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Edward H. Strauch

THE SEARCH FOR A SCIENCE OF LITERARY CRITICISM

If anything characterizes the scientific outlook, it is the effort to understand the *how* and *why* of natural phenomena. Commonly rejecting dogma and authority as the basis for theory, scientists check their daring hypotheses against evidence painstakingly collected through years of observation. In this way the facts advanced by science have increased man's actual knowledge of the world.

Francis Bacon (1561-1621) gave us an early definition of this approach. Opposing the extensive use of deduction in Aristotle's *Organon*,[1] Bacon proposed induction as a method of reasoning in his own *Novum Organum* (1620). Induction enables a researcher to infer a general truth from many particular facts by investigating a series of incidents or circumstances which appear to be governed by some probable relationship or pattern of occurences. The investigator's aim is to detect just what connection exists among such phenomena, how they operate and why.

Bacon was wary of the very hypotheses which set off such investigation, for men all too often are misled by their "idols". Bacon warned against such idols as : (1) bad habits of mind, (2) expecting more law and order in nature than can be found, (3) personal prejudices, (4) the tyranny of words, (5) the veneration of past systems of thought, and (6) the deductive reasoning as used in Aristotle's syllogisms. In place of these, Bacon advocated the analysis, classification, and correlation of all data pertaining to a given problem. By testing one hypothesis after another, the researcher tries to

uncover the law governing his facts. In other words, induction implies a patient search for patterns which divulge the shape and significance of empirical experience.

During the same period, Rene Descartes (1596-1650) was also seeking to develop a solid system of thought. To attain an indisputable foundation for his method of reasoning, he systematically doubted everything he once thought of as knowledge until he realized he could not doubt the act of doubting. As a result, he came to the conclusion, "I think, therefore I am". With this new insight into man's thinking self, Descartes founded modern philosophy, and his *"Cogito ergo sum"* made the discovery of mental processes as important as the inductive exploration of empirical phenomena.

Because Descartes regarded the essential faculty of human nature to be reason, he wanted to train the mind to reason well. In his *Discourse on the Method* (1637), he outlined the principles of his system :

(1) First, never accept anything as true which you do not recognize as such.

(2) Second, divide each of the difficulties that you wish to examine into as many parts as is possible and as will be required to better resolve them.

(3) Third, conduct your thoughts by order, beginning with the objects that are simplest and easiest to recognize, and

(4) Last, make enumerations so complete and reviews so general that you are assured you have omitted nothing.

By the circumspection that these four steps impose on thought, Descartes methodized rational investigation. In the following centuries, Cartesianism, as his method came to be called, encouraged the systematic analysis of truth and logic. Thus Descartes provided posterity with a model of the way the mind can define and transform experience into knowledge.

Thinkers in all intellectual domains gradually felt the need to pursue the aims and methods of either Bacon or Descartes.

As eighteenth century France became preoccupied with social, scientific, and philosophical questions, Fontenelle's *Conversations on the plurality of worlds* (1686) made science fashionable. During the century Buffon popularized the natural sciences, and geology was born.

Lavoisier introduced the important concept of *analysis*, which is the chemist's technique for separating a substance into its elements and *synthesis*, which is the recombination of those elements into their original state. Later *analysis* came to mean dividing any whole into its parts and *synthesis* meant recombining those parts into the original whole.

A prominent influence on the future of literary criticism was Montesquieu (1689-1755). His *spirit of the Laws* (1748) studied the relationship of law to the constitution of each form of government, to the country's climate, religion, commerce and the like. He believed that laws are relative to the physical aspect of the country and to the situation and size of the terrain. Furthermore, laws derive from the religion of the inhabitants, their inclinations, their wealth, their number, their mores, their manners, and from the interrelationship these conditions have among themselves. Montesquieu's intent was to examine all these connections in order to discover how together they formed what he called the spirit of the laws (I, 3).

Although Montesquieu's erudition was incomplete and at times inexact his effort to introduce the spirit and processes of science into the study of society was a pioneering attempt. More than this, he largely achieved his goal, for it became the philosophy of French education: "It is not a question of making people read, but of getting them to think." (*Esprit des Lois*, XI, 20).

Eighteenth century France also saw the publication of the *Encyclopedia* (1751-72), which attracted such noteworthy contributors as Diderot, D'Alembert, voltaire and Rousseau. It had two distinct objectives: 1) as an encyclopedia,it sought to demonstrate the range of human knowledge, and 2) as a

Reasoned Dictionary of Sciences, Arts and Trades, it described each science, trade and art by depicting its essential characteristics. The encyclopedia showed the value of the careful examination of phenomena and laws, and it aimed at converting men's common ways of thinking to rational habits of thought.

Comte de Buffon (1707-88) represented certain other scientific inclinations. He stressed the need to describe things precisely, for accurate details were necessary if an adequate account was to be rendered. Yet the most important need was to discover that great hypothesis which unified and explained everything.

Buffon himself sketched in the basis for a transformist and evolutionist explanation of living creatures. Further developed by his disciple Lamarck, Buffon's hypothesis found its culmination in Darwin's theory of evolution. Darwin's two-decade study admirably illustrated Buffon's admonition to science students: "Genius is only a greater aptitude of patience."

It was not long before persons interested in literature took up the scientific attitude. Among those seeking to apply the scientific approach to literary criticism was Madame de Stael (1766-1817), who undertook the analysis of the romantic soul. In her *Literature Considered in its Relations to Institutions* (1800), she makes use of Montesquieu's famous theory to study the influence of mores, laws and religion on literature as well as the influence of literature on society. She states, "Climate is one of the principal reasons for the differences . . . between images which please in the north (of Europe) and those which one loves to recall in the south. . . .' Reflecting the joys of life and of the heart, the southerner (of Europe) expresses himself through passion and willpower. By contrast, the northerner shows the influence of foggy and solemn climate by his preoccupation with suffering. Furthermore, his melancholy stems from the sense that man will never understand human destiny.

In Madame de Stael's *About Germany* (1810), she studies

the mores, arts, literature, philosophy, morality, religion and enthusiasm of the Germans. Her opposition between Northern and Southern Europe leads to a parallel contrast between classical and romantic poetry. Although a scrutiny of her information reveals it to be superficial, and even though her critical views are considered by some to be too subjective, her emphasis on inspiration and genius foreshadowed the development of 19th and 20th century psychology, as shown in her assertion, '. . . it is sufficient to show that the diversity. . . . of tastes derives not only from accidental causes, but also from primitive sources of the imagination and of thought.'

Francis-Rene de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) also explored the attributes of the modern mind. In *The Genius of Christianity* (1802), he contrasts Homer's epics to the sublime poetry of the Bible and praises Gothic art and chivalric virtue. In discussing the way the Christian religion inspired art and literature, he showed how it fostered genius, virtue, good taste and virility of concept. His review of works by Dante, Tasso and Milton introduced historical criticism because he was examining the influence of culture on the individual artist.

On the other hand, Chateaubriand's own ideal of beauty stimulated later critics to speculate on the role of the human mind in the production of literature. Chateaubriand's belief in the spontaneity of the imagination eventually led to a scietific study of the literary psyche.

Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve (1804-1869) in such works as *Critiques and Literary Portraits* (1836-39) and *Monday Lectures* (1851-62) pursued his own scientific bent when he observes, 'To be the disciple of Bacon in literary history and criticism seem to me the need of the time.'[2] Indeed, he asserts, 'I analyze. I botanize. What I should like to establish is the natural history of literature.'[3] In the same vein, he is confident about the future of literary study. 'A day will come. . . .a day when the science (of criticism) will be established, when the great families of the spirit and their principal divisions will be determined and known. When the principal character of mind

is given, one will be able to deduce several other characteristics'.[4] At that future time, scientists will be able to find the great natural divisions that mark off different groups of minds. Thus the critic himself should become' . . . someone who seizes the life and mind. . .someone suitable to be a good naturalist in this vast field of minds.'[5]

In addition to this wish to see literary criticism emulate the orderliness of the natural sciences, Sainte-Beuve also sought out the larger sociological connections between a man and his culture. 'The relation between the work and the author, the author's background—family, nation, historical period, and his period in relation to other ages—all these relations, in widening concentric circles, are necessary for the critic's estimate'.[6]

Sainte-Beuve's third method was to examine the specific connection between literary works and the author who created them. Characteristically, he asks about the writer, 'What did he think religiously? How was he affected by the sight of nature? How did he act as far as women are concerned—or in the matter of money? Was he rich—was he poor? What was his regimen, his manner of daily life? In brief what was his vice or weakness?'[7] Applying an old proverb, he remarks, 'Tell me who admires and loves you, and I shall tell you who you are . . .'[8] In essence, by sympathetically yet objectively studying the personality of the artist, Sainte-Beuve in his monographs attempts to give a more intimate account of literary creativity. Thus he equated the creative power of the poet with the insight of the critic. 'The poet finds the region . . . where his genius can live and unfold; the critic finds the instinct and law of that genius.'[9]

By employing these diverse methods, Sainte-Beuve was pursuing a critical ideal '. . . to go beyond the judgments of outdated rhetoric, to be as little as possible the dupe of phrases, words, beautiful conventional sentiments, and (to attain) truth . . .' Unfortunately, Sainte-Beuve did not always reach this ideal.[10]

Another important influence on literary criticism was positivist philosophy. Auguste Comte (1798-1857) advocated applying scientific methods to understanding humanity. In his *Course of Positivist Philosophy* (1830-42) and subsequent works, he viewed the human intelligence as going through three major stages : the theological, the metaphysical and the positive. If man began by seeing gods everywhere, then abstract forces, he finally saw there are social laws to be discovered. At the positive stage, thinkers are no longer preoccupied with problems about the origin or destination of the universe nor interested in the causes of natural phenomena. Rather, thinkers are prepared '. . . through the combined use of reason and observation, to devote (themselves) uniquely to discovering' the effective laws governing mankind.

Hippolyte Adophe Taine (1828-1893) developed a scientific philosophy of literature kindred to Comte's positivism. In Taine's introduction to *The History of English Literature* (1863-67), he made clear that his interest was in the racial mind and character of a people in its general process of thought and feeling. For instance, he wanted to arrive at the primitive disposition of the Germanic and Nordic race, its peculiar sensations, and its characteristic conceptions. He states, 'Here lie the grand causes, for they are the universal and permanent causes, present at every moment . . . always acting, indestructible. . . .'[11] These he attributes to *'race, milieu,* and *moment.'* When he studies a literary work, he situates it in the matrix of a national culture that produced it, the age or period of its birth, and the society into which it was born. Thus Taine sees a literary work as '. . . a transcript of contemporary manners, a manifestation of a certain kind of mind.'[12]

In this conjunction Taine makes clear what he expects. 'You consider his (the author's) writings, his artistic productions, his business transactions or political ventures; and that in order to. . . measure the scope and limits of his intelligence,

his inventiveness . . . to find the order, the character, the general force of his ideas, the mode in which he thinks and resolves. All these externals are but avenues converging toward . . . the genuine man, I mean that mass of faculties and feeling which are the inner man.'[13] Taine also spells out how this search is to be scientific in nature by adding, 'Is psychology only a series of observations? No, here as elsewhere we must search out the causes after we have collected the facts. No matter if the facts be physical or moral, they all have their causes; there is a cause for ambition, for courage, for truth, as there is for digestion, for muscular movement, for animal heat. Vice and virtue are products like vitriol and sugar; and every complex phenomenon arises from other simple phenomena on which it hangs.'[14]

Taine's injunctions show his effort was to discover the laws that Auguste Comte urged social scientists to find. By uncovering the circumstances of race, epoch, and milieu which constitute the moral conditions that created a given literature, Taine's literary study was an attempt to reconstruct the moral history of a civilization based on a knowledge of universal psychological laws. Thus Taine provides us with a method of finding out the psychology of the people that produced a certain literature.[15]

Claude Bernard (1813-1878) also influenced the search for a science of literary criticism. His introduction to the *Study of Experimental Medicine* (1865) introduced the experimental method to scientific research. The two-fold aim of experimentation is: 1) to test 'authoritative' assertions of the past for their validity and 2) to discover new facts about matter, nature and existence. As distinct from the science of observation, the science of experimentation can with absolute objectivity determine just what are the material, hereditary, or environmental conditions which produce an event. This determining of the causes of an occurence became known as *scientific determinism.*

Emile Zola (1840-1902) used Bernard's approach in his own introductory essay to *The Experimental Novel* (1880). Zola suggested that the novelist and scientist perform similar experiments when the writer of fiction sets up his initial story situation to discover the causes and effects of human interaction. Indeed, Zola felt experimentation would one day be a part of literary criticism when he states, 'I have only spoken of the experimental novel, but I am fairly convinced that the same method, after having triumphed in history and criticism, will triumph everywhere.'[16] In other words, the critic will have a set of criteria and experimental techniques by which to examine a novel's correspondence to truth and cohesion of imaginative reasoning. In addition, the critic will not only be able to test a literary work in the light of past experimentation but also he will be able to discover the new elements, structures, and dimensions in innovative literature by which it surpasses the past.

Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) also influenced Zola. Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) propounded that organic life evolved from early and simple forms to the myraid of species that exist today. This evolution took place through 'natural selection' wherein those organisms which could best adapt to their environment survived the struggle for existence. Zola adopted the view that man is similarly a product of heredity, environment and natural selection, and hence his novels portray characters who act in accordance with biological and environmental laws. Indeed, this way of looking at humanity engendered the nineteenth century literary movement called *naturalism*, where novelists adopted attitudes kindred to those of the physiologist, the zoologist, and naturalist in the fictional portrayal of mankind.

Although Ferdinand Brunetiere (1849-1906) attacked literary naturalism in his work *The Naturalist Novel* (1883), he himself drew heavily on Darwin's evolutionary theory in *The Evolution of Genres in the History of Literature* (1890) and his *Manual of the History of French Literature* (1897).

Brunetiere regarded this history of literature from the geneological standpoint, studying how an author's ideas evolved in his works. By emphasizing the literary work itself and deemphasizing the author's personality or social background, Brunetiere sought to demonstrate an inner causality in the history of literature by examining the influence of earlier literary works on later ones. Thus he draws an analogy between the development of a genre and the history of a species. 'A genre is born, grows, attains its perfection, declines and finally dies.'[17] However, Rene Wellek's objection to the analogy teaches that the adoption of any concept or method from one discipline to another is fraught with danger.[18]

Pierre E. M. Berthelot (1827-1907) in his *Science and Philosophy* (1886) opposed pure reasoning as a means of fathoming reality. Only positive science can coordinate and corroborate the facts of observation and experience. It does this by 'A progressive generalization deducted from anterior facts . . . . ceaselessly verified by new observations . .' which '. . . . conducts our knowledge from vulgar and particular phenomena to . . . natural laws.' Thus positive science is characterized both by exact induction and the search for encompassing laws to account for as many facts and phenomena as possible.

Gustave Lanson (1857-1934) in *The Scientific Spirit and the Method of Literary History* (1909) stressed the need for exact methods of literary research. In addition, he advocated that the researcher have patience, a respect for facts and a dispassionate dedication to the task. Lanson's *Manual of the History of French Literature* (1894) urged students to observe a strict methodology, and he himself demonstrated a judicious use of history and criticism, provided apt psychological portraits, and concentrated his discussion on literary works *per se.*

Although the search for a science of literary criticism is best exemplified by the writings of French critics and theorists, German scholars also made noteworthy contributions to the cause. The literary historian Wilhelm Scherer (1841-86)

explored virtually every major aspect of scientific methodology, and in a sense his works represent a summation of the trend toward a science of literary criticism in the nineteenth century.

Scherer attempted to found a poetic based on the principles of the empirical sciences. Adopting the ideas of French scientific determinism and English positivism, Scherer set himself the task of uncovering the interrelationship between extra-literary facts and those phenomena indigenous to the literary work. The isolated fact interested him only in so far as it manifested some literary law.[19]

On the other hand, Scherer warned against making hasty syntheses or arriving at grandiose conclusions as the history of ideas (the *Geisteswissenschaften)* school in Germany was prone to do. The true literary scientist must avoid the bad habit of seizing upon a few traits in a literary work and constructing a whole philosophical system out of these. In short, Scherer attacked the prevalent tendency to turn a limited accumulation of facts into sweeping generalizations about literature.

Scherer also described the ideal researcher and the goal he should pursue. He '. . . should undertake to organize his knowledge from the point of view of Causality.' In order to do this, he needs to have '. . . a systematic head, . . . a broad knowledge of all peoples, in all times, [be] at home with all spheres of human life . . . .'[20]

Adapting Taine's formula, Scherer studied such influences as 'heritage' 'experience', and 'knowledge'. *(Ererbtes, Erlebtes,* and *Erlerntes)* with the purpose of discovering the laws that condition the production of literary works. To such studies he added his own method of 'reciprocal illumination' *(wechselseitige Erhellung)* which aimed at comparing certain human activities in diverse historical periods.[21] Best represented in his posthumous *Poetik* (1888), this approach used literary works as sociological documents to highlight the influence of literature on the history of a nation.

Scherer insisted on looking, '. . . upon history as an unbroken chain of causes and effects . . .'[22] In his *History of the German Language* (1878) he asserts, '. . . with Buckle [the English Historian] we believe that determinism . . . is the cornerstone of all true comprehension. We believe that the goals of historical science are essentially kindred to those of the natural sciences . . .' and '. . . with the help of natural sciences, the physical forces (of nature will be) compelled to serve mankind.' Included in this belief is an idea which not only hearkens back to Descartes but which also prophesies twentieth cenutury psychology and the ultimate aim of that emerging science, '. . . we seek to understand the powers of the mind in order to master them . . .'[23] Thus his faith in science extended to all spheres of human experience.[24]

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FOOTNOTES

[1] Betrand Russell states that the ancient Greeks in general relied much on deduction as a source of knowledge. On the other hand, Aristotle questioned the basis of the first premise from which deduction starts and concluded that it derives from induction. Nevertheless, in his theory of knowledge, Aristotle overestimated the importance of deduction to human reasoning. See Russell's *A History of Philosophy* (London : George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1947) p. 222.

[2] W. J. Bate, *Criticism : the Major Texts* (N. Y. and Burlingame : Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1952) p. 499.

[3] Ibid., p. 490

[4] Ibid , p. 498

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., p. 490

[7] Ibid., p. 499

[8] Ibid.

[9] Cited in Leo Pollmann's *Literaturwissenschaft and Methode* (Frankfurt am Main, West Germany : Athenaum Fischer Verlag, 1973), p. 95. *'Le poete trouve la region ou son genie peut vivre et se deployer desormais; le critique trouve l'instinct et la loi de ce genie'*

[10] There were objections to Sainte-Beuve's approach. Gustave Lanson said, ' Instead of using biographies to explain works, he (Sainte Beuve) uses works to make up biographies.' Marcel Proust also raised an objection : 'a book is the product of another self (*moi*) than that manifest in society.' (Bate, p. 499; 498) Rene Wellek in his *History of Literary Criticism, 1740-1850, Vol. III, Age of Transition* also criticizes Sainte Beuve sharply, p. 70 ff.

[11] Bate, p. 504

[12] Ibid., p. 501

[13] Ibid., p. 502

[14] Ibid., p. 503

[15] Numerous objections have been made against Taine's approach. Sainte-Beuve argued that one cannot *deduce* a literary work of the first order by studying the influence of *race, milieu* and *moment* on it. Carloni and Filloux in *La Critique Litteraire* (1966) see his determinism and philosophical pretensions degenerating into mere impressions. Finally; Rene Wellek in his *History of Literary Criticism* (p.36) shows how Taine's concepts shift in meaning and how his causal explanations prove to be baffling in the end. On the other hand, W. C. Brownwell in *Criticism : An Essay on Function, Form and Method,* (pp. 33-34) considers that Taine's philosophic structure amply atones for the misapplication of some of the details.

[16] O. B. Hardison, Jr., ed., *Modern Continental Literary Criticism* (N.Y. : Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962) p. 109

[17] Wellek, p. 67

[18] Rene Wellek objects : 'The analogy between the evolution and the life cycle breaks down at every point : it is only a series of metaphors. . . .' Wellek believes Brunetiere has made too close a transference of concepts from biology : 'literary genres are not species, and do not transform themselves to higher species.' *History of Literary Criticism, Vol. III*, p. 67; pp 70-71. Thus Wellek argues that Brunetiere's analogy served more to confuse the historical interpretation of literature than clarify its development.

[19] Wilhelm Scherer, *'Die neue Generation'* in Viktor Zmegac's *Methoden der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft* (Frankfurt am Main, West Germany, 1971) p. 24

[20] Scherer. *'Zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache'* in Zmegac's *Methoden*.

[21] The three criteria in combination with 'reciprocal illumination' apparently have a distinct kinship with diachronic-synchronic linguistic and structuralist studies currently being pursued by European scholars.

[22] Scherer, *'H. Hettners Literaturgeschichte des 18 Jahrhundert' in* Zmegac's *Methoden* p. 14

[23] Scherer's *Geschichte . . . . .'* in Zmegac, p. 19

[24] Scherer was also inspired by Giambattista Vico's *Scienza Nuova* (1725) when Scherer regards German literary history as cyclical, alternating between male and female dominance in 300 year periods. Furthermore, he applied Darwinian Evolutionary concepts to the 'Growth' of individual works.

Kathleen Collins Beyer

TWO PASSAGES TO INDIA : ELIZA FAY AND E. M. FORSTER

One of the West's best-known travellers to the East is E.M. Forster; one of the least-known is Eliza Fay, whose late eighteenth—and early nineteenth—century letters Forster edited in 1925. Over one hundred years separated their journeys, and their responses to those journeys, similar and yet different, prove that both writers were in many ways products of their own times. Eliza, who first travelled to India in 1779, was in the vanguard of what was to become Anglo-Indian society, and she brought with her the typical standoffishness of that curious tribe. Forster, whose important visits to India were in 1912-13, in 1921, and in 1945 knew that he was witnessing the fag-end of the Empire; he blushed at his own sins and at the sins of his countrymen, and he aimed to understand the country which too long had been considered simply a jewel in England's crown.

Forster himself was outspoken about imperialists. Both in Egypt, where he worked as a Red Cross Volunteer during World War I, and in India he had contact with Westerners who ruled the East and he knew first-hand that too many of them were fired by a mean and belittling sense of superiority. He complained, for example, that Westerners have never allowed the Indian to be 'introduced to the West in the social sense, as to a possible friend. We have thrown grammars and neckties at him, and smiled when he put them on wrongly—that is all.'[1] As for Europeans in Egypt—'in all cases they are aliens and have come to exploit . . .; they despise Oriental ways . . .'[2] Forster knew, of course, that the break-

down of cross-cultural relations cannot be blamed solely on the imperialistic mentality and that East-West differences are genuine. But certainly much of the strength of his most famous writing, *A Passage to India*, derives from his portrayal of imperialism as the worm which coils its way between Easterner and Westerner, between Aziz and Fielding.

Our own sense of the history of imperialistic attitudes in India is enlarged because Forster himself chose to edit Eliza Fay's *Original Letters from India, 1779-1815*, a book which is a prime example of the deep-rooted feelings of racial superiority touted by the British in the East. Forster was busy with this task at the same time he was writing *A Passage to India*, which was published in 1924, one year before the Fay letters. Curiously enough, even though these projects overlapped and Forster had the theme of imperialism very much on mind while he was writing his novel, he treats Eliza's prejudices with a very light hand in his Introductory Notes. He alludes to changing attitudes in late eighteenth-century Calcutta, but deals with the topic glancingly. He points out that the British at that time were 'acquiring racial consciousness and the sense of Imperial responsibility' and asks, 'What would be the relation of this new society to the old oriental societies . . .?' His answer – 'No one asked the question yet, nor knew that a very peculiar brand—Anglo-India—was being added to the existing distractions of the peninsula.'[3] Forster goes on to admit that Eliza's letters, alongwith the *Memoirs of William Hickey*, help us know 'what ordinary social life was like a hundred and fifty years ago' in Calcutta (*OL*, 22). But he seems almost oddly insistent that although Eliza's letters 'have value historically, their main interest is human' (*OL*, 15) and he is curiously unwilling to explore their thematic import.

Who, then, was Eliza Fay and why indeed was Forster fascinated by her? Very little is known about her. She was born in 1756, but even her maiden name is a mystery. Forster guesses that her father may have been a sailor and gives a

thumbnail sketch of her: 'She could splash about in French,' 'she was capable of backgammon and cards,' 'her mental equipment was that of an intelligent lady's maid,' she was Anglican but 'pious without enthusiasm' (*OL* 9-10). She married Anthony Fay and in 1779 at the age of twenty-three set out with him for Calcutta where he was going to practise as an Advocate at the Supreme Court. Eliza, in other words, went to India hoping that she and her husband would make their fortune. As it happened, her husband failed at law and they divorced during her first stay. She had, however, financial schemes of her own based on mantua-making and the cloth trade and eventually returned to Calcutta three times—in 1784, in 1796, and in 1816 Each time her financial hopes were dashed. After she died in debt in 1817, the administrator of her estate went ahead and published letters which she had been gathering for print in hope of paying off her creditors. The letters were published in Calcutta in 1817, reprinted in 1821, and re-edited there in 1908 Forster found the 1908 edition irksome—'the text had been tinkered and repunctuated unpardonably' by Rev. W.R. Firminger and the flavour of Eliza's prose had been lost (*OL*, 8). Forster decided to edit the first British edition and to restore the original text.

As Forster makes clear in his well-researched introduction, he was drawn to Eliza as a writer, drawn to her piquant style. 'Every word she wrote is personal. Not a single sentence is dead.' As an example, he pinpoints her comments on a turtle, comments from a rather hungry woman on a long sea voyage:

> Numbers of man-of-war birds and eggs were taken, which proved to be good eating; they likewise caught the finest turtle I ever saw, weighing near 400 lbs., but by an act of unpardonable negligence in people so situated, it was suffered to walk overboard in the night.'

How Forster savoured this prose—'Her opinions and desires are always sticking out like this, and ripping the chaste mantle of literature' (*OL*, 13-14).

Her personality was a drawing point too as were her 'high powers of observation.' Forster dubbed her 'a soul courageous and gallant' and calls her a 'child of her century, which despite its palpitations never lost grasp of the main chance. Her floods of tears and fainting fits are always postponed until a convenient moment: they never intrude while she is looking after her luggage or outwitting her foes.' Her letters, according to Forster, reflect her shrewdness about national characteristics, her liveliness of eye; 'they show us a highly remarkable character, triumphant over the difficulties of life and narrative style' (*OL*, 14-15).

Certainly her endurance and pluck are awesome. Her 1779 journey from England to Calcutta, her most memorable, lasted twelve months and eighteen days and included the gruelling, three-day, overland crossing of the desert from Grand Cairo to Suez. She travelled, as she explains,

> in a kind of litter, called a Tataravan; with two poles fastened between two camels, one behind, the other before. The litter has a top and is surmounted by shabby, ill contrived Venetian blinds, which in the day, increase the suffocating heat, but are of use during the nights which are cold and piercing.

At first, despite her fear of Arabian bandits, the oddity of the whole situation held her attention, but she admits that

> when all traces of human habitation had vanished—; when every sign of cultivation disappeared ; . . when the immeasurable plain lay around me, a burning sun darted his fierce rays from above, and no asylum was visible in front, my very heart sunk within me *(OL, 96-7)*.

Even this adventure, however, paled in the light of her first experience in India—a fifteen-week imprisonment at Calicut by Hyder Ali, the local warlord. Aside from the constant mental anxiety over the eventual fate of Mr. Fay and herself, there was constant physical stress—having to sleep, for example, with scorpions, rats, or bats. It was a thoroughly unsettling welcome to India, a predicament which brought out both the worst and best of Eliza Fay and reminds us that most Empire builders spring from common stock. Eliza's own petty fury, for example, boiled fast and furious when another

prisoner, Mrs. Tulloh, commandeered her precious tea-kettle. On the other hand, the ordeal proved Eliza capable of sterner stuff. When it was clear that the Fays were to be taken captive and their luggage ransacked, Mr. Fay concealed their watches in Eliza's hair, 'secured with pins to prevent them from going; one of the pins however came out' just as Eliza reached shore. The result produced a real if somewhat reluctant heroine, as Eliza recalls: 'Never shall I forget what a terrible sensation the ticking of the watch caused! I think had it continued long I must completely have lost my senses. . .' (*OL*, 124-5).

But if Eliza is to be admired for her lively personality and style, we cannot help but notice how her letters home betray the insidious hauteur of the British, a trait which characterized Anglo-Indians and which, in Forster's opinion, finally cost England the subcontinent. Commenting on her imprisonment, Eliza says:

> little did I imagine that, any power on this Continent, however independent, would have dared to treat *English* subjects with such cruelty, as we experienced from them (*OL*, 120).

This claim to distinction seems to have accelerated over the years, and Forster himself long remembered the Anglo-Indian memsahib who said to him, 'Never forget that you're superior to every native in India except the Rajas, and they're on an equality.'[3]

Eliza's interests in India were, we must recall, pecuniary and it was mainly at arm's length that India thrilled her. When it was protectively veiled by distance, India was exotic and alluring to Eliza's eyes. Certainly the hodgepodge of Eastern and Western architecture that she found in Madras blended charmingly and afforded

> much gratification, particularly when viewed from the country, as the beautiful groups of trees intermingle their tall forms and majestic foliage, with the white chunam and rising spires, cummunicating such harmony, softness and elegance to the scene as to be altogether delightful; and rather resembling the images that float on the imagination after reading fairy tales, or the Arabian nights entertainment . . . (*OL*, 161-2).

Forced, however, to come close to the real India, to the people themselves, Eliza is generally repulsed. Indians she finds 'quiet and supine . . . only half alive' and yet, at the same time, annonyingly capable of exhibiting 'inflexible stubbornness, and vindictive dispositions . . .' (*OL*, 206). For Hinduism, she has no tolerance at all : burning ghats are 'disgusting spectacles" (*OL*, 208); 'deluded natives' worship idols of 'the very ugliest forms' (*OL*, 204). When she sees the pagodas of Jaggernauth from the deck of her ship and is told of the ritual sacrifices performed there, she is not at all curious to understand the custom; she simply prays that 'folly and superstition' will be swept away by the spread of the Gospel (*OL*, 171).

All in all, her letters actually have little to do with India. Her life was with the nabobs and that is largely what she tells us about—the dinners, the balls, the trips to the races and to the theatre in Calcutta where, as Jan Morris says, the British 'lived out their exiles, not merely with resignation or resolution, but actually with gusto.'[4] Her evaluations of India, unlike Forster's, do not go beyond the superficial. The reality of India might have soiled her petticoats, and so, she kept them tightly wrapped round her. One of her sketches of Cairo, where she stopped on her way to India, tells the same story.

> All the Christians live in one part of the town as I before noticed: during the time when the Plague rages, they visit each other by means of bridges thrown across the streets, from the tops of houses, and this is a convenience they often resort to at other times, as it saves them from insult, which they often meet below (*OL*, 94).

The garrison quality of this eighteenth-century scene anticipates the cultural insularity which Forster discovered during the twentieth century in Egypt and India and which he damned as vicious in *A Passage to India*. Why then is Forster so shy of pointing out Eliza's unsavoury attitudes? At one point he even praises the following keen-sighted generalization 'about the myriads of India.'

'I wish these people would not vex one by their tricks; for there is something in the mild countenances and gentle manners of the Hindoos that interests me exceedingly' (*OL*, 15).

To be honest, Eliza explored and wrote precious little about these 'mild countenances and gentle manners,' and Forster's fondness for her phrasing seems to mirror more clearly his own mixed reactions to Indians and India. Forster, too, came to India at a turning point in history, and if his views reflect the enlightened response of his contemporary countrymen in India, they also often smack of the cultural imperialism of an earlier age.

Forster visited India in 1912-13 and he came to live there for roughly eight months in 1921 as the Maharajah of Dewas' Private Secretary. In *The Hill of Devi*, which includes many of the letters that Forster wrote home during his first two trips to India, Forster insists that life in Dewas in 1921 was 'queer beyond description'[5] and his candid recollections of court life sometimes read as if they might have been written by a stereotypic Anglo-Indian. Consider his description of Gokul Ashtami, the birth of Krishna ceremony:

> What troubles me is that every detail, almost without exception, is fatuous, and in bad taste. The altar is a mess of little objects, stifled with rose leaves, the walls are hung with deplorable oleographs, the chandeliers, draperies—everything bad (*HD*. 160).

As for day-to-day court life, Forster often found it thoroughly vexing and did not hesitate to say so. 'I could never describe the muddle in this place. It is wheel within wheel' (*HD*, 115). 'I open a cupboard near the bath and find it full of teapots' (*HD*, 87). If Forster did not bother to underscore Eliza's narrow perceptions, it is probably because he saw little reason to carp about the short-comings of his ancestors. But might it not also be that he recognized a bit of Eliza in himself? Indeed, years later in 1953 when he wrote the Preface to *The Hill of Devi*, he was quick to apologize for his too frequently insulting tone:

> I was writing to people of whom I was fond and whom I wanted to

amuse, with the result that I became too humorous and conciliatory, and too prone to turn remote and rare matters into suburban jokes (*HD*, 7-8).

Forster's fond hope for friendship and understanding between peoples pressed him, however, to know these vexatious Indians and their customs better. Unlike Eliza, he could claim a knowledge of 'mild countenances and gentle manners.' He counted among his best friends, for example, the Maharajah of Dewas, a man who 'believed in the heart.' (*HD*, 176). The fact that Forster was so forcibly touched by this man reminds us how different his own experiences in India were from those of Eliza Fay. Eliza knew Indians as servants. Forster knew them as friends, and his tribute to the Maharajah is testimony to his confidence that connections, however tenuous, can be formed between men of heart from different nations:

> When I returned to England and he heard that I was worried because the post-war world of the '20's would not add up into sense, he sent me a message. 'Tell him,' it ran, 'tell him from me to follow his heart, and his mind will see everything clear.' The message as phrased is too facile : doors open into silliness at once But to remember and respect and prefer the heart, to have the instinct which follows it wherever possible—what surer help than that could one have through life? (*HD*, 176-7).

Forster's capacity for great and long-lasting friendships with Indians was matched by his serious interest in Indian culture, an interest totally alien to Eliza. We see this best in his writings on Hinduism. Its elaborate religious rigamarole grated on him, doctrines like transmigration seemed silly, and his own study of the religion was never rigorous or complete. But Hinduism had taken an uncanny hold on him as a young man. Forster talked about this in his 1919 piece, 'The Temple':

> . . . the general deportment of the Temple is odious . . . it rejects every human grace, . . . it ministers neither to the sense of beauty nor to the sense of time. . . . No one could love such a building. Yet no one can forget it. It remains in the mind. . . . We say 'Here is truth . . .'[6]

Only in 1940 when Forster viewed a photographic exhibit

mounted by Stella Kramrisch at the Warburg Institute did the full meaning of the temple unfold itself to him. Kramrisch helped him see the temple

> as the World Mountain on whose exterior is displayed life in all its forms, life human and superhuman and subhuman and animal, life tragic and cheerful, cruel and kind, seemly and obscene, all crowned at the mountain's summit by the sun. And in the interior of the mountain she revealed a tiny cavity, a central cell, where, in the heart of the world complexity, the individual could be alone with his god. . . . This happens to appeal to me.[7]

Forster's genuine interest in India had paid off. He was able to find in India convincing wisdom which harmonized with his own, and this is where he parts company with a bird of passage, an incipient imperialist, like Eliza Fay.

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NOTES

[1] 'Reflections in India, I : Too Late' (By our Indian Correspondent), *Nation and Athenaeum*, 21 January 1922, p. 614.

[2] E. M. Forster, 'Notes on Egypt' in *The Government of Egypt* (London: Labour Research Department, 1920), p. 9.

[3] Eliza Fay, *Original Letters from India, 1779-1815* (London : Hogarth Press, 1925), p. 20. All further references to this work appear in the text and are indicated by *OL*.

[4] Jan Morris, 'The World of William Hickey', '*Horizon*, 16, No.2 (Spring, 1974), p. 92.

[5] E. M. Forster, *The Hill of Devi* (New York : Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1953), p. 86. All further references to this work appear in the text and are indicated by *HD*.

[6] E. M. F [orster], 'The Temple,' *Athenaeum*, 26 September 1919, p. 947.

[7] E. M. Forster, 'The World Mountain,' *Listener*, 2 December 1954, p. 978.

Andre P. Sahel

ANDRE GIDE AND NORTH AFRICA : A PROCESS OF LIBERATION

'An irregular boy' : this is how Emile Rondeaux defined André Gide, his nephew, when he was a very young man.[1] Gide perhaps deserved the appellation, for he was an inconstant, nervous, and whimsical boy. But he undoubtedly deserved it as an adult too – for other reasons. His 'irregularity' does not exactly mean that he lived by no rule at all (for that, in itself, would have been a rule) but that he transgressed all established codes. 'Ever-changing and changeful', as was Montaigne whom he admired so much, Gide is a man of paradox—not for the sake of paradox but for the sake of truth, in an effort, that is, to respect the nuances, complexities, and ambiguities of the ego. For that reason, he lived in fear of nothing and in awe of no excess. For that reason also, he remained the same in spite of the many events and glories, pains and joys in his life, in spite of his multifarious creeds. He had a flirtation with the royalism of *Action Francaise* before a short lived affair with communism; he defended homosexuality, yet was repelled by some homosexual practices; he was given the most austere protestant education, but he exalted hedonism; he wished to burn all books (within himself), though his critical reading of a book could unquestionably be relied upon. When all is said, perhaps it was because of such contradictions that he was always faithful and true to himself.[2] If we were looking for symbols, we would find these words highly significant: 'I am afraid the grammar of my prose may be at fault'.[3] For they were the words uttered in February 1951 by the aged

Nobel Prize winner, and, of course, they sound like the words of the shy young man barely starting his literary career some sixty years earlier.

'I is someone else', Rimbaud said. One could say of Gide: he is someone else. In one of his lectures, Gide wrote in defence of the notion of literary influence.[4] He himself could have an immense impact upon the literature and society of the first third of the twentieth century only because he had earlier been influenced by others. 'My soul was an open inn at a cross-roads', Menalque says in *Les nourritures terrestres.*[5] Gide's literary and philosophical stature might assuredly not be reduced to the influences which he underwent. But he cannot be understood without them either.

A not so Holy Trinity

In 1891 the influences of three people are of importance. Gide is then 22. He has just published *Les cahiers d' Andre Walter,* a hardly fictionalized autobiography in which André Walter, Gide's double and mouthpiece, commits suicide. André Walter is madly in love with angelic purity. He is visited by hankering which he rejects, and by a passion for Emmanuéle who rejects him. The same name, Emmanuéle, appears throughout Gide's *Journal*; it is the name he gives to his cousin, Madeleine, Emile Rondeaux's daughter, and his wife to be. She is two years older than he is. She fills the heart of the man and the pages of his books. He has written his first work 'for her'—because she refused to marry him and because he wished to persuade her to accept him. Madeleine-Emmanuéle likes the book very much, yet is persistent in her rejection of him. But why is André so persistent in his proposal ? Why does he swear to wait so patiently ?

His cousin's mysticism has, so to speak, shaped his own mysticism throughout his adolescence. She, his spiritual and intellectual guide, represents the ideal woman. Her refusal reinforces her lofty image. Up to now her qualities and virtues had made her seem to be perfect; now her aloofness

definitely makes her a part of his most ethereal dreams. Since he cannot attain his longed-for ideal, she becomes a utopia with quasi-divine features—his transcendent, essential but unattainable, point of reference. He had fallen in love with her because of her purity; now she is to him the incarnation of *pure love*. Her refusal does not come as a surprise at all to André Gide. He thinks however that his unpretentious insistence will eventually win her. In the meantime, to distract somewhat his attention, he makes his first literary contacts in Paris.

Maurice Barrés, the author of *Un homme libre* notices his *Cahiers*, befriends him, and acquaints him with the *Symbolistes*, the fashionable movement of the turn of the century headed by Mallarmé. Gide therefore frequently attends the literary club of the Rue de Rome, the ethical creed of which he will always remember though not its decadent aesthetics: literature is to be loved, and a literary work can be perfect. 'With Mallarmé, Gide will comment, 'literature was the aim and the very end of life; it was authentic, it was the real thing. In order for him to sacrifice everything to it as he did, it must have been his sole belief'[6]. What Madeleine means to him in the realm of feelings, then, Mallarmé means in the realm of art; he is the god of poetry, *pure poetry;* he embodies aesthetic self-abnegation just as his cousin embodies moral self-abnegation.

At the close of the same year 1891, he meets Oscar Wilde. This new influence is poles apart from the two earlier ones. Wilde is a brilliant story-teller and conversationalist, an 'obstinate pleasure-seeker'[7], while Gide is still shy, inexperienced, and puritanical. The author of *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* is the 'antithetical synthesis' of the Madeleine/Mallarmé mystique. He represents life. He embodies new values. He believes in pantheistic immanence, *not* monotheistic transcendence, in self-exaltation, *not* self-sacrifice, in fleshly pleasures, *not* ethereal love, in life above all, *not* love above all.

These three persons—these symbols in Gide's destiny—correspond to his threefold personality. They influence him not so much by changing him as by revealing Gide his own diversity and even his own inner contradictions at a turning point in his life. Though Gide is anxious to exclude nothing, he is attracted to what seems to him most novel, and he will, for the years to come, adhere to Wilde's universe and individual morality. Those were decisive years during which therefore the young Puritan underwent an inner upheaval, a transmutation of the traditional values inherited from his ancestors through his mother. It is noteworthy that Gide will never totally deny the mystical side of his personality. He will always be keen on religious matters, just as he will always—in his own way—remain in love with Madeleine. And literature will always be his great, his life-long passion. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, however, his new interests are predominant and it is no longer his 'metaphysical' preoccupation (with man, the world; and the reason why man lives in the world) that drives him to write, but his 'physical' preoccupation : what is the world like and how do men live in it? Such questions lead him to travel the world. The writer becomes a traveller and discovers food for his books in his journeys from Spain to Egypt, from Italy to the USSR, from Turkey to Tchad. The strangenesses of landscapes and men and morals reveal his own strangeness. His journeys nourish his life and his life his work. He becomes the explorer of his own undiscovered country.

North Africa

One of his first journeys and, to be sure, one of those that most made their mark upon his life and work was the African tour he started in 1893.

'"Africa" I repeated that mysterious word which became fraught with terrors, attractive horrors, and expectations'[8]. The quotation well describes his mood when, on a stormy October night, he sails to Tunis. He does not go there in all

innocence : he knows what he is looking for in North Africa.[9] What is it? He had prepared himself for that journey even before he knew he would make it. The presence of his friend Paul Laurens was probably a mere pretext to get his mother's permission. The journey now will precipitate and soon bring to an end the psychological metamorphosis started two years ago by his meeting with Wilde. Apart from the 'terrors' and 'horrors', we notice his 'attractions'. Africa is, of course, the cause of this mixture of feelings. We may wonder whether he is heading really for an undiscovered continent, since he is not only full of fear and desire but also of 'expectations'. The term 'expectation'—a positive and specifically Gidian word[10]—proves that the place Gide is sailing to is not so much an undiscovered country as an inner land whose bourn he has already started reconnoitring. Its remoteness, he hopes, will be essential for his exploration. A great part of his eagerness and expectation is caused by the need to escape from an oppressive and all too compelling reality—from André Walter and his complexes, from puritanism, and from a thwarted sexuality.

The pages of his *Journal* for the months before the departure show that he now looks with a critical, not to say a disgusted, mind on the ethics he used to celebrate so fervently :

'Up to the age of 23, I led a life of virginity and depravity'[11]; 'it had not been easy to live by the moral code which up to now had led me, upheld me, and then made me corrupt'[12].

This is a new language, in which the idea of corruption is voiced twice to refer to the outcome of his pseudo-purity. Hence his implicit – and soon explicit—aspiration for new values, which will naturally conflict with the older ones; hence that surprising creed in the mouth of the Narcissus he used to be : 'When I want to do something, I must not worry whether it is good or bad'[13].

The serene rejection of the endless self-examination goes together with that of ascetism, moral scruples and the flesh-

mortifying self-denial. The ideal which is now contemplated is to reach an inner harmony, a fearless joy : 'I should like to be strong and normal, in order not to have to think of normality'[14].

A sentence from *Sile grain ne meurt* will echo in 1920 the 1893 preoccupation : 'What dominated us then was the horror of what was peculiar, bizarre, morbid, abnormal'[15]. The 'normality' the newly-converted Gide is longing for has nothing to do with the cosiness of the common way or with the bourgeois turn of mind of Flaubert's M. Homais. It does not mean the norm, but the contrary of the norm. It expresses a desire for self-affirmation, a claim for his own possibilities and a total responsibility for himself. It is the will in rebellion against conventions, or the energy through which the being, led beyond himself, tries to master his sexual, moral, and other fears and to triumph over the depression which could prevent him from reaching maturity. Gide in 1893 is perhaps only an old young man going through the crisis of the ending adolescence; but because the crisis occurs late in his life, it is very much like a Promethean rebellion. His departure to Africa in a way actualizes the rebellion. The Jupiterian authority he challenges is embodied by his mother with her puritanical principles. Only it is first and foremost for himself that this Prometheus wants to steal the fire he is to find on the burning land of North Africa. There he will discover joy and learn homosexuality. He will feel the need for that two-fold initiation all the more ardently as, during the Mediterranean crossing, he has a dangerous illness—tuberculosis and/or nervous illness—which teaches him that death is near and that life is precious Recovery has the force of a resurrection; he wants to hold onto that which he nearly lost; it adds to his determination to reject the morbid family values.

The link between illness and will to live is clearly expressed when Gide evokes his sexual intercourse with Meriem, the young Oulad-Nail tribeswoman :

After the night I spent with her, I felt an extraordinary peace and well-being. I do not mean the restful moment that may follow sexual pleasure. It is certain that Meriem had done me more good than all the doctor's medicines'[16]

What has in fact suddendly been cured is the rigid mortification that had since youth gnawed his body and his soul. Gide is aware that he has left behind both his native country and ethical principles, and looks forward to—he 'expects'—the metamorphosis of all his being. What he has just suffered from is the last attack launched from his vigorous huguenot side—a kind of somatization to be explained by psychoanalysis[17]. The psycho-somatic illness has its psycho-somatic remedy, the first step towards an 'ideal of balance, plenitude, and health'[18]. Through Meriem, woman plays a major part in his discovery of pleasure. It is well-known, however, that his sexual desires will soon be whetted by male partners: the question of homosexuality is capital in Gide's life—and in Gide's work as well if we bear in mind that he held *Corydon* as his 'most important book'[19]. Nothing therefore is as surprising as the symbolic and physical function he ascribes to his sexual intercourse with Meriem—while he had an intercourse with a man a few days before at Sousse[20]. Why, in his reconstruction of his past, does he insist that his health came back not with his first (homosexual) experience but with his second (heterosexual) one ? Why did he not rearrange the facts—we know he did not mind proselytizing and, moreover, he wrote that 'diaries are never more than half sincere, however intense their writer's quest for truth'[21]. Why, in short, did he not catch the opportunity of his own initiation to vindicate homosexuality ? Heterosexuality indeed is here remarkably privileged, while one of the points of the writer of *Les faux monnayeurs* was to underline the 'innate quality' of his own homosexual tendencies. The answer is that Gide writes more truly than he knows. He forgets one of his most essential ideas, and the truth emerges from the bare facts. The truth is that in a precise place (between

Sousse and Biskra), at a precise moment (in January or February 1894), Gide is reaching one of the crossroads of his life. His first intercourse has undoubtedly brought him pleasure; but the second one—the one with Meriem—brings him a sense of health and the joy of freedom.

To understand Gide's homosexual 'vocation', we have to consider the moment in *Sile grain ne meurt* when he relapses after his recovery, thanks to Meriem. His mother unexpectedly turns up at Biskra. He had cut off his geographical roots in order to cut off his moral roots as well, and now, because of his mother's presence, he may just be about to lose his freedom. He senses the danger, and determines to be firm :

> Must I interrupt this re-education of all our instincts which I had barely started ? I protested that I would not, and that the arrival of my mother should not change anything; to begin with, we should *not* cancel Meriem's visit.

But how could Prometheus stand against Zeus? 'My courage failed me, and I did not keep my promise to myself.' The eventual rejection of Meriem means that Gide regresses and goes back to the psychological and moral plight of the nervous adolescent; it means that, under the motherly glare, he confesses he has committed some crime. She understands that he has had sex. To him this is a 'catastrophe'. Andre Gide, now aged 24, a repentant son, avowes himself in the wrong. The few attempts at heterosexual affair that will follow at Biskra and later in Italy will be failures. His mother had brought him up a Puritan adolescent; she now makes him a homosexual adult[22].

Gide however has done with shame and the sense of guilt and the fear of sin: he now accepts himself and settles, so to speak, in his new nature. He will never be a shameful homosexual. A new meeting with Wilde, at Blidah the following year[28], completes his sexual conversion and, above all, banishes his bad conscience and sense of sin. He has mastered the harmony—the self-normalization—he had so long been denied.

The Dialectical Rendering of Experience

It seems that one of the essential purposes of *Les nourritures terrestres* is the synthetic rendering of the way trodden by Gide during those few years. Up to now we have followed the essential stages in Gide's liberation through his personal works—the *Journal* and *Sile grain ne meurt.* What remains to be studied is the literary outcome of the liberation, its artistic transfiguration[24]. *Les nourritures terrestres* is a sort of rationalization of his experience. Like his life Gide's book has two complementary themes : departure and desire[25]. 'Let my book teach you to be interested more in yourself than in itself'. This sentence belongs to the preamble of *Les nourritures.* It suggests that the dialectical transformation of experience is indeed one of the aims of the work. For the reader is asked to interiorize the objective reality of the book and then to consider himself as an object. There are three major stages of which the book is the first one; then the book is denied and the ego affirmed; lastly the ego is denied and the world discovered. The moral, as in a fable, is given at the very beginning. Departure is vindicated first and foremost because it is a freedom from all constraints[26]. The wish to 'throw away' or 'burn' the book in order to indulge in self-exploration is as yet an intellectual improvement. It implies a refusal to conform to ready-made truths or to institutions or dogmas, as well as a will to create one's own ethics and to make oneself 'the least replaceable of beings.'

Going away does not only mean the abandonment of the people, things, and habits; it means meeting something else, meeting the rest of life—the innumerable influences of the universe, the other one, the precious other one. This master-theme of departure can be read in a flowering of images which have in common the dialectics of abandonment and discovery (or death *and* resurrection, or past *and* present, or book *and* life, or possession *and* generosity, etc.). The opposites are complementary; negative statements have positive conse-

quences. This dialectical approach underlies the famous sentence 'Families, I have you! Closed homes; unopened doors; jealous clingings to happiness'.[27] The family institution, to Menalque prevents any openness to the world, any love, any freedom; it forbids all theses he wishes to show to any child along the highway—first of all to leave everything to follow him and then to leave him too. Being on the move is presented as more instructive in any case than being at a standstill; for a man asserts himself as he changes, as he acquaints himself with new persons and new settings. It is therefore best to be constantly heading for somewhere, and only endless journeys agree with the truth of an ever-changing world and with 'the multifarious forms of life : 'You will watch everything on your way, and will pause nowhere'.[28] Contrary to 'departure' which implies perpetual renewal and infinite variety, 'pause' here means stagnancy or even worse —death—bringing sterility. Travelling allows an individual to discover 'as much humanity as possible'. This is Gide's 'quantitative morality' as opposed to the false ethics of the unique truth.[29] What matters is the number of experiences, countrysides, places, and people one meets with. That is why Gide evokes—sometimes he only mentions—the many towns he went through in North Africa. That is also why he dislikes houses, 'dwellings' (where man closes himself up) and hates anything symbolizing claustration, such as canals which imprison watery fluidity.[30]

Between the two dialectical opposites the gap may be bridged by man's expectation—an eminently Gidian term, as we have seen—which arouses the need to achieve one's heart's desire and transforms passion into an impatience for creation. In Gide's life, expectation becomes through his illness 'a second puberty'.[31] In *Les nourritures terrestres* he draws from his own experience a kind of psychological strategy. Instead of standing for a mere transition, expectation becomes a means of metamorphosing a man : 'I was begging : let it come at last, the fit, the illness, the suffer-

ing.'[32] Just as to Pascal the habit of bending the knee engenders faith, to Gide expectation foreshadows the desired metamorphosis : 'I fell ill; I journeyed; I was born again a new being, under a new heaven and amidst utterly renewed things.'[33]

The morality of *Les nourritures terrestres*—an inversion of those Christian values which regard human existence as a mere transition towards the only true life beyond the grave—proclaims the importance of every moment in a man's course: 'Consider the evening as the death of day; and the morning as the birth of all things.[34] Life as a whole dynamically appears as a series of initiations. Man's existence is a constant metamorphosis and an eternal quest for all that is possible—he never rests in the narrow comfort of one moral pattern. To be forever longing : such is the second key-theme of *Les nourritures terrestres*, and it is well in agreement with the dialectical union of desire and pleasure, a union in which the former felicitously brings forth the latter:

> I know I could not feel desire which would not be satisfied immediately. Each of my thirsts expects to be quenched.[35]

The Puritan of yore no longer acknowledges the notion of sin; he is looking for what he used to shun and for what he was taught to avoid; he now despises all reserve and prudence.

What has been called—no doubt grossly—Gide's hedonism deserves to be qualified. What Gide achieves indeed is a transmutation of the traditional hedonism, and it is very much like the transmutation of the Christian ethics : he does not only valorize pleasure; he principally celebrates desire that brings forth pleasure. Desire is the antidote for satisfied pleasure—the pleasure of the surfeited and stagnant man only : 'The finest thing I have ever experienced on earth (Ah, Nathanial !) was for what I was hungering.'[36] Delight and pleasure, no doubt, are to be enthusiastically experienced, but they necessarily are included within the creative desire.

Hence Gide's reliance on life; hence his pantheistic optimism, thanks to which, in due time, every craving could find its satisfaction.

> 'I needed lungs'. the tree told me. 'So my sap turned into leaves, and I was able to breathe. After I had breathed, the leaves fell, but I did not die for all that. My fruit contains all my thoughts on life'.[37]

The privileged image of the desert specifies the 'desire' theme. Gide shows man appreciating his own dimensions in the immense void. The limitations of a narrow ego are manifest there : 'I loved you dearly, sandy desert. Let your faintest grain epitomize the whole universe !'[38] The desert is the place of prophetic revelations. It coincides with some spiritual geography. It opens trackless upon unknown adventures. It symbolizes readiness. It burns and bites—and thirst, according to the Gidian lexicon, refers to desire.[39] The ever-proclaimed love for the desert is then most revealing : 'Burning fever was preferable under the sun of the waterless desert where thirst cannot be quenched'.[40] The desert is the utmost experience. The 'desert' image exalts the almightiness of desire which cannot be thwarted by the notion of sin and cannot be impeded by the alienating pleasure. It epitomizes both Gide's fascination with the North African landscapes and his liberating process.

'Extremes meet me' : no phrase could better account for Gide's paradoxical route. What he similarly called his 'irony' is one of the main charcteristics of his work—where real experience is so heavily drawn upon and where, as in real life, Gide created opposite mirrors, so as not to be imprisoned within his own writings.[41] He who had escaped from the prison of puritanism could do no other.[43]

We have seen that *Les nourritures terrestres,* with its dialectical economy, illustrated and exalted a genuine liberation: the individual escaped from the excess of moral austerity and succeeded in avoiding the opposite excess of pleasure-worship : he could steer his way between chaining and unchaining. Here are three examples—but others could

be found in plenty—showing that Gide adopted detached attitudes to his own experiences.

The first example belongs to *Les nourritures terrestres*, Book One, where we read : 'Our deeds follow us as the light follows the phosphorus; they burn us, but make our splendour too.' In the last book, the sentence reappears but its meaning is radically altered :

> Our deeds follow us as the light follows the phosphorus; they make our splendor, but only by burning us'.

In the former sentence, dangerous life and unbridled pleasure are praised. The latter, on the contrary, underlines the evil consequences of a brilliant and glorious yet 'demoralizing' attitude. The coexistence of such fearfully symmetrical sentences within the same work proves that the writer chooses neither.

The second example is to be found in the comparison between the writer's correspondence with his mother and *Sile grain ne meurt*. Just before the departure to Tunis:

> I refused to take my bible with me. This, an apparently insignificant detail, is of the utmost importance . . . It was because the bible had become an indispensable nurture to me that I felt I ought to deprive myself of it. My farewell to Christ was not far from agonizing'.[43]

On the other hand, on 8 October 1893, a few days before his embarkation, he writes to his mother : I shall arrive in Marseille on the 12th. Will you send me a thin cloth-bound bible ?'[44] No matter if we think we are here catching Gide in the act of lying. Let us say that his memory fails him in one particular moment—however essential—of his evocation of the past. But this capital error is psychologically revealing. For after he has determined to do without the moral code of the Bible, at the last moment, going against his own turn of mind in rebellion against religion, he asks for the Book and thus refuses what would have been a mutilating choice.

My third example is borrowed—from the irony of life. He who continually exalted differences and uttered the exhorta-

tion 'Do not stay near whoever is like you'[45] was sexually drawn to homologous beings.

Such contradictions within an individual and within a work are confirmations that Gide ever rejected systematization. His intellectual honesty drew him to refuse to join a Party and also to refuse to be acknowledged as an ideological master. He thought that moral, spiritual, or psychological antinomies might not be evaded more than hereditary antinomies,[46] for in such fields any oversimplification might entail either alienation or tyranny. That is why even today, Gide's experience and thought are still so useful to us. They well agree with the reflections recently made by the leader of *the Nouveaux Philosophes :*

> The man who exalts his desires and the man who adheres to puritanism, the lewd individual and the ascetic, the ideologist of pleasure-seeking and the apostle of moral order, the one who rejects the idea of forbidden acts and the one who does not want to run the risk of transgression, both basically speak the same language—either by deficiency or by excess concealing and denying the fundamentel frame –work of human desires.[47]

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] *Sile grain ne meurt (SLG)*. Book I, Chapter 5 (1,5). Paris, 1926.
[2] *Les nourritures terrestres (NT)*, 1927 preface : 'The main characteristic of my life is certainly not fickleness but faithfulness'.
[3] Quoted by J. Delay, 'Dernieres annees', *Hommage a Andre Gide, Nouvelle Revue Francaise*, 1951.
[4] 'De l'influence en litterature,' *Pretextes*, Paris, 1904.
[5] *NT* IV I.
[6] 'Stephane Mallarme,' *Pretextes*.
[7] 'Oscar Wilde', *Pretextes*.
[8] *SLG* II, I.

[9] Not so when thirty two years later he is about to journey to the Congo : 'I shall know what I am looking for in that country once I am there'. See *Voyage au Congo*, I. Paris 1927.

[10] See C.D.E. Tolton, 'Le mot-theme 'Attente' et l'ironie gidienne', *Bulletin des Amis d'Andre Gide* no 53, Jan. 1982 ; 'L'attente gidienne est fond'ee sur une confiance certaine qu'une satisfaction se produira'.

[11] *Journal*, March 1893.

[12] *Ibid.*, end of April 1893.

[13] *Ibid.*, August 1893.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] *SLG*, II, I.

[16] *Ibid*,

[17] Let us note *(SLG*, II, I) the evocation of the 'stifling atmosphere' in his cabin on the ship sailing to Tunis. He decides to spend the night on deck—and catches cold. This may remind us of his wish to 'breathe more freely' away from his mother's oppression.

[18] *SLG*, II, I.

[19] Quoted by M. Van Rysselberghe, *Hommage a Andre Gide, NRF*, Paris 1951.

[20] *SLG*, II, I.

[21] *Ibid.*, I, 10.

[22] I think that Gide's assertion later in *SLG* (11,2)—'my affair with Meri m was short-lived because it did not agree with my nature' —is wrong; it is the affirmation of the uranist fighting for an idea.

[23] *SLG*, 11,2,

[24] *NT* was essentially written between October 1893 and April 1895— at the time of Gide's first North-African journey. *L' immoraliste*, which refers to some episodes of that journey, was written later (pub. 1902)

[25] That departure and desire are indeed the central themes is confirmed in the middle part of *NT* (IV).

[26] In *NT* the book is the privileged symbol of a merely external morality and culture.

[27] *NT*, IV, 1.

[28] *Ibid.*, 1, 1.

[29] Cf *NT*, VI : 'I wish I had been born in times when the poet had simply to enumerate things'.

[30] *NT*, VIII.

[31] *Ibid.*, 1, 2.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *Ibid.*, 1, 3.
[35] Ibid., 11.
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] *Ibid.*, VII.
[39] *Ibid.*, IV, 4.
[40] *Ibid.*, IV, 1.
[41] Indeed *NT* is the dialectical opposite of *Saul*, *La porte etroite*, that of *L'immoraliste*, etc . . . See *SLG* 1, 9, where Gide mentions his changing moods which 'compel me, immediately after I have completed a book, to leap, so to speak, to another extreme in myself—it is a question of inner balance—and to write a new book that will certainly displease the readers who had loved the previous one'.
[42] See Dennis Drummond, 'L'indice ironique chez Gide', *Bulletin des Amis d' Andre Gide*, no 56, October 1982, p. 509.
[43] *SLG*, 11, 1.
[44] Quoted by J. Delay, *La jeunesse d' Andre Gide* I, II, Paris 1956-57, p. 275.
[45] *NT*, 11.
[46] *SLG*, 1, 1.
[47] Bernard-Henri Levy : *L'ideologie francaise*, 1981, p. 229.

Bernard J. Paris

RICHARD III : SHAKESPEARE'S FIRST GREAT MIMETIC CHARACTER

The three *Henry VI* plays were the workshop in which Shakespeare learned the art of mimetic characterization. Talbot, Bedford, Humphrey of Gloucester, Winchester, Suffolk, Somerset, Eleanor, York, Beaufort, Clifford, and Henry are all recognizable psychological types whose personalities and relationships prefigure similar personalities and relationships in later plays. It is with Richard's soliloquies in *3 Henry VI*, however, that Shakespeare truly emerges as a psychological dramatist, taking us deep inside the psyche of his character and enabling us to understand the formation of his personality and the sources of his behaviour. The characterization of Richard is not as masterful as Shakespeare's later achievements in the tragedies, but it is a mistake to see him merely as a melodramatic villain, a Senecan tyrant, a Vice or a Machiavel. He is all of these things, but he is also perhaps the most fully drawn character in Western literature up to the point at which he appears.[1]

Like many other characters in Shakespear's plays, Richard can be well understood with the aid of the psychological theories of Karen Horney.[2] He is, like Iago, a marvellous example of Horney's arrogant-vindictive type. He is less complex than Iago; but in some respects he is more fully drawn, since we are given enough information about his childhood to understand the genesis of his neurosis, whereas we can only guess at the origin of Iago's. Before analyzing Richard, I shall provide a brief account of Horney's theory.

According to Horney, people respond to a pathogenic

environment by developing three basic strategies of defense: they move toward people and adopt the self-effacing or compliant solution; they move against people and adopt the aggressive or expansive solution; or they move away from people and become resigned or detached. Each of these solutions produces its own set of values and character traits. Each solution involves also a view of human nature, a sense of the world order, and a bargain with fate in which certain qualities, attitudes, and behaviours are supposed to be rewarded.

The person in whom self-effacing trends are dominant tries to gain protection and approval by being humble, self-sacrificing, undemanding, and dutiful. He values goodness and love above all else and tends to glorify suffering. He has powerful taboos against all that is presumptuous, selfish, and aggressive; he believes in turning the other cheek; and he sees the world as displaying a providential order in which goodness is rewarded. His bargain is that if he is a good, loving, noble person who shuns pride and does not seek his private gain or glory, he will be well treated by fate and by other people. For his solution to work, he must also believe in the goodness of human nature.

There are three aggressive types, for all of whom the appeal of life is not love but mastery. The narcissistic person seeks to master life 'by self-admiration and the exercise of charm.'[8] The perfectionistic person 'feels superior because of his high standards' *(NHG*, p. 196), through which he seeks to compel fate. The arrogant-vindictive person is extremely competitive; he must retaliate for all wrongs and triumph over all rivals. In his relations with others he is at once ruthless and cynical. He believes that might makes right and that the world is a jungle in which the strong annihilate the weak. He wants to be hard and tough and regards all manifestation of feeling as a sign of weakness. He fears the emergence of his own compliant trends because they would make him vulnera-

ble in an evil world, would confront him with self-hate, and would threaten his bargain, which is essentially with himself. He does not count on the world to give him anything, but he is convinced that he can reach his ambitious goals if he remains true to his vision of life as a battle and does not allow himself to be seduced by the traditional morality.

The basically detached person worships freedom, peace, and self-sufficiency. He handles a threatening world by renouncing his desires and by shutting others out of his inner life. He may have a strong need for superiority, but he realizes his ambition in imagination rather than through actual accomplishments. His bargain is that if he asks nothing of others, they will not bother him; that if he tries for nothing, he will not fail; and that if he expects little of life, it will not disappoint him.

In the course of neurotic development, the individual will come to make all three of these defensive moves compulsively; and, since they involve incompatible character structures and value systems, he will be torn by inner conflicts. In order to gain some sense of wholeness, he will emphasize one move more than the others; but the suppressed trends will continue to exist and may emerge powerfully when the predominant solution fails.

The individual develops not only interpersonal but also intra-psychic strategies of defense. To compensate for feelings of self-hate, worthlessness, and inadequacy, he creates an idealized image of himself and embarks upon a search for glory. The creation of the idealized image produces 'the pride system.' The individual takes a 'neurotic pride' in the attributes of his idealized self, and on the basis of these attributes, he makes 'neurotic claims' upon others. In an effort to actualize his idealized image, he imposes stringent demands and taboos upon himself, which Horney calls 'the tyranny of the should.' Because his inner conflicts are reflected in his idealized image, he is often caught in a 'crossfire of conflict-

ing shoulds.' Since they are both incompatible with each other and unrealistic, the shoulds are impossible to live up to and expose the individual to increased self-hate.

Like Shylock, and like Edmund in *Lear,* Richard has been treated unfairly because of an accident of birth; and he is burning with a bitter resentment. His needs for love and belonging and for esteem have been severely frustrated, and this has led him to develop the compensatory strategies which he talks about in his soliloquies and which he acts out in the course of *Richard III.* These strategies are designed to restore his pride, to help him forget his loveless state, and to give some sense of purpose to his life. They work fairly well until he becomes king; but the internal and external consequences of his ruthless behaviour finally catch up with him; and his defenses break down, momentarily at least, the night before the battle of Bosworth. The emergence of his feelings of guilt and self-hate reawakens the sympathy for him which had been generated by his opening soliloquy. One of the functions of Richard's soliloquies is to create dramatic irony by informing us of his true motives while his victims are deceived by his role playing At the same time that his soliloquies unmask his villainy, however, they also give us insight into the pain which is the source of that villainy; and thus they make him a more sympathetic character than he otherwise would be. Richard is not a motiveless villain, like Aaron the Moor; he is a suffering human being, like Shylock, whose behaviour is monstrous but understandable.

In his two soliloquies in *3 Henry VI* and in the opening soliloquy of *Richard III,* Richard is obsessed with his physical deformity, which fills him with self-loathing, makes him feel unlovable, and gives him a sense of being excluded from the human community. Richard's self-loathing is in large part an internalization of the loathing with which he has been regarded by others, a loathing which can now be justified by his moral character but which was originally a

response to his physical deformity. One of the chief sources of his negative feelings about himself is his mother. It is understandable that the Duchess of York should be horrified that Richard is her son, given his terrible crimes; but it seems evident that her horror was there from the beginning. Richard has always been 'disgracious' in his mother's 'eye' (iv, iv), a source of shame and disappointment[4] Richard has been subjected not only to his mother's rejection, but also to a widespread, culturally inspired abhorrence of his deformity. Over and over again he has been given the message that he is an anomaly, a monstrosity from whom normal people shrink with horror. Even the meek and mild Henry assaults Richard by repeating the stories about his birth.

K. Hen. The owl shriek'd at thy birth, an evil sign;
The night crow cried, aboding luckless time;
Dogs howl'd and hideous tempest shook down trees;
The raven rook'd her on the chimney's top,
And chattr'ing pies in dismal discord sung.
Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,
And yet brought forth less than a mother's hope
To wit, an indigested and deformed lump,
Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.
Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born,
To signify thou cam'st to bite the world;
And, if the rest be true which I have heard,
Thou cam'st—

Rich. I'll hear no more. Die prophet; in thy speech. *[Stabs him*[5]*]*

Richard had come to the Tower to commit a political murder, but he kills Henry in a fit of passion, as an act of revenge, striking back through Henry at all those who have regarded him as a monster. Henry's words trigger Richard's rage because they remind him of his mother's disappointment and reflect back to him his despised image, the way in which, in his darker moments, he feels about himself. Richard feels like 'an indigested and deformed lump,/Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.' In his first soliloquy he had described himself as being disproportioned 'in every part,/Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear-whelp,/That carries

no impression like the dam' (3 *Henry VI*, III, ii). Henry's words echo Richard's feelings about himself which are, in turn, the product of just such words in the mouths of those by whom Richard has been surrounded since infancy.

Richard grows up, then, in the midst of a mythology about himself in which he is a demonic figure. Not only does this mythology generate self-hate and a corresponding rage at those who make him feel so terrible about himself, but it also releases Richard to act out his rage, to seek revenge, Since people regard him as a monster and expect him to be evil, he has little hope of gaining approval and sees no point in trying. He might as well accept his fate :

> The midwife wonder'd, and the women cried
> 'O, Jesus bless us! He is born with teeth!'
> And so I was; which plainly signified
> That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.
> Then, since the heavens have shap'd my body so,
> Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it *(3 Henry VI*, V, vii*)*

Richard tries to acquire self-esteem by making evil his good and excelling as a Machiavel. He takes pride in his ability to manipulate, deceive, and destory his enemies. The measures which he takes to get rid of his self-hate tend to increase it, however. He sees his mind as crooked and shaped by the agents of hell. His moral self-condemnation is largely unconscious; but it emerges fully, for a moment, before the battle of Bosworth.

One of Richard's greatest sources of pain is his feeling that his physical deformity has made him unlovable. In his soliloquy in *3 Henry VI,* he considers giving up his pursuit of the crown because there are too many others whose claim is prior to his :

> Well, say there is no kingdom then for Richard :
> What other pleasure can the world afford ?
> I'll make my heaven in a lady's lap
> And deck my body in gay ornaments
> And witch sweet ladies with my words and looks
> O miserable thought! and more unlikely

> Than to accomplish twenty golden crowns!
> why, love foreswore me in my mother's womb;
> And, for, I should not deal in her soft laws,
> She did corrupt frail nature with some bribe
> To shrink mine arm up like a wither'd shrub;
> To make an envious mountain on my back,
> Where sits deformity to mock my body;
> To shape my legs of unequal size;
> To disproportion me in every part,
> Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear-whelp
> That carries no impression like the dam.
> Am I then a man to be belov'd?
> O monstrous fault to harbour such a thought! (III, ii)

This speech and the repetition of similar sentiments at the beginning of *Richard III* reveal, among other things, the intensity of Richard's desire for love. Despite his sense of its impossibility, he has a recurring fantasy of being loved by a woman, of making his 'heaven in a lady's lap.' Since the fantasy arouses his self-hate by making him conscious of his repulsiveness, he is angry with himself ('O monstrous fault') for allowing himself to entertain it. His hopelessness about winning love is partly the result of his deformity, but it is also the result of his mother's rejection. In order to feel lovable, we must have received love in childhood; but Richard has never been loved by anyone. He feels, therefore, that 'love foreswore [him] in [his] mother's womb.' It is part of his fate to be unlovable, just as it is part of his fate to be evil. His feeling of unlovableness makes it easier for him to be evil. Since love is unavailable, he is not afraid of losing it by moving against others.

Richard feels not only cut off from love but hostile to it and to all those who are able to enjoy it. Since he 'cannot prove a lover,' he is 'determined to prove a villain/And hate the idle pleasures of these days' (I, i). He hates the sight of romantic dalliance because it reminds him of his undesirability and makes him feel rejected, excluded, inferior. He is bitterly envious of those who are attractive to their fellows, and he needs to assuage his own misery by spoiling their

pleasure. As long as his family was fighting for the throne Richard could occupy himself with political scheming and warfare and gain some measure of approval for his aggressive activities. Now that peace has come, men are turning their attention to activities from which he feels excluded and in which he cannot compete. By being a villain he will not only poison their delight; he will make the world a jungle once more, a place where he is at home and in control while others are at a disadvantage.

Because of his loveless state, Richard feels excluded from the human community. Men love one another because they share a common nature. Richard has been made to feel like a creature of a different species, one who is repulsively different from the mass of mankind. He has no sense of kinship even with his brothers and is prepared, in the pursuit of his own interests, to commit fratricide.

> I have no brother, I am like no brother;
> And this word 'love,' which greybeards call divine,
> Be resident in men like one another,
> And not in me! I am myself alone,
> Clarence, beware. *(3 Henry VI*, V, vi*)*

Because he is so different from others and is therefore excluded from love, Richard feels that he is a law unto himself and is free to follow his own desires. His loveless state at once generates enormous rage and provides him with a rationale for acting it out. If no one loves him, why should he care about anyone else? Let those who have love be loving. Since he is not part of the human community, he is not subject to its moral laws.

Because of the accident of his birth, then, Richard is deprived of love, of esteem, of fellowship, of all the normal pleasures of life. He feels that he has been badly cheated and that he has a right to some kind of compensation, but he does not expect that compensation to be provided by fate, or nature, or anyone else. He relies entirely on himself, on his ability to be ruthlessly aggressive. He is so uninhibi-

ted in his aggressiveness in part because he has no respect at all (consciously, at least) for traditional values. Why should he defer to the so-called divine order when it has dealt so unfairly with him ? He is in rebellion not just against society, like Edmund or Iago, but against the whole system of the universe.[6]

The arrogant-vindictive person pursues vindictive triumphs as a way of retaliating for humiliations suffered in childhood. In the case of Richard, the humiliations have been almost unimaginably severe; and, as a result his need for vindictive triumphs is overwhelmingly intense. When we add to this the fact that Richard is free of most of the usual restraints and that he has no choice but to think of himself as evil, we can begin to understand why his behaviour is so extreme. Richard's pursuit of vindictive triumphs becomes his neurotic project, the meaning and purpose of his life.

We can see the way in which Richard consciously turns to vindictive triumphs as a compensatory strategy in his first soliloquy in *3 Henry VI.* After he concludes that he cannot make his heaven in a lady's lap he reverts to his determination to pursue the crown :

> Then, since this earth affords no joy to me
> But to command, to check, to o'erbear such
> As are of better person than myself,
> I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown
> And, whiles I live, t'account this world but hell
> Until my misshap'd trunk that bears this head
> Be round impaled with a glorious crown. (III, ii)

Richard feels that it is hopeless to try to move toward people and he is too full of outrage to resign himself to his fate. His search for glory can only take the form of achieving mastery, and what form of mastery can surpass that of becoming king? Life for Richard is hell because of his negative feelings about himself, but he hopes to escape his anguish by becoming the most powerful and glamorous figure of all, the great object of deference and respect. He sees the crown as an antidote to

his self-contempt; possession of it will make up for his 'mis-shap'd trunk.' Richard must either be all or he is nothing. If he cannot actualize his idealized image of himself he will be left with his feelings of worthlessness: 'Counting myself but bad till I be best' (*3 Henry VI*, vii). His drive for the crown is fueled by his enormous self-hate.

At the beginning of his first soliloquy in *3 Henry VI*, Richard is discouraged by the many obstacles between himself and the throne; but when he reflects that the world affords him no 'other pleasure,' he decides to pursue the crown. He realizes that the difficulties are immense; but he is also aware that he has a tremendous advantage over his adversaries because of his utter ruthlessness and ability to dissemble. The obstacles which Richard faces have a positive value for him, since they give him an opportunity to prove his mettle. When he succeeds in deceiving or disposing of his adversaries, he exults not only because he has moved a step closer to the throne, but also because he has lived up to his shoulds. We can see this most vividly, perhaps, in his euphoria after his wooing of Lady Anne :

> What? I that kill'd her husband and his father
> To take her in her heart's extremest hate . . .
> Having God, her conscience, and these bars against me,
> And I no friends to back my suit withal
> But the plain devil and dissembling looks?
> And yet to win her—all the world to nothing?
> Ha ! (I—ii)

Richard has an idealized image of himself as a man who can overcome all obstacles by the sheer force of his cleverness and ability to dissemble. His victory over Lady Anne feeds his pride, fulfils his shoulds, and assuages, to some extent at least, the self-hate which he had displayed in his opening soliloquy. He still does not find himself to be 'a marv'ilous proper man,' but he has 'crept in favor with himself' by virtue of his magnificent vindictive triumph. Critics frequently account for Richard's conscious delight in his villainy by

placing him in the tradition of the Vice. His behaviour fits that pattern; but, as we have seen, it also has psychological motivations.

Critics have been puzzled as to why Richard woos Lady Anne in the first place. He does not love her, he does not plan to 'keep her long,' and the marriage seems to offer no particular advantage. He speaks of having a 'secret close intent/By marrying her' (I, i); but we never learn what it is—or perhaps we do. Richard has decided that since the earth affords no joy to him 'But to command, to check, to o'erbear such/As are of better person than' himself, he'll make his 'heaven to dream upon the crown' (*3 Henry VI*, III, ii). He has a bitter envy of those with normal bodies and his primary form of vindictive triumph will be to have them all in his power by becoming king. There are other forms of triumph, however. His wooing of Anne is aimed not so much at Anne herself as at Edward, a man with whom he has a particulary strong sense of rivalry :

> Hath she forgot already that brave prince,
> Edward, her lord, whom I, some three months since,
> Stabb'd in my angry mood at Tewkesbury?
> A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman—
> Fram'd in the prodigality of nature.
> Young, valiant, wise, and (no doubt) right royal—
> The spacious world cannot again afford:
> And will she yet abase her eyes on me,
> That cropp'd the golden prime of this sweet prince
> And made her widow to a woeful bed?
> On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety? (I, iii)

Richard sees Edward as his opposite : Edward was 'Fram'd in the prodigality of nature,' whereas he was 'cheated of feature by dissembling Nature' (I, i). Edward is just the sort of man to exacerbate Richard's feelings of inferiority. He gets even with Edward, and with 'Nature,' and assuages these feelings first by killing Edward and then, more satisfying still, by winning his wife. He makes her humiliate her husband by forgetting him so soon and by doing it for his murderer, a

man vastly inferior to himself, She does it, moreover, for a man who does not love her, does not value her, and does not plan to keep her long. Richard has made a tremendous fool of Anne and has greatly diminished the stature of Edward. It is no wonder that he is exultant.

Critics have been puzzled not only by Richard's wooing of Lady Anne, but also by Anne's capitulation, which seems to many to be psychologically unrealistic.[7] Because we know so little about Anne, Richard's seduction of her lacks the richness and intelligibility of Iago's seduction of Othello. We can appreciate not only the ingenuity of Iago's techniques, but also their impact upon Othello. What we know about Anne we must infer from the success of Richard's approach. We do not have a prior knowledge of her character, but Richard does, and he chooses his method of attack accordingly. He flatters her, professes his love, and claims that he killed her husband and father-in-law only because of his passion for her. His primary method of manipulating Anne is to appear self-effacing himself and to appeal to her self-effacing value system.

At the beginning of the scene, Anne is full of angry, vindictive feelings toward Richard. He tries to disarm her rage by appealing to her to behave in a more Christian manner : 'Lady, you know no rules of charity,/Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses' (I, ii). He is trying to activate Anne's shoulds and to make her feel guilty about her vindictiveness. He behaves according to the model which he holds up to her. No matter how angry and scornful she is (and she says some terrible things to him), he unfailingly renders good for bad, blessings for curses. He presents himself as a proud, hard man who has been transformed by his love for her. He has never before shed 'an humble' or a 'remorseful tear,' but his longing for her has made him 'blind with weeping.' He has never asked anyone for anything; but now his 'proud heart sues, and prompts [his] tongue to

speak.' This feeds Anne's pride in a number of ways. It is a testimony to her desirability, and it gives her a sense of having great power over a very powerful man. It appeals to a fantasy which is frequent in the self-effacing woman—that through his love for her, she will be able to soften and redeem a wildly aggressive man.

When none of his techniques seems to be working Richard hits upon his master stroke :

> If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,
> Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword,
> Which if thou please to hide in this true breast
> And let the soul forth that adoreth thee,
> I lay it naked to the deadly stroke
> And humbly beg the death upon my knee. (I,ii)

Anne is so angry with Richard that she wishes to kill him, but having the opportunity to do so throws her into inner conflict. She dose not want to think of herself as revengeful and unforgiving. Richard has made her confront her vindictive impulses and recoil from them. If she should actually kill him, she would surely hate herself. She 'offers at' his breast with his sword but cannot stab him. Richard urges her to proceed, reminding her that he killed Henry and Edward, but protesting again that he did it for love of her. When she drops the sword, saying that though she wishes his death, she will not be his executioner, he offers to kill himself at her bidding. He is saying to her, in effect, if you cannot forgive me, kill me; if you cannot kill me, forgive me. He knows, of course, that she cannot kill him, but she does not know that he knows this. He is trying above all to convince her of his sincerity by offering her his life. Anne is not convinced, but she is no longer certain that he is lying : 'I would I knew thy heart.' His earlier tactics could not succeed as long as she felt he was dissembling. Now that she thinks he may be sincere, they have considerable effect. Perhaps he does think her a saint, perhaps he did kill Edward and Henry for her sake, perhaps he is a changed man because of his love for her.

When Richard proposes solemnly to inter 'this noble king/ And wet his grave with my repentant tear,' Anne is completely taken in : 'much it joys me, too/To see you are become so penitent.' Once Anne believes that Richard has been converted to Christian values, she is compelled by her shoulds to give him a chance. I am not sure that this explains, however, her willingness to marry him.

Richard has won Anne in the face of tremendous obstacles and with nothing on his side 'but the plain devil and dissembling looks.' The techniques which he uses on Anne he uses again and again in the course of the play. His primary method of manipulating others is to dissemble, and the chief object of his dissimulation is to appear self-effacing himself and to play upon the self-effacing tendencies of others. Like Iago, Richard despises self-effacing values as they are embodied in the traditional morality, and he loves to exploit other people's virtue and their naive belief in his appearance of goodness. But assuming a self-effacing posture, he manages to overcome the mythology which has surrounded him since birth and the animosity aroused by his evil actions as an adult. It is no wonder that this gives him a tremendous sense of triumph. It is a testimony both to his own skill and to the folly of others.

Richard begins the next scene, with the Queen, Rivers, and Grey, by protesting that he has been unfairly accused of not loving them and attributing this to his lack of hypocrisy :

> Because I cannot flatter and look fair,
> Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive, and cog,
> Duck with French nods and apish courtesy,
> I must be held a rancorous enemy.
> Cannot a plain man live and think no harm
> But thus his simple truth must be abus'd
> With silken, sly insinuating Jacks? (I—ii)

As in his dealings with Anne, it is essential that Richard overcome the distrust of his adversaries if his dissembling is to have any effect. He tries to do it here by accusing others of

his own practices, by pretending to abhor hypocrisy, and by professing, like Iago, to be 'a plain man.' He has so much trouble in this world because to be direct and honest is not safe. He deflects suspicion from himself for Clarence's imprisonment by accusing the queen's party of being responsible and by expressing great sorrow for his brother: 'I would to God my heart were flint like Edward's,/Or Edward's soft and pitiful like mine./I am too childish-foolish for this world.' (This is, of course, the way in which Richard sees self-effacing people). When he asks God to 'pardon them that are the cause' of Clarence's imprisonment, Rivers is taken in : 'A virtuous and a Christianlike conclusion—/To pray for them that have done scathe to us.' Richard has deceived not only his enemies, but also his allies, whom he regards as 'simple gulls.' He gets them to whet him :

> To be reveng'd on Rivers, Dorset, Grey.
> But then I sigh, and with a piece of Scripture,
> Tell them that God bids us do good for evil;
> And thus I clothe my naked villainy
> With odd old ends stol'n forth of holy writ,
> And seem a saint when most I play the devil. (I—ii)

This reminds us of Iago's exultation at the end of Act II of *Othello :* 'Divinity of hell/When devils will the blackest sins put on,/They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,/As I do now.' Richard and Iago both understand thoroughly the psychology of self-effacing people and are experts at imitating and exploiting it. Richard concludes this scene by putting on one of the blackest of sins, as he orders the murder of his brother.

There are several other instances of Richard's playing at being self-effacing. He tells Rivers that he 'had rather be a pedlar' than be king (I,iii), and he welcomes Edward's efforts to make peace : 'This death to me to be at enmity :/I hate it, and desire all good men's love' (II, i). He claims to be totally free of hostility :

> I do not know that Englishmen alive

With whom my soul is any jot at odds
More than the infant that is born to-night.
I thank my God for my humility. (II—i)

After the death of Edward, while he is plotting against the princes, he pretends piety and humility again in his behaviour toward his mother : 'Humbly on my knee/I crave your blessing'(II,ii). Shakespeare rather heavy-handedly has him mock his mother's blessing in an aside. His constant exposure of Richard's hypocrisy may reflect a fear that the audience will be taken in.

Richard's most elaborate display of self-effacing behaviour occurs in III, vii, the scene in which he pretends reluctance to accept the throne. This scene is carefully orchestrated by Richard and Buckingham, who work the crowd like a pair of con men. When Buckingham arrives with the Lord Mayor and the citizens, Richard is 'within, with two right reverend fathers/Divinely bent to meditation.' He appears reluctantly—'So sweet is zealous meditation'—between two bishops, and refuses Buckingham's offer of the crown. Playing the role of the humble man who shuns 'greatness' and 'glory,' he cites his 'desert/Unmeritable, his 'poverty of spirit' and his 'many . . . defects' : 'Alas, why would you heap this care on me?/I am unfit for state and majesty.' Buckingham understands his reluctance to depose his 'brother's son;/As well we know your tenderness of heart/And gentle, kind, effeminate remorse.' But he insists that whether Richard accepts or not, Edward's son shall never be king; and Richard regretfully accepts the 'burden.' As the scene ends, he is off to his 'holy work' again with the bishops. Throughout this scene, Richard and Buckingham play upon the Christian morality, with its taboos against pride, ambition, and the desire for glory. They present Richard as a model of self-effacement. He is self-deprecating, unambitious, and reluctant to seek his gain at the expense of others. He is an humble, religious man who would rather pray than exercise power. There is no soliloquy at the end of this scene, but we can imagine Richard's

exultation at the success of his pretense and his scorn for the gullibility of the people, who are deceived by their belief in the value system which he and Buckingham are mocking.

Richard, of course, is the opposite of the self-effacing image which he presents to the world. He seems to be a man without scruples, without remorse, without inner conflicts. He has a tremendous advantage over everyone else because he acts out his aggressive impulses, whereas they are subject to inner restraints. Even Buckingham, whom he describes as his 'other self' (II, ii), is hesitant about murdering the young princes. Richard feels that men have been brainwashed by their culture into believing that the voice of conscience is the voice of God and that they cannot violate the moral law without guilt and retribution. From Richard's point of view, 'Conscience is but a word that cowards use,/Devis'd at first to keep the strong in awe '(v, iii). Richard believes that might makes right and that society keeps down the strong by making them afraid to use their strength. Anyone who sees through his deception is able to throw off all moral restraint and to take advantage of other people's belief in the traditional pieties.

The traditional pieties have more power over Richard than he cares to admit. He needs to exploit self-effacing people in part because he is trying to prove to himself that he is right to suppress the self-effacing side of his own personality. He cannot entirely suppress it, however. He believes, like Lady Macbeth, that he can murder without guilt and remorse; but he finds, also like Lady Macbeth, that conscience is a reality which he cannot escape, that it pursues him in his sleep no matter what he believes while he is awake. Margaret's curse on Richard is that.

> The worm of conscience still begnaws thy soul . . .
> No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine,
> Unless it be while some tormenting dream
> Affrights thee with a hell of ugly devils! (I—iii)

This, like all of Margaret's curses, comes to pass. Lady Anne

later reports that 'never yet one hour in his bed/Did I enjoy the golden dew of sleep,/But with his timorous dreams was still awak'd' (IV, i). Richard's most terrifying attack of conscience occurs the night before the battle of Bosworth. It is the climax of Shakespeare's treatment of conscience in the play as a whole, which is designed to refute Richard's position.

Richard III is commonly seen as a justification of the Tudor dynasty. It is that, of course; but it is also, and perhaps more importantly, a justification of the traditional model of man and the traditional morality, both of which are challenged by Richard's arrogant-vindictive belief system. Shakespeare is out to show, through action and through characterization, that crime does not pay and that conscience is inescapable. Like *Macbeth*, *Richard III* asks whether a human being can, indeed, sin with impunity; and in both plays the answer is a resounding NO. The arrogant-vindictive solution does not work; its view of human nature and of the world order is false. Crime or the intention to commit crime activates the conscience, even in hardened men. The murderers of Clarence are troubled by conscience before the deed, and one of them repents after. The dialogue between them (II, iv) is similar to conversations between Macbeth and his Lady. Despite the fact that they are 'flesh'd villains,' the murderers of the princes are stricken 'with conscience and remorse' (IV, ii); and Tyrrel, who commissioned them, is deeply shaken. Sometimes it is misfortune or the threat of retribution which activates the conscience. Clarence's accusing dream occurs while he is in prison and fills him with remorse. Buckingham, who is as proud of his villainy as Richard, recognizes the justice of his fate as he is about to be beheaded : 'Wrong hath but wrong, and blame the due of blame' (V, i). Both Richard and Buckingham swear great but insincere oaths in order to get people to believe them. They do this with ease because they do not believe in the religious doctrines which make an oath a sacred thing. In the case of Buckingham, the very fate which he has called upon his head if he should be

lying comes to pass, and he undergoes a religious conversion :

> That high All-seer which I dallied with
> Hath turn'd my feigned prayer on my head
> And given in earnest what I begg'd in jest.
> Thus doth he force the swords of wicked men
> To turn their own points in their masters' bosoms. (V, i)

The emergence of conscience in Richard parallels the process which Shakespeare has depicted in the other aggressive characters in the play. It is not prepared for by a detailed portrayal of his psychological development, but it is compatible with his character structure. Gerald Zuk argues that 'Richard's downfall would seem to have been precipitated by his ascent to the crown,' that he is one of those people in whom 'latent forces within the superego' are liberated by 'a powerful wish-fulfilment.'[8] Richard's ascent to the throne does seem to have something to do with the emergence of his inner conflicts, the prior presence of which is indicated by his 'timorous dream.' The arrogant-vindictive person lives for the day of reckoning, the moment of vindictive triumph when his superiority is established and his revenge upon his detractors is complete. Richard anticipates having such a triumph when he ascends the throne. He has made his 'heaven to dream upon the crown' and has invested kingship with wonderful properties. In *3 Henry VI* he urges his father to 'but think/How sweet a thing it is to wear a crown,/Within whose circuit is Elysium/and all that poets feign of bliss and joy' (I, ii). Though Shakespeare does not portray the process very fully or explicitly, Richard seems, like the Macbeths, to find the possession of the throne a disappointing experience; and this may increase his uneasiness about the crimes which he committed to achieve it.

We do not see Richard experiencing any bliss or joy when he beomes king. Instead, he is immediately anxious about holding onto the throne ('But shall we wear these glories for a day?') and stopping 'all hopes whose growth may damage'

him (IV, ii). In the first scene in which he appears as king, he arranges the deaths of the princes (over which he breaks with Buckingham), he decides to kill Anne, he plans to marry his niece, and he worries about Henry VI's prophecy that Richmond will become king. He does not contemplate the pursuit of Elizabeth with the same zest and self-satisfaction that we saw earlier in this wooing of Anne:

> I must be married to my brother's daughter,
> Or else my kingdom stands on brittle glass.
> Murder her brothers, and then marry her—
> Uncertain way of gain! But I am in
> So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin.
> Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye. (IV, ii)

It had filled Richard with delight that he was able to win Anne despite his murder of her husband and his father. He has a sense now of the monstrousness of what he is contemplating in relation to Elizabeth, and he must overcome his reluctance by reminding himself of its necessity and his taboo against feeling pity. He seems in this passage to believe in the reality of sin, whereas he had formerly regarded it as just a scare word. He sees both his past bloody acts and his intended ones as sinful, and he is uncertain as to what they will gain. As soon as he ascends the throne, he seems to expect to lose it, perhaps because at some level he believes in the traditional values and in the retribution which is supposed to follow their violation.

The emergence of Richard's inner conflicts may be related also to the fact that as soon as he becomes king things start going badly for him and he is subjected to severe moral condemnation. In IV, iii, we learn that Richmond aims at Elizabeth ('and by that knot looks proudly on the crown'), that Morton has fled to Richmond, and that Buckingham is in the field with an army of Welshmen. In IV, iv, we see Richard rattled for the first time, as he sends Catesby off to the Duke of Norfolk but forgets to give him a message and he strikes the messenger who brings him news of Buckin-

gham': 'Out on ye, owls! Nothing but songs of death?' Richard is inundated with news of desertions and the growing strength of his enemies, and he does not entirely trust his remaining friends. In addition, he is subjected in this scene to his mother's curse and to a scathing attack by queen Elizabeth as he tries to gain her assistance in wooing her daughter. All of these things may give him the feeling that another day of reckoning is approaching at which he will have to pay for his sins. He fears failure at Bosworth in part because his sense of sinfulness has been activated, and his fear of failure exacerbates his sense of sinfulness, for self-effacing trends rise to the surface in an expansive person when his quest for mastery is threatend. It is not surprising that, despite his superiority in numbers, Richard has 'not that alacrity of spirit/Nor cheer of mind that [he was] wont to have' (V, iii). He is no longer convinced of his ability to master his fate through the sheer force of his aggressiveness but is burdened by guilt and fear and is full of inner conflicts.

Shakespeare's mimetic portrait of Richard is not as consistently rich and interesting as are his portraits of Hamlet, Othello, Iago, Lear and Macbeth. We can understand the genesis of Richard's defense system with exceptional clarity, but Richard is for the most part a rather static figure who repeats his strategies rather than a character who develops in a complex way in the course of the play. There are some signs, as we have seen, of the breakdown of his arrogant-vindictive defense system; but it is not until the night before the battle of Bosworth that he experiences a fully rendered psychological crisis. In his dream he is visited by those he has murdered, each of whom tells him to despair and die. Richard has believed that might makes right and that he can violate the moral law with impunity. The traditional belief is that right makes might, that the good will triumph and the evil will be undermined by their sins. The play is set up, of course, to vindicate the traditional morality. The battle of Bosworth is pre-

sented as a trial by combat in which the righteousness of Richmond's cause assures him victory despite his inferiority in numbers and experience. Oxford proclaims that 'Every man's conscience is a thousand men,/To fight against this guilty homicide' (V, ii). While Richmond's righteousness gives him additional strength, Richard's guilt has the opposite effect. The ghosts of the young princes tell Richard, 'let us be lead within thy bosom . . . / And weigh thee down to ruin, shame, and death'; and all of the ghosts tell Richmond that their 'wrongs in Richard's bosom/Will conquer him!' (V. iii). Because of its unrealistic mode of presentation, we cannot treat Richard's dream as a purely psychological phenomenon; but it does seem to be linked to his other 'timorous dreams' and to mark the point at which his unconscious guilt emerges so powerfully that it breaks down his defenses.

If Richard's dream is not presented realistically, his reaction to it is. The soliloquy which follows his awakening is the high point of Shakespeare's mimetic portrait. Richard awakes in a panic, calling for a horse and treatment of his wounds. He has evidently been dreaming of battle and has been experiencing the misfortune predicted for him by the ghosts of those he has murdered. In the midst of his fright, he calls upon Jesus for mercy. This is a self-effacing response to the collapse of his feelings of mastery and an indication that at some level he still holds traditional beliefs. When he realizes that he was only dreaming, he is filled with self-hate. His guilt-ridden dream and his plea for mercy violate his arrogant-vindictive shoulds, undermine his idealized image, and make him feel like his despised self. In order to restore his pride, he heaps scorn on his conscientious side ('O coward conscience') and tries to master his fear :

> What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by.
> Richard loves Richard: that is, I am I.
> Is there a murderer here? No. Yes. I am.
> Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason why—

Lest I revenge myself upon myself?
Alack, I love myself. Wherefore? For any good
That I myself have done unto myself?
O no! Alas, I rather hate myself
For hateful deeds committed by myself.
I am a villain. Yet I lie, I am not.
Fool, of thyself speak well. Fool, do not flatter. (V. iii)

This is Shakespeare's first detailed presentation of a character in the grip of inner conflict. Richard is schzoid in this soliloquy: his self effacing side has emerged, and he is caught in a cross-fire of conflicting shoulds. He realizes that what he is afraid of is the conscientious side of himself, and he tries to cope with his fear by holding onto his arrogant-vindictive code of egoism. If everyone is out for himself, then Richard must love Richard, and he has no reason to be afraid of himself. The problem is that he hates himself because of his violations of his self-effacing shoulds; and he is afraid that he will punish himself in order to reduce his self-hate. He has an impulse to seek revenge on himself for having been so terribly self-destructive. For a moment the forces in conflict seem evenly balanced. Richard's self-effacing side tells him that he is a villain, but his arrogant-vindictive side tells him that he is not. One set of shoulds tells him that he is a fool for thinking ill of himself, while the other set tells him that he is a fool for engaging in self-deception. Then his defenses collapse, and he is overwhelmed with guilt and self-hate:

My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree,
Murder, stern murder, in the dir'st degree,
All several sins, all us'd in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all 'guilty! guilty!'
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;
And if I die, no soul will pity me.
Nay, wherefore should they, since that I myself
Find in myself no pity to myself?

Richard is in despair because there is no way in which he can either cope with his guilt or satisfy his yearning for love. He feels that he has gone too far ever to put himself in harmony with his conscience. He has tried to deny its existence, but now he knows that it is indisputably there, and he fears that he can never escape his terrible self-hate. He is experiencing not only his guilt, but also, perhaps for the first time, the full force of his need for love. He has tried to deny this also; but, with his self-effacing side now dominant, he experiences the pain of his alienation from the human community. No one loves him and if he dies no one will pity him. He understands that his isolation is something which he has deserved. He cannot expect compassion from others when he is so full of rage with himself. His despair awakens our compassion, of course, as had the evidences of suffering in his earlier soliloquies.

Richard seems to be heading for a psychological collapse; but, when we next see him, he has pulled himself together and has rebuilt his arrogant-vindictive defense system :

> Let not our babbling dreams afright our souls;
> Conscience is but a word that cowards use,
> Devis'd at first to keep the strong in awe.
> Our strong arms be our conscience, swords our lawl
> March on, join bravely, let us to't pell-mell,
> If not to heaven, then hand in hand to hell. (V, iii)

This speech is addressed to himself, of course, more than to those who are with him. Richard deals with his anxiety attack and the emergence of his guilt and self-hate by once more dismissing conscience as a ruse and a sign of cowardice. He reaffirms his belief that might makes right and confronts his fate defiantly. Even if he is wrong and is headed for hell, his spirit is unbroken. He fights valiantly and dies with his harness on his back. His ability to fend off despair and to behave in a way which conforms to his aggressive system of values wins a certain respect, much as similar behaviour does for Macbeth.

I have presented Richard's inner conflict as being between the self-effacing and arrogant-vindictive components of his personality. It can be seen in other ways, of course. Many critics see it as being between the traditional values which Shakespeare's culture inherited from the Middle Ages and the new ideas which were springing up in the Renaissance. This is certainly a valid perspective. Richard is the first of the 'new men,' the individualists, whom Shakespeare depicted and destroyed again and again in his plays. We can reconcile the ideological and the psychological interpretations of Richard's inner conflict by recognizing that belief systems often embody our defensive strategies and appeal to us because they reinforce our dominant solution. Characters like Richard III, Edmund, Iago, Lady Macbeth, etc. can be seen as embodying certain radical ideas, the challenge of which Shakespeare rose to resist; but their belief systems are presented by Shakespeare himself as integral to their personalities and not as merely the product of cultural influences. The plays invite, that is, a psychological reading. Whatever his thematic intentions, Shakespeare seems to have intuitively understood the relation between character structure and belief.

The conflict between traditional and radical ideas which occurs so frequently in Shakespeare's play may reflect a psychological conflict in the author. From a psychological point of view Shakespeare may be trying to work out in *Richard III* a conflict between the arrogant-vindictive and self-effacing components of his own personality. Part of him seems to be drawn to Richard. He imagines him with such force that Richard is not simply a villain but is also a powerfully magnetic figure, one whose behaviour seems often understandable and even, at times, delightful. Shakespeare needs to repudiate the arrogant-vindictive part of himself, however, even more than he needs to give it expression; and so thematically the play is heavily weighted on the side of traditional values. One of the things which Shakespeare is showing from a

thematic point of view is that the intellect may see through and dissolve the traditional beliefs, but that they still exist in the spirit-they are psychic realities. In terms of mimesis the truth he is showing is that even in the most ruthlessly arrogant-vindictive person, there is a suppressed self-effacing side, that inner conflict is inescapable, and that we are going to hate ourselves if we violate our self-effacing shoulds.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] Like Michael Neill, I am interested in 'the surprising psychological insight which Shakespeare manages to produce from the manipulation of such thoroughly traditional material' ['Shakespeare's Halle of Mirrors : Play, Politics, and Psychology in *Richard III*,' *Shakespeare Studies*, VIII (1975), 103]. There are many critics, of course, who focus on Richard's relationship to the traditional material or on his thematic function and who fail to see him as a mimetic character. William B. Toole argues, for example, that we should not 'seek a modern psychological explanation for Richard's behaviour' on the basis of his opening soliloquy in *Richard III* because 'the delineation of Richard's character is ultimately conditioned more by his structural role in the overall design of the play than by psychological reality' ['The Motif of Psychic Division in 'Richard III,'' *Shakespeare Survey*, XXVII (1974), 25]. Richard Wheeler is very close to my own position when he points to the way in which Shakespeare's realistic presentation of political and psychological processes disrupts the play's 'stated meaning' ['History, Character, and Conscience in *Richard III*,' *Comparative Drama*, V (1971-72), 305]. There are interesting psychological analyses of Richard in the essays by Neill and Wheeler. For other psychological studies of Richard, see Charles Adler, 'Richard III—His significance as a study in Criminal Life-Style,' *International Journal of Individual Psychology*, II (1939), 55-56; Norman N. Holland, *Psychoanalysis and Shakespeare* (New York: 1966) pp. 334-36; and Murray Krieger, 'The Dark Generations of *Richard III*,' *Criticism*, I (1959), 32-48.

[3] See Bernard J. Paris, 'Hamlet and His Problems: A Horneyan Analysis,' *The Centennial Review*, XXI (1977), 36-66; 'Bargains with Fate: A Psychological Approach to Shakespeare's Major Tragedies,' *The Aligarh Journal of English Studies*, V (1980), 144-161; 'The Inner conflicts of *Measure for Measure*,' *The Centennial Review*, XXV (1981), 266-276; and 'Bargains with Fate: The Case of Macbeth,' *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, XLII (1982), 7-20.

[3] Karen Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth* (New York, 1950), p. 212. Hereafter cited as *NHG*.

[4] I am indebted to Randal Robinson for making me more vividly aware of the destructive influence of his mother upon Richard. In an unpublished essay ['The Identity and Temptations of Richard III'], he points out that when she stops Richard on his way to battle, the Duchess, 'like others in the play before her, calls her son a toad. . . . comical though the word may be in itself, it expresses the intolerance the Duchess feels toward Richard's physical deformity, and thus it reveals a prejudice which must have been present since Richard's birth'. Robinson argues that the Duchess 'used every possible development to reassure herself that Richard deserved her scornful treatment—including his long stay in the womb, the difficulty she had in his delivery, his entrance into the world deformed, and his disagreeable behaviour as an infant. . . . [She] gave Richard hate instead of love, . . . rejected his demands for support, and . . . made it impossible for Richard to connect himself with her in a direct, natural fashion.' Adler and Neill also discuss the Duchess's destructive effect upon Richard, Adler from an Adlerian and Neill from a Laingian point of view.

[5] *3 Henry VI*, V. vi. References to this play will henceforth be cited in the text. When no title is given, the reference is to *Richard III*.

[6] Freud includes Richard among those who feel that they are an exception because of 'some experience of suffering to which they had been subjected in their earliest childhood, one in respect of which they knew themselves to be guiltless, and which they could look upon as an unjust disadvantage imposed upon them.' What Richard's opening soliloquy in *Richard III* 'thus means is: 'Nature has done me a grievous wrong in denying me the beauty of form which wins human love. Life owes me reparation for this, and I will see that I get it. I have a right to be an exception, to disregard the scruples by which others let themselves be held back. I may do wrong myself, since wrong has been done to me' ['Some Character—Types Met with in Psycho-Analytic Work,' in *On*

Creativity and the Unconscious, ed. Benjamin Nelson (New York: 1958), pp. 86 & 88.

[7] The strongest case for the psychological realism of the scene between Richard and Anne has been made by Donald R., Shupe, 'The Wooing of Lady Anne: A Psychological Inquiry,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*, XXIX (1978), 28-36.

[8] Gerald Zuk, 'A Note on Richard's Anxiety Dream,' *American Imago*' XIV (1957), 38-39.

Jack R. Sublette

TIME'S FOOL : A READING OF *I HENRY IV*

William Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV* opens, as *Richard II* closes, with the King referring to time :

> So shaken as we are, so wan with care,
> Find we a time for frighted peace to pant,
> And breathe short-winded accents of new broils
> To be commenced in stronds afar remote.[1]

Henry erringly thinks that the time is right for him to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. If that trip can be made, he feels, then the burden of sin for stealing a crown and killing a king will be lifted from him and his kingdom. However, Blunt's news that Hotspur refuses to yield his prisoners to the King causes Henry to postpone his journey. The news and the postponement suggest that the times are not yet as Henry would like them to be. In fact, Henry's desired ttme will never come. Unlike Richard, Henry realizes his duty to stay at home and tend his kingdom. The second scene, however, emphasizes most dramatically and graphically the unnatural sense of time in the new world of Henry IV. Here Falstaff and Prince Hal talk about a view of time which is apparently new, one which did not exist in the days of Richard. Upon Falstaff's asking Hall what time of day it is, Hal responds :

> What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping houses, and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flamecolored taffeta, I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of the day.
>
> (I. ii. 6—13)

Hal's answer illustrates that time for Falstaff simply represents opportunities to gratify his physical appetites. Like

Richard, Falstaff uses time for his own personal advantage and lives as if he were beyond the traditional limits of time. The various analogies among the representations of time and the pleasures in Falstaff's life offer a very different picture of time from what Richard ultimately hammers out in the soliloquy in prison in which his final minutes are sadly and painfully told upon himself.

Falstaff ignores Hal's interpretation of time and picks up on another of the connotations of time found in the Prince's remaks : 'Indeed, you come near me now, Hal; for we that take purses go by the moon and the seven stars, and not by Phoebus, he, "that wandering knight so fair"' (I. ii. 14-17). The interpretation which Falstaff renders of Hal's words is that his question should not have been 'what time of day is it,' but more properly 'what time of night is it.' At the end of *Richard II*, Henry banishes Exton to a world of endless night. Ironically, the heir-apparent is frequenting a world in which the central character proudly lives by night. In fact, Falstaff, in making plans for England when Hal becomes king, changes the traditional association between sun and king to moon and king :

> Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art King, let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty. Let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon. And let men say we be men of good government, being governed, as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we steal. (I. ii. 26-33)

The results of Richard's not being England's proper sun and Bolingbroke's stealing the crown show themselves early in the world of Henry IV.

Falstaff's plans for the future are vain. Despite his behaviour and attitude, he is an old man. Hal's parting words to him in this scene, 'Farewell, thou latter spring ! Farewell, Allhallown summer !' (I. ii. 177-179), recognize the link between man and nature. Each man has only one spring in his life. Falstaff's spring is gone forever. Although he may enjoy the

temporary reprieve of an Indian summer, his course is certain —winter and death. Even at this relatively early moment, Hal's words foreshadow Falstaff's banishment. What the future holds is made even more clear in Hal's first soliloquy. From the beginning, Hal exhibits the behaviour and strategy of an astute politician. He knows that he is the heir-apparent; in order to pass the time until he becomes king, he plays in the world of Falstaff. In his first soliloquy, Prince Hal depicts his rather keen sense of identity :

> Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
> Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
> To smother up his beauty from the world,
> That, when he please again to be himself,
> Being wanted, he may be more wondered at
> By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
> Of vapors that did seem to strangle him. (I. ii. 220-226)

Despite the Prince's seeming to acquiesce to Falstaff's proposal that they become men who are associated with the moon, Hal views himself as being like the sun, not the moon. His analogy, however, is fautly. Hal could, if he wanted to do so, separate himself from Falstaff and the world of the taverns. On the other hand, the sun is simply clouded over in the course of natural events. The sun neither allows this to happen nor is it able to prevent it. Hal fails to recognize this natural phenomenon and, therefore, falsely attributes power to the sun which it does not, in fact, have.

The Prince is a young man and a relatively inexperienced politician; his view of himself and of his own ability to pattern his life reflects his lack of experience. The image, then, suggests that if in the natural course of events, Hal's true nature were obscured, it might be able to emerge naturally and dazzle the eyes of men. While the sun can overwhelm man with its brightness, its more productive function is to provide light and heat, in short, the source of life on earth. Hal might more properly wish to be the king who will furnish fitting leadership for his country, the source of good life on

earth. As the actions of Richard and Henry's abortive attempt to compensate for past deeds have shown, once the course of time is completed, it cannot be reversed. Even though Hal is aware of his plan for the future, this speech does not preclude Hal's changing as a result of his association with Falstaff and his companions. Of the change that occurs in Hal's character, Paul Jorgensen writes that while he agrees

> with those critics . . . who argue that Hal undergoes no radical reform, I do not believe that a correct interpretation of 'redeeming time' permits us to accept the notion of a static Hal who is perfect from the beginning and is merely enjoying a period of deceiving people, or, even less palatable, a Hal who can immerse himself daintily in a world of idle pleasure and emerge the same as he was before. Hal grows as a result of his experiences and not despite them.[8]

Hal foolishly views time as if it were a monetary entity which can be borrowed and repaid at will and oversimplifies the possible effects of his environment on him. Hal's phrase about redeeming time recalls Gaunt's claim that once he is dead, Richard cannot add a minute to his life and Richard's sorrowful soliloquy about wasting time. Man's power over time is definitely limited.

The emphasis of Hal's plans lies on the future. His rival Hotspur, Hotspur's father, and uncle decide that they, too, must redeem time, but they concentrate on the present. In order to reclaim the honour which the Percies have lost in helping Bolingbroke secure a crown which they now believe belongs to Edmund Mortimer, Hotspur argues for the compensatory use of the present:

> yet time serves wherein you may redeem
> Your banished honors, and restore yourselves
> Into the good thoughts of the world again,
> Revenge the jeering and disdained contempt
> Of this proud King, who studies day and night
> To answer all the debt he owes to you
> Even with the bloody payment of your deaths.
>
> (I. iii. 180-186)

While Hotspur uses the present frugally, Prince Hal immerses

himself in the time at hand with all of the zest for life which Falstaff himself exhibits. The Prince brags to Poins, 'I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life' (II. iv. 18-21). In order to entertain himself while waiting for Falstaff, Hal goes so far as to propose 'to drive away the time' (II. iv. 30). This remark represents a common human desire to make time pass quickly and to provide, thereby, a false sense of power over time by reducing its reality to a psychological state, but the results of Richard's wasting time loom all too darkly in the background. To Hal, however, the immediate effect of driving time away is to make him feel 'now of all humors that have showed themselves humors since the old days of Goodman Adam to the pupilage of this present twelve o'clock at midnight' (II. iv. 104). These words are spoken by the Prince of Wales who, in terms of the life of England's future king, lies yet unborn in the womb of time. Part of his period of gestation and his time of learning to become king occur at night in the taverns and on dark roads where robberies, even false robberies, happen; another part takes place in the royal world where a crown has been stolen by a prudent politician, another man who uses time to his own advantage. Despite the soliloquy in which he honestly states his carefully premeditated plans, Hal's enthusiasm for the present time, an enthusiasm which he can control, depicts his inexperience.

Surprisingly and ironically, Falstaff is the one who reminds Hal that he will have to answer to his father for the way in which he is spending his time. Falstaff, who usually thinks of only today, cautions Hal, 'thou wilt be horribly chid tomorrow when thou comest to thy father' (II. iv. 410). In the subsequent action, which is a kind of play-within-the-play, with Falstaff playing the King and Hal himself and then with the roles reversed, Shakespeare provides a glimpse into both the immediate and the more distant future, to the times when Hal will have to answer his father and when Hal as Henry V

will deal with Falstaff. The Prince's final and solemn 'I do, I will' (II. iv. 527) intimates that during the time of his apprenticeship for king, he has not learned the meaning of true frinedship, but he has learned his values both in the royal world where crowns are stolen and where loyalties change at will, often for selfish, personal, and political reasons, and in the not too dissimilar world of Falstaff and the taverns. The play-within-the-play with reversal of the roles recalls the dramatic metaphors of York and Richard in *Richard II*. Man's position is not stable but in a state of flux. Neither Hal nor Falstaff understands this reality.

The hour soon arrives for Hal to answer to the King. In an image with time viewed as a financial commodity, Henry severely chastises Hal by unfavourably contrasting him with Hotspur, who

> being no more in debt to years than thou
> Leads ancient lords and reverend bishops on
> To bloody battles and to bruising arms. (III.ii. 103-105)

In the King's eyes, here are two men who have been allotted the same amount of time in which to learn the ways of the world. Seemingly, Hotspur has proved the better student. Hal replies in language suggestive of his earlier soliloquy :

> I will redeem all this on Percy's head,
> And in the closing of some glorious day
> Be bold to tell you that I am your son:
> When I will wear a garment all of blood,
> And stain my favors in a bloody mask
> Which, washed away, shall scour my shame with it.
> And that shall be the day, whene'er it lights,
> That this same child of honor and renown,
> This gallant Hotspur, this-all-praised knight,
> And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.
> For every honor sitting on his helm,
> Would they were multitudes, and on my head
> My shames redoubled! For the time will come
> That I shall make this Northern youth exchange
> His glorious deeds for my indignities.

> Percy is but my factor, good my lord,
> To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf.
> And I will call him to so strict account
> That he shall render every glory up—
> Yea, even the slightest worship of his time—
> Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart. (III.ii. 132-152)

Although Hal shifts the focus from time in the earlier soliloquy to honour in this speech, the substance of his argument still refers to time. Both his honour and time remain financial commodities. Actually, Hal's attitude as revealed in the above quoted passage speaks rather disparagingly of his character. While Hal wastes time and enjoys himself as fully and completely as possible with Falstaff and the frequenters of the taverns, he consciously manipulates Hotspur, a man brave enough to live his life in the bright light of day. Hal will, in a sense, steal, when the time is right, from Hotspur what Percy has openly purchased for himself. In killing Hotspur, Hal may be able to redeem some of his own lost time and honour, but Hal is wrong to believe that he can take from Hotspur the honour that he has won for himself by using time to his own advantage.

Hotspur's reaction to the news that his father, being sick, will not be able to supply the expected supporting troops again contrasts Hal's emphasis on the future with the young Percy's use of the present. Even Vernon's description of the royalist troops does not have the power to dim Hotspur's hope:

> All furnished, all in arms;
> All plumed like estridges that with the wind
> Bated like eagles having lately bathed;
> Glittering in golden coats, like images;
> As full of spirit as the month of May,
> And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer;
> Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls. (IV.i.97-103)

Although Hotspur honestly believes that his cause is right, he fails to see the significance in Vernon's words. The image which portrays King Henry's soldiers furnishes the traditional link between human life and nature. Everything that Vernon

says suggests the newness, youth, and vitality of the opposing troops in contrast to Hotspur's followers who suffer a gap in their ranks because of the illness of the old Northumberland. However, upon learning that the time has not been right for Glendower to gather his forces, Hotspur senses the true import of the time for him but foolishly reacts :

> My father and Glendower being both away,
> The powers of us may serve so great a day.
> Come, let us take a muster speedily.
> Doomsday is near. Die all, die merrily. (IV.i. 131-134)

Hotspur's realization that life is short and, therefore, must be lived quickly and honourably contrasts with Hal's continual planning for a seemingly endless future.

As the day of the battle draws close, the King and Hal remark upon the reflection in nature of the disruption in human events. The King sees

> How bloodily the sun begins to peer
> Above yon busky hill ! The day looks pale
> At his distemperature. (V.i.1-3)

The rising of the sun and the beginning of a new day should not have such an ominous tone. The Prince's response echoes his father's thoughts :

> The southern wind
> Doth play the trumpet to his purposes,
> And by his hollow whistling in the leaves
> Foretells a tempest and a blustering day. (V.i. 3-6)

The King feels, however, that, if a storm occurs, it will prove favourable to him and his followers. The image suggests that the approaching storm is related to the previous storm, which in Worcester's words 'rained down fortune showering on your [Henry's] head' (V.i. 47-48). The former storm in reality proved beneficial for Bolingbroke only. As was predicted before and at the time of Bolingbroke's action, he, in usurping the time and a crown, would cause dissension throughout the realm. As the two factions now prepare to fight, the words, spoken much earlier by the Bishop of Carlisle, that 'The blood

of English shall manure the ground' (*RII* IV.i. 137) ring all too clearly. On a different level from the King's noticing the unnatural course of the day, Falstaff's wishing that 'twere bedtime. . . and all well' (V.i. 125) similarly demonstrates the irregularity and abnormality of time. In one sense, the remark is merely typical of Falstaff's desire for ceaseless pleasure and avoidance of physical danger. In a wider sense and on a more serious level, the image of Falstaff's wishing for bedtime in the morning before a battle suggests those Englishmen who have no part in bringing the two warring parties together and for whom this is an unnatural time. Hal's almost flippant response that Falstaff has no complaint because he owes 'God a death' (V.i. 126) both reflects the attitudes of Hal and Hotspur that the fight allows them the opportunity to settle their accounts of life and tacitly, when coupled with Falstaff's comment that the debt is not yet due, brings to mind all of those Englishmen for whom the time of reckoning is not necessarily due. The burden of responsibility for a battle, which need not occur if the former times had been handled properly, lies on the King.

Even though Hotspur wishes that he and the Prince of Wales alone might settle the quarrel, his assessment of life in terms of time is that man should live his short span of life honourably even if he dies achieving and maintaining his honour:

> O gentlemen, the time of life is short !
> To spend that shortness basely were too long
> If life did ride upon a dial's point,
> Still ending at the arrival of an hour.
> And if we live, we live to tread on kings;
> If die, brave death when princes die with us! (V.ii.82-87)

Hotspur, since the time of his speech about the ease of plucking 'bright honor from the pale-faced moon' (I.iii.201-202), has been willing to die fighting for his honour. Hal, conversely, has no intention of dying yet. It is almost impossible to determine that Hal is willing or unwilling to die because he does

not ponder that possibility. To Hal, the time of life is long; it is long enough for him to plan carefully how he can spend his hours to the greatest personal enjoyment and advantage. As Richard heard the irregular rhythm of music before he died and, therefore, was able to determine that there is a music in the lives of men which, when broken and out of proportion, is sour, Hotspur hears the musical rhythm of the sounds and instruments of war. The musical rhythm of civil war is as much an indication that time is not right as a funeral procession at the beginning of a reign. While much time has passed since the end of *Richard II*, the tenor of the time close to the end of the action in *I Henry IV* is very similar to that in the closing of the first play in the *Henriad*.

When Hotspur and Hal fight in hand-to-hand combat, Hotspur, as he predicted, realizes that 'the hour is come/To end the one of us' (V. iv. 68-69), and Hal seizes the opportunity, which he has planned, to redeem the time which he has lost. When Hal fatally wounds his adversary, Hotspur poignantly, sadly, and prophetically epitomizes both his life and end and the nature of the universe :

> O Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth!
> I better brook the loss of brittle life
> Than those proud titles thou has won of me,
> They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh.
> But thought's the slave of life, and life Time's fool,
> And Time, that takes survey of all the world,
> Must have a stop. (V.iv. 77-83)

If Richard and Bolingbroke had used time more wisely long ago and if Worcester had not lied recently, Hotspur might have been able to live in a more natural time, one in which he could live out his natural course on earth. Hotspur's dying words, when considered in terms of Gaunt's remark that 'the tongues of dying men/Enforce attention like deep harmony' (*RII* II.i. 5-6) suggest a richness that his fiery words in life do not. Speaking as a dying man, Hotspur identifies himself as a man whose words, like those of 'a prophet new-inspired' (*RII* II. i. 31), should be heeded. With a kind of Stoicism,

Hotspur prophesies that thought, life, and even time itself must sometime end. Hotspur's thoughts about a continual search for honour, his life which has been set in a time beyond and over which he has no control, and his earthly time all end with one deadly sword. Earlier Richard spoke of the same brittle transience. Hotspur's articulate speech should speak to Hal just as Gaunt's last words should to Richard. Neither one listens very carefully.

As Hal proclaims after the battle at Shrewsbury, 'the day is ours' (V.iv. 163), but what he fails to recognize is that even though the day is theirs, the time is not. Life is time's fool, not time life's fool. For the present, King Henry has won the battle. However, *I Henry IV* ends as it begins and as *Richard II* ends. Life is moving to the time of an irregular rhythm. The King declares that Northumberland and Scroop as well as Glendower and the Earl of March are yet to be conquered:

> Rebellion in this land shall lose his sway,
> Meeting the check of such another day.
> And since this business so fair is done,
> Let us not leave till all our own be won. (V.v. 41-44)

One should not have to win what is rightfully his own. The time might better bear the sounds of a march to the Holy Land than another battle processional.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare : The Complete Works*, ed. G. B. Harrison (New York : 1948), p. 617. Hereafter all quotations from Shakespeare are taken from Harrison's text and are documented in the text of the article by citing the act, scene, and line numbers in parentheses.

[2] Paul A. Jorgensen, 'Redeeming Time' in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*,' *Tennessee Studies in Literature*, 5 (1960), p. 108.

A. A. Ansari

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA : AN IMAGE OF LIQUIFACTION

Antony and Cleopatra is one of those plays of Shakespeare which evoke a highly complex and ambiguous response—ambiguous in the sense that one finds it difficult to be sure of the nature of impacts made on a sensitive mind by either of the two protagonists. Both are subtle and elusive, mercurial and even fidgety, and an element of indeterminacy gathers around them and nothing positive or absolutely categorical can be predicated of them until they are pushed little by little to the brink of death. When in the opening scene Antony, because of being compelled by the strong exigencies of the state to turn away, temporarily, from the wanton exuberance of their romantic love, unburdens himself with a gesture of petulance: 'Let Rome in Tiber melt' he is using an expression which holds relevance over and above its immediate context. The use of 'melt' as an infinitive reverberates throughout the play and throws into relief one of its basic themes. 'Melt' as reflecting a slow and continuous process bears an aura of meaning entirely distinct from 'burn', 'perish', 'annihilate' and countless cognate verbs which may be equated with non-being; linguistically, Antony seems to focus on something which is gently, unknowingly and almost insensibly being subsumed by or sucked into something else which may or may not be its exact contrary. One intriguing facet of it is the rapidity with which the scene of action in the play is constantly shifting; geographically, the main theatres are two: Egypt (the Eastern world) and Rome (the Western World)—the former symbolizing the pleasure principle—the Oriental

levitas and the latter, of necessity, the reality principle—the Roman *gravitas*. They are obviously not just spatial coordinates; on the contrary, they correspond to divergent and conflicting modes of being or life-conceptions or psychological proclivities. Not only does the action oscillate between these two vantage-points but more often than not one seems to intrude upon the other and this has the tendency of making the sharp dichotomy disappear. In other words, Egypt-the symbol of naked flesh, colossal exuberance and bawdy, animal vitality gives the illusion of shading off into Rome-the symbol of order, discipline and measure, and *vice versa*. Things are shown alternately now from the stand-point of Rome and then from that of Egypt, and what each signifies in its essentials is critically and ironically placed and evaluated.

One of the set pieces which rivets one's attention with a shock of delighted surprise is the passage Shakespeare lifted from Plutarch. It suffers a sea-change in the dramatist's alchemy of imagination and comes to reflect the flamboyant culture of Egypt. The lyrical narrative is put in the mouth of Enobarbus—the cynical, sharp-tongued and dry, choric commentator—who dwells rather rapturously on the public enthronement of Cleopatra and her meeting with Antony on Cydnus : a narrative not based on secondhand reporting but on close and intimate observation, and it has the effect of throwing Caesar into a violent explosion of anger. It starts with the avowed purpose of exposing to view 'the barge she sat in', and suffusing it with hectic colours makes the whole picture iridescent so much so that it stares us blindingly in the face. The barge is elevated to the status of 'a 'burnish'd throne', and with the employment of the word 'burn', coupled with the implicit suggestion of the shimmering light (cast on the waters), the two elements 'fire' and 'water' are brought into contiguity. With 'the poop was beatem gold,/Purple the sails', words like 'purple' and 'gold' become evocative of a resplendent visval image and

the winds grow enamoured of the perfumed sails. The perfume exuding perpetually from the sails may, metaphorically speaking, seem to emanate from the body of the occupant of the barge. The 'oars' and the 'tune of flutes' get constellated and they cast their spell on the water by way of accelerating its natural flow. Putting it differently—and here the erotic motif is smuggled in unobtrusively and with deftness—a suggestion is made about the waters growing 'amorous of the strokes'. The whole spectacle is steeped in the mystery and miraculous power of love which is both all-pervasive and contagious. Apropos of the seductive and sinister beauty of Cleopatra which seems to have sprouted out of the land of mandragora the summing up is done with delicate brushwork thus :

> she did lie
> In her pavilion—the cloth of gold, of tissue—
> O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
> The fancy outwork nature'. (II,ii, 198-201)

Though compact of the primary elements it surpasses both the products of human creativity at its highest and the processes of the organic; in other words it manifests the dazzling florescence in the phenomenal world and is preeminent even in that respect. With the plump and chubby boys—more or less carved in the pristine image of Cupid—holding 'divers-coloured fans' in their hands

> whose wind did seem
> To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
> And what they undid did

the act of cooling the cheeks by fanning them is brought home to us very vividly; it is a function which is assigned earlier, with ironic overtones, to 'the bellows and the fan' in Philo's opening speech in the play. Wind imagery has an ambivalent function here ; for it serves two ends simultaneously : cooling as well as excitation, and the form of the verb in 'what they undid did' has been twisted and hammered to produce a rhythmical effect. Both the presence of the

enticing and betwitching Thetis and of what F R Leavis succinctly calls 'the multitudinous impersonality of the packed masses of onlookers'[2] is cleverly hinted at when it is declared that arising from the barge 'A strange invisible perfume hits the sense,/Of the adjacent wharfs'. The element 'air' is exploited for indulging in an elaborate hyperbole : the 'air' too would have gone to gaze on Cleopatra—a paragon of loveliness and majesty, the radiant image of feminine glamour and charm—but for fear of creating vaccum in Nature, and a further audacious stroke is added, as if to consummate the sense of surprise, to the effect that Antony

> Enthron'd i' th' market-place, did sit alone,
> Whistling to the air; which; but for vacancy,
> Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
> And made a gap in nature.

The kinetic image used here causes boggle-eyed amazement to the reader and insinuates the notion that the whole world of Nature made up of fire, water, earth and air, mingled together in varying proportions, is involved with the heroine. Cleopatra is visualized more or less as the cynosure of Cydnus to such an extent that the inanimate are made to behave like animated beings. The 'pageant of artifice' Shakespeare stumbled on in his source material has been worked upon and transformed into a picture of richness to which the profusion in Nature contributes in no small measure, and on the structure of the verse falls the glow of a deliberate sensuousness. The rich tapestry of the entire narrative is shot through with the intimations of the sexual exuberance of which Cleopatra may be regarded as an archetype. The poetry of this passage has its source in the sexual energy which propels it and in the playful dialectic of 'fancy' and 'nature' embedded in it and which foreshadows its greater and more meaningful articulation in the later plays.

It is not a purple passage in the sense of having a detached beauty or peripheral and non-functional value, for it is correlated with what precedes and follows it in the artistic

economy of the play. This is climaxed by yet another endeavour to project the image of the inexhaustible fecundity of Cleopatra when Enobarbus reaches up the climactic point by saying :

> Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
> Her infinite variety: other women cloy
> The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry,
> Where most she satisfies. (II,ii, 35-8)

Her ambivalent personality is evoked by highlighting in her the power of resilience, the capacity to achieve new and perennial life in each successive moment and the sheer inherent instinct to withstand the corrosive impact of time. This holds the secret key to her abiding, insidious and Circean charm capable of binding the hero with erotic magic. This is counterpoised by the superb piece of oration delivered by Cleopatra in sheer ecstasy on Antony's passing away thus :

> For his bounty,
> There was no winter in 't ; an autumn 'twas
> That grew the more by reaping: his delights
> Were dolphin-like, they show'd his back above
> The element they lived in: in his livery
> Walk'd crowns and crownets : realms and islands were
> As plates dropp'd from his pocket. (V,ii, 86-92)

The golden bounty of autumn, with all the richness and plenitude attending upon it, is the 'objective correlative' provided for Antony; he is generous and open-handed to a fault, commands enormous resourcefulness, his generosity grows the more by spending, and conceived as part of the cycle of seasons he is qualified to achieve limitless and continuous self-creation. According to her estimation Antony could swim across the sea of delights unscathed, and bestows his gifts on others with prodigal carelessness and symbolizes in himself the tremendous glories and splendours of the terrestrial world.

When Cleopatra is severely reprimanded by Antony for allowing herself to be caressed by Caesar's emissary she is moved, in expiation of this supposedly heinous offence, to hurl a curse upon her progeny and her own self, with a view

to offering, as perceptively held by Traversi, 'a sort of emotional compensation to Antony.[3] She invokes heaven to pour down cold-heart-engendered hail, poisoned at the source, so that it may strike at the root of her existence and earnestly prays that she, along with her children, be subjected to lingering perdition. She is given to speculate that the process of discandying or dissolution may render them indistinguishable, in point of nauseating rottenness, from the flies and gnats of the Nile and the memory of their former life be altogether obliterated:

> From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,
> And poison it in the source, and the first stone
> Drop in my neck : as it determines, so
> Dissolve my life; the next Caesarion smite
> Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
> Together with my brave Egyptians all,
> By the discandying of this pelleted storm,
> Lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile
> Have buried them for prey! (III,xiii, 159-67)

Antony also fixes his mind upon the same image of discandying in a slightly different context and with new nuances of meaning. When he seems to have lost all that he had staked against Caesar and is brought to bay and consequently anticipates the complete disruption of the ties which bound him to his erstwhile followers (or sycophants) he begins to imagine that all the sweets of concord and amity are likely to vaporise, and allegiance to be laid henceforth at the door of Caesar alone:

> The hearts
> That spaniel'd me at heels, to whom I gave
> Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets
> On blossoming Caesar : and this pine is bark'd,
> That overtopp'd them all. (IV, Xii, 20-24)

Here the verb 'spaniel'd' contains the distillation of cold, corrosive contempt, discandying of sweets offers the image of the evanescence of human relationships and 'blossoming Caesar' carries along with it the implicit suggestion that Caesar

is the master of his crescent fortunes. The whole passage betrays Antony's withering scorn for the common run of people and utter disillusionment with the integument of the social fabric. And the image of the 'bark'd pine' reinforces the sense that the primal self has been stripped of all the essential tentacles that bound him with the life of the community and he has become denuded of all his former glory and distinction.

Driven ultimately to the nadir of his fortunes, and with an uncanny foreboding of imminent death Antony draws Eros's attention toward the figure of the cloud and the protean shapes one might perceive in it. The cloud does not have a static or stable form but appears under multiple aspects depending upon the eye of the beholder, and this becomes a metaphor for the process of apprehension of Reality. 'As a man is, So he sees; As the Eye is formed, such are its Powers'[4] was how Blake in his letter to Dr Trusler, 23 August 1799 formulated his characteristically incisive comment on the multiplicity of the levels of vision. In this moment of terrible anguish or *anxiety* when existence has become rootless for him and he seems to be gazing at the immense void and while his mind is still gripped and tormented by the notion of Cleopatra's perfidy, Antony is firmly persuaded of the fact that either one's hold over the apparatus of knowledge is exceedingly erratic and uncertain or the structure of Reality in itself is bewilderingly Kaleidoscopic :

> Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish,
> A vapour sometime, like a bear, or lion,
> A tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,
> A forked mountain, or blue promontory
> With trees upon't, that nod unto the world,
> And mock our eyes with air. Thou hast seen these signs,
> They are black vesper's pageants . . .
> That which is now a horse, even with a thought
> The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct
> As water is in water. (IV,xiv, 2-11)

This is a pivotal passage in which Antony's mind seems to be whirling from one image to another and it brings into focus

the inchoate stuff of the subliminal self. But it is quite obvious that the relativity of the mode of perception is not the only point at issue here. What Antony is most concerned with in this hour of crisis is the painful and disconcerting awareness that the coherence of his self or identity has come to grief. This is imaged by the shapelessness of the cloud which is glimpsed from moment to moment under multiple aspects. An ideal self is a single, whole and indivisible substance—an eternal Monad lying at the back of all appearances—but this in Antony's case has suffered damage, and the unifying and controlling principle is no longer operative. When Antony exclaims a little later : 'now my captain is,/Even such a body : here I am Antony,/Yet cannot hold this visible shape' (VI, xiv, 12-14), his consciousness is hovering over the 'buried pieces' of the self. He looks forward ominously to his eventual death and this prospect also represents a logical extension of his earlier muted but sybilline assertion :

> even with a thought
> The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct
> As water is in water.

The expression 'water in water' contains the essence of the dissolution theme: it is the image of liquifaction which permeates the entire play, and the process of indiscernible change is implied in the act of 'dislimning'. Antony's mind is benumbed at the thought of the fissures which have been created in his unified, consistent, stable self: the components of personality are held together in a precarious balance and they might lead to a radical dissolution in no time. It is intriguing to notice that the same predicament had been scrutinized rather objectively by the soldiers against the perspective of ghostly stage music thus :

> Sec. Sold. Peace, what noise ?
> First Sold. List, list!
> Sec. Sold. Hark!
> First Sold. Music i'the' air.
> Third Sold. Under the earth.
> Fourth Sold. It signs well, does it not?

Third Sold. No,
First Sold. Peace: I say:
What should this mean?
Sec. Sold. 'Tis the god Hercules, whom Antony lov'd
Now leaves him. (IV, iv, 6-16)

Mars and Hercules are the mythic approximations in terms of which Antony's heroic personality and his amazing martial exploits have been mediated to us. This identification between Antony and Hercules which runs as a point of convergence throughout the play is lent support to by Cleopatra as she draws Charmian's pointed attention to it in an arched flight of fancy :

Look, prithee, Charmian,
How this Herculean Roman does become
The carriage of his chafe. (I, iii, 83-5)

Hercules, the supposed ancestor of Antony, is a metonymic figure and there are several points of contact between the two. Hercules is warm and sanguine by temperament, is spontaneous and unreflective in his attitudes and responses, is impressive in physique and unyielding in the face of heavy odds. He offers a prototype to Antony, for the latter shares with him some of these attributes. Antony is equally warm, impulsive and volatile and prior to his surrendering to the captivating charm of Cleopatra had been steadfast and uncomplaining when confronted with unforeseen contingencies. The desertion of Antony by Hercules may legitimately be construed, within the metaphoric pattern, as a dissolution of his own self which is initiated by his discomfiture at the hands of Caesar. Earlier, the soothsayer had made a cryptic comment to the effect that near Caesar, Antony's 'angel becomes afeard'. The angel in this context is symbolic of the self which in the hour of crisis goes utterly to pieces. The cloud passage (iv, xiv) is preceded by this chance conversation of the unidentified soldiers (IV, iv) : both have a bearing upon the same phenomenon—leaking away of Antony's power or the fragmentation of the wholeness and integrity of the self.

For various reasons, foremost among them being the analogy of the fecund energies of life, Cleopatra has all along been intimately associated with Nilus. She is endearingly called 'my serpent of the Nile' by Antony, and serpents were traditionally believed to be spawned from the mud of the Nile by the operation of the sun as is expounded by Antony to Caesar in the vein of a psuedo-scientific lore and with a view to exciting vulgar curiosity:

> Thus do they, sir : they take the flow o' the Nile
> By certain scales i' the pyramid; they know,
> By the height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth
> Or foison follow. The higher Nilus swells,
> The more it promises : as it ebbs, the seedsman
> Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain,
> And shortly comes to harvest. (II,vii, 17-24)

It is to be kept spotlit in mind that the overflow of the Nile in its annual course—a phenomenon of periodic occurence—causes famine and destruction as well as fertility and abundance; and likewise, Cleopatra's passion also partakes of both sterility and fruition. In her association with the Nile ancient myth and legend, evoking the sense of qualitative change and consequent florescence and richness, have been coalesced. When she is about to reach the end of the tether she bursts forth : 'I have immortal longings in me'—an ambiguous phrase which means 'she has immortal longings—longings for Antony that will not die and which she will die to fulfil.[5] It admits of another construction, too : she wants 'to rush into the house of death' which ultimately opens on into the region of Eternity. Later on she adds : 'I am fire and air; my other elements/I give to baser life' (v, ii, 288), underlining simultaneously the intense ardour of her sustained passion for Antony and her incredible capacity to transmute it into the siren song of love ensuring mutual responsiveness. Earlier in the play Enobarbus, in an endeavour ro neutralize the effects of Antony's flying into tyrannical passion and pronouncing a devastating judgment against her : 'She is

cunning past man's thought' shrewdly observes : 'Alack, sir, no, her passions are made of nothing but the finest part of pure love. We cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears, they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report. This cannot be cunning in her' (1, ii, 144-8). And thus all the primal (and vital elements)—fire, water, air and earth—coexist in her being in proportions which it is difficult to sort out and disengage because they turn into one another. Precisely because of this what is most remarkable and pertinent in our experience of her is an awareness of deliquescency—all the elements do not cohere firmly into an inextricable oneness most of the time. Either they have a tendency towards dispersion or they can be seized upon only in fugitive moments and in utter isolation. Here polarities of experience are held in tension, opposites are juxtaposed, extremes seem to travel in contrary directions and avoid convergence on a focal point, solidities and fixities tend to dissolve and vaporise and there is a perpetual counterpointing of emotional rhythms. All this is reflected in the psychic mutability of the protagonists and in this also lies embedded the seeds of that catastrophe which they eventually have to face and by which they are shattered into bits. What is true of the individual selves of the two lovers is equally applicable to the quality of love which they share between themselves; in fact the latter emanates from the former. The course of their emotional life has been subject to strange vicissitudes : Antony had been married to Fulvia and on her death later agrees to Agrippa's clever suggestion to bind himself to an apparently 'unslipping knot' in having Octavia as wife, and Cleopatra had had in her 'salad days' her surfeit of pleasures with more than one monarch. They are, however, drawn to each other with magnetic charm and their impetuousity makes them brush aside all impediments which may obstruct their path. The basis of their love is insistently, blatantly and uncompromisingly sexual and this approximates to the Ovidian tradition. But it is also more Ovidian because they believe

in aspiring beyond the existing measures, evolving their own values and criteria, trying to reach up, in the course of their antiphonal lyrical love-combat, to 'new heaven and new earth', for the world they habitually live in seems to be pathetically incongruent to the scale of the amplitude of their love. Putting it differently we may legitimately hold that they are isolated and opposed by the circumambient reality: hence they exalt above the skies their private universe which is infinite, opulent and self-sufficient. Its adequacy can in no way be gauged by the available norms, for it partakes of the nature of Infinitude:

> Eternity was in our lips, and eyes,
> Bliss in our brows' bent; none of our parts so poor,
> But was a race of heaven. (I, iii, 35-37)

Such was the idealized love to which both Antony and Cleopatra were deeply and irrevocably committed with the incandescent flame of their soul—a kind of 'totalization of love's value'[6]. At the same time Antony is referred to contemptuously by more than one detached observer as 'the strumpet's fool' and 'the n'ver-lust-wearied' Antony, and Cleopatra is variously dubbed by him as 'a morsel for a monarch', 'a boggler ever', 'this false soul of Egypt' which 'beguil'd' him 'to the very heart of loss,' and their indulgence in 'lascivious wassails' is both unbounded and carried on with libertine recklessness. Though it may be upheld with justice that Antony is egged on to deflate her only when he feels unduly annoyed and harassed and his impatience with her riggishness reaches the breaking-point yet she does seem to offer an unequivocal adumbration of the biblical Whore of Babylon. Even though a 'triple pillar of the world', bearing major share of the load of 'the ranged empire' upon his shoulders Antony does not hesitate to repudiate, without any qualms of conscience, any of the manifold responsibilities which devolve upon him as a soldier and a statesman. He is twice betrayed by Cleopatra : once when he accepts heedlessly, and against his own better judgment, her hasty and ill-conceived advice

to engage himself with his formidable adversary in sea-fight in spite of having a definite edge over him in landforces, and a second time when despite her own presence Cleopatra's stratagem disastrously miscarries and she 'hoists sails and flies'. And Antony, like a 'doting mallard' in mating season, capitulates to her insistence, for he has allowed her to dominate him not only in sexual but also in state matters. He is thus left with no option but 'leaving the fight in height' he 'flies her' and thus exposes himself to the eventuality of abject surrender and defeat.

But notwithstanding her promiscuous past, her evasions and subterfuges, her cunning and hypocrisy, her pranks and duplicities and her combination of artifice and lyricism, Cleopatra's instinctive sympathy for and loyalty towards Antony shines through all her shams and make-believe. The towering and inundating passion which was stimulated in 'the demi-Atlas of this world' by one who was 'with Phoebus's amorous pinches black/And wrinkled deep in time' has both something despicable and ludicrous as well as glorious, ennobling and redemptive about it. The total and unquestionable devotion she spontaneously inspires in her bevy of girls-the inmates of the charmed circle-is both remarkable and enviable indeed, and bears an eloquent testimony to her heart of gold. Right from the beginning till such moment as Cleopatra seeks refuge in the monument and Antony, given the false scent of her feigned death, makes a sort of bungled effort at committing suicide, neither of them is deflected from the single-minded pursuit of pleasure. It looks as if this unrestrained indulgence in sensual delights would stretch itself to infinity. And just as the world of Rome-the world of Machivellian politics and manoeuvring and gaucheries of rhetoric-suffers from an inherent rottenness which is eating into its vitals and caving in, likewise the taint of corruption also adheres to the root of this love in the hot climate of Egypt. It is no less worth pondering that parallel to the ooze and slime of the Nile turning into the seedbed of fertility and' foison' by a

sort of subterranean self-replenishing potency, the approaching tide of death-the hour of the eclipse of 'terrene moon' and when 'the crown o' the earth doth melt'—becomes the occasion of an astounding, incalculable change in the unfathomable caverns of the psyche. Partly through the magic of vital and complex poetry and partly on account of the melting of the raw but burning passion into supernal grace the Egyptian and the Roman values seem to be moving on to the verge of interpenetration. The Roman ethos reflects a sort of masculinity and self-assertiveness as opposed to the langorous absorption into the softnesses of love so characteristic of the dwellers in the land of lotos-eaters. More precisely, the Roman values signify not only reticence and efficiency but also chilling and pitiless calculation, not only the rigorous and stringent enforcement of the law but also shrewd strategy and imperial inflatedness, not only the act of 'fashioning living energies into monuments of stone' but also and above all courage, Stoicism and a fearless leap into the jaws of death. It is these latter ones which become instrumental in effecting the metamorphosis of the intensely cloying passion into the amazing splendour and exquisiteness of transcendental love. Viewed against the perspective of this magnificent and opulent love, environed with its own blaze of glory, the sordidness and self-centredness of the earlier febrile emotion is altogether shed and the affairs of kingdoms and empires, big and momentous when weighed in the ordinary scale, look a bit paltry, degrading and trivial. In fact the whole dingy existence becomes transformed in a trice into the reality of imaginative existence. The stuff of experience out of which this play has been carved rests on rapid contrasts and juxtapositions, and when its tingling, vibrating and undulating nature gets organized it eventuates into the achievement of a 'lyric and triumphant end'. In this poetry in which is enshrined its own validity and its own witness, emotion clarifies itself, the rhythm of sonic srtuctures confers equilibrium on the psyche and the antithesis between passion and convention is

discarded .It looks as if both Antony and Cleopatra have taken on new and hitherto unrecognized physiognomies. The Cleopatra of serpentine beauty and disarming charm and the Antony of headstrong and infatuated passion come to form lyric orders of inviolable integration and to assume what Northrop Frye calls anti-historical and mythical dimensions of a Venus and a Mars. Their epiphanies are bound up with the poetry of the last scenes: the music of the soul, emerging from unsuspected and immeasurable depths, incarnates itself into what the harmony of numbers can bear the burden of. It therefore falls on one's ears with a rare incantatory power and makes an appeal to the totality of being.

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NOTES

[1] All quotations are from *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. H. R. Ridley, The Arden Shakespeare (London, 1954)

[2] F.R. Leavis, '*Antony and Cleopatra* and *All for love*, A Critical Exercise,' *Scrutiny*, 5, p. 164

[3] Derek Traversi, *An Approach to Shakespeare* 3rd edn., 2 vols. (London, 1968), p. 224

[4] Geoffrey Keynes, ed. '*The Letters of William Blake*, (London, 1956), p. 35

[5] David Horowitz, *Shakespeare, An Existential View*, (London, 1968), pp. 68-9

[6] Op. Cit. p. 44

BOOK REVIEW

Thomas Hardy : Poet of Tragic Vision by MANAS MUKUL DAS, Macmillan India Ltd., 1983, pp. 147, Rs. 50.

Manas Mukul Das begins with a strong feeling that a number of critics including Leavis, Eliot, Blackmur and Tate have been less than fair to Hardy's poetry. He takes upon himself the task of correcting what he considers to be the wrong critical perspective in which Hardy's poetry has generally been viewed over the years. Dr Das is an ardent admirer of Thomas Hardy's poetry; if at all, he has found fault with a very small number of Hardy's poems. There is something of a crusader's spirit about his untiring effort at restoring to Hardy what he regards as Hard's rightful place in the tradition of English poetry. However the author's determination to effectively counter the unsympathetic critics of Hardy has, at times, swung the argument of his study to the other extreme and led him to discovering poetic merit where its existence is doubtful.

Tracing some of the representative critical attitudes towards Hardy's poetry, Dr Das has quoted Trevor Johnson's remark that F. R. Leavis's *devaluation* of Hardy's poetry greatly influenced the criticism that followed and this trend continued upto the fifties. Dr Das, however, does not consider it to be *devaluation* and observes that since Leavis mistook Hardy's, 'Solidity' as Victorian, he 'misjudged its quality'. If Leavis could not find more than a dozen significant poems in Hardy's collections; Donald Davie, on the other hand, claimed in 1973 that Hardy has been the most far-reaching influence in the British poetry of the last fifty years. Dr Das' evaluation of Hardy's poetry generally moves between these two critical positions. In the brief Introduction

which contains a quite upto date survey of the various critical studies of Hardy's poetry, the author has slightly over-emphasized the value of Hardy's popularity with the reading public.

'Isolation or Rootedness'—the very title of the first chapter focuses on the conflicting interpretations of Hardy's tragic vision. Dr Das believes that Hardy belongs to 'the tragic tradition' but he finds it difficult to accept the view that the modern awareness of the individual's isolation is very prominent in Hardy. He holds that Hardy's intellect was influenced by contemporary thought but not his 'tragic vision' which was rooted in the traditions of *Wessex*. Dr Das draws attention to an important difference between the alien and the tragic writer—while the tragic writer can experience happiness and live along with suffering, the alien cannot. The tragic sensibility recognizes a certain dignity even in suffering. Here Dr Das refers to the theme of suffering in Hardy's poem *Beyond the Last Lamp* which reminds him of some of Wordsworth's poems. In his view 'Hardy was a poet of man, a poet of tragic suffering'. He does not see Hardy as an alien, nor does he find any overwhelming pessimism in Hardy's poetry. If at all there is any pessimism, it is in the poet's 'concept of the Universe, not in his experience'. The author insists that critics must distinguish Hardy's 'verses constructed in the mere brain' from 'poems created out of a communal wisdom he (Hardy) unconsciously inherited'. The point of view of the minor characters that serves as a kind of chorus in Hardy's novels is, according to Dr Das, in evidence in his poems as well.

Discussing the problem of time in Hardy's poetry, the author has pointed out types of time-consciousness : immediate and contemplative. For him 'tragic time' is different from time in 'mystic and alien' traditions of poetry. He finds 'something profoundly consoling about Hardy's time'. Commenting on time-experience relationship, he draws a distinction between 'particular' and 'essential experience' : while

the former is 'one of suffering within time', the latter is 'outside time'. Dr Das does not agree with Samuel Hynes who regards Hardy's poetry to be 'the poetry of experience, not the poetry of values'. He discerns a certain impersonality in Hardy's manner of transcending his experience in his poetry. Leavis did not see any poetical value in what he called Hardy's 'pessimistic ruminations' : Dr Das does not disagree with Leavis on this point, but for him Hardy's 'philosophical stance of mind' is an inseparable part of his creative make-up. He tenaciously maintains that alienation is not the cause of Hardy's suffering and the kind of isolation felt by Mathew Arnold and some twentieth century writers was outside the sphere of Hardy's concerns. The author finds Hardy's *Neutral Tones* a much maturer poem as compared to Arnold's *Forsaken Merman* or even *Dover Beach*. He has also compared Hardy's *Afterwards* with Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar* to distinguish the nature of Hardy's calm from that of Tennyson : while Tennyson's calm comes from 'an act of faith in God', there is no evidence of such a faith in Hardy. If at all he affirms anything, it is man's occasional capacity for compassion and love. Hardy shared with Wordsworth what the author calls 'the contemplative attitude'. Unlike that of Browning, Hardy's approach to emotion was not 'psychological-analytical'; it was 'metaphysical-synthetic'. Hardy was also different from Eliot, for he affirmed with a 'non-Christian tragic tradition'. The Christian tradition creeps into his poetry by way of nostalgia.

Dr Das thinks that Samuel Hynes has ignored Hardy's capacity for enjoying the beautiful. He has taken up the theme of Hardy's link with the folk tradition of *Wessex*, in the second chapter : *Tradition and Contemporaneity*, to highlight the positive impact of this tradition on the poet's sensibility. According to him this tradition enabled Hardy to affirm life and it saved him from Victorian sentimentality. Even his pessimism was not a product of the Victorian environment; it too emanated from *Dorest* or *Wessex*. A 'community point

of view' is quite violent in Hardy. Even his nature imagery communicates the experience of a community. While Leavis could see the 'countryman' in Hardy, he, Dr Das maintains, could not appreciate Middleton Murry's 'comprehensive whole' of Hardy's vision. Similarly Eliot and R.P. Blackmur misjudged Hardy's poetry because 'they failed to understand the nature of the tradition to which he belonged'. Dr Das characterizes Hardy's view of life as 'anthropocentric' and suggests that it greatly differed from Eliot's theocentric' view of life. He makes another very significant distinction when he says that, unlike Arnold, Hardy could escape from personality because 'his point of view was outside him'. The author has disagreed with David Perkins in his analysis of two of Hardy's poems in this chapter: The Darkling Thrush and *The Man He Killed*. While he rightly holds that the poet is not isolated from the speaker in *The Man He Killed*, his defence of Hardy against David Perkins' criticism of *The Darkling Thrush*, in which Perkins has termed the dubbling of the corpse as that of the 'century' as *arbitrary* and *intrusive*, is not exactly convincing.

In the third and final chapter, entitled *Form and Content*, there is a discussion of the faults in Hardy's poetic sensibility which have often been pointed out by the poets' critics. Here again the author has analysed in detail a number of Hardy's poems. He is of the opinion that some of Hardy's critics, for example Alan Tate, have not chosen the poems which represent Hardy at his best. Hardy's philosophical poems are neither his best, nor most representative. His ironic poems are often dominated by mere ideas but sometimes irony becomes Hardy's strength as in *Transformations* In *Convergence of the Twain*, Hardy has viewed a proud civilization from an ironic point of view. Dr Das regards this poem as 'moral without being didactic'. Unlike Eliot and Blackmur, he does not think that Hardy's adherence to his convictions damaged his poetry and once again asserts that Hardy's ideas are an inseparable part of his sensibility. However he

concedes that these ideas are Hardy's strength as well as his weakness. He has rightly objected to Eliot's insistence upon a particular kind of tradition and orthodoxy and gone on to say that Eliot did not have a tradition in the sense in which Hardy had one. It is wrong to regard Hardy as a poet without a tradition.

Dr Das, for whom the final test of poetry is in the 'rhythm, views Hardy's metrical structures as endowed with a positive value. He holds that Hardy's use of sounds belongs more to the tradition of dramatic poetry than to that of lyric poetry. He has relentlessly countered the charge that the form and content of Hardy's poems are not organically related. The author has, however, not fully developed what could be a very interesting aspect of this book, namely a study of Hardy's poetry in the perspective of the oriental traditions of poetry and philosophy.

Thomas Hardy : Poet of Tragic Vision, which has evolved from the author's doctoral dissertation, is an eminently readable book. Though it is principally concerned with defending Hardy's poetry against hostile criticism, it succeeds not only in giving a fresh and fairly solid appraisal of Thomas Hardy, the poet, but also in reawakening critical interest in his poetry which is not read as much as his novels. Dr Das's critical approach is a composite one and his critical standards are always genuinely literary. His analysis of Hardy's poems, sometimes, tends to be a little mechanical and monotonous but he has taken great pains in digging into the text of the poems. There is nothing flashy about this well-organized, properly documented and down-to-earth book, which, in many ways, resembles the grand old man of *Wessex*.

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