition (and specifically Swedenborg, of whom he was a follower) in depicting three levels-the natural, the psychological, and the celestial. Enthroned in the celestial world is God; who, being

the God within Job himself, has Job's features, only more radiant. With downpointing finger he summons Satan, who is the central figure in the middle world—the psychological, the world of Job's inner life. In this world are four figures (Satan being the fourth) whom we may equate with the Four Zoas, the 'four mighty ones who are in every breast', (so Blake describes them). We know that Satan is, in the drama of Albion, specifically identified with fallen-human-reason, responsible, in Blake's view, for the human selfhood against the divine world. There too we see the troubled human faces of Job and his wife, as they behold the arrival of Satan in an enveloping flame. Below, in the natural world, the dignified repose of the first plate is broken; the sons and daughters watch, troubled, as two angels (guardian angels?) show Job a scroll, the same that in the higher world is being unrolled before God—the record of his life. Job, startled, holds up the Book of the Law, as if defending himself against some challenge, or accusation: has he not kept the law? Why, then, this Day of Reckoning? He is, he protests, blameless.

In the third plate, things have gone from bad to worse; the black-winged figure of Satan scatters fire and destruction as the house collapses about Job's sons and daughters—as told in the Bible. But for Blake Job's loss of his sons and daughters is not a natural but a spiritual death—the only death Blake recognized. Our children are dead to us when we cease to love them; we cease to love them when we pass moral judgments upon them, and we pass moral judgments when we live by the letter of the law. The spirit of Jesus, we remember, is 'the continual forgiveness of sins', but Job has not yet learned that the spirit of the living God is other than the letter of the law by which he has hitherto lived. 'The letter killeth', Blake had engraved on Plate One; in Plate 3 we see precisely that—the letter is killing Job's family.

That this is Blake's meaning is clearly enough stated in many passages of the Prophetic Books, with the Giant Albion in the part of Job. Indeed it is clear that the figure of Albion

is to a great extent derived from the *Book of Job*; and when he made his engravings–his supreme work–the story of Albion in turn became a source on which he drew in telling the story of Job. First, by losing contact with the spiritual world, he loses his children :

> His inward eyes closing from the Divine vision, & all
> His children wandering outside, from his bosom fleeing away
> (FZ. i. 588. K. 279)

They become externalized as, losing the divine vision, Albion falls into the mentality which sees the world as external, and others as outside himself, not as 'one family' in the Imagination. In a passage full of echoes from the *Book of Job* Albion laments that his flocks and herds, his fields and hills, his whole world, is lost to him;

> His Children exil'd from his breast pass to and fro before him,
> His birds are silent on his hills, flocks die beneath his branches,
> His tents are fall'n, his trumpets & the sweet sound of his harp
> Are silent on his clouded hills that belch forth storms & fire.
> (J. 181i. K. 641)

They are outside himself. Condemnation of sexual love seems to be one cause of Job's rejection of his 'accursed family'; and Blake paints a terrible picture of family harmony giving place to confusion and hatred through Albion's submission to the morality of 'natural religion', the religion of Satan the selfhood :

> .. But father now no more,
> Nor sons, nor hateful peace & love, nor soft complacencies,
> With transgressors meeting in brotherhood around the table
> Or in the porch or garden. No more the sinful delights
> Of age and youth, and boy and girl, and animal and herb,
> And river and mountain, and city & village, and house & family,
> Beneath the Oak & Palm, beneath the Vine & Fig-tree,
> In self-denial!—But War and deadly contention Between
> Father and Son, and light and love! All bold asperities
> The unforgiving porches, the tables of enmity, and beds
> And chambers of trembling & suspition, hatreds of age & youth,
> And boy & girl & animal & herb, & river & mountain,
> And city & village and house & family. (J. 18. 13. K. 640)

Such is the situation of Job, his world no longer beautiful to him or his family dear.

In Plate 4 Job and his wife sit alone in their ruined world as the messenger brings his news of death and destruction; above is the figure of Satan who now dominates the scene—the human ego, neither more nor less. This too is a traditional view in Christian mystical literature: Satan is not outside us, but within us. 'Every man is born a spectre or Satan', Blake declares, 'and needs a new selfhood continually.' It is the human ego that rebels against the divine order, offering the natural man autonomy—freedom. Milton's Satan declares, 'Better to rule in hell than serve in Heaven'—words many have responded to—Hell being of course by definition a kingdom cut off from God. In terms of the inner life, divine kingdom is the Imagination, the kingdom of Jesus; that of Satan, the natural world, in which the empirical ego is Lord of This World—according to one of Satan's traditional names.

In plate 5 we are again shown the state—the new state—of Job's inner universe. In the celestial world the enthroned figure of God has become drowsy and the light of the spiritual sun which emanates from the God within is dimmed and darkened. A company of angels who surround the throne recoils, as the energetic figure of Satan intervenes between the spiritual universe and Job in the natural world below. A cloud is closing in, shutting off the divine world from the natural world, where Job and his wife sit, destitute, in a bare stony landscape. But Job, ever-righteous, is giving to a crippled beggar led by a dog what may be a loaf of bread, or may be a stone; either way there is no joy in the aspects either of giver or of receiver! charity, Blake knew, could be a very cold thing. We may remember in Songs of Experience, *Holy Thursday* :

> Is this a holy thing to see
> In a rich and fruitful land,
> Babes reduc'd to misery
> Fed with cold and usurous hand?

He has still bitterer words to say elsewhere about those who

> Compell the poor to live upon a Crust of bread, by soft mild art...
> ...
> Magnify small gifts; reduce the man to want a gift, & then give
> with pomp.

Blake was not perhaps impressed by Job's own account of his many charities.

In the sixth plate we see only the dark earth that Job now inhabits, with stone altars in the background, a ruin, a stone tomb. Satan stands above the now prostrate Job, pouring arrows and flames upon him; the text illustrated is the smiting of Job with boils. His sufferings are no longer circumstantial only, they are now in himself. But, again, Blake interprets the 'boils' in Job's body not as a natural affliction but as a disease of his soul; they are guilt and sin, inflicted upon the man who lives by the letter of a law that condemns sin but knows nothing of forgiveness. Again turning to the parallel of the Giant Albion, we are told what Blake understood by the boils which afflicted Job; Albion laments :

> The disease of Shame covers me from head to feet. I have no hope
> Every boil upon my body is a separate & deadly Sin.
> Doubt first assail'd me, then Shame took possession of me.
> (J. 21. 3. K. 643)

The passage then continues with the description (already quoted) of the flight of Albion's sons and daughters, the loss of his cattle and cornfields, and ends with a return to the theme of guilt and unchastity :

> All is Eternal Death unless you can weave a chaste
> Body over an unchaste mind.

But the 'costly Robes of Natural Virtue' cannot 'weave a chaste body over an unchaste mind'. Hypocrisy is not chastity. And Blake with his bold realism knew that

> No individual can keep these Laws, for they are death
> To every energy of man and forbid the springs of life
> (J. 35. 11. K. 662)

Job is now experiencing in himself those self-searchings and self-condemnations his search for individual natural righteousness has brought upon him. To Blake self-righteousness is the worst, perhaps the only unforgiveable sin.

In the seventh plate Job's friends arrive, representatives of the Jewish law, who bring him little comfort by insisting that since he is suffering he must have sinned, for suffering is a punishment for sin. Job must necessarily have broken the law, either he or his children; for according to the Mosaic teaching prosperity and happiness reward those who keep the commandments of God. Job still insists that he is absolutely guiltless, and he believes this to be true. In the eighth plate we see depicted the great protest of man against the human lot : 'Let the Day perish wherein I was born', Job cries; he feels himself to be the victim of meaningless and underserved affliction. And it is at this point, as those who have read Jung's *Answer to Job* will remember, that Jung is won over by Job's argument: God should not, surely, treat his creature, man, so cruelly. It is a protest that runs through Jewish literature to the present day. I think of the stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer; especially of one entitled *The Blasphemer*, which tells of the rebel of a village community who accuses God of his unforgiveable cruelty to men and women; and to dumb innocent animals. Hard indeed to answer. After the holocaust what answer indeed has God to give His people? Blake must have been aware of the depth of Job's questioning; and below Plate 8 the words are written :

> And they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights and none spoke a word unto him for they saw that his grief was very great.

What but silence can respond to the presence of man's total affliction ?

In the ninth plate the impasse is broken, as so often in life, not by any answer being found in terms of the situation as it is presented, as it seems to the sufferer himself, but in the form of a startling intervention from another level of consciousness, in the form of a dream. This happens to us also–some terrifying,

awe-inspiring or shocking dream does not so much resolve a situation which seems to have no solution, as introduce another element into that situation. This dream is a vision of God, experienced not by Job himself but by one of his friends, Eliphas the Temanite. The awe, terror and authenticity of that dream reaches us still, in the words of the narrator:

> In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on man, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.
>
> Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof : an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying
>
> Shall mortal man be more just than God ? Shall a man be more pure than his maker ? Behold, he put no trust in his servants; his angels he charged with folly.

This great dream carries conviction to our century who have discovered what all spiritual civilizations have known–that dreams are sent us from levels of consciousness normally inaccessible to us, beyond and above the reality the empirical ego has constructed for itself on a basis of information from the five senses categorized and compared by natural reason. The Bible gives many examples of dreams treated as valid symbolic revelations from these inner worlds. In Blake's awesome illustration we see Eliphas telling his dream, as the numinous presence stands before the sleeper. Eliphas, seated on the ground (the natural world, as symbolised pictorially) points upwards into the world of his dream (the psyche). Job and his wife, startled, draw apart as they look up, imaginatively, into another man's vision—for the visions of others can often bring enlightenment from that inner invisible universe all share. Job is no longer telling his own story, defending himself, proving himself in the right: he has seen something he had not taken into account, a mystery beyond his reckoning.

In the tenth plate, in which his three friends become his three accusers, Job makes, as it were, his last stand; and here he makes his appeal to God; his aspect is that of supplication, of prayer; he has nothing more to say. Everyone is against

him now–even his wife's aspect and attitude seems to suggest that here she is giving him her terrible advice, to 'curse God, and die'.

In all art I know of no depiction of suffering more awe-inspiring than Plate eleven. In it Job is alone; as we are each alone in the darkest hour. Hitherto his wife had been beside him, sharing his ordeal; but now he has passed into a place where none can accompany him into his desolation. Instead of his three friends three friends in the fires of hell seek to drag him down with a chain into the abyss. He lies prostrate on his sleeping mat–for this is an experience of the solitude of night–while over him hovers the figure of Satan, with cloven foot and entwined by the serpent; Satan is in the likeness of God, bearded and venerable, his face cruel as he points to the Book of the Law, while the thunderings and lightnings of Sinai surround the God of This World, the Accuser, in his final triumph over Job, prostrate, helpless, and condemned. Job averts his face and with his hands tries to ward off this terrible realization of the nature of the God whom he has worshipped-the God of This World, of that 'natural religion' against which Blake fought his lifelong battle. It is Satan, in Blake's view–Satan the Selfhood, the reasoner and the accuser, who writes the moral law Job has so religiously kept. In the margin is written 'Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light, & his Ministers of Righteousness' (above); and below 'The triumph of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment'.

Such is Blake's lifelong theme: the moral law is natural law, which when uninformed by spiritual understanding is hypo-critical and cruel. It is not the law of the Holy Spirit; the religi-on of Jesus, Blake says, is continual forgiveness of sin. Blake declared himself 'a worshipper of Jesus', the divine humanity, the Imagination that redeems from the law, that forgives continually. This plate is the turning-point in the story of Job as told by Blake; and in the remaining ten plates Blake sets

forth another picture of reality than that of Deism–natural religion– of the spiritual world and its nature and its laws. In 'this world'– so called also by Jesus in the Gospels–men and women are subject to the laws of natural morality–the Mosaic law. Blake seeks to show that in our inner worlds things are otherwise.

The stillness, the calm, the promise of hope, one can almost say, the silence depicted in Plate 12, the release from suffering, contrasts with the nightmare and claustrophobic horror of the preceding plate. If a picture was ever a true icon, communicating the hope it depicts to whoever contemplates it, it is this. And if a work of art can heal the human spirit—and for what other purpose do works of sublime art exist–this engraving, but a few square inches in size, surely brings inexhaustible, boundless healing. I have had a copy on my desk for years and yet every time I look at it, it overwhelms me; as does that wonderful passage in Dante–and perhaps Blake was thinking of it—when from the bottom of hell's ever-narrowing circles, from under Satan's hairy thighs, Dante, half carried by Virgil, emerges through a narrow passage in a kind of rebirth, into the stillness and faint light of dawn. In Blake's engraving also dawn is about to break for Job. He is seated, listening now, his three friends beside him, listening too. His wife—his soul—is bowed, still terrified by the experience undergone. In the still dark sky are wonderful stars; and a new figure is entering the scene, the young man Elihu. He is beautiful, as with his outstretched right hand he makes toward the seated group (Job and his wife and his friends) a gesture of refutal, and with his left hand he points upwards; he advances eagerly, like a messenger. The wisdom of experience, of tradition, of the law, as represented by the three friends, has failed; the young man, Elihu, is the spirit of prophecy, ever-young. It is he who comes, as he claims, to 'speak for God.'

Elihu corresponds—there are many parallels which on this occasion there is not time to develop—to Blake's own figure

of Los, the 'eternal prophet', spirit of inspiration, the fourth Zoa, of whom Blake writes that he 'kept the divine vision in time of trouble'. He often seems to identify himself with Los; for Blake, the poetic and prophetic genius are one. 'One thing alone makes a poet', he wrote; 'Imagination, the Divine Vision'. Elihu is Los, he is the prophet, he is the poetic vision. It is likely that Elihu provided Blake with his model for Los; and again, in these late engravings, all that Los had become in Blake's imagination, comes to enrich, in its turn, the beautiful and eloquent figure of Elihu.

Commentators, both Jewish and Christian, differ in their view of the part played by Elihu in the Book of Job. According to some, he adds little to the argument; others even suggest that he is an interpolation. Not so Blake—for Blake he is central; he does indeed perform the prophetic role, and 'speaks for God', as he claims. His first words claim that he is come to speak 'in God's stead'; but he at once disclaims any personal superiority. He is not, he hastens to say, different from other men: 'I also am formed of the clay'. His claim to speak for God is either presumption (as it has seemed to some commentators) or it is true: Blake held it to be true. Elihu several times repeats his claim:

> Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf.
> I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my maker.
> For truly my words shall not be falsel he that is perfect in knowledge is with you.

An interpolation? A youngman's conceit? To believe so is to deny the reality of the prophetic inspiration, and, virtually, to vindicate natural knowledge as against the mystery of God. In earlier chapters we have heard the wisdom of experience from the three friends; now inspiration speaks.

The truth of the claim of Elihu—and of Blake's own claim to inspiration—supposes the reality of a transpersonal mind, a holy spirit in man that 'knoweth all things'. This claim modern

views of man—such as G.G. Jung's—are more prepared to consider than was the assured rationalism of the last century to which such a claim would have been meaningless. Even now there is a tendency to psychologize spiritual mystery, to attribute to 'the unconscious'—a human category—what Tradition sees as the world of God; of the God Within, to be sure, but the within also is transcendent, even though some schools of psychology are reluctant to admit this.

The many sources, the many parallels, in both Jewish and Islamic literature, of Blake's figure of the beautiful youthful visitant I cannot here describe to you, such as I should like to; but he makes the claim of all inspiration, as against what Blake has elsewhere called 'aged ignorance' :

> I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

It is Elihu who plainly tells Job that he has been in the wrong in seeking to justify himself; instead of thinking about himself and proclaiming his own virtue he should have been thinking about God. The God whom Job has served hitherto is the moral God, a construction of the human ego- of Satan the selfhood. How passionately Blake himself held this view is clear from many passages throughout his writings :

> I do not consider either the Just or the Wicked to be in a Supreme State, but to be every one of them States of the Sleep which the Soul may fall into in its deadly dreams of Good & Evil when it leaves Paradise following the Serpent. (V.L.J. pp. 91-2. K 614)

'Moral virtues do not exist', he wrote; and

> We do not find anywhere that Satan is Accused of Sin; he is only accused of Unbelief & thereby drawing Man into Sin that he may accuse him. Such is the Last Judgment—deliverance from Satan's Accusation. Satan thinks that Sin is displeasing to God; he ought to know that Nothing is displeasing to God but Unbelief & eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil. (VL.J. p. 91. K. 615)

—and again,

It is not because Angels are Holier than Men or Devils that makes them Angels, but because they do not expect Holiness from one another but from God only. (VL.J. pp. 92-4 K. 616)

Job in his steadfastness will be rewarded by a vision of the true living God, of whom Elihu now speaks.

Elihu speaks first of dreams as a source of knowledge of God; thus lifting the discussion from the order of reason to the order of revelation. Blake has engraved in the margins of Plate 12:

> For God speaketh once yea twice, & Man perceiveth it not.
> In a Dream, in a Vision of the night, in deep Slumberings upon the Bed
> Then he openeth the ears of Man & sealeth their instruction.
> That he may withdraw man from his purposes & hide Pride from man.
> If there be...with him an interpreter, One among a thousand...
> then he is gracious unto him & saith, Deliver him from going down Into the Pit...

How many psychiatrists have credentials to meet such a claim? Jung himself surely, and others perhaps. One hopes so.

Elihu makes great claims: Job shall see God for himself: ...and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto a man his righteousness...

The true God is not the Accuser, but the healer, the source of 'righteousness'. Job's righteousness had not been the righteousness of God; Elihu reproaches him precisely for having said 'I am righteous' and then 'It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God'. Yet delighting in God is the chief good, the sole end of any human life, God being not simply 'good' but the Good itself. Job's prayer at the beginning of his tribulations was to find God in order to justify himself, to argue his case, like Kafka's K. But at the end his prayer is 'That which I see not teach me to see'.

At this central moment in the drama we should perhaps pause to ask ourselves whether Blake's interpretation of the cause of suffering is adequate. Is the nature of suffering, its root cause, the sense of guilt, the accusations and counter-

accusations of those who inflict and those who sustain these condemnations, who condemn others and ultimately condemn and hate ourselves? I believe that many psychologists would say that a deep-rooted and destructive sense of guilt, projected upon others or suffered in ourselves, is indeed a principal cause of psychological suffering. But what of physical suffering, of physical disease? For these we are surely not to blame. This is indeed a great mystery; accidents, loss of limbs, or sight, these things indeed seem inexplicable. And yet we know so little of physical disease. 'Body is that portion of soul perceived by the five senses' Blake wrote; and if body be 'a portion of soul' may not physical disease be subject to laws similar to those of mental suffering? In some cases this seems clearly to be the case—the medical profession would not deny it. Jesus himself healed a man unable to walk by saying 'your sins are forgiven.' And what of the accident-prone—there are many questions unanswered, or even not yet asked.

On the other side, it is also true that the blind, the physically handicapped, the mentally retarded, are not by any means always the most unhappy people: sometimes indeed the reverse seems to be true. But I am not here to argue Blake's case that the root of suffering lies in the ego which has cut itself off from the God within, but only to state it.

As one magnificent plate follows another the divine mystery-play unfolds. On Plate 13 Job and his wife do see God face to face, in that magnificent plate which illustrates the words: 'then the Lord answered Job out of the Whirlwind'. In the second plate God was present in the celestial world but not perceived directly by Job in the natural world. Here there are no longer any barriers; Job sees God face to face; as Blake had claimed 'to converse daily as man with man' with the Divine Humanity, the God Within, the Self of the Vedas and of Jung. Indeed discovery of this centre of the personality which is not the ego but the true Self is, in Jungian analysis, the term of the individuation process. Circumstances are not

changed, but we are changed. The cause of suffering is within ourselves, and so is its cure.

Here I would like to digress for a moment to speak about the Whirlwind. I need not remind you, perhaps, of the Pentecostal vision of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples as a mighty rushing wind. Wind, or breath, as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, is to be found throughout the Old and the New testaments and indeed throughout the world. Think too of Shelley's west wind, to whom he prayed 'Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is', and countless other passages of poetry. But there may be more to this central experience of Job. Had the author of the Book of Job known this? Had Blake? I leave you merely to reflect that spiritual knowledge is not a matter of information, but of epiphany; and release from suffering can only result from a change of consciousness.

In describing the remaining plates I must be brief. The vision of God in plate 13 is followed, in Plate 14, by a vision of the creation in all its glory, in the three worlds. In the margins the six days of creation are depicted; and the engraving itself–the seventh day–is entitled 'when the morning Stars sang together & all the Sons of God shouted for Joy'. The theme is epiphany itself; for creation is completed in mankind's vision of God as the Divine Humanity. This is the arrival of the human kingdom, in which the work of creation is completed. We remember here the title-page showing the seven elohim, the creators; the averted face of the seventh spirit has been revealed to Job as the face of humanity. Throughout the series, the face of God is always identical with the face of Job: not because Job has invented a God in his own image but because man is made in the image and likeness of God; as told in the Book of Genesis humanity is a manifestation of the God within; every human face, however obscured, is one among the many innumerable faces of God.

Plate 15 shows Behemoth and Leviathan. These are enclosed within a sphere–the time -world, as we may discover,

again, from comparison of the design with passages in the text of the Prophetic Books. They represent duality—an aspect of this world which has troubled many besides Job, and Blake himself: good and evil, the light and the dark contraries, which seem to be in the very nature of things, in this world. The finger of God points down to Beheomth and Leviathan as the great contraries, while Job, his wife and his three friends look down in awe, from the world of the soul, where they now are aware of the presence of God in the Spiritual world above the soul, into the world of generation where 'without contraries there is no progression'. What we call good and evil are necessary and inseparable, in this world. Unity is only in God.

Plate 16 shows the fall of Satan into the flames of the abyss. Once more we are looking into the inner worlds. In his fall Satan the great Selfhood is accompanied by two other figures, a man and a woman. These are the selfhoods of Job and his wife, now cast off. We have each our own selfhood; Blake often addressed his as 'my Satan'-'Truly, my Satan, thou art but a dunce', and so on; 'Every man is born a spectre, or Satan...' The Living God is now again on his throne, and around him, in the radiance of his light, the spiritual sun, a group of cherubs, or children. Nor are these merely angelic decoration: no, for if we look closely we see that the two principal winged children, boy and girl, who seem to be weeping, in penitence, correspond, again, to Job and his wife, whose selfhoods have been cast off into the abyss. They are spiritually new-born, 'as little children' in the kingdom of God. Three others are grouped together: Job's friends, they also are spiritually reborn. There is yet another child, haloed, half-hidden behind the figure of the Father: this I believe is the Christ-child, promised to the human world by the Jehovah of the Bible, and born, so Blake believed, as Jesus, the Divine Humanity. This I should like, honouring his memory, to recall was pointed out to me by that great follower and scholar of Blake, Kerrison Preston, whose collection of Blake material

was left to the Westminster City Library.

Plate 17 shows the human figure of God blessing Job and his wife; while in the margin there is text from the fourth Gospel: 'I and the Father are One'; 'At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father & you in me & I in you'; 'If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father'—the Christian promise of immortality proclaimed by St. John the Evangelist. The vision of the coming Messiah—who for Blake is Jesus, the divine humanity—is the resolution of Job's suffering and the meaning of his words 'I have heard thee with the hearing of my Ear, but now my Eye seeth thee'.

Jung, surely, overlooked that affirmation, which Blake understood in the sense of the vision of the God within. Jung thought that Job had won the argument, and at the end thought it best to say no more to a God incapable of speaking his language. But according to the text Job had 'seen' God; he had understood something he had not previously understood, and which brought his sufferings to an end. His consciousness had been transformed, 'and God blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning'. Strange that Jung, who saw the goal of the individuation process as a discovery of the true Self, should have been so carried away by his advocacy of Job in his self-justification as to have missed so essential a statement of the very goal he himself understood as the goal of human development.

In Plate 18 we see Job praying for his friends; and in Plate 19 a happy contrast with Plate 5, in which a joyless Job gives a loaf or a stone to a joyless beggar. Plate 19 illustrates Job and his wife receiving their guests as for a celebration. The women are wearing their best dresses, their jewels, and their hair elegantly arranged. The text below is 'Everyone also gave him a piece of money'. Job has learned to receive; learned that *he* is not necessarily the giver, congratulating himself on his generosity. Now he understands that from everyone we meet, we receive. This is a joyous scene, as Job and his wife sit under a great fig—tree while behind them is a field of ripening corn. Their world has come to life again.

In Plate 20 Job sits with his three daughters, embracing them: had he learned to value the feminine, to accept woman's love formerly rejected as sin? There is nothing in the text of the Bible to support such an interpretation, but it seems clear that this was what Blake thought. Woman's love was one of those 'sins' that afflicted Job with 'boils'; the notion that 'woman's love is sin' is one against which Blake himself waged his battle; and below the plate we see feminine figures carrying and scattering flowers, the 'loves and graces of eternity.' And to complete this happy conclusion we are shown again, on the plate, the same family group as in the first, Job and his wife under the great Tree of Life. But now they are not reading the Book of the Law, they have taken down from the tree those musical instruments, and one can almost hear Vaughan Williams's glorious music as one looks at those trumpets and flutes, Job's harp, and the lyre and song-scores of his daughters. The words below—paralleling the earlier text—'The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life' are the words 'In burnt offerings for sin thou hast no pleasure.' Job's burnt offerings had been the torments and ultimately the self-torments, of sin according to the laws of the God of This World. What *is* pleasing to God is that every human being should live creatively, from that 'intellectual fountain' which is the holy spirit within each of us. This last plate of Job might fitly be seen as an illustration of his address *To the Christians*, which Blake prefaces to the last book of *Jerusalem*, in which the Giant Albion, like Job, ends in joy and liberty.

> What is the Divine Spirit? Is the Holy Ghost any other than an Intellectual Fountain? What is the Harvest of the Gospel & its Labours? What is that Talent which it is a curse to hide? What are the Treasures of Heaven which we are to lay up for ourselves, are they any other than Mental Studies & Performances? What are all the Gifts of the Gospel, are they not all Mental Gifts? Is God a Spirit who must be worshipped in Spirit & in Truth, and are not the gifts of the Spirit Everything to Man? ...is not the Body more than Raiment? What is Mortality but the things relating to the Body which Dies? What is Immortality but the things

relating to the Spirit which Lives Eternally ? What is the Joy of Heaven but Improvement in the things of the Spirit ? What are the Pains of Hell but Ignorance, Bodily Lust, Idleness & devastation of the things of the Spirit ? Answer this to your selves & expel from among you those who pretend to despise the labours of Art & Science, which alone are the labours of the Gospel. (J. 77. K. 717)

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MATTHEW ARNOLD'S 'HIGHER SERIOUSNESS' RECONSIDERED

If I were asked to make a resume of Matthew Arnold's critical pronouncements in a single phrase, I would choose the phrase 'Higher Seriousness' because it is so central to his critical thinking that the moment Arnold, the critic, is mentioned, one instantly becomes conscious of this most controversial and the least understood of all critical concepts. 'Higher Seriousness' has the same place in the criticism of Arnold as 'Katharsis' has in the poetic theory of Aristotle, arousing the same amount of controversies and disagreements among scholars, and remaining as enigmatic as ever. It is very interesting to note that John Middleton Murray calls this concept of Arnold 'one of the shibboleths of serious criticism'[1] exactly as G.F. Else characterizes the Aristotelian theory of *Katharsis* 'as one of the biggest of the 'big' ideas in the field of aesthetics and criticism, the Mt. Everest or Kilimanjaro that looms on all literary horizons'.[2]

The concept of 'Higher Seriousness' has unfortunately brought its author a great disrepute in the twentieth century in the wake of the reaction that set in at the close of the nineteenth century against everything Victorian. Practically all historians of English literary criticism, right from Saintsbury to George Watson and all leading criticis of our times—T.S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, Cleanth Brooks, H. W. Garrod and John Crowe Ransom,[3] to name only a few most notable figures in English letters—all have achieved a startling unanimity of purpose in spurning almost every significant concept in Arnold's critical corpus—his definition of poetry, his theory of 'grand style', his notion of 'disinterestedness' and above all, his

concept of 'Higher Seriousness'. But all the hostile comments on the concept of 'Higher Seriousness' are due, I think, to the misunderstanding regarding the meaning of the phrase itself. Just as Aristotle had left the word 'Katharsis' unexplained and thus had given rise to endless commentaries on the katharsis-clause of his definition of tragedy, in like fashion, Arnold himself is largely responsible for all the unfavourable scholarly comments on his otherwise good-intentioned use of an essentially Aristotelian concept which has passed for Arnold's own concept. His sympathetic critics and disciples should have made Arnold's meaning clear but to the best of my knowledge, no earnest effort has been made so far in the direction of clarifying 'Higher Seriousness' even by the most sympathetic of his critics such as H.F. Lowry, Lionel Trilling and J.D. Jump.[4] In the present paper I shall try to bring out the meaning of 'Higher Seriousness' which will, I am sure, redeem Arnold and do him full justice.

The concept of 'Higher Seriousness' pervades the entire critical canon of Arnold right from his 'Preface' to the *Poems* of 1853 to the *Essays in Criticism*, Second Series, of 1888, the year of Arnold's death. It contains the essence of almost all the critical ideas that Arnold gave currency to—'disinterestedness', 'grand style' 'sweetness and light', his sense of culture as the capacity 'to see the object as in itself it really is' and above all his cult of Hellenism and the idea of the 'Best Self.' In its most extended form the concept has been used in his classic essay 'The Study of Poetry' which served as introduction to T.H. Ward's famous anthology entitled *English Poets* (1880) and was reprinted as the first of the *Essays in Criticism*, Second Series, in 1888. In this essay Arnold put forward his thesis that in the modern scientific age when the foundations of religion are being shaken by the discoveries of science almost daily, the only hope for the survival of man's spiritual life rests with poetry whose future is, Arnold declared, immense. But if poetry has to discharge the function of religion, it will have to be of a very excellent order. For, ordinary kind of poetry which the Victorian gentleman used as his pastime, Arnold

asserted, would not do; only the very best and most excellent kind of poetry could preserve humanity by 'forming, sustaining, and delighting' it. This being the case, Arnold's advice to his countrymen was: 'We must accustom ourselves to a high standard and to a strict judgment'.[5] We can derive the greatest benefits of consolation and strength from poetry only by reading the most excellent kind of poetry. But in order to realize our objective, we should be critical enough so that 'we could make distinction between excellent and inferior, sound, and unsound or only half-sound, true and untrue or only half-true.' Arnold, therefore, warns us against the two methods of making estimates about poetry which were current in his day : the historical method and the personal method. Instead of these fallacious methods, Arnold exhorts us to adopt what he calls 'Touchstone Method' which consists in having always in one's mind lines and expressions of the great masters which would serve as touchstones for 'detecting the presence of high poetic quality, and also the degree of this quality, in all other poetry which one may place beside them'. Arnold selects eleven passages from four greatest masters of poetry—Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton to serve as living examples of the most excellent kind of poetry. According to him, these passages are perfect criticisms of life under the conditions fixed for such criticisms by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty; they are perfect from the point of view of ideas as well as from the point of view of poetic craft–style, diction, imagery and rhythm. But above all, they have 'Higher Seriousness'—a quality which, in Arnold's considered opinion, is the highest mark of the greatest masters of poetry such as Homer. But what 'Higher Seriousness' actually is Arnold does not bother to explain beyond saying that it is 'born of absolute sincerity' and that it is what gives the criticism of life offered by a poet such as Dante in a verse like 'In la sua volontade nostra pace',... its real power and worth. However, the meaning of 'spoudaiotes' ('the high and excellent seriousness') can be brought out with some amount of certainty by attending attentively to the examples of this poetic virtue, supplied by Arnold in 'The Study of Poetry' and elsewhere

and by finding out the meaning of the term in Aristotle's *Poetics* which is, Arnold himself declares, the original source of the concept.

Let us take up first the statement of Aristotle in the ninth chapter of the *Poetics* 1451 b 3 where comparing poetry with history, Aristotle remarks: 'Dio kai philosophoteron kai spoudaioteron poiesis historias estin' which in S. H. Butcher's translation reads as: 'Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history'[6]. The phrase 'Philosophoteron kai spoudaioteron' has been variously rendered by other translators of the *Poetics* as 'more philosophic and of graver import' (Bywater)[7], 'more philosophical and more significant' (Leon Golden)[8] and 'something more philosophical and more worthy of serious attention' (T. S. Dorsch)[9]. But since the positive degree of the term 'spoudaioteron', namely, 'spoudaias' has been used by Aristotle as an adjective, qualifying the noun praxeos (of action) in the definition of tragedy at the beginning of the sixth chapter of the *Poetics* 1449 b 2 and since that term had been rendered invariably by all the translators of the *Poetics* known to Arnold by the word 'serious', Arnold not unnaturally chooses to translate 'philosophoteron kai spoudaioteron' by the expression 'possessing a higher truth and higher seriousness'. But Arnold did not use the word 'seriousness' in its usual narrow sense denoted by such words as 'sadness', 'solemnity', 'earnestness' 'grimness' or any such narrowly moral category. Aristotle, the real author of the concept, had not intended the phrase, under discussion, to suggest crude morality either. The context of Aristotle's statement is the unity of art which he discusses at great length in the eighth chapter of the *Poetics*. In chapter IX he enlarges upon the concept of unity in terms of Universality (his theory of 'Katholon'). Poetry is, according to Aristotle, superior to history because it deals with the Universal, whereas history remains contented with the Particular. When Aristotle says that poetry, at its best, is universal, he means to say that its statements are governed by the principles of 'Probability' ('Eikos') and

'Necessity' ('Ananke'). The observance of this twin principle of Probability and Necessity ensures the wholeness, completeness and coherence of the entire poetic construct, rendering it universal in appeal. It is exactly this universal appeal which explains why all human beings take interest in it regardless of the barriers of caste, creed, colour, country and age. History, unless it is being treated by a poet, gives only a factual record of events which are, in most cases, unrelated with one another and therefore quite confused and chaotic and in consequence thereof not of any real worth. History cannot achieve human interest simply because its records do not possess inner coherence and cohesion; naturally, its appeal is very limited and not very significant. The inter-connectedness of the events of poetry, on the other hand, renders it valuable and powerful, with the result that people take it very seriously and love to read it. Clearly, poetry is not an easy endeavour; it needs various knowledge and deep thinking and a great organizing capacity to compose a perfect poem whereas it needs no creative power to write history which hardly requires any imaginative faculty to make selection as is required by poetry for making its events convincing and artistically organic parts of the whole, for history is a jumble of chance-events, accidents and capricious doings without anything to justify them. Thus one, who wants to be the creator of poetry, in its truest sense, must be a friend of wisdom and truth and a man of noble character who takes his work in no slipshod manner but rather in a serious way because his work(creation of poetry) is no child's game, but a very significant and valuable and therefore noble activity. Here it is very pertinent to state that the word 'Spoudaios' is a very complex term which cannot be easily translated into English for, as Butcher says,[10] no one English word conveys the full sense of the Greek term. 'Grave' and 'Great—these are the two ideas contained in the word. But this is true of the term 'Spoudaias' in the definition of tragedy. What about the 'Spoudaios' or to be exact 'Spoudaioteron' (the comparative degree of 'spoudaios') in

the ninth chapter of the *Poetics* ? In this matter the research of Professor Leon Golden is worthy of our attention. He has clearly demonstrated that in Aristotle's *Poetics* there always exists a very close relationship between 'Spoudaios' and 'Areti' ('excellence'). He confidently asserts : 'In regard to the interpretation of 'Spoudaios' in the *Poetics*, each occurrence of the word can be easily, clearly, and I maintain, best understood in terms of the close relationship between 'Spoudaios' and 'Areti' which Aristotle posited in the *Categories*'.[11] He further observes : 'In the *Poetics*, where 'Spoudaios' occurs outside the definition of tragedy in chapter VI, it is frequently rendered by translators as 'excellent', 'good', 'noble' or some such synonym. It may sometimes be legitimately translated as 'serious' in these contexts but with a meaning quite different from the commonly accepted one for the occurrence of the term in the definition of tragedy. In those contexts where 'serious is a legitimate translation it is always with the nuance found in such English expressions as to take something seriously or a matter of serious import. Here serious means of high significance expressing a principal quality of the 'Areti' of a thing or person.[12]

In the light of this finding of Professor Golden, we can interpret the concept of 'spoudaios' as related to poetry in terms of the excellence of the poet consisting in his power to transmute and transform his raw material of particular events into something very high in scale, something very grand and noble by rendering them universal through his creative process called Mimesis. This faculty of universalizing the particular events comes to the poet who has a keen vision of life and deep feeling about it',[13] to use the illuminating words of Professor Murray. It came into the easy possession of the poets like Homer and Sophocles who had, in the excellent words of Arnold, 'seen life steadily and seen it whole'[14] and had both profundity of thought and the richness and ripeness of experience.

I believe that by 'Higher Seriousness' Arnold means exactly what Aristotle meant by his theory of 'Katholon' ('Universal')

which I have tried to expound in the preceding paragraph as simply as possible. It must be noted that the Universalizing power of poetry, in Aristotle's view, presupposes the possession by the poet of a philosophical world-view and the faculty of concretely and vividly realizing that world-view in the organic structure of his poem. It seems that Arnold had a much fuller grasp of the poetic theory of Aristotle than his detractors like John Shepard Eells, Jr. who has the audacity of calling him 'pseudo-Aristotelian'[15]. That Arnold was only reiterating in his concept of 'Higher Seriousness' the Aristotelian theory of 'Katholon' is clear from his employment of the word 'Seriousness' in conjunction with the word 'Truth'–'Truth' for what I have called the philosophical world-view and 'Seriousness' for the vivid and concrete realization of that view in the wholeness and completeness of the poetic artifact. Of course sometimes Arnold uses 'High Seriousness' or 'seriousness' alone. But he invariably means the Universality of Poetry which gives us[16] a satisfying sense of reality'.

In order to grasp the full import of Arnold's concept of 'Seriousness' we must bear in mind his idea of culture and the part that poetry, in his view, was destined to play in realizing it. Culture, in the truest sense, according to Arnold, is an activity of mind which manifests itself in a unique way of living, thinking and feeling. It is the product of the union between reason and imagination or as Arnold termed this union 'Sweetness and Light', borrowing the phrase from Jonathan Swift.[16] It is characterized by curiosity, openness, flexibility and, above every thing else, by 'Disinterestedness' which is nothing but an unbiased, unselfish and objective perception of things as in themselves they really are. Criticism and culture are almost synonyms for Arnold because the former has the same characteristics as the latter and literature–or 'poetry' in the broadest sense of the term – is uniquely capable of furthering culture by virtue of its being the noblest form of criticism- 'criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty.' Here we must recall Arnold's definition of criticism, namely' 'a disinterested

endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world'.[17] Now, if poetry is a criticism of life, then its highest mark should be the expression of the best and the noblest of thoughts gathered from various branches of learning, powerful enough to have moved the poet profoundly and to have been assimilated by his mind and soul, thus gaining an authentic ring in their expression. It is the deeply felt noble thoughts rendered most impersonal by the imaginative structuring by the poet that constitute 'Higher Seriousness' of Arnold's conception which is, as I have suggested earlier, substantially the same thing as Aristotle's notion of the Universality of poetry.

If what I have said about 'Higher Seriousness' is close to Arnold's real intention, then it must be borne out and vindicated by the examples of 'Higher Seriousness' given in *The Study of Poetry*. Each of the eleven touchstone passages is, Arnold asserts, artistically perfect and thematically sound but what makes it superbly poetic is the presence in it of 'Higher Seriousness', born of absolute sincerity. The first passage is from the third book of *Iliad* 11. 243–44 which could be transliterated in the following manner:

> Os phato tous d' edi katechen physizoos aia
> En Lakedaimoni authi, phile en patridi gaie.

In E. V. Rieu's prose-translation the passage reads thus:

> 'She did not know, when she said this, thst fruitful Earth had already received them in her lap, over there in Lacedaemon, in the country that they loved,'[18]

But the versified version in the hexameter measure done by a contemporary of Arnold, Dr. Hawtrey, the Provost of Eton, that Arnold had praised very highly, runs thus:

> 'So said she;— they long since in Earth's soft arms were reposing
> There in their own dear land, their fatherland, Lacedaemon.[19]

The lines are Homer's own comments on Helen's regrets, addressed to the Elders of Troy at the Skaian gates, viewing the Achaian host, on her failure to see her two brothers—Castor

and Polydeukes while she could identify very clearly Aias and Idomeneus and the rest. Arnold cites this passage to explain what 'the grandiose conception' actually is which he denies to the eleventh century French epic *Chanson de Roland*. Arnold quotes the following passage from the French poem:

> De plusurs choses a remembrer li prist,
> De tantes teres cume li bers cunquist,
> De dulce France, des humes de sun lign,
> De Carlemagne sun seignor ki l' nurrit.

Arnold himself translates this passage into English thus:

> 'Then begen he to call many things to remembrance—all the lands which his valour conquered, and pleasant France, and the men of his lineage, and Charlemagne his liege lord who nourished him.
>
> *Chanson de Roland* lii. 939-42

Now, wherein does actually lie the superiority of the Greek passage over the French passage? The answer lies in the praise lavished by an eminent historical French critic, M. Vitet (1802-73) on the French poem which praise, according to Arnold, is really deserved by Homer's epic. The *Chanson de Roland* displays an epic genius, M. Vitet says, because in its details it has the constant union of simplicity with greatness which is the quality of a genuine epic. But Arnold contends that it is in Homer rather than the anonymous poet of the *Chanson de Roland* that we get the constant union of simplicity with greatness. In support of his thesis Arnold quotes the above passages having an almost identical context. But unfortunately Arnold does not care to pinpoint as to where in fact we should look for the union of simplicity with greatness in the Greek passage. So far as the virtue of simplicity is concerned, both the passages clearly possess it in an eminent degree. But greatness of conception is to be found in the Greek passage alone. This can be easily located in the world-view of Homer suggested in a subtle way by the word 'Physizoos' which Rieu has rendered by the word 'Fruitful' but which more literally can be translated as 'Life-bestowing'. This epithet of the earth is indeed very rich in connotation; it implies that death is but life come full circle, for the earth, which

bestowed life, receives it back. Clearly, it is life-affirmation in the most poetic manner, the application of a profound idea in the structure of poetry without letting the reader feel that some moral lesson is being imparted to him. The particular utterance of Homer has become universal because it is shown to be artistically necessary after the speech of Helen in the context and looks probable when Homer's world-view as a whole, scattered throughout the *Iliad*, is taken into account. Moreover, the view of life that is suggested by the epithet, under consideration, is Stoic in its import and Arnold, it must be borne in mind, was an advocate of Stoicism whose essence is resignation or acceptance of life as it is, in itself a very noble and profound idea. The poet who composed the *Iliad* had absorbed and imbibed this noble view of life and made a poetic use of it in the passage, cited above, in accordance with the principles of Probability and Necessity, endowing his utterance with what Dr Johnson called 'the grandeur of generality'. When Arnold says that the poetry of the greatest poets such as Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton is characterized by 'Higher Seriousness', in all probability, he means exactly what I have just said about Homer's comments on Helen's speech regarding the absence of her brothers from the Greek ranks she is witnessing along with the Trojan Elders, including Priam, from the Skaian gate. Arnold rightly denies this quality to the passage from the *Chanson de Roland* because it contains no word with the depth of meaning that 'Physizoos' of Homer possesses. The word 'Dulce' ('Pleasant') which is an adjective used to qualify the word 'France', has no power of suggesting any noble view of life, comparable to Homer's word 'Physizoos'; the utmost that we could say about it is that it is a glorification by a soldier of his native land but does not rise to the high level of universality. The French poet has, no doubt, been able to suggest the moral idea of loyalty through his entire verse but then it suffers from the profuse use of the connective conjunction 'De' and Arnold, I am sure, calls it 'primitive' mainly on that account. Arnold agrees that the French poem has vigour and freshness and is not without

pathos but is certainly bereft of the grandiose conception and the constant union of simplicity with greatness; (i. e. it lacks 'Spoudaiotes' or 'Higher Seriousness') whose sure test is the sincerity of the poet's utterance.

We can subject each one of the remaining ten touchstone passages, cited by Arnold in *The Study of Poetry* to reveal its 'Spoudaiotes' in terms of the grand vision of life suggested by it and the fullest realization of that vision in accordance with the principles of Probability and Necessity (Arnold's laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty) which ensures the absolute sincerity of the poet's utterance, rendering it Universal in significance. But for lack of space I resist the temptation of that noble undertaking and postpone it for a sequel to this paper at some later date, and propose to discuss a few points pertaining to the viability of Arnold's concept of 'Higher Seriousness'. As I have already stated earlier, Arnold's insistence on the reading of the very best kind of poetry possessing 'Spoudaiotes' was occasioned by the decline of religion in his day and the consequent ample prospects of religion being replaced by poetry. Now, the function of religion, whatever be its denomination, is to console and delight the distressed soul of humanity and to refine and elevate man's sensibility. This double objective can be realized only by the poetry which is deep and moving in its expression of the thoughts of the best and the highest order, expressed with utmost sincerity in accordance with the principles of poetry-making. Some scholars think that only a sad and pathetic kind of poetry is what Arnold recommends. Had that been the case, Arnold would have called the verses from the *Chanson de Roland* poetry of the highest order because they do have pathos in an eminent degree in their evocation of Roland's mental and spiritual condition. Nor does Arnold believe that 'Higher Seriousness' is invariably missing from comic or bacchanalian poetry. While discussing the poetry of Burns, he says : 'it is unsatisfactory, not because it is bacchanalian poetry, but because it has not that accent of sincerity which bacchanalian poetry, to do it justice, very often has'. Evidently, Arnold is all for the real

voice of the poet because that alone can make his poetry convincing.

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BOOK REVIEW

Women in the Poetry of T. S. Eliot: A Psychoanalytic Approach by Tony Pinkney, Macmillan, 1984, pp. 156

Mr Tony Pinkney is the first psychoanalytical critic to make a systematic use of the insights of Melanie Klein and D. W. Winnicott, which originate from a study of psychoses—the more radical disturbances of the psyche, which are characterised by a failure in reality-testing—and not of neuroses as Freudian insights do. This involves a delving into the pre-Oedipal and pre-genital, in fact into the earliest phases of psychic life where only the maternal environment, initially the mother's breast, matters for the infant cherishing its omnipotence and experiencing the fear of annihilation, which is the fundamental human anxiety. To evade anxiety, which is, however, a necessary spur to psychic maturity, the primitive ego of the infant mobilises strategic 'schizoid' defences like projection, introjection, splitting, idealisation and omnipotent denial. As these defences inhibit 'symbol-formation' they are disabling in proportion to their success.

Klein traces adult psychosis back to fixations and difficulties in what she calls the 'paranoid-schizoid position'—a phase of undeveloped reality-testing in which the external object, which has been split into persecutory and good or idealised components because of anxiety, is indistinguishable from the self and is established as 'internal' by a process of introjection. But if environmental conditions are more favourable the infant passes on to the 'depressive position' in which it is able to recognise the single external object in its contradictory aspects and wholeness and otherness. In this phase Klein sees the fixation points of adult manic depression. Now the good 'internal object'-which is, of course, the mother-is shattered out of resentment for its very autonomy, which results in the

desolation of the inner psychic world. As the old fears of the disintegration of the ego are intensified schizoid defences are again alarmingly called into play. There is mourning; but there is also the feeling of guilt, which triggers off the reparative impulse to reconstitute the fragmented good object—and to put the child on the course of 'normal' development.

Klein saw art itself as a matter of depressive reparation. But in 1952 Hanna Segal rescued psychoanalytical aesthetics from its confinement to considerations of content by saying that if art makes reparation it does so, not by reconstituting a maternal object, but by formal structuring. Adrian Stokes went beyond the framework of Kleininian aesthetics to maintain that form would involve a potentially non-stultifying and, what Freud called, 'oceanic' merging of the self with the satisfying object combined with a sense of its otherness. Winnicott made things more lucid by proposing the idea of an intermediate area between the subjective and the objective: the 'potential space' between mother and infant which is empirically indicated by the 'transitional objects' the infant pushes into its mouth, sucks at, or is passionately attached to. The 'potential space' offers not only a breast substitute to wean the child but also a rudimentary form of play, allowing it to explore, dramatise and master the interface of self and other. In fact Winnicott pushes back beyond even the Kleinian positions into the remotest prehistory of the psyche to lay full stress on the importance and primacy of object-relations. 'Winnicott's value for this study of the work of T.S. Eliot', says Mr Pinkney 'is his insistence that Klein's depressive position, the separating out of both object and ego, has its pathological aspect and may be carried to manic extremes where it denies both an aggressive relation to the breast and that more benevolent interplay that is the 'potential space'. The author thinks that 'it is possible to get a long way in the analysis of Eliot's poetry and drama in terms of a dialectic between this extreme depressive separating out from the maternal object and the insistent return of the (paranoid-schizoid) repressed'.

Winnicott has also referred to Jacques Lacan's 'mirroring gaze' of the mother that answers to the self's demand for recognition. Lacan's own theory of psychosis, which is mentioned as 'a more illuminating parallel', is based on the castrating denial to the child of individuality and access to the 'paternal metaphor' by a 'phallic mother'. The child feels that she has snatched away the phallus altogether and slashed it away within her bodily interior. But he will determinedly prise open that body. And this brings us to Eliot's recurring theme of 'doing a girl in'.

This theme and what I. A. Richards saw, according to his own lights, as Eliot's 'persistent concern with sex' would make Eliot's poetry (and plays) a fair game for any psychoanalytical critic. But in this case the inadequacies and fallacies of his approach would also get exposed. At best he is likely to end up by getting, and not getting, at the truth at the same time.

Eliot's is a persistent and developing concern with regenerative love, and in his case, as in the case of Dante, the meaning of the poetry lies in final causes rather than in origins. But since the psychoanalytical critic is concerned with origins and not with final causes he, with his 'concitation of the backward devils', is likely to miss the meaning and 'purpose' of Eliot's whole 'show' as he goes about analysing its aesthetic forms into all kinds of bizarre and nauseating images. For example, instead of invoking the Dantean analogues that would have illuminated the meaning of the poem Hysteria–the descent-ascent curve suggested here by being sucked into the hell-mouth of the monster–woman; and the recurrent symbols associated with the three inter-related aspects of love, picked up from the last cantos of the *Purgatorio* and occurring in this context of a disturbed state of love in nightmarishly debased forms: the restaurant and its garden for Eros, the tea-ritual and the suggestions of cannibalism and violence for Agape, and the engulfing, 'involving' laughter of the woman for Charis—instead of invoking these analogues Mr Pinkney visualises a 'voracious and cannibalistic vagina' or *vagina dentata* to indicate the

underlying phantasy of the poem. The parallel with the Bakhtinian carnival can lead to an enrichment of our understanding, if we have already understood the meaning of the poem. There may be a brash typographic pun in 'acci-dental stars', which is perhaps ingenious of Mr Pinkney to identify. But what is more relevant here is the allusion to the myth of Dante's 'valley of dying stars'–'accidental stars'–in which both dentristic and militaristic connotations, converging as they do in the word 'drill', are subsumed. This is a very minor, almost a non-serious, instance of the mythical concrescence in Eliot's poetry, of his way of combining the various perspectives of human experience into a multivalent resonance through which he delivers his intensities. It is a pity Mr Pinkney has no means of appreciating it.

Furthermore, his theoretical framework does not allow any room for love, in the sense of relational responsibility consciously acted out by choosing and willing, and its movement towards transcendence and its striving for meaning in final causes. Hence he seems to have little understanding of the forward drive of Eliot's poetry as it moves along a whole range of development of meaning between Cassirer's poles of the Ineffable : the Indeterminate and the Infinite; from an exploration of the infernal, unregenerate state of wrong or disordered love, through that of the possibility, and also of the process, of regenerative purgation and ordering of love (first hinted at in *The Waste Land* itself), to that of reaching a comprehensive vision of regenerative–transcendental stillness 'With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling' (in *Four Quartets*). For the same reason Mr Pinkney has little understanding of the development in meaning of Eliot's personal symbols. Thus for him 'stairs' remain fixed in sexual-psychotic associations related to an ambivalently desired and threatening mother-mistress, but they never reach the transcendental associations of the saint's stair.

By adding Notes to *The Waste Land* for the sake of making up a desirable number of pages in print Eliot has put a whole

brood of merely allusion—hunting, origin—seeking critics on the wrong trail. Such critics would never stop to consider the functional relevance of the allusion to the particular context in which it occurs. In his Notes to *The Waste Land* Eliot has quoted Bradley. But neither this quotation nor the text of his doctoral dissertation on Bradley provides any ground for Mr Pinkney's inference that Eliot himself subscribed and kept on subscribing to Bradley's opinion of the unreality of the ego. If the ego is unreal for Eliot how is it that there is such a growing emphasis on the importance and perfection of the will in his poetry and plays ?

Mr Pinkney has avoided the instinctual determinism of Freudian psychoanalysis to fall into a kind of environmental determinism for lack of any notion of love and choosing and willing and transcendence. He says he does not want his 'readings of the poems to rest on psychobiography.' But the psychobiographical fallacy is something he cannot altogether avoid; it is ingrained into his approach. Thus in order to analyse the fictional psychic life created by Eliot the artist he would make frequent recourse to Lyndall Gordon's book, *Eliot's Early Years*, for information about 'the extremism and intense strangeness' of the psychic life of Eliot the man who suffers—his disturbed relations with his mother, his neurosis or 'mysterious illness' of 1910, his nervous breakdown of 1921 and all that.

It is very significant that Mr Pinkney accommodates considerations of form in his psychoanalytical criticism by invoking Segal, Stokes and Winnicott. One wishes he had made a further advance in this direction by fusing form and content in the notion of 'symbolic form', in and through which art makes a sensuous creation and discovery of reality. But the trouble lies with his commitment to seek meanings, not in final causes, but in origins. This commitment makes him see Eliot's formal constructs as 'strategies' whereby 'the adult ego struggles to establish an effective distance over against the psychic conflicts that buffet it,' more specifically, as 'strategies concerned both

to do girls in and deny the doing'. It makes him see them pointing backwards to the dialectical relationship between phantasy and ego.

Many of Mr Pinkey's insights are quite fresh, though their value is confined by him to the area of his commitment. Thus, for example, it is the thought, not of any inherent (Empsonian) ambiguity in the poetic text, but of the 'dialectical relationship between phantasy and ego' that leads him to discover the structural ambivalences of La Figlia—the textual splitting 'that makes the poet simultaneously contemplative observer and dangerous participant' (now we know why to thank Lafourge); the situation between imperative and indicative of verbs like 'stand', 'lean', and 'weave'; and the sense of the word 'leaves' which means both *departs* and *renders*. All these structural ambivalences are seen as 'strategies' whereby 'the destructive impulse towards the woman', directed to nothing less than doing her in, 'can be at once gratified and evaded'. The complexities and ironies of the poem cannot be denied. But the meaning of this formally structured experience, to which the 'cogitations' that 'still amaze/The troubled midnight and the noon's repose' give a clue, lies in final causes. Whereas Mr Pinkney who confuses the speaker (-observer-lover) of the poem with Eliot the poet and Eliot the poet with Eliot the man who suffers is seeking the meaning in some 'repressed', actually non-existent, 'subtext' of paranoid-schizoid phantasies of killing the 'mistress-mother'. Instead of making any value-judgment on the artistic success of the poem he simply tells us that it is 'more successful than most in repressing that subtext'. The value-judgment cannot be even implied, for we cannot say that, for example, Rhapsody which Mr Pinkney finds less successful in repressing the 'subtext' is of a comparatively inferior artistic merit. And, for that matter, what shall we say of the artistic merit of Prufrock? Mr Pinkney will 'dissect/The recurrent image into pre-conscious terrors' and conscious nauseants only to tell us that Prufrock enacts the 'paranoidschizoid position', and that in Portrait of a Lady the 'depressive

position' is carried to Winnicottian manic extremes, and so on and so forth. The personae of the poems are confused with Eliot the man and the women are identified as the dual images of his mother, menacing as well as idealised. The latter image, along with an 'omnipotent annihilation of persecutors in an effort to retrieve unproblematically the unity-in-duality of Winnicott's 'potential space', occurs through a 'manic strategy' in Eliot's 'religious verse', we are told (Eliot would not have appreciated the assumption of a dichotomy between his 'non-religious' and 'religious' verse just as he did not appreciate the assumption of a dichotomy between human love and divine love).

The 1920 Volume, with its Sweeney poems, is seen to be celebrating, though not long enough, the 'depressive position' in its Winnicottian manic extreme with the help of influences from the carving tradition, Hulme, classicism and Pound—who was associated for some time with Stokes. *The Waste Land* is seen as a regression to the paranoid-schizoid phantasies of attack by drowning on the phallic mother–mistress, which thesis is supported by turning, instead of an assumed repressed subtext, to those deleted portions of the original manuscript that refer to a shipwreck. The poem, it is observed, would have 'the pieces of the maternal body... lovingly stiched together even as it yearns to chop them into still tinier morsels... This tension is not, however, sustained in Eliot's later poetry, where devices of splitting and denial are firmly in command'. Again does it imply any value-judgment on *The Waste Land* or on later poetry? Oh no, Mr Pinkney is only trying to 'fit you,' with his psychotic thesis! He has even gone back to Kleinian aesthetics from which he departed earlier to consider formal structuring in his own psychogenetic way. In the last chapter Mr Pinkney considers 'stiffening in conclusion' in the depressive position. He hints at some unimaginably traumatic breakdown of infant mother-relationship in *Gerontion* which intensifies aggression and mobilises frenetic defences of manic denial. Some remarks on *The Family Reunion* with its Orestean theme of aggression towards the mother, its patholo-

gically depressive strain and its hero's struggle to get out of his paranoid-schizoid position are not out of place. In the concluding sentence of the book Mr Pinkny sums up Eliot's poetic and his own interpretative achievements thus: 'It is Eliot's substantial achievement to have interrogated the elegant schemas of the depressive position and to have compelled his interpreters (perhaps the plural has been used as a strategy') to adopt a strategy as *schizoid* as the poems 'own' (italics mine).

Since great poetry does not readily lend itself to committed criticism—be it Marxistic or psychoanalytical—the committed critic very often picks up lesser poetry to make his theoretical or ideological to-do. So it is not surprising to find Mr Pinkney leaving out the analysis of *The Hollow Men, Ash Wednesday* and above all *Four Quartets*—and dismissing even *The Waste Land* as a paranoid schizoid phantasy of attack on the mother and its manic denial. *Hysteria* opens and *Gerontion* closes his dealings with poetry. Very great attention is given to very minor poems—like the little prose poem *Hysteria*—and rejected and unpublished pieces—like *Circes Palace* in which he would *see* a *vagina dentata* in nauseating and bizarre details.

If it were not for certain fresh insights into the formal elements of some poems which can be profitable even for non-committed but initiated students of Eliot's poetry after they have been wrenched away from their psychoanalytical moorings—if it were not for these fresh insights Mr Pinkney's book would have whittled down merely to a sad, bad, mad attempt at interpreting the higher dream in terms of the lower dream.

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