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A Retrospective

Editor
Mohammad Asim Siddiqui

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Editor
Mohammad Asim Siddiqui

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The Aligarh Journal of English Studies is edited by Mohammad Asim Siddiqui and published by him on behalf of the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. The Journal aims at bringing out twice a year (April and October), critical and research articles dealing with subjects in all areas of English studies together with detailed and careful book reviews. Contributions should be addressed to the Editor and emailed at ajesenglishdepartment@gmail.com Stylistic and other conventions as recommended in the latest edition of MLA Handbook should be strictly adhered to.

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The Aligarh Journal of English Studies was started in 1976 by eminent bilingual scholar Asloob Ahmad Ansari, the then Head of the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Published on behalf of the Department, the journal has published research articles and detailed book reviews on all areas of English studies with special attention to Shakespeare. The present issue, a retrospective on some important volumes of the journal, brings together some key essays and reviews published in the *AJES*. For paucity of space, articles by some distinguished Indian literary critics could not be included in this issue. Similarly, with just one exception, book reviews of only past members of the Department have found a place in this issue. All previous issues of the journal have been digitized and are available on the web page of the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Keeping in mind the drastic changes in the nature of English studies in recent decades, the journal is now open to accepting submissions on all new and emerging areas of English studies.

Mohammad Asim Siddiqui
Editor

F.R. LEAVIS

ELIOT'S PERMANENT PLACE

T. S. Eliot died only a few years ago, and he is the last great poet we have had in the English language—the last manifestation, indeed, in our literature of major creativity. It is not, then, paradoxical to call him a great writer of our time. I don't, however, think that he is very widely read today in the way that makes a great contemporary poet the important influence he ought to be. The general recognition he has enjoyed for many years has been accompanied by critical inertness; that is, it has been little marked by any perception of his immediate relevance to the present crisis of civilization. He is known as the poet of *The Waste Land* who, after establishing his reputation with that work, proclaimed his adherence to Anglo-Catholicism and became a religious poet.

Both these emphases seem to me infelicitous: separately and together they misdirect, conveying in either case an inadequate idea of Eliot's major quality. To class him as a religious poet is—the more so in that the Anglo-Catholic movement in the Anglican church makes a cult of him—to promote misconceptions of the way in which he should be found a source of stimulus today by all who are concerned about the possibility of man's survival—his survival as anything more human than an adjunct to the world's master-computer. To think of Eliot as the poet of *The Waste Land* is to make him the poet of the 1920s, a period that feels to us now a long way back in time and history.

It was of course the appearance of *The Waste Land* that established Eliot as a recognized figure in the literary scene. It appeared in 1922 in the first two numbers of the *Criterion,* the quarterly he edited, and those of us who acclaimed it as an important event were certainly right. I think all the same that we

saw in it a higher kind of creative achievement than it actually was, and a more authoritative significance than I (at any rate) now see to be really there. I shall not attempt to justify these observations: an hour is so short and I propose to fill it in the way that seems to me most appropriate to the present occasion. For one thing, I want to have plenty of time for reading out Eliot's poetry; the critical purposes I have in mind seem to me to demand that—the more so since I am addressing an audience to whom the English language is not native, and for whom its subtleties of rhythm, inflexion and expressive movement may very well be elusive.

Eliot, then—and I make here an important critical point—had earned recognition as a remarkable young poetic genius five years before the appearance of *The Waste Land*. He had earned recognition, but he had not received it. That, it will perhaps be suggested, may be explained by the fact that in 1917, when the volume called *Prufrock* came out, the 1914 war was raging—was in fact, for England, after the murderous failure of the Somme, in its most tormenting phase. But even after the impact of The Waste Land, and even after he had achieved the institutional status, that may be said to have been safely his from 1930, the portentousness—the essential significance—of that early proof of Eliot's genius remained without general recognition. And the misleading emphases that have marked the conventional acceptance of him as a major poet since the middle nineteen-thirties have been associated with that fact—I am thinking of the emphasis on *The Waste Land* and the emphasis that makes him areligious poet peculiarly congenial to Anglo-Catholics.

In saying that he had achieved institutional status by 1930 I might seem to have admitted that he won recognition for his genius with notable ease, seeing how shockingly revolutionary he was found as a poet in the middle 1920 by the larger cultivated public (the once famous Dean Inge, for instance, who like the poet John Donne three centuries before him was Dean of St. Paul's, called him a 'literary Bolshevik'). I, who was concerned at that time, and later, to establish an intelligent critical recognition of what he had achieved, and where he stood in relation to the past of English poetry, have--to report that there seemed to me to

be the strongest resistance, which didn't quickly permit itself—if ever it did—to be satisfactorily overcome.

In order to explain this contradiction, I must refer to a fact of the British cultural world in which Eliot, in the early 1920s, made his *debut* that is not, I think, unknown to you. When, after the armistice of 1918, the surviving young men came back and the life of peace-time started again, those who were interested in literature found that the social-intellectual coterie known as Bloomsbury was in power. It exercised a decisive authority in the field of higher cultural fashion and over the relevant currency of valuations. Originating at Cambridge (this was the England of more than half-a-century ago), it enjoyed the advantages of being a social elite—a very exclusive one (its leading male members were Etonians); and using these advantages to the full, it advanced confident pretensions to being an intellectual elite. Desmond McCarthy, him- self an Etonian, was able to report that the young American poet had 'Etonian-type manners', and Bloomsbury took Eliot up. It was very characteristic of Eliot—and this is a point of great critical significance—that he should have allowed himself to be taken up very completely. The advantage is seen in the fact that it was the Hogarth Press, a Bloomsbury concern run by Leonard and Virginia Woolf, that published *The Waste Land* in the pamphlet form that preceded the inclusion in the later volume of *Poems*. It was as effective a launch as can be imagined. In the modish literary world, and among the young at Cambridge, Eliot became at once a major currency-value.

But Bloomsbury, for all its pretensions, was not intelligent, at any rate about literature, and its sophistication ran astonishingly to cheapness. Its spiritual ethos is given you in the fact that it produced Lytton Strachey, and offered him to the world as a distinguished—even a great—writer. What it found congenial in Eliot was the obvious and impudent daring of the technique, the showy sophistication, and the ironical 'disillusion' that it could feel, without suffering anything that disturbed the habitual Bloomsbury complacency, to be both profound and its own. What I am thinking of is represented by such poems as *Mr.*

Eliot's Sunday Morning Service and *Sweeny Among the Nightingales* (with an epigraph in tragic Greek)—poems that associate comfortably with those in French, composed by Eliot in the then modish French manners, which are interspersed among them.

It was the poet of this phase—the phase of *The Waste Land*—who was the acclaimed modern poet of the 1920s. Bloomsbury's authority did indeed easily prevail. But Bloomsbury's interest in Eliot—or anything else—was not intelligent. And the poem I am going to read to you was not one of those which excited the admiration of the 'advanced' young when *The Waste Land* had made its impact. But it deserved to be seen as having demonstrated the presence of a portentous original genius—announced the arrival of a new great poet:

Now that lilacs are in bloom

She has a bowl of lilacs in her room

And twists one in her fingers while she talks.

'Ah, my friend, you do not know, you do not know

What life is, you who hold it in your hands';

(Slowly twisting the lilac stalks)

'You let it flow from you, you let it flow.

And youth is cruel, and has no more remorse

And smiles at situations which it cannot see.

I smile, of course, And go on drinking tea.

Yet with these April sunsets, that somehow recall

My buried life, and Paris in the Spring,

I feel immeasurably at peace, and find the world

To be wonderful and youthful, after all.

The voice returns like the insistent out-of-tune

Of a broken violin on an August afternoon:

'I am always sure that you understand

My feelings, always sure that you feel,

Sure that across the gulf you reach your hand.

You are invulnerable; you have no Achilles' heel.

You will go on, and when you have prevailed

You can say: at this point many a one has failed.

But what have I, but what have I, my friend,

To give you, what can you receive from me?

Only the friendship and the sympathy

Of one about to reach her journey's end.

It is hard now to realize how remarkable and significant this was—should have been seen to be—fifty years ago. The versification and the language—portentous fact—are wholly of the twentieth century, and yet the rhythms and the metric are such that no one brought upon Victorian poetry should have had any difficulty in recognizing them as proper to verse. The significant and profound originality, the pregnant innovation is to be recognized in the living play of tone and inflexion, a kind of life that depends on the poet's use—which in its precision is unmistakably a poetic use—of the spoken language and the speaking voice.

A Greek was murdered at a Polish dance,

Another bank-defaulter has confessed.

I keep my countenance,

I remain self-possessed

Except when a street-piano, mechanical and tired

Re-iterates some worn-out common song

With the smell of hyacinths across the garden

Recalling things that other people have desired,

Are these ideas right or wrong?

This doesn't suggest Donne or any other poet of the seventeenth century, or any intense intellectuality. But actually, the command of shifting tone and living inflexion means the possibility of the strong and subtle presence of thought, the never drugged or hypnotized nerve of intelligence that characterizes Eliot's finest poetry. Looking back, we can see that there is no paradox about the development that led from *Portrait of a Lady* to *Four Quartets,* his concluding and most astonishing creative achievement, which is in the most exacting way a challenge to thought.

The 'portentousness' of the early achievement represented by *Portrait of a Lady* is that it made such a development possible. Already in 1917 Eliot had demonstrated that something *could* happen in English poetry after Swinburne. For Swinburne, as Eliot in due course made us realize, had been a dead-end, and while his influence prevailed there had been a long arrest—that during which my schooldays were spent. The line of poetry inaugurated by Tennyson had its last term in Swinburne; there could be no fresh or significant poetic creation without a fresh start. And to make a fresh start requires genius. Writing of certain minor poets of the eighteenth-century Eliot says: 'They had not the consciousness to perceive that they felt differently'—from what the established modes of expression dictated—'and therefore must use words differently.' As a young poet Eliot *had* the 'consciousness.’ In his famous essay (one of his truly good ones) on 'The Metaphysicals' he remarks on the preoccupation of the Victorian poets with creating a poetic dream-world or other world; and what he says about Donne and the writers of the best dramatic verse of Donne's time makes plain with what positive intentions of his own he deplores the restrictive and devitalizing effect of the Victorian habits of diction and rhythm. 'The possible interests of a poet', he observes, 'are unlimited; the more intelligent he is the better; the more intelligent he is the more likely that he will have interests: our only condition is that he turn them into poetry; and not merely meditate on them poetically.’

The poetic that Eliot achieved excluded nothing that mattered to him (that is what 'interest' means) from his poetry. On the contrary, its creation and development were determined by his

need to focus, define and register in words and rhythms his sharpest sense of life and his profoundest searching of experience (which is another way of saying his 'thought'). Whatever his limitations and disabilities—and our immense indebtedness to his poetry includes its forcing us to recognize and ponder them—he was a distinguished spirit, deeply engaged in *our* world. I've said that to stress in the accepted way *The Waste Land* doesn't suggest fairly how much and in what ways he matters—should be recognized to matter—to us, now, who are troubled about civilization and the prospects for humanity. For a corrective I will read two passages, one from the unfinished *Coriolan* sequence and one from 'East Coker', the second of the *Four Quartets:*

CRY what shall I cry?

All flesh is grass: comprehending

The Companions of the Bath, the Knights of the British Empire,

the Cavaliers,

O Cavaliers! of the Legion of Honour,

The Order of the Black Eagle (Ist and 2nd class),

And the Order of the Rising Sun.

Cry cry what shall I cry?

The first thing to do is to form the committees:

The consultative councils, the standing committees,

select committees and sub-committees.

That is the opening of 'Difficulties of a Statesman', the second of the two pieces that form *Coriolan* as we have it. The following opens Section III of 'East Coker':

O dark dark dark. They all go into the dark,

The vacant interstellar spaces, the vacant into the vacant,

The captains, merchant bankers, eminent men of letters,

The generous patrons of art, the statesmen and the rulers,

Distinguished civil servants, chairmen of many committees,

Industrial lords and petty contractors, all go into the dark,
And dark the Sun and Moon, and the Almanach de Gotha
And the Stock Exchange Gazette, the Directory of Directors.
And cold the sense and lost the motive of action.
And we all go with them into the silent funeral.
No body's funeral, for there is no one to bury.
I said to my soul, be still, and let the dark come upon you
Which shall be the darkness of God. As, in a theatre,
The lights are extinguished, for the scene to be changed
With a hollow rumble of wings, with a movement of darkness on darkness,
And we know that the hills and the trees, the distant panorama
And the bold imposing facade are all being rolled away--
Or as, when an underground train, in the tube, stops too long between stations
And the conversation rises and slowly fades into silence
And you see behind every face the mental emptiness deepen
Leaving only the growing terror of nothing to think about;
Or when, under ether, the mind is conscious but conscious of nothing—
I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love
For love would be love of the wrong thing; there is yet faith
But the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting.
Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought:
So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing.

These passages differ in an essential way from each other, but they have a preoccupation in common. The first—and earlier—passage is comparatively simple. It evokes with intensity the world in which any but immediate ends are lost and forgotten in the complication of the machinery—administrative, political, economic, social and so on—and the intensity is protest, recoil and despair. Ends are lost and forgotten: look, I tell my students in England, at the leading articles, the letters and the poised commentaries in the *Times, the Guardian, the New Statesman, the Spectator,* and you will have to conclude that the public of the educated and enlightened that represents the wisdom of our politicians and statesmen and chairmen of commissions and committees on Higher Education knows of no higher end to be considered than a rising material 'standard of living'. As J. K. Galbraith, the critical American economist says in his book, *The New Industrial State*: 'St Peter is assumed to ask applicants only what they have done to increase G.N.P. We in England, of course, believe in fair distribution and something we call 'equality of opportunity', and in order to equalize opportunities are committed to letting standards in education look after themselves; that is, to ignoring them—which, in a technologico-Benthamite civilization, means sacrificing cultural values, human significances and what should be directing intelligence.

In the second passage the poet is engaged more completely—that is, with more of himself. The tone is no longer that of protest or satire, but of one who searches into his own inner plight and responsibility. Further, the passage belongs to a closely organised context, the totality of *Four Quartets*, the organisation of which is determined by a marvelously sustained constructive organization. 'The preoccupation'—I quote from a careful account I wrote a good many years ago—'is with establishing from among the illusions and unrealities of life in time an apprehension of an assured reality—a reality that, though necessarily apprehended in time, is not of it'.

We come here to the delicate question of Eliot's religious bent, its nature and its bearing on the aspect of the plight of our civilization, the spiritual Philistinism, he recoils from in

'Difficulties of a Statesman'. The last three or four lines of the passage I've just read from 'East Coker' might serve for an epigraph to *Ash-Wednesday*, that unequivocally religious poem, or sequence of poems, with which he surprised admirers of *The Waste Land*, disconcerting some of them, in the close of the 1920s. *Four Quartets*, of which 'East Coker' is the second member, were—or was, for the constituent four members form a whole—completed a dozen years later, during the war, and form Eliot's concluding and culminating work. The question of the nature of the religious bent expressed in the poetry is, as I've said, a delicate one. To make even a show of discussing it fairly is obviously, in the time at my disposal, not possible; but, on the other hand, it can't, without absurdity, be ignored.

Let me say, then that I am sure that any serious preoccupation with the plight of humanity in the technological age must invoke a religious depth of experience and conviction in a way uncongenial to the Bloomsbury ethos. It must involve in a decisive way the kind of recognition that D. H. Lawrencein the opening of *The Rainbow*, attributes to the farmer, Tom Brangwen. Of Brangwen, watching by the ewes at lambing-time under the night-sky, we are told: 'He knew he did not belong to himself'. It is disastrous for man, as he proceeds with his 'conquest of nature' (you are familiar with that phrase), to lose that sense—to forget that knowledge: my saying this doesn't mean that I myself find Eliot's way of being religious, congenial, and I had better say at once that I do not.

I point again here to the peculiar kind of importance I see in Eliot. Our indebtedness to him is, or (I think) should be, largely a matter of our being compelled in reading his poetry to say 'No! not just that!', or even 'Not that at all!'. Of course, if he hadn't been creatively—poetically—so potent we shouldn't have been indebted in that way, and we couldn't have found him so potent if there hadn't been validity and reality in what he impressed us with. He was a distinguished spirit, with a great artist's sensitiveness of response to the human predicament—the profounder strains and starvations of the human psyche in his time—our time. The creative pressure behind his poetry, as behind all major art, was intense need felt as personal: we

perceive that, with a poignant force of recognition, as we read him. But we also perceive, being compelled by his poetry to attend with a vigilant closeness, that the intensity hasn't the full general significance, the human representativeness that is implied: the distinctive pressure of need is not essentially in and of the human condition, *la condition humaine*, though the poet obviously counts on our sharing his implicit assumption that it is.

I said, you will remember, that, while we were right to be immensely impressed by *The Waste Land* in the 1920s, and to see it as an historic achievement, we attributed to the poem a higher status as an organic work than it actually realizes. Eliot's rapid acceptance as a major creative power was associated with the belief that the poem *was* what it offered itself as being: an achieved and representatively significant work—significance here being something to be discussed in terms of the bankruptcy of civilization, the 'modern consciousness, the 'modern sense of the human situation', and so on. Well, Eliot was born and brought up in the modern world and *The Waste Land* is full of references to it. But for all the use of Fraser's *Golden Bough* and of fertility-ritual allusions, the treatment of the theme of the dried-up springs and the failure of life hasn't the breadth of significance claimed and asserted by the title and the apparatus of notes. The distinctive attitude towards the feeling about the relations between men and women that predominates in the poem is morbidly personal one we know so well from the earlier poems; the symbolic Waste Land makes itself felt too much as Thomas Stearns Eliot's. A judgment of the same form has, at a higher level, to be passed on *Four Quartets*, that intrinsically very much more important work. It too is, in a limiting sense, more personal than it asks us to take it as being and (we can hardly doubt) than the poet knows.

I hope I shan't be misunderstood (for I mustn't offer to discuss the force the term has in this use) when I say that he hadn't the essential normality of the greatest kind of artist—the artist we can call great without feeling that there are grave qualifications to be urged. Where Eliot is in question, if we take him with the seriousness he invites and deserves, very grave qualifications are called for. In the place of 'intense' I might, by way of

distinguishing his case, have used another adjective: his sense of his need—the need itself—was desperate. It was desperate because it was the consequence of division and disorder in his inner being that defeated intelligence and made it impossible for him to achieve a complete integrity. He suffered from an insecurity, depressing to contemplate and paradoxical in so gifted and assured an artist, that made him (for all the irony in the passage I read out) assiduously intent on confirming and advancing his recognized social status as an 'eminent man of letters'. He was in fact a pusillanimous snob. He identified his distinction with his social 'currency value' so completely that, in the use of his influence—and even as Editor of a critical quarterly that proclaimed itself *The Criterion*, he consistently showed himself more afraid of the essentially Philistine conventional world of eminences, performers and pretenders than of the spiritual authority represented by his creative gift. He was, indeed, the enemy of creativity to the extent of letting his prestige be used—of using it himself—against those who worked, and exposed themselves disinterestedly, to get real (that is, intelligent) recognition for his real distinction, disinterested critics being, in the nature of things, an insufferable offence to those whose approval he most cared about. In this way there was generated in him a profound contempt for himself and humanity and a festering guilt that, since something in him refused to let him recognize unequivocally their genesis and nature, disturbed and confused his preoccupation with the really real, the spirit and all that 'the fear of God' (a phrase he makes his own in 'East Coker') would seem to portend.

As I have said, to have been brought to these judgments, with the enhanced consciousness of the issues that that entails, is an important part of one's indebtedness. But the debt, of course, is not a mere matter of 'No!' The implicit form of a critical response to a work that affects one as a challenge that, having been taken, has brought notable profit is, in general, 'Yes, but...' and the 'but' in one's response to *Four Quartets* couldn't have told so strongly in one's sense of gain if there hadn't been in it a very large element of 'Yes'. That, of course, is what one recognizes when

one judges *Four Quartets* to be the work of a major and astonishingly original poet.

Nothing even remotely resembling it, I think, has ever been written by any other writer. It is essentially a creative work, such as only a great poet could have written, but, in the creative exploration of experience which it conducts, analysis of extraordinarily subtle kinds plays a necessary part. In fact, the poem does, in ways that could be open only to a poet of genius, work that suggests an epistemological or a philosophical, and treatise. Eliot's religious poetry, I have said, is not what conventionally Christian appreciation makes it, the point to be insisted on is that Eliot, so far from affirming doctrine or belief, employs all the resources of his poetic mastery of English to explore and test experience non- affirmatively in the hope that the major affirmation will, at the close, stand there self-affirmed. Hope—he doesn't deny his Christian sensibility, with the nisus implicit in it; it is a basic datum, a given among those he starts with. But the poem shows no tendency to force anything, even if it is open to criticism of the kind I have suggested. It asks, 'What, concretely, is believing?', and the 'concretely' means that the question can without change of force take the form 'What do I (the poet) believe'?—which, rephrased, becomes 'What that is really real can I apprehend—can I arrive at apprehending—with unequivocal firmness?" The exploratory process involves an inquiry into the nature of conceptual thought and the part played in experience, its evaluation, and perhaps its substance, by language.

As this account intimates, *Four Quartets* is complex, subtle and difficult, characterized as it is by a diversity of method and effect. The short poem I am now going to read, 'Marina', while it exemplifies what I mean by the creative exploration of experience, does so in a relatively simple way that presents, I think, no difficulty. There is no hint of Anglo-Catholicism or of theology, but there is the characteristic creative—if you prefer, constructive—quest of the real. You have, in simpler form, the same constructive process—the co-operative action of different orders of suggestion. The distinctive note is given by the title,

Marina being the daughter in Shakespeare's *Pericles* who was lost and is found, a promise of continued life, personal and impersonal, for the father. You have working together that, the enchanted wonder of landfalling a new world, a favourite Eliotic memory of childhood (whispers and small laughter), the ship (representing the constructive effort—'I made this'), and, for foil, evoking what has to be escaped from, the tolling of the re-iterated 'Death' in the second paragraph. The epigraph is from Seneca's *Hercules Furens:*

What seas what shores what grey rocks and what islands

What water lapping the bow

And scent of pine and the woodthrush singing through the fog

What images return

O my daughter.

Those who sharpen the tooth of the dog, meaning

Death

Those who glitter with the glory of the hummingbird, meaning

Death

Those who sit in the sty of contentment, meaning Death

Those who suffer the ecstasy of the animals, meaning Death

Are become unsubstantial, reduced by a wind,

A breath of pine, and the woodsong fog

By this grace dissolved in place

What is this face, less clear and clearer

The pulse in the arm, less strong and stronger--

Given or lent? more distant than stars and nearer than the eye

Whispers and small laughter between leaves and hurrying feet

Under sleep, where all the waters meet.

The only specifically Christian note there is the word 'grace'—'By this grace dissolved in place'. But the more important peculiarity of the poem is given in the title, the name of the lost daughter who was found. The note of tenderness goes with the distinctive resonance of the whole, and such a note where human relations are concerned is, I think, unique in Eliot's poetry. And telling oneself *that*, as one inevitably does in responding to the poem (for which the word is 'lovely'), one can't help commenting that 'daughter' implies relevantly to the theme of 'love', a number of relations, emotional and spiritual, between human beings which seem not to exist for Eliot. Here I come back to the subject of his disabilities. Besides what I have said already, there is another, and, I think, closely related, constatation to be made; he shows himself unable to contemplate the relations between men and women with anything but distaste—except with the aid of Dante. His religious poetry, in fact, involves him in an essential dependence on Dante, who was a very different kind of religious poet from himself, and I think that the way in which he depends on Dante might reasonably be called illegitimate; that it justifies some severe limiting judgments regarding his own performance in the undertaking represented by *Four Quartets.*

The theme of Eliot's relation to Dante is at any rate a very important one, and an intelligent study of it would prove to be in more than one way very rewarding. But critics with the necessary qualifications are not common. I myself, in order to give as fair an impression as possible in my short hour of the diversity of Eliot's poetic modes, always so recognizably Eliot, will turn now to *Ash-Wednesday*, which appeared in its completeness a dozen years before the first 'Quartet'. *Four Quartets* is undeniably difficult. *Ash-Wednesday* is *not* undeniably that, but evokes an immediate irresistible response. Yet in fact it is major poetry that in preoccupation and technique leads straight on to the later work, though there is nothing intimidating about the subtlety, which therefore tends not to get the attention it needs: the obvious beauty, thus simplified, satisfies the reader. Let me then, before I read out the first of the constituent poems, ask you to notice how the spirit of the spoken language is there, ready to take command unmistakably, even where the diction and mode are so strongly

liturgical and biblical. The definition of attitude, the significance, depends on the actual living control of tone and inflexion. That is, in spite of the apparently incantatory rhythm, this poetry demands the full attention of the waking mind; there is no hypnoidal effect. It registers a recoil from the world of 'Difficulties of a Statesman', but the recoil isn't into anything in the nature of the Victorian otherworld of dream-world, but towards the positive constructive effort of *Four Quartets.*

The pervasive tone of the first poem answers to a sentence in the passage I read from 'East Coker'—

I said to my soul be still and wait without hope

For hope would be hope for the wrong thing

—but with no violence to the essential logic, the note of effort is there in 'Consequently I-rejoice having to construct something upon which to rejoice. And you'll notice when in a moment I read the poem the logical *in*consequence of the "consequently.' Though the poem is composed of statements that have to be read as such, the relation between them is not that of prose at all. The poet's meaning requires both 'is' and 'is not', and in the totality of the poem they don't cancel out. For Eliot's thought here is not something got clear beforehand and apart and then put into words; it is created in each poem, being something that couldn't be grasped and conveyed by words used in any paraphrasable way. Here in *Ash-Wednesday* we have, impressively manifested, that intense interest in the relation of words and linguistic usage to experience—which has its supreme creative expression in *Four Quartets*, a poem that (it's very much to be emphasized in an age exposed as ours is to the menaces of linguistic science) is an incomparably profound inquiry into the nature of language. The only further comment I will make before reading the poem is a reminder about the shifts of tone and the essential part they play in the meaning. Note, for instance, that line 4, the slightly altered Shakespearian line, has its own pointed felicity of tone (placing—you speak it in inverted commas) and that the parenthesis about the 'aged eagle' is an irony against self-dramatizing pride (for there may be a pride of humility), and note

the factual flatness of the third paragraph ('Because I know that time is always time'):

Because I do not hope to turn again

Because I do not hope

Because I do not hope to turn

Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope

I no longer strive to strive towards such things

(Why should the aged eagle stretch its wings?)

Why should I mourn

The vanished power of the usual reign?

Because I do not hope to know again

The infirm glory of the positive hour

Because I do not think

Because I know I shall not know

The one veritable transitory power

Because I cannot drink

There, where trees flower, and springs flow, for there is nothing again

Because I know that time is always time

And place is always and only place

And what is actual is actual only for one time

And only for one place

I rejoice that things are as they are and

I renounce the blessed face

And renounce the voice

Because I cannot hope to turn again

Consequently, I rejoice, having to construct something

Upon which to rejoice

Taking that poem by itself, you might perhaps be inclined to say that the emphasis my account of Eliot's poetry laid on non-affirmativeness was misleading. You might suggest that what I called the Christian nisus, the undisguised impelling spontaneity, amounted to implicit affirmation. But consider the second poem of *Ash-Wednesday* (which is more than a sequence for the six constituent poems form a complex whole). This which I am going to read now is strikingly different from the first—the thing to note about it is the intensity with which, while appealing so positively to a Christian tradition, it evokes death as extinction:

Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper-tree

In the cool of the day, having fed to satiety

On my legs my heart my liver and that which had been

contained

In the hollow round of my skull. And God said

Shall these bones live? shall these

Bones live? And that which had been contained

In the bones (which were already dry) said chirping:

Because of the goodness of this Lady

And because of her loveliness, and because

She honours the Virgin in meditation,

We shine with brightness.

The only further comment I will make on that is on the obvious presence in it of Dante, a presence announced plainly enough in the opening. The nature of the presence and the nature of Eliot's dependence on the great Tuscan poet are not easy to define, but we can see there *is* a dependence of some kind, and that it is an important theme for anyone concerned to vindicate critically Eliot's major status. The importance is avowed in the title attached to the next poem as I read it first (it had a French translation *en regard*) in *Commerce*. The title was *'Som de*

l'escalina', which as you know, comes from the Provencal passage spoken by Arnaut Daniel in canto 26 of the *Purgatorio*.

I will read the poem, the third of *Ash-Wednesday*, but I will first say something about—there is point, you will see in my doing that—*'La FigliachePiange'*, a short poem that appeared in 1919. The poem, with its theme of young love and its lyrical note, is unique in Eliot's work, but the memory represents something very important for Eliot, some vital mode of experience—something felt as a possibility of transcending disgust, rejection and protest. We know this not just from the power of the poem itself, but from the part played by related evocations in his later poetry. You will note the evocation in 'Som de l'escalina', the poem I shall now read—the last:

At the first turning of the second stair

I turned and saw below

The same shape twisted on the banister

Under the vapour in the fetid air

Struggling with the devil of the stairs who wears

The deceitful face of hope and of despair.

At the second turning of the second stair

I left them twisting, turning below;

There were no more faces and the stair was dark,

Damp, jagged, like an old man's mouth drivelling, beyond repair,

Or the toothed gullet of an aged shark.

At the first turning of the third stair

Was a slotted window bellied like the fig's fruit

And beyond the hawthorn blossom and a pasture scene

The broadbacked figure drest in blue and green

Enchanted the maytime with an antiqe flute.

Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown, Lilac and brown hair;

Distraction, music of the flute, stops and steps of the mind over

the third stair,

Fading, fading; strength beyond hope and despair

Climbing the third stair.

I mustn't discuss the suggestion that even—or obviously—in that transmuted memory of love and childhood we have the influence of Dante. I must, in fact, bring my discourse to a close. To do so on the theme of Eliot's relation to Dante has a certain felicity. Of course, I have done no more than point to that theme as demanding attention-more intelligent attention than it has had. But, in attempting to give an unmisleading account of so great, complex and diverse a poet as Eliot in an hour's lecture, I *could* only be selective and suggestive. Both his major quality and his limitations were involved in his relation to Dante. A study of it would go deep into our civilization of today, and would throw light on our essential problems. The world he lived in was very different from Dante's and he was a very different kind of man and a very different kind of mind; and, though I have talked of illegitimate dependence, I haven't meant to suggest that his intense interest in Dante derives merely from his disabilities.

I hope that, in any case, I have made plain the kind of grounds that justify one's seeing in Eliot a major *modern* poet—a momentously significant poet of *our* world.

*Text of an unpublished lecture delivered at the Catholic University of Milan (Italy), 18 April 1969.

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F. R. Leavis, founder of the acclaimed journal, *Scrutiny*., and author of *Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry* (1936) and *The Great Tradition* (1948) taught at Downing College, Cambridge.

G. SINGH

F.R. LEAVIS: LATER WRITINGS

I have known two men who were great in their respective fields and extraordinary as men: one was Leavis; the other was Pound. Although Leavis had many reservations about *The Cantos*, he and Pound had much in common. Once in a conversation with Leavis I ventured to remark on this similarity, and he gave me to understand that he agreed with my assessment. For Leavis-and he both wrote and said so more than once-Pound was both courageous and honest as few poets in this century have been. Courage, integrity and disinterestedness characterized everything Pound said, did or wrote; and the same may be said of Leavis. Both were men of principle and ready to stick out their necks for their convictions. Although in different ways, each paid for what he believed in, and yet Pound as a poet and critic and Leavis as a critic and teacher exercised a greater influence in this century than any other poet, critic or teacher ever did. Their awareness of this was the basis of their authority, and at the same time the cause of the animus they aroused.

Few single sentences in Leavis's writings epitomise the essence of his relationship with the academic and cultural world as the following from *'Scrutiny: A Retrospect'* (August 1962):

> Well-known dons, thought of widely as distinguished intellectuals, are assiduous journalists, establish themselves as names and authorities by frequent performances on radio and television, and form what Sir Charles Snow calls a 'culture' with the other practioners of their kind, whether or not these claim academic standing, and the standards they favour will naturally be those by which they feel themselves safe as distinguished intellectuals.

Here we have something approaching the definition of what is academic in the bad sense of the term that Leavis fought against all his life; and by implication the sense of values and standards he fought for, while embodying them in his own life and work in a manner that is at once daunting and inspiring. His commitment to these values is writ large on everything he said or did-a commitment supported by the fact that there was no dissociation between Leavis the man and Leavis the critic. Integrity and disinterestedness of a moral and literary kind are virtues that characterize his writings from first to last. There is no intelligence without character, he once told me, and he himself possessed both in equal measure. 'Earnest, responsible, and loyal by nature', Leavis says apropos of Wordsworth; and the same may be said of him. His critical perception and intelligence are inseparable from his character. They constitute the grounds for regarding him as a whole critic—a critic concerned with life and with the problems and dilemmas of modern civilization, no less than with literature. While accepting Matthew Arnold's definition of literature as a criticism of life, Leavis re-formulates it by asserting that 'the judgments the literary critic is concerned with are judgments about life'. That is why 'the re-creative response of the individual mind to the black marks on the page' is something much more than a literary or intellectual exercise; it is a response to one's own experience of life, and to its diverse phenomena, to quote Thomas Hardy, 'as they are forced upon us by chance and change'. And, as in life, so also in literary criticism, the only judgments that count are personal judgments, and for Leavis 'a judgment is personal or it is nothing: you cannot take over someone else's'.

What made Leavis such a controversial critic was as much the challenge his insistence on the inseparability of the values of life and the values of literature represented, as his judgments and evaluations themselves. This led him to challenge conventional opinion or academic authority in order to applaud what was both modern and original in D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, Yeats, Pound; or in writers like Blake, Wordsworth, Hopkins, George Eliot, Dickens or Conrad. In his lectures and tutorials as well as in his books and in *Scrutiny*, Leavis displayed his unmatchable powers

of the 'close criticism' of text (whether prose or verse), and linked that criticism with a 'revaluation' of life itself or of its particular aspects. Leavis's own influence-and no critic in this century has been more influential-is not so much a question of accepting his evaluations as such even though the validity of few of his assessments can objectively be questioned now-as that of recognizing the impact his criticism made.

And it made the impact it did not so much by theorizing about literary criticism, as by offering practical examples of it, covering not only modern writers but also classics from Shakespeare and Donne to George Eliot and Hopkins.

There was, from the very outset of his career, a certain air of intensity and earnestness about everything he wrote or did. It is this that his critics have in mind when they complain that Leavis never relaxed. But if he had 'relaxed'- and the more one analyses the term in that context, the more frivolous it seems to be the sense of commitment that both he and his wife shared and that made, among other things, *Scrutiny* possible, would not have existed. Leavis himself indirectly comments on the nature of this commitment when he sets out to refute Eliot's charge that 'Lawrence was an ignorant man in the sense that he was unaware of how much he did not know. Exposing what he considers to be 'the shocking essential ignorance' that characterizes *The Cocktail Party*, Leavis elaborates on what he means by that ignorance:

> …ignorance of the possibilities of life: ignorance of the effect the play must have on a kind of reader or spectator of whose existence the author appears to be unaware the reader who has, himself, found serious work to do in the world and is able to be unaffectedly serious about it, who knows what family life is and has helped to bring up children and who, though capable of being interested in Mr Eliot's poetry, cannot afford cocktail civilization and would reject it, with contempt and boredom, if he could afford it

But then Eliot was not the type of person who would have readily understood the kind of seriousness Leavis professed and

practiced—Eliot who wrote in *The Criterion* of the frightful consequences that might have ensued if Lawrence had been a don at Cambridge, 'rotten and rotting others'. And when Eliot wrote this Leavis was widely supposed at Cambridge 'to share the honour of the intention with Lawrence'.

II

Leavis's retirement from his Cambridge post in 1963 in no way affected his commitment to teaching and writing. In fact he brought out as many books after his retirement as before: *'Anna Karenina'* and *Other Essays* (1967); *English Literature in Our Time and the University* (1969): *Lectures in America* (1969) and *Dickens the Novelist* (1970)-the last two in collaboration with Q.D. Leavis—*Nor Shall My Sword* (1972); *Letters in Criticism*, edited by John Tasker (1974); *The Living Principle: 'English' as a Discipline of Thought* (1975) and *Thought, Words and Creativity*: *Art and Thought in Lawrence* (1976). His lectures as well as his writings after his retirement unfailingly attest to his undiminished powers as critic, thinker and writer. While in many of them he returns to authors and subjects he had already dealt with in the past-Blake, Wordsworth and Dickens; Hopkins, Yeats, Lawrence and Eliot; the university and the so-called two cultures-his way of dealing with whatever he takes up is just as fresh and provocative, as subtle and impinging as ever, and his style is without exception marked with that analytical grasp and acumen which one associates with his *Scrutiny* days. Employing with considerable effectiveness the classroom or seminar technique in the larger context of a public platform, Leavis turns each lecture into something richly complex which simultaneously engages the attention of the critic and the pedagogue, the exegete and the polemicist.

'Anna Karenina' and Other Essays brings together sixteen essays, reviews or lectures that had already appeared in various periodicals, both English and American, dealing with such themes as *Anna Karenina, The Pilgrim's Progress*, *What Maisie Knew, The Shadow-Line*, *'The Americanness of American Literature', 'T.S. Eliot as Critic'* and *'Johnson as Critic'*. In many ways perhaps the most significant essay in the whole book is the one on

'T.S. Eliot as Critic' which, while evaluating the strength and originality as well as the shortcomings of Eliot's criticism establishes Leavis's own claim and stature as a critic-and not merely vis-a-vis Eliot. For while reviewing Eliot's book *On Poets and Poetry* —a book which Leavis finds 'at once so distinguished and so unimportant-he compares it with Eliot's earlier critical writings which, through their fine intelligence, sensitiveness and consciousness of a rare kind, account for the decisive influence they exercised. Leavis singles out 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' as being pre-eminently the essay on which Eliot's reputation 'as a thinker, a disciplined intelligence notably capable of vigorous, penetrating and sustained thought' is based. And yet, in his searching analysis of the essay, Leavis exposes 'its ambiguities, its logical inconsequence, its pseudo-precisions, its fallaciousness, and the aplomb of its equivocations and its specious cogency, as well as the doctrine of impersonality Eliot expounds there. And when, while commenting on Keats's 'Ode to the Nightingale', Eliot observes that it contains a number of feelings which have nothing to do with the nightingale, but which the nightingale, 'partly because of its attractive name, and partly because of its reputation served to bring together', Leavis replies: 'As if there were not something else, more important, to be said about the relation of the ode to the life, the living from which it derived the creative impulsion; derived something without full recognition of which there can be no intelligent appreciation of the "artistic process" or the art'.

Further on Leavis challenges other critical pronouncements of Eliot's such as his regarding *Coriolanus and Antony and Cleopatra* as being Shakespeare's 'most assured artistic success'; his offering Landor as a great poet; his backing Wyndham Lewis; his evaluations of *The Cencias* the greatest of the verse-plays by nineteenth-century poets or of Dryden's *The Hind and the Panther* as a great poem; his considering Dryden one of the three greatest critics of poetry in English Literature (the other two being Samuel Johnson and Coleridge (which Leavis considers to be 'a portent of conventionality'); or 'that solemn, that hardly credible, discussion of Kipling's verse' and his regarding Auden and Spender as distinguished poets. In challenging such

Eliotian positions Leavis is himself implicitly advancing those values-both critical and moral-which he rigorously upholds, even or especially when he is dealing with Eliot's poetry. The very fact that Eliot is often weak in value judgment, especially so far as modern literature is concerned is ascribed by Leavis to 'some radical inner condition'-a condition that prevents him from being aware of the profounder, the essential criticisms *Family Reunion* and *The Cocktail Party* invite-criticisms that express 'one's sharpened sense of the importance of literature, and therefore of the relation of literature to life'.

Following the essay on Eliot as critic there is one on Johnson as critic in evaluating whom Leavis starts with an un-Eliotian observation: 'Johnson's critical writings are living literature as Dryden's (for instance) are not—an observation that puts Eliot's assessment of Dryden in its place. For Leavis Johnson's importance as a critic does not lie in what he says about the particular authors he deals with; nor in any direct instruction in critical thinking he may have to offer. It lies in the vigour and weight of Johnson's critical as well as other writings 'the vigour that comes from a powerful mind and a profoundly serious nature, and the weight that seems to be a matter of bringing to bear at every point the ordered experience of a lifetime'. In this as well as in some other respects no two critics for Leavis are more unlike than Johnson and Eliot. And as in the case of Eliot, so also in that of Johnson, Leavis probes his limitations in order to be able to evaluate all the better what is both valid and original in Johnson's criticsm. Commenting on what is regarded as Johnson's 'defective ear', Leavis finds something positive about it insofar as that ear was the product of a training in a positive taste. But it is when Leavis considers Johnson's criticism of Shakespeare that he finds his limitations are at once more seriously disabling and more interesting. One major limitation in Johnson derives from the fact that his mind and sensibility were formed in and through a language which is utterly unlike the Shakespearian use of English. Leavis analyses this drawback, with all its implications, with an illuminating cogency and perception which, apart from the intrinsic soundness of what he says, reveals his instinctive liking for Johnson as a person as well as a critic.

One significant aspect of Leavis's criticism of Johnson is that it brings out Johnson's attitude to his subject as well as Leavis's own attitude to it. Hence in diagnosing Johnson's limitations, which, however, 'have positive correlations', Leavis unmistakably expounds his own critical tenets, criteria and attitudes. Thus Johnson's inability to appreciate Shakespearian poetry brings into play, in Leavis's examination of the nature and causes of that inability, a characteristically Leavisian insight into that poetry. Similarly, it is a juxtaposition of the things Johnson can do and the things he cannot that enables Leavis to place him historically i. e. before and in relation to Coleridge. 'The subtlety of analysis', Leavis points out, 'that Coleridge, with his psychological inwardness, is to bring into criticism is not at Johnson's command. But it can be said that Johnson, with his rational vigour and the directness of his appeal to experience, represents the best that criticism can do before Coleridge'.

Throughout the essays in this book we see in different contexts, prompted by different situations and carrying different emphases, both Leavis's sense of the importance of literature in itself and of its relation to life. Thus while evaluating Anna Karenina-and through it Tolstoy's genius- Leavis argues how it exemplifies the relations between art and life which is the characteristic of the highest kind of creativity. Whether Leavis analyses Anna Karenina in terms of art, or in terms of the didactic impulses even though the essential spirit of Tolstoy's art is such that the didactic impulses never get out of hand-he is invariably concerned with presenting the findings of his critical analysis in terms of a significance which transcends the distinction between the artistic and the didactic. For while exploring the nature of the moral sense and of sincerity, he explores the relation between the individual's moral responsibility and his social context. Interpreted in this way, both the ethos and the leitmotif of the novel acquire a dual significance-modern and historical as a result of which *Anna Karenina* is seen to be a great novel of modern times and Tolstoy's essential problems, moral and spiritual, are seen to be ours.

Another illuminating essay in this book is the one on *The Pilgrim's Progress* which starts with the sentence: 'It is possible to read *The Pilgrim's Progress* without any thought of its theological intention'-a sentence that does away without any fuss with many cobwebs of theological exegesis. This, of course, does not mean that Leavis is considering the book merely as a literary masterpiece. He is profoundly conscious of its religious depth; but his way of being conscious of it is different in that it is morally as well as critically more subtle and more complex, so that Leavis's response to the book is based on the conviction that 'Bunyan's religion, like his art, comes from the whole man'. Hence, whether it is *Adam Bede* or *What Maisie Knew*, *The Europeans* or *The Secret Agent*, Leavis's approach and the strength and originality which characterize that approach -are dictated by his belief that the criticism of a novel-or of any other work of art for that matter and the criticism of life are one and the same thing, both revolving round the fundamental question: 'What do men live by and for?.' Thus, for example, it is the positing and dealing with this question that, more than anything else, makes *The Shadow-Line* the important novel it is, being central to Conrad's genius and therefore being, as Leavis calls it, *'Conrad's Silas Marner'*

In *Lectures in America* three lectures ('Luddites? or There is Only One Culture', 'Eliot's Classical Standing' and 'Yeats: The Problem and The Challenge') are by Leavis and one 'A Fresh Approach to *Wuthering Heights'*, with four appendices) by Q. D. Leavis. Except for the Yeats lecture—delivered at the Queen's University, Belfast, they were all delivered in America. The first is an extended counter-comment on the attacks that were made on Leavis's lecture on Sir Charles Snow 'both a bi-cultural sage and a novelist' as Leavis calls him in *Dickens The Novelist*-and the spirit of what Leavis has to say is summed up in the very first sentence: 'I am used to being misrepresented, but not resigned to it' What follows is a brilliant example of positive and almost creative polemics hardly less brilliant than the *Two Cultures*? *The Significance of C. P. Snow*-in which, while answering- and exposing-the arguments of his British and American critics, Leavis achieves a masterly prose with subtle ironic undertones, loaded parentheses, and evocative digressions, and at the same

time pursues his aim which is that of conveying the positive nature of his concerns and dilemmas about contemporary civilization—its values and non values.

In 'Eliot's Classical Standing', while analysing what constitutes the grounds for such a standing and why Eliot is more influential than Yeats or Hardy, Leavis affirms that although *The Waste Land* was very impressive and very important in the 1920s, one at that time tended to regard it a higher kind of achievement than it actually is. And yet, even before *The Waste Land*, for instance in *Portrait of a Lady'*-Eliot had already 'altered expression'. Another poem Leavis singles out for praise is 'La figlia che piange', which is his favourite poem and which he calls unique insofar as the memory it embodies 'obviously represents something very important for Eliot, some vital node of experience-something felt as perhaps a possibility of transcending disgust, rejection and protest'. In Ash-Wednesday, on the other hand, Eliot's quest-his separate need, as in *The Hollow Men*, to be able to believe in, to be sure of, something real to himself that should claim allegiance and give meaning'- becomes consciously religious, even though Eliot makes no religious affirmations as such. 'Marina' another favourite poem of Leavis's, is also the subject of some valuable critical evaluative comments such as those on 'its unliturgical and un-Dantean human tenderness', on Eliot's overdependence on Dante concerning which Leavis observes: 'Eliot overvalued what Dante had to offer; he might have got from Shakespeare, or there was to be got, a great deal that Dante couldn't give a great deal more than is represented by that resonance from *Pericles*.' Leavis's attitude to poetry in general and to Eliot's religious poetry in particular is radically moulded by his sharp distinction between a theological interest and a critical interest in a given work of poetry. As he has often reiterated, in order to appreciate Eliot's religious poetry one does not need to be an Anglo-Catholic, or theologically given. In fact, Leavis goes so far as to think that he is paying a high tribute to the genius of the poet when he expresses his conviction that as a literary critic one had better not find oneself doing that (i.e., dealing in Christian theology) and that it needs literary criticism

to do justice to Eliot'-which applies even more so to *Four Quartets*, the culminating manifestation of Eliot's genius.

Leavis's lecture on 'Yeats: The Problem and the Challenge' was given at my university on the occasion of the centenary of the poet's birth, although it was actually delivered in May 1966. Setting out to reassess Yeats's poetic achievement as a major twentieth century poet in the light of what he had come to mean to Leavis in the last quarter of a century or so since he first wrote on him in *New Bearings in English Poetry* (1932), Leavis starts by asking 'how much of the fully achieved thing is there in Yeats's oeuvre-what proportion of the wholly created poem that stands there unequivocally in its own right, self-sufficient?' And his answer is that the proportion is not large, and that there are only a few poems—less than a dozen—in which one recognizes that the poetic art locally is that of the great poet who 'altered expression'. In separating these poems from the total oeuvre and in commenting on them Leavis achieved, in the course of the hour or so that his lecture lasted, the most essential kind of evaluative judgment with its necessarily restrictive effect. And he achieves this partly because he discards the study of the schematisms, the diagrammatics, the symbolical elaborations to which Yeats devoted so much of his energy, as not being necessary to a close critical appreciation of a successful poem of Yeats. The most important poems for Leavis are 'Sailing to Byzantium', 'Byzantium', 'The Winding Stair' and 'Among School Children' the last being his favourite poem. On the element of irony in the poem 'Sailing to Byzantium', and especially in the line, 'Of what is past, or passing, or to come', Leavis comments: 'It is the irony of a tormenting complexity of experience-a complexity that entails an irreducible and tormenting contradiction of impulsions or imperatives or verdicts, and it indicates 'a tense and tentative poise which is no index of an achieved stability. Similarly, while analysing the sardonic bitterness of 'Byzantium' (with its 'I hail the superhuman;/ I call it death-in-life and life-in-death') Leavis asks: 'Which is it? There is surely a difference. To "hail the super-human" as "death-in-life" and "life-in-death" with that air of ecstatic assurance is to transcend the balancing of doubt and belief in irony; to drop thought in an act, the act being an expression of

intense sardonic bitterness'. Leavis, however, considers both 'Byzantium' and 'Sailing to Byzantium' major poetry, even though they stand apart. They stand apart because the latter does not come out, as Leavis calls it, of 'any wholeness of being or mastery of experience'. What the poem in its totality has instead is a 'poetic or quasi- musical satisfyingness', but it is no proof of the poet's having achieved a permanent stability in life. In evaluating the significance of this particular aspect of Yeats's poetry Leavis links it with certain characteristics of Yeats's personality and background-a link that serves as a key to the understanding of Yeats's poetic career and his status as a major figure in English literature:

> It is characteristic of Yeats to have had no centre of unity, and to have been unable to find one. The lack is apparent in his solemn propoundings about the Mask and the Anti-self, and in the related schematic elaborations. It is there, an essential theme for the critic, in that habit of cultivating attitudes and postures which makes one-if an English- man, at any rate-remark that Yeats is a fellow-countryman of Wilde. Shaw and Joyce (I am thinking of that photograph of Joyce with his walking-stick outside Shakespeare and Co.)

English Literature in Our Time and the University—the text of the Clark Lectures Leavis gave in 1967-came out in 1969, with an introductory essay in which Leavis analyses the concepts and criteria behind the six lectures. The very choice of the title reflects Leavis's sense of the gravity of what is at issue-'a frightening face of the gravity being the blankness-the inability, or refusal, to perceive that characterizes our civilization'. What Leavis says both in the introductory essay and in the text of the lectures links this book- and it couldn't have been otherwise-with *Education and the University* on the one hand, and with *Nor Shall My Sword* on the other. For in all the three books his thought is determined by his triple interest-university education, creative literature (including literary criticism) and the civilization we live in. Conceiving English literature as a living reality and 'a real and

potent force in our time', and the real university as 'a centre of consciousness and human responsibility for the civilized world', Leavis goes on to explain how his concern for English Literature, far from implying any slighting of the sciences, or the other specialist studies. points to the desirability of having an English School 'that truly deserves the respect of those who are acquainted with intellectual standards in their own fields'.

From such reflection on the nature of the academic establishment and how it works, Leavis passes on to the spirit of enlightenment which determines the ethos of our civilization today-an enlightenment which is for Leavis 'the deadly enemy, being itself the irresponsibility, righteously practising connivance in the interest (whether it knows it or not) of self-indulgent ease'. Another phenomenon that Leavis criticises is the influence of 'the portentous total mechanism of American civilization' on Britain, so that one is now faced with, 'a nightmare intensification of what Arnold feared. He saw this country in danger of becoming a greater Holland; we see it unmistakably turning with rapid acceleration into a little America'. It is this sense of concern and disquiet as well as the conviction that 'there can be no national greatness where there is no strong spiritual continuity-strong with the strength of continuous renewal by recreation' that shows Leavis-and in some books (including this) more explicitly than in others in the dual role of critic of literature and critic of civilisation. Thus the present book is as much about Eliot and Lawrence, or as much about English literature and the University, as about what Leavis calls elsewhere the frightening problems of our civilization tackled in the context of creative literature and of one's critical response to it which implicitly presupposes an enquiry into the social and cultural conditions which produced that literature.

In the six lectures that follow Leavis develops the various themes and concepts outlined in this essay-enlisting them all as part of a design in which Eliot and Lawrence loom large as major creative artists. It is by using them as examples that Leavis discusses the significance of English literature, past and present, within the context of the university. Invoking the Arnoldian concern for preserving the continuity of cultural consciousness

which implied, as it does for Leavis, 'a more conscious and deliberate use of intelligence' than was needed in the past, Leavis notes that in the England Arnold was addressing there was a large and immensely influential educated class. Such a class is equally indispensable today in spite of the misleading spirit of egalitarianism that is the hall-mark of the ethos of modern enlightenment. Hence Leavis's insistence that 'there must be a community of the "educated" that can never be a majority'. In the lecture 'The Present and the Past: Eliot's Demonstration' Leavis tackles the problem of justifying English as a liaison centre in universities, and the English school as a centre of higher education, and regards modern literature as playing a key role in it. For, Leavis observes, 'it is only from the present, out of the present, in the present, that you can approach the literature of the past. Apropos of this Leavis quotes Eliot's essay on the metaphysical poets which is so crucial to Eliot's own poetry and to his development as a modern poet. Moreover, it is criticism of the highest order: pregnant, intensely economical, and, in the way of great criticism, unmistakably creative.' In fact, for Leavis, all of Eliot's essays on the seventeenth century poets are both criticism and an important part of the creative writing of our time. They are creative insofar as they provide the link between Eliot's thought as such and the kind of poetry he was going to write, and at the same time constitute a model of 'a kind of strong and subtle thinking in poetry, an intellectual nerve.'

In 'Eliot's "Axe to Grind" while dealing with Eliot's relationship with Donne, Milton, Dryden, Johnson, Leavis himself writes criticism which has the same qualities that he attributes to Eliot's criticism-a criticism with its 'highly compressed *charge of perceptions*, intuitions and suggestions'. One superb example of this is Leavis's characterization of Milton's genius not merely as '*un*-but as anti- Shakespearian' and he goes on to explain why: 'The ethos of his stylistic invention denies his verse anything like a Shakespearian relation to the living language. With the absence of the speech-subtlety of movement, tone and inflection that can be commanded only by the poet who appeals to the reader's most delicate sense of what is natural in English speech goes a marked restriction of the part played by evoked sensuous effects and

evoked specific varieties of energy-an absence, in sum, of arresting concreteness'.

In 'Why *Four Quartets* Matters in a Technologico-Benthamite Age' Leavis attempts a closely argued examination of Eliot's masterpiece to which some ten years later he was to devote an exhaustive critique (in The Living Principle). Discarding the notion of Eliot as being primarily the poet of *The Waste Land,* Leavis concentrates on Eliot's poetic development and achievement-from 'The Hollow Men', which is seen as a prelude to *Ash-Wednesday*, to *Four Quartets*. Leavis finds Eliot's poetic mastery consummately demonstrated together with his power of searching and sustained thought -thought 'that is not a matter of reflecting poetically (to use Eliot's own dismissing phrase), but thought that requires for its definition and conduct means and procedures that are essentially poetic'. That is why Eliot's religious poetry is so utterly different from Dante's on the one hand and from Herbert's on the other. After setting aside the Anglo-Catholic expositors of Eliot, who make the poetry something utterly different from what it is, Leavis goes on to ask in what sense Eliot's poetry is religious. It is in answering this question, he says, that one has to take account of its insistent challenge to the thinking-the pondering, distinguishing, relating-mind'. And if Eliot, like Lawrence, is a creative writer who is also consummately a critic, it is because his creative works, like Lawrence's, are so many 'modes of thought.'

But against Eliot's genius as a poet and as a thinker and against 'the heroic integrity of his poetic career', as it superbly manifests itself in his major poetry, Leavis puts what he calls those 'embarrassing plays' written with an eye on success in the theatre, 'with the applause of the best people and a kudos that a man of his kind of distinction should surely not be very much concerned for. Behind these plays there is the consciousness of the social world, the world 'where social pressures, social suggestion and social "civilization" work (especially on the insecure) in the most insidious ways'. Thus Leavis connects these plays with an essential datum concerning Eliot-his sense of insecurity.

The penultimate lecture deals with Eliot and Lawrence as critics of *Hamlet* in which Leavis expatiates on what that sense of insecurity meant and how it affected Eliot's writings -especially his plays and criticism-and why he felt an instinctive animus against Lawrence. In the last lecture- 'Summing Up: "Monstrous Unrealism" and the Alternative'- Leavis starts by emphasizing the difference between Lawrence and Eliot, especially as brought out in their dealings with *Hamlet* a difference that accounts for the fact that Lawrence's is a completer and profounder intelligence about life than Eliot's. This leads Leavis to mention in passing other critics of Shakespeare—Gilbert Murray (in his British Academy lecture on 'Hamlet and Orestes'), Wilson Knight (in *The Wheel of Fire*, in which the two essays on *Hamlet* constituted a milestone in Shakespeare criticism), J. M. Robertson (in *Montaigne and Shakespeare*), Santayana and Kitto.

From Shakespeare Leavis proceeds to the novel and its importance in English literature. He quotes Lawrence to the effect that 'the novel is a great discovery: far greater than Galileo's telescope or somebody else's wireless. The novel is the highest form of human expression so far attained'. For Leavis too the novel in the English language is one of 'the great creative chapters in the human record', for the study of it and of novelists from Dickens to Lawrence 'entails a study of the changing civilization (ours) of which their work is the criticism, the interpretation and the history: nothing rivals it as such'. They have all the more crucial a role to play given the fact that we live in a technological age in which it is extremely difficult to get the relevance of literary studies recognized and really believed in.

This emphasis on the importance of the English novel has often exposed Leavis to the charge of provincialism. But Leavis contends that it is his business to emphasize the difference between 'the right kind of partialness, patchiness and incompletion and what is favoured by those who dismiss as "provincial" the spirit I have tried to define. Better then, be provincial than cosmopolitan, for to be cosmopolitan in these matters is to be at home nowhere, and he who is at home nowhere can make little of any literature-the more he knows, the larger is

his ignorance'. One consequence of this wide-ranging cosmopolitanism is the 'portent' of the American influence in university English. This influence continues to grow and, says Leavis, 'it is a bad one, which, for America's sake as well as our own, we should resist'.

III

Dickens the Novelist came out in 1970—the centenary year of Dickens's death. It is the second book-after *Lectures in America* (1967)-in which F.R. Leavis and his wife Q.D. Leavis collaborate; but theirs was a collaboration which extended over the entire period of their working life. For the purpose, however, of this essay I shall confine myself to Leavis's essays alone. But what they both say in the preface applies equally, even though in a somewhat different way, to what each has written. They tell us that their approach is not that of a general survey of Dickens, for 'all such enterprises are merely academic, and unprofitable critically. Even the trend of some criticism as such, for instance the trend of American criticism of Dickens from Edmund Wilson onwards, is regarded by the Leavises 'as being in general wrong-headed, ill-informed in ways we have demonstrated, and essentially ignorant and misleading'.

These considerations as well as their conviction that Dickens is the Shakespeare of the novel govern what they present in this book. In his essay on *Dombey and Son*—written originally as an introduction to the novel and published in *The Sewanee Review* in 1962-Leavis sees a decisive manner in Dickens's career insofar as it is not only the first essay in the elaborately plotted Victorian novel, but it also displays the characteristic qualities of his inexhaustible creativity- 'the vigour of the perception and rendering of life, the varied comedy, the vitality of expression'. In this novel Dickens's genius is already functioning in a full and mature way, 'with an unusual intensity and there is a control from an unusual depth'. One of the highlights of that genius is present in the treatment of Mrs. Dombey's death and in writing about it with admiring enthusiasm, Leavis's own style displays a characteristic quality of linguistic poise and control together with an evocative grip on the subtlety and delicacy of what he wants to

convey. The theme as Dickens is possessed by it here' (viz. Mrs. Dombey's death), we are told, 'is a different thing from what it becomes. For he *is* possessed by it: he is possessed by an intense and penetrating perception of the real-his theme *is* that. The art that serves it does not run to the luxuries of pathos and sensation or to redundancies. And it is astonishingly sensitive and plausible'. Leavis's interest in Dickens's language-or for that matter in the language of any other writer is neither specialistically linguistic nor philological; it is essentially and altogether creative. In other words, the kind of language a writer uses and the way he uses it are taken not merely as tokens of a writer's maturity or power, but as being of the very essence of the power, maturity and vision that are indispensable to a great artist. Having described Dickens as Shakespearian, Leavis goes on to comment on Dickens's language and asks us to consider 'the vitality-the surprisingness combined with felicity, dramatic and poetic-of the speech on which he so largely renders these characters (Susan Nipper, Mr Toots, Mrs MacStinger, Cousin Feenix)'. It is these qualities-as *manifest* both in this novel and in subsequent novels-that constitute 'the inexhaustibly wonderful poetic life of Dickens's prose.

But the full force and mastery of Dickens's supreme genius is incomparably present in *Hard Times* which Leavis regards as the author's masterpiece. This novel, insofar as it represents 'the world of Bentham' more vividly and more poignantly than any other novel by Dickens, is possessed, as Leavis puts it, 'by a comprehensive vision, one in which the inhumanities of Victorian civilization are seen as fostered and sanctioned by a hard philosophy, the aggressive formulation of an inhumane spirit'. He quotes various passages to show how Dickens conducts with great subtlety the confutation of Utilitarianism by life; and, at the same time, how, in order to achieve this, he shows himself to be in perfect command of 'a subtle interplay of diverse elements, a multiplicity in unison of timbre and tone'. It is by virtue of this as well as by virtue of his command of word, phrase, rhythm and image that, according to Leavis, there is no greater master of English than Dickens-except Shakespeare.

Another major novel of Dickens Leavis examines is *Little Dorrit* apropos of which he asks how Dickens, while 'pursuing indefatigably his career as best-selling producer of popular fiction, could develop into a creative writer of the first order, the superlatively original creator of his art'. Throughout this essay Leavis answers this question by ascribing to Dickens certain qualities which account for this development: intense interest in contemplating and pondering life around him; his undertaking, here as in other novels, the study of 'the criteria implicit in the evaluative study of life'; his aim of 'communicating generally valid truths about what can't be defined'. These general truths concern Dickens's criticism of Victorian civilization in such a way as to make his creative genius one with a potency of thought. Moreover what Dickens observes and presents undergoes 'the impersonalizing process of his art-namely, that of transmuting his personal experience into something that is not personal.

Leavis then proceeds to discuss Blake's influence on-or at any rate his affinity with-Dickens, especially in *Little Dorrit*. This influence is particularly evident in the way Dickens exposes 'the irrelevance of the Benthamite calculus': in his insisting that 'life is spontaneous and creative, so that the appeal to self-interest as the essential motive is life- defeating'; in his vindicating, in terms of childhood, the qualities of spontaneity, disinterestedness, love and wonder; and in his giving the significant place to Art-'a place entailing a conception of Art that is pure Blake'. Thus the detailed analysis of the various terms and aspects of *Little Dorrit* is conducted by invoking the criteria and values of the Blakean ethos. It is this, as well as the way Dickens deals with his material, which makes him, like Blake, a great artist-an artist who is 'familiar with the compelling impersonal authority of the real'. But, together with the essential affinity between Blake and Dickens, Leavis almost by way of complementing that affinity-also spells out in the end the difference between the two. The difference, he tells us,

> is not that Blake is more spiritual; rather, it can with a measure of truth be said to be that Blake's genius-which certainly suffered for lack of that essential kind of collaboration which Dickens's relations with

> his public gave him-led him to spend a vast deal of his life and effort wrestling with ultimate questions that inevitably defeated him. (That. presumably, is what Lawrence meant when he said that 'Blake was one of those ghastly obscene knowers'-the implication being that, tainted with Urizenic malady, he failed to respect the force of his own insistence on essential 'wonder'.) The evidence of defeat is failure in his major creative enterprises-failure implicitly recognized by Blake him- self as he makes attempt after attempt, aspiring to a possession of 'answers' that is unattainable.

And yet, even though without aspiring to such an unattainable possession—and, as Leavis justly remarks, 'it is not a creative writer's business to be a theologian or a philosopher'—Dickens communicated 'a profound insight into human nature, the human situation and human need; we have no right to ask anything else of a great writer'.

IV

Nor Shall My Sword-a collection of seven essays, most of them published previously-came out in 1972. Its very title indicates both the polemical and the positive nature of the problems with which it deals. Apart from Chapters IV ("English", Unrest and Continuity') and V ("Literarism" versus "Scientism": The Misconception and the Menace'), much of the discussion centres around the non-literary aspects and problems of contemporary civilization. In this book Leavis strikes an admirable balance between the critical and the polemical, between tradition and contemporaneity, rendering whatever he says at once appealing and challenging. If his thought has always a certain grip and cogency about it, it is because there is nothing narrowly or academically literary about his view of literature; and also because he commands the analytical subtleties and creative resources of English as few contemporary critics have been able to do. In fact, one can say of Leavis's English what A. E. Housman said of the classical scholar, Hugh Munro's, namely,

that 'he wrote English so well that most scholars do not know he wrote it'.

Both the book's title and its dedication suggest the key role Blake has in Leavis's thinking about the problems of our civilization and especially about what constitutes the ethos of the creatively humane as opposed to 'the hubris of technological-positivist enlightenment' or the so-called humanism of the technological-Benthamite world. For as against Blake's 'intransigent certainties' the only thing the present world can offer according to Leavis is 'a high standard of living in a vacuum of disinheritance.'

The actual problems and conditions created by the technological-Benthamite civilization that threaten human existence range from the menace of leisure to the journalistic addiction of the academic intellectuals to the culture of the magazine sections of the Sunday papers which are habitually mistaken for what Matthew Arnold meant by 'the best that is thought and known in our times'. In contemplating how such a situation can be combated Leavis comments on the application of the concept that politics is the art of the possible to the role of higher education in a changing world and observes: 'But we create possibility-we are committed to believing that, and must tell ourselves so, for the clear consciousness confirms, strengthens and emboldens the intuition it expresses'. If such a conviction is lacking, there is nothing to stop England from becoming just a province of American world with all the American conditions, especially in the universities, which are so rapidly becoming established here: 'the rootlessness, the vacuity, the inhuman scale, the failure of organic cultural life, the anti-human reductivism that favors the American neo-imperialism of the computer'. In the face of such menaces, even Oxford and Cambridge, far from remaining centres of excellence or creative centres of civilization, are doomed to become more and more 'mushrooms of mediocrity'. This, however, does not mean that Leavis is anti-American. In fact, he believes that the hope of salvation for America herself depends upon our success in the creative battle here, 'where we can still open it, and wage it, and resolve to win (or not to lose)'-the battle, that is, against 'the barbarity, complacent, self-indulgent

and ignorant, that can see nothing to be quarrelled with in believing, or wanting to believe, that a computer can write a poem.'

The Living Principle which came out in the eightieth year of Leavis's life shows the vigour and vitality of his mind and thought as cogently as any other book he had published before. After re-affirming his old convictions and evaluations in the context of a new commitment, namely, that of the discipline of thought as expounded in the first section entitled *Thought, Language and Objectivity*, Leavis links them, on the plane of practical criticism, with his superb exercises in judgment and analysis by reprinting 'Thought and Emotional Quality', 'Imagery and Movement', 'Reality and Sincerity', 'Prose', 'Antony and Cleopatra and All for Love', all of which had appeared in *Scrutiny*. He then proceeds to examine *Four Quartets*. Thus, what is valuable in this book is the result of Leavis's life-long concern with the values, not merely of literature and literary criticism, but also of civilization. The three creative writers who have dealt with these problems and whom Leavis finds most congenial are Blake, D.H. Lawrence and T.S. Eliot. In dealing with them Leavis illustrates his own way of analysing evaluatively the text before him. 'Imagery and Movement', for instance, while discussing Shakespeare's use of English as that of a genius, of one endowed with a 'marvellously quick and penetrating intelligence about life and human nature', Leavis juxtaposes the triumph of 'clarity' and logic in Dryden's age with Shakespeare's power in apprehending and registering the subtleties and complexities of his thought processes and concludes that 'whatever was gained by the triumph of "clarity", logic and Descartes, the gain was paid for by an immeasurable loss...cutting yourself off from most important capacities and potentialities of thought which of its nature is essentially heuristic and creative'. 'Reality and Sincerity' is one of the best critiques by Leavis of a single poem. The poem in question is Hardy's 'After a Journey' in which the poet's rare integrity is analysed and interpreted through the presentation of specific fact and concrete circumstance.

But it is the last section, a discussion of *Four Quartets*, that constitutes the most original and impressive part of this book. It also offers the most searching reading of Eliot's major poem by the most perceptive and authoritative critic of Eliot's poetry. However, Leavis's recognition of Eliot's importance as a poet goes hand in hand with his severely limiting judgment on Eliot's thought and personality. For instance, while commenting on the thought behind the lines from *Burnt Norton*-'But to what purpose/Disturbing the dust on a bowl of rose-leaves/I do not know'-Leavis distinguishes it (as something abstract and general) from actual thinking 'the thinking quality and force of which relate essentially, in terms of the total significance, to its being impelled by a personal need and directed by an imperative personal concern'. But analysis of the thinking quality in Eliot's poetry is inseparable from Leavis's examination of Eliot's use of language through which he manages to convey a complexity of varying and cumulative evocation', 'a sure apprehension of what he can feel to be the ultimately real', the 'unreality, the unlivingness, of life in time' and 'the vibration of a yearning suffered in inescapable remoteness'.

It is this dual inquiry into Eliot's thought and language which leads to Leavis's adverse criticism of *Burnt Norton*-a criticism that concerns Eliot's evocation of a transcendent reality voiced particularly in the lines; 'human kind/Cannot bear very much reality'. If this reality does not recommend itself to Leavis, it is because it is 'antithetically and excludingly non-human', and because it makes Eliot recoil from mechanistic determinism and, in doing so, deny life's essential creativity. He sees Eliot as a prisoner of an inescapable self-contradiction which leads him to an acceptance of defeat. For, in Burnt Norton, Eliot is 'a divided man' and his inner conflict is bred by irremediable self-division. That is why, for Leavis, he lacks that profoundest and completest sincerity which characterizes the work of the greatest writers; what we find in his work-and in his personality- instead is 'a limitation of self-knowledge that can't transcend; a courage that he hasn't'.

It is against the background of such imitations and reservations that Leavis proceeds to pay the kind of tribute to

Eliot's genius that only a critic of his calibre and convictions could have paid the tribute of what he calls 'a profoundly convinced "No"". The quality of Eliot's genius as a major poet is recognized in spite of as well as together with the 'disabling inner contradictions' with which Eliot had to struggle. One such contradiction concerns his devotion to his art, on the one hand, and his 'frustrating and untenable conception of the spiritual', on the other. For it is the kind of transcendental and spiritual reality which Eliot postulates that compels Leavis's disagreement. However, this very disagreement makes for 'a sharpening of one's power to perceive and to realize, and a strengthening of one's thought, conviction and resolution'. Thus, while recognizing the great service Eliot's poetry has rendered to life and humanity in exposing 'the disastrousness of today's triumphant philistinism', Leavis nevertheless rejects the solution offered by Eliot in terms of humility, renunciation and expiation. And yet if *Four Quartets* repays a closely critical reading like the one that Leavis accords it, it is, no doubt, as he himself affirms, because 'the defeated genius is a genius, and the creative power is inseparable from the significance of the defeat'.

That Lawrence, together with Eliot, should have been the central inspiration behind Leavis's writings as well as behind his own development as a critic is evident from the fact that on no modern writer *has* he written so often and with such a sense of commitment. That it is Lawrence who occupies pride of place is evident from the fact that Leavis has devoted two books to him: *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (1955) and *Thought, Words and Creativity: Art and Thought in Lawrence* (1976). In both he deals with *Women in Love*, *The Rainbow and The Captain's Doll*, which not only shows that he attaches a key importance to these works in assessing Lawrence's genius, but also that since he first wrote about them he had been pondering on their significance, which justified his writing about them again and saying something quite new. In both these books what engages Leavis, coupled with Lawrence's art as a writer, is his thought on the problems of modern industrial civilization and on their relation to art, and Leavis, convincingly brings out, especially in Thoughts, Words

and Creativity, what one can learn from Lawrence's attitude to the problems of his time.

In the first chapter entitled 'Thought, Words and Creativity," while rejecting Eliot's unfavourable view of Lawrence's capacity for thought, Leavis analytically assesses the operative presence of the thought behind Lawrence's diagnosis of modern civilization, and shows how that thought was not and could not have been separable from his art. Thus both the thought behind *Women in Love* and the thought in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* derive 'in perfect directness from the one vital intelligence and the one achieved wholeness of individual being'. Leavis quotes Lawrence to the effect that 'it was the greatest pity in the world, when philosophy and fiction got split. They used to be one, right from the days of myth. Then they went and parted, like a nagging married couple, with Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas and that beastly Kant. So the novel went sloppy, and philosophy went abstract-dry. The two should come together again in the novel'. In the following chapters Leavis demonstrates, through closely reasoned argument and exemplification how, in spite of his distaste for 'the kind of intellectuality that starts, as so much philosophical writing does, from a mathematic logical assumption about the criteria of valid thought', Lawrence convincingly interweaves philosophy and fiction in his novels. The unity between the two is a hall-mark of his art; that is why the word 'thought' is used again and again by Leavis in characterizing Lawrence's creativity. But analysis and assessment of thought entail the analysis of the nature of language on the importance of which Leavis comments as follows: 'individuals alone can mean, but they mean in order to meet and commune in meaning. Not only does the individual need relations with others, but the vital relations are creative-and creative of a reality that transcends language. Without the English language waiting quick and ready for him, Lawrence couldn't have communicated his thought: that is obvious enough'.

But Leavis's way of analysing Lawrence's thought and language is not that of a philosopher or a linguist. 'I think of myself', Leavis observes, 'as an anti-philosopher, which is what a literary critic ought to be-and every intelligent reader of creative

literature is a literary critic'. It is as a critic, then that, for all his enthusiasm for Lawrence, and for all Lawrence's own enthusiasm for *The Plumed Serpent* which he regarded as 'my most important thing so far', Leavis finds this novel unsatisfactory-unsatisfactory primarily because of the absence of any sharp boundary between Lawrence's discursive thought and his fully creative act. Using *The Plumed Serpent* as a foil, he proceeds to deal with *Women in Love*-Lawrence's greatest novel-elucidating and exemplifying the relation of art to life, or the place of art in life, which is so integral a part of Lawrence's thought.

In *The Captain's Doll*, the treatment of the love-theme is regarded as being equally a treatment of the life-theme and they both bear 'directly on the philosopher's and the critic's objections to the indeterminateness of the word "life"". In formulating those objections Leavis takes into account some of the dramatically charged dialogues between Hannele and Alexander, and what he says about them vindicates the triple aspect of his own perception as a critic—perception of thought, words and creativity. Authenticating and giving weight to that perception is Leavis's insight into the real nature of the conflict as well as the relationship between Alexander and Hannele:

> What she called 'love on equal terms went with the self-ignorance that made her ask uneasily what had moved her to make the doll of Alexander. Both the doll and the demand for 'love on equal terms are expressions of the female ego: the flatteringness of the doll and the plausibility of the demand are specious; they cover resentment at the male strength that went with the mystery in Alexander-the profound vital maleness that Hannele, in her complex reaction, so admired in him and that made her at the root of herself, for all his disconcertingness trust him as she did.

Leavis's critique of *The Rainbow*-which together with *Women in Love* forms, as Lawrence himself has said, 'an organic whole',-while taking cognizance of the marked differences of style between the two books is based on the same criteria as his

critique of *Women in Love*-criteria emerging from and ultimately leading to 'a properly indocile perception of what our civilization is doing to life'. That is why Leavis finds Lawrence's basic attitude to be religious 'in the most vital, the most living way'. And in a certain way the same may be said of Leavis's own attitude to life-and to literature-even though such a formulation might convey the impression of one's summing up in a rather simplistic way what is at once so delicate and so complex. At the outset of the chapter on *The Rainbow* Leavis himself has observed that 'Nothing important can really be said simply- simply *and* safely; and by "safely" I mean so as to ensure that the whole intuited apprehension striving to find itself, to discover what it is in words, is duly served, and not thwarted'.

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Ghan Shyam Singh, a poet, critic and academic was associated with Aligarh Muslim University before moving to the Queen's University, Belfast. His friendship with the Leavises gave him the unique position of writing a biography of Leavis and a number of critical works.

KENNETH MUIR

FOUR NOTES ON *HAMLET*

I

The extracts from the Dido play in the second act of *Hamlet* derive ultimately from the *Æneid* II; but some critics think that Shakespeare may have used only Marlowe's *Dido* for the passages concerned. Certainly, he did use Marlowe, as there is one close parallel. Marlowe describes how Pyrrhus

> whiskt his word about.
>
> And with the wind thereof the King fell downe.

So Shakespeare described how

> Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
>
> But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
>
> Th'unnerved father falls.

Virgil's description of Priam's murder begins with Hecuba urging him to take sanctuary, goes on to speak of his son Polites being slain before his parents' eyes, and of how Priam contrasts the merciful behaviour of Achilles (in allowing him to claim Hector's body) with the ruthless deeds of his son, Pyrrhus. Marlowe adds some additional horrors- Pyrrhus carrying the head of Priam's youngest son spitted on his spear; Priam at Jupiter's altar, with Hecuba clinging to him; Priam begging for mercy and Pyrrhus cutting off his hands as he kneels. Like Marlowe, Shakespeare omits Priam's mention of his visit to Achilles to beg for Hector's body; he omits Pyrrhus' words to Priam and his dragging him by the hair; and he omits Marlowe's picture of Hecuba trying to scratch out Pyrrhus' eyes and the amputation of Priam's hands.

Those who doubt whether Shakespeare had a first-hand knowledge of Virgil argue that the references to Dido in *The Tempest* prove nothing, and they contrast Virgil's account of Dido's meeting with Æneas in the underworld with Shakespeare's (in *Antony and Cleopatra)*. Dido in the former version refuses to forgive the desertion of her lover-

Illa solo fixosoculousaversatenebat

Antony in the play boasts that when he and Cleopatra arrive in the underworld:

Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,

And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze.

Dido and her Æneas shall want troops,

And all the haunt be ours.

Could anyone who had read the account given in Virgil's sixth book, it is asked, have made the mistake of thinking that Dido and Æneas were there together? There are several possible explanations of the disparity. Shakespeare may have read the passage years before, perhaps at school, and failed to remember it accurately; or he may have realised that when Antony was supposed to be speaking, Virgil had not yet written his epic, and Antony (or Shakespeare) could be forgiven for altering the end of the Dido story; or, thirdly, Shakespeare may have distinguished between the first meeting in the underworld, while Æneas was still living, and the second meeting, not recorded by Virgil, after Æneas had died and was able to obtain Dido's forgiveness.

The probability that Shakespeare had read at least parts of the *Æneid* may be supported by another echo in *Antony and Cleopatra*. In Virgil's propagandist account of the Battle of Actium (Book VIII) there is a description of the shield presented by Venus':

Haec inter tumuli late marisibat imago

aurea, sed fluctuspumabantcaerulacano;

et circumargentoclaridelphines in orbem

aequoraverrebantcaudis, aestumquesecabant

In medio classes aeratas, Actiabella.

The dolphins are associated with Augustus Caesar; but it is difficult to doubt that Shakespeare knew this passage and transferred the dolphins to Antony in Cleopatra's re-creation of his magnificence:

His delights

Were dolphin-like; they showed his back above

The element they liv'd in.

II

It is universally agreed that the bad quarto of Hamlet (Q1) is a reported text. The broad discrepancies between it and Q2 may be due to the fact that it represents an earlier version of Shakespeare's play, but it is more likely that the report was contaminated with memories of the earlier play—the order of the scenes, for example, or the substitution of Corambis for Polonius. The matter is complicated by the fact that the printers of Q2 made use of a copy of Q1, so that mistakes were carried over into the superior text. Dover Wilson lists some 150 readings in which Q1 and F1 agree against Q2. Many misprints in Q2 may thus be corrected by reference to F1; but it is reasonable to assume that some were missed by F1. There is at least one Q1 reading, although ignored by editors, which is worth considering. This is in one of the Dido speeches. The three texts read as follows:

The rugged *Pirrus*, he whose sable armes,

Blacke as his purpose did the night resemble.

When he lay couched in the ominous horse,

Hath now his blacke and grimme complexion smeered

With Heraldry more dismall, (Q1)

the rugged *Pirrhus*, he whose

sable Armes.

Black as his purpose did the night resemble,

When he lay couched in thomynous horse, Hath now this dread and black complection smeard,

With heraldy more dismall (Q2)

The rugged *Pyrrhus*, he whose Sable Armes

Blacke as his purpose, did the night resemble

When he lay couched in the Ominous Horse,

Hath now this dread and blacke Complexion smear'd

With Heraldry more dismall: (F 1)

Clearly Q2 has three mistakes in these five lines: the uncertainty whether the first line is prose or verse, the elision in *th'omynous* and the spelling of *heraldy*. On all these points Q1 is correct and its readings are confirmed by F1. The Folio, however, agrees with Q2 in reading 'this dread and black' instead of 'his black and grim'. It would be impossible to prove the superiority of *dread* to *grim* or of *grim* to *dread*; but there is good reason to believe that Shakespeare wrote *his* rather than *this*. Pyrrhus' arms and purpose are black as night; he becomes 'total gules', smeared in blood from head to foot. It seems more natural to read *his* than *this*; and the letter *h* was frequently misread as *th*. There is an example in the same scene, where Q2 reads 'Seeming to feele this blowe' and F misprints 'his blow'.

III

In the most famous speech in the play Hamlet declares:

Thus conscience does make cowards, (Q2)

cowards of vs all (Q1. F1)

Nearly all editors assume that *conscience* means reflection; and Bradley complains that the Oxford Dictionary 'unfortunately lends its authority to the misinterpretation' that the word in this context means 'the sense of right and wrong as regards things for which one is responsible'. Now the word

conscience is used eight times in *Hamlet* and in the remaining seven it clearly means a sense of right and wrong ('They are not near my conscience', 'the conscience of the King', 'almost against my conscience'). Indeed, in the very scene under discussion Claudius confesses to his bad conscience:

How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience !

I think there can be no doubt that this is also the meaning in Hamlet's soliloquy. He is saying that we hesitate to commit suicide, partly because it is a sin so to do, and partly because we are aware of our own sinfulness and afraid of the Last Judgement.

But Shakespeare is a wily bird. As Hamlet says, he is not so easily played upon as a pipe. Although the primary meaning of conscience seems incontrovertible, it is quite possible that Shakespeare was aware of the other meaning; and the two meanings are both implied in the lines in the last soliloquy in which for the last time Hamlet wonders why he has not yet killed his uncle:

whether it be

Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple

Of thinking too precisely on the event;

A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,

And ever three parts coward, I do not know

Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do'…

Here we have conscience related both to reflection and to moral scruples, and, as in the earlier soliloquy, conscience (in both senses) is the apparent cause of cowardice.

IV

More than fifty years ago, it was possible to see a performance of a Shakespeare play at the Old Vic for 5d (about 2p of the present currency); and as I lived in London I was able to see every production more than once. In the late 'twenties and early 'thirties I saw there three productions of *Hamlet* with lon Swinley, John Gielgud and Ernest Milton in the title-role. All

were remarkable performances and Gielgud's became the classic interpretation for a whole generation. I shared the general admiration for Gielgud's performance, but I regarded it as closely rivalled by that of Swinley, who suffered from first-night nerves and never impressed the critics as warmly as he impressed Old Vic audiences.

These three performances, however different in detail, shared certain assumptions, literary and historical. They were all roughly Bradleian; that is to say they all stressed the effect of his father's death and his mother's remarriage on the Prince; they all, consciously or unconsciously, believed with Eliot that Shakespeare's theme was the effect of a mother's guilt on a son. Noel Coward had written of the same topic in *The Vortex*, with a neurotic son and an adulterous mother. An equally important influence was the anti-war sentiment of the period. It may be significant that in 1933 Gielgud appeared in the pacifist play, *Richard of Bordeaux*. About the same time there were performances of *Le Tombeau sous l'arc de triomphe* and of *Miracle at Verdun*, while a few years before there had been a long run of *Journey's End.* The three Hamlets mentioned all had scruples about the killing of Claudius.

Laurence Olivier's film (1948)-he had played the part on the stage in 1937-was misleadingly prefaced by Hamlet's words on the 'dram of eale' and a statement that the film was about a man who could not make up his mind. In fact the hero was more heroic than those of the 'thirties, less poetic, and less self-critical—the soliloquy at the end of Act 2 was cut. It was also more overtly Freudian than any previous production, Gertrude being young enough, it was said, to be Hamlet's mistress.

During the next twenty years the English theatre was influenced by the political theatre of Brecht, by the Theatre of Cruelty and the Theatre of the Absurd, by Jan Kott, by the phenomenon of the Angry Young Men, and by unrest among students. So when David Warner played Hamlet at Stratford-upon-Avon in 1965, he looked and spoke like a disaffected student, like 'a suitable case for treatment', the title of a film in which he afterwards acted brilliantly. He did not seem to be a

prince either in gesture or speech, his one positive characteristic being his love for his father. I pass over other Hamlets, such as the one who climbed into a property- basket, and just refer to a production which ran for twelve years in Moscow. In place of a curtain, there was a huge iron door and inside were numerous small rooms which looked like cells. The set was based on Hamlet's statement that Denmark was a prison. Although the director was a high ranking official some critics thought that the idea of the production was suggested by the pains and tribulations of the artist in Stalin's Russia. In Kozintsev's impressive film (1964) there was great emphasis on the power struggle between Hamlet and Claudius, and no psychological complexity in the hero.

Michael Pennington in the 1980 Stratford production was more princely than any recent Hamlet but he was placed in what seemed like a rehearsal room. The idea behind this was that the central theme of the play is acting, not merely because of the play within the play and Hamlet's advice to the players, but because all the characters, and especially the Prince, are role-playing. This is certainly one theme of the play but in practice it had the effect of alienating the audience. One doubts whether the Brechtian method is appropriate to Shakespearian tragedy.

I have tried to show that stage interpretations are influenced by the writing of literary critics—one is tempted to say the more eccentric the greater the influence—by theatrical fashions which are apt to change rapidly, and by the social and political ideas of the period. Such influences are inevitable; but one cannot help feeling that directors sometimes sacrifice the deeper significances of Shakespearian tragedies by pretending that he is our contemporary.

Note

[1] 'Among these subjects extended a wide and swelling sea; It was done in gold, yet it looked like the blue sea foaming with white caps: Dolphins, picked out in silver, were cart-wheeling all around, Lashing the face of the deep with their tails and cleaving the water. Centrally were displayed

two fleets of bronze, engaged in the battle of actium". (tr. C. Day Lewis)

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Kenneth Arthur Muir, one of the most eminent Shakespeare scholars of the 20th century, was King Alfred Professor of English at Liverpool University from 1951 to 1974. He edited the prestigious *Shakespeare Survey* from 1965 to 1980 and served as chairman of the International Shakespeare Association.

WILSON KNIGHT ON HAMLET AND CLAUDIUS: A DISCUSSION

STONE: Professor Wilson Knight, your views on Hamlet have naturally changed over the years. For example, in your early essay, 'The Rose of May' [in *The Inperial Theme,* 1931], you appeared to see Hamlet, as the harmful element in a normal society, not the good element in a society which is evil and needs reforming. But in '*Hamlet* Reconsidered' [in *The Wheel of Fire*, 1930], you state: 'Hamlet suffers for his profundity, for the advance... beyond normality,' and 'is on the way to superman status' [pp. 300-301]. What are your views now of his positive qualities?

KNIGHT: I think that Hamlet was near a very high state of being, but to be near such a state and not quite bring it off, may lead one into a considerable amount of trouble; I wouldn't say that Hamlet is to be blamed. We're judging him by a very high standard. But a man whose thoughts are so bitter, so generally concentrated on death, cannot be held out as a model. He is not the kind of man who could reform any society, except perhaps at the end. He does touch something different at the end, just touches it.

STONE: I should have thought that, by his description of Horatio, his recommendation to the Players in the field of Art, his view of his father, Hamlet does keep consistently before the audience an ideal which he is somehow prevented from fulfilling.

KNIGHT: I agree. In his address to the Players and to Horatio he does put the ideal before us—the poise, the balance, the harmony—which he is presumably striving for himself. But whoever may be to blame himself or society, he does not easily attain it.

STONE: But society's main representative is Claudius— a criminal and the formal antagonist in the play.

KNIGHT: I've always maintained that if you follow the text closely, Claudius is not drawn as a despicable villain. He and Hamlet are called—the phrase is Hamlet's—'mighty opposites'. Claudius has, we know, a crime behind him. But so has society always, a host of crimes, and as its members we are all guilty on a number of counts. In drama the guilt is clearer when shown as personal and extreme, but it's the same problem. Claudius is a man of reason, commonsense, normality, and a good governor. He is not a genius, but he is effective, and he sets about solving international problems by peace rather than by war. We today can surely approve of that. Most important of all, when Hamlet first becomes an open threat we are reminded, by a crucial speech, of Claudius importance within the play's society as King. It is spoken by Rosencrantz, acting as a choric figure, not just as a flatterer. The words are:

> The cease of majesty
>
> Dies not alone, but, like a gulf, doth draw
>
> What's near it with it; it is a massy wheel.
>
> Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount.
>
> To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things Are mortis'd and adjoin'd.
>
> [III. iii. 15]

Now however much we sympathise with Hamlet, we're surely meant to recognize a public danger in a man who behaves as Hamlet is behaving. Besides, Claudius is more than a figurehead. He is, as a man, kingly. When later on Laertes enters at the head of a revolutionary and raging crowd, Claudius speaks lines that stand out from all Shakespeare in their dignity and assurance, spoken by a king as a king:

> What is the cause, Laertes,
>
> That thy rebellion looks so giant-like ?
>
> Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person.

There's such divinity doth hedge a king
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd. Let him go, Gertrude,
-Speak man.

[IV. v. 120]

Shakespeare knows perfectly well what he is doing. He is building up before us a man of innate royalty, one, as it were, born to govern and govern well. Against him is Hamlet, who has seen the fearful evil upon which this great good has been built. *There's* a problem for him—and for us.

STONE: About those words of 'dignity and assurance' as you call them. Of course there's a real threat from Laertes and his Danes, but Claudius believes that he's won his big battle: Hamlet has gone away by sea to be murdered. The audience see Claudius' behaviour as that of a man in a fool's paradise, because Hamlet will return. Claudius' nobility when threatened with assassination has to be contrasted with his ignobility at the moment of his death. 'Yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt'. That's absurd, because he knows he's been wounded by a poisoned rapier. Do you think a noble character could have such an ignoble death?

KNIGHT: I wouldn't deny that our sympathies are with Hamlet, the 'sweet prince' and so on, and that at the end of the play we are satisfied that Claudius, who is a criminal, by very reason of his past crime and subsequent plots, must not be given a grand tragic end, like say Richard II or Othello. But I don't see Claudius' end as so ignoble. I think I could use his dying words, 'O I yet defend me, friends', for my own argument. He is a man of conviviality and a devoted husband. He is respected, and it seems liked, by those around him; and he has, I think, every right to call them 'friends'. Hamlet appears to have no real friends except Horatio: he is shown as isolated within a community that fears him.

STONE: But what about the rest of Claudius' character? What the ghost says of the murder and incest and so forth?

KNIGHT: I was recently talking on *Hamlet* at the City of London School, and one of the boys remarked that according to the play, it did certainly seem that Claudius was guilty of a sexual crime. My answer was that, though the Ghost and Hamlet call Claudius' marriage incest, Claudius himself, and the court, show no signs of regarding it as a sin. In sexual matters much may depend on convention, and conventions change. This marriage is, within the play's many transitional valuations, clearly a borderline case. Today it would not be considered incest at all.

STONE: But isn't there a very important convention here? There are lots of ghosts in the old Elizabethan drama, and what a good ghost says is understood to be true. This one refers to Claudius as, 'That incestuous, and that adulterous beast'. And Hamlet's first expressed reaction is, 'It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you'. Now how can you get round that?

KNIGHT: The ghost is certainly an impressive ghost, and it does, we presume, tell the truth about the murder. Bradley calls it 'so majestical a phantom'; and that is what it is, at least on its first entry—'majestical'. Bradley regards it as authoritative, almost as the voice of providence, or destiny. I have always tended to question that. Like so much else in the play, the ghost is enigmatic. The dead King has not gone to heaven, he is suffering from what he calls his 'crimes', (though 'crimes' need not mean more than sins). He is in some sort of purgatory. So he is not purely 'good', and certainly not divinely authoritative. He is a minor spirit. Hamlet calls him 'poor ghost'. More—Hamlet sometimes even wonders whether it's an *evil* spirit:

> The spirit that I have seen.
>
> May be the devil, and the devil hath power
>
> T'assume a pleasing shape.
>
> [II, ii, 635]

Hamlet is quite seriously, at this point, wondering 'Is this a good, or an evil, spirit ?'. Elsewhere, I know, he accepts the ghost's account as true. For us, the ghost must be morally indecisive.

STONE: Wouldn't you say the dead King is generally praised in the play, which makes the fact that he is now a poor ghost more pathetic, more tragic?

KNIGHT: The old King *is* praised as a warrior. He was a man of war as Claudius is a man of peace. But not many people do speak of him at all. Horatio calls him just 'a goodly king'.

STONE: So Hamlet had a 'goodly king' for a father. Do you think he chose his girl-friend so well?

KNIGHT: Ophelia seems to be mainly passive, until the mad scene. An exquisitely drawn study of a sweet-natured girl quite helpless within the circumstances, who only attains dramatic status when the richer underthrusts of her personality are liberated in the harmonies of madness. There only she comes into her own. It's a marvelous scene.

STONE: But when she's sane she speaks wonderful praise of Hamlet:

> The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword.
>
> Th' expectancy and rose of the fair state,
>
> The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
>
> Th' observed of all observers—
>
> [III. i. 160]

Oughtn't such a person as she describes be able to do a fundamental thing like avenging a father's death? You seem to think that, after the challenge has been brought by Osric in the last act, Hamlet is really set to accomplish his revenge. Towards the end of '*Hamlet* Reconsidered' [p. 321] you say, 'Now, as never before, he calmly and confidently means to execute the ghost's command: "The interim is mine" [v. ii. 73]. At this point Hamlet's

words seem to me to be in direct contrast to his actions, although I agree with you that in the end his revenge is perfect. But do you think he deserved it ?

KNIGHT: You mean he was rather lucky ?

STONE: Yes.

KNIGHT: In my essay I did face that. What I said was, once he is in the right state of being, things go right. You must remember that the central speech in the whole play, as I called it somewhere, 'the central speech in the most discussed work of the world's literature, begins, 'To be, or not to be'. I think 'To be' means exactly what it says. To attain a state of being. It doesn't mean to die or not to die; it doesn't mean to kill the King or not to kill the King. It means to achieve true—being the state defined in Hamlet's address to the Players, and in talking to Horatio. I believe that he comes back from his sea adventure in a changed mood, and does almost achieve that state at the end. He has for the first time, good manners. He addresses the King respectfully as 'your Grace' and the Queen as 'good Madam'. I suggest that when he gets into this state, a state, we may call it, of humility, then he becomes lucky. It all now falls into his hands. There is no plan or plot of his own that we can attribute his success to. He has himself told us that the readiness is all'. That is the point. When the chance offers, he is ready. Perhaps noone can do more.

STONE: A kind of personal harmony then, in which both readiness and good manners figure ?

KNIGHT: Yes. It involves an acceptance, near to love. He is a different man. He even has a long speech to Laertes apologising for his past madness.

STONE: It's a word he uses of himself, though his closer definitions give a slightly different emphasis: 'You must needs have heard how I am punishs'd With sore distraction'.[v. ii. 143]. And quite early in the play, he tells Rosencrantz and Guildenstern: 'I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw. [II. ii. 405]. Do you think at any time in the play that Hamlet is mad?

KNIGHT: Perhaps in his grim dialogue with the King in Act IV about decaying bodies. And yet that might be better called a macabre humour. And it is not at all irrational. Hamlet has by now become so at home with horrors and the unearthly. Besides, in this scene he claims to be in touch with a cherub or guardian spirit. What most shakes his mind is love. Perhaps because it is dragging him back to earthly life, especially Ophelia. His visit to Ophelia in disarray suggested dementia. His prose in the nunnery scene is near breakdown:

I have heard of your paintings too, well enough. God hath given you one face, and you made your-selves another. You jig, you amble, and you lisp; you nickname God's creatures and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say we will have no more marriages. Those that are married already-all but one-shall live. The rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery go. [III. i. 150]

When Hamlet confesses madness to Laertes, Ophelia is again involved. Our problem was beautifully expressed by Robert Bridges in *The Testament of Beauty:*

Wherefore

Hamlet himself would never have been aught to us, or we

to Hamlet wer't not for the artful balance whereby

Shakespeare so gingerly put his sanity in doubt

without the while confounding his Reason. [1, 576]

We shall not easily improve on that.

STONE: May we turn now to something else, Professor Wilson Kinght ? I know from your book *Shakespearian Production* [London, 1936] that you are a practical theatre man as well as a scholar. I am sure we agree that a good Shakespearian should be both. How old do you think Hamlet should appear on the stage ?

KNIGHT: In the text Hamlet seems to be recognized as young and yet, on perhaps the dubious evidence of the graveyard scene, he seems to be about thirty.

STONE: Do you think that might have been because the chief actor, Burbage, couldn't look young ?

KNIGHT: Perhaps I can answer that best by talking of an excellent recent production of *Hamlet* at the Northcott Theatre in Exeter. It was produced by Tony Church and Hamlet was Derek Fowlds, of 'Basil Brush' fame.

STONE: I love him.

KNIGHT: There was no specious originality for its own sake. And it was good to have a really young Hamlet, played *as* young. It was also good to see a significant change of Hamlet's costume after the ghost scenes. So often this is completely missed, despite Ophelia's lines.

Hitherto I myself have tended to see Hamlet in his 'inky cloak', either tidy or disarranged, until the final scenes, when something less gloomy might be used, such as a soft red, or purple. The other people would be bright and gay, giving an impression of life, normal surfaces, perhaps superficiality, in contrast to Hamlet's death-shadowed profundities. This clearly suits my own interpretation.

The Northcott production had a different angle, attuned to its youthful and attractive hero. On his first entrance Hamlet was in black. After the ghost scenes he wore a grey, or grey-blue dress, disarranged, but pleasing; as though to hint some not too definite, spiritual, *advance*. In contrast, the King and Queen were associated, in drapes and costumes, with bold reds and black, suggesting earthly life in all its richness and blood, its crimes and death.

When Ophelia was mad, she wore similar colours to Hamlet, almost the same dress. These two young people together seemed, in their wild disarray, on the edge at least of some spiritual attainments.

STONE: Something of a supplement then to your published view?

KNIGHT: Yes, as I've always seen Hamlet as *approaching* a high state. But there *was* a difference, which I

found illuminating. And in a way convincing. It was particularly helpful when Hamlet was at his most obnoxious, joking about Polonius dead body and appearing dangerously nihilistic in thought and act. One could see it all as a kind of youthful, Puckish, fun, as from a state *above* all mortal problems. Above morality. We needn't develop the thought too far: it was a glimpse, the kind of glimpse the stage alone can give, evanescent perhaps, but genuine.

STONE: Can one really be above morality and yet achieve transcendence?

KNIGHT: I'm not sure. We can sometimes learn from humour, from fun, what can't be stated rationally. And we can often learn from youth insights that are closed to maturity. We today are surely aware of this in the riotous idealism of our own many young Hamlets:

Let us impart what we have seen tonight

Unto young Hamlet--for, upon my life,

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

[1. i. 169]

These are lines which we might all, with *due caution*—for such spirits are not always to be trusted—ponder.

STONE: Which gives Hamlet a very lofty fulfilment indeed. Isn't that a change in your view of the play?

KNIGHT: I think our central thought must remain the play's ambivalence. In all deepest issues of life on earth, we are continually being driven back on the enigmatic, on mystery. 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy [I. v. 166] which applies on every level, moral, social and metaphysical.

Unpublished transcript of a B. B. C. discussion on Hamlet, recorded on 26 September 1970. Speakers are Professor Wilson Knight and Mr. Brian Stone.

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LAURENCE LERNER

PROGRESS AND EVIL

In the fifth book of Spenser's Faerie Queene an encounter takes place between the hero, Artegall, who represents Justice, and a giant with a huge pair of scales in his hand, who boasts

That all the world he would weigh equally

If ought he had the same to counterpoise.

For want whereof he weighed vanity

And filled his balance full of idle toys:

Yet was admired much of fools, women and boys.

This giant has a number of ambitious technological projects: to rearrange land and sea, to supersede the weather, to 'balance heaven and hell together', to restore the earth to its pristine smoothness and reduce all things 'unto equality'. These projects earn him great popular esteem:

Therefore the vulgar did about him flock...

In hope by his great benefit to gain,

And uncontrolled freedom to obtain.

Artegall disputes with the giant, telling him that he must first know what everything was like 'of yore': all things were created 'in goodly measure', in a state of harmony, and all are in their place now in a well-ordered world which it is blasphemy to think of rearranging: 'All change is perilous, and all chance unsound./Therefore leave off to weigh them all again'. In reply, the giant maintains 'how badly all things present be', and insists

that both protuberances and inequalities should be smoothed out. 'Therefore I will throw down these mountains high,/ And make them level with the lowly plain'; and, as a parallel activity, he will overthrow tyrants, 'And lordings curb, that commons overawe;/And all the wealth of rich men to the poor will draw'. Artegall replies that for all the apparent changes taking place, things stay essentially the same. Both kinds of inequality (geographical and political) are good because decreed by God:

The hills do not the lowly dale disdain;

The dales do not the lofty hills envy.

He maketh kings to sit in sovereignty,

He maketh subjects to their power obey;

He pulleth down, he setteth up on high.

For the giant to seek to rearrange the world is not only wrong but futile: no one can withstand God's 'mighty will'. The giant's projects are vain because he does not know the causes of things.

The showdown comes when Artegall challenges the giant to weigh words, and to weigh right and wrong, which he cannot do, because, as Artegall explains, it must be done in the mind. Whereupon *(ultima regum ratio!)* he has the giant thrown into the sea and drowned. This produces an uprising among the common people ('that rascal rout'), which is suppressed through their being knocked down by Talus, Artegall's iron follower.

Spenser's prescience in this episode is uncanny, and would have astonished and distressed him. In the figure of the giant he has foretold a good deal of the history of modern thought. The giant's scientific world picture is set against Artegall's traditional theological view, based on order and degree and the acceptance of God's universe. The giant has read his Archimedes, who declared he would move the world if he had somewhere to place himself; his science is based on mathematics, and issues in technology, so that while Artegall is concerned with the place of everything in a

prearranged plan, he is busy measuring—the truly revolutionary procedure. Natural scientists at this time were still drawing up taxonomies, a procedure that offered little threat to the traditional world order; whereas it is as if Spenser's giant was aware of Whitehead's observation that Aristotle had told scientists to classify when he should have told them to measure. Like a good positivist, too, the giant is unhistorical: it is Artegall who maintains that to understand the world you must know how it was of yore. Where philosophy is traditional, conservative and hierarchical, science is democratic, even socialist, for it abolishes old distinctions: the quaint ambiguity of 'equality' is a shrewd social insight. As for Artegall's way of winning the argument—there is as much ambiguity and confusion in his case as in the giant's, but he has him thrown into the sea—it seems such an admission that new ideas can be kept down only by force, that one could almost believe it was smuggled into Spenser's text by some irreverent radical.

A later system of thought, that does not fully exist yet, is here condemned as if it were a wicked misunderstanding of the world; and a very similar point can be made about *King Lear*. As all students know, two views of Nature are used in the play, normative and neutral. Normative Nature is now familiar to us as part of the Elizabethan world picture: it is God's ordered universe, which responds with shock when the basic moral law is transgressed. Duncan's horses take leave of their share of natural reason when Duncan is murdered; unnatural events take place in the heavens when Julius Caesar is about to be killed. The positive side of the doctrine is stated by the friar in *Romeo and Juliet* who explains, as he gathers medicinal herbs, that everything in Nature has its own virtue, and that there are curative and harmful properties in plants corresponding to sin and grace in mankind. In Lear it functions as a standard to invoke against ‘'unnatural" behaviour:

Hear, Nature, hearl dear Goddess, hearl

Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend

To make this creature fruitfull

Into her womb convey sterility

l Dry up in her the organs of increase,

And from her derogate body never spring

A babe to honour her! If she must teem,

Create her child of spleen, that it may live

And be athwart disnature'd torment to her!

Because Goneril was a thankless child, it is possible to appeal to Nature, the dear Goddess who has arranged for the bond of love and gratitude to bind parents and children; and Nature can answer the prayer either by the physical curse of sterility or by the moral curse of giving her a thankless child: the two are parallel and complementary, for physical and moral are not independent of each other. To give birth, that holy act of fruitful Nature, would in her case be degraded into 'teeming'. Lear of course is not himself moved by natural piety: he is dictating to Nature, and he has already transgressed against the family bond by inviting love in return for financial reward. But it is not difficult to distinguish the doctrine itself from Lear's perversion of it; and my immediate concern is not the dramatic action of the play but the implications of its conception of Nature. When Lear, recovering from his great passion, is being tended by Cordelia, she is told that there are simples designed to bring about the foster-nurse of nature, repose: the same doctrine as that stated by the Friar. To this she responds:

All blest secrets,

All you unpublishad virtues of the earth

Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate

In the good man's distress!

It is impossible to be sure if this is a conceit or the direct statement of a doctrine. The hope that simples will flourish if we water them with our tears sounds like a charming poetic fancy, deriving from Shakespeare's craftsmanship or Cordelia's intensity;

but Nature, in the normative view, can and does respond to the appeal of a loving heart, so that Cordelia's plea ('be aidant and remediate') is at least as much prayer as conceit.

In contrast to this is the Nature of instinctual drives and natural law, the nature that contrasts with society and what Edmund calls 'the curiosity of nations'. Edmund the bastard is the natural child, in the revealing phrase which implies that wedlock is unnatural—as perhaps the word *wedlock* already suggests. There is a complication here, in that to the Christian wedlock is not natural either, but supernatural: marriage is a sacrament to the Catholic, and even to the Protestant requires the blessing of the Church. But since Nature is imbued with the spirit of God, the natural, by the normative view, includes the supernatural: whereas Edmund's Nature is quite different from, even opposite to, Lear's 'dear goddess'. It is the nature of natural science.

Now as it happens a modern play provides us with the perfect contrast to all this. In Sartre's retelling of the Orestes story, *Les Mouches*, there is a confrontation between Oreste and Jupiter just before the climax, in which the hitherto shifty and undignified god manages, through rhetoric and sound effects, to impress and overawe. Speaking now in a grandiose manner, he describes the revolution of the planets and the cycle of generations in language that recalls the Elizabethan world picture:

Par moi les especes se perpetuent, j' ai ordonne

qu'un homme engendretoujours un homme, et que le

petit d'un chiensoit un chien, par moi la douce

langue des mareesvient lecher le sable et se

retire a heure fixe...

This last detail restates exactly what Artegall said to the giant: that constant movement does not mean disorder. Then, having asserted that physical order involves a moral order, Jupiter points out to Oreste that his attempted defiance will be repudiated

by the earth itself, which will crumble under his feet. Oreste replies by reasserting his rejection of Jupiter's world:

Qu'elle s' effritel Que les rochers me condannent,
et que les plantes se fanent sur mon passage: tout
ton univers ne suffira pas a me donner tort. Tu
es le roi des Dieux, Jupiter, le roi des pierres et
des etoiles, le roi des vagues de la mer. Mais
tune'es pas le roi des hommes.

This defiance constitutes his freedom: 'je suis condanne de n'avoir d' aut re loique ela mienne. Jupiter pities the humans to whom Oreste will offer the 'obscene et fade existence' that will remain to them after refusing integration in his scheme of things. Oreste does not dispute that this is what awaits them, but 'pourquoi leur refuserais—je le desespoir qui estenmoi, puisque c'est leur lot?' Liberty, for Sartre, is emancipation from the Great Chain of Being and the Elizabethan world picture.

It is as if Oreste is asserting a historical point: that a new worldview was perceived by the old, but perceived as evil, or despicable. In order to claim the future, all Oreste needs to do is reverse the moral judgment. Jupiter is not saying all this for the first time, as we've already seen: already in the fourteenth century, a preacher responded to social mobility by saying 'God made the clergy knights and labourers, but the devil made the burghers and usurers'—that is, the new classes. Nietzsche's aphorism on the subject is more openly cynical: 'History treats almost exclusively of bad men who have later been declared good men.'

So far, what we have seen rebuked is science and democracy; to these we can add individual self-reliance and social mobility. What Samuel Smiles admired, Langland deplored: 'Ac sythe bondesmen barnes han be made bisshopes,/And barnesbastardushan be erchedekens.' The opposite view—that social conflict results from discrepancies of wealth—is found in *Piers Plowman,* but placed in the mouth of one of the Deadly

Sins: egalitarianism is preached by Wrath. The intellectual questioning of Spenser giant is also found, and also rebuked, in *PP:* the dreamer is reproached by Reason for wondering at the marvels of the world (how birds have the wit to build their nests), instead of drawing moral lessons from Nature, and for wanting to know why the world is in such a bad state.

Why should literature perceive the future as evil? The obvious answer is that the imagination is conservative, and cannot accept a radically new way of perceiving reality, either social or natural: and its way of handling the unacceptable is to fit it into existing (moral) categories, so that repudiation takes the form of moral disapproval. The tension that results when the future grows more and more actual can persist for a very long time—as we see from the case of social mobility. Langland's disapproval, in varying form, persisted throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not only in asides and incidentals, but as a central element in Jacobean satire and comedy. The well-born rake, whose sexual and financial behaviour displays little more than direct self-interest, is almost invariably depicted sympathetically in the comedies of Middleton and Massinger; in contrast, the city merchant, set on financial gain and buying his way into a higher social level, is a monster (or, if he is depicted as sensible and knowing his place, then his wife and daughters are monsters). Massinger in particular turned such figures into brilliant grotesques, Overreach in the misleadingly titled *New way to Pay Old Debts* (it shows a very old way to handle new men), and Luke in *The City Madam*. Here is Luke enjoying the spectacle of the virtuous family he has ruined:

Ha, ha, ha !

This move me to compassion, or raise

One sign of seeming pity in my face!

You are deceived: it rather renders me

More flinty and obdurate. A south wind

Shall sooner soften marble, and the rain

That slides down gently from his flaggy wings

Shall wrest compunction from me. Tis my glory
That they are wretched, and by me made so;
It sets my happiness off: I could not triumph
if these were not my captives.

The motives of the banker or money-lender who forecloses and perhaps ruins his debtor involve a whole change of social ethos. He operates under a financial code in which debts are paid and contracts honoured because they are debts and contracts, not because he takes a gleeful delight in watching others suffer or cutting out a pound of flesh. His morality is that of contract, not of natural justice or divine authority, and his dealings are determined by questions of legal right and obligation, not by the total human situation; if his actions cause suffering, he may genuinely regret it, but the responsibility rests with the sufferer who entered on the contract. What Massinger sees, however, is not the morality of contract but the immorality of cruelty; Luke is presented as if his chief aim is to enjoy the suffering. When to this is added the self-dramatisation of the Elizabethan villain, we get the diabolic chuckling of a speech like this, imperceptive as social interpretation, but full of linguistic vitality.

An almost exact parallel to the view I am suggesting, that the future is first perceived as evil, is found in Durkheim's theory of crime. Durkheim shocked his contemporaries by asserting that crime is a normal phenomenon, for in all societies some individuals must diverge from the collective type, among which divergences some must be criminal. He then went on to defend this divergence as necessary for social change. If the *conscience collective* imposed itself on individual *consciences* with complete success, a situation would arise in which no change was possible: crime is therefore necessary, in general as a sign that the moral situation is not frozen, and in particular but rare cases the criminal may himself be an innovator, the precursor of a new morality.

If progress is seen as evil, does this mean the reverse is true ? That what an age (including, no doubt, our own) sees as

evil must represent the morality of the future? The thought is almost too alarming to contemplate, and (perhaps for that reason) it is not easy to formulate reasons for rejecting it. The crucial question will concern the social basis of values, the fact that the same position can be seen either in moral terms or in historical terms: either as a statement of what conforms to a general principle, or attributed to the particular social group who are likely to hold it. Take, for instance, happiness.

But the whim we have of Happiness is somewhat thus. By certain valuations, and averages, of our own striking, we come upon some sort of average, terrestrial lot; this we fancy belongs to us by nature, and of indefeasible right. It is simple payment of our wages, of our deserts; requires neither thanks nor complaint: only such overplus as there may be do we account Happiness; any deficit again is Misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our own deserts ourselves, and what a fund of self-conceit there is in each of us,—do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead cry: See there, what a payment; was ever worthy gentleman so used;—I tell thee Blockhead, it all comes of thy Vanity; of what thou fanciest those same deserts of thine to be.

Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp.

So true it is, what I then said, that the Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, Unity itself divided by Zero will give Infinity. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time write: 'It is only with Renunciation (Entsagen) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin'.

So Thomas Carlyle, transcendentalist philosopher and poet manque, in 1835; and here, in contrast, Daniel Lerner (no relation to the present writer), sociologist, in 1963:

The spread of frustration in areas developing less rapidly than their people wish can be seen as the outcome of a deep imbalance between achievement and aspiration. In simple terms, this situation arises when many people in a society want far more than they can hope to get.

This disparity in the want-get ratio has been studied intensively in the social sciences literature in terms of achievement and aspiration. The relationship we here propose for study can be expressed by the following equation (adapted from an ingenious formula of William James):

$$\text{Satisfaction} = \frac{\text{Achievement}}{\text{Aspiration}}$$

...It is a serious imbalance in this ratio that characterises areas beset by rising frustrations. Typically in these situations the denominator increases faster than the numerator...

How does such an imbalance in the warnt-get ratio occur? How can it be prevented or cured ?... There are six institutions which function as the principal agencies of social change (or its inhibition): the economy. the police, the family, the community, the school, the media.

The differences between these two passages are important, and fascinating. The most important difference lies in their style. Each, as it happens, quotes from an authority he respects, but whereas Lerner names kim without evasion, Carlyle coyly presents Goethe as 'the wisest of our time', with a brief indication that he wrote in German. Is he being ironic? The whole texture of Carlyle's prose suggests irony: the archaisms, the Germanisms, the exaggerated imperatives, all convey the feel of someone playing with the language. In this playfulness lies his individuality, but it is never allowed to conceal the fact that deep down he means what he is saying; and once we have arrived at Carlyle's deep earnestness through the medium of his linguistic oddity, we are left feeling that we have made his message our own, as we could not otherwise have done.

The only detail in Daniel Lerner's sober sociological prose that corresponds to all this is the liveliness of the phrase 'the want-get ratio. No doubt he is proud of it (the two blunt Saxon verbs qualifying the very abstract noun), but he does not play with it: and for the rest, he uses his prose as a window, which is to say, he has no style.

This stylistic difference is far more important than what at a first glance might appear more fundamental, the fact that one author uses imperatives, the other indicatives—that is, one is writing moral exhortation, the other dispassionate analysis. For with a little ingenuity, we could remove this difference. Instead of 'consider', 'see there', 'make thy claim", we could cause Carlyle to write 'in the case of those whose claims are zero, we will observe...', or Lerner to write 'put thy trust in the following institutions..." (or at any rate, if we want to keep him in the same stylistic universe, 'I suggest to the reader that he try putting his trust in...'). The fact that we can make this change and make it so easily shows us how much these two passages have in common, and makes it easier to accept the clear fact that the content of what they are saying is identical.

The relation between value judgment and social reality can be plotted on a continuum, whose two extreme positions are first, that moral criteria are wholly independent of what happens, and, at the other end, that morality is derived from society and must be understood historically. The first is formulated in Hume's celebrated distinction between is and ought and, more recently and succinctly, by Wittgenstein:

The sense of the world must lie outside the world... If there is any value which is of value, it must lie outside all happening and being so. For all happening and being so is accidental. (Tractatus 6:41)

For a statement of the second in its full crudity we can turn to a practical politician—Lenin, for instance:

Our morality is completely subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat... Morality is that which serves to destroy the old exploiting society. (Therefore) we deny all

morality that is drawn from some conception beyond men, beyond class. We say that it is a fraud and a deception...a fraud and a stultification of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists.

Social reality, to the Marxist, determines moral perception; and since it is constantly changing, so is morality. The change in the material base results from interactions between different elements of economic activity, which act on each other not like two billiard balls, but by interpenetrating and causing changes in each other. There are innumerable accounts of the Marxist theory of how value is determined by the dialectical activity of the social base, and I shall here choose Lukacs' exposition in *History and Class Consciousness* (from which I have already taken the analogy in the previous sentence). He explains that the solution to every insoluble problem is to be found in history: it may be insoluble if the contending elements remain the same, but historical understanding will show that they don't. To those who perceive only immediate reality, 'every true change must seem incomprehensible', and the undeniable fact of change, when it occurs, will appear to be a catastrophe, a sudden unexpected turn of events that comes from outside and eliminates all mediations. Hence Lukacs' attack on absolutist forms of thinking, which he contrasts with a true understanding of the dialectical nature of historical process. So the absolutist ethical standpoint from which Artegall condemns the giant, or Massinger Luke, is the sign of a failure in historical understanding. Unless ethical judgments are made with such understanding, they will be bound by the class limitations of whoever makes them. And the first class to be capable of a truly objective social understanding will be the proletariat: since they exploit no one, they don't need an ideology (that is, an understanding of the world with built-in distortions to protect their class interests). So Lukacs can assert that 'whether an action is functionally right or wrong is decided ultimately by the evolution of proletarian class-consciousness."

To the Humean, Daniel Lerner is being reductivist; to the Marxist, Carlyle is wasting his time. Lerner's mistake consists in posing the question of the nature of happiness and then reducing it

to a consequence of the situation of whoever asks it without admitting that the *criteria* for happiness must be independent of the situation which is judged against them. Carlyle's contrary error consists in treating the happiness formula as if it was an absolute, as if mere exhortation could lead us to reduce the denominator; only the form is absolute, and the actual determining of the fraction results from the material situation of the individual.

The argument of this essay is clearly incompatible with the Humean extreme, for if value is independent of reality, it cannot make any real difference that the future has become the present; does that mean that I am driven to the other extreme, and that the claim that progress is initially perceived as evil necessarily implies the philosophical position of Lukacs?

All theories that see theory as a symptom are in danger of cutting off the branch they are sitting on. The Freudian claim that resistance to psycho-analytic. interpretations is a rationalisation of our reluctance to admit the truth about ourselves is subject to the reply that the offering of those interpretations can itself be explained as a rationalisation (say of some aggressive impulse). And if all moral judgment is a rationalisation of class interest, why is this not true of the theory that moral judgment is based on class interest? Can the Marxist, who does not believe it possible to emerge from history, claim to have done so himself? It is a powerful strength in Marxism that it admits this point. It would not have been possible for dialectical materialism to emerge at any earlier point in history: only when the bourgeois revolution had taken place, and the possibility of a proletarian revolution had been realistically formulated (i.e. its material basis perceived) did it become possible to understand not only that morality is class-based, but that a non-ideological morality might come into being, based on the one non-exploiting class. Marxism is not outside history, but this does not invalidate its insights, since it knows where it stands.

I must now explain why I do not regard progress-as-evil as necessarily a Marxist theory, though I doubt if I could have formulated it in this way had there been no Marxism. I believe it possible to make use of Marxist insights without accepting

Marxism as a system. For first, Marxism is not the only theory that sees moral thinking as a function of society, for it is not necessary that such a theory be materialist. Suppose we took the formulation 'interactions between different elements of economic activity', and replaced the last phrase by 'economic and intellectual activity', or 'economic activity and social habit', or even 'intellectual activity and social habit', one would then have a theory of social change in which the fundamental elements were no longer classes; and the form of the dialectic could be preserved, despite this alteration. There is a good deal of sociological theory that does just this. Durkheim is as strong an instance as Marx of a thinker who derives consciousness from society and discusses moral propositions by tracing them back to the situation that gives rise to them: to the extent that his critics directed at him what is essentially the same criticism as Popper makes of Marx, of sliding from social pressures to moral rules. Yet at the same time Durkheim is explicitly anti-materialist, since he regarded religion not economic activity as the most primitive of all social phenomena, from which other institutions derive. And among recent historians Keith Thomas offers an interesting parallel. His explanation of witchcraft treats it as the consequence of social change, in particular of the rise of economic individualism; and it has much in common with the progress-as-evil theory, in that a new individualist ethic appears in the consciousness of accuser as guilt (which he projects onto the accused) before it is openly held and defended. This looks like an economic explanation but it leaves open the question of whether new economic activity caused a change of attitude, or *vice-versa;* and when it comes to explaining the decline of witchcraft, Thomas is quite explicitly anti-materialist: 'the change which occurred in the seventeenth century was not so much technological as mental. Since attacks on materialism have usually taken the form of statements of faith (that it is demeaning to human dignity, or to human liberty, to regard beliefs as determined by the substructure), it is important to realise that there are scrupulously documented theories which reject it on the ground that the evidence points against it.

And second, despite the finesse that I have praised, there is no complete escape from the problem of sawing off one's branch. The Marxist claim that it does not suffer from the limitations of class morality is based, essentially, on the claim that the proletariat is the class of the future. There are great conveniences in locating one's material basis in the future: it leaves one more room for adaptation and unconstrained thought, for a material reality that has not yet come about is not very different from idealism. But once that future starts arriving, it may take on a definite and not necessarily attractive form, and to regard it as unavoidable will then turn into a doctrine of might is right. On this point, the argument of Popper seems to me irrefutable.

It is not my aim to propose solutions to philosophic problems: but rather to indicate what the alternative philosophic positions are, and to suggest what the implications of each one are for literary theory and practice. The particular problem posed in this essay I cannot even begin to solve; and I will conclude by setting against Lukacs the (Humean) point of Popper, that even if a particular future is inevitable, this need not make it desirable, or even acceptable.

'It is at least conceivable (I do not assert more, at present) that a man who to-day foresees with certainty that we are heading for a period of slavery, that we are going to return to the cage of the arrested society, or even that we are about to return to the beasts, may nevertheless decide not to adopt the moral standards of this impending period but to contribute as well as he can to the survival of his humanitarian ideals, hoping perhaps for a resurrection of his morality in some dim future.

All that is, at least, conceivable. It may perhaps not be the 'wisest decision to make. But the fact that such a decision is excluded neither by foreknowledge nor by any sociological or psychological law shows that the first claim of historicist moral theory is untenable. Whether we should accept the morality of the future just because it is the morality of the future, this in itself is just a moral problem.'

(The Open Society and its Enemies, Chapter 22)

This is a common enough position in our time; and it has developed its own literary form, the anti-Utopia. It is clear that there is a natural connexion between millenarianism and Utopia, and when the millenarianism is religious the Utopia is called the Kingdom of God. A Utopia is a description of a society which has solved all our present problems; an anti- Utopia describes a society that has solved the problems by destroying what we most value. It is clearly the appropriate form for those who watch the Saints, the Party, the Fifth Monarchy men, bullying and destroying in order to bring about their New Jerusalem.

If we are unlucky, our descendants will read *Brave New World*, 1984, *The Space Merchants, we*, and will remark that the twentieth century imagination registered as evil what they have come to see as progress.

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Laurence Lerner, a South African-born British literary critic, poet and novelist, held various academic positions around the world, including at the University of Sussex and Vanderbilt University. Among a number of significant works he authored, *The Frontiers of Literature* (Blackwell, 1988*), Love and Marriage: Literature and Its Social Context* (St. Martin's, 1979), and a collection of poems, *Rembrandt's Mirror* (Vanderbilt, 1987) are noteworthy.

RICHARD ELLMANN

JOYCE'S RELIGION AND POLITICS

What were Joyce's attitudes to church and state? To what extent was he shaped by the Catholicism he forswore? How committed was he to the liberation of Ireland? These questions haunt his hundredth birthday.

In later life, asked when he had left the Church, Joyce remarked, 'That's for the Church to say. By this time, he recognized the complexities. In his youth he was not so guarded or ambiguous. He wrote to Nora Barnacle on 29 August 1904, 'Six years ago (at sixteen) I left the Catholic Church, hating it most fervently. I found it impossible for me to remain in it on account of the impulses of my nature. The Church's attitude to sexuality was particularly repugnant to him. His letter went on, 'I made secret war upon it when I was a student and declined to accept the positions it offered me.' These positions, according to his brother Stanislaus, included that of priest. 'By doing this I made myself a beggar but I retained my pride, Joyce wrote to Nora. 'Now I make open war upon it by what I write and say and do.'

His actions accorded with this policy. He neither confessed nor took communion. When his children were born, he forbade their being baptized. His grandson was baptized against his wishes and without his knowledge. He preferred to live with Nora Barnacle for twenty-seven years without marrying her. When at last a wedding became necessary for purposes of inheritance, he had it performed in a registry office. At his death, when the possibility of a religious service was mentioned, his wife said, 'I couldn't do that to him.'

So far all is straightforward. Joyce's rejection of the Church was compatible, however, with considerable interest in it

and in its procedures. He was often derogatory. Priests, he said, were 'barbarians armed with crucifixes. Or he would remark, as on 13 March 1908, 'None of the gratifications of the senses are half so odious as their mortifications which the saints practiced; also the Church, whilst providing rewards for the senses of the glorified body, has promised none for the sense of taste or of touch.' Some of his devout friends took comfort in the way that Joyce regularly attended the services of Holy Week, and had particular pleasure in Tenebrae. He did so, however, like a tourist of another persuasion, standing at the back of the church. Another remnant of his early piety survived as a superstitious fear of thunderstorms, which he would do anything to avoid. Once, when thunder crashed and Joyce quailed, Thomas Mc-Greevy admonished him, 'Look at your children. They aren't frightened at all.' 'They have no religion,' said Joyce with contempt. The marrow in his bones was at variance with his brain.

Critics have sometimes contended that his books should not be taken as opposed to the Church. Of course, no frontal attack is made in them. Joyce spoke in an early autobiographical essay of having adopted 'urbanity in warfare' as his strategy. He was anxious that his books should not commit propaganda, even against institutions of which he disapproved. In his brother's diary for April 1908, it is recorded that Joyce said of the novel-*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*-on which he was then working, 'it would not be aimed at Catholicism in Ireland; he didn't care a rap if Ireland continued in Catholicism for the next two thousand years. Some Hottentot religion would be too good for the people. At any rate, with the Catholic doctrine of grace-which... he considers the main doctrine of the Church-the priests could well defend these lenten banalities if they kept the faithful with the Church, the accumulator of grace. Their hell, too, they could defend in a similar manner and it was a logical belief if one admitted their theory of sin and punishment.'

Stephen's apostasy is accordingly presented as a choice for himself, and not necessarily one for others. On the other hand, he is an exemplum, not only in his capacity as artist, but in his character of emancipated man. His initial submission, in fear and

remorse, to the terrifying sermons about death, judgment, and punishment, changes to revulsion at their cruelty. Yet Joyce is careful not to overstate his case. If Father Dolan, who in Chapter 1 pandies Stephen unjustly, is sadistic, the priest who hears the boy's confession after the retreat in Chapter III is kind and gentle.

Apart from such sporadic concessions, the Church is regularly presented in terms of darkness, constriction, and thwart, Stephen finds that its emphasis on the soul is as lopsided as the prostitute's emphasis on the body. His most adroit maneuver is taking over its vocabulary for his own secular purposes. He receives a *call*, hears 'a voice from beyond the world, but what it summons him to is not the priesthood but life, including sexual love, and an art that would content body and soul alike. The word *sin* is modified to error, to *fall* is only to experience: Stephen ecstatically contemplates 'To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life. He himself achieves *resurrection*: 'His soul had risen from the grave of boyhood, spurning her graveclothes'. He is ordained into a new priestcraft of his own devising: he imagines himself 'a priest of eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of ever- living life. At the book's end he even takes over from the Church the care of *conscience*; it is he and not the Church who will forge a conscience for his race.

Just what this new conscience was to be Joyce would clarify in *Ulysses*. Neither Bloom nor Stephen could be described as pagan though neither acknowledges any institutional belief. Bloom, in offering his conception of love as against the Citizen's hatred and violence, is voicing a humanist ethic. He also fulfils the role of the good Samaritan when Stephen is knocked down. So far as Catholicism is concerned, he ruminates humorously about confession, communion, resurrection, marveling at the hold these strange conceptions have. Stephen, reared among them, but unwilling to accept Catholic limitations of his independence, is in active rebellion. His climactic moment comes as his mother's ghost, like that of the Commendatore in Don Giovanni, thrice sum- mons him to repent. His anguished retort is 'Shite!', when the true pagan would neither see the ghost nor recognize any

inclination to repent. Stephen is never insouciant. When he points to his head and quotes William Blake, who in his turn was alluding to Dante, 'But in here it is I must kill the priest and the king, Joyce at once sanctions his 'mental fight' and acknowledges the responsibility of this rebellion.

In *Finnegans Wake* Joyce seems more relaxed about the Church and about rebellion. Shaun, as a hypocritical do- gooder, with a claim to piety, is steadily mocked, but so is his errant and agnostic brother. Catholicism has its place in the book, a pervasive one that involves Saint Patrick, count- less popes, church history and theological squabbles. In terms of universal history, which the *Wake* presents, the Church's punctilio about forgotten issues adds to the joyful polyphony. In the night world shot through with dreams, religion appears no better and no worse than other human obsessions.

To be opposed to the Church as an institution is one thing; to be opposed to all religious feeling is another. At moments Joyce surprises his atheistical brother Stanislaus by unexpected concessions Stanislaus noted in his diary on 7 August 1908 that James said 'he believed that in his heart every man was religious. He spoke from his knowledge of himself. I asked him did he mean that everyone had in his heart some faith in a Deity, by which he could be influenced. He said, 'Yes.' That this was not just a passing fancy appears to be borne out in *Ulysses*, less in Stephen and Bloom, who disclaim faith, than in Molly. She, while contemptuous of piety, is also contemptuous of impiety, and approves a vague theism: 'as for them saying there is no God I wouldn't give a snap of my two fingers for all their learning why don’t they go and create something I often asked him atheists or what- ever they call themselves... Although Joyce in May 1905 pronounced himself to be incapable of belief of any kind, he evidently had more than a few grains left. But any approach to orthodoxy repelled him. When a priest in Zurich pointed out on a starry night the order of the stars and used it to prove the existence of God, Joyce replied acidly, 'What a pity that it is all based on mutual interdestruction!'

He had much the same feelings of intransigence towards the British state, as the occupying power in Ireland, that he had towards the Catholic Church. 'Political awareness' was a quality he valued in writers. Joyce was politically aware with- out being political. That is, day to day politics did not interest him, but he thought of his writing as subsuming politics within it His earliest recorded work was his lost poem about the man who had tried to lead Ireland to independence, Parnell. Flag waving nationalism was not to his taste, but he regarded political independence as an aspect of the larger independence he was seeking. His brother records a conversation they had in April 1907. Stanislaus urged that an independent Ireland would be intolerable. 'What the devil are your politics?' asked James. 'Do you not think Ireland has a right to govern itself and is capable of doing so?' During his ten years in Trieste Joyce wrote nine articles setting forth the Irish 'problem' for a local newspaper, and in 1914 he offered them as a book to an Italian publisher. They were not accepted a pity, because they would have demonstrated that Joyce was altogether aware of and concerned about the political situation of his country.

Joyce is sometimes said to have been a lifelong Parnellite, but he was opposed to turning great dead men into stone effigies. In *Ulysses* he mocks the idea that Parnell is still alive and will return. The one post-Parnellite politician whom Joyce felt he could endorse was Arthur Griffith, who pleased him by being 'unassuming' and 'not indulging in flights.' He liked Griffith's policy for two reasons especially, its non-violence and its economic boycott of Britain. About the boycott he remarked on 16 May 1907, 'The Sinn Fin policy comes to fighting England with knife and fork, 'and said it was 'the highest form of political warfare I have heard of'. In 1912 he asked Griffith's advice in connection with his troubles over publishing *Dubliners*, and was pleased to be treated as a man having a common cause though working in a less obviously political medium. For he had remained faithful to his goal of creating new Irishmen and Irishwomen through the honesty and scorching candor of his writing. In Ulysses he acknowledged Griffith's political importance by making many references to him alone among

politicians of the day. And he called attention to the ultimately political direction of his own work by having Irish Stephen, at the end of the brothel scene, beaten up by a British soldier, whom he defies as 'the uninvited. Joyce was gratified when, just be- fore *Ulysses* was published in 1922, Arthur Griffith was elected the first president of Ireland. The cultural emancipation of the country, with which Joyce had charged himself, seemed to be succeeding at the same time as the more limited but almost equally necessary political emancipation, which he associated with Griffith.

But Griffith died within a few months. and the Civil War broke out. When Nora Joyce with their two children was fired on while visiting Galway during that war, Joyce grew more skeptical. He had called himself a socialist in his early twenties, then said he was an anarchist, though not a 'practical anarchist in the modern sense'. During the First World War, when he was committed to neutrality he began to describe himself as apolitical, though he considered his litigation against a British consular official named Henry Carr to be a nationalistic action. The creation of the Free State had satisfied his political ambitions, always secondary to his cultural ones, but subsequent events made him feel that his immediate reaction could not be sustained. In 1932 he was invited to a St Patrick's Day party in Paris; he declined to attend it because the Irish Ambassador to France, Count O'Kelly, was also to be present, and Joyce did not wish to imply that he in any way endorsed the present Irish state. 'I do not mind 'larking' with (High Commissioner) Dulanty in London but I care nothing about politics,' he wrote. 'Ireland, with Ulster in, will probably be a separate republic in ten or fifty years and I do not suppose anyone in England will really care two hoots whether it is or not. They are doing many things more efficiently, I am told, than was possible under the old regime but any semblance of liberty they had when under England seems to have gone- and goodness knows that was not much.'

Yet indifference was not a characteristic of a man who made a point of reading Irish newspapers every day, and who took a passionate interest in every detail of his native land. However

skeptical he became of political progress, he endeavored in all his books to achieve something super political, by disclosing sharply what life in Ireland was, and dimly what it might be. This was his higher politics.

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Richard David Ellmann was a renowned American literary critic and biographer of James Joyce and Oscar Wilde. He taught at Northwestern University, Oxford and Emory, where he assumed Robert W. professorship in 1980. His scholarly works include *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (1948; reprinted 1987) and *Oscar Wilde: A Collection of Critical Essays* (1970).

Z.A. USMANI

ULYSSES —TO NO END GATHERED

I

With respect to meanings and values the fundamental form of the novel is what Alan Friedman calls 'the stream of conscience'[1]. In this light Stephen's pronouncement towards the end of *A Portrait* becomes all the more meaningful:

> Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.

Along with other conscience-forging perceiving selves Stephen figures in Ulysses. But in this novel, he can be only partially identified with Joyce the artist who is present in and beyond his work. The stream of conscience of a perceiving self or character must be distinguished, therefore, from the composite stream of the conscience of the race-not only the Irish race but also the human race that Joyce forges in the mind of the reader. He forges it as multi-perspectival knowledge and it is in this inclusive sense of 'Knowledge' (Conscientia), which implies consciousness as well as moral awareness, that we would like to use the term 'conscience'- through a collation of various fragments of awareness. Though one is tempted to seek analogues in post-impressionism, cubism, montage, musical *leit-motifs*, Bergsonian vitalism, relativism etc. one gets the impression that the Joycean fragments of awareness lie in a chaotic mass. Thus F.R. Leavis is of the opinion that there is 'no organizing principle' in *Ulysses*. I do not take it to be wholly true. And yet I take it to be true in a very important sense.

Critics are to be blamed for looking for a finished or 'closed' structure in *Ulysses*. The novel has an 'open' structure, and

its end is a new beginning, a juncture of open possibilities, for the conscience of the race, informed by this structure, to proceed on its endless journey. Critics are also to be blamed for not taking proper note of the myth which operates as a structurally controlling principle and unites the various fragments of awareness. Eliot was the first to draw our attention to this mythical method, which he himself followed for his own purposes. But I am afraid the myth in *Ulysses* has not been properly defined and understood. Without denying the importance of Stuart Gilbert's work, we must realize that the novel embodies the myth of a Ulyssean journey which is significant, neither because of its outward events nor because of its destination, but because of its endless trajectory of inward, mental events. In other words, it is the myth of the endless Ulyssean journey of the ever-developing conscience of the ever-exiled, ever-unappeased human race-on a deeper level it runs through *The Odyssey* itself. So much for the critics. But Joyce himself is to be blamed for lacking the high- seriousness of value-concern in his treatment of the myth and of the material the myth would organically unite. (What would have happened if Wordsworth had such an attitude in *The Immortality* Ode, or Eliot in the *Waste Land?*). Thus, there is an 'organizing principle' in *Ulysses*, in a loose, rather jocoserious sense. But there *isn't* an organizing principle in an immanently absolute sense, in the sense of an all-pervading high-seriousness of value-concern, such as we find in very great works of art.

With his jocoserious attitude Joyce 'forges' (shapes, and also shapes in order to deceive) the conscience of the race through an interplay of multiple conscience-perspectives. There are the personal perspectives of the perceiving selves created through interior monologue and authorial comment, and along with them there are the impersonal perspectives of various modes and varying degrees of sympathy, ranging from the dramatic through all manner of narrative down to the coldly scientific. The central conscience-perspective which is also the most fractured one, even to the extent of lending itself to relativism, is that of Ulysses-Bloom's stream of conscience which is defined in relation to the streams of conscience of other perceiving selves, particularly

those of Telemachus-Stephen and Penelope-Molly, and in relation to the whole stream of relevant events in the novel.

The jocoseriousness may be unforgivable, but with his multiple perspectives Joyce is countering all absolutism to create a new consciousness. He would forge the uncreated conscience of the race through the multi-perspectival knowledge of a reality which would seem all the more devastatingly and yet all the more fascinatingly mysterious because of such knowledge. It is not fair, therefore, to call *Ulysses* a nihilistic work. It moves towards an acceptance of the human situation and a saying of 'Yes' to all that life offers. In its own way it affirms life, and it also affirms the love which is 'life for men and women'. Think of Bloom, the common man whose epic *Ulysses* is. He who fails miserably in his tragi-comic but nonetheless 'heroic' attempts to establish satisfying relationships with Molly and Stephen, he who is to no end cuckolded, humiliated, tormented, persecuted, abnegated emerges out of his hell-purgatory with equanimity, with a will to live by adapting himself to changing conditions, and with a persistent ability to love about which we have never been in doubt ('There is much kindness in the jew'). Not love in any glorious, romantic, possessive or self-exultifying sense. But 'love... the opposite of hatred', as he himself puts it in the 'Cyclops' episode (432). 'it's no use. Force, hatred, history, all that. That's not life for men and women. And everybody knows'-unless his heart has been hardened by political cynicism, like that of the foreigner-hating, Cyclops-like Citizen-'that it's the very opposite of that that is really life'. This love which is 'really life' is the love that persists as a primeval 'great bond' of instinctive kindness towards the other person, whatever happens. It loves, so to say, the indulgence in loving action, unconditionally and persistently. 'Love loves to love', thinks Bloom jocosely. And then he goes on to deflate his belief by thinking of the tragi-comic odds of love: 'You love a certain person. And this person loves that other person (for example Bloom loves Molly and Molly loves Blazes Boylan) because everybody loves somebody but God loves everybody' (433). You come up against such tragi-comic odds in a universe

of 'void incertitude'. In Bloom's own case they are most intensely tragi-comic.

But I would hasten to add that Joyce's jocoseriousness of attitude detracts from the quality of his affirmation in as much as it prevents him from having any discriminating imaginative insight into ultimate values. The mere will to live and the love which is 'the opposite of hatred' would 'promote life', not on any higher or transcendental level, but only on an aboriginal, animistic level-at which the conscience of the race may run along a course of deindividuated cosmic continuance ('In my end is my beginning'). The mere will to live which rolls on with it is not the will made perfect and impelled, as in Dante, by the 'Love that moves the sun and the stars'. Not the will that makes a choice, 'costing not less than everything, which is basically an act of faith. So, to make Joyce's conscience of the race run along a higher plane of life a drastic, existentialist jump is needed- with which a personal God may also pop in again! Let us assume that the 'open end' of *Ulysses* leaves this, too, as an 'Open Possibility'.

For Joyce the conscience of the race is man's developing knowledge of the human self and its world; the knowledge of the microcosm and the macrocosm and their relations both in terms of actual and possible events in the past and in future. Forging this conscience would be a business of 'stirring memory and desire,' of the evocation of the very hell- purgatory of the world of experience and of dreaming of some kind of paradise. Joyce goes about this business with a jocoserious attitude; but the shifting conscience-perspective of his ironical composition can vibrate with man's deepest hopes and fears. They can effect a contemplation of the paradoxes of the flesh-bound, contingent existence and of the problems of the sinning-suffering human self in the world of 'Nobodaddy'- its aching loneliness and exile, its inner sense of being, its tormenting conflicts, its disintegration and reintegration, and its possible destinies. It is in the fitness of things that *Ulysses* incorporates an argument on Shakespeare and his works, especially *Hamlet*, and evokes ironical reminders of, not only the Odyssey and various stories, legends and parables of exile and return, but also of the works of Blake, Goethe, Dante

and Mann. Conscience-forging works, all of them; in so far as they explore the possibility of arriving at a new, atoned and integrated conscience from the disintegrative state of man's exile into experience. And works greater than Joyce's novel, too. But let us not forget Joyce's countryman Swift. For like Swift Joyce, who is again a lesser artist, makes a devastatingly ironical examination of man and his values in order to smash our assumptions, illusions, pretensions and pride. He makes such an examination as he proceeds into the exploration of the human situation and of the mystery of the universe, both the microcosm and the macrocosm. Quite naturally he comes up against metaphysical questions with regard to the nature of the universe and the predicament and destiny of man-questions with regard to the whatness, whoness, whoseness, whenceness and whereness of things.

Stephen's and Bloom's perceiving selves are like different musical instruments raising these questions in their own way turn by turn, the former having metaphysical overtones but the latter resonating with greater 'realism' and intensity of feeling. Both these 'Keyless citizens' who profess 'their disbelief in many orthodox religious, national, social and ethical doctrines' (777) seek, tragicomically, to 'forge' the meaning of things through this or that mythical fancy. For in Joyce's world man lives by fancy alone-'O tell me where fancy is bread?' (706). It is bred (bread) in *Ulysses*, and owing to the author's deficiency of an all-organizing, value-discriminating power of creative imagination it is not transformed into the 'bread' of the higher life of the spirit. In this novel the myths, which are reduced to mythical fancies and which involve our imaginative energies only jocoseriously, keep cutting across one another through the interplay of shifting ironical perspectives. Thus, the myths of 'eternal return' and 'paternity' are cut across by the myth of 'continuity-in-change', which in its turn is cut across by the myth of 'void incertitude'. But this too is finally cut across by the myth of the (amoral) 'stream of bodily life-Anna Livia Plurabelle.

The mythical fancies that are jocoseriously associated with the figures of Stephen, Bloom and Molly do lend to these characters a mythical concrescence. Thus, Stephen Dedalus is not

only man as an artist, fallen into decadence and condemned in the pride of his intellect to a self-imposed seclusion, martyrdom, or exile, but also fallen man-angel-his very name reminding us not only of St Stephen but also of both Dedalus and Icarus (270; 674). Add to these the figures he fancifully assimilates to himself in his discourse on the cuckolded Shakespeare who wrote *Hamlet* and on the mystery of paternity. And Stephen is montaged, jocoseriously enough, as proto-Martyr-Telemachus-Christ-Shakespeare-*Hamlet*-the Ghost-Joyce-Dedalus-Icarus-Lucifer. To assert the freedom of his soul he 'would fly by those nets' of established institutions-nationality, language, religion etc. that are flung at the human soul. For this reason he has crossed the wish of his dying mother by refusing to pray. But in his flight he is pulled down by the unconscious power of the institutions he has rejected and Blake's Nobodaddy (264), the Hang-man God who presides over them, torments him with remorse and the fear of the judgment to come. He has exiled himself from the house of his father, Simon Dedalus, and thinks that 'Paternity may be a legal fiction.' 'Fatherhood, in the sense of conscious begetting, is unknown to man. It is a mystical estate, an apostolic succession, from only begetter to only begotten. On that mystery... the church... is founded irremovably because founded, like the world, macro- and-microcosm, upon the void. Upon incertitude, upon unlikelihood' (266). Thus, Christ is consubstantial with God according to orthodox theology. In his discourse on Hamlet, Shakespeare and paternity, Stephen evokes the various concepts of God's fatherhood of Christ with sacrilegious freedom. He is jocoseriously searching for an adopted father, one of like but not identical substance, as God is of Christ according to the Arian concept. When he meets him in the form of Bloom he does not recognize him as such. And that is the tragi-comedy of it. With the same jocoseriousness he regards Dedalus the fabulous artificer as his spiritual father, whose substance is identical with his own, as God's is with Christ's according to Sabellius[3]. As with Hamlet, the foundations of his ethical values have disintegrated and he has nothing to rely on but his personal convictions and sense of fulfilment of being-nothing but his own fractured conscience.

Leopold Bloom is an exile in a more deeply existentialistic sense. He is the common man, the Everyman-Noman (*Ulysses*) aspect of the human self. Stephen who is the bullock-befriending bard' is always befriending the powers of sex and fertility. He has no sex-inhibitions; but Bloom has. Bloom has left his father (to die of suicide in a hotel) and the God of his father and has 'sinned against the light', not in the priest's sense, but in that of evading the responsibility of love towards the other person, by breaking his father's heart and by evading the mutuality of pleasure (e.g., in the case of Gerty Mac Dowell and that of the 'bride of darkness' of whom he thinks in 'The Oxen of the Sun' episode). His sexual indulgences and flirtations, which are products of the sex-frustration he feels because of his wife's adultery, are not of a criminal nature, are even close to being innocuous. He suffers for being married to this woman just as he suffers for being born in a Jewish family of Hungarian origin. Only if he had a son to hear in his heart the suffering father's mute voice! But his only son Rudy died when he was only eleven days old, and his death had also something to do with the estrangement of Bloom's conjugal relations with Molly. So, Bloom has been exiled to sinning-suffering through the very fact of his birth, which is a coincidence followed by other coincidences. He keeps dreaming Utopian dreams of some promised land of the future- of Agendath Netaim (and subconsciously of 'the new Bloomusalem' and the 'paradisiacal era') and then, in spite of knowing that it has little chance of realization, of a home called 'Bloomville' or 'Flowerville'. In fact, he is a jocoserious mythical concrescence of Everyman, Ulysses, Moses, Christ, the sacrificial lamb, Elijah, Shakespeare, Sinbad, Rip Van Winkle and the Wandering Jew. Perhaps he is divine in his essence but God manifests Himself in him and for him as a 'darkness shining in brightness' which brightness cannot comprehend. The personal God has been eclipsed by a cloud of skepticism and His Signs speak no more; they have become mere 'coincidences' in a world of 'void incertitude' through which his mind is making an endless journey. This is not to say that Bloom is irreligious. With his 'kindness' and 'love which is the opposite of hatred' he has more of the spirit of Christian Humanism than his 'Christian' persecutors. But the lack

of the sense of revelation brings his religion down to an animistic, aboriginal level. If he were to hear Molly's interior monologue he would, possibly, recognize her as *mana*.

Molly (Marion) Bloom has a seemingly unending series of lovers, 'originating in and repeated to infinity' (863), as it were-we can assume Captain Mulvey as the first and Blazes Boylan as the last term of the series, with Bloom himself coming somewhere in between, but none of them is 'neither first nor last nor only nor alone' in the series, though each of them imagines that he is. She seems to be always groping forwards toward some ideal combining pleasure with happiness through beauty. Ironically enough, she has a vague sense of revelation as she intuits the existence of God the Creator while meditating on the wonderful beauty of nature (931). Being a 'lowly form of an immortal' (15)-like the milk- woman-she with her insatiable desire; her miraculous fecundity; her all-enticing charm; her cat-like ways (65-66); her instinctive, amoral, sub-intellectual responses; her docile aqua city, protean variability and irresistible vitality; her goddess-like indifference to everything except her own concerns; her ever- flowing energy of bodily life, a self-defiling, self-purifying stream, like some mythological river people have worshipped from times immemorial-a Liffey or a Ganges-fascinating, drowning, devouring, deceiving, blessing her people, but sweeping away everything in the onrush of her current-she cannot be taken jocoseriously, in spite of all his ironies, even by Joyce: this blind, elemental, mysterious power or shakti. She has always her way ('Ann hath a way', quipped Shakespeare). And it is she who is always finding her way through the 'incertitude of the void'. She is, therefore, an ironical, but pretty serious mythical concrescence, of The-cat-like- Eternal Feminine-Gea-Tellus-stream-of-bodily-life-Liffey-Anna Livia-Plurabelle.

II

Joyce begins by focusing on his main character through the third-person narrative and gradually involving us more and more with the character's personal conscience-perspective through a phenomenological perception developing into interior

monologue-or what is loosely called 'the stream of consciousness'-before he shifts to other personal and imper- sonal perspectives. But there is a continual change-'change- in-continuity'- of tonality causing a continual exaltation-deflation, and this occurs even in the same perspective, as we noted in the case of Bloom's pronouncement on love. The exaltation-deflation is an effect characteristic of *Ulysses*; but unfortunately, it is not axled along a value-concern of absolute high seriousness.

Joyce's focus shifts from the personal conscience-perspective of Stephen to that of Bloom, who becomes more important, and then finally to that of Molly whose lengthy and unpunctuated stream of consciousness balances our previous involvements with Bloom and Stephen. Apart from Molly's long rhapsody, which forms a coda to the whole composition, Bloomsday (16 June 1904) begins and ends with the sound of the church bells announcing the hour, reminding us of the orthodox institution which acts as the guardian of conscience in the world of time. But the sound produces peculiar vibrations of feelings in the minds of Stephen and Bloom who have professed disbelief in all orthodox institutions. It occurs in their consciousness at crucial moments. In the sound Stephen hears the prayer *Liliatarutilantium* while Bloom hears *Heigho, Heigho*. Both the intimations are associated with death, loss, separation, loneliness and exile. The former is associated in Stephen's mind through the circumstances of his mother's death with the feelings of intellectual pride in the freedom of soul, bitter wretchedness, pangs of grief and remorse and the subconscious fear of damnation. These feelings are contemplated in the impersonal light of the 'Ithaca' episode, when Bloom and Stephen part, so as to turn the prayer into an ironic appeal that man makes to heaven in his inevitable loneliness and in the face of existential paradoxes and 'the incertitude of the void'. In the same light, Bloom's intimation of *Heigho*, which is a dance-of-death cry initially associated in his mind with funerals, with the doom of the exiled human creature whom 'nobody owns' (121) and who, as he thinks, will 'wake no more' into resurrection and life, is transformed at the moment of parting with Stephen into a jocoserious comment

over this creature's tragi-comic failure to redeem his irreparable loss and the inevitable loneliness and wretchedness of his situation in the face of existential paradoxes and 'the incertitude of the void.' *Liliata* and *Heigho* are important *leit-motifs* that vibrate with tragi- comic significance in the developing conscience of the race. Between their first and final occurrence lies the whole tragicomedy of coincidences which some indifferent Fate seems to be tossing up out of the incertitude of the void by way of practical jokes on the human victims. They are ultimately cruel and always in bad taste-very much like the one in the 'U.P. UP' affair of the Breens (199; 385-86).

Through the use of *leit-motifs* Joyce proceeds by a continual concretion and intensification of effects though because of his jocoserious attitude his effects seem 'to no end gathered' and, in fact, do not converge into any deep imaginative insight into reality. He also achieves through his *leit-motifs* the ironic complexity of a mythical concrescence.

To take an example. Bloom who has been trying to make sense of his predicament through the myths of eternal return (Cf. the Viconian Cycles of history in *Finnegans Wake*) and metempsychosis, which Molly reads as 'met him pike hoses', her obscenic reading ironically epitomizing the whole tragi-comedy of her adulterous business of meeting her lovers in bed; Bloom who has bought a smutty novel *(Sweets of Sin)* in his attempts to make up with Molly after reading in it how some married woman spent all the money her husband gave her to make herself attractive 'with frillies' for her lover Raoul and how she displayed her 'heaving embonpoint' for him; Bloom who, to compensate for Molly's persistent adultery, is carrying on an epistolary flirtation with a typist-girl Martha (under the guise of Henry Flower) who calls him 'naughty boy' and who has written to him: 'What kind of perfume does your wife use'; Bloom who thinks of Molly the Andalusian *senorita's* plump girl-hood in Gibralter and of her first love affair with Captain Mulvey; Bloom who has been dreaming of the promised land Agendath and the return of the golden years of love-life which began in the same month, in June, when Molly first gave herself to him on Ben Howth, with her heaving young

breasts all perfume- Bloom, compensating for his sex-frustration, and humiliations of the day, masturbates over Gerty MacDowell (Nausicaa)who, in watching the fire-works, bends far back and reveals her legs and undergarments for him, her dream-husband. This is how the year of love-life has returned. But after his auto-erotic excitement is over and after he has discovered that Gerty MacDowell is lame he realizes that return is not the same. The returning year of love-life brings Boylan and Molly together: 'I am a fool perhaps. He gets the plums and I the Plum stones'. Youth comes only once. Returning is not the same for any Rip Van Winkle (492). He is a cuckold to whom the returning year of love-life brings only auto-erotic indulgence and epistolary flirtation. While he is thankful to Gerty MacDowell for all this chance that made him feel so young and is reminded of Martha he is troubled by Molly's continuous adultery from year to year. Gerty and Molly on the one hand and Captain Mulvey, Boylan and himself on the other mythically fuse and interact in his consciousness with a tremendous ironic complexity and concentration of feelings as he reminisces:

O sweety all your little girl white up I saw dirty brace girdle made me do love sticky we two naughty Grace darling she him half past the bed met him pike hoses frillies for Raoul to perfume your wife black hair heave under embon Senorita young eyes Mulvey plump years dreams return tail end Agendathswooney lovey showed me her next year in drawers return next in her next her next.

Joyce continually keeps up the tension between desire and fear as he involves us with the personal conscience- perspectives of Stephen and Bloom. The first three episodes 'Telemachus', 'Nestor' and 'Proteus'-involve us with the conscience-perspective of Stephen-his intellectual pride in the freedom of his soul and the agony of his spirit in the face of the all-drowning eternal mystery of things-the Protean sea of the universe. The remorse of his conscience-'Agenbite of Inwit' is evoked against a background of the fall into the 'Snotgreen' bitterness of grief, humiliation, wretchedness, loneliness and exile the 'Snotgreen' on his handkerchief from Mulligan's shaving razor, the 'Snotgreen' of the

sea to whichMulligan points calling it 'a grey sweet mother', and then Mulligan's sudden stab on the sore spot of his conscience: 'The aunt thinks you killed your mother You could have knelt down, damn it, Kinch, when your dying mother asked you'. Later on he says patronizingly: 'Ah, poor dogsbody, I must give you a shirt...Stephen is a 'keyless citizen'. He pays the rent; but Mulligan always keeps the key of the room. As he hears *Liliata* in the sound of the church bells he decides not to come back to Martello Tower for sleeping. Home also he cannot go.

Stephen thinks that as an Irishman he is the servant of two masters, 'the imperial British state and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church'. In his head he must kill the priest and the King ('Circe'). The theme of Ireland (which is symbolized by the old milkwoman 'serving her conqueror and her gay betrayer') echoes his personal agony. The 'Nestor' episode deepens it by emphasizing the humiliation of his material conditions and expands it by relating it to a sense of history-which Stephen teaches to the mocking boys at Mr. Deasy's school. Though the past had other possibilities which did not become actual what became actual makes history a nightmare. If history moves towards the 'goal' of manifestation of God, the shouts he hears from the playing field-battlefield make him think that God is 'a shout in the street'. Blake is continually evoked to remind us that 'symbols of beauty and power' have been 'soiled by greed and misery. The antisemitic but greedy wise-fool, Mr. Deasy, says the Jews 'sinned against the light'. 'Who has not?' retorts Stephen. With this we are introduced to the basic motif of Joyce's theme of disintegration-and-reintegration of human conscience. The motif is sounded with an existentialistic irony, which gets deeper and deeper when the focus shifts on to Bloom. As for Mr. Deasy, we are reminded of his own 'sin against the light', which is his greed for coins, as we take a last look at him: 'On his wise shoulders through the checker-work of leaves the sun flung spangles, dancing coins'.

Stephen thinks of his soul as 'tranquil brightness form of forms'. The symbols of algebra make him think of the human intellect as a soul-mirror: 'Gone too from the world, Averroes and

Moses Maimonides... flashing in their mocking mirrors the obscure soul of the world, a darkness shining in brightness which brightness could not comprehend'. The 'darkness shining in brightness' is the Whole Reality, soul of man and soul of the world, in terms of possible human experience.

Stephen wants to make an epiphany of the 'darkness shining in brightness', which would be a 'Third Testament', one doing away with the personal God of orthodox religion. But on account of his self-imposed isolation, pride and sentimentality he fails. He hears the 'thud of Blake's wings of excess' but without the aid of imagination (Los) or love-for 'they are each to each' (Wordsworth)-his own flights become so many abortive attempts towards reaching the epiphany of reintegration. For one thing, he fails to see the 'darkness shining in brightness' in the living Bloom, who also represents what has happened to Christianity-which is another irony. Stephen is tossed about for 'sinning against the light' by the Hangman God who presides over the eternally mysterious, Proteansea of the universe, which in terms of human experience, lends itself to a limited perception through the ineluctable modality of the visible and of the audible-

Ineluctable modality of the visible; at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs. Limits of the diaphane…Diaphane, diaphane.

Evidently the 'Proteus 'episode plays the basic themes that inform the conscience of the race in a new key, one which has metaphysical overtones. 'Seaspawn and seawrack' lead to the contemplation of the very mystery of birth, sex, life and death, which, seem intertwined to Stephen-'bridebed, childbed, bed of death'; 'mouth to her womb. Oomb, allwombling tomb'. They will also appear intertwined to Bloom in 'Hades' and elsewhere. In fact, Stephen contemplates the eternal mystery of things, of which the sea is a symbol; the mystery of their Protean identity-the dead dog and the living dog who snuffs at it being both manifestations of God ('Ah, poor dogsbody. Here lies poor dogsbody's body')

who undergoes a perpetual sea-change the mystery of their existence; and the mystery of their ultimate destiny when they seem 'to no end gathered'-

Under the upswelling tide he saw the writhing weeds lift languidly and sway reluctant arms, hissing up their petticoats, in whispering water swaying and upturning coy silver fonds. Day by day: night by night: lifted, flooded and let fall. Lord they are weary: and whispered to, they sigh. Saint Ambrose heard it, sigh of leaves and waves, waiting, awaiting the fullness of their times… To no end gathered.

The themes vibrate with longing and pain and hope and fear in relation to the conscience of young Stephen who questions why his shadow is 'not endless till the farthest star'. As he walks across the sands of Sandymount Beach and paces over the rocks, 'hearing Elsinore's tempting flood and the cries of those who are drowned by the bitter waters of the world he thinks of his mother (a mother's love is perhaps the only real thing, he thought while helping an ugly and futile boy at the school): 'I could not save her. Waters: bitter death: lost. In fact, he has lost everything, mother, home, country, shelter, job (he will not go back to work at Mr Deasy's school), family, relations (he will not go to Uncle Richie Golding's house, though he visualizes his visit there), friends-everything except his soul, for even the clothes he is wearing are not his own. 'Take all, Keep all. My soul walks with me… Endless, would it be mine, form of my form?'

His metaphysical flight results in a fall evoking a vision of the fall of Lucifer-'Allbright he falls, proud lightning of the intellect, Lucifer... Where? To evening lands. Evening will find itself. Finding that Mulligan has not returned but thrown away his handkerchief Stephen lays 'the dry snot picked from his nostril on a ledge of rock'. This is the mark that his bitter and proud soul leaves on a mysterious and indifferent universe.

But Stephen has perceived hints of crucifixion too-'a drying line with two crucified shirts'. The 'homing ship' that he sees at the end of the episode is a painful reminder not only of exile but also of persecution and crucifixion-'a three- master, her

sails brailed up on the crosstrees'. And this looks forward to Bloom.

From Stephen's metaphysical awareness when we turn to that of the unjustifiably suffering and persecuted Bloom we find ourselves groping for some definition of 'sin against the light'. Why should he suffer torture, humiliation and persecution? He himself feels remorse for leaving his father, to die of suicide in a hotel, and for leaving the God of his father. Is that the jew's 'sin against the light'? As we get more and more involved with him our concept of 'sin' changes. It is sinning-suffering. In All Hallows Church he sees the letters I.H.S. on the back of a communion priest. He thinks they stand for: 'I have sinned or no: I have suffered, it is'. The letters may stand for something else, but the ambivalence of Bloom's interpretation is significant. It is not 'sin' in the priest's sense. It is error: experience.

Like his paradisal-and even 'paradisiacal'-dreams his remorse calls up mythical associations from the far-East. His personal feelings expand into universal significance through his awareness of the lot of the jews, 'the oldest, the first race' and of the lot of the human race whose conscience he represents in a very important sense. The personal and the universal fuse when his patterns of awareness acquire a mythical concrescence. They often acquire it. But for the very reason that they are reaching out to it the staccato phrases of his interior monologue are packed with greater 'realism' as well as a greater concentration of feeling. Thus, on his way to the Turkish bath ('Lotus-Eaters') the poster *Lea Tonight* reminds him of his father who always spoke feelingly about a play-scene, one in which old blind Abraham recognizes Nathan's voice and puts his fingers on his face. Witness the mythical concrescence:

Nathan's voice! His son's voice! I hear the voice of Nathan who left his father to die of grief and misery in my arms, who left the house of his father and left the God of his father.

Every word is so deep, Leopold.

Poor papa! Poor man! I'm glad I didn't go into the room to look at his face. That day! O dearlFfoo! Well, perhaps it was the best for him (93).

Later on in the 'Hades' episode the fate of a child in the coffin, the fate of his helpless, little son Rudy and the fate of his heartbroken father who died-leaving a letter 'For my son Leopold' are mythically fused into a realization of the fate of the disowned human creature, which he is himself, too: 'Rattle his bones. Over the stones. Only a pauper. Nobody owns'. Nothing like 'the resurrection and the life. Once you are dead you are dead'

In 'Calypso' we hear the 'jingle' of Molly's adulterous bed, which is a motif associated with tormenting and humiliating impertinence. Boylan is coming for his tryst with Molly at four.

After 'Calypso' and 'Lotus-Eaters' have modified and intensified the themes of freedom of conscience, sin and error, remorse, suffering, humiliation, loneliness and exile in relation to Bloom's perceiving self the 'Hades' episode reiterates these themes in a new key, which is provided by a sense of death and decay-so that 'Papa's little lump of love' (48) becomes 'Papa's little lump of dung'. Through a Hamlet- like vision Bloom sees his world transformed into a graveyard: 'The Irishman's house is his coffin'. The process of the decay of the dead body is visualized vividly. The dead 'must breed a devil of a lot of maggots… Your head it simply swirls. Those lovely seaside gurls.' Death is intertwined with sex and life. 'There is another world after death named hell. I do not like that other world she [Martha-by way of typing mistake] wrote. No more do I... Warm beds: warm full-blooded life'. Thus, Bloom's mythical journey to the underworld results only in quickening his love of life, and this in spite of all the sufferings and humiliations that life involves. I think this is significant. But life is a matter of mystery and 'void incertitude', which is symbolized by the appearance at Paddy Dignam's funeral of the unknown man in the mackintosh. Nobody knows who he is and how he happens to be there.

By coincidence the 'void incertitude' throws Boylan in Bloom's way again and again, but not Stephen whose path crosses

Bloom's repeatedly without their meeting each other till they meet at the Lying-in Hospital ('Oxen of the Sun'). Whenever Bloom sees Boylan his torment is betrayed by some abrupt irrelevancy of behavior. He examines his finger- nails on one occasion. At another he forgets to pay the shop-girl who reminds him of it with a smile. His consciousness is broken into abrupt gestures and painful flashes of awareness. 'At four she. Winsomely she on Bloohimwhom smiled. Bloosmi qui go. Ternoon'.

In the 'Aeolus' episode the stream of life is seen in terms of the flux of our commercial ('cloacal') civilization, with the Aeolus-like newspaper editor 'puffing' over it. Bloom raises a pertinent question: 'Whose land?' Can he really own any- thing-Agendath, Molly, Stephen-when everything is in a state of flux? In the 'Lestrygonians' episode while he is feeding gulls by the symbolic Liffey stream he muses: 'How can you own water really? It's always flowing in a stream, never the same, which in the stream of life we trace. Because life is a stream'. And again: 'Cityful passing away, other cityful coming, passing away too... No one is anything'. But *Ulysses* is persistently concerned not only with the destiny ('Where ?') but also with the identity of things. Thus Bloom: "I was happier then. Or was that I? Or am I now 1? Twenty-eight I was. She twenty three... Could never like it again after Rudy' (213). Then he thinks how Molly gave herself to him first. That was on Ben Howth among the rhodendrons. 'She kissed me. I was kissed. Kissed, she kissed me. Me. And me now' (224). After acting the good Samaritan to the blind piano-tuner boy Bloom muses: 'Karma they call that transmigration for sins you did in a past life the reincarnation met him pikehoses'.

He has turned away in Swiftian disgust from Barton Restaurant on seeing men feeding like Lestrygonians. Earlier he has thought: 'Justice it means but it's everybody eating every- one else. That's what life is after all. Now as he is reminded of Plumtree's Potted Meat ad., in which he has already read 'jingle' (91), he muses: 'All up a plumtree. Dignam's potted meat ['A corpse is meat gone bad']. Cannibals would with lemon and rice' (218). We are reminded of Stephen's parable of the plums in 'Aeolus' which he also calls *A Pisgah Sight of Palestine.* It gets

connected up with what Bloom thinks in 'Nausicaa': 'He [Boylan] gets the plums I the plumstones.' At the newspaper office Stephen says quoting St Augustine: 'It was revealed to me that those things are good which yet are corrupted which neither if they were supremely good nor unless they were good could be corrupted'. His Parable of the Plums, which tells of the Vestal virgins 'peering up at the statue of the one handled adulterer at Nelson's pillar and eating plums to 'take off the thirst of the brawn' has suggested as much. Through all these associations Plumtree's Potted Meat implies what the cannibalistic, lusty human animal feeds on and is transformed into in his coffin-home-'abode-of- bliss'-

What is home without

Plumtree's Potted Meat?

Incomplete.

With it an abode of bliss.

'Beward of imititations. Peatmot. Trumplee. Montpat. Plamtroo." (800). One can look at 'The heaventree of stars hung with humid nightblue fruit.' But that is a Utopia ('Ithaca'). Thus, in the conscience of the race that Joyce 'forges' Plumtree's Potted Meat epitomizes the whole tragi-comedy of married life, of life, sex and death of man, the essentially lonely creature-'Madam, I'm Adam'.

As we stop moving in time in 'the Wandering Rocks' we see, in nineteen fragmented visions, these creatures strangely muddling through the maze of 'void incertitude', performing some disjuncted, irrelevant, blind and mechanical actions, reaching out to and 'just missing something'-while the Viceroy of Ireland's procession, which is the symbol of imperialistic domination, passes. Each of them seems isolated within his or her own subjective and relativistic sphere of experience, though each of them, prone as he or she is to illusions, prejudices, pretensions, and fallacies of stance, observation and judgment, 'forges' his or her own 'reality'. Where is the human self? thinks Stephen. 'Throb always without you and the throb always within' the Wandering

Rocks of the macro- and the microcosm. 'Between two roaring worlds where they swirl, I. Shatter them, one and both. But stun myself too in the blow. Shatter me you who can'. (This foreshadows the events in 'Circe'). Only Anna Liffey-the stream of life-seems to be infallibly finding her way through these 'Wandering Rocks.'

Stephen meets his sister Dilly at a bookshop, whose poverty releases a flood of remorse in him. He misses meeting Bloom who comes a moment later at the same shop and buys *Sweets of Sin* for Molly. Boylan who is on his way to his tryst with Molly enters a flowershop to buy flowers and flirts with the shopgirl. 'Above the cross blind of the Ormond Hotel, gold by bronze, Miss Kennedy's head by Miss Douce's head, watched and admired His Lordship's procession'. They are barmaids who are the 'Sirens' of the next episode. They symbolize the alluring rhythm of beauty mutually included with that of sordid materialism in the drowning waters of the world-The Rose of Castille (opera) is The Rose of Cast Steel (railway train), as Lenehan's riddle reminds us in 'Aeolus'. What with the impertinence of boots and the brief, though vulgar, flirtation of Boylan, who drops in to have a drink and to please whom the barmaid-sirens compete among them- selves, these idols themselves are essentially lonely, sad-in- longing, dolorous-'Idolores'.

By the time we reach the *cadenza* of the 'sirens' episode Joyce's *leit-motifs* which have been recurring in various contexts acquire such a tremendous ideality that he can use them as sound-patterns on the analogy of music and yet make them resonate with meanings like words in poetry. For example, the *leit-motif* 'jingle' has gathered various associative meanings of troubling impertinence-the 'jingle' of Molly's adulterous bed, of the Editor's keys-who rudely dismisses Bloom when he comes back to have a 'puff' for his 'House of Key (e)s advertisement-of the horsehoofs of British soldiery, of the coins in a commercial civilization, and, what is more of Blazes Boylan's jaunting car as he goes for his adulterous tryst with Molly. Through such *leit-motifs* Joyce can proceed by a continual concretion and intensification. Thus, even

the 'overture' of the 'Sirens' episode is not meaningless sound. Witness the opening bars:

Bronze by gold heard the hoofironssteelyringing

Imperthnthnthnthnthn…

A jumping rose on satiny breasts of Satin, rose of Castille.

Blazes Boylan drops in for a drink at Ormond where 'with patience Lenahan waited for Boylan with impatience, for jingle jaunty blazes boy'. After a brief but vulgar flirtation with the barmaids he goes off on his way to Molly. 'He's off. Light sob of breath Bloom sighed on the bluehued flowers. Jingling... Jingle haunted down the guys.... Mrs Marion met him pike hoses.... Jiggedy jingle jaunty jaunty'. *All is lost now*, sings Simon Dedalus. 'Woman: As easy stop the sea'. But music distances the personal feelings, and even brings about an objective contemplation of the ecstasy of sex-love-of the 'flood of warm, jimjam lickitup secretness…

Tipping her tepping her tapping her topping her.... The joy the feel the warm the. Tup. To pour o'er sluices pouring gushes. Flood, gush, flow, joygush, tupthrop'.

The various songs evoke Bloom's personal feelings to make them universal. Lionel's song from *Martha* echoes 'in cry of lionel loneliness' Bloom's own longing for ideal love as he sits secretly writing his letter to Martha, a tragi-comic coincidence, this. 'Alone. One love. One hope... For only her he waited. Where?" The recurrent question 'Where'? which first occurred when Stephen thought of his dead mother and which is related to man's predicament and destiny goes on acquiring an increasing force in the novel. In this context it is related to an aching sense of personal loneliness of 'So lonely blooming'-which is submerged into a sense of cosmic loneliness as Simon Dedalus sings C-ome, thou lost one! Co-me thou dear one! in

a swift pure cry... soaring high, high resplendent, aflame, crowned, high in the effulgence symbolistic, high, of the ethereal

bosom, high, of the high vast irradiation everywhere all soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessnessness.

This sense of cosmic loneliness modulates into a sense of awesome dreariness with the singing of *The Croppy Boy*-a symbol not only of the suffering spirit of Ireland but also of the conscience of the human race suffering under the tyranny of Nobodaddy's institutions-which sounds painfully 'the voic of dark age, of unlove, earth's fatigue… Croak of vast manless moonless womoonless marsh'.

Against a background of gaiety and flirtation are evoked: 'as obligato, the suggestions of the eternal mystery of life and the passing of all beautiful things-the cosmic loneliness of mankind; as ground bass, the constant echo of the sea, symbol of the ceaseless flow of nature"[4] The fact of mere physical loneliness is reiterated by the 'Tap. Tap' of the blind piano tuner boy who is coming back for his tuning fork-'l too, lost my race... No son. Rudy. Too late now. Or if not? If not? If still? It is ironically mingled with the painful blows of the adulterous Boylan's rapping and tapping at Bloom's house- 'one rapped on a door, one tapped with a knock...with a loud proud knocker, with a cock carracarracarra cock. Cock- cock'. Bloom thinks that women are like flutes. 'They want it: not too much polite. That's why he gets them. Gold in your pocket, brass in your face'. As Bloom leaves Ormond-Bloom, 'soft Bloom, I feel so lonely Bloom' we are reminded of the split in the personality of this tormented man.

Up the quay went Lionelleopold, naughty Henry with letter for Mady, with sweets of sin with frillies for Raoul with met him pike hoses went Poldy on.

As the above quotations testify, Joyce's sound-picture language often acquires a symbolic transparency in *Ulysses* owing to an artistic patterning of *leit-motifs*, its opsistic function being subsumed by its symbolic function. But as Joyce tends to overdo things, he forgets that the essential nature of language is not so much opsistic, musical or magical as symbolic. Again, it is

because of Joyce's jocoseriousness, his lack of discrimination of values, that his words, in Finnegans Wake particularly, fail to focalize precise meanings; they inwardly crack, sometimes break, and get distorted under the tension of contradictory meanings. They acquire the immediacy, concreteness and self-subsistence of magical incantation[5]-promoting life on the aboriginal level. Freed from the life of symbolic referentiality they acquire an independent phenomenological life of their own-'funnoumenological life, to imitate Joyce. Joyce's distorted language, which is a pro- duct of his jocoserious attitude, becomes more and more of a block in the way of the reader's participation. It becomes a turbid 'stream of consciousness' through which we cannot have very deep imaginative insights into 'forms of things unknown' or, for that matter, into the inarticulate feelings of the unconscious. We think of Lawrence-not to speak of Shakespeare-who is able to do all this without distorting the language and we feel sorry for Joyce who for all his astounding labors at artifice cannot become as great an artist.

III

The 'Cyclops' episode, while it further intensifies Bloom's humiliation and persecution, brings out not only the tragi- comedy of man's victimization of man on account of his fallacious understanding and generic imperfections but also the mystery of a universe of coincidences and 'void incertitude'. Think, for example, of Bantam Lyon's earlier meeting with Bloom, of his misunderstanding of Bloom's words 'I was just going to throw it away', of Bloom's coming to Barney Kiernan's pub to meet Martin Cunningham in order to arrange the insurance of the recently widowed Mrs Dignam, and of the cynical Citizen's prejudices and his interpretation, in the light of Bantam Lyon's wrong information, of Bloom's withdrawal to seek Martin Cunningham as a blind to cash his winnings on the horse Throwaway. The Citizen gets more and more enraged at Bloom till he throws a biscuit-tin at him in the manner of the Cyclops throwing a rock at Odysseus. Bloom escapes. But the catastrophe caused by the clattering tinbox is described in terms of a terrific earthquake; and in the end the narrator's own mock-heroic perspective is fractured

into an awe-inspiring vision of Bloom ascending to heaven as Elijah. Bloom himself has flung the throwaway *Elijah Is Coming* into the symbolic Liffey and it is being carried by the stream 'which in the stream of life we trace', which is another irony. But it might turn out that the victimized man was divine and his victimization was another instance of man's repetitive 'sinning against the light (Christ himself was a jew, Bloom has said to his persecutors). Who Knows?

Bloom's own 'sin against the light' gets defined, not in terms of external, institutional standards, but in terms of his own internal standard of conscience as a failure to realize his responsibility towards the other person in some unique situation. He feels guilty after his auto-erotic excitement is over in 'Nausicaa': 'What a brute he had been! At it again? A fair unsullied soul had called to him and, wretch that he was,how had he answered?' However, returning is not the same, and, as Stephen had said, 'No later undoing will undo the first undoing (251).

'The Oxen of the Sun' episode emphasizes the holiness of sex and fertility. It traces the foetus-like development of the conscience of the race in relation to the theme of sex and fertility, which development is organically constituted by a similar development of the symbolic form of language-the English language in this case. Critics who have missed the conscience theme see here only an uncalled-for parody of various English prose styles having an unjustifiable parallel with the development of the foetus. But to disagree with these critics is not to deny Joyce's pedantry. The scene of the episode is the Lying-in-Hospital where Bloom comes out, of his humane concern for Mrs Purefoy, and meets Stephen. Indifferent to the condition of the poor Mrs. Purefoy Stephen and his medico friends are indulging in an obscene and vulgar conversation. Bloom is shocked, and he begins to feel more and more concerned for Stephen. He feels remorse for what can be called his 'sin against the light' as he is reminded of his affair with the 'bride of darkness'. 'Did heart leap to heart? Nay, fair reader. In a breath 'twas done' and the poor girl fled away in terror. This reminiscence is followed by a vision.

'Agendath is a waste land'; the 'ghosts of beasts... revengeful Zodiacal host', which are his own 'sins against the light' externalized as lustful rivals, 'tramp to drink, unslaked and with horrible gulpings'; they loom 'over the house of Virgo'; and the veil of the 'ever-virgin bride'-'it is she, Martha… Millicent'-'blazes [Boylan], Alpha, a ruby and triangled sign upon the forehead of Taurus'-which is the eternal triangle of Bloom's hell-purgatory.

Under the hallucination of drink, the revengeful, tormenting 'ghosts of beasts' are evoked, as if by magic of Circe, in the 'Circe' episode which has been called the *Walpurgisnacht of Ulysses*. But let us keep in mind a saying of Goethe's to which Stephen referred in the 'Scylla and Charybdis' episode:

'Beware of what you wish for in youth because you will get it in middle life' (251). With all its climactic intensity the 'Circe' episode dramatizes the hell-purgatory of the dark penetralia of the conscience of the race. In this surrealistic drama, while 'snakes of river fog creep slowly', all our archetypal impulses come to life in the form of persons, things and ideas. Here we have in disguise King, Queen, Magician, Redeemer, and Eternal Parents-and for Chance or Luck we have Homer's *moly* disguised as Bloom's potato. As their secret desires, hopes and fears are enacted in this tormenting region Bloom and Stephen meet themselves in meeting others, and in meeting them and the other characters of this phantasmagoria, we meet ourselves (Cf. Stephen's remarks on Shakespeare's works, p. 273). As the 'revengeful ghosts' are let loose Bloom suffers all he wishes to suffer. He is accused (by various women), lynched, carbonized, brutally tortured after exchanging sexes with the whoremistress Bella-'The sins of your past are rising against you', says Bella is even made to witness Blazes Boylan rubbing in his adulterous triumph. And he dreams all he secretly wishes to dream-the dreams of being Lord Mayor, King, Messiah, and of 'the new Bloomusalem' and the 'paradisiacal Era'. Both Bloom's and Stephen's paths lie through harlot street (Cf. Stephen's recall of his dream of street of harlots in 'Proteus'), but it is for Bloom, and not for the egotistical Stephen, that the hell would turn into purgatory. In his intellectual pride Stephen would fly through it, though he

cannot evade his 'Agenbite of Inwit' (he has been trying to evade it through idle talk, ribaldry, drinking and whoring) which sticks deeper, like a malignant crab, in his heart after his refusal to repent at the behest of his mother's ghost. Lacking proper imaginative sympathy even for his mother's tortured soul he can make only a nihilistic move- ment to shatter the nightmare of history which to him is a manifestation of the Corpse-chewer God. In a symbolic, though farcical action, he smashes the chandelier-as if he had smashed the whole world of time: 'Time's livid final flameleaps and, in the following darkness, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry' (even Freemasonry). But Bloom (the Freemason) has been caring for him. After Stephen himself has been knocked down ('shatter me you who can') by the British soldier Bloom tends him with paternal care. As he bends over Stephen he sees a redemptive vision of his son Rudy. It implies that the conscience of the race can be self-redeeming; it can be redeemed, not through the dictates of any orthodox religion, but through imaginative sympathy.

Bloom is able to rescue Stephen, thanks to certain coincidences-'tooralooms' and 'reassuralooms'. He feels his own lost son has returned to him as Stephen. But after cliches have been paraded in 'Eumaeus' we once again realize that returning is not the same; rather, it turns out to be a mere illusion. Bloom and Stephen whose mental trajectories have been meeting at various points without their knowing of it exchange opinions. For example, both of them do not believe in orthodox institutions and are sceptical of a personal God. With his sympathetic attitude Bloom is even able to touch Stephen's conscience with regard to his undesirable companions and his deserted and poor family. Stephen whose one value has been a proud belief in his own soul makes an advance into utter scepticism by thinking of 'the possibility of its annihilation by its First Cause', Who may thereby add to 'the number of His other practical jokes'. Bloom acquiesces in it broadly and goes on to question the existence of a supernatural God. Religious beliefs are 'genuine forgeries' (of monks and poets). So are all beliefs and the values associated with them. Thus, we are heading towards the scientific-relativistic

reductionism of 'Ithaca'-another hell- purgatory: an intellectual one this time.

Though Stephen seriously accepts Bloom's 'marks of hospitality' (791) he flies through this hell-purgatory too, maintaining his pride and his self-imposed seclusion. But Bloom is most intensely involved in this hell-purgatory as he was involved in the earlier one in 'Circe'. The reductions he is subjected to have some positive, purgatorial implications in his case.

The reductionism proceeds through scientifically impersonal questions and answers so as to shatter all the myths, illusions, pretensions, assumptions and fancies with which man 'forges' meanings and values. The myths of paternity and return-the circus clown was not Bloom's son and Bloom's coin never returned and even the myths of perfectibility and possible redemption are nothing but such 'forgeries' in view of the 'irreparability of the past', 'the imprevidibility of the future' and the social and generic imperfections of the human condition. Stephen affirms, and Bloom apprehends, man's significance as a conscious rational animal... and a conscious rational reagent between a micro- and a macrocosm ineluctably constructed upon the incertitude of the void'. Our experience of the novel bears testimony to it. But it also bears testimony to the novelist's lack of an all-organizing, all-transforming and predominant passion of faith in higher values-and faith, as Kierkegaard reminds us, is a belief in the impossible; it is creative imagination at its intensest. Without embodying this faith *Ulysses* falls short of being an autotelic work of a high order. In it things seem 'To no end gathered'.

The conscience of the race that Joyce 'forges', by jocoseriously regarding all creations of the human spirit as 'forgeries', implies knowledge; knowledge and knowledge, but not wisdom and insight in any deeper sense. A competent keyless citizen may proceed 'energetically from the unknown to the known through the incertitude of the void', but since even heaven is a Utopia there is no known method from the known to the unknown'. In an existence which is 'a parenthesis of infinitesimal

brevity, individual human selves pursue their ineluctably lonely conscience-trajectories-which meet, if at all, only tangentially. Only tangentially in view of our 'natured natures of dissimilar similarity'. Consider Everyman-Noman(*Ulysses*)-Bloom: 'From inexistence to existence he came to many and was as one received: existence with existence he was with any as any with any: from existence to non-existence gone he would be by all as none perceived'. So Bloom and Stephen contemplate each other 'in both mirrors'-the 'mirror' image is an important recurrent motif-'in both mirrors of the reciprocal flesh of theirhisnothis fellowfaces'-and part; for Stephen has declined Bloom's offer of lodging in his house. The church bells sound, and in the sound Stephen hears *Liliata* and Bloom *Heigho*. After Stephen is gone Bloom feels 'the cold of interstellar space'. As he is coming back into his house his illusion of sameness is shattered by a bump on the temple from an unexpected article of furniture. He performs a symbolic burning of the prospectus of Agendath; and is involved with a symbolic interchange of reflection in the mirror with three objects on the mantlepiece-a timepiece, a dwarf tree, matrimonial gift of a friendly couple, and an embalmed owl: matrimonial gift of one of Molly's lovers, which now exchanges with Bloom a gaze of mutual compassion-the composite image in the mirror being that of 'a solitary (ipsorelative) mutable (aliorelative) man'. Yet Bloom indulges in schemes and dreams. He knows that though they are extremely difficult of realization they can alleviate fatigue, produce sound sleep and renovate vitality. In his intellectual hell-purgatory he fears 'the committal of homicide or suicide during sleep by an aberration of the light of reason' (848). He thinks of his father's suicide and experiences a sentiment of remorse: 'Because in immature impatience he had treatedwith disrespect certain beliefs and practices' which now appear to him, in the light of relativistic reductions, 'Not more rational than they had then appeared, not less rational than other beliefs and practices now appeared'. With this new remorse takes place the purgation of his old remorse. Bloom is further reduced, on the level of mathematical possibility, 'by cross multiplication of reverses of fortune... and by elimination of all positive values to a negligible negativeirrational quantity', with all its attendant

indignities. After various possible reactions have been coldly scrutinized Bloom is drawn into the bed in which Molly is lying. It is an 'abode' ('his own or not his own'). He is aware of its mythical 'snakespiral springs of the mattress being old', and thinks of himself as only a term 'in a series originating and repeated to infinity'. The scientific reductionism also reduces the sentiments of envy and jealousy. He understands that Molly's adultery is less calamitous than a cataclysmic annihilation of the earth and less reprehensible than so many crimes, and, in view of her 'natured nature', is 'more than inevitable, irreparable'. So he feels more abnegation than jealousy, less envy than equanimity. He justifies his sentiments by reflecting, among other things, on 'the futility of triumph or protest or vindication: the inanity of extolled virtue the lethargy of nescient matter: the apathy of the stars'. He rationally under- stands and accepts his situation and is willing to live, to go on adapting himself to changing conditions and to persist in loving her in his own non-glamourous way. We have already commented on the significance of these positives that emerge from this intellectual purgatory of Everyman- Noman-Bloom. In his present situation Bloom cannot do anything but kiss 'the plump mellow yellow smellow melons (Cf. Stephen's dream in which Bloom carries a melon as he leads him into the street of harlots) of her rump'. A testimony of his adaptation, this. Over the bed there moves 'the upcast reflection of a lamp and shade, an inconstant series of concentric circles of varying gradations of light and shadow'. This is the emblem of the 'comprehension in incomprehension' of the reality of things. (Cf. Stephen's 'darkness shining in brightness'). The mystery of this reality and even of the void incertitude on which it is founded is as fascinating as it is devastating. With a sense of 'something evermore about to be' (Wordsworth) it impels the conscience of the race onward and onward with a love of life, turning its endless Ulyssean journey into a continuous adventure.

Bloom is finally reduced to 'the childmanwearythe m 'an-child in the womb' as he lies beside Molly-Gea-Tellus. 'He rests'. And as he is sinking into sleep he thinks he has travelled. 'With?' 'Sinbad the Sailor and Tinbad the Tailor and Jinbad the Jailor...'

etc. As we fade on him we do not know where he goes 'in the night of the bed of all the auks of the rocs of Darkinbad the Brightdayler'. The question 'Where? not only in the case of death and life but even in the case of sleep remains unanswered.

But now, as Molly has awakened, out of the incertitude of the void itself gushes forth the stream of life, of bodily life, which is the first and the last myth, one which is too palpable to be dismissed as fancy or 'forgery'. It gushes forth with its rhythm of divine beauty and creativity manifested, paradoxically, in the gross impulsions of the ever-unsatiated flesh; gushes forth with her indifference to moral, intellectual and spiritual concerns, sweeping away the painful ingenuities or 'forgeries' of conscience in the blind vitality of an assertion from the loins. To this self-defiling, self-purifying stream her adorers are drawn, are 'drowned and devoured, born and reborn, cherished, corrupted, deceived and blessed.[6] The mysterious fascination she exercises keeps alive the love of life and even the love of love, though on an aboriginal, animistic level; but without this fascination of hers the conscience of the race would freeze in 'the cold of interstellar space'. We contemplate this stream as we contemplate the unpunctuated flow of Molly's stream of consciousness. She goes on and on with 'he' and 'he' and 'he' to her everyman is a 'he'. To her adultery is not such a big harm 'in this vale of tears' she thinks of having even Stephen as her next lover. Though she feels all men are brutes she seems to be searching for some ideal with her insatiable desire, as suggested earlier. But it is important that her really happy time, when she came close to the ideal, is the period of her courtship with Bloom; that was also the time when she realized the wonderful beauty of the world. She sinks back into sleepwhile reminiscing how she first gave herself to Bloom on Ben Howth among the rhodendrons:

> *and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.*

Ultimately, the question is: How much concerned do we feel for Molly? for Bloom? for Stephen? Not terribly much. Not even as much as we feel for Gulliver, the imaginative creation and discovery of the 'devastating' Swift. Again, it is because Joyce lacks that high-seriousness of value-concern which is the immanently absolute 'organizing principle' of very great works of art; and not merely an organizing principle either, but a way of gathering things, which would otherwise remain 'To no end gathered', into the dialectical unity of a highly significant form or pattern of sentience, through which our imaginative sympathies are evoked and directed into an energizing, life-exalting, insight into reality. Think, both Joyce and Eliot use the mythical method. But it should be Eliot who can more convincingly say 'I have not made this show purposelessly'.

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Z. A. Usmani, a multilingual scholar, was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University. He is the author of *Shakespearian and Other Essays*.

A.A. ANSARI

KING LEAR: THE VISION OF HORROR

Presumably the central drive in *King Lear* is directed towards an attempt at probing the human condition, involving of course the skillful portrayal and interaction of characters and done through the inner organisms of image and symbol. These indeed constitute the complex architecture meant for clarifying and objectification of that condition. The calculated plan of parceling his kingdom into three portions at a finger's stroke, reserving the largest and most opulent one (as it is disclosed later) for Cordelia who was expected to outweigh, in exuberant and fulsome protestations of love, both Goneril and Regan, smacks of the folk-lorist prudence and has also the element of ritualistic formality in it. The standard set up by Lear for the evaluation of love, it has been widely recognized, seems to be quantitative rather than qualitative; love for him is a commodity, and not a relation, some- thing which is ponderable and measurable, resting not on the total personality of the speaker but on words uttered speciously and with glibness and with an eye on securing the allotted portion by humoring, as a public gesture, the old autocratic king. Lear in a way clings to form, and keeps in view only the marketable value of love and tends to deny its real substance. In arranging this awkward and irrational love-contest he is undoubtedly motivated by the unappeasable desire to be flattered and his largess was bound to follow proportionately to the love offered by each competitor. What does transpire is rather upsetting and clean contrary to his expectations: whereas the other two daughters are maximal in their empty, rhetorical effusions, Cordelia is minimal, reticent and almost tongue-tied. Lear's immediate repercussions betray a state of mind deeply rooted in self- centredness, egotism and a sort of imperiousness which is not likely to be qualified and moderated by the exercise of of cool-tempered wisdom. Logically enough, when Cordelia, instead of indulging in mouthfuls of hollow and

hypocritical adulation, insists, unlike the other two sisters, on following strictly the compulsions of the natural 'bond', Lear instantly flies into violent and tyrannical passion. Her insistence on the 'bond' may, however, be seen to conform to the calculus of material computation implied by his own terms of reference. This ultimately leads to the break-up of the organic order of established hierarchies and sanctions. Lear's fatal and tragic flaw consists in regarding love as something to be reckoned with in the market place on the basis of rough and ready calculation and not grasped and apprehended as an imaginative entity. It amounts to thinking in terms of the Blakean Ratio, the mechanical and perfunctory give-and-take of a material bargain. There is at the same time an obvious, ineluctable element of whimsicality about him, and the entire proceedings turn into a kind of grotesquerie, with an admixture of sadism in it.

Very early in the play Lear when expostulates with the inflexible, self-righteous Cordelia: 'what can you say to draw, A third more opulent than your sisters?' (1,i, 85-86) and the following colloquy ensues:

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear: Nothing ?

Cor.: Nothing.

Lear; Nothing will come of nothing': (1, i, 87-90)

the word 'nothing' in that colloquy and the endless variations played on it later in the oft-repeated 'never' are packed with a density of meaning one does not ordinarily associate with the utterances of a senile, perverse and self-willed person. And yet his assertion here and the entire corpus of his experience later has an archetypal quality about it. Lear is incapable of viewing things except in a purely rationalistic way—incapable, that is, of developing images of sympathy and love which help us outgrow our narrow grooves and acquire the spaciousness and amplitude of a self-transcending mind. Quickly pouncing, therefore, upon Cordelia's curt, hesitant, monosyllabic words, forced out of a rigid and inward-looking person, Lear is moved to making a peremptory, categorical and decisive statement: 'Nothing will

come of nothing,' The word 'nothing' comes to acquire a signification which is crucial and which seems to permeate the whole play. In other words, it not only reflects a stubborn refusal on Lear's part to extend the hand of reciprocal love but also unconsciously reveals a particular state of mind. 'Nothing' connotes, in this specific context, an awareness of the immense void which he strives to be piercing through and he swims in the emptiness everything, paradoxically, is full of. It is this constant preoccupation with 'nothingness'—the loss of essence, the dissolution of identity and the sudden fracture of things—which is germane to the action of the play. This poses a wider existential problem than the mere gimmickry of an ossified brain, an egocentric individual's divestment of himself of both the substance and the paraphernalia of authority and the ironic self-pity which follows upon the retention of the king's name only. In a later context, in reply to the Fool's query: 'Can you make no use of nothing, Nuncle?' (1, iv, 136) Lear comes forward promptly with: 'Why, no, boy, nothing can be made out of nothing' (1,iv, 139). This is reinforced by the Fool's cryptic summing up of lear'spredi- cament thus: 'now thou art an O without a figure. I am better than thou art now; I am a Fool, thou art nothing' (1, iv, 200-2), and an 'O without a figure', it goes without saying, amounts to complete absence of identity. In the maddening crescendo of his traumatic experience of both the perversely calculating and ignoble daughters, humiliated, moreover, not only because of the reduction of his retinue—dubbed as debauched and riotous—but also feeling alienated as a most irksome and unwanted guest, and while he is on the verge of becoming crazed in his wits, Lear puts to himself a series of resounding questions which betray any way a sort of 'defenceless bewilderment':

Does any here know me? This is not Lear:

Does Lear walk thus ? speak thus? Where are his eyes?

Either his notion weakens, his discerning

Are lethargied—Ha; waking? 'tis not so.

Who is it that can tell me who I am? (1,iv,234-38)

And pat comes the Fool's reply to this feverous, heart-rending query: 'Lear's shadow'. Lear is forced to the conviction that the constituent factors of his personality have fallen into disarray, its cohesiveness is gone and this leads on to the self-excoriating experience which is integral to the play.

In a way Edgar is the pivotal character and in spite of the moral crudeness of some of his comments on Gloucester's sexual misdemeanor, most of the subtle insights of the play are mediated through him and these are marked by a degree of maturity and level-headedness far exceeding anybody else's. The artifice involved in his masquerades deepens the intensity of Lear's sufferings: that in a way is the excuse for this shrewd juxtaposition of the two. He impersonates a Bedlamite beggar, puts on the garb of those contemporary madmen who, released from the lunatic asylum, used to roam about here and there, with their teeth chattering due to exposure to the severity of winter, their bare flesh lacerated by self-torture—pictures of abject poverty and awful destitution. As part of his calculated strategy and with a view to striking terror in the heart of the beholders he pretends as if he is haunted by the evil spirits of popular superstition and was meant to be taken as an adept in charms and exorcisms. He dresses himself very fantastically, sticking on his person all the assorted items which, being part of their usual odd equipment, were paraded by the half-crazed beggars in the countryside and these vagabonds were able to evoke pity of the onlookers:

The country gives me proof and precedent

Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,

Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms

Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary:

And with this horrible object...

Enforce their charity, (II, iii, 13-20)

To render this weird and ghastly presence, under the assumed nomenclature of Tom, authentic, he is also referred to as one who 'eats the swimming frog, the toad, the todpole, the wall-newt, and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stock-punished, and imprisoned, (III, iv, 132-39). And not only is the fact of demonic possession in consonance with his assumed and recognized role but he also seems to contain these evil spirits within himself: 'Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; as Obidicut, of lust; Hoberdidance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing; who since possesses chamber- maids, and waiting-women' (IV, i, 58-62). Through the use of this nightmarish imagery we are made to believe that these evil spirits cleave to him so closely and tenaciously that he comes to discard his essential self and turns into a mere wraith. The possession by the spirits who, ironically enough, prove to be no more than vermins, Heilman argues, may be treated as Shakespeare's cunning version of the Medieval allegorization of the Seven Deadly Sins."2

Confronted with this monstrous caricature of man, barely wrapped in tattered clothes—linked up with the moral emblem of the 'looped and window's raggedness of humanity, and when the mood of searing melancholy and black despondency is on him, Lear begins to speculate over the basic constitution of man thus: 'Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Hal here's three on's are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings (III, iv, 105-111), Riddled with paradox this Voters a sharp contrast to Hamlet's idealization in 'What a piece of work is a man' passage which however ends up surprizingly with man's ultimate pounding to dust. Unlike that steep fall from sublimity to nothingness, Lear's indictment of man is wholesale, consistent and unqualified: man in his bare, physical existence does not owe anything to the animals although the latter in their minimal endowments are

partakers of some kind of rudimentary sophistication. Lear, however, wishes to see through and beyond the state of sophistication (which any way stands condemned) or what Langland succinctly and metaphorically identifies, according to his own stance, as the 'Contenuance of clothyng' *(Cf. Visions of Piers Plowman).* The accent falls therefore on the radical transformation he has undergone and the reduction of the proud, finicky and 'lust dieted' man to the level of ani- mals. In 'Off, off, you lendings' he insists that the garment of falsehood—the accretions of culture and superimposed breeding—had better be cast off. In a leaping flash of insight he awakens to the reality of the nexus of relationship existing not only between himself and Edgar but also between himself and the entire humankind. While immersed in deep self-communion Edgar proposes to himself

To take the basest and most poorest shape

That very penury, in contempt of man,

Brought near to beast; (II. iii, 7-9)

The figure of poor Tom, with his 'presented rakedness' and which is foisted upon Edgar, becomes a moving image of the stripping of man to the bone. Talking to Edgar and while his mind is still haunted subconsciously by the same phantasmagoric figure he had seen, earlier, Gloucester continues to dwell on the theme of the triviality of man thus: I th' last night's storm I such a fellow saw, /Which made me think a man a worm' (Iv. i. 32-33). To eliminate the civilized and social context from man and to see him as a bare, physical object makes him almost indistinguishable from the Swiflian figure of the Yahoo or Shakespeare's own Caliban. And this Tom who, according to Northrop Frye's iluminating etching of him, 'stands between Lear in front of him and the abyss of non-entity inhabited by the foul fiends behind[3] brings to mind irresistibly the following lines from the Book of Job: ‘The light, they say, is near to the darkness'... If I say to the pit, 'You are my father', and to the worm, 'My' mother or 'My sister'; Where then is my hope?' (17:12-14).

It has been acutely observed by Mc laughlin[4] that the hovel in which Lear, Edgar and the Fool are herded together as the poorest specimens of sub-human species and which offers them temporary refuge from the 'pitiless pelting of the storm' raging outside in all its elemental fury takes on a symbolic significance. For a moment, these two creatures, hovering over the periphery of human existence, come to share a fraction of the burden with Lear who has been moving in the delirium of evil for so long. As counterpoised to the palace the—symbol of superfluity—the hovel is an emblem of necessity to which they are now reduced owing to the vicissitudes of their fortunes. The inference that Mclaughlin is at such pains to draw and insist on is that whereas the palace symbolizes the vainglory, the arrogance and ruthlessness of the affluent and the privileged—the *hubris* of culture in one word—and tends to shut out the common man from its precincts and from access to the worldly goods, in the hovel Lear's area of communication widens as here he comes across the dispossessed of the world. Here Lear has 'created perspectives from which the power of the civilized seems little and absurd'.[5] But it is equally legitimate to hold that the hovel is an emblem of Lear's sharpened sense of isolation and of man's regression into primitivism which is in accord with his ultimate reduction to animality. It has the status of a veritable dark tower into which Lear lands and where, along with the fiend-haunted Edgar, he is likely to be afforded a fugitive moment of cessation from the agonizing experiences to which he has been consistently exposed and which have told heavily upon his meagre inner sources of strength. It may be added that the thunder which reflects 'the authentic voice of the tragic experience epitomizes the crumbling of physical nature into chaos and the prayer speech which concludes with

O! I have ta'en

Too little care of this. Take physic, Pomp;

Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,

That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,

And shew the Heavens more just. (III,iv, 32-36)

underscores Lear's movement from pure egocentricity to some semblance of Pauline charity and a hardening of his moral fibre. It also helps Lear—'the ruin'd piece of Nature—reachieve the lost sense of identity—an identity which had been shivered into fragments as an inevitable concomitant of the series of mounting crises by which his life was assailed all along.

The sense of horror, the evocation of which is insistent and obstinate is partly concretized by Edgar whose 'body is a fearful reminder of the deformity that life may visit upon us at any instant.[6] He is presented not only as a bedlam beggar but also as a walking shadow—'a tattered cloth upon a stick',—with horns sticking out of it, something which is at once paltry and hideous. The gouging out of Gloucester's eyes caused by the barbarous and atrocious frenzy of Cornwall evokes a sort of nihilistic horror which seems to be a correlative of the dizzying image of the abyss of death or nothingness. This renders him physically incapable of recognizing his own legitimate son who had been doggedly pursuing him throughout the periods of turmoil by exercising an endless repertory of roles.

Edgar's is a most lethal character, both intriguing and trenchant, and he is given to putting on a variety of masks partly to escape detection by those who lie in ambush of his life and partly also because he has to do a bit of play- acting. When Lear asks him: 'What hast thou been? Edgar's purposeful misrepresentation of himself runs to this effect:

'A serving man, proud in heart and mind; that curl'd my hair, wore gloves in my cap, serv'd the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of Heaven; one that slept in the contriving of lust, and wak'd to do it. Wine love'd I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramo- ur'd the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey' (III, iv, 85-95). This recalls, in a different con- text, Malcolm's deliberate self-denigration when he is being persuaded to take upon himself the reins of government in place of the bloody and unscrupulous Macbeth who was bound to be ousted from the stewardship of 'the

gor'd state'. But whereas Malcolm wanted to make sure if the election that had fallen upon him would stand the strain it was to be exposed to and if he himself were competent enough to rise to the occasion, Edgar's minutiae of fault-finding is a specific instance of the all-pervasive corruption and taint which seems to be an inalienable adjunct of the human condition in the fallen world. Edgar here becomes the symbol of man, portrayed in depth in all vileness and ignominy, given over to lust and all other passions the flesh is heir to, and thus hovering perilously over the brink of moral bankruptcy. Moreover, while embarking upon a series of sophisticated impersonations and trying to hoodwink his blinded father who is far from suspecting his identity Edgar indulges in this clever piece of histrionic improvisation which is nevertheless tinged with a streak of pathos:

As I stood here below methought his eyes

Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,

Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridg'd sea:

It was some fiend; (IV, vi, 69-72)

In the image of the horned devil or monstrosity of creation is the ideal of 'unaccommodatedness' objectified and particularized in a pretty convincing way: something which we tend to contemplate with fascinated horror. This bizarre, grotesque and frightening figure is emblematic of the ostracized man, one of the social outcasts, thrown out of gear in his particular milieu, spurned and rejected with contumely by the sponsors of hierarchy, status and law within the organized body-politic wherein 'lewdness' in the social/sexual sense of the Renaissance ethos flourishes without any impediment or reservation. He generates utter revulsion and disgust against the sacrosanct norms and values and induces us to believe in man's temporary retreat from civilized society into the Hobbesian world of brutish and conflicting appetites. Edgar's crucial importance in the structure of the play is twofold: he is the counterpart of Cordelia in the sense of being a vital 'component in Lear's re-education', and both of them are also touching pictures of that steadfast endurance and 'patience' the need for which Lear came

to feel so desperately and with such agonizing tremors. In respect of epitomizing love and charity and the hallowed Christian pieties he offers many points of contact with Langland's Good Samaritan. And secondly, he is also symbolic of the desecration of human personality which is effected in an altogether alien and antagonistic universe. Like Cordelia, too, he ceases to be a merely dramatic character (he was perhaps not intended to be) laying claims to verisimilitude but comes, on the contrary, to acquire parabolic attributes. D.G James has perceptively drawn pointed attention to Shakespeare's 'secular imagination' which to him is exercised in this play more conspicuously than anywhere else and which is characterized primarily by its power to simplify and abstract, to achieve effects of intensification by the shedding of ritualism and rhetoric though this does not necessarily entail the impoverishment of overwhelming richness. This lends credence to the assumption that Edgar is not a fully realized character with a Jamesian solidity of specification and hence not explicable in terms of psychological motivation alone or exclusively. In other words, far from being a mimetic unity, he is more or less equivalent to a device or symbol and thus paves the way for the emergence of symbolic configurations so evident in the last plays. It is not for nothing that he finds congenial company in and a sort of temperamental affinity with the Fool—also an embodiment of steadily increasing cogeries of meanings and possessed of uncanny insights into the human predicament; both of them try their level best and each, according to his own distinctive variety of persuasion, to put Lear back on the rails—help him achieve his moral and spiritual rehabilitation, and both of them are not very dissimilar to Banquo in *Macbeth* and lago in Othello[8]—symbolic devices rather than full-blooded, resonant and rounded characters. His distinguishing of himself as the 'foul fiend' and his consistently used nomenclature of 'the poor Tom' not only evoke irksome and unsavoury associations but also underline the fact that denuded of all his acquisitions and external trappings and seen in the lurid and disillusioning light of experiential reality man is no better than a ludicrous object inviting nothing but contempt and derision,

Apparently Lear's mind is gripped and tormented by the notion of filial ingratitude throughout the play—which may be regarded as its *leitmotif*—(this is also the obsessive, recurrent theme for Proust), but no less by a subconscious gloating over the aberrations of sex. This latter contrasts with the revulsion felt by Hamlet against Queen Gertrude's living 'In the rank sweat of an unseam'dbed,/Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love/Over the nasty stye '(III, iv, 93-95). Her abject, total and unashamed surrender to the lure of the unquenchable carnal appetite was logically climaxed by the unduly hasty and incestuous marriage with Claudius. And in *King Lear* the monstrous ingratitude of the two 'marble- hearted' fiends, Goneril and Regan,—the initial crime which propels the action of the play and sets in motion the continuous spirals of disaster—becomes coalesced with their secret sexual intrigue with Edmund who casts the spell of his bawdy, animal vitality on both of them alike and simultaneously. It is worth pondering that all these irritating and queasy sensations, emanating from unexpectedly divergent sources are constellated into the complex whole of physical and spiritual nakedness which is mediated by the insistent presence of Edgar. In other words, all these factors conspire to raising Lear's sense of disgust and nausea to such high tension-power that he cannot help visualizing women as possessed of a bipolar personality: the upper half of their bodies seems to be created by gods and the lower half by the fiend. This basic dichotomy—the fact of being at once under the aegis of nature and spirit—is imaged in the figure of centaurs—the mythical off-spring of Ixion begotten by him on the cloud woman—who were believed to betray distinct and unmistakable proneness towards sexual passion. The paradox of nature-spirit duality, exemplified in women, is highlighted with the maximum, though controlled, sense of withering scorn thus;

Down from the waist they are Centaurs,

Though women all above:

But to the girdle do the Gods inherit,

Beneath is all the fiend's: (Iv, vi. 126-29)

To activate the virulence of his attack Shakespeare achieves a deliberate reshaping of the original myth: he changes the mythical male sex into the female one presumably because for him the immediate frame of reference or what Frye designates as 'the morally intelligible action'[9] is the inordinate, obnoxious sexuality of his two daughters. It is, as rightly pointed out by Heilman, 'the horror of the subservience of the god-like in man to the animal'[10] which is lacerating his sensibility. The image of 'the sulphureous pit', surrounded and supported as it is by the ancillary suggestions of hellish 'darkness', burning', 'scalding', 'stench', 'consumption', is symbolic of man's lower anatomy—the residue of his blind, voracious and intractable impulses which are all masked by the attractive but sinister covering of civilization. The tidal wave of this ominous and zestful harangue reaches its limit by the use of the monosyllables like 'fie, fie, fie, pah, pah' which underscore the sense of something which is utterly abominable. Lear's sardonic mirth can be gauged by his perception that even an ounce of civet, bought from the apothecary, may, perhaps, help neutralize the caustic bitterness effected by his two daughters' brutal and unashamed grovelling into the mire of lust and which bitterness has singed his whole being, poisoned the very roots of his existence. 'Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, To sweeten my imagination (IV, vi, 132-33). Lear's desperate plea for sweetening of the imagination, uttered from the depths of his tragic experience, enables us to envision a state of being which is cankered, dungy and mortally offensive (all this is implied by the single word 'stench') and which is, therefore, in need of being transformed into its polar opposite. In other words, Lear is at once sensitive to the suffocating power of this 'lewdness' as well as to the impulse to be released from its pressure. At another remove, Albany, after having undergone a startling metamorphosis in his moral and psychic reactions, feels appalled by the bestiality of the two sisters and, inferentially, of the entire humankind, and is deeply conscious of the distressing possibility that we may be pushed to the brink of cannibalism as an inevitable consequence of the break-up of ordered harmony if divine vengeance did not intervene at the most opportune moment to halt the descent:

If that the heavens do not their visible spirits

Send quickly down to tame these vilde offences

It will come,

Humanity must perforce prey on itself,

Like monsters of the deep. (Iv, ii, 46-9)

This registers the impression that the veneer of the aristocratic culture is seething with the tumult of the kinetic life below it and man's vulnerability to savagery is a patent and ineluctable fact of experience. This makes the whole situation in the larger design of the universe look ugly and odious. The grim and malicious irony, the cruel joke played by the supernal powers watching over the disconcertingly painful human situation is externalized by the convention-ridden and superstitious Gloucester thus:

As flies to wanton boys, are we to th' Gods;

They kill us for their sport. (IV, i, 36-7)

Apart from the sense of the incongruous and the grotesque (the latter one was specifically stressed by Wilson Knight)[11] which is evoked and kept spotlit in the mind from the start, the play all along focuses on the impact of sheer disgust and horror. At the conclusion of the mock-trial scene, enacted on the plane of phantasy, to arraign his two daughters and while he is still crack-brained, Lear gives expression to his harrowing sense of puzzlement at the untamed and unnamable fierceness which has struck such deep roots in the human heart. The evil which cleaves to the human constitution seems to be primeval, colossal and at the same time baffling and irremediable in the context of the known categories. 'Then let them anatomize Regan, see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that make these hard hearts?' (III, vi, 76-9). This, like the query about 'the unaccommodated man', is a query about primacies. A similar gruesome sense-impression is evoked by Cornwall's blood-curdling ejection of Gloucester's eyes, in exercise of his ingrained malevolence, and he puts the whole thing in an icy-cold and

nerve-wracking way thus: 'Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly! Where is thy lustre now?' (III, VII, 82-83). And this query, in its outrageousness, is matched only by a kind of exhausted and petrifying resignation, when in reply to Edgar's wry comment: 'You cannot see your way', Gloucester, says laconically, 'I have no way, and therefore want no eyes,/I stumbled when I saw. (IV, i, 18-19).

One of the shattering moments in the play occurs when Edgar makes the blinded Gloucester believe that he was about to make a perpendicular fall from the Dover Cliff down into the vast and assumed sea below in a bid to materialize his suicidal project. Looking down from the height above before the leap is taken man and things look shockingly small and insignificant:

The crows and choughs that wing the midway air

Show Scarce so gross as beetles; half way down

Hangs one that gathers sampire, dreadful trade!

Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.

The fishermen that walk upon the beach

Appear like mice, (IV, vi; 13-18)

And after Gloucester has been miraculously saved and reached the level ground, unscathed, despite the make-believe of the leap, things above are now viewed from the changed perspective: 'the shrill-gorg'd lark so far/Cannot be seen or heard' (IV, vi, 58-9). What hardly needs stressing is that here it is not so much a matter of physical depth or height, for these two strokes of genius relating to landscape painting are of the nature of two mirror-images through which is reflected the multiple vision of man as well as emphasis is put on the fact that fancy is likely to be cheated in all sorts of ways. What is no less significant is that the dizziness implicated in the earlier passage has both a perceptual and a metaphysical dimension one feels the ache of awareness at the realization of the puniness of man in the total scheme of things. An identical moment both of anguish and of

horror is recorded when Lear, awakening after a fit of semi-unconsciousness, and in answer to Cordelia's tremulous interrogation: 'How does my royal Lord? How fares your Majesty ?" (iv, vii, 44) replies in sibylline overtones thus :

You do me wrong to take me out o' th' grave;

Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound

Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears

Do scald like molten lead. (iv, vii, 45-8)

The iconology used here is both Medieval and apocalyptic and these lines sensitively reflect and transfix Lear's deep anguish at its intensest. Lear is instinctively aware of Cordelia's living in Paradiso, for to him hers is a redeemed soul though he himself is bound to the individual rack of nemesis which is made of fire and this fire is fuelled by his own tears of repentance. The wheel may be taken as the emblem of crucifixion, and the verb 'bound' implies the notion that the doom is irrevocable and the punishment of sins is continuing and unimitigated. This is the epiphany of the finitude of existence from which one wants to seek an escape but the way to escape has been blocked; may be the excruciating sense of his 'huge sorrows is not only self-perpetuating but, paradoxically enough, it is infinitely desired, too.

When towards the very end, Kent puts an uneasy and highly embarrassing question: 'Is this the promis'd end?" (V, iii, 263) and Edgar enlarges upon it by a supplementary query: 'Or image of that horror?' (v, iii, 264), both these apocalyptic utterances have the effect of shaking one to the very roots of one's being. Needless to say that round the word 'horror' gather the implications of doomsday—the hour of the total disruption of the frame of created things when 'mere anarchy' is bound to be 'loosed upon the world'. Further, Kent's and Edgar's utterances are preceded by Lear's own agonizing eruption, marked by a benumbing pain, when he enters the stage with Cordelia *dead in his arms;*

Howl, howl, howl, O! You are men of stones:

Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so

That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever.

I know when one is dead, and when one lives;

She's dead as earth, (V, iii, 257-61)

and followed by a piercing and deafening outcry when every bit of tremulous hope lies utterly crushed under the load of the gathering tumult that cannot be taken off:

And my poor fool is hang'd' ! no, no, no life !

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,

And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,

Never, never, never, never, never! (V, iii, 305-8)

The repetition of 'howl, howl', 'howl', 'no, no, no life' and 'never. never, never, never, never', charged as it is with the profoundest imaginable agony and the maximum of nihilistic horror, comes upon one with devastating and cataclysmic force. In these monosyllabic words of great explosive and penetrating power and this defiant questioning of the ultimate structure of things is concentrated the distillation of corrosive despair and they reflect upon that *angst* which thoroughly envelops the play and may be regarded as its most activating impulse. They bring into focus, with resounding ecstasy, 'man's paralyzing disbelief in the goodness of Providence'. All redemptorist readings of the play, based as they are on the transparent beauty and pathos of the reconciliation scene between Lear and Cordelia, though they undoubtedly refer to a therapeutic power, are cancelled out and stand invalidated by the rampant violence of these last lines. And thus Bradley's perception of a streak of joy in Lear's unbearable agony is a kind of sentimentalizing which is scarcely warranted by the facts of the matter. One should not allow the evidence of the text to be wrenched and twisted in the interest of proving a preconceived or at least untenable thesis—the thesis that makes one look for serenity and equipoise where only dark despondency

and anguish are writ large: this is likely to deflect one from the main thrust.

The image of man which issues forth from *King Lear* is that of a tormented, isolated being—one who, after the fading away of imperial glory and the exhaustion of the flamboyancy of culture—looks more or less like a hunted animal or an impaled insect wriggling along the edges of the wall. It is the sense of *estrangement* and precariousness within the iron world of regal authority and ossification of law and culture, when the dynamics of power is no longer within his grasp, which registers a shock of pain and surprise on Lear. His act of abdication which amounts to a deliberate withdrawal from obligations and commitments and which opened the floodgates of anarchy ran counter to the accepted premises of the Tudor theory of monarchy, and was regarded as a serious crime in the Jacobean ethos. Lear comes to be supported by Edgar and the Fool at the moment when his entire self, torn at the cross-road of love and disillusion, is no longer capable of functioning harmoniously. Thrown upon the sea of troubles, rudderless, life for a man of Lear's sensitivity is no more than a futile and horrid affair; man seems to have lost his moorings and life partakes of sheer and total absurdity. The seeds of his eventual catastrophe are contained in his 'hideous rashness' betrayed by him even pretty early and which is very objectively and clinically diagnosed by no less a person than Kent. But the sense of living in a hostile and perilous world all alone and almost bereft of the sustainment offered by genuine and reciprocal love is what accounts for Lear's utter moral and spiritual collapse, and for the world being reduced to mere shambles for him. The overtones of 'nothingness', audible at the very beginning, continue to reverberate all along and the play ends up with 'the image of that horror', and these two are closely enmeshed through all sorts of tenuous linkages on both the moral and the metaphysical levels

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Asloob Ahmad Ansari, an eminent bilingual scholar, was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Founder of *The Aligarh Journal of English Studies* and a prolific author, Ansari specialised in Shakespeare, Blake, Ghalib and Iqbal.

EDWARD H. STRAUCH

THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL VIEW

It is not difficult to infer that Santiago is a Christian figure. While his story undeniably supports such an interpretation, this ethnocentric reading tends to omit those dimensions of his character and destiny which go beyond the purely Christian. For this reason, the purpose of the present paper is to use an anthropological approach which will show how Santiago represents an archetype transcending the confines of any given religion or culture.[1]

Associations with the hero's name lead one immediately to the story setting- the Caribbean Sea. Santiago city is the capital of Oriente Province in south-east Cuba. This geographical clue leads us to speculate on those inferences to the name Santiago beyond its obvious translation into Saint James.

Santiago de Cuba was formerly named Oriente, and this name is plainly cognate to the English word Orient. The Spanish word refers to the eastern coast of the island, and its English counterpart, in the context of the story, implies the eastern sky and the sunrise. As a matter of fact, Santiago begins his day of fishing at dawn, and he rows his skiff westward so that he must face the rising sun, which glares upon the flat sea and would blind him if he did not keep his eyes fixed on the water next to the skiff and on his lines (p. 32) [2].

Santiago's name also evokes association with the word orientation, which noun signifies one's awareness of personal, spacial, and temporal relations. In the Gulf Stream, Santiago orients himself according to the signs of the sea, the seasons, and other natural cycles. For instance, he knows the great fish come in September and October as do the hurricanes (p. 37). Is this not a

figurative way of saying that in life the September and October months are fraught with danger for a man, and yet those same years, representing the time of a man's greatest skill and wisdom, enable him to find the great meaning to his destiny? Santiago is also aware of the 'homing instinct' of the seabirds, which at the same time reflects migratory patterns. Perhaps this may be regarded as a figurative allusion to Santiago's own pilgrim instinct. The deeper intimations flowing beneath the surface story of *The Old Man and the Sea*, as the currents themselves flow beneath his skiff, will confirm the hypothesis that Santiago's destiny is that of a pilgrim.

The designation Orient suggests a further meaning to the word orientation. Architecturally speaking, it means the alignment of a church upon the east-west axis, so that the altar (where the Eucharist takes place) is at the eastern end[3]. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that at the west end of the church, on the facade which faces the setting sun, the tympanum over the main entrance traditionally portrays a Last Judgment scene. In this context, Santiago's rowing westward seems to be in the direction of death or the eschatological end of man and the world, although Santiago faces the east in the direction of life. One can even draw an age-old inference from this simple act. The impossibility of looking directly into the sunlight is like the ancient mystical notion that one cannot look directly into the face of god without being blinded by His magnificence and splendour. God's speaking to Moses through the intermediary of the burning bush is a Biblical example of this belief. Perhaps for this spiritual reason, Santiago cannot look into the glare of the real sun in the morning. On the other hand, in the evening Santiago, rowing eastward, faces the sun, now 'dying' over the western horizon, and at that time he can look into it without getting the blackness (p.33). Beyond the literal fact, does this mean that once he has faced death squarely in his battle with the great fish, he can bear the limits of this life or can endure the awesome Presence of God in the after world? Such an interpretation would not at all be uncommon in mystic translations of the significance of pilgrimages.

Beyond the immediate Judaic-Christian connotations to the geography of the story, the infinitive to orient means to determine one's position on the earth and to adjust oneself to recognize facts or truths. In a larger sense, Santiago's story is precisely such a recognition, for daily the facts of life and death force him to come to terms with his own meaning in existence.

Furthermore, the old man's name clearly suggests a renowned place of pilgrimage in Northwest Spain, Santiago de Compostela. That he feels he was born to be a fisher man (p. 50) and that he senses his destiny is linked with seeking out the remote sanctuary of the great fish lends his life the aura of an actual pilgrimage.

Proof that this assertion is not merely a lapse into pseudo-religious rhetoric comes from the evidence provided by seasoned anthropologists. Their description of the traditional traits of pilgrimages brings considerable weight to the claim that Santiago's way of life has distinct pilgrim characteristics.

As far back as anthropology can go, there have always been cults of nature and sanctuaries which have been the object of arduous journeys. Ancient religions revered sacred places as forests, caves, rivers, bodies of water, and even fissures in the earth. Natural phenomena gave rise to religious practices in which divination had an important role. Prophecies were made upon observing the flight of birds, flashes of lightning, or the entrails of sacrificed victims. Corporeal relics were venerated such as the head, heart and even sexual organs. In the Christian era, as is well known, the bones of a saint were sent to the four corners of Christendom to become the saintly relic upon which to build a church.

A moment's reflection shows how such anthropological facts help clarify that Santiago's story may be regarded as a pilgrimage. First of all, fishing takes place in nature, that is, on the sea, the source of life. He himself divines the meaning of the flights of birds, much as a naturalist would do, but also with a mystic's compassion. The novel ends with the fish as a victim, a carcass of bones, whose sacrifice to the sharks takes on a darkly ironic meaning when the tourists (who represent a travesty on true

pilgrims) misidentify the marlin as a shark. To be sure, such ignorance is a bitter commentary on modern civilization at the same time that it points to the authenticity of Santiago's natural and ritualistic way of life. The other fishermen, the initiated, recognize what Santiago has done. If Santiago performed no overt religious act that might ordinarily be associated with a pilgrimage, the fight with the fish and its great size imply he has taken part in a supernatural event.

There are other characteristics of pilgrimages which seem to provide further evidence that Santiago's experience at sea is such an act or undertaking. The pagans of Greco-Latin antiquity had cults in the woods, by sources, rivers, and fountains. Brahmans go to rivers, Buddhists to mountains (cf. Hemingway's 'Snows of Kilimanjaro'). Christians went to grottos, islands, and lakes. Such places often are associated with depths, the feminine, and the source of life just as is the ocean in *The Old Man and the Sea*. Furthermore, centres of devotion are usually remote from civilization and far from the main routes of communication. Distances travelled to these holy places confirm the idea that a pilgrimage often obliges the pilgrim to undergo physical discomfort or pain to arrive there. Certainly the place Santiago has chosen meets these qualifications for a real pilgrimage.

Very often a physical trial is associated with the difficulty of the road, which trial enhances the merit attained by the voyage, the *Peregrinatio religionis ergo* of Erasmus. The distance travelled for a holy purpose is entwined with a certain stoicism, which typifies Christian and Moslem pilgrims alike. Indeed, the true pilgrim departs heroically alone on his voyage to the sanctuary and endures much in order to be worthy of the experience of the Holy Presence. Obviously Santiago's voyage out into the remoteness of the sea, where the great currents crossed and where the greatest depths were reached, in order to seek out his great fish, strongly indicates that he is a lone pilgrim in search of the great truth for his soul to live by. Like other pilgrims, Santiago is exposed to death, to physical privations, hazardous routes and the difficulty of the way chosen.

If the pilgrimage has its pains, it also has its rewards. For the Moslems who reach the Mecca, are absolved of their sins. Back in his village, the Moslem acquires hadji or nobility. For Brahmans. the ritual bath in the sacred river opens paradise to them. For most pilgrims, heavenly benedictions descend upon their lives. Santiago experiences a similar reward in capturing the fish and beginning his return to the port until the sharks attack.

The ironic twist of fate in this attack is not the only factor which separates Santiago's experience from that of other pilgrims. Unlike pilgrimages undertaken to expiate some mortal sin, Santiago is not required to endure humiliation or to flagellate himself publicly, as is the case even today in some Moslem countries. Nor as with Buddhists, Brahmans, or Mohammedans, is it necessary for Santiago to live in misery or to beg for a living, although like them he willingly exposes himself to the cruelty of nature. Nor does Santiago practice any kind of masochism or self-mortification. (In humility and hope, Christians in the Middle Ages went great distances on their knees to pray at a sacred place. Or again Buddhists measured the distance to a sanctuary with their bodies by lying down, getting up and lying down over and over again. Nor does Santiago employ some easy device as the famous prayer mill used by the Tibetan Lamas to spin prayers up to heaven.) On the other hand, Santiago's prayer 'Hail Mary' and his solemn promise to go on a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Cobre (p. 65) echoes the ritualistic phrasing of pilgrims of other religions.

Ancient animistic custom often made tree, such as a mighty oak, the object of pilgrimages. Worship is associated with the tree under which Gautama Buddha meditated for five years, and Western scholars do not hesitate to identify the Cross as the 'Tree of life' on which Christ achieved his apotheosis. In rural Europe the custom of hammering nails into trees still persists, and this act has transparent symbolic associations with the crucifixion of Christ. Similarly Manolin recalls when Santiago killed a fish in the boat, the old man's clubbing it was 'like chopping a tree down and the sweet blood smell all over me' (p. 12). Or again when the sharks attack Santiago's catch, he utters the expression 'Ay' for

which there is no translation but which 'perhaps is just a noise such as a man might make, involuntarily, feeling the nail go through his hands and into the wood' (p. 107). Such associations provide at least peripheral evidence that Santiago's life is a pilgrimage, whether conscious or not.

Obviously, the ancient veneration of water and the associations of many saints with water (as Saint James, the fisherman) apply to the old man's story. Furthermore, pilgrims bathe in life-giving waters and Santiago's dipping his wounded hand into the sea to be healed is a practical, curative and spiritual gesture.

Another ritual associated with the pilgrimage is that of circumambulation. In many religions, turning a number of times, usually three, around a sanctuary or even the object of veneration is performed. The ancient Celts did it in the direction of the sun; the Brahmans consider circular ways around sanctuaries to be purifying; the Buddhists require pilgrims to circle around lakes and mountains; and Moslems use circumambulation in the pilgrimage to the Mecca. Can one see in Santiago's drawing the fish to him in ever-tightening circles more than a practical necessity? Perhaps not, and yet since Santiago's way of life has many other acts kindred to other pilgrimage rituals, the similarity is striking.

Anthropologists believe circumambulation is in homage to the sun. Santiago too is aware of the cyclical patterns of the sun, of the seasons, of the cycle of life and death as evinced in the struggle for survival. Santiago's mystical encounter with the majestic marlin in the dying part of the year seems to bear witness to a similar, if higher, form of reverence.

The pilgrim often makes a deeply felt promise like Santiago's vow to catch the great fish. The object of a pilgrimage is spiritual communion. Often a sacrifice is made (as the lambs, cows, goats, and camels at Mecca) and the flesh is given to the poor. If Santiago's killing the fish may be regarded as such a sacrifice, it is to the beauty and power of life in the marlin, and his act is clearly a re-enactment of the Eucharist. Ironically, in the story, the sharks get the meat, not the meek and the poor.

A Christian can undertake a pilgrimage, as can the faithful of other religions, if he has undergone spiritual purification. Sexual abstinence is a frequent practice so that the experience may be moral. Not only is Santiago's life clean in this respect, but his calling the man-of-war a whore implies a pure attitude on his part. Without stain of any kind Santiago is worthy of the holy voyage he has undertaken.

If pilgrimages are sustained acts of faith by men and women who seek to give their lives a spiritual meaning, Santiago's soul must surely find salvation from the meaninglessness of other men's lives. The mystic love he bears the creatures of nature, his readiness to endure suffering and to risk his life prepare him for the encounter with the great marlin. He is worthy of communion with the mystery of life and death, and such worthiness promises the true pilgrim a deathless destiny.

Notes and References

1. *The Webster's Seventh Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass: G and C Merriam Co. 1965), gives the following definition of anthropology: 'teaching about the origin, nature and destiny of man esp. from the perspective of his relation to God.'. p. 38

2. All pagination in parentheses indicates the 1952 New York Scribner Library publication of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea.*

3. It is a curious fact that to orient also means to bury a body with the feet pointing eastward.

4. A number of basic characteristics described on pilgrimages are derived from Romain Roussel's Les Pelerinages. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972, the Que-Sais-Je? series, No. 666. On pp. 126-127 he furnishes an excellent bibliography of related works.

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Edward Hugo Strauch was an American writer and scholar of comparative literature, rituals, myths and theism. He taught at universities in USA, Iran, Morocco and Nigeria. Some of his scholarly works include *Creative Writing for Africans* (1996), *The Creative Conscience as Human Destiny* (2004) and *The Supraconscience of Humanity* (2010).

KATHLEEN RAINE

THE CITY IN WILLIAM BLAKE

William Blake occupies an unique place among the Romantic poets in being before all else a poet of the city; and among all English poets his conception of the city is without precedent. Blake was a Londoner born, and but for three years spent in the village of Felpham on the Suffolk coast employed (as an engraver) by an uncomprehending patron, William Hayley, a country squire and biographer of the poet Cowper, lived all his life in his native city. Not indeed that he loved the city and was indifferent to nature: on the contrary, there are passages of nature poetry in his work of the greatest beauty. Rather he saw the city as the tragic and terrible scene of human struggle and suffering, of good and evil, of the heavens and hells of human experience; and for Blake 'Nature without man is barren': yet the city was, for Blake, of supreme concern because the city is the human creation, the total expression of the human imagination, in its heights and in its depths. Man is born in Eden-nature-and toils to create the city which shall embody and express the thoughts and visions of the inner order of the human mind; an invisible order, not to be found in nature, the uniquely human universe. Above all, for Blake, the city is alive; it is not merely an embodiment, in works of art, of thoughts and visions, dreams and imaginings: it is these thoughts and imaginings themselves, the collective life of a people or a nation. What Blake wrote about London has little to do with what a town-planner or a writer on architecture might have to tell; for Blake a city is a living being, 'a human awful wonder of God' as he wrote. The city is not its outward form but the inner life of its inhabitants as these interact upon one another for good or ill. Of this living city composed of a myriad lives the city of stone and bricks, of streets and buildings, of palaces and churches, is only the image and realization. For Blake his native city is therefore a Person, a collective Person rather than a place:

I behold London, a Human awful wonder of God!

He says: 'Return, Albion, return! I give myself for thee.

'My Streets are my Ideas of Imagination.

'Awake Albion, awake! and let us awake up together.

'My Houses are Thoughts: my Inhabitants, Affections,

'The children of my thoughts walking within my blood-vessels'

(J. 38. 29. K. 665)

Throughout his life Blake continued to listen to the unspoken thoughts of his city's collective life and to that of 'The Giant Albion', the English nation- a 'giant' because made up of many lives, past, present and to come:

So spoke London, immortal Guardiani !

In Felpham I heard and saw the Visions of Albion.

I write in South Molton Street what I both see and hear

In regions of Humanity, in London's opening streets

(J. 38. 40, K. 665)

In South Molton Street, in the heart of London, near Oxford Street, Blake himself lived for a number of years.

Every city has its collective identity, its special human character:

Verulam! Canterbury! venerable parent of men,

Generous immortal Guardian, golden clad! for Cities

Are Men, fathers of multitudes, and Rivers & Mountains

Are also Men; everything is Human, mighty! Sublime!

(J. 38, 45. K. 665)

- and he names other cities, 'Edinburgh, cloth'd with fortitude'. York, Selsea, Chichester, Oxford, Bath, Durham, Lincoln, Carlisle, Ely, Norwich, Peterborough- all the principal cities of England, and each with its own human character. The city, then, is for Blake a living spiritual entity; he called this interior London 'Golgonooza', from the root *golgos*, a skull;

because the city's existence is not outside but within us, in the human brain:

...Golgonooza the spiritual Fourfold London eternal,

In immense labours & sorrows, ever building, ever falling

(M. 6. 1-2. K. 485)

Terrible and beautiful, this interior city is a continual striving and creation:

Here, on the banks of the Thames, Los builded Golgonooza,

Outside of the Gates of the Human Heart...

…In fears

He builded it, in rage and in fury. It is the Spiritual Fourfold

London, continually building & continually decaying desolate

(J. 53, 15. K. 684)

(Los, in Blake's mythological system, is the time-spirit who like the Indian Shiva is creator and destroyer of all that is manifested in time; his consort Enitharmon is space).

The city of Golgonooza is fourfold because we are ourselves fourfold. Blake had already understood the fourfold nature of the human psyche before C. G. Jung made the human quaternity familiar to our century under the names of reason, sensation, feeling and intuition. The whole mythological action of Blake's Prophetic Books revolves round the interplay - the strife and the harmonizing—of these 'four mighty ones' who are, he says, in every breast', and whom he calls the Four Zoas-- the Living Creatures of the vision of Ezekiel and the similar Apocalyptic beasts in St. John's vision of the New Jerusalem. As the human psyche, so the human city. Golgonooza therefore takes the form Jung has named a mandala; much like St. John's fourfold city, with its four 'gates' and sacred precinct. Blake describes this structure at length, though he never drew it. In fact the city is four dimensional, each of its 'gates' themselves fourfold, and the fourfold orientation is endlessly repeated in every 'inhabitant' and everything within the city:

And every part of the City is fourfold; & every inhabitant, fourfold.

And every pot & vesset & garment & utensil of the houses,

And every house, fourfold;

- that is to say we experience the city not only with our physical senses but with heart, mind, and imagination.

...but the third Gate in every one

Is clos'd as with a threefold curtain of ivory & fine linen & ermine.

(J. 13. 20. K. 633)

The ‘Western Gate’—that of the physical senses- is closed by the physical body (the ivory bones and woven fibres of the mortal 'garment' of flesh) until man's return to Paradise, when the senses also will open into the 'eternal' world of human consciousness and not, as now, into the transient world of time and space.

In this and other respects Golgonooza differs from St. John's holy city; for Golgonooza is not the heavenly archetype but work in progress towards the building of Jerusalem on earth—*Jerusalem*, the 'bride' of Blake's 'Jesus, the Imagination' gives its title to Blake's last prophetic book; and Vala, the 'goddess nature' to his first; Vala's other name is Babylon, the secular city built not according to the heavenly archetype but by mortal humanity forgetful of the inner worlds. For Blake the human task on earth is to realize in time an image of eternity; to build the outer city in the image of the inner city, or, to use the phrase of the Irish mystic A.E. (George Russell, early friend of Blake's greatest disciple. W. B. Yeats,) to make the 'politics of time' conform to the ‘politics of eternity’. This has been the theme of Plato, of Aristotle, of St. Augustine, and of Blake's own teacher, Swedenborg: who also described his vision of the fourfold spiritual London, and whose detailed description of its quarters and their inhabitants was no doubt the immediate inspiration of Blake's Golgonooza. In St.

John's Holy City (which is also a mandala) the central symbol is the Tree of Life and the four flowing rivers of Paradise; while in the City of Golgonooza the centre is the palace of Los, the time-spirit, surrounded by a moat of fire. There Los labours at his 'furnaces' to give concrete form in space and time to whatever humanity imagines. Los and Enitharmon (as time and space) are the parents of all who come into the world of Generation. At the end of time the furnaces of creation will become fountains and the four rivers of life flow again where Los's 'furnaces' now blaze.

'The male is a furnace of beryll; & the female is a golden loom'. On Enitharmon's looms are woven the bodies with which she clothes the generating spirits, while 'The Sons of Los clothe them & feed & provide houses & fields.' (M. 26. 30.K.512). With every new birth a new region of experience comes into being. each, unique; for though we live in the same city. we have each our own 'houses and fields', our especial vision of that shared world, and through the interplay of all these unique inner worlds, none alike, the city is built and sustained:

And every Generated Body in its inward form

Is a garden of delight & a building of magnificence.

Built by the sons of Los...

And the herbs & flowers & furniture & beds & chambers

Continually woven in the Looms of Enitharmon's Daughters.

In bright Cathedron's golden Dome with care & love & tears.

(M. 26. 31. K. 512)

All born into this world have the opportunity to share in the 'labour' of building the City, whose 'houses & fields' are not, of course, those bought and sold by property-dealers, but regions of humankind's living experience.

Blake's spiritual fourfold London, therefore, is neither St John's Holy city, nor the 'waste land' of that later poet of London, T. S. Eliot, although there are indeed passages in Blake's writing—and especially in his latest work, *Jerusalem* as dark as any in Eliot's poem, passages which no doubt provided a

prototype for Eliot's 'unreal city'. Behind both Blake and Eliot stands Dante, whose beloved and hated city of Florence peopled the three regions of hell, purgatory and paradise; these also, as for Blake- and indeed for Eliot- not places in the natural world but states of being.

For Blake, as for Dante and indeed for Eliot, his denunciation of the London hells was something more than political; it was in the light of the politics of eternity that he judged the politics of a time for the most part forgetful of humanity's inner worlds. Economic forces, material interests, the distribution of wealth and property were not for him causes but effects produced by human attitudes; and while Blake denounces a society that enslaves the poor to wretched wages, forces children to labour in factories and conscripts young men into armies waging useless wars, he saw these things as not curable by material or political changes alone. They are the inevitable consequence of false ideologies. No words of Blake's are better known and more often quoted than 'those dark Satanic Mills"; felt to be so apt a description of England's industrial landscape that few have troubled to examine Blake's own use of the phrase. These words do not in fact describe the mills and factories of an industrial landscape (which in Blake's life- time had scarcely come into existence) but the philosophy, the ideology- which was to give rise to these; that of mechanistic materialism, which Blake identified with the names associated with that deadly ideology which was to dominate the next hundred years, the names of Bacon, Newton and Locke. The 'mills' of Satan are the universe of mechanistic causes, ever producing mechanistic effects, the world as a machine envisaged by Newton and philosophised by Locke, unmitigated, unenlightened by any vision of humanity's inner kingdom, the archetype of the Holy City which the inhabitants of Golgonooza labour to realize. Therefore, Blake calls Satan (who is 'the mind of the natural frame', oblivious of the inner spiritual kingdom) 'the Miller of Eternity', and with a direct allusion to Newtonian astronomy.

...Prince of the Starry Hosts

And of the Wheels of Heaven, to turn the Mills day & night.

This world, deprived of spiritual life, conceived as an inhuman mechanism, a mechanism to which men & women are perforce enslaved, is Blake's hell. Blake leaves us in no doubt what the ideology is which he holds responsible for this mechanistic scheme of thought, soon to image itself in nineteenth century utilitarian England, thence to spread throughout the world, taking with it desolation. The final outcome of a mechanization of nature can only be the mechanization human beings also. Los, the time-spirit, asks Satan, his 'youngest-born', the modern mentality.

Art thou not Newton's Pantocrator, weaving the Woof of Locke?

To Mortals thy Mills seem everything...

(M. 4. 11-12. K. 483)

--and dismisses him with the prophetic words

Thy Work is Eternal Death with Mills & Ovens & Cauldrons.

Trouble me no more; thou canst not have Eternal Life.

(M. 4. 17. K. 483)

The desolation of the landscape created by Blake's Satan is that of Dante's City of Dis, and Milton's Pandemonium, these likewise cities built in hell, which is the place and state cut off from spiritual vision. Blake saw, and foresaw the dark landscape to come, contrasting labourers enslaved to the machine with the pastoral world industry was beginning to replace.

And all the Arts of Life they chang'd into the Arts of Death in Albion.

The hour-glass contemn'd because its simple workmanship

Was like the workmanship of the plowman, & the water-wheel

That raises water into cisterns, broken &burn'd with fire Because its workmanship was like the workmanship of the shepherd;

And in their stead, intricate wheels invented, wheel without wheel,

To perplex youth in their cutgoings & to bind to labours in Albion
Of day & night the myriads of eternity; that they may grind
And polish brass & iron hour after hour, laborious task.
Kept ignorant of its use: that they might spend the days of wisdom
In sorrowful drudgery to obtain a scanty pittance of bread,
In ignorance to view a smail portion & think that All,
And call it Demonstration, blind to all the simple rules of life.

While indeed Blake protested against the enslavement of labour it is above all the spiritual bondage he deplores; high wages would not, in his eyes, sufficiently compensate for the soul-destroying effect of such mechanical tasks on life itself. 'His machines are woven with his life' is Blake's terrible prophetic reflection on the Giant Albion, the English nation for whose awakening and recovery he laboured.

Even in Blake's early *Songs of Experience*, the poem *London* gives no description of the appearance of the city but evokes its essence in human terms:

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice; in every ban.
The mind-forged manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry

Every black'ning Church appalls;

And the hapless Soldier's sigh

Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro midnight streets I hear

How the youthful Harlot's curse

Blasts the new born Infant's tear,

And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

(K. 216)

The walls of London churches are blackened by the soot from chimneys swept by small boys on whose wrongs the church is silent; and those who from places of government make wars bear the reproach of the blood of the hapless soldiers who fight them. The laws of property impose helplessness on the inhabitants of the 'charter'd' streets, while prostitution is the offspring of poverty and social hypocrisy.

London, in *Songs of Experience*, is depicted as an old man led by a little child; and Blake used the same depiction many years later in *Jerusalem* illustrating the words

I see London, blind & age-bent, begging thro the Streets

(J. 84. 11. K. 729)

Thus the city is always described in terms of states of being For Blake Chelsea Hospital was not Wren's fine architecture but 'the place of wounded Soldiers'; 'London's darkness'- for Blake the only darkness is spiritual darkness—is made up of

The Solder's fife, the Harlot's shriek, the Virgin's dismal groan.

The Parent's fear, the Brother's jealousy, the Sister's curse.

Under the influence of an ideology that does not hold life to be sacred a society has no scruples in enslaving human labour

in peace and in war. 'Battersea and Chelsea mourn'. 'Hackney and Holloway sicken' as their children are herded into armies; and the Giant Albion laments,

...I hear my Children's voices,

I see their piteous faces gleam out upon the cruel winds

From Lincoln & Norwich, from Edinburgh & Monmouth:

I see them distant from my bosom scourg'd along the roads.

Then lost in clouds. I hear their tender voices! Clouds divide:

I see them die beneath the whips of the Captains.

(J.21.32.K.644)

No less terrible the enslavement of labour:

They mock at the Labourer's limbs: they mock at his starv'd Children:

They buy his daughters that they may have power to sell his Sons:

They compell the Poor to live upon a crust of bread by soft mildarts:

They reduce the Man to wants then give with pomp & ceremony.

The praise of Jehovah is chanted from lips of hunger & thirst.

No poet has more precisely and more bitterly condemned his city than Blake denounced London, where he saw

….all the tendernesses of the soul cast forth as filth & mire

(J. 31. 21. K. 657)

Such is the city as it is built when the agent is not the Imagination and the human spirit, but by Satan 'the soul of the natural frame', whose wife is Vala, Babylon, the 'cruel' goddess Nature, principle of mortal generation, who weaves the 'black Woof of Death: as 'the veil of human miseries'. As Blake listened to the voices of London, he heard much that was terrible: conscription of young men for useless war; industrial enslavement

of women and children; at Tyburn the London crowds would gather to see the hangings of mere boys for small offences against property all the sufferings and injustices of a society from which Jerusalem, the soul of the nation, was 'cast forth'

...upon the wilds to Poplar & Bow,

To Malden & Canterbury in the delights of cruelty.

The Shuttles of death sing in the sky to Islington &Pancrass,

Round Marybone to Tyburn's River, weaving black melancholy asa net,

And despair as meshes closely wove over the west of London

Where mild Jerusalem sought to repose in death & be no more.

(J. 41. 5. K. 668)

Vala, the Goddess Nature, is the mother of bodies, Jerusalem the mother of souls; she is the bride of 'Jesus, the Imagination' or the 'Divine Humanity' a term Blake took from his master Swedenborg. In the four quatrains that form the preface to the prophetic poem *Milton* Blake turns a tradition according to which Jesus had visited Glastonbury in the company of Joseph of Arimathea to symbolic purposes, and asks (translating the poem into Blake's symbolic terms) whether once the Imagination and spiritual vision had not been present in his native land. Our Gothic cathedrals Blake deeply admired as monuments of ‘spiritual religion,’ in contrast with Wren's St. Paul's which he saw as a church of Deism—natural religion, product of the materialist ideologies he opposed. The hymn is known to millions and is sung at every meeting of the thousands of Women's Institutes throughout Britain;

And did those feet in ancient time

Walk upon England's mountains green?

And was the holy Lamb of God

On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire.

I will not cease from Mental Fight.
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green & pleasant Land.

(K. 480-81)

If such impassioned thought can be paraphrased in prose Blake is announcing his lifelong task and incidentally the theme of the poem *Milton*- which is to take up spiritual arms against materialist mentality which he saw already dominating English life and thought. In the name of the spiritual city Jerusalem, the soul of his nation, whose fall into the 'deadly sleep of a mechanistic science he saw as a spiritual sickness and as the cause of many evils. Jerusalem, the suffering soul of the alienated Giant Albion, found refuge in the humble house of Blake and his wife in Lambeth, on the south bank of the Thames. Blake knew himself to be that soul's champion and guardian. In a modest house in Lambeth Blake's earliest Prophetic Books were written; a house of hope and vision and the love of his early years of marriage. In a hostile world Jerusalem

...fled to Lambeth's mild Vale and hid herself beneath
The Surrey Hills...her Sons are siez'd

For victims of sacrifice; but Jerusalem cannot be found, Hid

By the Daughters of Beulah.

(J. 41. 12. K. 668)

It is to be remembered that Blake was writing during the Napoleonic wars, seen by him as wanton waste of young lives in a doubtful cause; (he had in his youth been a supporter of the French Revolution, in the years before the Terror, but later saw that his early hopes had ended in a war that could bring no good to either victor or vanquished).

Beulah is married love-a symbol taken from Swedenborg's commentaries on the Bible; and there follows a beautiful and intimate image of the relationship between Blake and his wife, who gave refuge to Jerusalem from a hostile world bent on war and conquest:

There is a Grain of Sand in Lambeth that Satan cannot find,

Nor can his Watch Fiends find it; 'tis translucent & has many Angles,

But he who finds it will find Oothoon's palace; for within

Opening into Beulah, every angle is a lovely heaven.

(J. 41. 15. K. 668)

Blake is writing of a refuge not to be found in time or space- in 'nature,' Satan's kingdom; 'To see a world in a grain of sand' -in the dimensionless—is the gift of the imagination alone, and this gives refuge from Satan's world. Jerusalem is not built by rulers or town-planners, but in the secrecy of many hearts; and from humble beginnings Blake knew himself to be engaged in the laying of her foundations; as history has since proved, in the ever-growing number of those who in this century look to him as England's great prophet.

We builded Jerusalem as a City & a Temple; from Lambeth

We began our Foundations, lovely Lambeth. O lovely Hills

Of Camberwell...

(J. 84. 3. K. 729)

True though it is that from Lambeth Blake and his wife could walk into green fields of Camberwell, it is not on account of its natural beauty that Blake calls these places 'lovely' but because of his spiritual labours and human happiness in these otherwise obscure suburbs of London. It is ever in secrecy that the foundations of the City are laid, and in a passage of great beauty (where, again, Lambeth is invoked) Blake perfectly and eloquently expresses all he felt about what a human city is, in its inner essence, as a building of human souls each individually and all collectively labouring to embody a vision whose realization will be only when all is done 'on earth as it is in heaven', according to the archetype of the Human Imagination. The soul-Jerusalem—is called 'the lamb's wife' and the bride of Jesus because she perceives the 'Divine Human' present within every individual as the image of God in which, (according to the first chapter of Genesis) unfallen man was created. Because that archetype is 'the human existence itself'. reality itself, (and not, like the illusory ideologies of the empirical human ego, cut off from that living ground) it is impossible for Blake to despair, since reality must finally prevail over illusion. It is the Imagination who presides over the Last Judgment, in which error is exposed in the light of Imagination's ultimate truth. For similar reasons—because that signature of the Divine Humanity is in every human being, Blake never presented the building of the City of Jerusalem as the work of afew men of outstanding genius or so-called 'originality' or inventiveness. The city is, rather, the work of all its inhabitants, the 'golden builders':

What are those golden builders doing? where was the burying place

Of soft Ethinthus? near Tyburn's fatal Tree? is that

Mild Zion's hill's most ancient promontory, near mournful

Ever weeping Paddington? is that Calvary and Golgotha

Becoming a building of pity and compassion? Lol

The stones are pity, and the bricks, well wrought affections

Enamel'd with love &kindness, & the tiles engraven gold.
Labour of merciful hands: the beams & rafters are forgiveness:
The mortar & cement of the work, tears of honesty: the nails
And the screws & iron braces are well wrought blandishmets
And well contrived words, firm fixing, never forgotten.
Always comforting the remembrance: the floors, humility:
The ceilings devotion: the hearths, thanksgiving.
Prepare the furniture, O Lambeth, in thy pitying looms,
The curtains, woven tears & sighs wrought into lovely forms
For comfort; there the secret furniture of Jerusalem's chamber
Is wrought, Lambeth! the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, loveth thee,
Thou art one with her & knowest not of self in thy supreme joy.
Go on, builders in hope, thor Jerusalem wanders far away
Without the gate of Los, among the dark Satanic wheels.

(J. 12. 25. K. 632)

Because Blake's Jesus is the human Imagination his holy city is a city of the arts-these being, within Blake's terms, embodiments of the heavenly archetypes. For Blake morality (and he includes both civil law and the Church's law) is the domain of the God of This World—of Satan the Self-hood- whereas the works of poet, painter and architect are embodiments of visions of heavenly originals. 'One thing alone makes a poet', Bláke declared, 'Imagination, the Divine Vision'. Blake followed the Platonic tradition in holding that humankind has lost paradise not through sin but through forgetfulness; and the artists are among those who have not (in Platonic terms) drunk too deep of the river of matter the draught of forgetfulness on entering this world. Transposed into Biblical terms, Blake writes that Noah and his sons 'represent Poetry, Painting & Music, the three Powers in Man of conversing with Paradise, which the flood did not sweep away'. (Notebook p. 178 K. 609)- the flood of the five senses, which obscures the vision of the soul, as he elsewhere writes. For Blake

therefore true art is the mirror of Imagination, mediated by those 'daughters of Inspiration' who are his muses. Yeats, whose own Byzantium is a city of the arts, wrote in similar vein, following his master Blake, that 'truth cannot be discovered, but may be revealed". Works of art- copies of 'heavenly originals'- the archetype- serve in turn to awaken recollection, in the Platonic sense of the word *anamnesis*, in those ‘sleepers’—again the term comes from Plotinus—who cannot themselves perceive directly the originals 'laid up in heaven'. It is said that Pythagoras could himself 'hear' the music of the spheres, but invented musical modes in order to communicate these to his disciples; just as Mozart perceived in his mind a whole opera, which he could then transcribe into instrumental music. Hence works of art are a human necessity, if the human race is to be reminded of the heavenly originals and withheld from falling into what Blake calls the 'deadly sleep' of forgetfulness of our own spiritual universe and nature.

Thus, the City of Golgonooza is called the city of human 'Art and Manufacture'; it has 'mighty Spires & Domes of ivory and gold' embodying visions the Sons of Los labour to realize. These beautiful works form mental regions-'houses' in Blake's terms which we may enter and 'live' in- as we may 'live' not only in architectural buildings but also in works of music or poetry or within 'regions' created by artists of imaginative insight. 'Poetry'; as I.A. Richards wrote, 'is the house we live in'. The betrayal of the true task of the artist by those who work without any vision of the archetype, or who deliberately proffer some reductionist or perverted vision of the human spirit are thus failing, not merely to amuse or instruct, but to create an environment in which the soul can live. So Blake, with an allusion to Shakespeare's lines about the poet who 'gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name', describes the task of the artists as builders of the City of Golgonooza:

Some Sons of Los surround the Passions with porches of iron &silver,

Creating form & beauty around the dark regions of sorrow,

Giving to airy nothing a name and a habitation

Delightful, with bounds to the Infinite putting off the Indefinite
Into most holy forms of Thought; such is the power of inspiration.
They labour incessant with many tears & afflictions.
Creating the beautiful House for the piteous sufferer

(M. 28. 1. K. 514)

The 'piteous sufferers' are the forgetful souls who in this world have lost the recollection of the eternal order. For Blake the true environment of the human spirit is the inner regions created by works of art, A utilitarian city can provide only 'housing' but not, in Blake's beautiful sense, 'houses and fields' of the imagination, sheltering and sustaining the soul as well as the body.

'Los's Halls', built throughout the 6,000 years of the world, are our inheritance of works of the Imagination, where inhabitants of the spiritual city may find the records of all human history. We inhabit not only a temporal present and the ruins of time but all that timeless world that Imagination has created, a spacious world. In the 'halls' of the time-spirit all that has been realized in the life of the imagination remains:

All things acted on Earth are seen in the bright Sculptures of
Los's Halls, & every Age renews its powers from these Works
With every pathetic story possible to happen from Hate or
Wayward Love; & every sorrow & distress is carved here,
Every Affinity of Parents. Marriages & Friendships are here
In all their various combinations wrought with wondrous Art,
All that can happen to Man in his pilgrimage of seventy years.

(J. 16.61.K.638)

Perhaps Blake, who as a painter and engraver, naturally thought in terms of the visual arts, here uses the symbolic image of 'sculptures' because these are of all the arts the most permanent; and it is the timeless permanence of the records of the human imagination that he is here evoking. There is a somewhat similar

passage in Dante's *Purgatorio* Canto XII, where in the pavement of the circle of the proud are chiselled reliefs showing examples from classical and biblical antiquity of pride laid low- Saul, Arachne, Rehoboam. Alcmaeon and Senna- cherib; this gallery of the past with its pathetic stories of hate and wayward love might have inspired Blake's eloquent evoca- tion of the creations of Los and his Sons in the halls of time, carved in the records of

…the City of Golgonooza & its smaller Cities.

The Looms & Mills & Prisons & Work-housas of Og& Anak,

The Amalekite, the Canaanite, the Moabite, the Egyptian.

And all that has existed in the space of six thousand years.

Permanent & not lost, not lost nor vanish'd, & every little act.

Word, work & wish that has existed, all remaining still

…

For everything exists & not one smile nor tear.

One hair nor particle of dust, not one can pass away.

(J. 13. 56-14. 1. K. 634)

What Imagination has experienced and created remains forever, not in the natural world but in the 'spiritual fourfold London eternal', and in every human city, the regions of humankind's inner universe of which the inhabitants of earth are the creators and inheritors in the 'halls' of Time.

Throughout his descriptions of the building of Golgonooza Blake insists on the toil, the great labours, of the builders; and not least on his own:

…I rest not from my great task!

To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the immortal Eyes

Of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought, into Eternity,

Ever expanding in the Bosom of God, the Human Imagination.

(J. 5. 17. K. 623)

Blake supremely admired Michaelangelo and the other Florentine architects and painters who were, with the builders of the Gothic cathedrals, working, so Blake understood, according to the true forms of Imagination; recognized by all because innate in all. He would gladly have used his gifts as a painter in the service of his own city, as did the architects and painters and sculptors of the cities of Italy, and specifically-would have liked to paint great frescoes comparable to theirs in Westminster Abbey. He was never given the opportunity to do this, and was bitter and angry in his protest against the commercial values of England where money and not vision dictated the quality of the city, its buildings and its works. He lamented the absence of such enlightened patrons as the Papacy and the Medicis who had set the great Floren- tines to build and adorn the cities of Italy:

The Artist wishes it was now the fashion to make such monuments, and then he should not doubt of having a national commission to execute these two Pictures [the spiritual forms of Nelson and Pitt] on a scale that is suitable to the grandeur of the nation, who is the parent of his heroes. in high finished fresco, where the colours would be as pure and as permanent as precious stones, though the figures were one hundred feet in' height. (Descriptive Catalogue II, The Spiritual Form of Pitt, K. 566)

Blake would have liked to 'make England What Italy is, an Envied Storehouse of Intellectual Riches'. (Notebook p. 20. Public Address).

But a commercial nation encourages impostors, since true discrimination is lacking. However, scale being finally of little importance, it has surely come about that Blake's illustrations of the Book of Job, a few square inches in size, have created 'regions' of the Imagination no less spacious than Michaelangelo's Sistine chapel, and 'visited' by the imaginations of almost as many as those who visit the Vatican.

The Imagination is innate in all but gifts are unequal, and Blake was no friend of the envy latent in egalitarianism. In his early book *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* he wrote:

The worship of God is: Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best: those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God.

(MHH. 22. K. 158)

To this he added 'if Jesus Christ is the greatest man, you ought to love him in the greatest degree'-Jesus being the universal Imagination itself, whose disciples, according to Blake, are 'all artists'. He had not changed his view when he wrote in his introduction to the concluding chapter of his last Prophetic Book, *Jerusalem*

I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty both of body & mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination, Imagination, the real & eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow... The Apostles knew of no other Gospel. What were all their spiritual gifts? What is the Divine Spirit? Is the Holy Ghost any other than an Intellectual Fountain?... What is the Life of Man but Art & Science? Is it Meat & Drink? is not the Body more than Raiment? What is Mortality but things relating to the Body which Dies? What is Immorta- lity but the things relating to the Spirit which Lives Eternally?... to Labour in Knowledge is to Build up Jerusalem and to Despise Knowledge is to Despise Jerusalem & her Builders. And remember: He who despises & mocks a Mental Gift In another, calling it pride & selfishness & sin, mocks Jesus the giver of every Mental Gift, which always appear to the ignorance-loving Hypocrite as Sins; but that which is a Sin in the sight of cruel Man is not so in the sight of our kind God. Let every Christian, as much as in him lies, engage himself openly & publicly before all the World in some Mental pursuit for the Building up of Jerusalem.

'A Poet, a Painter, a Musician, an Architect: (he wrote) the Man Or Woman who is not one of these is not a Christian." (The Laocoon. K. 776). The golden builders can never rest from their labours,

…in Visions

In new Expanses, creating exemplars of Memory and of Intellect;

--for these are the regions of every human city, whose life and continuity depends not upon its historic monuments, but on the continuity of the inner life of its inhabitants.

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Kathleen Jessie Raine was a visionary poet and literary scholar. Her poetry collections include *Stone and Flower* (1943), *The Lost Country* (1972), and *The Oracle in the Heart* (1979). Her works of scholarship include *The Inner Journey of the Poet* (1982), *W. B. Yeats and the Learning of Imagination* (1999) and two volumes of *Blake and Tradition* (1968 and 1969). She was Professor at Cambridge.

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: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 remarked 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. 11. 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*, 11, 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 though 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 consider- ed 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 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 studies 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- Philipps 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 bio- graphical 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 Dowden 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 attempted 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 cautious 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 biographical 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 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 evidence of the freshness and modernity of outlook elsewhere in the book, especially 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 him- self 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 roman- tic 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 especial 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 biography' (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 reinforced 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 some- thing 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 veure as if they are liable to 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 daunting to 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' (*Letters*, 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 in spite 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-will-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 essential 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 there-fore 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 Raleigh'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 substance 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 how- ever, 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. 'More- over, 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 be- yond 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 sympathy. 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 life- less 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 balanced 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.

Notes and References

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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 1. 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 experien- tial 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. Shakes- peare'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

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Maqbool Hasan Khan was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University. A Shakespeare scholar, he is the author of *Edward Dowden's Shakespearian Criticism, Shakespeare's Pericles and Other Studies*, and editor of annotated editions of *Hamlet* and *Tempest* for Orient Blackswan Drama Classics.

ZAHIDA ZAIDI

IMAGE OF MAN IN ABSURD DRAMA

The one thing that is not clear in modern art is its image of man. We can select a figure from Greek art, from the Renaissance or the Middle Ages and say with some certainty ‘That is the image of man as the Greek, the medieval or the Renaissance man conceived him’. I do not think we can find any comparably clear-cut image of man in the bewildering thicket of modern art. And this is not because we are too close to the period, as yet, to stand back and make such a selection. Rather, the variety of images is too great and too contradictory to coalesce into any single shape or form. May the reason why modern art offer us no clear-cut image of man not be that it already knows-whether or not it has brought this knowledge to conceptual expression-that man is a creature that transcends any image because it has no fixed essence or nature, as a stone or a tree has?

Thus ends an interesting and perceptive analysis of modern art by William Barrett in his admirable book, *Irrational Man*[1]This may be, from a certain point of view, a valid assessment of modern art, but it is certainly not true of modern avant-garde drama or the so-called 'Theatre of the Absurd." Nothing is more striking about, or characteristic of this drama than a vivid and haunting image of man and his predicament that these plays project. Perhaps it is by virtue of its form and medium, that modern drama, notwithstanding his fluid essence and elusive identity, has been able to create an image of man. And this is the image of a lonely and bewildered man in an absurd and incomprehensible universe.

As the mind explores the ever-extending gallery of the 'absurd drama', a series of vivid and compelling images of man appear on the screen of imagination: the image of a very old man sitting by his tape-recorder, staring in the void and the tape of his

past life running on in silence (*Krapp's Last Tape*); the image of a middle-aged woman sinking deeper and deeper into the burning sand and thanking heaven for small mercies, for another 'happy day' *(Happy Days)*: the image of two tramps waiting endlessly (for Godot) by the roadside, under a blasted tree *(Waiting for Godot)*; the image of a very old couple, in a circular room, surrounded by water, receiving an invisible crowd and cluttering up the stage with empty chairs *(The Chairs)*; the image of a new tenant getting buried in a never-ending stream of furniture, which, then begins to block the passage and proliferate the streets *(The New Tenant)* the image of two maids in a room, playing at being themselves, each other and their mistress and endlessly lost in a hall of mirrors (*The Maids*); the image of two criminals in a basement room, frantically answering the demands of the 'dumb waiter and waiting for the message that will end up the life of one of them *(The Dumb Waiter)* the image of a young man in a park, desperately trying to communicate with his complacent chance-companion and, finally, impaling himself on his own knife to bring the message home *(The Zoo Story);* the image of a lay priest setting out to find 'the true God', and getting crucified at the altar of a meaningless abstraction *(Tiny Alice)*; the image of two young lovers, tearing the walls of their respective cells to reach each other, only to find that on one side of their cages is a fathomless abyss and on the other, more bars and more jailers behind them, and that even their jailer is a prisoner in a larger cage *(Humans and No)*; the image of a young man coming out for a stroll in the park to escape the stifling atmosphere of the interior and getting lost in an immense labyrinth of blankets *(The Labyrinth)*; and so on.

All these images project in vivid, concrete and imaginative terms, the state of man and his predicament, and are felt to possess symbolic significance. All, to a lesser or greater degree, convey a sense of man's loneliness, anxiety, vulnerability and the vision of his entrapment in a complicated, painful and incomprehensible situation. From these instances, I have selected two, viz., *Waiting for Godot* (Beckett) and *The Chairs* (lonesco) for close study, as they seem to me to be most characteristic of this dramatic mode, most poignant in the vision of Man and of

human existence they project, and artistically the most perfect. In them, as it were, all other images coalesce to create a poignant and haunting image of man and of human predicament, and a new myth is born.

11

Waiting for Godot (Samuel Beckett) is so original in form and bewildering in its contents that it led Kenneth Tynan to remark, 'A play, it asserts and proves, is basically a means of spending two hours in the dark without being bored[2] and also that passing time in the dark is not only a condition for drama but also an essential aspect of human condition itself. 'The condition of Man' says Heidegger, 'is to be there. Theatre also presupposes this presence. It depends on 'here' and 'now' for its existence. Beckett makes it not only a means of presenting life but also a subject-matter of his drama. According to Alain Robbe-Grillet, Beckett's men resist any attempt at interpretation except the most obvious and immediate one, that 'they are men and they are there'.[3]

The play explores a static situation. On a country road, under a blasted tree two tramps-Vladimir and Estragon (Didi and Gogo)-wait for Godot, who does not appear, but in the course of the evening, Pozzo and Lucky-master and slave- make their appearance. Towards the end of Act I the tramps are informed by Godot's messenger-a little boy-that Godot cannot come this evening but will surely come tomorrow. Gogo and Didi decide to give up their vigil, but they do not leave the stage. The curtain comes down on the two tramps standing still staring in the void. The second act begins in the same way and proceeds with slight variations. Time and place are the same, except that the tree has sprouted a few leaves. Pozzo and Lucky again make their appearance, but Pozzo is now blind and Lucky dumb. Towards the end the little boy comes again, informing about Godot's inability to keep his appointment and his promise to come the next day. Gogo and Didi decide to leave but they do not move. The curtain falls on the two tramps staring in the void.

We may, now, have a closer look at the two tramps to learn a little more about their existence. Gogo and Didi appear to be quite rootless and homeless. They are ill clad and ill at ease.

Gogo's foot is a constant source of irritation and Didi suffers from kidney trouble. They subsist on carrots and turnips, which they stuff in their pockets along with other inconsequential rubbish. They do not seem to come from, or to go, anywhere in particular, although Estragon says that he spent the night in a ditch 'as usual' and was beaten up by 'them' as usual. To pass the time, they invent stories, improvise games, arguments and occasionally contemplate suicide. Eva Metman in trying to explain the personalities of the two tramps' remarks:

> They belong to a category of people, well-known in Paris as clochards, people who have known better times and have often, as in this case, been cultured and educated. They make a point of being rejects of destiny, in love with their position as outsiders.[4]

She is, I think, grossly mistaken in this assumption and absolutely on the wrong track in trying to understand these creations with reference to their psychological motivations and cultural background. Gogo and Didi are not psychologically conceived characters in the ordinary sense of the term, nor are they placed in a specific social or cultural context. They are symbolic characters, creating an image of man and his predicament in a timeless, universal perspective. They are homeless, rootless, unprovided and ill-at-ease since this is how Beckett conceives of man in a metaphysical perspective. They are outsiders, no doubt, but that too in a metaphysical sense. Beckett, like the existentialists, seems to think that Man is an outsider in the universe since he cannot relate himself to his environment as naturally and spontaneously as a bird or a tree can, nor can get reconciled to the absurdity of his contingent existence.

While Vladimir and Estragon create the image of Man in a timeless, universal perspective, Pozzo and Lucky suggest an image of man in a temporal and social context. They are master and slave-torturer and victim-bound to each other in a pattern of sado-masochistic relationship. While Gogo and Didi stay and wait. Pozzo and Lucky move, but their movement amounts to less than waiting. While Gogo and Didi are more or less interchangeable, Pozzo and Lucky are well-defined by their functions. Gogo and Didi are unrecognizable but eternal, Pozzo

and Lucky are busy, self-important but subject to the devastating rush of time. They decline and deteriorate perceptively in the course of the play. In Pozzo, as Rossette Lemont points out, Beckett has caricatured the organizers of this world. 'President, trustee, absolute monarch this egotistical, narcissistic traveller, in love with his voice and the ready flow of his rhetoric. Is a living symbol of the establishment.[5]Lucky, on the other hand, stands for that section of humanity, which has been dehumanized by its slavery and suppression. But Lucky is lucky in the sense that he has a master, who, however cruelly, organizes his life for him. For this security he has sacrificed his soul and creativity. Lucky, we are told, could sing and dance and inspire Pozzo. But now this dancing is a vision of his entrapment and his thinking has been reduced to a monotonous babble of meaningless words. His monologue is also incidentally, Beckett's devastating parody of logic, science, medicine, sports, religion and other patent securities of the modern Man.

Like the central characters, the situation of the play, too, has symbolic significance. The plot can be summed up in four words, 'we waiting for Godot'. Waiting is the central action (or inaction) of the play and also its subject-matter. But what does it amount to. Gogo and Didi seem to say, 'we exist therefore we must be waiting for something', and, 'we are waiting for something therefore there must be some- thing we wait for'. This waiting is neither a hope nor even a longing, rather, a habit or an excuse. It is the last resort by means of which the two tramps try to escape the transience and instability of their existence. As Vladimir remarks in the second act:

What are we doing here, *that* is the question. And we in this that we happen to know the answer. Yes, in this immense confusion are blessed one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come...or for the night to fall.[6]

This preoccupation of waiting fills up their life until the night falls-which, in my opinion, is a metaphor for death-it saves them from facing the human condition in its grim nakedness and from the anguish and suffering that might spring thereby. The monotony and aimlessness of their existence has been

unconsciously camouflaged in the vague belief that they are waiting for Godot. Vladimir and Estragon are neither able to give a shape and meaning to their existence, nor are they able to face the horror of its meaninglessness. The positive attitude of the two tramps is thus, essentially, negative and is, in fact a dramatic projection of an inauthentic existence. In existentialist terminology they are living in bad faith. This inability to face the unbearable precludes the possibility of tragedy. Consequently, the tone of the play is predominantly farcical and its heroes, who are, in fact, anti-heroes, incredibly clownish, in spite of the grimness and pathos of their situation.

Vladimir and Estragon drift and escape from a true awareness of being by means of their vague dependence on Godot, but they are not totally immersed in their bad faith like Pozzo and Lucky. Their forgetfulness is illuminated, though on rare occasions, by flashes of insight. Vladimir has a dim awareness of tragedy. 'The air is full of our cries, but the habit is a great deadener' he says. He looks at Estragon, who is sleeping, and reflects, 'At me too, someone is looking, of me too someone is saying, he is sleeping, he knows nothing. As for Estragon, his dreams reveal the hidden anxieties of his soul, but he has to suppress them as Didi avoids involvement in them.

Seen from another point of view, the waiting appears to be a metaphor for existence itself. Existence seen as process of slow suicide. Vladimir and Estragon (or Everyman) are being sacrificed at the altar of nothingness. And it is an endless and cruel process, for 'where Christ lived, it was warm, it was dry and they crucified quick'. But Gogo and Didi are not so lucky. Further it is in the act of waiting that we experience the weight of time. Time lies heavy on the two tramps:

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow

Creeps in this petty pace, from day to day, To the last syllable of recorded time; And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death.

(Macbeth, V.v. 18-23)

What we are confronted here with is absolute time. Consequently, while life can be projected dramatically as a never-ending process of waiting, it can also be expressed as a flash of lightning between the womb and the tomb-between the dark security of the womb and the absolute darkness of the tomb.

There is a semblance of movement in the play, but it is a circular movement, which after some time conveys the impression of stasis. The action and the situation is circular. The first act ends where it began. The second begins at that point and ends exactly in the same way. The story of the dog moves in never-ending circles. Every argument in the play is circular and every attempt to pass the time ends where it began. We may say that the play is not only exploring a static situation, but is dramatizing a regression beyond nothingness, which Jung describes as a descent into Hades and which has also been characterized as a 'phenomenology of nothingness. The play opens with the words 'Nothing to be done'. And these words resound in space and time. The word nothing punctuates the dialogue throughout the play. Similarly, the verbal texture of the play as well as a close-knit texture of symbols and images carries its vision with extraordinary poignancy and nimbleness. Themes of life and death, ambiguity and absurdity are interwoven in its texture, lending substance and flavour to the image of Man and his predicament.

‘The world of the play', in the words of Gunther Andres, is an abstraction; an empty stage, empty but for one prop indispensable for the meaning of the fable: the blasted tree in its center, which defines the world as a permanent instrument for suicide and life as a non-committing of suicide.[7] The characters, too, in view of the same critic are abstract not only in the sense of being man in general but also in a more literal and cruel sense of the word. They are 'abstracti' that is 'pulled away', 'set apart the illusion of solidity is shattered and what we see is the disintegration or decomposition of the image.

We may now turn to Godot. Who is he and what does he stand for? Is he God? Is he hope for a better social order? Is he Death or Silence? Is he the elusive self that we look for but never

come by? Yes, but not quite. The most important thing about Godot is that he is absent If he is God he is a diminutive god and his absence lends a significant dimension to the total structure of the play. Vladimir and Estragon's faint chances of salvation dwindle into nothingness before our eyes. Nietzsche announced the death of God and Beckett dramatizes the agony of his absence, or, shall we say, non-existence. While scores of critics have been baffled by Godot's ambiguity, Ruby Cohn asserts that Beckett's play tells us plainly who Godot is 'The promise that is always awaited but not fulfilled, the expectation that brings two men to the board, night after night. The play tells us this dramatically and not discursively.[8]This statement is significant in so far as it shifts our attention from the question of Godot's identity to the experience of the central characters. But, in fact, it is another way of saying that we do not know anything about Godot, except that Vladimir and Estragon are waiting for him. The ambiguity, like his absence, is essential to the meaning of the play. And this ambiguity is not confined to the identity of Godot, but is a characteristic stylistic feature of the play as well as of its subject-matter. *Waiting for Godot* reverberates with questions that remain unanswered, contains statements that are doubted, events and persons that are forgotten, decisions that are never translated into action and arguments that lead nowhere. This state of uncertainty conveys, obliquely, Man's sense of bewilderment and anxiety when confronted with the ultimate questions of being and existence.

The essential ambiguity of the subject-matter is reflected, not only in the vagueness and incompleteness of impulses, thought, desires and memories but also in the treatment of language. Beckett is here asserting, and also illustrating that the tools of comprehension and communication at man's command are impotent and rusty. Logic and reasoning do not unfold ultimate truth and language is often a means of concealment rather than the revelation of meaning. The play confronts us with an ever-widening gulf between thought, language and action. Beckett's man lives in a world which is not of his making, and which resists any attempt to make sense of it. This spectacle of Man's helplessness in an incomprehensible world lends a dark

tone to Beckett's vision of life. The world emerging from his play has been variously described as a 'desert of loss' or 'the Zone of Zero.

But *Waiting for Godot* is not an incoherent work of art, though it is a play about the incoherence of life. Its apparent formlessness projects the formlessness of life itself and its rejection of action and plot reflects a life devoid of significant action and divorced from history. It creates, in concrete, vivid and moving terms, an image of Man and his universe. In the opinion of Martin Esslin it is a poetic image that has to be experienced in its totality[9] and, according to J.L. Styan, it is an extended metaphor that makes itself felt at several levels of meaning.[10] Beckett's vision, in ,spite of his dark tone and profound pessimism cannot be branded as nihilistic, for the play is not only a complete artistic triumph, but Beckett's ruthless and deeply moving projection of Man's experience of being and his predicament is, in the last analysis, an act of supreme courage and integrity. And courage, as Paul Tillich points out, is the highest form of self-affirmation, as it confronts Man with Being, Non-Being and their unity. In other words, Beckett's translation of a painful and tragic experience into a work of perfect symmetry and artistic coherence is a form of mastery and transcendence of that experience. And this is what makes the play both illuminating and exhilarating.

The Chairs (Eugene Ionesco) is a non-realistic play in which the tragic dilemma of existence is conveyed, largely, through comic and hilarious means and projected in concrete visual symbols. *The Chairs* does not tell a realistic story, or present psychologically motivated characters, but creates an image of Man and the human condition. It does not unfold a plot, but reveals the panorama of the inner world. The dramatic method employed by Ionesco is symbolic, surrealistic and fantastic. Ionesco believes that realistic drama is inadequate for the purposes of conveying complex and elusive experience of Being and a sense of metaphysical reality. Realism' he asserts, 'never looks beyond reality. It narrows it down, falsifies it and leaves out of account the obsessive truths that are most fundamental to us: love, death and wonder. Truth lies in our dreams, in our

imagination (*Notes and Counter Notes*). A play, for Ionesco, is an organic growth and a structure of the imagination. His plays are striking for freedom of form and spontaneity of technique. But in his moments of inspiration, as Martin Esslin points out, 'the spontaneous creations of his subconscious emerge as readymade formal structures of true classical purity.[11] And this is particularly true of *The Chairs.*

The Chairs presents a very old couple in a circular tower surrounded by water. The setting of a closed room, cut off from the outside world, has by now become a stock dramatic metaphor in modern drama. This scenic device suggests man's isolation and his entrapment in a situation of no exit, and creates a poignant image of human condition. Plays like *Henry IV* by Pirandello, *No Exit* and *Condemned of Altona* by Sartre, *The Room and Dumb Waiter* by Pinter, *Endgame* by Beckett, *The Maids* by Genet, and *Armadee* by Ionesco make effective and significant use of the setting of a closed space, cut off from reality. In *The Chairs* this scenic effect is combined with other visual devices and concrete symbols that lend poignancy to the image of man and his existence.

The action of the play takes place outside history and recognizable space. 'Paris never existed my little one', says the Old Woman to the Old Man. But her husband seems to think that, 'That city must have existed, because it collapsed... It was extinguished four hundred thousand years ago and nothing remains of it except a song', which paradoxically asserts that, 'Paris will always be Paris'. And so, we are moving in a world where the common scale of values does not seem to operate. Even the certainty (or illusion) of space and time is shattered and the keynote of existential experience is ambiguity and paradox.

The Chairs presents an essentially static situation in which the illusion of movement is created by endless, meaningless repetitions and occasional regressions. Encouraged by the Old Woman, the Old Man is telling the same stories, imitating the same people and making the same complaints for the last seventy-five years. And when even this does not help to evade reality, he

lapses into a second childhood and the Old Woman plays the part of the mother.

The play unfolds a life of failure, regrets, remorse, frustration and a general sense of futility made tolerable by vague aspirations, pretentious hopes and vital delusions. The old couple has lost grip on life, which is becoming more and more complicated and incomprehensible for them: 'The further one goes, the deeper one sinks', says the Old Man, and the Old Woman is bewildered and terrified by the spectacle of water all around them. They are desperately trying to live in an imaginary past, which their memory has glorified for them. 'Six o'clock in the morning, and it's dark already says the Old Man to his wife, 'surely you remember, there was day light at eight o'clock in the evening, at nine o'clock, at midnight'. The Old Woman, of course, agrees with him.

The Old Man likes to believe that he is a misunderstood intellectual, 'unrecognized and underestimated by my contemporaries'. The Old Woman confirms him in his belief and assures him that he is very gifted and that though he is only a General Factotum, he could have been a 'head general, a head king, a head president or even a head comedian'. However, all is not lost, since the Old Man is preparing a great message for the world, which, he hopes, will save humanity. The Old Man lives either in the cold solace of excessive self-pity touching the boundaries of the grotesque. They have crushed my bones, they have robbed me, they have assassinated me...I have been the collector of injustices, the lightning-rod of catastrophes', or in the romantic nostalgia of a distant past: 'We could have shared youth, beauty, eternity-an eternity of joys', says he to his imaginary beloved, 'La Belle'. Only once, in the course of action, he seems to be awakened to the full horror of his condition and to a sense of metaphysical emptiness and nothingness... 'Sometime I awaken in the midst of absolute silence. It is a perfect circle, there is nothing lacking, but its shape might disappear. There are holes through which it can escape'. The Old Woman echoes him 'ghosts, phantoms, mere nothings. But she quickly reassures herself and

her husband. 'The duties my husband performs are very important- sublime'.

The other side of this self-pity, self-justification and nostalgia, which are different expressions of 'bad faith,' is a nagging sense of guilt that the old couple cannot shake off. The Old Woman believes that they had a son who deserted them because they failed to live up to his expectations. She confides in her invisible guest, the photographer:

OLD WOMAN: We've had a son... He left his parents... A very long time ago. And we loved him so much... He used to say 'you kill the birds... why do you kill the birds ?...we don't kill the birds.. 'You are telling lies, he would say, 'you are trying to deceive me and I loved you so much. The streets are full of birds you've killed and the little children dying... The sky is red with blood...I thought you were good... The streets are full of dead birds... You've put out their eyes... Daddy, Mummy you're wicked. I won't stay with you any more'. [12]

The Old Man, on the other hand, is bitten by remorse as he cannot forget that he left his mother to die in a ditch. He confides in his invisible beloved, La Belle:

OLD MAN: I left my mother to die all alone in a ditch. She called after me, crying feebly, my little boy, my beloved child, don't leave me to die, I'm not long for this world.... Don’t worry mother, I'll soon be back, I was in a hurry, I was going to dance...when I did come back, she was dead and buried deep in the ground...I started digging to try her but I couldn't. I know, I know, it always happens. Sons leaving their mothers and as good as killing their fathers. Life is like that... But it tortures me (p. 61).

These stories convey a deep sense of guilt and betrayal on the part of these old people. But this should not lead us to conclude that they are psychologically motivated characters. 'Avoid psychology, or rather give it metaphysical dimension,' 'says Ionesco in *Notes and Counter Notes* And this seems to be the case here too. We may note here that the Old Man tells his friend that they never had a child and the Old Woman tells the photographer that her husband was a loyal and loving son and that

his parents died in his arms. This underlines the fact that we are not expected to take these stories at their face value, and what they convey is not an ordinary sense of guilt about specific events, but an all-pervading existential guilt and anxiety that is an essential ingredient of existential experience.

But these contradictory stories also contribute to a sense of bewilderment and loss. We are moving in a world in which logic has ceased to exist, moral values are uncertain and language has broken down as a means of communication. Every assertion is contradicted and every statement negated. The Old Man tells his first love, the invisible Belle, 'You have not changed a bit-Ah yes your nose has grown longer-a lot longer. He tells her again, 'I loved you a hundred years ago but there has been such a change.... No you haven't changed a bit-I loved you I love you.'. Ionesco is here preoccupied with the failure of communication, resulting in an experience of isolation and bewilderment. This is conveyed in the image of the empty chairs, fantastic conversation with the invisible crowd and above all in the image of the dumb Orator. But it is also brought out in the treatment of language itself, which had been Ionesco's main preoccupation in *The Lesson*, *Bald Prim Don* a and other early plays. Ionesco employs apparently realistic dialogue only to break it into downright nonsense until we realize that it always consisted of cliches, catchwords and banalities that conceal rather than reveal the meaning. This distrust and devaluation of language is a widespread phenomenon in contemporary culture, indicative of a general state of about assumptions, concepts and values that were believed to be the foundation of all human communication and action.

To cap their life of vacuity and failure, the old couple stage an imaginary reception, to which all distinguished personalities, 'all the intellectuals and all the proprietors' are invited and at which a professional orator is to convey the Messianic message of the Old Man. Gradually the invisible guests begin to arrive. The old people receive them, converse with them and entertain them with great enthusiasm, and the Old Woman brings more and more chairs to accommodate the swelling crowd of the imaginary characters. Finally, the Emperor arrives with

great fanfare, to crown the occasion. But as the action proceeds, the dream becomes more and more complicated and closes in upon the two old people. They are separated from each other and from the emperor by the unmanageable crowd and the chairs cluttering up the entire stage. The action now rises to a paroxysm and frenzy which according to Ionesco is the true source of the theatre. Finally, the Orator arrives and at the height of their imaginary glory the old people throw themselves out of the windows, leaving the stage to the deaf and dumb Orator whose massage is Silence-silence broken by the derisive laughter of the invisible crowd. The ending of *The Chairs* brings to mind the last scene of *The Hairy Ape* (O'Neill) set in the zoo, in which Yank's passionate pleas for sympathy and understanding are answered by the chattering and screeching of the invisible monkeys but Ionesco's method is more subtle and economical and its symbolic significance many dimensional.

In *The Chairs* Ionesco has managed to retain a balance between madness and pathos, suffering and laughter, grotesque comedy and tragic horror. For Ionesco laughter is an indivisible part of the tragic for it is the perception of the unbearable, and for him, the unbearable alone is truly tragic. 'For my part,' he confesses, 'I have never understood the difference people make between the comic and the tragic. As the comic is the intuitive perception of the absurd, it seems to me more hopeless than the tragic. The comic offers no escape. I say hopeless but in reality, is lies beyond the boundaries of hope and despair (*Notes and Counter Notes*). Thus, laughter becomes also a means of transcending the absurd and the tragic. For Ionesco the grotesque is the means by which art can express the paradoxical and, in the words of Robert Corrigan, 'express the form of the unformed- the face of the world without a face.

The Chairs is a work of great artistic integrity and imaginative force. It is a complex and self-contained structure-organic, subjective and spontaneous. It does not contain a discursive argument but recreates a rich and complex experience. Themes of loneliness, despair, death, time, evanescence, vacuity, failure, remorse, guilt, absurdity and nothingness interpenetrate its

structure and are orchestrated like themes in a musical symphony. In the words of Martin Esslin, it is a poetic image brought to life-complex, ambiguous, many- dimensional-the beauty and depth of symbol transcends any search for definition.[13]

Ionesco's plays are conceived, primarily, in terms of the resources of drama. He has not only used language more dramatically, which in his own words, is just 'one member of the shock troop of the theatre' but has also extended the vocabulary of the theatre by endowing the stage props with a vital symbolic dimension. 'Nothing is barred in the theatre', he asserts, 'characters may be brought to life, but the unseen presence of our inner fears can also be materialized. So the author is not only allowed but recommended to make actors of his props, to bring objects to life, to animate scenery and to give symbols concrete forms *(Notes and Counter Notes)*. The furniture in *The New Tenart*, coffee cups in *Victims of Duty* and the corpse in *Amadee* suffering from the incurable disease of the dead, i.e., geometric progression are some of the examples of this method. In these plays the stage properties convey the horror of the proliferation of matter and the crushing weight of the universe. They also project leaden, hopeless and oppressive states of mind, which, in Ionesco's opinion, mask the victory of anti-spiritualistic forces.

The symbolic use of stage props in *The Chairs* is a triumph of this technique. Ionesco speaks of two striking states of mind-two opposing experiences of reality: the experience of heaviness, materiality and opaqueness of the world and the experience of its evanescence, emptiness and nothingness. In *The Chairs* Ionesco has hit upon a symbol that conveys both these experiences and states of mind with equal force. The spectacle of the innumerable chairs, cluttered up on the stage, conveys a sense of the proliferation of matter, heaviness and oppressive weight of the material world, but these empty chairs may also convey a sense of emptiness and nothingness. In Ionesco's own words, 'The subject of the play is not the message, nor the moral disaster of the old couple but the chairs themselves. The absence of people, the absence of the emperor, the absence of matter, the unreality of

the world, the metaphysical emptiness-the theme of the play is nothingness.[14]

To conclude: *The Chairs* is a profoundly moving dramatic experience. It carries a great weight of psychological, moral and philosophical interest with extraordinary nimbleness and a minimum of apparent effort. It not only creates an image of Man and reveals several dimensions of his existential experience in a strikingly modern idiom but also suggests an image of his predicament in a timeless, universal perspective. 'Everything is a circumscribed moment in history', says Ionesco in *Notes and Counter Notes*, 'but all history is contained in each moment of history. Any moment in history is valid when it transcends history'. And this seems to be particularly applicable to *The Chairs*, thus justifying Ionesco's view that, 'Art seems to be the best justification for a belief in the possibility of a metaphysical liberation.'

IV

The image of man emerging from the absurd plays in general and *Waiting for Godot* and *The Chairs* in particular, translates the vision, intentions and philosophic assumptions of the 'Absurd Drama' in vivid, concrete and coherent artistic forms. Absurd Drama is a search for meaning in a fragmented universe, which is felt to have no central purpose or direction. It attempts to tackle the problem of being and human existence in its totality, complexity and in its essential ambiguity and transience in doing so it undertakes to shock man out of his complacence, smugness, illusions, evasions and mechanical habits of thought. Rejecting the conventional image of man based on conceptual thought, pseudo-scientific analysis or outdated moral sanctions, it creates a highly subjective image of man, which is disturbing and bewildering, but also exhilarating in its freshness and authenticity it expresses the anguish and despair, springing from the recognition that man is surrounded by areas of darkness, and that no one will provide him with ready-made answers or rules of conduct. As Albert Camus puts it in *The Myth of Sisyphus:*

The certainty of the existence of God, who would give meaning to life, has far greater attraction than the knowledge that

without him one could do evil without being punished. The choice between these two alternatives would not be difficult. But there is no choice. And that is where the bitterness begins.[15]

Absurd Drama is an attempt to come to terms with the realities of this uncomfortable existence. It confronts the audience, act only with the absurdity of the inauthentic existence, shrouded in illusion and evasions, but also with the essential absurdity of human condition itself. The implicit assumption is that this confrontation may be the first step in coming to terms with human predicament

Absurd Drama is not a drama of ideas but a drama of being. It is concerned not with ideologies or discursive arguments but with the elusive experiences of the inner-world and with themes of permanent validity and universal significance. Themes of life, death, time, evanescence, emptiness, isolation, despair, wonder and transcendence are directly projected here through images, symbols, rhythmic patterns and verbal texture its language is the language of living experience rather than that of conceptual thought. And since it is concerned with the totality of being and realities of the inner world, it has abandoned the realistic technique of presentation Realism in drama, these dramatists feel, is adequate only for the purpose of projecting conventionally conceived reality and superficial modes of perception. This drama depends, largely, on surrealistic, expressionistic and symbolic modes of expression, as surrealistic dream images and poetic symbols can encompass and obliquely convey realities and experiences which elude the grasp of reason and conceptual thought. As Jung says, 'The heart has its own reasons which the reason does not know.' In this respect the Absurd drama is essentially poetic theatre.

It is now my purpose to show that the Absurd Drama is not an eccentric movement, but is in tune with the central quests and intellectual and moral preoccupations of our time, and the image of Man, emerging from these plays, is a characteristic expression of the modern sensibility and a contribution to the imaginative culture of the contemporary world.

One of the striking features of Absurd Drama is its unique and shocking treatment of language which is a direct consequence of an attempt to convey the total reality of being. This distrust and devaluation of language is in tune with the mood and temper of our times. The inadequacy of conceptual thought as a means of encompassing the complex realities of being and subconscious existence of man, and of language as a means of communicating these realities, is a widely felt phenomenon in the present-day world) Meaning and purpose- fulness are not the prerogatives of the mind, they operate in the whole of living nature, says Jung. He also draws our attention to the fact that, 'The ideas with which we deal in our apparently disciplined waking life, are by no means as precise as we would like to believe. On the contrary, their meaning (and their emotional significance for us) becomes more imprecise. the more closely we examine them.' Language, it is felt, is not always the best means of conveying an elusive experience or a complex phenomenon. In some cases, music or painting may have a more direct access to an elusive meaning and the profoundest experiences of spirit are best contained in silence. Absence of verbal-language characterizes the higher stages of contemplative thought in oriental philosophy.

But in the present-day world, the inadequacy of language is felt, not only in relation to higher contemplative thought and mystical experiences, but also in the sphere of day-to-day life and interpersonal relationship. Language, it is felt, has been so completely corrupted by cliches, banalities, mechanical habits of thought and easy-going conventional attitudes that it fails to convey a precise meaning, fresh impulse or unique perception. On the other hand, the emphasis on specialization and fragmentation of knowledge has also rendered language somewhat secondary if not superfluous. The image of the world, as George Steiner points out in his essay 'Retreat from the Word', is fast receding from the communicative grasp of language. Much significant reality now begins outside the verbal context

Modern philosophy, too, is distrustful of language, and since Spinoza much philosophical inquiry has been devoted to the use of the language for the clarification of language. Language is

no longer seen as means of arriving at ultimate truth or certainty, but as a spiral or gallery of mirrors bringing the intellect back to its point of departure. Symbolic logic is one of the attempts to break through this circle. The work of Wittgenstein, the great Cambridge philosopher, can be seen as an attempt to escape from the spiral of language. He doubts whether reality can be spoken of since language is a kind of infinite regression. According to him, a clear-cut relation between the word and the fact cannot be taken for granted. That which we call fact may well be a veil spun by language to conceal reality. Other psychological and anthropological researches like Warf-Sapir studies and the findings of growth psychologists, too, illustrate that language and the educative processes of culture orient the individual to a very few touch points with reality.

Similarly, *avant-garde* drama or the Theatre of the Absurd has close affinities with modern art in its techniques, spirit and intentions Like Absurd Drama, modern art is not a statement of well-defined meaning or order, but a search for meaning in a fragmented universe. Abandonment of the traditional styles and forms in modern art can be seen as expression of dissatisfaction with conventionally-conceived reality, And the abandonment of representational image parallels a distrust of the language of conceptual thought. Modern art is characterized by broken colours, segmented compositions, shattered surfaces and dissolving form. In break up, says Kathrine Kuh, can be found the key to the history of modern art. Contemporary art, like *avantgarde* drama is not just an artistically pleasing or morally flattering experience. Like Absurd Drama, it is profoundly disturbing. In many of my paintings, says Albright, I am trying to lead the observer back, sideways, up and down into the picture to make him feel tossed about in every direction-what I am really trying to do is to make a coherent statement about life that will force people to meditate a bit. I am not trying to make a pleasant aesthetic experience. I want to make the observer uncomfortable. The contemporary artist depicts a shattered world because he has courage to face destruction and death. These artists have rejected discreet codes and conventional restrictions and they deal with vital force, brutal, uncouth and disturbing but vigorously alive.

The have turned their back on what they found stale or petrified. Truth is faced in its nakedness and disturbing ambiguity.

Hymon Bloom's 'Old Woman Dreaming' is a terrifying image of death and decomposition, and Francis Bacon's Study of Pope Innocent is a disturbing study in ambiguity. The figure moves and yet is frozen, it cries yet is silent. The figure is caged yet eludes its barriers by melting into the surrounding curtain, but one can never be sure whether it is seated before or behind the curtain. Dali's Paranoic Face is another ingenious and disturbing study in ambiguity. A picture which appears to be an idyllic country scene, on being turned sideways, reveals a terrifying face. The composition conveys a double and divided experience. The observer turns from the one to the other image with uncomfortable ambivalence. Edward Munch's THE CRY, on the other hand is perhaps the most powerful expression of frozen horror in the entire history of art. Similarly, Giacometti's expressionistic sculpture, The Tall Figure, which seems to be on the point of breaking under its own rarified tensions is a moving image of human isolation. These are some of the instances that create powerful and moving images of man and human predicament (contrary to the view of William Barrett) and reinforce and complement the image of Man created by Absurd Drama.

Absurd Drama has affinities with surrealistic and expressionistic art. Surrealistic paintings of Miro, Tanguy and Dali unravel the mysteries of the subconscious mind and recreate the fascinating panorama of the inner world. Kandinsky's. abstract expressionistic canvases and Jackson Pollack's violent action paintings have some affinities with the Absurd Drama, particularly from the point of view of the freedom of form and subjectivity of approach. But in my opinion, Absurd Drama has much greater depth and range. Paul Klee's visual puns bring to mind the comic theatrical devices of Ionesco.

Absurd Drama has deep affinities with Existentialism. Both the existentialist philosophers and the absurd dramatists reject the concept of man as a purely rational being. The existentialists believe that man is not a thinking animal with

reason engrafted on animality, but a vital, passionate being, whose vitality flows into spirituality. Both concern themselves with the totality of being and believe that being is not a problem to be mastered and done with but a mystery to be lived and relived. Both reject the absolute truth and emphasize its unsurmountable ambiguity. Both seem to believe that a perception of absurdity and an encounter with nothingness is the starting-point of an authentic existence. In the existentialist philosophy the question of the moral choice is central and explicit while in the Absurd Drama it is implicit. Indeed, the Absurd Drama is so close to the existentialist philosophy that it can be seen as the artistic manifestation of existentialism itself. We have, however, to make a distinction between the absurd plays and the existentialist fiction and plays of existentialist thinkers like Sartre, Camus and Simone de Beauvoir, which often have an air of being illustrations of their philosophic system Absurd Drama, on the other hand, does not seem to be motivated by a clearly defined philosophic system. Its insights are arrived at independently and intuitively and its artistic approach more experimental and imaginative

Martin Esslin, in his path-breaking book, *The Theatre of the Absurd*, also draws our attention to the affinities between Absurd Drama and mystic thought. Indeed, he goes to the extent of suggesting that the Absurd Drama comes closest to being a religious quest of our time.[17] Mysticism depends on intuition as a means of apprehending ultimate reality, and distrusts discursive thought and conceptual language as a means of apprehending and communicating this reality. Further, an encounter with nothingness and emptiness is an essential dimension of mystic experience, particularly of eastern mysticism and Buddhist thought. These terms, however, have different connotations in the vocabulary of mysticism. A newly awakened interest in mysticism and Zen Buddhism is a striking feature of the contemporary situation. We may say that Mysticism and Absurd Drama are two different ways of coming to terms with the totality of Being, but both register a protest against narrow limits of conceptual thought and mechanical approach to reality.

In short, the Absurd Drama is not only a significant dramatic movement but also a supreme expression of the modern sensibility and contemporary experience. It is an attempt to face human predicament in its totality and stark nakedness, and by translating it in coherent and authentic artistic form, transcend man's tragic predicament and the absurdity of his contingent existence. As the above discussion shows, it is not only in the mainstream of contemporary thought and culture, but is also a significant contribution towards its enrichment.

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Zahida Zaidi, an Urdu and English poet, playwright, translator and critic was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Her scholarly works include *Glimpses of Urdu Literature: Select Writings* (2011). Her plays include *Doosra Kamra* (1990), *Inqalab ka Ek Din* (1996). She translated literary works of Chekov, Pirandello, Beckett, Sartre and Ionesco.

BOOK REVIEW

MASOODUL HASAN

YEATS AND THE NOH: WITH TWO PLAYS FOR DANCERS BY YEATS AND TWO NOH PLAYS

by Akhtar Qambar

(Weather – Hill, 1974, pp. 161)

Symbolic in character and austere in the use of stage-machinery, the short musical ghost-plays of Japan were first presented to English readers by Ezra Pound from the materials painstakingly collected and translated by Ernest Fenollosa during his stay in the Far East. Yeats was connected with the publication from the very beginning, and he supplied an introduction to the Cuala press edition of *The Classic Noh Theatre of Japan* (1916). Fascinated by the economy, subtlety and suggestiveness of these plays, and finding their technique suited to his own purpose he fashioned the *Four Plays for Dancers* (1920) in an answerable style. In a note on one of these plays, he even acknowledged his indebtedness to the tradition: "I have found my first model-and in literature if we would not be parvenus we must have a model-in the 'Noh' stage of aristocratic Japan." Though some salient aspects of this relationship have been touched upon in various studies of Yeats (particularly by Peter Ure and F. A. C. Wilson) and in reviews of his *Four Plays for Dancers*, no full-length study of the subject- excepting the doctoral dissertation of Hiro Ishibashi- seems to have been published. Miss Akhtar Qambar's brief work is a commendable attempt to fill this gap.

Being introductory in nature, the first two chapters supply the background and motives of Yeats's active interest in Noh drama. Chapter I analyses, though rather sketchily, the poet's predilection for symbolism and the Symbolist Movement. Chapter

II deals briefly with the main trends in contemporary Irish theatre, Yeats's views on dramaturgy and his endeavours for the revival and development of the national drama. The account is interspersed with some casual, but perceptive, observations about the Irish temper and national ethos and their bearing on Irish theatre.

The author's examination of the Japanese aesthetic attitude (pp. 39-45) responsible for the birth and development of this peculiar form of ritual drama is enlightening and thought-provoking. Her vivid, sometimes almost lyrical, reminiscences of some of the Noh performances in the land of their origin invest her statements with an added measure of cogency and authenticity, and show a genuine and sensitive appreciation of a difficult genre. Interesting and informative in character, chapter III is obviously the most effective and successful part of the book. The general account of the Noh drama, its genesis, structure and characteristics, and the description of the stage provide the necessary information for a richer understanding of their assimilation in Yeats's plays. References to the 'Kathakali' and 'Karnatak' schools of dance and music by way of passing comparisons are especially suggestive for Indian readers. Yeats and the *Plays for Dancers* (Chap. IV) discuss succinctly the characteristics and technique of Yeats's relevant plays. It also furnishes the outline of the plots of two readily comparable Japanese plays- *Hagoromo* and *Nishikigi*. The treatment of the English plays, however, is rather slender, as of the four of them only two-*At the Hawk's Well* and *The Only Jealousy of Emer* - seem to have received some attention-Calvary is just referred to in passing. Attention is focused on the point that while writing these plays Yeats was trying to explore the symbolic potential and philosophical significance of these stories and myths, but rather surprisingly there is hardly any mention of any one of his contemporary poems which are no less significant monuments of his concern with symbolism. Similarly notice of the rise of one-act play in England is wanting though a brief addition on this point would have made the historical perspective more factual and realistic.

Miss Qambar has chosen only two plays, which she considers "unique in the history of poetic drama" (p. 96), for detailed treatment of their structure, theme and symbolism (chap. V). Some interesting sidelight is shed on the translation and staging of At the Hawk's Well in Japan. Though admitting the possibility of stratification of symbolism in the plays, she restricts herself to only one layer of meaning. She suggests that Cuchulain in *The Only Jealousy of Emer* stands for both fate and the mocker of fate, the destroyer of value (p. 90), and finds that Yeats's conception of female characters in the play is connected with the romantic image of Maud Gonne (p. 93). One, however, is reminded of another source ignored by the author, though specifically mentioned by Yeats himself in a note on the same play: "I have filled *The Only Jealousy of Emer* with convictions about the nature and history of a woman's beauty, which Robartes found in the *Speculum* of Gyral- dus and in Arabia Deserta among the Judwalis."

The last chapter offers a cross-section of critical opinion culled from the periodicals, and a general assessment of the plays with special reference to the causes of their failure to catch popular fancy. It is followed by an appendix incorporating the text of *At the Hawk's Well* and *The Dreaming of the Bones*, and the Noh plays, *Hagoromo* and *Nishikigi*, translated by Pound and Fenollosa. The author's Indian sensibility is again in evidence in the extended, and rather over-stretched, analogy of the Urdu *Mushaira* with the *Noh* theatre. Even taken as instruments of culture, the comparison between the two does not appear to be quite relevant as Mushaira is not a genre, nor was it ever meant to be performed by actors. Finally, the author describes the Noh drama and Yeats's plays for dancers as brilliant spots of eccentricity in theatre' (p. 114). Occasional brilliance of artifice and theme not many may deny. But in view of the pervasive influence of the *Noh* even in the later plays of Yeats and some of the plays of Wallace Stevens-and the survival of the genre in Japan for several centuries it is hardly fair to call them mere eccentricity in theatre.

Yeats and the Noh is an intelligent little book on a difficult subject with occasional flashes of critical insight, and a frequent verve of style that makes it delightful reading. It is a valuable contribution to Yeatsean studies, but in spite of the comprehensiveness of its title, the actual work is much too selective and restricted in range. One wishes that the author had paid attention to some of Yeats' later plays as well like *The Resurrection*. *A Full Moon in March*, *The Herne's Egg*, *Purgatory* and *The Death of Cuculain* which do have unmistakable traces of the Noh drama in them. Such an enlarged and comprehensive treatment would have added to the utility of the work. To the academic critic omission of titles of essays in some of the entries in the bibliography (of periodical literature) would also appear as an avoidable minor flaw.

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Masoodul Hasan was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University. Author of many books, his books include *Francis Quarles*, and *Sufism and English Literature.*

BOOK REVIEW

O.P. GOVIL

DISENCHANTED IMAGES

by Theodore Ziolkowski

(Princeton University Press, 1977, pp. 273)

The study of imagery in our times has, in the main, been aesthetically oriented. It has been made either to interpret particular literary works or to individualize the aesthetic experience of an author, or at best to identify the essential traits of a literary period. The historical perspective showing a keen awareness of the relevance of social and cultural behaviour is mostly observed in works tracing the evolution of certain 'ideas' or 'concepts', but seldom in the study of images. Professor Ziolkowski's ambitious work is indeed one of the pioneering attempts made in recent years to study images in their wider social and cultural contexts, overriding narrow boundaries of place and time.

Taking his cue from Jean Cocteau's remarkable film, *The Blood of a Poet*, which had its premiere in 1932 and has invited a wide variety of comment and interpretation since, the author proposes to examine the history of three generically related images- an animated statue, a haunted portrait, and a magic mirror. He takes the term 'image' in its primary sense as 'the iconic representation of a concrete object that is depicted as having physical presence in the work itself', and not in the current literary senses as icon, mental image, or figure of speech. An image, in his view, may be used as theme, motif, or symbol; while theme is tied to some particular hero, motif refers merely to one element of a larger action or situation and symbol signifies something other than the image itself. The author plans to study the image of the animated statue as a theme, the image of haunted portrait as a

motif, and that of the magic mirror as a symbol, according as they generally appear in a number of fictional works through the ages.

In the introductory chapter, the author defines his approach both as iconography inasmuch as it involves a description and classification of images, and as iconology since it implies the use of a method of interpretation based on synthesis rather than analysis, taking into account the influence of theological, philosophical, and political ideas upon the images, as well as the purposes and inclinations of the individual artists. These three images, he maintains, are distinguished from all other images that might occur in a literary work by their affinity with the human soul, and also, significantly enough, by the fact that they all, as he proceeds to show, originally suggested magical associations, but in the course of time underwent the process of secularization or what he calls 'disenchantment'. In other words, his primary purpose in this work is to offer a literary iconology of magic images and to analyze the stages of their disenchantment.

In the second chapter Professor Ziolkowski traces the sources of the theme of Venus and the Ring in the universally accepted myths of creation and the ancient belief in animated statues in both popular and religious legend. The image of Venus and the Ring is charged with many time- honoured associations with evil, sorcery, iconolatry, and the pagan past. During the last eight centuries, the statue of Venus has continued to represent an undercurrent of pagan antiquity that has survived into modern Christian civilization, although the value of the image has varied according to the context in which it occurs. In medieval times and down to German Romanticism, the image occurred principally in a religious context, representing either pagan deities or satanic demons in opposition to Christianity. Since Romanticism, the image has occurred more in a generally cultural and less in a narrowly religious context. The statue of Venus has come to embody the power of primitive passion in contrast to the sterility of civilization. The author, by his masterly analysis and comparative study of a number of continental works, shows that for Henery James and F. Ansley, the statue symbolizes a threat to order and civilization whereas for Heine, Merimee, Sacher-

Masoch, and Burgess, it represents a vigorous and welcome challenge to a bland and effete society. During this long period, the image has undergone, as the author demonstrates, at least four pronounced stages in the process of disenchantment. In the Middles Ages and down to the Renaissance and the Baroque periods it is accepted as patently magical, whether associated with evil or pagan or satanic purposes in juxtaposition with the widely accepted miracles of the Christian saints. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with the onset of rationalism and common sense, animation of statues is suspect but romantic *natur philosophie*, at least theoretically, justifies the animation of inanimate matter. Many writers of the period accept magic as a useful literary convention and use the theme of Venus and the Ring as a convenient metaphor to express the basic romantic belief in the unity of all beings and in the compelling power of the unconscious. Towards the end of the romantic period, as the balance between reason and convention begins to shift, the theme is gradually stripped of many of its characteristic motifs- the wild hunt, the necromancer, and the ring, although they appear in horror fiction, and the theme in its full form becomes the subject of parody and poetic fantasy.

The third chapter deals with the image as motif, i.e., of the Haunted Portrait. It traces its sources in the archaic belief that the portrait is the receptacle of the human spirit which prevailed through folk literature and Christian legend. Then it manifests itself first in the Gothic romance 'which stands out as one of the earliest and most conspicuous symptoms of the incipient reaction against Enlightenment'. Horace Walpole was the first to introduce the supernatural into the novel, which had remained totally realistic during the first half of the eighteenth century. The stock device of mistaken identity, the author shows, was particularly based upon an uncanny resemblance between a portrait and a living figure. After reaching the peak of popularity between 1795 and 1805, the Gothic romance declined under the effective impact of a reaction in the form of humorous writings. The author distinguishes three main categories of the haunted portraits: (i) *Genius loci*- those belonging to a specific place, (ii) *Figura*- those foreshadowing present or future events, and (iii) *Anima*- those

magically related to their models. The first category is dominant in the Gothic romance where the usually malevolent, brooding presence of the house or family is an obvious precursor of the classic ghost stories of the nineteenth century. The portrait as *figura* is best exemplified by Novalis's famous fragmentary novel, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1802) which inspired Nerval and Rossetti. In Stevenson and Tynan, the portrait prefigures an affliction that will be devastating for the heroine's life and ruin her happiness. The author illustrates the portrait as anima by analyzing the works of Gogol, Hawthorne, Poe, Zola, and Wilde, and offers brilliant comparative estimates of these writers in the process. In sum, the haunted portrait, he observes, that entered the Gothic romance with clearly supernatural associations went through a period of rationalization during late romanticism and was then internalized psychologically by writers of late realism. In our times, we find interesting inversions of all three major forms of the haunted portrait; instead of the past haunting the present, men from the present go up into the picture, e. g., Henry James's novel, *The Sense of the Past*, which had already been anticipated by H. G. Wells (*The Time Machine*) and others. Edith Wharton, likewise, offers a remarkable inversion of the haunted portrait as anima in her tale, 'The Moving Finger' (1901). The inversion of the portrait as figura is exemplified by a comical novel: William de Morgans' *A Likely Story* (1911), where the portrait acts as chronicle or gossip columnist. Finally, the author analyses William E. Barrett's recent novel, *The Shape of Illusion* (1972), which recapitulates all the principal aspects of the motif of the haunted portrait. The fourth chapter traces the sources of the image of the magic mirror in Platonic philosophy, literary theory, Christian theology (through medieval mysticism down to eighteenth century pietism), German thought, and romantic literature. The three well-known mirror metaphors- the Platonic mirror of art that reflects the phenomenal world, the Christian mirror of the soul that reflects God, and the romantic mirror of the self that reflects another human being (all of which have had a powerful impact on thought and literature for many centuries)- are not to be taken, the author points out, as the image of the magic mirror in his sense of the term. He rules out even the broken

mirror of the literature of the romantic age, which is 'obsessed with the problem of consciousness and the terrible sense of guilt it entails', for the simple reason that they are in no sense of the term 'magic images', and hence cannot be disenchanted. The properties of the magic mirror, he observes, derive from the age-old traditional belief (in both folklore and literature) to the effect that the mirror image is the soul and the mirror therefore represents the realm of souls, spirits, and the dead. He distinguishes three principal categories of magic mirror that we find in literature: the catoptromantic or divining mirror, the doubling mirror, and the penetrable mirror. Of these, the second and the third 'easily develop into symbolic images: of the self and of an alternative world-model' whereas the first, though the oldest and most familiar, 'tends to remain at the level of a minor motif. The author traces the image of the magic mirror as symbolic double in progressive stages from Poe and Dostoevsky through Maupassant and Stevenson down to Rodenbach, Brinsov and Rilke, and finally shows how it becomes a transparent window opening onto an ideal world, different from the illusory world of everyday reality. The realm behind the mirror continues to provide the scene in romances from Lewis Carroll's classic, *Through the Looking Glass* (1872), through George MacDonald down to James Branch Cabell.

The concluding chapter brings out 'those common elements that constitute certain larger patterns integrating all three images'. It marks three distinct stages in the process of disenchantment, drawing interesting parallels between literature and theology and showing how interest in the supernatural occurs in regular waves. He refers to the continual wave-movement 'which leads from the marvellous through the fantastic to the uncanny', and also seeks to probe the facts that account for these fluctuations, focusing light on the oft-noted paradox that 'literary interest in the supernatural is a product of the Enlightenment. In their effort to dispel beliefs they considered foolish, the thinkers of the eighteenth century produced scores of volumes on the supernatural'. He also draws attention to the fact that 'as long as the cultural context accepts the supernatural, the appropriate form of response is the marvellous. The fantastic occurs only when

faith has been called into sufficient question for doubt, hesitation, and ambivalence to exist'. Equally pertinent is his observation that 'the horror story thrived in a Victorian England that so notoriously repressed its sexuality'. Professor Ziolkowski lays particular stress on the cultural factors for a revival of interest in the supernatural, and then points to the national differences that account for a contrast in approach of various peoples in Europe to a particular theme or image. For example, in the hands of the German writers at the beginning of the nineteenth century, who were heirs to two strong cultural traditions-the revival of classical pagan antiquity and the revival of Christian Middle Ages that marked German romanticism- the legend of Venus and the Ring represented the clash of paganism and Christianity whereas in the hands of the French writers, keenly aware of the threat of crass materialism to republican values, the same theme embodied the conflict between primitive passion and an exhausted, materialistic civilization. The author, however, hastens to add that, by and large, cultural interests transcend national barriers, as is evident from his analysis of a wide range of fictional works on both sides of the Atlantic which demonstrate a certain uniformity of pattern in their fluctuating attitude to the three images culminating in 'the pronounced shift in the location of existential anxiety from without to within'. Finally, the author observes that as 'the original justifying meaning is withdrawn from a particular image, the image remains in literature according to the Law of Conservation of Cultural Energy', though it is usually reduced in literary status - becoming a figure in a parody or ghost story. These inferences which are based upon his critical analysis of the three images are valuable contributions to literary iconology and constitute significant sidelights on literary history.

For his study of the three images, Professor Ziolkowski has examined the works of about seventy writers of fiction- both European and American- of the last two centuries, giving abundant display of his profound interdisciplinary scholarship and his remarkable capacity for marshalling data. Though his main concern is to highlight the cultural and psychological factors which conditioned their vogue during this period, he has occasionally offered perceptive and illuminating comments on

individual writers, felicitously resorting to comparative evaluation where necessary. His work is, however, a study more in cultural and less in literary history. His approach and conclusions are patently historical in orientation and not aesthetic, although he deals with literary works and claims 'to demonstrate the essential literariness of literature. One may even question his affirmation in the Preface that 'magic mirrors and haunted portraits occur only in books or on the stage-not in "life", for, after all, illusions in life, too, are 'real' experiences and get mirrored in art and literature. Though Professor Ziolkowski tends to be repetitive while summing up his observations, yet in spite of this - he achieves clarity and system in the organization of his recalcitrant and massive material.

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O. P. Govil, an author of *Browning's Poetics*, was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University.

BOOK REVIEW

S.M. RIZWAN HUSAIN

SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMATIC MEDITATIONS: AN EXPERIMENT IN CRITICISM

by Giorgio Melchiori

(Clarendon Press, 1976, pp. 206)

In the spectrum of possible approaches to Shakespeare's Sonnets, Professor Melchiori's book represents an important, though familiar, line of argument which refuses to be purely 'literary', calling for a bridging operation between literary criticism and linguistic analysis on the one hand, and a marked sociological orientation on the other. Clearly, this is a doctrine of eclecticism, and Professor Melchiori proposes to utilize this strategy of multiple critical methods to arrive at an 'overall interpretation' of the four 'atypical' sonnets of Shakespeare in which, as he claims, the bard's thoughts and feelings are best articulated. The result is a closely-argued and complex book.

Subtitled 'An Experiment in Criticism', the book opens with a brief chapter on its chosen methodology, justifying literary criticism's traditional, though often guilt-ridden, dependence on such non-literary disciplines as sociology, history, psychology, and linguistics. But it is to Professor Melchiori's credit that he shows his sensitiveness to so many of the dangers that beset an approach of this kind: the danger of treating a grammatical analysis of a poem as the meta critical statement of its meaning; the danger of relying too much on personal impressions, however brilliant and stimulating; the danger of over-emphasizing 'content and context' at the expense of 'forms of expression', and vice versa. There is, thus, much good caution and alert observation throughout Professor Melchiori's argument.

Professor Melchiori finds most criticism of Shakespeare's Sonnets flawed by the 'errors' of critics who insist on reading these poems either as 'formal exercises' documenting the poet's mastery within the context of his poetic culture, or as 'confessional poetry expressing the poet's ‘private predicament’. It also leads him into an attack on the post-Empsonion exegeses which, though structural or semiotic in orientation, always fail to get beyond this 'critical impasse'. Tempted thus to sour rejection, Professor Melchiori steers a different. course and tries to attempt an 'intellectual portrait of Shakespeare based on the evidence found exclusively in sonnets 94, 121, 129, and 146, which contain the poet's 'dramatic meditations' on such non-conventional themes as the ethics of power, social behaviour, sex, and religion. Inclined to see these sonnets in terms of their intellectual, even philosophical content, he hopes to rehabilitate Shakespeare less as the historically interesting Elizabethan than as the man whose essential humanity has still something important and crucial to say to us. It is in this that his eclectic approach is a necessity with him, not a panel-game facility.

Happily, Professor Melchiori is finely alive to one of the basic insights of modern linguistics which insists on treating data both on the 'diachronic' and 'synchronic’ levels. That is, in this case, his professed intention is to study 'the general historical evolution of the context' in order to identify 'the individual position of Shakespeare as a thinking mind' in it. But how to go about it? The answer is crucial to the success of Professor Melchiori's methodology, and what he has to say is of the widest possible interest.

Professor Melchiori begins by identifying Herbert Donow's "Concordance' as his 'source-book', which consists of statistically computerized 'data' drawn from the Elizabethan sonnet usage practised by Daniel, Drayton, Shakespeare, Sidney, and Spenser-all in the form of 'lexical' tables, schemes, and diagrams. Here the choice of data as an 'abstraction' is perhaps forced on him by his commitment to 'avoid all temptation to sentimentalize or aestheticize it. And in using it he makes a telling application of 'statistics' to literary criticism. But these

configurations, Professor Melchiori warns us, should in no case be taken as representing 'a method of inquiry'; they are, what he calls, justifiably, 'a point of departure', providing only 'factual presuppositions' for his proposed study.

From these tables, Professor Melchiori attempts to reconstruct a 'lexical' profile of the Elizabethan 'norm' in sonnet writing by concentrating only on those lexical items which show a tendency of 'high frequency' in the five sonnet sequences. Such a 'normative' profile of the genre, he argues, is sharply nuanced, on the communication level, by the predominance of the pronominals on the scale 'I'-'her'/ 'him'-'thou'/'you'; and on the connotative level it gets rounded off by a relatively high frequency of the word, 'Love', expressing the 'idealization of a conventional sentiment. Given this, he expects to be in possession of a most sensitive instrument, enabling him to let a sociological perspective unfold on it. And it is here that the main weight of his eclectic approach is felt.

It is held, justifiably, that pronouns providing ‘lines of communication' between the poet and his social universe- are the main 'semiotic pointers which tend to determine the communication network of a poetic discourse. It, therefore, immediately commits him to interpreting the predominance of the 'I', followed statistically by the second person pronominals, in his characterization of the Elizabethan sonnet norm. To begin with, we are asked to see it in terms of the 'courtly tradition of lyric poetry, generated and sustained by a definite class structure, in which the court poet celebrates his speaking 'I', always distancing it from the rest of the mankind on which it contemplates with studied detachment. More immediately, and with regard to a strikingly low frequency of 'thou'/'you' in it, his interpretation achieves greater plausibility as we notice almost a total absence of any ‘dialogue' which may involve I-thou relationship. Thus, he points out, 'Love' as a 'courtly game' becomes the most privileged theme in this 'I'-dominated poetry. In summary, most of what Professor Melchiori tells us here fits well into the 'aristocratic' conception of 'elite' poetry which seems to underlie the Elizabethan sonneteering-the 'patrimony of the privileged few' in

that clientele system. This is, for example, quite obvious in the case of Sir Philip Sidney, undoubtedly the model of the English courtier, who adopted it 'as a form of expression proper to an elite'. However, for Daniel, Drayton, and Spenser, who as 'outsiders' were still aspiring to enter into this 'magic circle of the aristocracy', it turned out to be a 'means of social climbing'. But what about Shakespeare? Professor Melchiori turns again to 'statistics' for a possible answer.

That Shakespeare broke with this courtly tradition is a kind of insight that Professor Melchiori's sensitively applied statistical method does much to support. In particular, it enables him to 'measure' Shakespeare's deviations from the norm in the use of pronominal forms and in the treatment of the still privileged theme, 'Love'. He does it with particular authority, using once again the evidence he draws from his source book, Herbert Donow's 'Concordance'. Such evidence tantalizingly suggests that the norm of Shakespeare's Sonnets is characterized on the level of communication by achieving a balance between 'I' and 'thou'; and that it stands out on the connotative level by the 'prevalence of the word 'Love' in relation to 'Beauty', 'Time', and 'Truth'. But what is the significance of these deviations? In the first place, Professor Melchiori argues, Shakespeare's disruption of the 'normal' pronominal order, 'I'-'her'/'him'-'thou'/'you', results in his attempt to move away from the tradition of the sonneteer as an 'aristocrat', establishing a dialogue with, instead of contemplating, his interlocutor. That is, so the argument runs, Shakespeare behaves 'as par inter pares, or as man to man', entering into a 'vital and dramatic I-thou relationship' even while using the lyrical form. And one aspect of Shakespeare on which Professor Melchiori puts repeated emphasis is the poet's secure social standing as a playwright which places him on a 'totally different plane from that of the other sonneteers of his time in respect of the social hierarchy in which they were trying to find a place. This, therefore, obviated for him the need to use lyrical poetry as 'prestige' or as a 'means of social climbing'.

Surely, what we find here is not a routine assessment. Still more striking is Professor Melchiori's comment on Shakespeare's

treatment of the theme of 'Love' in relation to 'Beauty' (physical beauty as a reflection of inner beauty), 'Time' (often personified), and 'Truth' (as the quality of being genuine and sincere). Here', Professor Melchiori reminds us, 'we are dealing with fundamental and typical motives of Shakespeare's poetry: his preoccupation with the pressure of time, his recognition of the temporal and transitory dimension of human existence, and his determination to defy time and death without trying to escape into another dimension; the exaltation of "Truth" is an affirmation of the necessity to remain faithful to oneself and to one's condition as a man, to be frank; and his authenticity- an essential moral quality- can constitute, together with beauty, a passport to immortality'. That is, he suggests, the theme, although of Horatian and Ovidian origin, assumes in Shakespeare a 'new ethical quality', going beyond its Renaissance usage which is essentially aesthetic. Thus viewed, 'Love' is no more an 'idealization of a conventional sentiment as treated by most of his contemporaries, but becomes an 'inescapable component of the human condition, a conflict between the life of the senses and an innate ethical need'.

But to describe Shakespeare in this way is to resurrect the 'typical' in the poet; the 'atypical' in him, however, is yet to be explored. When Professor Melchiori turns to this problem he looks hopefully to Shakespeare's departures from his own norm, assuming that such departures may reveal 'more directly the thought of the author beyond the self- imposed personal conventions and tricks of style which are merely the stock-in-trade of his poetic craft'. This, therefore, leads him to the actual choice of four sonnets-94, 121, 129, and 146-which are found to be 'atypical' in that they neither partake of the poet's much favoured I-thou dialogue nor celebrate his key connotative theme, 'Love'. And 'atypical' as they are, the argument claims, these sonnets document the poet's ambiguous attitude towards 'the upheaval in traditional ethical values in the moment of history in which he was living. This, in fact, is the core of Professor Melchiori's argument.

Setting off from here Professor Melchiori writes four chapters, each of which is concerned with one of the four

'atypical' sonnets. In each chapter, his plea is in favour of taking the poem under discussion on its own terms, treating it as a 'soliloquy' in so far as it gets away from the private context of the surrounding poems. Given this, his strategy in each case is to follow the suggestions of the language the poem uses and of the socio-economic code it applies. Thus, by a careful construing of a 'socio-linguistic' context Professor Melchiori comes to recognize, for example, sonnet 94 as a 'political poem', sonnet 121 as a personal statement on the 'dialectics of society versus individual', sonnet 129 as dramatic meditation on the ethics of 'sex' and sonnet 146 as a 'Christian poem'. In particular, they are interpreted as 'explorations of the contradictions in themselves dramatic-existing in the various views on the exercise of power, social behaviour, sex, and religion'. That is, Professor Melchiori reads them to discover the poet's awareness of the transition that was taking place at the time, a transition from an agricultural economy in the hands of the landed aristocracy to the progressive assertion of a merchant class accumulating wealth through commercial and banking operations, threatening the privileges of blood. There is also an interchapter on sonnet 20, which interprets the basic semantic antinomy between 'platonic love' and 'sexual passion'.

We must now ask where Professor Melchiori's eclecticism, has brought us, and what difference it makes to our understanding of the sonnets. There is, surely, on reflection, no methodological confusion although he has used a multitude of critical means to make his assessment of the sonnets clear to us. Here Professor Melchiori is not a mere exploiter of a changing taste in literary interpretation. We are, in fact, in his debt when he shows how to use 'statistics' as a 'discovery procedure' and how to transmute it into a critical tool of enormous potential. And even his sociological approach, used here for unfolding a socio-economic perspective, is not without its measure of success although at times, I think, it tends to labour points which could be made more simply. Above all, in the four interpretative chapters of the book, wherein Professor Melchiori's eclectic approach validates itself, we are offered a radically new reading of Shakespeare's sonnets, with some interesting insights into the Elizabethan sonnet usage.

It is, however, perhaps rather unfortunate for this thoughtful book to have relied exclusively on Herbert Donow's 'Concordance'-not an entirely safe source-book, as Kenneth Muir points out, for 'data hunting'.

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S. M. Rizwan Husain, one of the pioneers of English Language Teaching at AMU, was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University.

BOOK REVIEW

MOHAMMAD YASIN

E.M. FORSTER: THE PERSONAL VOICE

by John Colmer

(Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957, pp. 227)

Post-war criticism of Forster and a reassessment of his works by eminent scholars has not only established him as one of the greatest creative writers of the present century but also as a thinker, a liberal and an individualist. In the wake of the fresh revival of interest in Forster on both sides of the Atlantic, commendable studies throwing light on different aspects of the novelist have come out. Professor John Colmer's book *E. M. Forster: The Personal Voice* is one of the most comprehensive, well-documented and upto date critical studies on Forster. Besides the critical material on Forster, Colmer has also taken note of the newly published memoirs and biographies of his friends and contemporaries that present sidelights on the novelist's personality.

E. M. Forster: The Personal Voice is a significant contribution to Forster criticism because without being too formal or too abstract, Colmer has tried to present the creative writer, the liberal, the anti-Nazi pacifist, the mystic, the homosexual and the 'freedom' fighter from a fresh point of view. As a result of his enquiry, the entire persona emerges in full view, though somewhat individualistic and even enigmatic but human to the very core. The book 'aims to place Forster's various works in their appropriate social and cultural context, using as far as possible, Forster's own account of the climate of thought in which his powers as a writer developed.'

Colmer follows the Trilling-Beer tradition but adds something new and original to it in his study. Trilling's *E. M. Forster: A Study* (1944) is valuable for offering intellectual and political background to Forster's work and Beer's *The Achievement of E. M Forster* (1962) stresses the romantic and moral aspects of Forster's art. John Colmer's book supplements these studies by unifying the visionary and aesthetic aspects with the personal modes and attitudes of the artist in his creative writings.

The first chapter 'Life and Times' provides sufficient biographical sidelights on the novelist's formative years- 'the female-dominated world', initiation into the life of 'comradeship' ('to be loved and even hurt') and the urge for 'continuity', realised in the wake of sudden exile from his rural paradise. References to Forster's reactions to the shallowness of middle class culture and his hatred of the conventional values have been made by eminent critics. Colmer records Forster's early impressions and underscores the importance of Cambridge on the development of the young author. According to him Forster felt liberated in Cambridge but scepticism leading to agnosticism further deepened his urge for 'continuity' and 'personal salvation'. While emphasising the influence of nineteenth-century liberalism, Romanticism, the Cambridge Apostles, and Bloomsbury, and the general socio-political milieu, the author appropriately reminds us of the novelist's insistence 'that a writer's development is internal' (p. 19).

Before discussing 'Italian Novels' Colmer analyses the background of the short stories and the 'germination' of Forster's early novels. He refers to the influence of the series of *Guides* and *Volumes of Sketches* on Forster's nascent mind and concludes that the short stories (including his homosexual stories, published later) form an ideal introduction to Forster's fictional universe. They not only introduce us to his characteristic blend of poetry and realism but also explore themes and motifs more amply developed in the novels-salvation, the 'rescue party', the past, the personal relations, nature, money and the attacks on conventional ideas of good form.

A Room with a View provides the framework of contrasting values ideally suited to novels of domestic comedy in Jane Austen's manner. Though Colmer is not blind to Forster's excessive concern with the art, architecture and local colour of Italy, he believes that in this novei Forster comes closest in spirit to Jane Austen: 'It celebrates the victory of Love' and Truth over 'Muddle' (p. 43). The analysis of the dramatic value of scenes and situations in the novel is abundantly suggestive. The critic, very rightly remarks that in this early' novel Forster explores the interaction of the different levels of consciousness in a manner that. foreshadows *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*.

Like the earlier novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* also evokes the atmosphere and spirit of Italy with special intensity. But the theme is that of 'the rescue'. Colmer refers to Forster's simple time-table of the rescues in the manuscripts, now in the British Museum. Every reader of the novel knows that *Where Angels Fear to Tread* is a novel about being saved. The critic, however, observes that two different ideas of being saved are played off against each other: 'One is the idea of spiritual salvation, of saving one's inner integrity, of achieving wholeness of being... The other is saving face, the whole business of sending out rescue parties to prevent an undesirable marriage' (p. 54).

Though not strictly Forster's *Juvenalia,* the early novels draw attention to his meticulous impressionism and to visionary. experiences with regard to the theme of personal salvation, In these novels the juxtaposition of Italy and England serves as a major structural principle for contrasting the two approaches to life: the instinctive and the conventional. In the English novels, *The Longest Journey* (1907), *Howards End* (1910) and *Maurice* (written 1913-14), the structure rests on contrast within English society; consequently communities and houses serve a more important symbolic role than in the Italian novels.

Colmer is very perceptive in his treatment of the English novels. He holds that the theme in these novels is England, the question of 'who shall inherit England'. But at the the very outset, while reminding us of the limitations of Forster's solutions (pastoral Code), he probes the true nature of these novels in the

following words: 'They also assert the supremacy of imaginative reason; they explore the possibilities of man living in harmony with the earth; they are centrally concerned with the sanctity of personal relations, with the need to "connect"; and they all show that ultimately "the inner life pays", an ironic reversal of the commercial ethics of the day' (p. 66).

The tripartite division of *The Longest Journey into Cambridge*, Sawston and Wiltshire corresponds to three different responses to life. In the first section, Cambridge, we meet the hero, Rickie Elliot full of high ideals and a radiant vision of human fellowship. In the Sawston chapter, we watch the progressive deterioration of Rickie's character under the influence of his wife Agnes, an unimaginative woman, and of her brother, Mr Pembroke a house master at Sawston school. In the last section of the novel, Wiltshire, Rickie loses his own life in saving Stephen (his illegitimate brother) from being run over by a train. Clearly another story about salvation. Yet, equally important is the theme of illusion and reality. The imaginative Rickie suffers as much as the instinctive Stephen or the intellectual Ansell. The novel as a whole suggests that no one approach is sufficient but that all are necessary.

Colmer, brilliantly correlating *The Longest Journey* with the homosexual stories, remarks that for obvious reasons Forster was driven into using a number of subterfuges to hide his real theme-love between men. But since the publication of Maurice in 1971, the new approach illuminates much that has always seemed obscene. Two different views have been taken of this confusion. John Harvey sees it as 'an expression of confused and inadequate vision of life' while trilling sees it as 'a failure to master technique'.

Colmer surmises: it is a confusion of vision as well as of technique', yet his final remarks about the novel are revealing: *'The Longest Journey* is something more interesting than a splendid failure or a flawed masterpiece. It is a novel that challenges most of our settled critical categories and is a landmark in Forster's fictional development' (p. 84).

Howards End, built on a major antithesis-the contrast between culture and materialism, is a novel embracing a broader spectrum of English society. It is not the story of a young man's imaginative and emotional development, but the story of two strongly contrasted groups of people-the Wilcoxes (Commercialism, Power) and the Schlegels (Culture). The importance of 'Continuity' is symbolised in the house of *Howards End*. Colmer's main thesis about the novel is that 'it seeks to transmute the muddle of existence into the mystery of life, to transform the horrors of industrialism into a plausible pastoral vision' (p. 93). He successfully illustrates his thesis by suggesting the theme of harmony in a variety of ways: 'It is explored through the private lives of individuals, through the conflict of classes, through the conflict of national traditions' (p, 94). Thus, *Howards End* occupies a distinctive place among novels about culture and society. In this respect this novel may be compared to James's novels on love and money, particularly *The Princess Casemassive* (1886) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). It may, however, be conceded that these works may not be rated fictional masterpieces because of their lack of human warmth and a limited appeal for the general reader.

Colmer's chapter on 'Posthumous Fiction' is not only informative but also suggestive and illuminating. He refers to four different manuscript versions of *Arctic Summer* and discusses its significance in the perfection of Forster's work. The critic is more successful in presenting a perceptive study of the creative sources and biographical details of *Maurice* (1971) in which Forster granted his male lovers a triumph in exile and speculated on the possibility of a redeemed England through their classless love. He points out how it throws great light on Forster's dilemma as an artist and as a man: how to come to terms with his own sexuality in a society that imprisoned homosexuals and banned homosexual literature. The key sentence in Colmer's critique of the novel is that '*Maurice* is an exercise, in personal therapy, not a finished work of art' (p. 114). One may add that it is well done in certain respects but not worth doing. With its simple framework the novel treating the homosexual relations of Maurice Hell with two young men Clive Bell and Alec Scudder and culminating in Maurice and

Alec's retreat into the green woods carries the suggestion that they will inherit England. Professor Colmer traces streaks of homosexuality in Forster from the earlier stories and novels to the appearance of his masterpiece *A Passage to India*. Obviously for Forster personal relations are manifested through homosexual relations in so many of his fictional works.

Before taking up *A Passage to India*, Colmer discusses the background of this novel through Forster's visits to India, his knowledge of Islamic culture in Alexendria and his awareness of the sanctity of Hindu ceremonies. Forster's 'Indian Entries' published in *Encounter* (January 1962) and his visit to different Indian cities is quite well known.

The Hill of Devi based on a carefully edited version of letters he wrote home to his mother and friends during his visits to India supply additional material. Forster had responded at the deepest level of his being to the beauty and terror of the Indian landscape. He was equally interested in probing the mysteries or 'muddles' of India and in speculating on the difficulties in establishing personal relationship among different communities.

It is difficult to agree with Professor Colmer's view that *A Passage to India* presents a composite picture of India. The truth is that Forster's glimpses of India are mainly impressionistic. His cursory and superficial knowledge of men and places hardly qualifies him to grasp the real spirit of India ('unity in diversity'). Forster's own claim that the novel is 'about the search of the human race for a more lasting home, about the universe as embodied in the Indian earth and the horror lurking in the Marabar Caves and the release symbolised by the birth of Krishna's sounds rather unconvincing. Viewed as a work of art that reflects Indian culture and society, the novel succeeds only in yoking together heterogenous elements but always emphasizing the 'diversity' rather than the 'unity'. However, artistically speaking, *A Passage to India* does mark the culmination of Forster's career. The harmony in the novel is at best the product of an effort to reconcile the opposites and the incompatibles.

Professor Colmer views the tripartite structure of the novel in a rather simplistic manner. According to him, the first part,

Mosque, explores the Moslem approach to truth; the second part, Caves, examines the confusion and sterility of the British and the third part, Temple, celebrates the comprehensive spirituality of the Hindu approach. His discovery of a variety of 'parallel and interlocking relationships' is interesting and reminds us of the difficulties in bringing Englishmen and Indians together as friends: 'The two nations cannot be friends' 'I know. Not yet.' Colmer repeats Forster's view that affection can triumph over corroding suspicion and produce connection and harmony but the triumph is precarious. Colmer observes shrewdly to the affect that 'In *A Passage to India*, language comes to stand for everything that divides man; while memory and silences stand for what reconciles and unites' (p. 168).

Professor Colmer thinks that since Forster's achievement as a novelist depends mainly on his power of characterization, his mastery of dialogue, his delicately poised irony, his flexible prose, he will continue to be read and appreciated as a major twentieth century novelist. He even asserts that Forster's novels will survive changes of fashion and that his critical and social writings will continue to be read both for their originality of thought and expression and for their historical interest' (p. 227). Perhaps he could have conveniently telescoped certain descriptive chapters to make room for general criticism of Forster's art and vision. Works such as *Howards End* and *A Passage to India* deserve thorough scrutiny. The brief critical appraisals, though quite rewarding for the general reader, leave him craving for a fuller treatment. Nevertheless, Colmer's book is a valuable contribution to Forster studies and opens fresh avenues for further research. His balanced judgments and comprehensive view of the artist's genius undoubtedly help him in giving us the quintessence of Forster in an objective yet sympathetic manner.

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Mohammad Yasin was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University. A bilingual author, he wrote *Joseph Conrad's Theory of Fiction*.

BOOK REVIEW

S. WIQAR HUSAIN

POPE'S IMAGINATION

by David Fairer

(Manchester University Press, 1984, pp. 189)

David Fairer, who thinks that modern criticism has not done 'justice to the richness and complexity about the imagination in the age of Pope', sets out to establish in his book the following 'general points':

Pope's intense interest in the working of imagination within himself and others, his manipulation of the effects of imagination for artistic ends, his exploration of the nature of imaginative activity through character as well as through the readers' response, his absorption in the earlier traditions and ideas about the imagination and their implications in the context of his own poetry, his highlighting of the ambiguities found in the various views of the imagination and his ability to draw 'poetic power' from them, and finally the fact that 'in this important aspect of his writing Pope is clearly working within the native traditions of English literature of 1550-1700. The author has chosen for detailed study such poems of Pope's in which the imagination is, to quote his words, 'a part of the subject matter. If Eloisa to Abelard provides a medium to understand 'the paradox of the imagination', the relationship between truth and imagination is discerned through an analysis of *The Rape of the Lock*, and the final two chapters which deal, respectively, with 'Women and the imagination, and 'The imagination as process', focus upon *Epistle to a Lady* and *The Dunciad Variorum*. The study of these four poems is preceded by an introduction and a chapter, by way of background entitled, 'Pope's imagination'.

The author admits that the early eighteenth century was sceptical of the imagination but adds that Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson and Milton too had their reservations about this tremendous human faculty. He also justly reminds the reader that fancy and imagination were not two distinct terms in the time of Pope, not even in the critical writings of Dryden, though he seems to be aware of a difference between the two. Hence fancy, imagination and even fantasy have been referred to as almost interchangeable terms in the book. Fairer asserts that for Pope the poet's imagination is not sealed off from the 'chaos of human experience. Pope is deeply aware of the paradoxical nature of imagination, and it is 'the tension within his work between imaginative sympathy and moral judgment- between a freer and a more stable element, which gives it much of its power'.

Pope's preoccupation with the subject of imagination is ably established through significant references to his Letters in Chapter one. The poet, who saw man as 'one mighty Inconsistency', viewed the imagination as something in which a person indulged and regarded it as 'a dangerous and renegade power'. Realised as he did the equivocal nature of the imagination, it was his endeavour to impose an artistic discipline on the products of fancy. Pope was aware of the imagination's potential for transcending everyday reality and also of its inconsistency and fancifulness which made it resemble a woman:

If Pope's imagination was in some ways a woman, then she was at times a fallen woman, at times a redeemed woman: she was sometimes Eve, victim of a satanic dream, sometimes the lady in the Maske awaiting the release of her soul into a higher sphere. At all times she was elusive, troubled, brilliant. She delighted him, but frustrated him. Pope followed her, solved her, and finally grew disillusioned with her.

The above extract should not produce the impression that the book's language is by and large metaphorical. It has a certain power and richness of its own but it is on the whole, the solid, concise and matter-of-fact language of responsible scholar- ship and criticism which avoids jargon and enables the reader to share,

on an intimate level, the author's critical exploration of the subject.

The studies of the four poems given in the succeeding chapters share a common pattern, which, despite their being extremely well-documented and informative in the best sense of the word, makes them a little monotonous. The most commendable aspect of these studies is the author's attempt to relate the poem under reference to its literary past which is not necessarily confined to the previous works of literature in a particular genre, but also includes the religious, social, political and pedagogic features of the relevant time. Thus a historical context is established, yet the emphasis continues to be on the literary tradition. For instance, in Chapter two a reference is made to the Renaissance faculty psychology that recognised the independent status of the imagination as well as its elusive nature and wanted it to be controlled by the rational mind, but it is not difficult to see that the real interest of this chapter centres upon some of the works of Spenser, *Shakespeare* and Milton as the literary antecedents of Pope's poem. A useful parallel is drawn between Milton's *Ludlow Maske* and *Eloisa to Abelard* to illustrate the contrast between the two types of imagination: the divine and the base, represented, respectively, by the Lady and Comus in Milton's *Maske*. The author makes a perceptive distinction between Milton's Lady and Pope's Eloisa as he remarks that like the lady Eloisa is a 'physical prisoner', but unlike her she is a prisoner of her imagination as well. Pope's poem is thus 'a battle- ground of the base functions of the imagination', and the final resolution has been achieved in the imagination of the heroine. Surely Pope's 'Ovidian epistle' is placed in its proper literary context with a good many suggestions to help the reader, but the criticism (to which Fairer has himself referred) still stands that in Eloisa to Abelard Pope has not been able to distance himself sufficiently from the heroine. It may, however, be pointed out that the author's aim is not so much to attempt a comprehensive appreciation of the poem as it is to draw attention to the nature and function of imagination as depicted in the poem. All the four studies share this stress, which, in places, tends to be overlaid, and makes the interest of the book alittle too confined.

Since the poems are projected mainly as allegories of the complex nature of imagination (a mode of interpretation which may not convince some readers of Pope's poetry), the author's approach is bound to become reductive. Not that the author is unaware of the various implications of Pope's poetry. He, for instance, quotes Emrys Jones' remark that 'what Pope as a deliberate satirist rejects as dully lifeless, his imagination communicates as obscurely energetic', but his particular approach does not allow him to concede that Pope's 'conscious intention' could be in conflict with his imagination. Nevertheless, the level and quality of perception as exemplified through Emrys Jones' above remark stand out and may prove of greater help in dealing with Pope's poetry in its totality. However, Fairer goes on to add, with great force and clarity, that 'in reading Pope's poetry we may find that our own imaginative responses awkwardly complicatethe issue, but at such moments we should beware of concluding that the poem's meaning must either exclude such a response, or be compromised as a result. What he cannot admit is that Pope was unaware of any 'complicity' in his writing. As the focus is on the conscious moral intention of the artist, it makes the author examine *The Rape of the Lock* chiefly in terms of 'opposition between imagination and truth' symbolised through Belinda and Clarissa, Ariel and the Baron and the lock and the scissors. The second part of the chapter on *The Rape of the Lock*, which draws attention to the theories of Hobbes and Locke concerning the imagination on the one hand and to the works of Jonson, Milton, Cowley, Rowe and Spenser on the other, provides a useful backdrop to the theme of the mock epic as it is apprehended and projected by Fairer who thinks that the poem is more allegorical than qenerally thought of and represents the imagination in its myriad aspects. The sylphs are seen as Pope's 'most powerful and sustained image of the imagination'. A parallel is established between Belinda and Milton's Eve. The author is of the view that the 'crowded imagination' of a coquette like Belinda does not necessarily project the confusion of value in her society.

As mentioned earlier the studies of *Epistle to a Lady* and *The Dunciad Variorum* follow the same pattern as established in the first two studies. *Epistle to a Lady* is seen as 'an anatomy of

the self-destructive aspects of the imaginative activity in the fancifulness of women- a subject also treated by some of the eighteenth century essayists. There is a good analysis of the form of the poem along with a comparison with *The Rape of the Lock*. Of particular interest in this regard is the distinction made between the roles of Martha and Clarissa in the two poems.

As in the case of *The Rape of the Lock*, the satirical aspect of the poem is relegated to a secondary position in the explication of *The Dunciad Variorum* (the three-book Dunciad is chosen for the study). The author regards the *Dunciad* as an 'expose of many kinds of distorted imagination and a medium to understand the relationship between imaginative disorder and moral disorder. Special attention is paid to the neo-platonic nature of imagery of mist and mud; and it is held out that dullness offers in the poem 'a satanic kind of imaginative spectacle' The author's references to some of the passages of the poem are a little too detailed, bordering, at times, on paraphrase as for example on pp. 127-28. However, this lengthy consideration of the poem does throw up some valid critical points, for instance, the remark that Pope's perception, pre- Romantic as it was, would make him lose his identity by indulging in private fantasies, or that what Pope satirizes in the Dunciad is the imagination's capacity to 'pleasingly confound dissimilar objects' (the phrase is Hobbes'). Thus the author maintains that it is the moral theme which is of primary importance in the Dunciad as it is in the other three poems treated in the book.

In the brief but exceptionally solid Postscript, Fairer admits that it would be an over-simplification to reduce Pope's views on the imagination to a single theory, for he, in fact, did not theorize on this subject. What Byron identified as the two most important aspects of Pope's art: imagination and morality. should always be seen together because for Pope 'a self-enclosed and self-referential imagination' hardly made any sense. It is in the last paragraph of the postscript that the author touches upon an idea which keeps haunting the reader throughout the book: the importance of relating the imagination to morality or to be more exact to truth in this video age of ours in which the link between

the two is most threatened particularly through the nefarious manipulations of the high priests of advertising. And here one should admit that a book like this could not have come at a more appropriate time, for it takes up with great conviction and clarity a subject which is extremely significant for our age, and hence the relevance of this volume goes beyond the confines of literary criticism.

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S. Wiqar Husain, a widely read scholar, was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University. He specialised in American and Continental fiction.

BOOK REVIEW

PETER WOLFE

THE LIFE OF GRAHAM GREENE, VOLUME 1: 1904-1939

by Norman Sherry

(Viking Press, 1989, pp. 783)

The very fact of Norman Sherry's *Life of Graham Greene* sparks at least two ironies. At 783 pages, this first half of a projected two-volume work already runs to more than twice the page count of Greene's longest novel, *Brighton Rock* (1938). The second irony turns on the gulf dividing a writer whose seedy, bitten-up people usually move in shabby, nasty settings and the deluxe format of that writer's biography. The large print, generous margins, and creamy king-size pages of Sherry's authorized Life belie both Greene's preference for the run-down and his frequent use of grandeur as a benchmark of moral corruption.

Perhaps the biography's elegance refers most accurately to the wit, energy, and dedication of the biographer. The thoroughness of detail found in Sherry's opening pages typify the book's inclusiveness. We learn here the day of the week Greene was born, the exact time of his birth, and his birth weight. Also included is a description of the weather in Berkhamsted, England, on both 2 October 1904 and the previous month; information about the flooring, lighting, and seating capacity of the chapel where he was baptised; the date he cut his first tooth. Sherry goes on to include pocket biographies of those who influenced Greene, like Kenneth Richmond, the London psychiatrist who treated him for depression at age seventeen, and one Don Pelito, the four foot-six-inch model for the Judas figure in *The Power and the Glory* (1940), whom Sherry himself met in 1978. Interviewing people, reading old letters, sifting school records, Sherry displays both the

diligence and alertness required of a good biographer. He compares information given to him in person with that found in either manuscript or print. For the sake of accuracy, he will correct Greene's flawed memory (or spelling). Then he will enter his man's psychodrama, showing, for instance, how Greene's worries about money, health, and career led to recurrent nightmares in the early 1930s. His gains can be easily assessed. Rather than drowning the reader in a sea of facts, he proves that a biography can be inclusive but not boring.

An array of skills enrich the Life. Sherry can vary his pace, approach and subject matter without losing sight of his purpose that of dovetailing the formation of Greene's sensibility with the oeuvre that has made him one of our century's leading writers in English. By turns analytical and anecdotal, Sherry will trace Greene's childhood fears to their source and then note their recurrence in the fiction. Symbols from Greene's unhappy childhood like the green baize door and the cracked bell show him overcoming his early traumas in part by transmuting them into important writing; a lifelong fear of drowning also underlies one of the best scenes in *The Quiet American* (1955).

The ability to blend materials enables Sherry to work out a set of artistic principles from Greene's book reviews of the early 1930s, too. In the aesthetic sphere, Sherry is first rate. He finds meaning not only in the feelings stated in Greene's letters but also in the letters' imagery and stylistic control. Writing with economy and good sense, he summarizes the failings of Greene's first published novel, *The Man Within* (1929):

The story is slight with much repetitive action, the setting and characters often unrealized and the dialogue sometimes maladroit Apart from the middle chapters dealing with the assize courts, the reader enters a romantic and unrealistic world populated by unlikely smugglers (371)

This disclaimer reveals but one of Sherry's strengths. Let's look at some others. For example, much of his persuasiveness rests on his lively sense of fun, a near requirement for a portrayer of a prankster like Greene. Thus, the chapter called 'A Seminal Year' includes the observation, 'That night, from the window of

his hotel, he [Greene] saw a man and woman copulating' (163); and some years later, when a sick Liberian says that he's suffering from gonorrhea, we're told, 'Graham turned green' (556).

Only a sharp, versatile mind one sensitive to both the prankish and the morbid can do justice to Greene's 'complex, ambiguous nature' (259). No idolator, Sherry will refer to his man's 'strong streak of perversity' (158). Looking in the right places for ideas, he also shows this perversity shaping Greene's art. Violence dogged Greene from the start: 'When he was ten the First World War began; when he was thirteen there was the Russian Revolution; when he was twenty-two there was the General Strike in Britain' (5-6). This background of upheaval aggravated a childhood fear of birds, bats, and darkness; even when he was small, he felt pulled between the need for both security and the solitude his budding imagination needed to find creative outlets. The bipolar tug intensified in 1918 when he began boarding in the school where his father was headmaster. Sherry's account in Chapter 5 of Greene's persecution by his fellow students and his belief that his parents betrayed him make the chapter, ‘The Greening of Greene’, the linchpin of the book. The transformation of the shy, physically awkward lad into the betrayal-ridden adult who preferred the filth and fever of the primitive tropics to the comforts of home discloses some of the burden of artistic expression. Greene accepted the frustrations and denials of authorship in order to win success. The author in Greene has thrived at the expense of the person, dredging up childhood anxieties and dwelling on his failings to the point where his hard-won success had lost its savor (in A Sort of Life [1971]), he chides himself for having failed at failure).

Did he fail his biographer, too? 'I will never lie to you Norman, but I will not answer all your questions' (xvi), he once told Sherry. Perhaps his reticence explains his shadowiness as a family man. More could have been said of the fact that his African and Mexican journeys of the 1930s coincided with the age when his two children were starting to walk a time when his wife reeded him at home. And though Sherry does remind us that Greene and Vivien divorced, he might have explained the rift by means of the contrast developed in It's a Battlefield between love

and lust. Whereas lust is simple, love introduces complexities which can interfere with sex and blunt sexual pleasure. This tragic contrast could explain a great deal about Greene's marriage. Besides appearing in a 1934 book, it preceded only by months Greene's departure for Liberia in January 1935, and it coincided with the time when he began to tip pages from his diary. Though much has been said about the pain Graham Greene has suffered, perhaps more attention needs to be given to the pain he inflicted.

It would be good, too, to know his thoughts when he named his son (born in September 1936) Francis Francis was the name of the unlucky main figure in his rejected first novel, *The Episode*; of the treacherous, guilt-raked hero of *The Man Within*; and of the frightened child who dies in 'The End of the Party (1931). Certainly Greene wanted better for his new son than the woes suffered by his like-named characters. but Sherry sidesteps the issues called forth by Francis's puzzling name, intriguing as they are.

If he's protecting Greene's privacy, then perhaps his silence shouldn't be faulted. But his Life can be improved elsewhere. The Prefaces of Henry James was edited by R. P. Blackmur and not Leon Edel, as Sherry claims (524), and Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* didn't first appear in 1947 (245, 373), but in 1948. Another problem inheres in the book's style. Sherry handles complex ideas and moral ambiguities with a deftness befitting his mercurial subject. And though his interest in Greene remains steady, his prose softens and sags over the long pull. Future editions of the biography should remove cliches like 'set the wheels in motion' (143), 'throw in the towel' (249), and 'keep the wolf from the door (447). Another rhetorical slip that has no place in a major biography is Sherry's growing tendency to cite a connection without troubling to define it: 'Greene's priest [in *The Power and the Glory*] suffers his greatest degradation in jail and this episode owes a good deal to Greene's experiences in Villhermosa (712).

As these missed chances show, some parts of the Life please more than others. Readers may object to the volume of quoted material, for example, puffing out Chapter 14, an account of Greene's courtship of Vivien. Here, Sherry can't resist

including many of the surviving letters Greene wrote at the time, thus forfeiting both control and perspective. The hard focus created by a succession of letters works better in a novel of psychological realism than in a biography. It also makes us question Sherry's judgment. What kind of material should a biography preserve? Chapter Thirty-two prints a 1933 letter describing the Greenes' new flat. Selection becomes a question again in Chapter 36. Appearing after an exciting account of Greene's Liberian trek, the heavily quoted chapter stubs along slowly. Whatever rhythm Sherry does coax out of it he forfeits in his rehearsals of Greene's dealings with agents, editors, and publishers, material that might have been summarized rather than spelled out. But he recovers quickly. Sluggish, earnest Chapter 36 yields to one of the book's most inspired chapters, 'The Pleasure Dome,' a discussion of Greene as both a film critic and film maker. Because Sherry backs off from his material, he recounts experience, probes its meaning, and formulates an aesthetic that sheds important light on Greene's artistry. Most of the Life attains this distinction. Funny, perceptive, and generous in spirit, the work Includes a wealth of data drawn from many sources. Organizing this abundance is Sherry's concept of Greene as a restless, energetic man forever seeking ways of escape from depression and boredom, yes, but perhaps also from that penchant for ugliness that has chilled his heart while, paradoxically, building his vision. Much of the value of *The Life of Graham Greene* stems from the book's ability to filter the events it describes through the prism of Greene's personality. As he should, Greene focuses everything that goes on in the *Life*. Sherry deserves credit for keeping him at the animating core. Credit should also go to his sometimes-enigmatic subject. One of the best strokes in a career studded by imaginative triumphs came in Greene's having chosen Norman Sherry to write his biography.

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Peter Wolfe was Professor of English at University of Missouri, St Louis, Missouri, USA.

BOOK REVIEW

HARISH RAIZADA

E.S.P. VOCABULARY AND MEDICAL DISCOURSE

by Farhatullah Khan

(Lissan Publications, 1990, pp. 165)

While going through Dr Farhatullah Khan's book, I was reminded of Emily Dickinson who devoted herself religiously to the study of *An American Dictionary of the English Language* by Noah Webster, 1844 edition, for several years before making her debut in the field of poetry. She had realized the importance of lexis, being symbol of ideas, for communication and hence wanted to store in her memory its rich treasure for her own special purposes. With the expanding frontiers of knowledge particularly in the fields of science, engineering and medical science and simultaneous increase in the specialized vocabulary to give it verbal manifestation, it is becoming more and more difficult to communicate adequately and exactly the specialized knowledge of a subject through. the limited range of common vocabulary. There has therefore arisen a great need of learning the medium for special requirements and purposes. Lexis being the proper tool of communication, the emphasis falls on categorizing its widely increasing wealth according to various disciplines.

English has now attained the status of the *lingua franca* of the world because of its links with the British colonies in the past and its fast developing rich vocabulary in the present. This global significance of English has necessitated reorientation in its teaching to speakers of other languages. There is now significant change in approach to and methodology of the English Language Teaching (ELT) to cater to manifold interests and requirements of communication for different purposes. The new demands have led to channelizing ELT to specified professional needs The concept

of English for Specific Purposes, i.e., ESP, has therefore emerged as a significant aspect of ELT, to help the specialist learner in a particular discipline to use it for his own specific communicative needs and purposes. ESP enables learners to analyse, interpret and produce discourse typical of the subject area.

As vocabulary is a major feature distinguishing subject area, it is not surprising that there have appeared a large number of separate dictionaries related to different subjects of knowledge. Though useful in segregating lexis peculiar to each subject, they do not help students, researchers and experts of the subject to discern the scientific ways of the evolution and connotation of specialist vocabularies and link them with relevant patterns of meanings in discourse. Dr Farhatullah Khan's book. ESP Vocabulary and Medical Discourse, is a pioneering work in presenting a lucid elucidation of the discourse-based lexis related to Medical Sciences.

Out of the six chapters which comprise the main body of Dr. Khan's study, the first three chapters give an in-depth analysis of the theoretical aspects of ESP origin, definition, communicative approaches related to syllabus, materials, methods and teacher training. The last three chapters throw valuable light on the interpretation of specialist disciplines. They deal with the role of vocabulary in language teaching and illustrate with charts and diagrams the communicative potential of vocabulary and propose a model of generative vocabulary drawn on the procedures of word grammar. Chapter seven which is the last one in the study really sums up the inferences drawn from the theoretical and practical aspects of ESP treated earlier. This chapter is very useful not only to the specialists in the field of medical science but also to students and teachers in general.

Written in simple and immaculate English, the book is systematically arranged and well-organised. It is characterized by scientific analysis and precision and cogency in treatment. It also reveals its author's deep insight into and thorough understanding of the various aspects of his subject. It is an indispensable book for the students and specialists in the field of medical science. Its

impressive printing and get-up compares favourably with the books published abroad.

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Harish Raizada was Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University. He is the author of *R. K. Narayan,* and *The Lotus and the Rose: Indian Fiction in English (1859-1947)*.

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