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movement of the poet. But Dorothy says that Wordsworth was not *alone* watching the daffodils: she was there with him. We may perhaps explain this loneliness by noting its relationship with 'cloud'. There is an indeterminacy, a certain freedom, in the movement of the cloud—also a brooding presence that arches over the earth. In a moment of perception, of contemplation, when one stands alone to oneself, one sees into the creativity, freedom, and joy of the universe. Once we appreciate this relationship between joy and the natural order, we can appreciate better the gradual progress towards 'explicit identification of the symbol' as brought about by the poet's technical device. As F.A. Pottle comments:

> First we have 'fluttering' (literal: the flowers are self-moved); then 'tossing their heads in sprightly dance' (the flowers are self-moved and are having a wonderful time . . .) Finally—but not until the third stanza is reached—we get the quite explicit serie e', 'gay', 'jocund', pleasure'. Wordsworth is always (or almost always) explicit in this fashion: he tells you just how you are expected to take his figures.[5]

The same device of explicit identification of the symbol by varied iteration of the key-word is adopted in the following lines:

> The valley rings with mirth and joy
> Among the hills the echoes play
> A never never ending song
> To welcome in the May . . .
>
> Along the river's stony marge
> The sand-lark chants a joyous song;
> The thrush is busy in the wood,
> And carols loud and strong.
>
> (*Idle Shepherd Boys*)

The objects of Nature unite in a common 'jubilee'. Joy vibrates through the whole scale of being. The poetic device of iteration brings out with remarkable explicitness the natural truth. The poet is never tired of attributing this feeling of Joy to the universe as a whole:

> The Cock is crowing,
> The stream is flowing,

The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green fields sleep in the sun ; . . .

There is joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone:

('The Cock is crowing')

One of the best expressions of this feeling is in the *Immortality Ode*:

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, a joyous song:
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound:
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts today
Feel the gladness of the May!

And again,

I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday; —
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,
thou happy shepherd-boy!

Joy is thus a property of the universe Birds, animals, flowers, children, vegetable life, all participate in it[6]. The poet considers life as a process of integrated harmony in Nature. *Raso vai sah*, as we in this country would say. The fulfilment of life lies in our capacity to realise joy. Wherever there is sentience in Nature, joy is at once apparent.

This does not mean that Wordsworth turned his face from pain and suffering, and the fiercer moods of Nature. In fact, he sought in them what he called a 'renovating virtue'. His intuitions of sorrow and despair, of 'visionary dreariness',

became for him the sources of creative 'power'(*Prelude* XI 311 ff). There is a 'dark Inscrutable workmanship'which reconciles all 'Discordant elements' and 'makes them cling together In one society'. The 'suffering', in man is split open, and set over against the mighty infinity:

> Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
> And shares the nature of infinity.
>
> (*The Borderes*, 1543)

Without an apprehension of this infinite power, the value of harmony in music, of beauty in outer Nature, of joy in creation, may evoke in man a thought of inward chaos, which would be a contradiction in the spirit itself. Suffering or pain is a negative value; it is pleasure which is the most determining factor in life. Pain may act as a necessary discipline of our feelings, but it is joy, that 'grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he [man] knows, and feels, and lives, and moves'[8].

As Wordsworth grasps the continuity of the life-process he is brought face to face with its basic value, joy. This is the 'never-failing principle' referred to earlier. Life as a creative synthesis implies a principle of consciousness, of feeling, of freedom, of joy. Consider, for instance, the following lines:

> How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?
> Because the lovely little flower is free
> Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold;
> And so the grandeur in the Forest-tree
> Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
> But from its *own* divine vitality.
>
> (*Miscellaneous Sonnets*, II, XXIII)

There is in the flower, as in all organic life, a creative principle. It is 'bloom' in the flower, 'grandeur' in the tree. Wordsworth tells us that the flower realises itself in 'freedom'; in other words, 'freedom' is integral to 'creativity'—it is necessary for the potency (boldness) of the flower. Similarly the 'grandeur' of the tree implies not a 'formal mould', but its *own* vitality.' Freedom and vitality are also referred to as 'Liberty and

Power' (*Prelude* XI, 184). Thus the creative principle is a spontaneous impulse in all life-processes, and though it determines their self-realisation, it implies freedom. Aesthetically conceived, it is joy. The following lines make the point explicit:

> such delight I found
> To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower,
> That intermixture of delicious hues,
> Along so vast a surface, all at once,
> In one impression, by connecting force
> Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.
>
> (*To Joanna*)

Wordsworth attributes joy to even the lowest aspects of Nature's life. All objects are interfused by the 'connecting force of their own beauty', which is 'delight' emotionally apprehended. As Leone Vivante remarks:

> The principle of synthesis is not abstractly inferred: it is 'beauty', it is 'force'. It is a reality of experience. It is at one and the same time a phenomenal and an ontological reality. It is an original power, intrinsically characterized, revealing its intrinsic necessity, its primal and *eternal* character, while absorbing the manifold and realizing itself in and through it.[9]

This creative principle is variously expressed by Wordsworth. It is 'silence' in the sky, 'sleep' in the hills, a 'voice' and a 'mystery' in the bird:

> (i) The silence that is in the starry sky,
> The sleep that is among the lonely hills.
>
> (*Brougham Castle*, 163)

> (ii) thou art to me
> No bird, but an invisible thing,
> A voice, a mystery.
>
> (*To the Cuckoo*)

The creative principle is thus an original, immanent value of the life-process, and is integral to joy.

Further, Wordsworth conceives this principle as an aspect of divinity. It is an attribute of that 'one interior life . . . In

which all beings live with god, themselves are god'.[10] This divinity is the very essence of life: 'Nature's self, which is the breath of God' (*Prelude* V, 222). It is sometimes argued that the poet abandoned his faith in creativity and joy in favour of 'the doctrine of grace, which is the orthodox equivalent of transcendentalism'.[11] This is not true, for joy, both in its immanent and transcendental aspects, is regarded by Wordsworth as a 'never-failing principle' of the universe. As an aspect of being, it partakes of the divine essence. It makes for the 'highest bliss' in minds that are 'truly from the Deity':

> the highest bliss
> That can be known is theirs, the consciousness
> Of whom they are habitually infused
> Through every image, and through every thought,
> And all impression.
>
> (*Prelude* XIII, 107)

This divine essence is 'the anchor' of his 'purest thoughts', the 'soul' of all his 'moral being' (*Tintern Abbey*). The poet looks to it for all values—wisdom, truth, beauty, order:

> Pure modulations flowing from the heart
> Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty, Truth
> With Order dwell, in endless youth.
>
> (*On the Power of Sound*, 110)

'Wisdom', 'Beauty' and 'Truth' merge into 'Order' which stands for the synthesis of these interpenetrative values: it is a law which is rhythm concretized. Submission to Order is participation in the joy of life. The 'ancient heavens', through this, are 'fresh and strong'. It makes for the 'security' of 'joy', which emanates from chartered freedom, and is itself unconscious and spontaneous (*Ode to Duty*). Thus Wordsworth conceives Joy as an aspect of being and an attribute of divinity. It is distinguished from its metaphoric expression, is the basis of natural truth, and is identical with life itself.

II

We may now pass on to an examination of Wordsworth's treatment of joy in relation to the associationism of Hartley

and Alison which has been so much emphasized by Beatty. Wordsworth, in fact, moved away from their view of associationism, which takes sensations for its starting-point. Sensations are transformed by the laws of association into personal values which fall broadly, according to Hartley, into groups of 'Pleasures' and 'Pains'. 'Pleasures' and 'Pains', in their turn, include 'Sensation, Imagination, Ambition, Self-interest, Sympathy, Theopathy, and the Moral Sense'. Hartley associates the first four with 'simple'ideas of sensation, and the last three with 'intellectual' ideas. How these simple ideas of sensation, and intellectual ideas are transmuted into personal values he writes:

> All the intellectual Pleasures and Pains are deducible ultimately from the sensible ones, if we can shew of each intellectual Plaesure and Pain in particular, that it takes its Rise from other Pleasures and Pains, either sensible or intellectual. For thus none of the intellectual Pleasures and Pains can be original. But the sensible Pleasures and Pains are evidently originals. They are therefore the only ones, i.e., they are the Common Source from whence all the intellectual Pleasures and Pains are ultimately derived.[12]

In brief, Hartley's argument runs like this:

1. Pleasures and Pains are comprehended under simple ideas (i.e. based directly upon sensations), and intellectual ideas.
2. Intellectual pleasures and pains are deduced from the simple ones by the laws of association.
3. Sensation is the original source of pleasures and pains.

Hartley's doctrine of associationism was applied by Alison to aesthetics. He tried to show that our feelings or emotions of beauty are the result of experience. An emotion of beauty or subjimity is originally simple, but develops into a complex feeling. In his words:

> It involves, in all cases, first, the production of simple emotion, ...and, secondly, the consequent excitement of a peculiar exercise of the imagination: ,that these concomitant effects are distinguishable, and very often distinguished in our experience; and that the peculiar

pleasure of the beautiful or the sublime is only felt when these two effects are conjoined, and the whole complex emotion produced.[13]

In other words, our aesthetic emotions depend on our ideas of things through association. They are modified and directed by these simple ideas in an aesthetic product. These ideas are called by Alison 'ideas of emotion'.[14]

It is not difficult to understand why Wordsworth was attracted towards Hartley and Alison. As he responded emotionally to the sights and sounds of Nature, he was drawn towards the doctrine of associationism which explained that our ideas are derived from the data of sense-perception. Further, his concentration upon his experiences of childhood, and his emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth as a subject of his poetry, disposed his mind favourably towards this psychology which attempted to explain the inter-connections between the different stages of man's development. The associationism of Hartley and Alison, therefore, gave a part-explanation of the growth of his love of Nature. As he said, he drew an 'organic pleasure' from the forms and colours of Nature:

> A child, I held unconscious intercourse
> With the eternal Beauty, drinking in
> A pure organic pleasure from the lines
> Of curling mist, or from the level plain
> Of waters colour'd by the steady clouds.
>
> (*Prelude* I, 589)

Thus the beauteous forms of Nature were collaterally attached 'To every scheme of holiday delight' (*Prelude* II, 51 ff.). As he grew up the 'vulgar joy or 'giddy bliss' wearied itself out of the memory', but the scenes associated with it became 'habitually dear': they were 'allied to the affections':

> these same scenes,
> So beauteous and majestic in themselves,
> Became habitually dear, and all
> Their hues and forms were by invisible links
> Allied to the affections.
>
> (*Prelude* I, 625)

The associationist psychology can, therefore, explain an aspect of Wordsworth's concept of joy, but it does not account for that 'never-failing principle of Joy' which the poet regards as an ultimate value of the whole being. Beatty conveniently ignores the fact that Wordsworth's view of the human mind does not owe complete allegiance to Hartley. He also overlooks that the poet's perception of truth is not only through sensation but also through intuitions; and that a child's life is not only one of 'immediate joy in sensation[15] but also one visited by 'gleams like the flashing of a shield' (*Prelude* I,614). Such gleams are rare flashes of intuition which have nothing to do with an association of ideas. In such flashes one is made aware of the 'bond of union betwixt life and joy' (*Prelude* I, 585; also 575-76). They offer 'joys of subtler origin' (*Prelude* I, 609) in contract to the vulgar joy' of 'chance collisions and quaint accidents'[16] of associationism.

Reverting to Alison, we find that he seems to give more importance to the mind than Hartley does. When he says that he has based his arguments on a doctrine which holds that 'matter is not beautiful in itself, but derives its beauty from the exepression of mind', one wonders if he really suggests the presence of mind in Nature. What he, in fact, tries to suggest is that Nature in some of its forms shows through various means a power or affection of mind, i.e., a kind of aesthetic response. Alison does not explain Wordsworth's intuition of the one in many, the 'sentiment of Being spread O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still' (*Prelnde* II, 420) the 'one life' which is 'joy' in 'all things'. He does not take stock of that 'sovereign Intellect' which is diffused through the bodily Image' of Nature (*Prelude* V, 14). What Alison does at best is to say that the forms of Nature express animation, which appears, for example, in the sun as the 'cheerfulness of his morning', the 'splendour of his noon-day', the 'tenderness of his evening light'[17]. Wordsworth, on the other hand, goes further and declares that 'the forms of Nature have a passion in themselves', and that it is not an ordinary passion but a 'never-failing principle of joy and purest passion'.

The doctrine of association does not account for Wordsworth's view of the interpenetration of the colours and forms of Nature. It is a mechanistic theory and shows little appreciation of the concept of fusion. In each fusion there is a harmony which gives a distinct tone to the objects that dissolve into each other. A creative wholeness exceeds the sum of the individual parts and lends them a unity. Take, for example, the following lines:

> No sound is uttered,—but a deep
> And solemn harmony pervades
> The hollow vale from steep to steep,
> And penetrates the glades.
>
> (*Evening of Extraordinary Splendour*)

Or, again, consider these lines:

> The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
> Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
> Which I till then had heard appeared the voice
> Of common pleasure: beast and bird, and the lamb,
> The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush,
> Vied with this waterfall, and made a song
> Which, while I listened, seemed like the growth
> Or like some natural produce of the air,
> That could not cease to be.
>
> ('It was an April morning')

All sounds, abstracted form the objects are fused into one harmony that pervades the elements. It is a harmony of infinitely varied elements, and is spontaneous (a 'natural produce') and incessant, because it cannot 'cease to be'. As the poet said elsewhere, all notes in the universe are 'half-confounded in each other's blaze', and form 'one galaxy of life and joy (*Prelude* VIII, 629). Beast, bird, lamb, dog, linnet, thrush, waterfall—all objects in the natural order participate in the 'song' of life. There is something timeless, ceaseless about this music as it penetrates all levels of creation. This sense of fusion, of creativity, of harmony, is powerfully apprehended by Wordsworth, and is found neither in Hartley nor in Alison; and its relation to joy we have already examined. The 'deep

power of harmony' is the 'deep power of joy' with which we see into the 'life of things' (*Tintern Abbey*).

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

(I refer to *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* edited by E.de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire, in the case of variant texts not found in the one-volume *Oxford Wordsworth*, edited by T. Hutchinson and revised by E. de Selincourt. References to *The Prelude* are, unless otherwise stated, to the text of 1805.)

[1]*Oxf. W.*, p. 755.

[2]*The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, edited by John Morley (London, 1888), Preface, p. LXV.

[3]H.C. Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence*, edited by T. Sadler (London, 1869), entry of 10 September 1816.

[4]*Journals*, edited by E. de Selincourt (Oxford, 1941), Vol. I, entry of 15 April 1802.

[5]'The Eye and the Object in Wordsworth's Poetry', in *Wordsworth Centenary Studies*, edited by G.T. Dunklin (Princeton, 1951), p.31.

[6]It may be observed that the sensibility of joy in the lower life, as recorded by Wordsworth, is not a fanciful thought. J. W. Beach draws our attention to the poet's acqaintance with Erasmus Darwin's *Zoonima* in which an entire section is devoted to the study of vegetable and animal life (See *The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth Century Poetry* (New York, 1936), p. 182). Darwin shows that vegetable life possesses at least four different kinds of sense, in addition to that of 'love' and perhaps also some conscious thought. Wordsworth, however, goes further and sees the organic unity in creation as the basis of natural truth.

[7]*Prelude* (1850) I, 341-44.

[8]*Oxf. W.*, pp. 737-38.

[9]*English Poetry* (London, 1950), pp. 99-100.

[10]*Prelude*, p. 512 (variant text).

[11]M. M. Radar, *Presiding Ideas in Wordsworth's Poetry* (Seatle, Washington, 1931) p. 156. Also see Elizabath Geen. 'Wordsworth's Concept of Grace', *PMLA*, LVIII (1943), also my article, 'Wordsworth's Concept of Reason', *Indian Journal of English Studies*, II, (1961), pp. 54-5.

[12]David Hartley, *Observations on Man: His Frame, His Duty, His Expectations* (London, 1749), Vol. I, pp. 416-17.

[13]Archibald Alison, *Essays on Beauty and Taste* (London, 1871), p. 66.

[14]Alison, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[15]Arthur Beatty, *Wordsworth: His Doctrine and Art*, second edition (Madison, 1927), p. 73.

[16]Allison, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

[17]Allison, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

Z. A. Usmani

SOLITUDE AND WORDSWORTH'S *Peele Castle* POEM

When we think of the unity of Wordsworth's poetry we think of solitude and relationship through which his poetry attempts to find, within the world itself, the answer to all its questions. It does attempt to find the answer to the question of suffering too; and in all fairness to Wordsworth, it can be said that in his best poetry, at least in the poetry of the Great Decade, he is not blind to the fact of suffering, though he is always looking for a 'central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation'. We need remind ourselves only of *The Ruined Cottage* of 1797-98, *The Old Cumberland Beggar*, *Resolution and Independence*, *Michael*, *Ruth*, *The Prelude* and the Lucy poems to realize the truth of these statements. This poetry teaches us neither to reject the world nor to get bogged down in it but to enter into the right relation of love with it; it teaches us to 'look at the world in a spirit of love'[1] in order to discover its ultimate significance—for all the 'puny boundaries' of a 'universe of death' and all 'the passing shews of being', with all the agitating, cramping phenomena they give rise to, are dissolved and transmuted by the poet into a comprehensive, relational vision which is very much of this world and yet transcends it.

In this poetry Wordsworth does not turn away from the world and its questions to any pat, autistic cheeriness of a dream-world or wonderland.

The Wordsworthian Solitude which implies the apprehension of infinitude in sigularity, in an *I-Thou* situation which often occasions what is called Wordsworth's 'mystic vision,' has its 'spot of time' discipline and is not without its social reverberations. Not depending on physical isolation, it is

> solitude
> More active, even, than 'best society',
> Society made sweet as solitude
> By silent inobtrusive sympathies,
> And gentle agitations of the mind
> From manifold distinctions, difference
> Perceived in things, where to the common eye,
> No difference is...

which means the perception of the relational sigularities of things, of 'similitudes in dissimilitudes' and 'dissimilitudes in similitudes'—'and hence from the same source Sublimer joy'. Is Wordsworth rejecting this solitude in the *Peele Castle* poem?

Critics have taken note of the other,non-relational, solitudes, for example, the intellectual solitude of Oswald in *The Borderers* and the materialistic solitude of the modern city-dwellers as defined in *The Recluse* fragment, to distinguish them from the Wordsworthian Solitude which is relational in character. But it has not been sufficiently recognized that among the undesirable, non-relational types there is a romantic solitude, too, and that Wordsworth seems to be pretty well aware of its dangers. As early as 1787 he begins composing a poem to warn us of these dangers: the poem is *Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree.* It tells us about a man who 'turned himself away' from the world 'And with the food of pride sustained his soul/In solitude'. Like all non-relational solitudes, romantic solitude too may draw its sustenance from pride instead of love, and thus yield an 'unfruitful life'. Hence Wordsworth's warning:

> Stranger ! henceforth be warned; and know that pride,
> However disguised in its own majesty,
> Is littleness; that he who feels contempt
> For any living thing, hath faculties
> Which he has never used....
> O be wiser, Thou !
> Instructed that true knowledge leads to love.

Wordsworth, the greatest of the Romantic poets, has been romanticized by romantic critics and uninitiated, mostly anthology-suckled, readers. But his poetry can certainly stand

up to any attempt at identifying it with some sort of Arcadianism—Lake-Districtism, if you like—Lotos-eaterism, Literary Hippieism, Literary Yoga or Literary SPCA.

To come to the *Peele Castle* poem: the uninitiated reader is likely to get a shock when in this poem he finds Wordsworth rejecting what appears to be a mystic vision of the Wordsworthian Solitude as a 'fond illusion' of the heart 'that lives alone,/Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind'. How many of us had had a similar experience? I had it myself. I would like to blame all those critics who led me to believe Wordsworth was describing a mystic experience in the *Peele Castle* poem. So many of them even pointed to the 'light that never was' lines as an illustration of Wordsworth's mystic experience. Even in a recent book, *Wordsworth and His World*, I find Mr F. E. Halliday reiterating the popular view that in the *Peele Castle* poem Wordsworth 'mourned the loss of the visionary power, of "the light that never was, on sea or land", which had suffused the castle when he stayed near it twelve years before. But now, "a deep distress hath humanized my Soul" '.[2] The misunderstanding about these lines is as old as Wordsworth criticism itself; even the poet's contemporaries had it, and probably it had come to his notice. For his notes on lines 13-20, Bernard Groom does well to transcribe the following remarks of Walter Raleigh:

> These lines, or some of them, have been so frequently quoted apart from their context, that it has become almost a hopeless task to get them understood. The misunderstanding must have come to Wordsworth's notice, for in the edition of 1820 he altered the first stanza thus:
>
> Ah! Then, if mine had been the painter's hand,
> To express what then I saw, and add the gleam
> Of lustre, known to neither sea nor land,
> But borrowed from the youthful poet's dream;
>
> This later version removes all misunderstanding. But the poet's readers, intelligibly enough, preferred the earlier version: preferred, indeed to keep their two lines in an inverted sense, and to misread or neglect the rest of the poem. It is the word 'consecration', used, it would seem, for a dream-like glory, a peace attained by shunning reality, which

is chiefly responsible for the misreading. Yet the original version, which is also the final version, may be kept without danger of mistake, if only the poem be read as a whole. The following verses make all clear (*ll.* 29-36, 53-60). The happiness that is to be pitied is blind happiness, which nourishes itself on its own false fancies. The happiness that is to be coveted is the happiness of fearless vision, 'and frequent sights of what is to be borne'. And it is by the daylight of truth, not by 'the light that never was, on sea or land', that the poet desires to look upon the things of earth.[3]

But, as hinted above, the trouble lies too deep to be removed only by the advice to read the poem as a whole. We can be sure of our ground if we can find a more or less categorical answer to the question: Is Wordsworth recollecting a mystic experience in the *Peele Castle* poem? Let us take the first twelve lines of the poem that describe the experience the poet had about twelve years ago, and put them beside the following passages from *The Prelude*, Bk IV. In this case, the young poet had passed 'the night in dancing, gaiety and mirth' and, before he retired, 'the cock had crow'd, the sky was bright with day':

> Two miles I had to walk along the fields
> Before I reached my home. Magnificent
> The morning was, a memorable pomp,
> More glorious than I ever had beheld.
> The Sea was laughing at a distance; all
> The solid Mountains were as bright as clouds,
> Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;
> And, in the meadows and the lower grounds,
> Was all the sweetness of a common dawn,
> Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
> And Labourers going forth into the fields,
> —Ah! need I say, dear Friend, that to the brim
> My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
> Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
> Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
> A dedicated Spirit. On I walk'd
> In blessedness, which even yet remains.

In this passage from *The Prelude*, the external reality is realized in all its singularity, in all its unique, living and lived

concreteness: and this is why it is infinite in its significance. Let us remember what St Thomas Acquinas has said: 'Only singulars are infinite'. But the *Peele Castle* scene is described only in general terms, and is meant to be described so. There is nothing singular about it. Peele Castle is a 'rugged Pile' and that is about all. It may be any rugged pile, any ancient building. The disjuncted impressions—disjuncted, because the 'rugged Pile' and the sea are not dynamically related to one another—prevent the Castle and the sea from being realized in their significant otherness. In Wordsworth's experience Peele Castle is set, not over against the sea—and this is very significant—but *beside* it. Hence things are not meant to be seen in a dynamic pattern of relationships which might have quickened them into an infinitely suggestive singularity, such as things have in a mystic vision scene. A mystic vision scene is always constituted of symbolical elements, though symbolical elements do not always constitute a mystic vision scene. But in themselves the elements of the Peele Castle scene are not very much symbolical. And certainly, they are not 'Characters of the great Apocalypse,/The types and symbols of Eternity'. They are not 'intervenient images' that mediate between the visible and the invisible world. The scene does not extend far into the landscape of the soul. Nor is it meant to do so. The protagonist is not interested in the relational singularity of the 'rugged Pile'. Instead, he turns to a consideration of its 'Form . . . sleeping on a glassy sea', which Form is not the significant form of the Wordsworthian reality; not the 'intervenient image' but only the reflection in the calm water which is something non-relational, dualistic and disjuncted. The reflection depends for its precarious existence on the 'calm' of the sea it serves to emphasize, which in its turn depends on fair summer weather. Things are at the mercy of some fortuitous chaotic forces condescending to sleep for the time being; they are not existing in their own right to define one another through relational singularity. Together, they can create only a 'fond illusion'.

There is nothing singular about the calm sea—it may be any calm sea reflecting the shore-scape—just as there is nothing singular about the other elements in the scene. The 'glassy sea' with its image of Peele Castle (which trembled but never passed away), the 'pure sky' and the 'quiet air' together do not make up the unity in variety of distinct but related things by which they might mean themselves and something more than themselves. One would think they belong to a Macphersonian, and not to a Wordsworthian, world.[4] Is it not remarkable that calm water with reflection and sea which have intense symbolic significances elsewhere in Wordsworth do not have such a symbolic significance here? Here, the sea is nothing more than the sea. In fact the elements in the scene do not interanimate one another—and they are not meant to do it either—through a dialectical unity of tensions which is the very life of art-symbols. By themselves, they present only the calm-sea sentiment, which is very much a stock sentiment—not needing a Wordsworth to evoke it for us. By themselves, they do not make us discover any significant emotions; for all significant emotions arise out of a dialectical unity in the sensibility in which thought is felt as feeling and feeling is contemplated as thought. All significant emotions are accentuations of the whole of man's being. Those that are not are only sentimentalities.

We get the impression that the elements constituting the Peele Castle scene lie in a sentimental monochrome. The key-words—'sleeping', 'glassy', 'pure', 'quiet', 'still', 'calm'—come with a narcotic sameness that dulls the faculty of thinking and later on lends itself to Lotos-eateristic indulgence. The sentiment proceeds not through the emotionalization of thought but through an abeyance of thought. Is not all this 'perfect calm' nothing but a temporary state depending on fair summer weather? Does it not have only a precarious existence which can crumble at any time like a house of cards? Why make such a fuss about it? 'Whene'er I looked thy Image still was there': that is, it had not passed away. But was it still? No. trembled, but it never passed away'. It very well could,

couldn't it? What if it did? Does not the trembling only confirm the fact of possible agitation? Is it not that the protagonist dwells on the 'perfect calm' only through an ostritch-like ignorance of this fact? Or is it only a wilful ignorance of this fact arising out of romantic pride? Does the 'Perfect calm' have such a valid intellectual and emotional conviction as to subsume this fact? Is it as valid a conviction of perfection or permanence as, for example, that of the 'stationary blasts of waterfalls' or that of 'the immeasurable height of woods decaying never to be decayed'? The repetition of 'so' and the recurrence of prolonged vowel sounds and interjections amount to a feminine, almost hysterical, emphasis —nothing of the usual Wordsworthian musculārity here:

> So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
> So like, so very like, was day to day!

Does the protagonist really believe that the 'trembling Image' which never passed away will continue playing this fanciful trick for ever? He is certainly reaching out to some idea of perfection or permanence. With another interjection he jumps to it: 'How perfect was the calm!' Yes how perfect? 'So pure . . . s o quiet . . . so like, so very like !', and now 'How perfect !'. This recurrent use of vague, exclammatory colloquialisms for adverbs of degree betrays the hollowness of the sentimental assertions. Does the protagonist know he is deluding himself when he says: 'it seemed no sleep;/No mood which season takes away or brings'? It *seemed!* The *seeming* does not have the conviction of living truth which one realizes both intellectually and emotionally, with the wholeness of one's being: the truth which is 'carried alive into the heart by passion'. In the absence of this truth, there is only a delusive pretension of finding some cosmic significance in the scene:

> I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
> Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

The word 'fancied' deserves a serious attention, particularly because Wordsworth uses it. Yes, it was all a fancy: a

romantic fancy. No doubt, it has its own fascination and part of our heart is in it, but it does not appeal to the whole of our being. It must be rejected, though the rejection is not easy. In the case of Wordsworth, the rejection was painfully forced on him by the death of his brother John Wordsworth, and 'a deep distress... humanized' his soul by chastening his facile, indulgent sensibility. It may be observed that the 'humanized' soul is not antithetical to the Wordsworthian Solitude but only to the non-relational solitude, particularly of the romantic type, which Wordsworth rejects as a 'fond illusion'.

> I have submitted to a new control:
> A power is gone which nothing can restore . . .
> Not for a moment could I now behold
> A smiling sea, and be what I have been;
> The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old.

There is some ambiguity here. The 'loss' is the loss of his beloved brother; but along with it, it is also the loss of the power of facile happiness which, though it may be seen now as a 'blind happiness', is yet something lost and nostalgically remembered, while the 'lost heart stiffens and rejoices' in having to submit to the 'new control' of 'fortitude and patient cheer' forced upon the poet by his 'deep distress'.

Turning to *The Prelude* scene, we realize that it is rich in symbolic significance by virtue of the apprehended singulars that act as 'intervenient images' mediating between the phenomenal and the noumenal world. For example, the 'solid Mountains' are earthly as well as heavenly in being 'as bright as clouds,/Grain-tinctured, drench'd in empyrean light.' It is through a realization of such 'intervenient images' that the Wordsworthian Solitude experience leads to a 'mystic vision', which term should not be understood in a restricted, technical sense but in the sense of the revelation of the 'invisible world' in the visible world itself. This happens when the visible world is seen in a 'spirit of love', with an 'eye made quiet'; when the relational accent falls on it and it is charged with

mythico-religious significance. It happens in the case of the 'magnificent morning' scene as the previous mood of hilarity, gaiety and mirth is suddenly overcome by a feeling of mounting spiritual exaltation which is hypostatically worked up through the various elements of the scene. The laughing Sea, the solid but heavenly Mountains, and, in the meadows and the lower grounds, all the sweetness of a common dawn, dews, vapours, and the melody of birds, and Labourers going forth into the fields—all speak of the innate possibilities of earthly existence for happiness and blessedness, for sanctification and eternal glory, for a harmony of humble sweetness and nobility through dedicated labour, and bind the poet to this earthly existence in the holiness of the heart's affections and dedication to his task of going forth into the fields of poetry as a divine Labourer. Things certainly mean more than themselves because they are interanimated through a dialectical unity of tensions which includes the awareness of the 'invisible world' along with that of the visible; the awareness of magnificence and glory along with that of 'common' earthly phenomena, even that of toil and strife and suffering—hinted by the figures of the Labourers going forth into the fields. In this dynamic pattern we apprehend new compositions of feeling[5] and a new, hitherto unknown, mode of being. All great art is a discovery of significant reality through concrete and intense sensuous forms of experience.

The *Peele Castle* poem *does* make this discovery, not through a direct contemplation of these forms, which for Wordsworth would have become 'intervenient images', but in an indirect and more dramatic way by contrasting two pictures: Beaumont's picture and the picture Wordsworth himself would have made. The contrast serves the purpose of concretion and intensification, and of definition in terms of ultimate significance. It *does* carve out a new dynamic pattern of feelings in which calamitous suffering is reconciled with 'fortitude and patient cheer' and 'hope', which take the place of 'blind happiness' and illusory optimism.

But in the light of what has been said above it is not difficult to convince ourselves that in itself the Peele Castle scene—as given in the first twelve lines of the poem—is lacking in relational singularity and therefore in comprehensiveness and richness of symbolic significance. It is lacking in 'intervenient images' that make for the revelation of the 'invisible world': in everything that would constitute the 'mystic vision' of the Wordsworthian solitude. There is'nt any 'mystic vision' in the *Peele Castle* poem. Nor was it meant to be there.

Wordsworth is not speaking of the loss of 'visionary power' when he says: 'A power is gone, which nothing can restore'. The loss of this power occurred much earlier, and Wordsworth has already mourned it in the first four strophes of the 'Immortality Ode' which were composed, as de Selincourt has established, in 1802. I see no reason to doubt that here, in the *Peele Castle* poem, Wordsworth is speaking of the loss of the power of facile, and thoughtlessly optimistic, joy which has gone because of his beloved brother's death in shipwreck in February, 1805—and this sense, as we have seen above, is very well borne out by the context.

We may note in passing that, by virtue of the apprehension of relational singularity, the 'mystic vision' is often accompained by a sense of wonder and awe and a sense of some mysterious, numinous power uniting all the things of the universe into the One Life. We should not look for these elements in the Peele Castle scene.

Let us recall to mind the Simplon Pass experience:

> the brook and road
> Were fellow travellers in this gloomy strait,
> And with them did we journey several hours
> At a slow pace. The immeasurable height
> Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
> The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
> And in the narrow rent at every turn
> Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and forlorn,
> The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
> The rocks that muttered close upon our ears,
> Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-side

As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
The unfettered clouds and region of the Heavens,
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light—
Were all like workings of one mind, the features
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree;
Characters of the great Apocalypse,
The types and symbols of Eternity,
Of first, and last, and midst, and without end.

I offer no comment. But it should be recognized that in this case too the mystic vision is attained through the apprehension of relational singulars like:

The rocks, that muttered close upon over ears,
Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-side
As if a voice were in them.

Such a symbolical apotheosis of things, such a sense of holy awe and wonder is outside the scope of the Peele Castle scene which does not evoke any mystic vision. The scene does not have an immediate self-sufficiency of meaning—it does not mean anything in itself. It is meant to give rise to a fancy-picture in the mind, such as Wordsworth would have painted in the 'fond illusion of my heart' if he had been a painter, and through this fancy-picture it is meant to serve as a foil to the scene in Sir George Beaumont's picture. It should be kept in mind that in the *Peele Castle* poem Wordsworth is not comparing two impressions of the same landscape (or seascape), as he has done in *Tintern Abbey* or 'The Immortality Ode'. Here, let me repeat, he is comparing two pictures: an actual picture painted by Sir George Beaumont and a might have been picture or fancy-picture that Wordsworth himself might have painted on the basis of his romantic experience. The referents of the two pictures are two different states of nature and two different postures of Peele Castle in relation to them. The two pictures contrast two different emblematic views of earthly existence.

In painting his fancy-picture, Wordsworth would first express what then he saw, and then

add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream.

Let us not forget that Wordsworth had never experienced 'the light that never was' in his actual experience of the Peele Castle scene. It was not there in what then he saw; but he would *add* it in his picture, as a fanciful category, which he ironically calls 'the consecration, and the Poet's dream'. It may be remarked that this 'Poet' is not the true poet (whom nobody would grudge his mystic visions, if he had any) but the (romantic) 'dreamer' or the youthful poet' as he is called in the 1820 version. It reminds us of Keats's distinction in the 'Second *Hyperion*' between the 'dreamer' and the 'true poet'. There can be no doubt that Wordsworth is implying such a distinction. Witness not only the 1820 version but also the very drift of the poem. The whole description of *adding* the fanciful 'light' comes with playful irony which has so often been missed or ignored, by readers and critics. The word 'add' is quite significant. It suggests that Wordsworth did not actually experience what is now *added* to produce a semblance of pseudo-mystic vision; pseudo-mystic, because of the very fact that the *addition* of such an element does not make an ordinary experience mystic. A mystic experience is not an ordinary experience *plus* some 'mysterious *X*'. It is qualitatively different from an ordinary experience because of the immanent earthly-unearthly quality of the relational singulars apprehended in it. If a painter were to paint it, he would have to paint 'intervenient images' revealing the noumenal in the phenomenal—something like: 'the solid Mountains as bright as clouds/Grain-tinctured, drench'd in empyrean light'. An 'intervenient image' must have an intrinsic holiness in being a type and symbol of Eternity: it must not be consecrated by way of an after-thought. Of course, the painter works by adding one effect to the other; but the point is that the 'consecration' was neither potentially nor actually there in this hypothetical painter's original experience. Before they are expressed in a work of art, things must already

exist as an organic whole in the artist's mind. Even in the case of a painter working on 'intervenient images' it can be said that 'the end precedes the beginning'. In fact, in its context of playful irony, the word 'consecration' is almost pejorative. So is the word 'dream'. Here 'dream' is not associated with the 'glory and freshness' of the mystic vision of the Wordsworthian Solitude, as it is in 'The Immortality Ode' and elsewhere, but with the 'fond illusion' of romantic solitude which is later on rejected as the state of 'the heart that lives alone,/Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind'. I don't think it is enough to say with Walter Raleigh: 'if only the poem be read as a whole'. I would rather like to say: 'if only the whole poem be *read*'!

Consider the word 'dream' in the following passage where the calm water in becoming an 'intervenient image' mediating between the external and internal becomes a symbol of the mind in its relation to the external world:

> Oh ! then the calm
> And dead still water lay upon my mind
> Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky
> Never before so beautiful, sank down
> Into my heart, and held me like a dream.

This kind of synaesthesia is something we should not look for in the Peele Castle scene. Observe how the 'intervenient image' brings about a fusion of the abstract and the concrete, the spiritual and the material by ascribing 'weight' to pleasure. In this case 'dream' certainly signifies a state of mystic vision. To this sense of the word, the 'Immortality Ode' has given such a tremendous resonance that it tends to interfere with its meaning in the *Peele Castle* poem.

So, the misreading of the *Peele Castle* poem is also encouraged by the fact that there is a spill-over of the meanings of certain words from the 'Immortality Ode' and elsewhere into this poem. Such words are: 'gleam', 'light', 'dream' and 'power'. Besides blaming the critics, I would like to blame all these genii which should not be allowed to come out of the bottle.

In his picture Wordsworth would have seen Peele Castle as 'a chronicle of heaven' isolated from any significance of human history, in a goody-goddy, pietistic world which, in being permanently 'without toil or strife', is not, in fact, very much different from the world of the Lotos-eaters.

> I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile
> Amid a world how different from this!
> Beside a sea that could not cease to smile:
> On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.
>
> Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
> Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;
> Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
> The very sweetest had to thee been given.
>
> A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
> Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
> No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
> Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

The picture is meant to intensify the romantic, Lotos-eateristic monochrome. Even a phrase like 'silent Nature's breathing life' contributes to this effect. There is no dynamic relationship, such as there was in the case of Lucy and the 'breathing balm' and the 'silence and the calm of mute insensate things'. The picture is meant to show itself at a disadvantge, not only because of its autistic exclusion of grim possibilities pointing to disasters like the death of John Wordsworth, but also because in setting Peele Castle *beside*, and not over against, the sea it is lacking in that dialectical unity of tensions which is the very life of art-symbols. But Beaumont's picture is a 'passionate work', a dynamic pattern of relationships which makes the Castle, the sea and everything else interanimate one another as symbols, though, of course, these symbols do not become 'intervenient images' to constitute a mystic vision. In Beaumont's picture, things mean themselves and something more than themselves. They exist in their own right because they are in a dynamic pattern of relationships. 'That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell' is not there merely to emphasize the storminess of the sea. It exists in its own right as it 'labours' in the 'deadly swell'.

So does the Castle, 'this huge Castle, standing here sublime', as it 'braves',

> Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
> The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Beaumont's pictorial reprensentation of the Sublime, as Wordsworth sees it, falls in line with the poet's own attempts at realizing the Sublime, through intensified dialectical patterns often combining tumult and peace, motion and stillness, time and Eternity and various incompatible modes of being. Think of those Solitaries and of those Landscapes—how they transcend the 'puny boundaries' of mere space-time existence! And as for suffering—think of all those sublime sufferers who transcend suffering, particularly of Michael, of the Leech-gatherer and of the Discharged Soldier of *The Prelude*. In the *Peele Castle* poem Wordsworth is once again realizing the Sublime that transcends suffering through an acceptance of suffering. Everything in the poem points to this realization. We proceed to it through the contrast of the two pictures which represent two emblematic views of earthly existence. The poet's 'deep distress' makes it impossible for him to hold on to the romantic view and has in fact opened his eyes to its 'fond illusion'. The 'humanized' soul rejects it as the 'blind happiness' of romantic isolation from one's own 'Kind', and welcomes 'the fortitude and patient cheer' view which is the Sublime pictorially represented by Beaumont. Wordsworth makes of this pictorial representation a universalizing objective correlative of his personal feelings about his brother John Wordsworth's death; John Wordsworth who 'was all that could be wished for in man' and the noblest man he had ever known, and who was reported to have died doing his duty as Captain of the ship while he was trying to save others, and not himself, from drowning. Acceptance of suffering in this fashion implies a sense of ultimate values, implies hope, and therefore, a transcendance of suffering itself. Thus in and through Beaumont's picture, Wordsworth discovers not only the meaning of John Wordsworth's existence but also the very mean-

ing of man's existence, if man's existence is to have any meaning. The meaning is: 'Not without hope we suffer and mourn'. This meaning emerges from a dialectical unity of experiential tensions in which the sense of disastrous circumstances is combined with a sense of 'braving' them with 'fortitude and patient cheer', and this in answer to the sense of 'deep distress' which has shown the blind happiness' for what it is. Again, this is not to deny the fascination of the romantic view; for Wordsworth has shown not only the 'fond illusion' but also what it feels like cherishing a 'fond illusion'. But the point is: it does not appeal to the whole of our being, as 'truth in its largest sense', and is therefore rejected by the 'humanized soul'. Beaumont's picture triumphs over Wordsworth's fancy-picture, both on moral and artistic grounds, in the same way as Keats's Apollo triumphs over Hyperion and his 'true poet' over the 'dreamer'.

Through this triumph, Wordsworth would once again point to a 'central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation'; but now the emphasis is not so much on peace as on hope for peace in the heaven beyond, and this hope is kept up, by a quasi-Stoical attitude. Having already lost the mystic vision, and now in his 'deep distress', having lost even the power of facile happiness (which, he realizes, was a 'blind happiness'), Wordsworth cannot see experience as immanently self-sufficient in meaning. He must relate it to something beyond it to make it meaningful. This is looking forward to *The White Doe of Rylstone* and the poetry of a 'baptized imagination'. The *Peele Castle* poem makes us look both backwards and forwards. A fuller understanding of this bridge-like poem is of central significance for a fuller understanding of the unity of Wordsworth's work.

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[4]See 'Essay, Supplementary to the Preface, 1815.'

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FOOLS OF TIME IN *Macbeth*

Among the great tragedies of Shakespeare *Macbeth* stands out as much for its sharpness of focus and tenuous but volcanic speed as for the intricate web of ambiguities in which the entire action is enclosed. Each crucial incident in the play looks Janus-like and yields, on close scrutiny, contrary significances. The Weird Sisters speak on purpose with a double tongue and Macbeth, self-tempted to some extent, is unable to tear through the haziness of their speeches and attain to certainty till the very last. 'Fair is foul, and foul is fair' (I, i, 2) comes upon us with an ominous, haunting cadence; it strikes the key-note of the play and determines, by and large, its ever-changing perspective. Banquo, more clear-eyed and freer of mental cobwebs than Macbeth, is able to perceive:

> But 'its strange:
> And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
> The instruments of Darkness talk us truths;
> Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
> In deepest consequence.[1]
>
> (1, iii, 122)

This is how he comments upon the initial prophecy coming true to Macbeth and recognizes, with an ironical sombreness, the dubiety hovering over the utterances of the Witches—'the instruments of Darkness', though a kind of unconscious sardonic pleasure seems to be lurking behind it. He focuses on the enormity of their juggling and its shattering impact over its recipients as if foreshadowing—without being aware of it—the future yet shrouded in mystery for Macbeth. Unlike Banquo, Macbeth is both possessed of a supreme gift of

vision and is a victim of self-delusion. In an aside immediately following the colloquy referred to above, however, he is very much sceptical about the validity of their stance and his own attitude corresponding to it:

> This supernatural soliciting
> Cannot be ill; cannot be good:—
> If ill, why hath it given me earnest of success,
> Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor:
> If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
> Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
> And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
> Against the use of nature?
>
> (I, iii, 130)

Here Macbeth indulges in a sustained meditation, holding the mutually contradictory aspects of the 'supernatural soliciting' spotlit in his mind and painfully realizing that it is the equivocal character of the temptation offered that keeps him in a flurry. It should not be treated as an abstract statement of ambiguity but its concrete apprehension and presentment in terms of lived experience. It is not 'suggestion' as a concept but its horrid image which offers itself to his hallucinatory vision, and the moment he yields to it the fibres of his body become high-strung and he is thrown into a physio-psychic turmoil though as yet only a tiny part of the prophecy has been fulfilled. The unfixing of hair and the pounding of the heart—both symptoms of a taut, muscular tension—imply a dislocation of the normal and natural processes of living and leave one dazed with a primitive, animal horror. Macbeth thus finds himself caught in a see-saw rhythm and is at his wits' end how best to decipher the cryptic, quasi-oracular pronouncements of the Sisters. In the letter that Lady Macbeth is perusing at the beginning of Act I, Scene v, occur these significant words: 'Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the King, who all-hail'd me, 'Thane of Cawdor'; by which title, before, these Weird Sisters saluted me, and referr'd me to the coming on of time, with

'Hail, King that shalt be!' The phrase 'stood rapt in the wonder of it' betrays the fact that Macbeth is overwhelmed with amazement and his judgment, therefore, lies suspended for the moment. Convinced of their power of looking into the seeds of time he is fully persuaded to take their deliberate sophistry at its face value, and this involves him in a kind of self-deception he finds it difficult to extricate himself from. There is a close and hidden connection between 'all-hail'd me Thane of Cawdor' and 'Hail, King that shalt be'—the present and the future moments of time are interlocked, and this intertwining corresponds exactly to that cloud of unknowing behind which Macbeth strives to seek shelter and thus the avalanche of ruin descends upon him block by block. Only half-contented with his grasp on the present Macbeth seems to be chasing the future with all the eager trepidation at his command, and the play thus appears to be furiously future-driven.

The abundant use of dramatic irony in the play is also linked with the juxtaposition of the motifs of 'illusion' and 'reality', for the employment of irony necessarily implies a dislocation of perspective. Things turn out differently from what they look like, and contrary to our expectations, so that 'nothing is, but what is not' (I, iii, 142), and the foreshadowing of events is achieved inspite of ourselves. Duncan's estimate of Macbeth is belied tragically, and to our sense of deep shock, by his sacrilegious murder of his cousin and guest; the original thane of Cawdor betrays the absolute trust Duncan had built on him early; Banquo's reliance of Macbeth is rudely shattered by his suborning the murderers to cut short the lives of Banquo and his son, Fleance, and Macduff, too, is given a false scent by the consciously contrived self-denigration Malcolm subjects himself to. And the crowning event in this long catalogue is the movement of the Birnam Wood in the direction of the Dunsinane Castle—a clever stratagem contrived with the intention of undermining Macbeth's posture of smug self-complacency and his apparently impregnable will. This is in addition to Macduff—the nemesis-figure—proving himself to be the ultimate

agent of destruction in virtue of his not being born of woman. Thus the calculated build-up of treacherous appearances is pretty pervasive in the play throughout.

Apart from the ambiguity which is the current coin in the Witches' transaction with Macbeth, he himself, too, as reported by Lady Macbeth in one of her early soliloquies, is torn by divergent pulls and ambivalent drives:

> Thou wouldst be great;
> Art not without ambition, but without
> The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,
> That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
> And yet wouldst wrongly win; thou'dst have, great Glamis,
> That which cries, "Thus thou must do", if thou have it;
> And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
> Than wishest should be undone.
>
> (I, v, 18)

This is a piece of sharp, objective, clinical analysis, framed in the language of depth paradox—a kind of controlled vagueness. A fair amount of distancing is involved in Lady Macbeth's appraisal of her husband and this appraisal is conveyed through carefully balanced opposites. With her characteristic feminine intuition she is quick to perceive that for her husband ambition is one of the vital impulsions of life. Normally the achievement of this ambition by Macbeth is unattended by malice, rancour or crookedness, and a holiness of spirit shines through his motivations. On occasions, however, a hiatus may seem to yawn between the options he has chosen and the value-system that governs his life as a whole. Curiously enough, sometimes he doesn't mind achieving his objective and yet shuns a course of action which is not in conformity with the moral absolutes, theoretically speaking. Also occasionally what makes him abstain from embarking upon some particular strategy is the fear complex that is not only inhibiting but nerve-wracking. In a later context Lady Macbeth calls her husband 'infirm of purpose' with an explosion of impatience, but the infirmity she stains

him with emanates from the fact that he is most often tormented with 'compunctious visitings of nature' and cannot bring his desire and performance into any firm coordination. The Hell that stares Macbeth in the face is designed partly by the doubts and fears sown into him by the Witches and partly by his own ambivalent attitudes. This is what precedes the murder of Duncan. What follows in its wake may, however, be visualized as the Harrowing of Hell as in the case of Herod in the Mystery plays, for he is condemned to pacing up and down the infernal universe of his own creation all along.

The Porter's scene has been subjected to a fair amount of explication, and De Quincey is the earliest critic to point out how it ushers in a daylight world in the midst of the suffocating darkness which had dominated the preceding scenes. But its real significance lies, I should think, in the fact that it reinforces the theme of temptation through equivocation. It has been pointed out with some justice that the Porter bears the same relationship to the knockers at the gate as the Witches have towards Macbeth,[2] for the knockers are tempted into Hell as Macbeth descends into his Dantesque Inferno little by little as a consequence of believing in the casuistry of the Witches. In both cases the temptation offered outwardly seems to be an externalization of the evil subsisting at the core of the ego. The knockers' world, portrayed in all its width of reference and highlighting all its nuances, is a microcosm counterpoised to the macrocosm of *Macbeth*, and from it also radiate waves of ambiguity and suspense. In it some of the typical characters—all damned for some vice or the other—are subjected to withering sarcasm and the apparent hilarity of tone is shot through with a subtle and corrosive irony. The Porter's scene, it may be admitted, contributes its own share to the creation of that illusion which brings the antithetical reality into sharp relief.

Lady Macbeth's is a case of psychopathy and transcends the mere causal relationship of crime and punishment. Her tragic predicament is characterized by the fact that her psyche

begins to dislocate—its integrative centre being lost—the moment the heinous crime is perpetrated, and she begins to live henceforth, not very much unlike Macbeth, in a world of ghostly appearances. With Macbeth the conscious mind, though shadowed and tortured by hallucinatony fears and the guilt complex that stings his conscience off and on, remains vibrant to the last; in the case of Lady Macbeth, it is the subliminal self which is most deeply involved. In the sleep-walking scene it is the twilight of consciousness that seems to be her natural habitat, and she is turned into a kind of automaton. Macbeth's penchant for visual evocation, keyed to the highest pitch of intensity, is brought out again and again in his soul-searching soliloquies. Lady Macbeth, on the contrary, creates for herself a mirror state which helps her bring to the surface the contents of her submerged, unconscious mind. Her obsessed reliving of the past harks back to indelible memories that yet have to be plucked and erased in the interest of her psychic reorientation whereas Macbeth is almost always looking forward to the future.

Macbeth's soliloquy in Act V, scene v, offers a sharp contrast to the one in Act I, scene vii. In the latter 'the bank and shoal of time' and what is relevant to it absorbs his full attention; in the former any continued existence in the palpable and tangible world of facts is fretful and wearisome to him in the extreme. The nadir of Macbeth's fortunes is reached when he is shown the three apparitions with manoeuvred ironic overtones, and Macbeth is peremptorily forbidden to seek any further unravelling of the mystery. The first is that of the armed head, apparently intended to incite Macbeth to engage himself at any cost in the impending combat against his enemies but implicitly signifying, nevertheless, that his own head was to be cut off by Macduff and carried to Malcolm. The second is that of the bloody child—that is, of Macduff who has been untimely ripped out of his mother's womb, and Macbeth had been given the false and tantalizing assurance of not being cowed down by any one born of woman. The third one is of

the child with a crown on his head and a bough in his hand, symbolizing the royal Malcolm who was to succeed in the direct line of descent from Duncan and who ordered his soldiers to hew down branches of trees in the Birnam Wood and take them to Dunsinane. And Macbeth had been forewarned not to succumb unless the Birnam Wood moved towards the Dunsinane Castle—a phenomenon out of the order of nature and hence most incredible to human reasoning. A subsidiary symbolic meaning of the bough relates to the blossoming forth of the forces of regeneration and harmony waiting upon the return of Malcolm to the country which had been distraught and laid waste by the over-vaulting ambition of Macbeth. The unfolding of these apparitions is an ingenious attempt to screw up Macbeth's courage 'to the sticking-place', to goad him to a false sense of immunity and then cause the citadel of his self-assurance topple down with a bang. This is yet another example of that equivocation which operates as an important thematic strand in the play. Later, the show of eight successive kings—embodying the vision of Banquo's progeny—the last one carrying a glass in his hand, signifies the unending chain of royalty in favour of Banquo and drives home pathetically to Macbeth the sense of sterility of his own line. This shakes him to the roots of his being and elicits from him this withering comment: 'What! will the line stretch out to th' crack of doom?' (IV, i, 117) This powerfully laconic line, in its own subtle way, betrays that Macbeth is now delicately poised on the edge of the precipice, his hopes are in utter collapse and his defences begin to give way from now onwards. And Angus, in the beginning of Act V sums up, with penetrating insight, the steep tragic contrast between the two successive phases of Macbeth's pursuit of power thus:

> now does he feel his title
> Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
> Upon a dwarfish thief.
>
> (V, ii, 20)

It hardly needs to be stressed that the antithesis between 'a

giant's robe' and 'a dwarfish thief' on whom it settles down serves as the most effective means of deflation here.

The Hell Macbeth lands himself into is the inevitable consequence of the fact that in his case 'function is smothered in surmise' and his 'single state of man'—the microcosm of personality—is completely fragmented by his chaotic desires and the web of ambiguities woven for him by the Witches. He is compelled of necessity to fumble his way through the tumult of jostling fears and anxieties to a point of stability and order. The major and final 'tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow' soliloquy is already prepared for by the jaded and mounting despair reflected in Macbeth's reaction to the stunning apparitions exposed to his view by the Weird Sisters and in his later comment:

> I have liv'd long enough: my way of life
> Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf;
>
> (V, iii, 22)

'The yellow leaf' is a very luminous concretion of the wintry landscape, the frozen circle of Hell in which Macbeth now seems to be imprisoned and which is what the darkness of his soul has made as its masterpiece. The distance from this deeply poignant expression of pathos to the sense of the dissolution of time is not very far, indeed. The news of Lady Macbeth's death (a death caused by her own violent hands in sheer desperation and a benumbing, logical climax to her protracted frenzied living) prompts Macbeth to make an only excursion into the realm of metaphysics and speculate over the unreality of time and, inferentially, of life itself. It would be helpful at this point to hold the text of the soliloquy firmly within one's range of vision for a moment:

> Macb. She should have died hereaft'er:
> There would have been a time for such a word.—
> To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;

> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.
>
> (V, v, 17)

'There would have been a time for such a word' is really interchangeable with 'she should have died hereafter'. No simple opposition between 'now' and 'later' is involved here, and this is too transparent and self-evident a datum to warrant any extended commentary upon it. On the contrary, the very concept of time as comprising both 'now' and 'later' is not only unsavoury but utterly obnoxious to Macbeth in his present state of perturbation. For him time has ceased to be an integrated whole, a meaningful and connected sequence; it is unreal and illusory in the sense of being no more than a conglomeration of the isolated 'nows' succeeding each other mechanically in an endless chain of trivia. It is this mechanical succession, corresponding to the notion of the 'hereafter' or the linking together of 'tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow', that comes upon us with an insistent refrain. One may well recall that while welcoming Macbeth, in the first flush of his astounding victory on the battle-field where he had fought for Duncan as one of his trusted lieutenants and generals, Lady Macbeth had burst out in a moment of utter exhilaration and buoyancy thus:

> Great Glamis, worthy Cawdor!
> Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
> Thy letters have transported me beyond
> This ignorant present, and I feel now
> The future in the instant.
>
> (I, v, 54)

It may not be wide of the mark to point out that whereas 'hereafter' in this context is related to a state of expectancy—

the present being depreciated as 'this ignorant present'—, the 'tomorrow' in the final soliloquy is nugatory—a pale and evanescent shadow shimmering over the surface of time. It has been perceptively demonstrated by John Lawlor that the concept of time implicated here is not linear and incremental but cyclic and repetitive.[8] All the 'tomorrows'—each one of which creeps in this petty pace from day to day—constitute an ant-like ghostly procession and offer us an image of a shapeless mass of endlessly multiplying moments. History or 'recorded time' thus becomes meaningless because it is lacking in an integrated patterning of lived experience. Without a sense of sequence or continuity and of value—both of which contribute to whatever plenitude inheres in the concept of time—the future is reduced to a mere sham, an 'insubstantial pageant,' with nothing solid to sustain it. Lady Macbeth's death, occurring in the present, suggests the idea of a series of tomorrows but it may, with a backward glance, as well insinuate the notion of 'yesterdays.' For with death staring us in the face with its icy gaze, time instead of reaching out into the future, registers a regression into the past. The yesterdays are equivalent to moments of time frozen in the abysmal depths of the past and these remain as alive to consciousness as events taking place here and now, and Lady Macbeth's death is a glaring instance of it. Again, whereas all the 'yesterdays' the 'nows' and the 'tomorrows' form one continuum for the normal percipient, to Macbeth, paradoxically enough, it is not so much the sense of cohesiveness and interfusion as that of dispersion and dislocation that is more urgent and obstinate. This is so because at this critical juncture it is Macbeth's consciousness that serves as the mode for measuring the flow of time. And his is a fractured consciousness—one which amounts to a cleavage in the innermost fabric of the mind occasioned by the persistent tension between the compulsions of the simple present and those of the Subjunctive future. There is, therefore, a direct relationship and consonance between the essential lunacy of Macbeth's alienated life and duration which, instead of being a

symbol of order and control, has become cancerous. The yesterdays are more or less imaged as torch-bearers leading the 'fools of time'-inept, blundering, impercipient mortals—up to the threshold of Death. 'Dusty death' vivifies for an instant the spark of meaning latent in the Biblical warning that 'Dust we are and unto dust must we return'—a strong enough reminder of the emblematical force of *memento mori* pageant. By a sudden leap of the imagination Macbeth may briefly and temporarily identify himself with one such fool, for with the dislocated time as his characteristic frame of reference, he is one who can no longer control events.[4] And such a one is bound to be summoned, like Everyman in the Medieval play with that title, into the gigantic cemetry of the skeletal forms condemned to be made food for worms sooner or later.

It has been pointed out by several critics—Ribner being one of them—and with explicit moral disapproval, that Macbeth shows little concern or sensitivity when the news of the Queen's death is communicated to him.[5] Here there is no question of personal involvement. It is the inescapable dilemma of the human condition that Macbeth watches with bated breath. As a matter of fact, Lady Macbeth's death precipitates the psychological crisis, bringing to a focus the accumulating burden of pain to which Macbeth had bowed down at long last, and his excruciating awareness of the disarray in life is for once and immediately crystallized into a philosophical utterance. Macbeth has for the moment ceased to be an active participant in the drama; he becomee, instead, the choric voice in terms of which a judgment is passed on human life with a shuddering honesty. The 'haunting majesty' discovered by Tomlinson in the soliloquy may have been contributed by the texture of sound,[6] but the note of anguish born of the acute sense of futility is no less and patently unmistakable. The suggestion of the torch latent in the word 'lighted' is brought out openly in the image of the candle that flickers for a brief moment and is then suddenly extinguished. This helps us recall a similar image used by Shakespeare when

Othello, stirred up to a maddening spasm of jealousy, is about to strangulate Desdemona in her bed: 'Put out the light, and then put out the light!' The co-presence of the literal and the figurative light reminds us in that line not only of the fragility and precariousness of human existence but of its preternatural aspect as well, and here, too, the brief candle of life is destined to be smothered and goes out in no time. If time is involved in a process of dispersion, so is the lamp of life to peter out sometime or the other.

The procession of the 'tomorrows', involved in a crawling, snail-like, retarded movement, the 'yesterdays' receding ultimately into the valley of bones, and the flickering light of the candle—all these woven together evoke the image of the 'walking shadow' because the sense of precariousness is their common denominator. And 'shadow' evokes the notion of substance as its antithesis, and life in time is shadowy as opposed to the radiance of Eternity though this undercurrent of meaning, it may be emphasised, is not the focus of attention there. The idea of Eternity is farthest from the mind of Macbeth at the moment, for he is too deeply involved in the present to make it an object of contemplation. In 'life's but a walking shadow' are gathered together all the implications of contingency, insubstantiality, and movement which is blind, undirected and purposeless. It evokes the impression of an uncertain and fitful groping into the regions of darkness, of an abortive endeavour to reduce chaos to manageable proportions. Life may also be imaged as a 'poor player'—a shoddy artist, one who bungles his material, misconceives the process of fashioning it into a coherent whole, a fully wrought artefact, and makes a mawkish and piliable display of his talents. In the two verbs 'struts' and 'frets' is contained the reference to one who counterfeits—like each one of the players in Jacques's speech in *As You Like It*—many roles of the fustian kind. He has his 'exits' and 'entrances', performs his role in the enacted drama till a predetermined period of time, and then droops into utter nothingness. He has to abandon at long last all the power

and prestige, all the vainglory and pompousness, and accept with resignation, like characters in the Morality plays, 'the constitution of silence'. All the significances of this soliloquy are brought to a head in the concluding image: 'it is a tale/ Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury/'Signifying nothing'. From the 'walking shadow' suggested by the dim, flickering candle through the poor player on to the 'idiot' telling a tale, 'full of sound and fury' there seems to have been introduced a slight change in the metaphoric idiom of the passage. But it is, however, no less manifest that the 'idiot' in the last line is the new mask taken on by the 'poor player' or the shoddy artist referred to in the preceding line. Also life which is normally equivalent to *Logos* is now converted into the gibberish outpouring of a maniac—an utterance stuffed with high-sounding but incomprehensible words, a kind of verbal imposture. An implicit opposition between force and violence on the one hand, and futility and absurdity on the other is also insinuated here. Time has become a cipher because damage has been done to those things which are intrinsically valuable in life. And all things in the terrestrial universe function and realize themselves in and through the medium of time. Denuded of its essential significance life is reduced to a mere husk, a void in which things do not interact organically and do not hold together in a dynamic and fructuous relationship. Life, in all its particularities, becomes inauthentic.

Giving an account of Duncan's reception of the news of Macbeth's brave and amazing military exploits Ross had, with an uncanny insight, spoken the truth about 'Bellona's bridegroom' thus: 'Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make, Strange images of death' (I, iii, 96). Later, Macbeth unwittingly confirms this insight when externalizing his own inner turmoil he explains to Lady Macbeth the dark intimation of the ghost voices of his own conscience thus:

> Still it cried, "Sleep no more !" to all the house:
> "Glamis hath murder'd Sleep, Cawdor and therefore
> Shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more!'
>
> (II, ii, 40)

Glamis, Cawdor and Macbeth are multiple facets of the same personality who is the architect of 'the strange images of death', and has murdered sleep which is an act of blaspheme. Sleep, it needs hardly to be underscored, is the symbol of the renewal of vitality, restoration of order and poise in the midst of chaos and disorder, and of the eventual possibility of psychic rehabilitation. And time and sleep are coordinates, and any violence done to them implies that human consciousness has also come to grief. Partly through carving images of death, partly through annulling the possibilities of re-constitution and partly through his own betrayal to the casuistry of the Werid Sisters Macbeth has 'put rancours in the vessel of his peace' and deprived himself of the prospect of re-achieving his sadly lost inner poise. It is, therefore, small wonder that in this soliloquy the end of the human sojourn in this world is envisioned in terms of pure nihilism. For the time being, at any rate, the notion of a Christian optimism, of an ultimate beneficence in a benighted world seems to be brushed aside brusquely. The pathos associated with the 'poor player' on both the moral and the aesthetic planes is extended to the lot of the 'idiot' who is imagined to be involved in a Dionysian dance of existence. This is what impels him to go down the wheel, to relinquish his unsure hold on life and be thrown into a state of damnation, for in Macbeth's case and, generally speaking, too, such a state is tantamount to living in a realm which is 'devoid of significant relations'[7] and in which the Subjunctive is no long operative.

Life as an absurd phenomenon, not reducible to any logical coherence or pattern, and with anti-reason as its substratum, is what is projected unmistakably in this soliloquy. It also reflects the protagonist's claustrophobic state of mind at this particular juncture. He has been 'tied to a stake', condemned to live in a hostile universe where all the channels of communication with the circumambient reality have now been finally disrupted. In this soliloquy Macbeth has been able to paint his soul-sickness most effectively and with a sure touch, and nausea and absurdity—the two main concerns of the exist-

entialist philosophers—are very much in the foreground of this picture. In this sense Macbeth may, like Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame*, be considered as an image, in the realm of art, of the anxiety and absurdity cleaving to the human condition as its inalienable attributes. Macbeth's exasperation of disillusionment reaches a climactic point here and all the spirals of gloom and seething discontent forming earlier are objectified eventually in this soliloquy. No doubt the play ends with the re-emergence of the forces of grace and harmony but this soliloquy—far from reflecting Shakespeare's mature personal vision—represents, nevertheless, the swelling act of the drama that had been enacted in Macbeth's soul since he laid 'the Lord's annointed Temple' in ruins. And Macbeth, before he is actually murdered by Macduff in the last scene of the play, is already symbolically entombed within the debris of his own truncated and mutilated personality.

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Jafar Zaki

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE AND FIELDING'S *Modern Husband*

Of all the plays of Fielding that have anything to do with the politics or the personality of Sir Robert Walpole, *The Modern Husband* is of particular importance since it is with this play that he is supposed to have made a serious attempt to attract Walpole's attention and get into his good graces. Becoming, as most of the critics would have us believe, an admirer of Walpole for once, he dedicated this play, his most 'important contribution to drama', to the most important man of the day in the hope of finding in him 'a powerful sponsor' for it.[1] There is no denying the fact that the language in which the Dedication is couched is flattering in the extreme. The encomiums that Fielding showers on the 'wise statesman' and 'the generous patron'—extolling his efforts for peace and his services to the country, admiring his 'humanity and sweetness of temper'—and the invitation that he extends to him to secure for himself 'notable advantages' by protecting him in particular and the 'Muses' in general, have, apparently, a ring of sincerity about them. In any case there is nothing in them to arouse our suspicions. Nevertheless, our suspicions are aroused. And that because of Walpole's response to Fielding's meticulously penned appeal. As is admitted on all hands, Walpole accepted the Dedication but vouchsafed no favour, no encouragement to the seemingly obsequious dedicator. Nor did he, to our knowledge, even deign to grace any single performance of the play with his presense, though the royalty had done so once (2 March 1732). Why this indifference to a person upon whom he used to shine, as the reports go, in no distant past? Why this snub to an author whose pen could

have counter-acted opposition propaganda far more effectively than all his hired scribes put together? Or, to put it otherwise, why did Walpole, despite the intercession of Lady Mary Montagu[2], despite his well-known liberality to his eulogists and despite his growing need for more talented eulogists (and apologists), decline to respond favourably to Fielding's overture and thus, foolishly, one would think, provided him with yet another excuse to drift further away from him? These questions arise spontaneously in one's mind when one comes to think of the 'history' of *The Modern Husband*. But, unfortunately, very few of Fielding scholars have bothered to take note of them. Those few who have, have simply tried to explain them away by referring either to Walpole's notorious distaste for polite literature or to his remembrance of the treatment Fielding had subjected him to in *The Welsh Opera* (*The Grub-Street Opera* in the revised form). But this explanation is more convenient than convincing. Those who know Walpole know it very well that, notwithstanding his lack of interest in *belles lettres* it was not in his nature to disoblige those who could wield a pen, much less to give them any calculated affront. It is also an admitted fact that, notwithstanding his sharp memory and vindictive disposition, it was not Walpole's normal practice to allow petty injuries to dwell in his mind for long, much less to let go an advantageous proposition by them. In my opinion a far more plausible explanation for Walpole's refusal to take the honorific phrases of the Dedication at their face value is to be found in the play itself, and that in the character of Lord Richly.

Lord Richly is presented as a 'great man', that is, in the satirical terminology of the period, a great rogue. He is endowed with some of those despicable attributes with which Walpole's enemies had come to characterize him. Lord Richly is a lecherous, treacherous man of wealth and property every single aspect of whose life and, in fact, whose attitude towards life, is typically and unmistakably Walpolean. For example, he has Walpole's 'greatness', his influence and power, his dis-

criminating dispensation of favours, his paganism and his depraved tastes and depraved morals. As a 'great man' Richly is shown as possessing and enjoying such essential trappings of false greatness as panders, puffers, parasites, supercilious porters and, above all, the levees where his vanity is fed by 'an abundance of poor wretches' who come 'gaping for favours'. But these favours are not to be had for nothing. Nor are they meant for every Tom, Dick and Harry. As a rule, Richly never wastes them on those who have outlived their usefulness and are now recommended only by their dire need or past services to the country. But he is too clever to say 'no' to them. Lest they stop coming to him, he makes expectation-raising promises to one and all and, thus, keeps them perpetually on tenter-hooks. He takes full advantage of their distress. Merely by dangling a promise before 'twenty' needy people; he makes them 'subscribe themselves cuckolds'. Encouragements and favours of substance are reserved for creatures who can cater to his low desires. Richly is perfidious even to those whom he calls his friends. His profuse professions of 'strictest friendship' neither induce him to extend his promised help to his friends in the 'House', where he has much influence, nor do they deter him from attempting the honour of their wives. He is a great lover of cheap entertainments and extends his influence to its utmost in favour of worthless writers and performers. For him religion and virtue have no meaning whatsoever. Intensely conscious of his significance, inflated by the adulation of his 'flatterers and hireling sycophants . . . whose honour and love are as venal as their praise', Lord Richly has come to treat 'the rest of mankind as his tenants' and, accordingly, claims the atrocious privileges of a liege lord both over their property and honour.[3]

The portrait of Lord Richly is damning enough. I would not say that Walpole was its original but, still, it does bear in every single feature of it the impress of an artist sufficiently familiar with the distorted representations of the Prime Minister that the political caricaturists of the period were busy sketch-

ing night and day. Fielding's indebtedness to them is beyond dispute. He has given to Richly the same weaknesses, the same vices which the Opposition writers had detected in Walpole. And he has described them exactly in the same language and in the same tone and style in which Walpole's were being described. To show that the resemblance between the two 'great' men is too close to be deemed fortuitous some evidence gathered from the contemporary sources is offered in the following paragraphs.

Richly's amorous proclivities are, to a great extent, of the same type as Walpole's. He affects to be a universal gallant, falls in love with 'every woman he sees' (II. vi), makes his wealth 'the humble servant of [his] pleasures' (V. ii) and cuckolds his friends and dependants (IV. ii). Now, this appears to have been the reputation of Walpole as well. It was an open secret that it was Walpole's money, not his person, that won him the favours of women like Maria Skerret.[4] He was also credited with having crowned some of his followers with a pair of horns. The evidence of this is found not only in the writings of his opponents (for example, *The Craftsman* Nos. 195 and 498) but also in Hervey's *Memoirs* (I. pp. 103-4) where Walpole's attempted seduction of Molly Lepel, Hervey's wife, is reported. It is to be noted that Richly's designs on the honour of Mrs Bellamant and the strategy employed by him are the same as those of Jonathan Wild—a satirical substitute of Walpole of a later date-in respect of Mrs Heartfree. Both Richly and Wild approach their victims 'under the cover of acquaintance and friendship' (V. vi). There is yet another aspect of Richly's love-making which brings him nearer to Walpole. He appears to be a lustful satyr but it is believed that in actuality he injures the women 'more in fame than in their person' (II. vi). This too is quite in keeping with Walpole's practice. He used to talk boastfully about his intrigues and amours and conquests simply to earn the title of an irresistable philanderer.

In Richly's fondness for the tumblers, ballad-singers and jigs (II. v) it is possible to see a reflection on Walpole's liking

for vulgar entertainments. Walpole's critics, including the leading satirists of the day, were not only ridiculing him on this score but also equating him with some of the low characters found in these entertainments. 'Harlequin', 'Punch', 'fiddler', equilibrist' and such other derogatory epithets were being used to describe him and his style of government. The allusion to Walpole becomes more obvious in Lord Richly's comments on Mr Crambo's' 'new opera', *The Humours of Bedlam*. Richly has 'read it' and has found it 'a most surprising fine performance' as it has 'not one syllable of sense in it from the first page to the last.' He is quite confident of its favourable reception because he has 'interest enough to support it' (II. v). The last part of Richly's statement at once reminds one of 'Jack Juniper's' sarcastic observation in the Preface to *The Deposing and Death of Queen Gin* on 'a certain Gentleman in Power' (that is, Walpole) whose approval was considered more necessary for a dramatist than the acquisition of learning and knowledge. But the name of the author and the qualities of the play strongly indicate that the whole passage was designed to be an innuendo on Walpole's patronage of Samuel Johnson (of Cheshire) and his recently staged bedlamite opera, *Hurlothrumbo*. Like 'Mr Crambo', the author of *Hurlothrumbo* had no pretence to sense. He himself had impudently announced the absurdity of his opera by printing the following triplet on the title page:

> Ye Sons of Fire, read my Hurlothrumbo,
> Turn it betwixt your Finger and your Thumbo,
> And being quite outdone, be quite struck dumbo.

Hurlothrumbo was a wretched piece indeed but still it was a great success. According to Dibdin the success of the opera was entirely due to Walpole's extraordinary enthusiasm for it.[5] His interest in the play cooled down only when the audience started identifying him with its leading character, Lord Flame, the fiddler. But at the time of the composition of *The Modern Husband* (and also of *The Author's Farce*, which contains some

bitter comments on *Hurlothrumbo* and its promoters) Samuel Johnson was basking in the sunshine of Walpole's favours.

By making Richly a champion of the nonsense Fielding has placed him on the same pedestal on which Walpole had been placed by Pope and other satirists. Richly, on his own confession, hates commonsense. He also hates religion and virtue. He wants the one to be totally banished out of the world and the other to be deemed no more tangible than the ghost in *Hamlet*, which 'is here, there, everywhere, and nowhere at all' (II. v). His utter disregard for things spiritual is essentially of the same complexion as that of Walpole. It should be sufficient to cite only two evidences in this connection. One is found in Hervey's *Memoirs* (III. p. 907) where Walpole's almost blasphemous utterance on the administration of the extreme unction to Queen Caroline is reproduced; and the other, in Lady Mary Montagu's letter (30 October 1723) to her sister, the Countess of Mar, reporting Walpole's waggish suggestion regarding the removal of the obtrusive word 'NOT' from the Ten Commandments.

On account of his inflated sense of greatness and vanity, Lord Richly is compared to a Leviathan (I. viii). This, to my mind, is a very significant pointer to Fielding's satirical intentions. In Walpole's time this phrase was invariably applied to him. The earliest use of it, for this purpose, was made in *The Craftsman* of 3 March 1729, in 'Anti-Leviathan's' commentary on an 'Oration on Fish' delivered by the celebrated John Henley, a protégé of Walpole. Pointing out the understandable omission of 'Leviathan' in Henley's discourse, the commentator made the applicability of the obnoxious phrase to Walpole quite obvious by defining it as 'a fictitious creature of the brain made to represent allegorically something else . . . a Dragon of Dragons, a land-fish monster'. The opprobrious connotation of the epithet was made more evident by William Pulteney in his ballad, *The Honest Jury* where, after referring to the predictions of Duncan Campbell regarding the exoneration of the publisher of *The Craftsman*, he said:

> But one thing remains, his predictions to crown,
> And that is to see the Leviathan down;

Fielding had Walpole in mind when, some ten years after *The Modern Husband*, he published the 'Remakable Queries' of *The Champion* under the title, *The Leviathan Hook'd*, and again, when he invested Jonathan Wild with Walpolean greatness and compared him to 'a voracious water-hero'. It can be safely assumed that in *The Modern Husband* the phrase was used to serve the same purpose which it had served, or was to serve, elsewhere.

The most important scene in the play, for our consideration, is the one showing Lord Richly at his levee (I. ix). His behaviour is an exact copy of Walpole's at his weekly levees. He is as condescending, as obliging, as lavish in promises and as evasive as Walpole is reported to have been. Phrases like 'I shall do it', 'depend upon it, I will remember you' are always at the tip of Lord Richly's tongue, just as they were at Walpole's. Richly, again like Walpole, relishes being courted for favours although he has nothing but contempt for those who come to seek his help. This is how he expresses himself on this point towards the end of the scene:

> What a world of poor chemirical devils does a levee draw together! All gaping for favours without the least capacity of making a return for them.

> But great men justly, act by wiser rules;
> A levee is the paradise of fools.

The sentiments expressed here are strikingly similar to Pillage's, who represents Walpole in Fielding's last political play, *Eurydice Hiss'd*. Using the stage terminology, Pillage, the author of a damned farce (Walpole's abortive Excise Scheme) soliloquizes in the following manner :

> Who'd wish to be the author of a farce,
> Surrounded daily by a crowd of actors,
> Gaping for parts, and never to be satisfied?
> Yet, say the wise, in loftier seats of life,
> Solicitation is the chief reward;

The 'farcical' nature of Walpole's levees was noted and ridiculed by a number of his contemporaries, such as by the author of *The Fortunate Prince* (showing Sejanus' levee) and by Lord Hervey who communicated the following revealing information to his friend, Henry Fox, on 25 January 1733:

> I have nothing to recount but a Journal of the day, which consists of several theatres I have been in, several dull farces I have seen played, and several dull players I have seen act. The first theatre I was in was in company with your brother at Sir Robert Walpole's, where we saw the farce of a full Levee. Kissing, whispering, bowing, squeezing hands etc., were all acted there as usual by the political pantomimes who officiate at those weekly performances, where several boons are asked which are not so much as promised, and several promised which will never be granted.

One of the numerous persons who sought 'boons' from Walpole was Fielding. While writing *The Modern Husband* he was frequently attending Walpole's levees. The evidence of this is found not only in the contemporary reports but also in the two 'facetious' epistles that he had addressed to Walpole in 1730-31. Much of the realism, and also bitterness, of the levee scene in the play under consideration can be accounted for only by relating it to Fielding's own experiences at the Prime Minister's residence in Arlington Street.

The offensiveness of this scene and its irrelevance to the plot were noted very particularly by a discerning contemporary. In the *Grub-Street Journal* of 30 March 1732, 'Mr Dramaticus', of whom more shall be said later, condemning the whole play on moral and artistic grounds, made a very pointed reference to Fielding's depiction of Lord Richly's 'greatness'. Since his observations on this aspect of the play confirm my suspicions about Fielding's real motive, they are being quoted in full:

> I know not [says 'Mr. Dramaticus'] why he [Fielding] has made Lord Richly a gret man, unless it be for the sake of describing a levee ; nor why this great man should be the greatest rogue that ever lived: I don't conceive but that the play had gone on full as well without it. The making of a great man absolutely and totally bad, both in his public and private stations, in his morals and behaviour, is so poor, so scandalous,

so vulgar and so mean a piece of satire that (fools, malicious or discontented persons, may indeed laugh, but) all good and wise men will despise the odious picture.

Dramaticus' sharp reaction indicates that at least he had no doubts about the actual object of Fielding's satire. His protest against making a great man appear 'the greatest rogue', 'totally bad . . . in his *public* and *private* stations', is of the same nature as the ministerial writers were making. We have to remember that in the eyes of his contemporaries Walpole was not just *a* great man but *the* Great Man for, as Professor Plumb has pointed out, the phrase had become a common nickname for him. 'His critics were always using this expression to 'occasion sneers' (*The Craftsman*, 19 September 1730) and often they went beyond it. But it was left to Fielding to subject the 'great man' in *The Modern Husband* to a debunking that remained unsurpassed till he himself came to write *Jonathan Wild the Great*.

There is another issue related to this play that requires some rethinking. It is generally held that the dedication of the play to Walpole was the *casus belli* between Fielding and the *Grub-Street Journal*. This view has been accepted by every single critic without any reservation. According to W. L. Cross, Fielding, by wearing 'the Walpole badge' and associating with 'Pope's arch-enemy, Colley Cibber... exposed himself to those heavier shots of Grub Street wit that were aimed to kill'.[7] This is the verdict of Holmes Dudden as well. Surprisingly enough, John Loftis, who had consulted Hillhouse's book, *The Grub-Street Journal*, also maintains: 'by the dedication Fielding made himself a target for the *Grub-Street Journal*'.[8] But this is untenable; and that for two reasons. First, the attitude of the *Journal* towards Fielding had all along been anything but charitable. Its hostility towards Fielding had started as early as December 1730 and it persisted till at least May 1736. The second and more important reason is to be found in the personality of 'Dramaticus', the author of the articles on *The Modern Husband*. 'Dramaticus', according to Hillhouse, was Sir William Yonge, one of Walpole's devoted

followers. How the articles of Pope's 'Billy' found a place in Pope's journal is a puzzling fact no doubt but it can be explained by his pseudonymity. One thing, however, is absolutely unbelievable: that Sir William Yonge took an umbrage against Fielding simply because, or even partly because, Fielding had dedicated the play to his patron. Sir William Yonge had been assigned the duty of recruiting writers for the Ministry and it was chiefly due to his efforts that the services of William Arnall and Matthew Concanen were obtained. If the Dedication of *The Modern Husband* was really written with a view to flattering Walpole and thus cajole a living from him, then Sir William Yonge would have been the last man to cudgel or criticise Fielding. Indeed, the strictures passed on the levee scene (noted earlier) make one feel that it may have been Sir William Yonge himself, who had both read the play and seen its performance, who judged correctly the drift of Fielding's satire and drew Walpole's attention to it.

After what has been said above it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the purpose the play, at least the Richly part of it, was to serve was totally different from the one we habitually deduce from its Dedication. And that purpose, to my mind, was to cast reflections, very severe reflections indeed, on Walpole's 'public and private stations' rather than to flatter him and obtain his patronage. Such a conclusion becomes almost unavoidable when certain other factors are taken into account: such as the date of the composition of the play (September 1730), the closeness, if not exact correspondence, of this date to the period during which Fielding was having the privilege of cooling his heels in the ante-chamber of Walpole's residence, the delay and caution-qualities rarely associated with Fielding's impecunious, hence prolific, muse-in getting the play staged.[9] Added to this, we have Walpole's reaction to it. As mentioned earlier, he, unlike the later readers of the play, simply refused to be taken in by Fielding's extra-friendly posture. Obviously, he, or those who read the play for him, made no mistake about Fielding's concealed intentions. When one takes all these facts into

account one is bound to feel less inclined to chime in with those who maintain that the Dedication of *The Modern Husband* embodies Fielding's serious, determined and unmistakable bid for Walpole's favours and, therefore, is of greater importance than the play itself. To my mind, it embodies no such bid and has no such importance. But by denying this I do not mean to suggest that the Dedication has no significance at all; or that it is no more than just an exercise in the art of ironical composition to be classed with the dedications of Fielding's later plays, *The Mock Doctor* and *Tumble-Down Dick*. Sure enough, the seemingly sincere compliments did not come from his heart but, at the same time, there is no concealed venom in them either. The Dedication was written on purpose. It had an important part to play. And that was to act as a subterfuge and a palliative to attenuate the causticity of satire on Walpole within the play. Fielding had not fully forgiven (and he never did) Walpole for his humiliating (from his point of view) experiences at his levees two or three years before; but now, in April 1732, much of his anger was gone and he was not particularly keen on antagonizing Walpole unnecessarily. The Dedication of the play to Walpole was, therefore, an act of prudence, a product of afterthought and, possibly, a consequence of the advice of the sagacious Lady Mary Montagu. Seen in this light, whatever resemblance this Dedication has with that of Lewis Theobald's *Orestes* loses much of that significance which C. B. Woods has attached to it,[10] and the account given of the influence of the magnates of the Drury Lane Theatre on Fielding begins to look somewhat exaggerated.

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Harish Raizada

'POINT OF VIEW' IN JANE AUSTEN'S NOVELS

I

The strange phenomenon of Jane Austen as one of the greatest 'artificers' of the novel can be explained only in terms of the sheer force of her genius.[1] It is no more a matter of mere conjecture that many of Henry James's assumptions about the nature and integrity of a good novel were anticipated and followed in practice by his literary ancestress about a century earlier. Like Henry James, she could have remarked: 'A novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism and in proportion as it lives will it be found, I think, that in each of the parts there is something of each of the other parts.'[2] The exact symmetry and unity of form found in her stories are attained by the perfection with which the means employed are adapted to the intended effect. As with Henry James so with her: 'What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?'[3]

What suprises us most, however, is the fact that even the adoption of a specific point of view of narration, which Henry James considered as the most suitable device to provide organic unity to the form of the novel and which he not only professed in theory but followed in practice, is anticipated and employed by Jane Austen for similar effects in her novels. James in his Prefaces (1907-9) tells us that he was obsessed by the problem of finding a 'centre', a 'focus', for his stories, and that it was in large measure solved by considering how the narrative vehicle could be limited by framing the action inside

the consciousness of one of the characters within the plot itself. This device of telling the story not as the author perceives it, but as one of his characters perceives it, helps in eliminating the omniscient author whose frequent intrusion breaks the illusion of reality. The story in its turn, gains in intensity, vividness and coherence.

Jane Austen uses in all her six major novels the technique that we now call as that of 'the central intelligence' or of 'the selective omniscience, that is, of viewing the action of a novel through the eyes of a character who is inside the story and whose subtlety of mind equals that of the novelist himself. That Jane Austen did not use this device of narration accidentally is borne out by the fact that she was a deliberate artist and had the great artist's concern for form and presentation. We know from the schedule of her work which Cassandra left that she tirelessly rewrote and revised entire books after an interval of time. *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey* were first written under the titles *Elinor and Marianne*, *First Impressions* and *Susan*, respectively, and were recast in the present form after a gap of several years. In the beginning she had a fascination for epistolary form of the novel, perhaps because of its vogue in her age. *Love and Friendship*, *Lesley Castle*, a fragment, and *Elinor and Marianne* were all written as epistolary novels. The fact that she transferred the whole of *Elinor and Marianne* from the letter to the narrative form while giving it a final shape clearly shows her deep concern for the quest of a more effective mode of narration.

The study of the point of view of narration in Jane Austen, which has hitherto remained unattempted, therefore, deserves a special attention because of its importance in unfolding the themes of her novels and providing unity of form to them.

II

In two of Jane Austen's novels, *Emma* and *Northanger Abbey*, the narrative perspective is focused from the beginning to the end on their heroines and all the situations are revealed

through their consciousness. In *Emma*, the action is confined to the small town of Highbury and it covers a duration of one year. There is almost no direct statement of any significance and there is a minimum of reported action The heroine is present in nearly all the scenes and where she is not present, as in Chapter Five, the discussion among the characters is centred on her. In *Northanger Abbey*, the scene of action is not confined to one place. It shifts to Bath or Northanger Abbey or Fullerton as Catherine Morland, the heroine and the view-point character, visits these places. Only such events as take place in her presence are dramatized, others are simply reported through letters received by her or information conveyed to her. We know of other characters in the novel only to the extent that they are associated with her and not beyond it. In Chapter Ten, while dancing with Catherine, Henry Tilney is called by his father and has a brief talk with him. We do not know of their conversation till Henry describes it to Catherine. In Chapter Twelve, when the play which Catherine has gone to witness concludes and Henry Tilney comes to her box, she observes John Thorpe engaged in conversation with General Tilney sitting in the opposite box. We learn of their conversation only when John talks about it to Catherine. Similarly, the details of the party to Clifton which Catherine does not join, much to the annoyance of her brother James and her friend Isabella, are conveyed to the reader as they are reported by Maria Thorpe to Catherine at the beginning of Chapter Fifteen. We learn of Isabella's engagement with James when the former reveals it in her conversation with Catherine. The news of Isabella's desertion of James and her flirtations with Captain Tilney are also conveyed to us through James's letters to Catherine during her stay in Northanger Abbey with Tilneys. This method of focusing the narrative perspective on the heroine helps the author in directing the action of both these novels towards a logical conclusion and providing lucidity of form to them.

Both *Emma* and *Northanger Abbey* revolve around their

heroine's painful discovery of the truth about herself, the gradual stripping herself of illusion. They deal with the theme of the education of the heroine out of a condition of self-deception owing, in the case of Emma, to her match-making fancies, and, in that of Catherine Morland, to her fatuous pursuit of Gothic illusions—into a state of unself-deluded perceptiveness. The exposure of the mistakes of the heroines, who are also view-point characters, requires a very skilful handling of the material by the author. Since the fancies of Emma emerge from her pride, a flaw in her nature, Jane Austen cures her of them by putting her amidst complex personal relationships and by recording her emotional responses and reactions arising out of the interplay of these relationships. This device helps the author in dramatizing Emma even when the point of view of narration is her own. We see Emma through her relationship with other people even as we see them through her perspective. We thus come to see her above and beyond her presentation of herself, and at the same time, of course, we come to see the community of men and women at large through Emma's relationship with it. The illusions of Catherine Morland, on the other hand, do not emerge from any weakness in her nature. They arise from her addiction to Gothic romances. The author has therefore to use a device by which he may expose not only the mistakes of the heroine but also the morbidity of Gothic romances which often corrupt the vision of good-natured men and women. It is therefore not surprising that Jane Austen often takes recourse to authorial intrusions in this novel which are here more frequent than in any other of her works. She, however, does not interpose herself to regulate characters and action which are left free to take their own natural course. Her intrusions are confined only to the listing of conventions and formulas in which romances dealing with unreal incidents differ from novels dealing with real life. She thus makes a double attack on the romances, satirizing them from outside by her authorial comments and from inside by dramatizing illusions and quixotisms of the

heroine whose fancy has been corrupted by the reading of the romances.

In the other novels of Jane Austen, in *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion*, the narrative perspective is not focused on any single character from the beginning. The emergence of the view-point character is delayed in these novels till such time as the author has introduced from her neutral omniscience point of view the events which either do not fall within the perspective of the view-point character or cannot be narrated adequately and convincingly by him or her. In the concluding chapters of these novels the author once again reverts to the neutral omniscience point of view to tie up the threads together without any recourse to chance coincidences and by accounting for every incident and every character that forms an integral and contributory part in the organic whole of the novel.

In *Sense and Sensibility* Jane Austen uses the neutral omniscience point of view in the first nine chapters because it is more appropriate for unfolding the character of the chief protagonists and introducing their respective attachments. From Chapter Ten onwards, i.e., after Marianne and Willoughby have come together, Elinor becomes the focus of the story and we begin to see the development of the action and the qualities of other characters from her point of view. Only the incidents which occur in her presence are dramatized, others are conveyed to the reader as they are reported to her by other characters either verbally or through their letters. Even though Marianne and Willoughby are passionately attached to each other, we do not hear of their conversation directly from them. We get the information of Willoughby's intended gift of a horse to Marianne when she reports it to Elinor. Even Marianne's visit to Allenham, the estate Willoughby is to inherit, is conveyed to us through Mrs Jennings in the presence of Elinor. After Willoughby's departure, while the grief-stricken Marianne shuts herself in her room, it is Elinor who expresses to her mother her concern about their engagement. We learn about Colonel Brandon's growing

love for Marianne and his apparent frustration through his conversation with Elinor. It is again to Elinor that Lucy Steele breaks out in confidence the astounding news of her secret engagement with Edward. When the scene of action shifts to London with the trip of Elinor and Marianne there, Elinor shares Marianne's anxiety about Willoughby's expected visit. Later when Willoughby jilts Marianne, we learn of the contents of the letters exchanged between them through Elinor's perusal of these letters. While Marianne suffers from uncontrollable agonies of wounded love, it is the sensible Elinor who labours to assuage her grief. The news about Willoughby's engagement and marriage with Miss Grey, the rich heiress, are also conveyed to us as they are reported to Elinor by Mrs Jennings. It is to Elinor that Colonel Brandon discloses the story of his first attachment and also the villainy of Willoughby in ruining the life of young Eliza. We learn of the shock and anger of Fanny Dashwood on the revelation of Lucy's secret engagement with Edward as Mrs Jennings informs Elinor about it and later of Edward's dismissal by his mother, Mrs Ferarrs, and her settling the estate on his younger brother Robert, through John Dashwood's conversation with Elinor. Further developments in the Edward-Lucy affair are conveyed to the reader through Elinor's knowledge about them by her accidental meeting and conversation with Anne Steele in Kensington Garden or Lucy Steele's letter to her. During Marianne's illness on her way home, it is Elinor who nurses her and solicits Colonel Brandon's help to call her mother. It is to Elinor that Willoughby, during his unexpected visit at this time, gives a detailed explanation of his conduct towards Marianne. On returning to Barton Park, Elinor learns about Lucy's betrayal of Edward and her marriage with Robert Ferarrs through letters received by her from Mrs Jennings and John Dashwood. Thus the story proceeds in the natural sequence with events taking place as a necessary consequence of what has preceded till we come to the conclusion where the author reverts to the neutral omniscience point of view to round it off in a compact whole.

It can be argued why Jane Austen chose to narrate the story from the point of view of Elinor and not from that of Marianne particularly when the latter is considered the true heroine of the novel. If we consider the aim Jane Austen has in mind it becomes obvious that no other point of view of narration would have dramatized it better than that of Elinor. She, being a lady of sense, can look at events objectively. She consistently tries to relate her imagination and her feelings to her judgment and to moral and social decorum. Her observations and criticisms of the conduct and behaviour of other characters are not only more sound but also identical with those of the author. Marianne's self-interest and sensitiveness disqualify her from judging other characters in their proper perspective. This is obvious from her mistaken assessment not only of the inferior qualities of Willoughby but also of the superior qualities of Mrs Jennings and Colonel Brandon. Besides this, Marianne's extravagant and profound agonies of her wounded love could not have been described convincingly had she herself been the view-point character. The change of heart Marianne undergoes and the lessons she learns in the value of combining Elinor's sense with her own sensibility also require that events such as Elinor's self-control in a similar situation of suffering which Marianne overlooks earlier, should leave their impact on her by their sudden revelation. This could be possible only when the narrative perspective is focused not on Marianne but on some other character. With Marianne's point of view of narration it would have also not been possible to describe the constant interest Colonel Brandon takes in her affairs and the deep attachment he has for her. Without a proper dramatization of his attachment Marianne's marriage with him would have appeared unconvincing. One has also to notice that while Marianne's sufferings are eloquent, Elinor's heroic struggle to control the anguish of disappointed love is internal. It is of great psychological interest and hence can be treated successfully only when the narrative perspective is focused on her.

It would have been equally unsuitable had the story been narrated from the standpoint of the selective omniscience of both Elinor and Marianne alternately. The novel would have lost its organic form and turned into a disjointed amalgam of two isolated stories. Elinor as a view-point character not only unites the two separate stories of her own life and that of her sister's but also gives it an organic unity by sharing the intense grief of Marianne and making it part of her own experience. Alternately she appears as a protagonist narrator and as a witness narrator unfolding the experiences of her own life and also those of her sister's, respectively.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the emergence of the view-point character is delayed till Elizabeth Bennet is established as the heroine of the novel. From the earlier chapters it appears that the Jane-Bingley romance will bring the central action into focus, with Elizabeth playing a secondary role. By Chapter Sixteen, i.e., after the arrival of Mr Collins, it becomes perfectly clear that Elizabeth is the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice* and now onwards we begin to see more and more of the action, and of the other characters from her point of view.

The delay in establishing Elizabeth as a view-point character is necessitated by the initial relationship between her and Darcy. Darcy in his first meeting with her at the Meryton Ball refers to her disparagingly and declines to be introduced to her. Ironically enough, he has to revise his opinion of Elizabeth as he sees more of her. In Chapter Six he is shown to be bewitched by her eyes (p. 246) and later when Elizabeth comes to stay at Netherfield to nurse her ailing sister, Darcy is visibly drawn to her and feels the charm of her character. Even Elizabeth notices during the visit of Longbourn ladies to those of Netherfield that she was herself becoming an object of some interest in the eyes of Darcy (p. 243). It would not have been possible to describe Darcy's falling in love had the author followed Elizabeth's point of view of narration from the start of the novel.

Besides, if Elizabeth's change of heart after she has

declined Darcy's proposal is to be made convincing, the grounds on which Darcy clears himself against Elizabeth's charges, must be objectively established early in the story. For this it is necessary that the vulgarity of Mrs Bennet and her silly younger daughters should be exposed and the excessive modesty of Jane, which checks her from expressing her love for Bingley visibly and thus makes Darcy doubt her genuine feelings, should be emphasised. It would have been difficult to do so in a narrative primarily from Elizabeth's point of view. The objective treatment of events from the standpoint of the author's neutral omniscience at the beginning of the novel can alone make the reader believe, long before Elizabeth does, that her rising prejudice against Darcy is not well grounded.

Even in the early chapters where Jane Austen uses neutral omniscience point of view of narration, there are several clues to show that she is gradually bringing up Elizabeth as a viewpoint character. In Chapter One, Mr Bennet singles her out as the most sensible of her sisters. In Chapter Three, though Jane is fortunate enough to be chosen by Bingley as his partner at the Meryton Ball, Elizabeth turns out to be the centre of conversation among the persons present. In Chapter Six, when the ladies of Longbourn wait on those of Netherfield, Elizabeth dominates the scene by attracting Darcy's attention and interest to the extent that Miss Bingley teases him: 'How long has she been a favourite and pray when am I to wish you joy?' (p. 246). When Jane goes to visit the Bingleys at Netherfield, the scene of action does not shift there; it does only after Elizabeth installs herself there to nurse the ailing Jane. The four consecutive chapters, from the Eighth to the Eleventh, which describe the elder Bennet sisters' stay at Netherfield, clearly show that the author is more interested in Elizabeth than in Jane. Even when Jane recovers and is attended by Elizabeth to the drawing room in the company of Bingleys, she is not the focus of attention. She is soon claimed by Bingley and then relegated to the background. We are not told anything about the conversation of the new lovers. The whole of the chapter, on the other hand, is devoted to the

conversation among Elizabeth, Darcy and Bingley's sister. In Chapter Fifteen, it is Elizabeth who notices the embarrassment in the countenance of both Darcy and Wickham as they look at each other in their accidental meeting at Meryton.

With this attention that the author pays to Elizabeth the reader is not surprised when the narrative perspective is focused on Elizabeth from Chapter Sixteen onwards and all the future events are seen through her 'central intelligence'. The storyteller now makes us see more and more of the action from Elizabeth's point of view. We learn about Wickham-Darcy relationship from the details given by the former to Elizabeth, or about the departure of the Bingleys and Jane's fears of not seeing Mr Bingley again through the information conveyed by Jane to Elizabeth, or of Charlotte Lucas's engagement with Mr Collins through the former's first confiding the secret to her friend Elizabeth. When the Gardiners visit the Bennets it is Elizabeth who apprises her aunt, Mrs Gardiner, of the Jane-Bingley love affair and of Darcy's ill treatment of Wickham. Later, when Jane accompanies the Gardiners to London, we learn about Jane's disappointment with Miss Bingley from her letters to Elizabeth. When Elizabeth leaves for Hunsford with Sir Lucas and Maria to visit Charlotte and later on with the Gardiners for the Northern tour including their visit to Derbyshire and Pemberley, the scene of action also shifts from Longbourn to the places Elizabeth visits. The news of the elopment of Lydia with Wickham is made known through Jane's letter to Elizabeth. The information of the whereabouts of Lydia and Wickham is also conveyed to the reader through the letter of Mr Gardiner to Mr Bennet as read by Elizabeth and a detailed account of the circumstances of their discovery and marriage and Darcy's role in the whole affair through Mrs Gardiner's long letter to Elizabeth. With this selective omniscience point of view of Elizabeth's consciousness the action goes on advancing in a natural sequence till we come to the inevitable end of the novel which binds Elizabeth and Darcy in a happy

wedlock in spite of the former's prejudice against the latter's pride.

That Fanny Price is to be the focus of the story in *Mansfield Park* becomes obvious from the middle of the first chapter when after describing the history of the Ward sisters of Hutingdon from the neutral omniscience point of view, the author introduces a conversation among Sir Thomas Bertram, Lady Bertram and Mrs Norris showing their concern for helping the needy Mrs Price by adopting her eldest daughter Fanny in their family. Fanny is, however, not established as a view-point character early in the story because of her peculiar situation. In the house of her alarming relations, the Bertrams of Mansfield Park, where Fanny comes to stay as the ten-year old uncared-for girl of a large and needy family, she is neglected by everyone except Edmund, the second son of Sir Bertram, who treats her with kindness and educates her to turn into a girl of good taste, correct judgment and high moral principles. Her cousins Maria and Julia are too proud and selfish to notice her. While Fanny's gratitude and admiration for Edmund ripen into a deep love for him, the latter is desperately in love with the liveliness and glitter of London-bred Mary Crawford whose charming and profligate brother Henry Crawford carries on a scandalous flirtation with both Maria and Julia at the same time. If Fanny is to be considered worthy of Edmund by the Bertram family her moral propriety is to be contrasted with the moral impropriety of the Bertrams and the Crawfords. That is why upto Chapter Twenty-one, which covers nearly one-third of the novel, the point of view of narration alternates between the multiple selective omniscience of Bertrams and Crawfords and the limited omniscience of Fanny. In this part of the novel, which closes with the marriage of Maria Bertram with Mr Rushworth and Julia's departure with the couple, Fanny is a mere spectator of the drama of self-deception of the other characters. Like the chorus in the Greek drama she observes and disapproves of what she observes.

That the author attaches much importance to the narra-

tive perspective of Fanny even in this part of the novel is clearly testified by the situation described in Chapter Ten. During the excursion to Sotherton, as the Bertrams and the Crawfords, along with Fanny and Rushworth, move out to loiter in the open in different groups, Fanny who is tired of a long walk rests on a bench opposite the park after she has been left there by the gay pair of Mary Crawford and Edmund. Different persons come and sit at this spot and then move out in the wilderness but the author does not take us on a narrative tour along with them. We are not told what happens to Mary and Edmund when they leave Fanny alone or how Maria and Henry Crawford behave as they cross over the closed gate of the park and are followed by the jealous Julia. Fanny remains the focus of the scene and we learn only of such conversation as takes place with her or in her presence.

From Chapter Twenty-two to Chapter Thirty-six Fanny emerges as a view-point character on the scene. Her importance increases after the departure of her cousins and the story-teller continues to keep her in focus. She is now shown to be actively involved in the action as Henry Crawford courts her first in amusement and then in earnest. This middle part of the novel is intended by the author to test Fanny's moral convictions by plunging her amidst temptations. Fanny, who has professed rectitude while she stood apart from the action, shows the strength to stand by her moral standards when she is herself at the centre of the action. She rejects Henry Crawford.

The events in the remaining part of the novel, i.e., from Chapter Thirty-seven to Chapter Forty-seven, are also narrated from the point of view of Fanny. In this part, however, she is again made to stand apart from the action and to play the role of a spectator. As Fanny leaves Mansfield Park to visit her home in Portsmouth the author uses the device of reporting the development in the life of the Bertrams through letters sent by Mary Crawford, Edmund, and Lady Bertram to her. Even when she returns to Mansfield Park on getting the distressing news about Maria's desertion of her husband and

Julia's elopment, Fanny's knowledge of further events is based on the reports she gets from others. Edmund, for instance, tells her about his last interview with Mary Crawford and his disillusionment about her. In the concluding chapter the author shifts to the neutral omniscience point of view of narration to bring the story to its logical end.

In *Persuasion* Anne Elliot is perpetually at the centre of the novel after the first three chapters which are treated from the neutral omniscience point of view owing to its suitability to introduce the reader to Sir Walter's blind blood-worship, the circumstances of the Elliot family, and Anne's inferior position in it. We do not hear anything about Anne's father and sister after they have left for Bath till she joins them. At Uppercross also we see only such events and such aspects of other characters as come under the perspective of Anne. We are told that at Uppercross she is 'treated with too much confidence by all parties' and is 'too much in the secret of the complaints of each house' (p. 1235), i.e., of Mary and her parents-in-law. She is, therefore, a witness to all that happens there; and what happens when she is not present is reported to her. When Wentworth, during his stay with his sister, pays his first visit to the Musgroves and Anne is left out of the party owing to the illness of her nephew, we learn about what passes in the party through Mary's communication about it to Anne. In Chapter Ten, only such part of Louisa Musgrove's conversation with Wentworth during their walk in a hedge-row is dramatized as is overheard by Anne sitting nearby. When Louisa injures herself seriously by her imprudent jumping down some steps and bas to stay at Lyme, the author does not leave us with her even though she passes through a very anxious time. We return to Uppercross with Anne and learn about Louisa's health through the reports brought there by Charles and Mr Hayter. When Anne goes to Bath to join her father and sister the scene of action also shifts there. Now, as the author remarks, 'Uppercross excited no interest, Kellynch very little: it was all Bath'

(p. 1292). Though still a girl of no consequence in the eyes of her father and sister she possesses an importance of her own. Mr William Elliot, her cousin and the heir of Kellynch estate, coveted by her eldest sister, is drawn towards her and tries to woo her. It is she who first notices the cunning designs of Mrs Clay and later learns about the selfish character of Mr Elliot from her old friend, Mrs Smith. It is to her that Maria first breaks the surprising news of Louisa's engagement with Captain Benwick. When Captain Wentworth comes to Bath it is she who notices his jealousy towards Mr Elliot and discerns in it with satisfaction his revival of love for her. By means of such skilful technical manoeuvring Jane Austen gradually leads the action of the novel to revolve round Anne which fact ultimately contributes to the unity of form in the novel.

III

Jane Austen does not only describe events or unfold action from the point of view of her heroines but also regulates the judgment and opinions of the reader about different characters and their relationships from their view-points. Except for Emma and Catherine Morland, whose visions are clouded by their extravagant fancies and fatuous illusions, and partly for Elizabeth who misjudges Darcy because of her prejudice against him, other heroines discern the reality and assess the situation with the subtlety of mind which equals that of the author herself. Their views and opinions are approved by the author, and accepted by the reader as the voice of sense and sanity. In *Sense and Sensibility* we observe more accurately and precisely the merits and demerits of the Dashwoods, the Middletons, the Palmers, the Ferrars, the Steele sisters, Mrs Jennings, Willoughby and Colonel Brandon from Elinor's opinion about them. We feel her concern for Marianne's engagement with Willoughby or share her sympathy for Colonel Brandon and Edward. In *Pride and Prejudice* Elizabeth is mistaken in her early observation of the character of Darcy and Wickham because of her prejudice against the former,

but her assessment of her parents, Mr Collins, her younger sisters, Lady Catherine and Miss de Bourgh is very sound and the reader is led to think of them the way she does. Similarly, though Fanny Price, in *Mansfield Park*, is jealous of Mary Crawford, yet she betrays greater sense than even Edmund in discerning the moral impropriety of the Bertram sisters and the Crawfords. Anne Elliot, in *Persuasion*, turns out to be an infallible observer of men's character after her initial mistake in breaking off her engagement with Captain Wentworth on the ill advice of others. The Musgroves rely upon her sane advice, the Harvilles admire her and Captain Benwick shakes off his morbid attachment for the dead Fanny Harville under her benign influence. She is the first to observe the artfulness and the evil designs of Mrs Clay and the selfishness of Mr William Elliot. The reader forms his impressions about the different characters and judges their private relations from her point of view.

Often when under the stress of emotional tensions the heroines of Jane Austen indulge in self-reflection, the narrative perspective penetrates to their sensibility; the point of view then remains no more an external device but becomes a part of their psyche. In *Sense and Sensibility* when Elinor thinks of the sad plight of Edward in the event of his prospective marriage with Lucy Steele or suffers intensely the agonies of the grief-stricken Marianne, the point of view penetrates to her consciousness and a significant part of action takes place in the intimate chambers of her mind. Similarly, in *Pride and Prejudice*, when after Darcy's letter of explanation and her visit to Pemberley Elizabeth is stricken by remorse for her hasty opinion of Darcy, or when later on she reflects with shame and indignation on the vulgarity of her mother and younger sisters, or on the impropriety of her father's behaviour as a husband, or on the neglect and indulgence by her parents of a girl like Lydia, the point of view becomes hers and the reader comes to share not only her awareness but also her evaluation.

This device is more frequently used by Jane Austen in *Persuasion* which is more seriously reflective in mood and

reflects deeper emotion. There is a greater emphasis on the private world of Anne in this novel and an essential part of the action takes place in her tormented psyche. When Wentworth meets Anne for the first time after eight years and goes out after showing an awkward and formal courtesy towards her, her agitated mind reflects over the event thus:

> 'It is over ! It is over!' she repeated to herself again and again, in nervous gratitude.
>
> Mary talked, but she could not attend. She had seen him. They had met. They had been once more in the same room.
>
> Soon, however, she began to reason with herself, and try to be feelingless. Eight years, almost eight years had passed, since all had been given up. How absurd to be resuming the agitation which such an interval had banished into distance and indistinctness! What might not eight years do? Events of every description, changes, alienations, removals—all, all must be comprised in it, and oblivion of the past—how natural, how certain too! It included a third part of her own life.
>
> Alas, with all her reasonings she found that to retentive feelings eight years may be little more than nothing.
>
> Now, how were his sentiments to be read? Was this like wishing to avoid her? And the next moment she was hating herself for the folly which asked the question (pp. 1245-46).

Such musings analyse the internal and emotional experience of the heroine and are similar to the interior monologues of the stream-of-consciousness technique novels. Here the narrative perspective penetrates to Anne's sensibility and becomes a part of her psyche.

IV

The selective omniscience point of view of narration adopted by Jane Austen not only gives a unique unity of form to her novels but also contributes to the economy of her art on which depends much of the intensity of effect in her novels. Very few novelists have approached her in the admirable proportioning of means to ends and the consequent elimination of all superfluous and extraneous content. The information which Mary Musgrove gives to Anne of Captain Wentworth's visit to the Musgroves is very brief but nothing could have been more telling in its effect on Anne than her remark: 'Captain Wentworth is not very gallant by you, Anne, though he was so

attentive to me. Henrietta asked him what he thought of you when they went away, and he said : "You were so altered he could not have known you again" (p. 1246). Even in the description of places, whether towns, open-air scenes or houses of residence, Jane Austen selects only such details as are noticed by or come under the perspective of the view-point character. As no novelist can give an exact copy of real life in all its vastness, he has to make a proper selection of his material. Very few novelists are, it can safely be said, as artistically discriminating in their selectivity as Jane Austen.

It is worth noticing here that in practising the economy of art Jane Austen does not leave any threads hanging loose in the novel. Every incident is shown to be relevant to the action and is properly accounted for. The real significance of some of the situations which we consider of no consequence and casually pass over, dawns on us as the story moves ahead. We realize the importance of Elinor's musings over Edward's embarrassment and of restraint in his relations with her in spite of his being in love with her, or of Colonel Brandon's abruptly leaving for London, or of Elizabeth Bennet's observation of the embarrassment in the countenance of both Darcy and Wickham on their accidental encounter at Meryton, only when events connected with them are revealed to us later in the novel. Even minor incidents like Frank Churchill's visit to London for a haircut or the anonymous gift of a piano for Jane Fairfax, which appear as mere objects of fun in the beginning, acquire new dimensions when Frank Churchill's secret engagement with Fairfax is made known to us.

It is the complete control Jane Austen has over her world that gives her works their rare classical unity and makes her one of the most perfect artists among novelists. Part of her secret, no doubt, lies in her clever and purposive manipulation of the narrative point of view.

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Salamatullah Khan

THE DIMENSIONS OF EMILY DICKINSON'S REVOLT

In thinking of the life and art of Emily Dickinson one is aware of many apparent paradoxes. She repudiated the pervasive authority of the Puritan orthodoxy, but her thinking was conditioned by, and her ethical norms and social concerns were derived from, the same Puritan tradition of the Connecticut Valley.[1] She wrote poems with irreverent references to God, sometimes bordering on blasphemy,[2] but the main body of her poetry and her letters are informed with a deep sense of piety. She imposed on herself an austere seclusion in order to dedicate herself to the writing of poetry, but repeatedly refused to publish her poems. She rejected transcendentalism as a world-view which envisaged man as the source of all moral law, supplanting revelation with intuition, but shared with it its distrust of institutions and its insistence on self-reliance for self-realization. She read the poems of Holmes, Whitter, Longfellow, and Emerson, the last with some admiration, but forged altogether a new medium of poetic expression, and in reading her poetry we seldom think of her contemporaries. She derived her metres from books of hymnology commonly available in her days but enriched them with her own innovations to write secular hymns :

> In the name of the Bee—
> And of the Butterfly—
> And of the Breeze—Amen ! (Vol. I, 18)

She made self-revelation her chief commitment to poetry but looked upon the projection of her self objectively as one out with a lantern looking for herself.[3] She often wrote poems on

conventional subjects of the nineteenth century like death or immortality but infused them with new meaning and scope by what I have elsewhere called,[4] her strategy of paradox. She eagerly found a literary 'preceptor' in Higginson but in spite of the deference with which she received his advice she never incorporated it in the body of her poetry. She always addressed the men with whom she is generally believed to have fallen in love, as 'master', 'friend', or 'preceptor', and one strongly suspects that she never allowed them to know the closely-guarded secret of her heart. In trying to analyse these and similar paradoxes and to place them in their proper context, we realise the highly complex and sophisticated self of the poet. This realization often erodes our confidence, for there is no fixed image of the poet. To quote Richard B. Sewall, 'teachers send their students to Donne and Yeats and Frost with an assurance (justified or otherwise) not yet applicable to Emily Dickinson'.[5] No wonder then that we still ask and ask, and, in our bewilderment try to identify, what Jay Leyda calls, the 'omitted center'[6] not only of her poetry but also of her personality.

II

These paradoxes, however, reflect, in a way, the conflicting forces operating in the contemporary social, religious and literary traditions of the nineteenth century America. In matters of religion the theocracy established in Massachusetts by the founding fathers had considerably weakened by the end of the seventeenth century. Church membership had declined by the severe orthodox doctrine that God alone determined His elect and that no one could ever know whether he had been chosen or rejected. But Solomon Stoddard brought about a reversal of this policy of self-banishment by admitting to communion all who wished to receive it. He argued that since it was not possible to know the will of God there was greater likelihood of God's mercy on those who took up the covenant. By defying the Boston theologians, Stoddard incre-

ased the membership of the church in Connecticut Valley with its diocesan centre at Northompton and organised an association of the Valley churches which exercised powerful authority for fifty years till his death in 1729. His grandson, Jonathan Edwards, who succeeded him, reverted to God's absoluteness, to the salvation only for His elect and to the final judgment of God as not a foreseeable end. The severity of the doctrines preached by him alienated his parishioners who consisted mostly of prosperous land speculators and merchants.

These controversies had long ceased to agitate people in the Valley by the time Emily Dickinson was born in 1830, but they shaped the moral and ethical concerns and, in that limited sense, they were still compulsively operative in the Valley. Along with the convictions of the Puritan past, which were still held and enunciated by the First Church, there existed the Unitarian liberalism which was becoming increasingly popular in Boston and its neighbourhood. Emily Dickinson was introduced to Unitarian thinking early in life by Benjamin Franklin Newton who was a Unitarian and who, according to her, 'taught me immortality' (*Letters*, I, p. 404) and 'a faith in things unseen, and in life again much nobler and much more blessed' (*Letters*, I, p. 282). She was instinctively in agreement with some of the tenets of Unitarianism and, like the Unitarians, totally rejected the belief in an arbitrary God and revolted against the idea of a chosen few elected to salvation. In one of her poems she derisively concludes that only the inanimate stone can fulfil the absolute decree :

How happy is the little Stone
That rambles in the Road alone,
And doesn't care about Careers
And Exigencies never fears—
Whose Coat of elemental Brown

A passing Universe put on,
And independent as the Sun
Associates or glows alone,
Fulfilling absolute Decree
In casual simplicity— (Vol. III, 1510)

She also shared with the Unitarians their religious tolerance and their emphasis on the importance of character. But she did not accept Unitarianism completely as a faith or religious doctrine.

Her rejection of Puritan orthodoxy seemed final enough, for like Harriet Beecher Stowe, she never accepted the dogmas of Calvinism. In her extreme reaction she wrote to Higginson in 1862 that the members of her family are religious 'and address an Eclipse, every morning—whom they call their Father' (*Letters*, II, p. 404). Again, in a poem written four years before her death, she said :

> Those—dying then,
> Knew where they went—
> They went to God's Right Hand—
> That Hand is amputated now
> And God cannot be found— (Vol. III, 1551)

I have quoted only two examples; there are many more. But these moments of negation are exceptions rather than the general rule. They represent the doubts without which there can be no stable belief and about which she said metaphorically that

> Narcotics cannot still the Tooth
> That nibbles at the soul— (Vol. II, 501)

There are many poems of affirmation which present God as the Prince of the Kingdom of Heaven, who Himself is the unity and is duplicated in all divine objects (Vol. II, 721). Again, she visualised the cities of heaven, 'And God—at every Gate' (Vol. II, 615).

From the arguments given above it is obvious that what she revolted against was the sacrosanct piety. As I have elsewhere said,[7] she was a non-conformist of a new kind and her non-conformity consisted in her rejection of the unthinking belief of the devout. As against this rejection she clung to some of the significant aspects of her Puritan tradition which held that man's intuitions were too untrustworthy to replace revelation,

that he was imperfect and could not be the source of moral law, that he was dependent and must seek revelation even if it was not guaranteed. These beliefs of Emily Dickinson explain why, in moments of spiritual crisis, she turned to Edward Everettee Hale and Washington Gladden and Charles Wadsworth instead of finding peace and consolation in the essays of George Ripley or the sermons of Theodore Parker. But she understood fully the fact and the consequences of her spiritual suffering and isolation. 'I am standing alone in rebellion', she wrote in 1850 (*Letters*, I, p. 94). Making Gethsemane, the garden outside Jerusalem where Jesus was betrayed and arrested, the metaphor of spiritual agony, she wrote:

> Gethsemane—
> Is but a Province—in Being's Centre (Vol. II, 553)

And it was from this tormented centre of her being that she created the tragic poetry of her spiritual solitude.

III

Closely allied to Unitarianism, transcendentalism in the New England of Emily Dickinson's days, though secular and liberal in its concept, was predominantly ethical and asserted the primacy of spiritual over material values. It saw God or Deity as the pervading principle manifest in all the objects of the universe and in all men everywhere. It envisaged that God and the universe were one entity and that the macrocosm was reflected in the microcosm—the soul of man. Hence, man's intuitions and his inner light were sure guides of his spiritual well-being and there was no need of man's submission to any authority outside himself. In believing man to be an integral part of the cosmos transcendentalism radiated optimism in its mystical assurance about the destiny of man. These winds of doctrine and idealistic philosophy blowing from Concord and Boston had deeply influenced the writers of New England. Emily Dickinson was also stirred but her thinking

was not affected or altered. She said that 'I see—New Englandly' (Vol. I, 285) but she was more deeply affected by the alienating disintegration of the social and religious community of New England. While sharing the distrust of external authority and institution with transcendentalism, she repudiated its basic assumptions.

One of the fundamental premises of the transcendentalist poets was of nature (written with a capital N) as a divine analogy. This nature cult, (if I may use the word) had gained wide acceptance for more than a hundred years and had formed an essential part of the poetic heritage which had come down to Emily Dickinson from Thomson and the English romantics to Bryant and Emerson. In Emersonian terminology, it provided a 'Correspondence' between man and the cosmos or between the creature and the Creator. Emily Dickinson rejected this fundamental premise by declaring: 'Nature and God—I neither knew' (Vol. II. 835). "Nature is a Haunted House"—she told Higginson (*Letters*, II, p. 554) and wrote again in one of her poems:

> But nature is a stranger yet;
> The ones that cite her most
> Have never passed her haunted house,
> Nor simplified her ghost. (Vol. III, 1400)

Nature, according to her, is a mysterious house, ordained and regulated by God, and its secrets have not been revealed to man.

In another poem she apparantly had a dig at the transcendentalists who believed that the tremendous and varied spectacle of nature was only for man :

> A little Madness in the Spring
> Is wholesome even for the King,
> But God be with the Clown—
> Who ponders this tremendous scene—
> This whole Experiment of Green—
> As if it were his own. (Vol. III, 1333)

A king is traditionally expected to remain calm and dignified when confronted with excitement but if his restraint is broken by the exuberance and the renewal of life in spring and he also shares the ecstacy ('madness') of the season, it does him good. But it was the height of presumption to believe that the vast phenomena of nature have been ordained for man. The philosophical stance of Emily Dickinson concerning nature is explicit enough to indicate the departure she had made from the cult of nature propounded by the transcendentalists. She looked upon nature with the eyes of a painter, 'Nature is what we see', (Vol. II, 668) and her best realized poems are genre portraits shorn of all sentimentality.

Another trend in the American poetry of the post-Civil War era was that of Ideal Poetry whose champions Richard Henry Stoddard, Edmond C. Stedman, Bayard Taylor, Thomas B. Aldrich and Richard W. Gilder made a cult of evasion to escape the harsh realities following the Civil War. Some of them pretended that they continued the literary heritage of the past and wanted to preserve poetry from the gross materialism of the era. The aesthetics of Ideal Poetry was later summarised in Stedman's *The Nature and Elements of Poetry* (1892) which propounded the primacy of beauty and the idea that art was allied to polite morality. This ideality provided forms to disengage the mind of the poet from the felt experience of life, leading it to the exotic, and building a refuge elevated to a national literary doctrine. Emily Dickinson was completely untouched by this movement and considering the coldly contemptuous review of her *Poems* (1890) by the idealist poet and critic, Aldrich, it can be safely inferred that she was basically antithetical to Ideal Poetry.

IV

Alienated spiritually from the community of a disintegrating New England in which both Puritanism and Transcendentalism were losing ground and seemed less and less convincing as world-views, she was also isolated from the social community

by her own choice. She lived in a world where the lengthening shadows of sorrow and death shadowed her personal universe. 'I can't stop to strut—in a world where bells toll', she wrote in one of her letters.[8] 'Sorrow seems more general than it did,' she wrote again, 'and not the estate of a few persons, since the war began.'[9] As a defence against a chaotic and hostile world, she founded the community of the one—the poet in the act of creation. With clinical detachment she explored the subterranean secrets of her soul and projected her self to confront the non-self wherein resided the experience she required. This confrontation of the Me by the Not-Me (Emerson's phrase) had terrors of its own.

One need not be a Chamber—to be Haunted—
One need not be a House—
The brain has Corridors—surpassing
Material Place—

Far safer, of a Midnight Meeting
External Ghost
Than its interior Confronting
The Cooler Host.

Far safer, through an Abbey gallop,
The Stones a'chase—
Than Unarmed, one's a'self encounter—
In Lonesome Place

Ourself behind ourself, concealed—
Should startle most—
Assassin hid in our Apartment
Be Horror's least. (Vol. II, 670)

The encounter with the self in her lonesome soul and the meeting of herself behind herself gave her the opportunity to make a perpetual assessment of her experience and shaped her unique poetic mode.

Self-revelation, however, was not without a precedent in the intellectual history of America. Jonathan Edwards emphasised 'personal narrative' as a guide to spiritual recovery and Puritanism made introspection the most effective measure for self as well as social evaluation. As against Kantian epistemology, the Scottish Common Sense Philosophy, which

dominated philosophical thought in America during the greater part of the nineteenth century, held that philosophy and introspection were identical. One of its leading exponents, Thomas Reid, insisted that a philosopher had to be an anatomist of the mind—of the 'corridors' of the 'brain' in Emily Dickinson's terms—'for it is his own mind only that he can examine with any degree of accuracy and distinction'.[10] Emily Dickinson wrote in one of her letters : 'The soul must go by Death alone, so, it must by life, if it is a soul' (*Letters*, II, p.455). Again, she wrote in a poem :

> The Soul has Bandaged moments—
> When too appalled to stir—
> She feels some ghastly Fright come up
> And stop to look at her— (Vol. II, 512)

But in all her self-revelations, she remained majestically impersonal and even in the most crowded moments of a crisis, she took stock of herself as if she was some other person, 'out with lanterns', as she said, 'looking for myself' (*Letters*, II, pp. 323-24) or as she wrote nonchalantly: 'I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—' (Vol. I, 465).

She was also aware of the duality of the self. The seat of the self is the consciousness and one of the primary functions of the consciousness is to bring or forge unity between the self and the non-self or, in Emerson's phrase, the me and the not-me. But there was division within the self itself: the part of the self which is involved in the experience, is watched by the other part of the self which is not involved and which functions as an onlooker or a spectator not sharing the experience. It is like the 'you and I' of Eliot's *Prufrock*, or as the other part of the self in Whitman's 'Song of Myself' (Section 4) :

> Apart from the pulling and hauling stands what I am,
> Stands amused, complacent, compassionating, idle, unitary, . . .
> Both in and out of the game and watching and wondering at it.

For a poet like Emily Dickinson who was committed to self-revelation in her poetry, this duality of the self assumes greater prominence. In her poem (Vol. II, 670), quoted above, she states that it is easier to meet an external ghost at mid-

night than to confront the cool and composed 'host' of the 'interior'. This cool host stands aside as witness and as a recorder of experience but such a host also plays the most important role in the creative activity of the poet by modifying the subjective or 'subjunctive' and often transmuting the subjective into the objective or 'indicative', (in modern terminology). In another poem, she, almost jokingly points out this duality :

> But since Myself—assault Me—
> How have I peace
> Except by subjugating
> Consciousness ?
>
> And since We're mutual Monarch
> How this be
> Except by Abdication—
> Me—of Me? (Vol. II, 642)

In an age which was overflowing with melifluous verse, and most poets were intent upon resolving verse to statement, she wrote aphoristic poems with 'omitted centre' and in deliberate irregular syntax, which Higginson found 'spasmodic' and 'uncontrolled', (*Letters*, II, p. 409) although he recognized its 'luminous flashes' and confessed that 'you only enshroud yoursalf in this fiery mist and I cannot reach you, but only rejoice in the rare sparkles of light' (*Letters*, II, p. 461). She made sensuous patterns that word combinations can make and wielded her words like swords,[11] often surpassing even the Imagists of the twentieth century in the fastidious choice of the precise and exact word.[12] She made startling innovations in the rhyme scheme and the use of metres she borrowed from English hymnology.[13] To the irregularities of her syntax she provided the notation to explain her poems by showing how they must be spoken (*Letters*, II, p. 412). She created striking images as when she described sunset as 'Blazing in Gold and quenching in Purple/Leaping like Leopards to the Sky' (Vol. I, 228). If there was a rebel poet, Emily Dickinson was most certainly one.

'Perhaps you smile at me', she wrote to Higginson, 'I could not stop for that. My Business is Circumference'[14] Thus

assuming the obvious and concentrating on the peripheral, she evoked the epiphany of self-revelation and made it one of the major devices of her poetry, for the ultimate meaning of poetry like a circle or circumference, projects itself back upon itself. After suggesting a metaphor to the Hollands, she wrote: 'Perhaps you laugh at me. Perhaps the whole United States is laughing at me too. I cannot stop for that. My business is to love'. Then employing a metaphor for herself as a poet, she continued: 'I found a Bird, this morning... and wherefore sing, I said, since nobody *hears*?..."My business is to sing" and away she rose'.[15] And she did sing like no one else in the nineteenth century America.

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[2]See *The Poetry of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson, 3 vols (Harvard, 1955), Vol. III, p. 1461, where she attributes duplicity to God. All quotations are from this edition with volume and poem numbers given in the brackets).

[3]*The Letters of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson and Theodora Ward, 3 vols (Harvard, 1958), II, 182, pp. 323-24.

[4]Salamatullah Khan, *Emily Dickinson's Poetry : The Flood Subjects*, (New Delhi, 1969), p. 132.

[5]Richard B. Sewall, *Emily Dickinson* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1963), p. 7.

[6]Jay Leyda, *The Years and Hours of Emily Dickinson*, 2 vols (New Haven, 1960), Vol. I, p. XXII

[7]*Emily Dickinson's Poetry*, p. 132.

[8]Jay Leyda, Vol. II, p. 65.

[9]*ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 72.

[10]*Selections from the Scottish Philosophy of Common Sense*, edited by G. A. Johnston (Chicago and London, 1915) p. 13.

[11]See Donald E. Thackrey, *Emily Dickinson's Approach to Poetry* (Lincoln, 1954), Chapter II.

[12]See my own essay 'Emily Dickison and Modern American Poetry', in *Essays on Modern American Poetry*, edited by S. M. Pandeya (New Delhi, 1971).

[13]See Edith Perry Stamm, 'Emily Dickinson : Poetry and Punctuation' *Saturday Review of Literature*, XL-V, 30 March 1963), pp. 26-27.

[14]Jay Leyda, Vol. II, p. 65.

[15]See Johnson, *Emily Dickinson*, Chapter VIV.

BOOK REVIEWS

An Essay on 'King Lear'. By S. L. GOLDBERG (London: Cambridge University Press), 1974, 192 pp.

An Essay on 'King Lear' has interest of several kinds. Primarily, it is a close and coherent account of the imaginative reality of the play. That the book achieves distinction in a field where excellence, in our century at least, has not been rare is not by itself an unremarkable feat. Credit should, however, be given for a study that brings into focus certain issues in Shakespeare criticism which are of more than local, and, one may hope, of more than immediate interest, What is most remarkable about Professor Goldberg's attempt to raise questions of wider bearing is the fact of their close relevance to the mode of apprehension of the imaginative core of *King Lear*. Professor Goldberg has things of the greatest interest to say about the so-called 'character' approach to Shakespearian drama, and the success of the conceptual tools he has developed in his treatment of the specific dramatic mode in *King Lear* together with the impression of unusual critical integrity in dealing with the intractable aspects of the play are, no doubt, most reassuring in a situation where formulae of partial or local validity are credited with general applicability.

To suggest that criticism could still become significant by grappling with the problems of methodology and procedure in a century that has seen radical departures in critical stance and approach to Shakespeare, as to much else, may perhaps be found to indicate a rather unusual predisposition to theory. And, indeed, the 'revolution' in Shakespeare criticism in the 'thirties, the revolution that was, among other things, the result of a determined, as perhaps also a little perverse,

attempt to misunderstand Bradley (not, of course, that Bradley himself did not have much to be misunderstood) did certainly bring about changes of perspective. That, and several other strands in the crisicism of Shakespeare, the one, for instance, that insists on the validating of our apprehensions of Shakespeare with reference to their mode, to their very life, in the theatre, or the approach that concerns itself with the historical reality and relevance of the plays, have occasioned many attempts at the re-examination of the bases of approach. The very excitement caused by what may be termed as 'discoveries' only if we think of their insistent exclusiveness (for as elements of perception in older frameworks they had always been present) forced on the attention their inadequacies, their failure to account for the whole of experience even when they did certainly sensitise new and important aspects of the plays. What was new and startling a little while ago has now been fully absorbed leading, as it now appears, to fresh uncertainties and also inducing a greater willingness to revert to earlier conceptual frameworks to see if, in rejecting them, insights of value might not have been sacrificed.

Surprisingly, when in the second chapter of his book Professor Goldberg looks back at the main critical tradition of the century he seems to have been struck more with the continuity of this tradition than with any supposed breaks. It need not, however, appear as surprising as it does the moment we notice that, by implication, he would regard the concern with an 'explanation' of Shakespeare in terms of his historical reality, be it the conventions of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama or contemporary intellectual mores, as the real point of divergence from the Bradleyan standpoint. So was the approach that exclusively concerned itself with 'direct poetic-symbolism'. Professor Goldberg is certainly right in suggesting that a vague sense of unease with aspects of Bradley's concept of 'character' in Shakespeare became confused with questions of the value of the historical approach. The way Professor Goldberg looks at the problem helps us see the links between Bradley and what is ostensibly opposed to him.

The feature of the Shakespearian debate in the twentieth century that engages Professor Goldberg's attention most is the concept of 'character'. Professor Goldberg's point of departure is his sense of the inadequacy of Bradley's concept or rather the unconscious pull of the Victorian *weltanschauung* as reflected in Bradley's conception of the stability and the determining role of specific moral characteristics. Where Bradley seems to go wrong is not related to the suggestion of an extra-dramatic life of the *dramatispersonae* nor is it concerned with the idea that the question of their personal identity is irrelevant to an appreciation of the real imaginative life of the plays. The dissatisfaction is centred round the feeling that, in the Bradleyan discussion of 'character', the elements of psychic life reflect, *a là* George Eliot and other Victorian novelists, the conception of a much more 'stable' ego than is warranted by our contemporary sense of human identity. Professor Goldberg does well to assimilate both Johnson and Coleridge to the Bradleyan view that our sense of character, of individual human consciousness, is a necessary part of our response to Shakesperian drama. Within the *donnees* and the stylistic mode of the work he rightly points out, 'we naturally assume the charcters to be separate, autonomous centres of consciousness, with an inner life like that of real people . . . in so far as their words and actions evoke it' (p. 37). While Bradley himself never really thought of the plays in terms suggestive of the psychological novel or the idealised documentary, there is nothing in his approach that would positively preclude all possibility of misunderstanding. Some of the later developments, especially in the 'thirties, have now certainly made it impossible to approach Shakespeare with realistic assumptions though, at the same time, the exaggerations of the 'thematic' or symbolic readings, too, have come to be recognised for what they are. Viewed from the standpoint of the centre of meaning and vision in a Shakespeare play the opposition between 'character' and 'symbol, between human identity for its own sake and as a mere counter for a more enduring reality, appears false and

misleading. The reiteration of this important point provides the link for Professor Goldberg's discussion of 'character' in post-Bradleyan criticism.

It is, no doubt, possible to suggest that the movement away from Bradley was encouraged by the desire to disengage the core of the plays' meaning—in the case of the great tragedies—from the supposed insights achieved by the protagonists through suffering and catastrophe. As character-study lost its documentary value and as characters themselves acquired symbolic status the search for imaginative centres became more wide-ranging and, as Professor Goldberg rightly points out, arbitrarily located in whatever happened to catch the critic's fancy. The case of Wilson Knight is instructive in many ways. With his concern to apprehend the 'visionary whole' of a Shakespearian play, to interpret it metaphysically rather than in ethical terms, Wilson Knight found its referent in the world of transcendental values. While one would certainly endorse Professor Goldberg's implied assessment of the importance of Wilson Knight's criticism, it is difficult, while reading *The Wheel of Fire* and the later books, not to feel concerned at the way the impression of actuality, of the reality of characters and situations, is constantly minimised. Professor Goldberg, however, does imply this when he points out that we can hardly do justice to Shakespeare by treating 'character' as a mere epiphenomenon. The suggestion moreover, brings us a step nearer Professor Goldberg's main argument. Like a number of other critics, Arthur Sewell and L.C. Knights in the main, he would endorse a conception of 'character' that would do 'justice not only to our sense of the characters' moral autonomy in a world of good and evil (as Bradley's did), but also to the subtle, manifold ways in which the poetic medium and the controlling conventions work in each play simultaneously to create an appropriate kind of identity for the characters, give them a larger symbolic force, and comment on them' (p. 40). His summary of the arguments of the two critics serves to bring out the failure of an approach that would seek to locate the meaning of a Shakespearian

tragedy, *King Lear* in this case, in the consciousness of its central character. Both the interpretations seem to have re-introduced the Bradleyan fallacy of the equivalence between the play's meaning with the significance of its hero's experience.

The occasion for Professor Goldberg's discussion of 'character' is the metaphor of 'sight' in *King Lear*. Is what we 'see' in the play the same that Lear comes to acknowledge as true at the end ? Should we say that the change in Lear's consciousness as a result of his peculiar experiences is the teleological end towards which everything else in the play moves and in relation to which it justifies its existence? Sewell conceived of the 'vision' of a Shakespearian tragedy in terms of the 'prism' metaphor : aspects of the play's comprehensive vision are mediated through its galaxy of characters. Major criticism of the play, however, has always been preoccupied with the idea that the other characters have only an 'elaborative' role to play or serve only to occasion, so to say, Lear's 'insights'. This has been so even where characters are treated only in terms of their symbolic significance. What the tendency to see Lear's consciousness as the centre of significance in the play does is to reduce its complexity to a schematising formula and to deny to Shakespearian drama its ironic, and hence, truly dramatic, element. Nowhere is this tendency to discover in the action of the play an easy working out of an ethical scheme with its centre in the process of Lear's regeneration so markedly evident as in the otherwise justly celebrated essay on *King Lear* by Professor L.C. Knights. Knights's phrase, 'affirmation *in spite of everything*', and the reference to 'the imaginative discovery that is the play's essence' suggest, according to Professor Goldberg, that 'the "discovery", the moral pattern of the whole, is more important and more real than the human experience in which (and only in which) it exists at all—exists, that is, as more than a merely imagined artistic pattern, or an abstract and therefore arbitrary moral pattern' (p. 59). What Professor Goldberg himself does in the

rest of the book is to trace the process of discovery that the play unfolds and to stress the open-ended, problematic, and hence, deeply disturbing, nature of that discovery.

The easiest solution to the 'problem' of *King Lear* is to suggest that the play lacks coherence. At least that was what the age of Naham Tate with an easy assumption of its own unquestioned superiority thought of its ending. The happy ending was not merely an ideological-oriented change; it was also an attempt to make sense of an apparently baffling artistic design. Many of the later readings of the play have treated it in a similar manner—with greater sophistication, of course. The commentary that Professor Goldberg offers on the process of Lear's inner change serves to bring into focus the absence of any meaningful pattern in it. He finds it difficult to describe Lear's condition 'as one of self-knowledge achieved through suffering, or a recognition of the moral order he had denied, or a saving reconciliation with it, any more than we could ever truly have described the action in terms of some "tragic fault" in his character' (p. 156). The play reveals no progress towards a climactic moment of 'vision' or 'insight', and certainly not if we think in terms of the protagonist's 'education' in experience. Professor Goldberg parenthetically refers to the other tragedies in this connection, and one is left with the temptation to speculate on the implications of this view in other cases. So far as *King Lear* is concerned, the action is found to be 'a series of destructive "ironies", abrupt reversals, breaks, sharp disjunctions, each one of which subtly engages our assent, but which together form what Frank Kermode would call a gathering "apocalypse", a process wherein reality declares itself in the very revenge it takes upon every belief, upon every expectation or assertion of meaning and value within which men try to contain it' (p. 157-8).

This however, is not the whole truth as posited in the play and as Professor Goldberg looks at it. Embedded in *King Lear* are several designs: '. . . the particulars remain obstinately themselves. Whatever whole we actually grasp

must be *less* than the sum of its parts; the losses involved in any total "meaning" have no remedies' (p. 180). Ideology—nihilistic denial or idealistic affirmation—is excluded from a work that engages us at a level where definition becomes dificult since our experience of it, of the play's 'meaning,' is 'at once bafflingly specific and yet bafflingly without limits. It is as though our consciousness might bear it as a precipitate from the play, but if so, it would not be the right thing our consciousness possessed; while on the other hand, if we really did possess it, we might then not be able to bear it at all' (p. 162). The pattern of mutually destructive ironies, of 'meaninglessness', seems at moments and from a different angle to yield to one of 'affirmation', an affirmation, however, that can be extracted only from Lear's and our own sense of loss at Cordelia' death and from our commitment to the values she stands for. It is difficult to see the point of the critics who find in Cordelia and in Lear's reconciliation with her a 'cancellation' of evil in the play, and it is here that Professor Goldberg's suggestion regarding the particulars remaining themselves becomes significant. Goneril is, as he rightly points out, 'a far tougher proposition than Iago' (p. 179). Her peculiar end and the values she represents cannot be synthesised with any ultimate scheme of salvation. This brings us close to another pattern—a pattern that is woven round the reverberations of Lear's question : 'Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,/And thou no breath at all'. It is a pattern in which the human need for 'justice', the desire to force the world to yield some coherence, some meaning, becomes the predominant reality that the play affirms. The way Professor Goldberg approaches *King Lear* leads to a minimisation of the doctrinal content. The play acquires the quality of lived experience, the sense of the limitation of the individual human consciousness by existential needs and of the presence of the question of self and identity beneath the moral mask of 'character'. That the book reflects certain significant trends in contemporary thought about life and art—as interesting

criticism of Shakespeare has always done in the past—is something that may not concern the reader for many years to come.

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Keats and Embarrassment. By CHRISTOPHER RICKS (Oxford : Clarendon Press), 1974, 224 pp.

Ricks's main purpose in this excellent study is to consider Keats as 'a human prototype of new experience' as revealed through those letters which express embarrassment in various forms, and thus to revaluate his erotic poetry. Though embarrassment, in a broad sense, was a nineteenth century sentiment, in Keats's poetry, Ricks maintains, it has a distinctive character—'the sense not just that something is happening but that something is being watched is an important giver of depth.' Ricks not only aims at showing, taking his cue from F.R. Leavis, the relation between Keats's sensuousness and seriousness, and the value of blushes as part of his sensuousness to an understanding of his seriousness, but he also makes a disputable claim that 'the case for a great deal that is best in Keats is the case for that sphere of life—adolescence ; or rather for a recognition and incorporation of those insights into life which may be more acceptable to a perceptive adolescent than to others.' Disagreeing with most of the modern critics, who have a comparatively low estimate of *Endymion*, Ricks seems to think with John Bailey that 'the central Keats is the rich poet of *Endymion* and 'The Eve of St. Agnes' rather than the sombre mature poet (strained and against the grain) of, say, *The Fall of Hyperion.*' In fact, frequent references to these early poems

stem from the belief that 'a particular strength of Keats is the implication that the youthful, the luxuriant and the immature can be, not just excusable errors, but vantage-points.'

With a view to supplementing Jones's imaginative approach to blushing in Keats's erotic poetry, Ricks emphasizes its social and moral aspects as well. To Keats, blushing has a moral value in ordinary human life. It is in fact germane to social behaviour inasmuch as it implies empathy—identity with others—and is thus the essence of Keats's well-known concept of Negative Capability. Ricks also amply illustrates from the Letters Keats's power not merely to anatomise the behaviour of the embarrassed with the penetrating eye of a medical practitioner but also to evoke the unembarrassable with the awed humanity of a great anthropologist, his capacity to involve in an ordinary situation of embarrassment so many preoccupations and interests that are pure Keats, and, above all, his predilection to associate embarrassment with sexual feelings and creativity. The liberation from embarrassment, the Letters further reveal, was effected by an imaginative act of sympathy—by friendship, love and a sense of art; he was freed from embarrassment particularly on account of his height by the assurance of love from his brother George and sister-in-law. In both the subjective world of the creative imagination and its beauty and the palpable objective world of nature and its beauty, Keats found release from embarrassment. In his approach to nature, Ricks rightly observes, 'Keats was alert to something importantly true about the dignity and beauty of nature; that among the sane, fortifying and consolatory powers it has is the power to free us from embarrassment, to make embarrassment unthinkable.' Keats's candour in this matter indicates that his love of nature was not mere sentiment, but was perhaps more solidly grounded, or rather more actually needed and felt, than Wordsworth's, though less obsessive. The Letters display Keats's flair for humour particularly when he imagines a friend in an embarrassing situation. Equally interesting is his evocation of how a woman's sexual self-possession and freedom from embarrassment created in him a corresponding self-possession and

freedom. Ricks is well able to bring out Keats's perceptive evocation of delicate and difficult feelings, the subtle humour and deep humanity underlying them, and the perfect ease and grace with which he moves from one sense to the other.

While considering embarrassment in the narrower sense—in relation to love—that is, blushing, Ricks significantly refers to Darwin's use of the word 'self-attention' for the phenomenon of blushing since it has a bearing upon romanticism: 'Self-attention and the vistas of thinking what others think of us; these are among the many vistas and reflections which preoccupied the Romantic.' But the following discussion of the biological and physiological aspects of blushing is too academic to be wholly relevant. Further, Ricks's attempt to trace the tradition of erotic poetry in relation to blushing from Chaucer down to Byron, through Marlowe and Dryden, is too selective, even arbitrary, though he well leads up towards an appraisal of Keats's different approach to embarrassment, that is, 'from the wish to pass directly' through 'the hotly disconcerting, the potentially ludicrous, distasteful, or blush-inducing.'

The central and the longest chapter, 'Keats, Byron and 'slippery blisses' is a brilliant analysis of Keats's poetic insights and methods. Ricks sets out with an exploration of the rich wealth of Keats's verbal imagination as displayed in his use of conscious effects, 'puns and portmanteaux' as well as misspellings and other ambiguities more or less unconsciously made. (Perhaps Keats's speculative mind, an avid reader of Shakespeare as he was, was creatively stimulated by the various emendations of Shakespeare texts then available to him). Ricks rightly observes that these verbal slips 'are often indications of how his imagination was working and are sometimes indications of an achieved suggestiveness which works within the poem itself.' Ricks next dwells upon the antagonism between Keats and Byron. Byron's violent outbursts against Keats ('Johnny Keats's *p-ss a bed* poetry') Ricks shrewdly remarks, tell us more about Byron's imagination than about Keats's,

but are not wholly unjustified in view of the presence of an important element in Keats's writing that should permit of the possibility of such a reaction, as contemporary criticism of Keats's poetry amply bears out. Ricks makes an excellent study of the erotic passages in 'The Eve of St. Agnes', and his comments on the mixed sense of 'sea-weed' are highly perceptive. He rightly concludes that 'when Keats not only lets us see so vividly the undressing of Madeline and Porphyro's watching it, but lets us share his richly intimate equanimity, he gives us an example of how we should—in the largest sense—behave.' This observation incidentally recalls Keats's conception of a 'superior being' as enunciated in his journal-letter to his brother, dated 19 March 1819:

> May there not be superior beings amused with any graceful, though instinctive attitude my mind may fall into, as I am entertained with the alertness of a Stoat or the anxiety of a Deer? Though a quarrel in the Streets is a thing to be hated, the energies displayed in it are fine; the commonest Man shows a grace in his quarrel ... This is the very thing in which consists poetry.

Ricks agrees with Trilling that Keats as poet made the boldest affirmation of the principle of pleasure and also made this principle into the greatest and sincerest doubt. That is why Keats's erotic writing 'can cause a twinge of distaste, since the accommodation of distaste can be a humanly and artistically valuable thing, especially when it coexists with a frank delight.' Ricks effectively brings out the sensuous appeal and the verbal felicity in the lines from *Endymion* beginning with: 'Those lips, O slippery Kisses ...' His comments on the 'pleasure's nipple' however lose their force when he brings in a reference to Swift's description of the Brobdingnagian nurse suckling the baby, which creates a totally different emotional impact.

In order to show how Keats's Truth of imagination begins in 'the directness of sense' and how physicality is intimately related to the act of love, Ricks next makes a fine study of the

various kinds of sensation that Keats evokes in his erotic poetry—dimpled arms, bellies, nostrils, breast, perspiration, feasting, etc. Equally illuminating is the study of certain recurrent words that convey special kinds of sensation—honey, ooze, slime, sluicy, spongy, gummy, etc. The three-page long quotation from Sartre, in conclusion of the comments on 'gummy', is however a blemish.

As for the relation between sensuousness and seriousness in Keats, Ricks point out the ambivalence of sensation in Keats's poetry; 'the rich pleasure can in the moment of its achievement become a poisoned satiation,—in other words, paradox is implicit in 'a fine excess'. This relation, in Keats's thought, is a relation between 'delight in sensation' and 'Truth', the co-existence of which is necessary for the attainment of the 'complex mind'. This relation, in fact, is also a process which has social and moral implications, for it indicates a sense of duty, duty to pleasure—our duty to gain pleasure for ourselves and to delight in others' gaining it. 'To convince one's nerves of others' happiness and then without perfunctoriness, embarrassment, cynicism or dismay to rejoice at it, Ricks significantly observes, 'is Keats's central moral impulse and especial verbal power.'

Ricks attempts, in this book, 'to see the shape of Keats's imagination and the truth of it.' He no doubt brings to light some of the beauties in Keats's poetry hitherto unnoticed. He makes a sensitive and sensible analysis of individual poetic lines and passages, explicating their suggestiveness and verbal charm, but he does so disregardful of the shape of the total poem of which they are a part. His interpretation, therefore, even at its best, fails to illuminate the poem's unity. Surprisingly enough, he takes no notice of the major poems of Keats, except the 'Ode to Autumn' of which too he speaks in a rather apologetic tone: 'So compact, masterful, and yet gentle a poem is great in many ways, and in suggesting that the poem suits my book, I am not saying that it is great because it suits my book.' But perhaps in defence of Ricks's approach it may be said that he

is more concerned with Keats's characteristic habits of mind and the quality and substance of his erotic imagination than with any thing else and that in a way his brilliant study does enrich our response to Keats's poetry

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Dialectical Criticism and Renaissance Literature. By MICHAEL MCCANLES (Berkely: University of California Press), 1975, xvii+278 pp.

Since the rise of the school of New Criticism in America critics have felt baffled by the Formalist-Historicist controversy, as the two approaches have appeared, though often wrongly, as rival and mutually irreconcilable types of criticism. With its marked emphasis on textual analyses the Formalist approach tends to highlight the individuality and uniqueness of a work of art, while the historicist focuses attention on its cultural contexts and their interplay in its genesis and development. Avoiding the extremes, McCanles has attempted here a synthetic approach to some specimens of the later Renaissance English literature. He sees literature in the dual role of the product and producer of culture, and as such he finds both the formalist and historicist approaches inadequate and fragmentary in character, since individually they fail to treat a work of art in its totality. Moreover, to him Renaissance literature is characterised by antinomies and contradictions which may be discovered even in apparently disparate works like Bacon's philosophical treatises, Shakespeare's plays, the early seventeenth-century lyric and *Paradise Lost*. These conflicting ideas, images and the consequent tension, however, can be fully comprehended only through dialectical criticism.

Apart from a short expository introduction, the book consists of four essays—one each on the dialectical elements in Bacon's scientific philosophy, the Metaphysical lyric, Milton's epic and eight phys of Shakespeare, followed by a concluding essay on the dimensions and prospects of this new experiment in criticism. Each main essay is followed by a brief 'Transition' summarising the central points of the preceding chapter and leading to the essential meaning of the next one. These innovatory links enhance the clarity and coherence of the work as a whole.

This study of the antinomical nature of Renaissance culture opens with a treatment of the subdued contrastive elements in Bacon's thought and his concept of scientific philosophy. One is reminded of the light-dark opposition in *De augmentis* which is also reflected in the mutually supplementary roles of intuition and reason as epistemological tools. Similar dialectic may be noted in his famous doctrine of the idols; and in *The New Organon* and *The Natural and Experimental History* the occasional use of the myth of Eden and the Fall points in the same direction. Finally, Bacon suggests that man can acquire power over nature through science, but for this he needs freedom from ingrained prejudices and superstitions, the limitations of human nature itself. This represents Bacon's preoccupation with material aspects of life and knowledge as 'anti-materialistic' in spirit. Therefore, McCanles rightly concludes that, in spite of the apparent primacy of reason in his epistemological scheme, Bacon was a visionary and dreamer. It may be recalled that Shelley too considered his great predecessor a veritable poet.

Tension and paradox are the more widely acknowledged features of the structure of Metaphysical poetry. An analysis of some of his poems ('Lovers Infinitenesse', 'The Canonization' and 'Hymn to God my God, in my Sicknesse') reveals 'the interpenetration of dynamism and stasis' as the essential merit of Donne's secular and religious poetry. On the other hand, George Herbert attempts 'the paradox of salvation', as

is evident from the progression of thought and feeling in 'Love III', 'The Church Porch', 'The Sacrifice' and 'Agonie'. His other poems also demonstrate a confrontation between the historical and divine schemes, and the inescapable 'multi-layeredness' of human thought. 'The Garden' and 'Upon Appleton House' have a patently antinomical theme, and Marvell specialists like Rosalie Colie and Donald M. Friedman have readily recognised them as symbolisation of conflict between the active and contemplative life. McCanles, however, disagrees with them and considers their essential theme as 'accommodations demanded of a mind that begins by formulating the problematics of human life in dichotomous terms' (p. 107). The conflict imposes certain stresses on language as for the sake of proper and effective mediation the *personae* of the poem seem to struggle with intractability of their language.

In McCanles' words Milton saw dialectic as the 'warp and woof of the fabric of universal history'. This dichotomy is evident in the poet's treatment of the doctrine of obedience as well, for according to Milton God expected a voluntaristic acceptance and actualisation of His decree by man. Paradoxically, therefore, Reason plays a pivotal role in Eve's psychic journey from Temptation to Fall. The critic designates it as 'The Dialectic of idolatory' ; and in the section subtitled 'The Dialectic of Language' he deals with the ambiguities and pitfalls of the decadent language that Milton had inherited. However, possibilities of re-establishing a harmony with the antinomies of divine will are not completely ignored, and they are treated in the section 'Dialectic of Mirroring'. Milton was, obviously, employing here the accepted Elizabethan theory of microcosmic and macrocosmic correspondences and the poetic doctrine that permitted complex repeated patterns—images, actions and speeches—to mirror each other. *Paradise Lost*, therefore, is both a fable—an explanation and a philosophy of universal history—and a poem, and its vitality as a work of art emanates largely from the interpenetration of these two aspects.

By its very nature drama is the most dialectical genre, and the antinomical pattern of Right and Power is found in all the major plays of Shakespeare. In the present work these polarities are brought out in the brief treatment of *Richard II*, *1* and *2 Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Measure for Measure* and *Hamlet*. McCanles maintains that these plays represent the same basic themes and ethos as inform the works of Bacon, Donne, Marvell and Milton. Almost involuntarily and ineluctably led by the common cultural urges and dichotomies these various writers sought an understanding of and a control over a world of oppressive ambiguities and asymmetries. An interesting and revealing point is made about Falstaff's various masks, especially that of moral probity, with Hotspur serving as his anti-mask. The right-might conflict in the Henry plays is almost irreconcilable, while in *Julius Caesar* the clash between the lofty 'ethical imperatives' and self-corruption is concretised on a political plane. Likewise, *Troilus and Cressida* hinges upon a conflict between idealization of sordid realities and the 'debunking of such idealization.' The central issue involved in *Measure for Measure* is one of Right *versus* Power, though McCanles maintains that 'the play argues against neither licence nor law, but against the law-licence dialectic' (p. 200). Though initially presented as suffering from inexplicable indecision, Hamlet embodies the dialectical insight of his creator, and the play achieves an artistic resolution of the prevalent antinomies.

Certain philosophical bases and the prospects of dialectical criticism are elucidated in the final chapter. Its two components—'mythos' (the presentation and development of conflict) and 'dianoia' (meaning)—two terms derived from Northrop Frye—are explained with reference to some of the plays and poems discussed earlier. Taking a cue from Karl Manneheim, McCanles further introduces a sociological interpretation of the three dimensions—objective, expressive and documentary—of literature. The discussion, however, tends

to be repetitive, and an uninspiring 'absolutization' of the points already made in the course of the previous essays.

The essays, particularly the analytical sections, provide some revealing insights into the texture of the works. McCanles has brilliantly succeeded in establishing and highlighting the unity of a cultural pattern behind these different works, and one only wishes that the author had not left out Spenser and Marlowe who also worked in the same cultural contexts, and whose works supply ample evidence of the antinomical pattern—the chief concern of the present study. Similarly, the brief but discerning references to the impact of dialectic on the language of Marvell and, to some extent, Milton, are of a seminal nature. A more elaborate treatment of this linguistic aspect of literature, also embracing the language of Donne, would have further added to the value of the critical study. One also finds that the examination of the interrelationship between this dialectic of thought and the rise of the parodoxical style is utterly wanting. Perhaps, the seventeenth century dialectic contributed indirectly to the practice of authorial comments, too, as in the case of Milton; and a brief reference to it could have been incorporated to the qualitative advantage of the work. These minor desiderata, however, do not by any means detract from the otherwise brilliant and lucid treatment of a challenging subject. Our understanding of the tone, character and genesis of English Renaissance literature is certainly much the richer because of this illuminating and, in a way, pioneering work.

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The Classic. By FRANK KERMODE (London : Faber & Faber), 1975, £ 3.50, 141 pp.

The book is a collection of Professor Kermode's four T. S. Eliot Memorial Lectures for 1973, delivered at the

University of Kent. For Professor Kermode it is Eliot's own essay, 'What is a Classic ?', that sets off reverberations of critical enquiry into the nature of the works we choose to call 'classics.' For him Eliot's question reverberates along various literary perspectives with a newer and more pertinent significance every time to focalize the bare, constitutive essentials of all kinds of classic literature. A very simple but very fundamental question is : 'Why do people still read what we call "classics?"—and we call them 'classics' simply because people still read them. Obviously classics are works that endure, that stay alive by accommodating themselves to 'endlessly varying dispositions.' At bottom, then, the problem of the classic is the problem of 'a just estimation of the permanent relations between the enduring and the transient, the essence and the disposition'. In this way Eliot's 'What is a Classic ?' implicates Professor Kermode with the question : 'How may a work of the past retain identity in change ?'

As Professor Kermode launches on his enquiry he begins by examining Eliot's special concept of the classic, which is assimilated to the myth of the timeless-in-the-temporal empire. The classic endures in its essence through varying dispositions in two ways: hermeneutics, which relies on philology and historiography, and accommodation, which relies mainly on allegory. According to Eliot's special concept, the paradigm of the classic is the Empire—a ghostly paradigm in as much as the Empire is 'laid up in heaven' and transcends its temporal manifestations and their vicissitudes. It is 'timeless' or eternal in its essence, even though the dispositions, 'in the aspect of time,' change frequently. So is it with the classic in being assimilated to it. According to this concept, Virgil, with his imperialism and metropolitanism, his overall maturity, comprehensiveness and universality, is the type of all classics. And Dante, who draws upon the imperial tradition has set the example of realizing the Virgilian ideal through the 'illustrious vulgar', the purified vernacular. Hence any vernacular literature becomes a classic in so far as it has 'its place in a larger pattern, a

pattern set in Rome.' The other kind of literature that falls outside this imperial-metropolitan tradition may be great, even greater than a 'classic', but it will be 'provincial'—sometimes even Robinson-Crusoeistic (as the case of Blake shows).

There are other myths that the classic may draw upon (and in more than one way). In his second Lecture Professor Kermode considers the dilution and the weakening of the Empire myth in the seventeenth and the eighteenth century; and in this light he considers Marvell, Milton and the Augustans. In Marvell the myth of the *imperium* is secularized; in Milton it is rejected and replaced by the myth of a provincial millenium which is not timeless-and-yet-in-time but at the end of time; and in the Augustans it loses its transcendence, its Rome becoming a mere historical model of civility and a source of irony, a warning against the probable onset of decadence and another dark age.

The classic, which changes according to dispositions and yet retains its identity, must have an intrinsic capability of plurisignification, even the capability of saying something more than its author knows. Its multiple meanings are, therefore, completed through various dispositions by the co-operation of various readers. Professor Kermode demonstrates it in his third Lecture which deals with the migration of the Empire myth further west, to America. In his learned way he discusses Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* which is the classic of the New World. We find that in this case the Empire myth has been transformed into the myth of the mutative types. The Empire has lost its ideal Rome; the new Rome it has gained is beautiful and yet sinister, timeless and yet, in the aspect of time, corrupt—a symbol of history as a fortunate fall. The provincial New World will reject its classic perpetuity. The art of this New World will be an art of change, of the ever-changing versions of the old types. These versions are shifting, unstable and varying in force : they must be fulfilled by the determinations of the reader. There is no predetermined, authorial, meaning; the meaning is to be built up

by the reader who is the co-producer. In this way the New World classic openly invites accommodation, whereas the old classic, claiming to be a finished product, merely suffered it.

The New World classic brings Professor Kermode to a consideration of the modern classic in the concluding Lecture.

> Unlike the old classic, which was expected to provide answers, this one poses a virtually infinite set of questions. And when we have learnt how to ask some of the questions we may discover that the same kind of questions can also be put to the old classic. The modern classic, and the modern way of reading the classic, are not to be separated.

In fact, the imperialist view of the classic accommodates all temporal vicissitudes like periodic changes in language, generic expectation, ideology and so forth by modifying the basic model, through renovations, translations, allegorical interpretations, etc., so as to make it contemporaneous. But these modifications do not leave the model very credible, and so a new model is required. This new model, which is the modern classic, would require us in the first place to abandon the notion of the absolute classic and consider the classic simply as 'a book that is read a long time after it was written.' In this light '*translations* become transitions from a past to a present system of beliefs, language, generic expectations; renovations become very specific attempts to establish the relevance of a document which has had a good chance of losing it. It is true that the modern classic occasions an extreme variety of response characteristic of the modern way of reading it. The modern classic is not a nut to be broken for the sake of the meaning all will agree upon. We must by-pass all the old arguments about the author's 'intention'—he says more than he himself knows. The modern classic presents itself as a complex and indeterminate system of signifiers, which is open to an infinite plurality of meaning. Every classic, in fact every great work of art, has a potential of plurality, and the action of time and the deaths of the author and the readers only serve to liberate it. But secularization multiplies the world's struc-

tures of probability and forces us to recognize the inherent, constitutive plurality of the literary text. Plurality now becomes, not a prescription but a fact. Having broken away from the generic relation with the Eternal-in-the-Temporal Empire the classic now adjusts the relation of the essence and the disposition by upholding its own constitutive plurality. Professor Kermode's brilliant reading of *Wuthering Heights*, which is a modern classic, demonstrates this constitutive plurality.

In the end we reflect that a literary text is 'a system of signifiers which always shows a surplus after meeting any particular restricted reading'. We are reminded of Levi-Strauss who first spoke of a 'surplus of signifier' in relation to shamanism, which would find a symbolic language 'by means of which unexpressed, and otherwise inexpressible, psychic states can be immediately expressed'. The classic, old or new, has a guarantee for survival because of its possession of a 'surplus of signifier'. Its infinite potential of plurality operates through various probability systems and is never exhausted by them. This is the modern view. It is necessarily tolerant of change and plurality whereas the older view, 'regarding most forms of pluralism as heretical, holds fast to the time-transcending idea of Empire'. Yet the new approach, though it could be said to secularize the old in an almost Feuerbachian way, may do so in a sense which preserves it in a form acceptable to changed probability systems. For what was thought of as beyond time, . . . inhabiting a fictive perpetuity, is now beyond time in a more human sense' : it is here, in our world itself. The modern classic, too, is unaffected by time and yet it offers itself to be read under our particular temporal dispositions. 'The work proposes; man disposes'. Professor Kermode reminds us that originally it was God who did the disposing.

Indeed, Professor Kermode's book is very learned and very stimulating - in spite of, and perhaps because of, the fact that (like the modern classic) it raises more questions than it answers. To return to Eliot: one must observe that Eliot is not using the term 'classic' as the sole criterion of value. He

is not so much concerned with value as with a central tradition, one that might bring out the significance of his own poetry-'poetry-workshop criticism' again ! A 'classic' literature, in this special sense of centrality, may be inferior to a 'provincial' literature, in point of value or greatness; but it is something 'good' and desirable and even necessary for a full understanding of the poetry of a nation. Marvell who comes closer to a 'classic' is inferior to Milton who moves away from it; and yet Marvell is more modern, more civilized 'more Latin, more refined' because he, though not a true imperialist, belongs to the metropolitan tradition. Of course, there are 'relative' classics-like Marvell and Pope-and 'absolute' classics-like Virgil. Professor Kermode could have saved a possible confusion by pointing out that Eliot refers to the former when he talks of the possible literary inferiority of a 'classic'. In his essay Eliot himself acknowledges that in itself maturity-which includes maturity of mind, maturity of manners, maturity of language and perfection of a common style-would not go very far in achieving greatness of a higher order and would make only a 'relative' classic unless *maturity* implies, as in the case of Virgil, amplitude and catholicity (in which qualities the age of Pope is deficient) and is related to *comprehensiveness* and *universality.* Overall maturity, comprehensiveness and universality-these are Eliot's criteria for the greatness of a classic. A 'provincial' literature may not cultivate, for example, maturity of manners and a common style, and yet be very great. It may not cultivate overall maturity and may look 'eccentric'-for maturity, as Eliot concedes, frequently involves 'the development of some potentialitles to the exclusion of others'-and yet this 'provincial' literature may be very great. In this case it will be deficient in overall maturity, but not in comprehensiveness and universality.

What are the common criteria of greatness for all the works of literature, classic and non-classic ? How are these criteria related to the various views of the classic examined by Professor Kermode? Why is Milton who is not a 'classic' greater than Marvell who is almost one ? What is the position of

Shakespeare in relation to the various views of the classic ? Is he completely outside the imperialist tradition ? Doesn't he make use of the Empire myth for dramatic purposes (as Wilson Knight has worked out) ? These may be naive questions, but they do occur to the reader of Professor Kermode's book. One wishes he had enlightened the reader further by clarifying these and similar issues. For example, it could have been hinted, to the credit of Eliot and in all fairness to him, that his criteria of *maturity*, *comprehensiveness* and *universality* are fairly common criteria of greatness, which are applicable not only to the imperialist classic literature but also to the modern classic and non-classic literature, with the difference that the imperialist classic literature partakes of an overall maturity to assimilate itself generically to the myth of the Empire. These common criteria would affirm that all art aspires to the condition of myth. It may do so through either of these two methods or through both of them : through generic assimilation-as the old classic does with regard to the myth of the Empire-or through formalistic evocation or manipulation of structural control through myth with plurisignification systems and semantic and hermeneutic gaps, etc. which are the rage of modern structuralists and semiologists. In the face of secularization formalistic evocation of myth is practised by the artist rather consciously-witness Eliot's own 'mythical method' and the example of Joyce before him ; for secularization which multiplies the world's structures of probability also makes things fall apart into a 'panorama of futility'; and so the artist is becoming more and more conscious of controlling his structures through myth so as to express the inexpressible in the most intense, most comprehensive and most universal way. Secularization of history is the fortunate fall that has made art concious of the myth within. It is recognized that by virtue of their mythical *gestalten* the sensuous forms of art are a concrescence of infinite significance and are immanently comprehensive and universal: they are a 'surplus of signifier' for the endless embodiment and revelation of the infinite in the finite, the time-

less in the temporal, the essence in the disposition. It was Wordsworth who called poetry a 'sensuous incarnation'. And Eliot himself has affirmed the incarnation (or the Logos) myth both thematically and structurally in *Four Quartets*. If there is a single, universal and all-inclusive criterion of the greatness of art, it is, if I may make a tentative submission, the affirmation of the principle of Incarnation in and through the dialectics of sensuous forms-by which I do not necessarily mean the affirmation of the historicity of the Christian Incarnation, in the orthodox sense: one can affirm the principle of Incarnation in an unorthodox, even 'secular', way; for this affirmation is actually an affirmation of love in the widest and most significant sense-a saying of *Thou*. The incarnation myth is the myth of all myths, which unites all kinds of art in the Stillness of the Word and resolves the *querelle* Professor Kermode talks about. Professor Kermode, who is consistently concerned with the relation of the eternal and the temporal, does not mention the Incarnation myth-perhaps because Eliot's 'poetry-workshop' criticism does not give any clue to it, does not choose to speak about it in civilized society, though his poetry is very much informed with it and is even conscious of the analogy between art and Incarnation *(Four Quartets)*. It is all right that Eliot has talked of *maturity, comprehensiveness* and *universality*. But has he kept the vital secret to himself ?

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CONTENTS

A. G. Stock	Classic Forms and Puritan Principles	1
Mohan Lal	Wordsworth's Concept of Joy	11
Z. A. Usmani	Solitude and Wordsworth's *Peele Castle* Poem	28
A. A. Ansari	Fools of Time in *Macbeth*	45
Jafar Zaki	Sir Robert Walpole and Fielding's *Modern Husband*	60
Harish Raizada	'Point of View' in Jane Austen's Novels	72
Salamatullah Khan	The Dimensions of Revolt in Emily Dickinson's Poetry	90

Book Reviews

Maqbool H. Khan	*An Essay on 'King Lear'* By S. L. Goldberg	101
O. P. Govil	*Keats and Embarrassment* By Christopher Ricks	108
Masoodul Hasan	*Dialectical Criticism and Renaissance Literature* By Michael McCanles	113
Z. A. Usmani	*The Classic* By Frank Kermode	117

A. G. Stock

CLASSIC FORMS AND PURITAN PRINCIPLES:
A Note on their Interaction in Milton's Poetry

That done, he leads him to the highest Mount;
Such one, as that same mighty man of God,
. . . . . .
Dwelt fortie days vpon; where writ in stone
With bloudy letters by the hand of God,
The bitter doome of death and balefull mone
He did receiue, whiles flashing fire about him shone.

Or like that sacred hill, whose head full hie,
Adornd with fruitfull Oliues all arownd,
Is, as it were for endlesse memory
Of that deare Lord, who oft thereon was fownd,
For euer with a flowring girlond crownd :
Or loke that pleasaunt Mount, that is for ay
Through famous Poets verse each where renownd,
On which the thrise three learned Ladies play
Their heauenly notes, and make full many a louely lay.[1]

The Hermit Contemplation is giving the Red Cross Knight a foretaste of the heavenly vision; and the mount from which he sees it is like three places: Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments; the Mount of Olives where Christ prayed; Helicon, the playground of the Muses.

The Knight has passed through the trials of the world with mixed success. Three times he would have lost his life if the mistress he served had been any other than Una, the embodiment of the living truth. He has learnt the weakness of his strength, and been saved by her from Despair, and brought to the House of Holiness to be taught the way of salvation by the Christian Graces, Faith, Hope and Charity.

Not till then is he allowed a glimpse of the New Jerusalem. All this part of the allegory is in strictly Christian terms, and yet Spenser can name the Muses, with their Pagan associations in the same stanza and the same context as Christ. Which is to say that for him the poet's vision is no less authentic than the saint's; and the poet's vision is inseparable from the imagery of the Greek poets.

Western culture derives from two sources: Greece for the forms of its art and learning, Palestine for the Judaic inheritance of its moral values. They have seldom moved easily in double harness. In Christianity there is a God-centred, world-despising strain to which the Greek delight in physical beauty and human strength is suspect, a euphemism for the lust of the flesh, the lust of eyes and the pride of life. The anthropomorphic imagery of the Greeks, seeing the divine within nature rather than beyond it, in Christian terms becomes the worship of false gods if it is taken seriously, and trivial vanity if it is not. But there was a phase, in the glow of Renaissance art, when they seemed to come together in a generous synthesis: when Leonardo's John the Baptist was twin brother to his Bachhus, and Botticelli's Madonna had the same face as his Venus, only bowed down, as Walter Pater put it, with a sense of the intolerable honour decreed for her by the will of heaven. Spenser inherits that synthesis, though he stands near the point of its break-up, He is not aware of a necessary choice between his classical culture and his reformed, somewhat austere relegion: he can join their images without awkwardness.

Milton was different. Like Spenser, but more deeply, he mastered the classical learning of his age; it moulded the forms of his imagination till it became a language of personal expression. Like Spenser, but with more intensity, he was of the reformed religion. But he was born later, and grew up in a world where controversy was already stronger than concord in its hold on men's intellect and passions. Already in his *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* one can see his concern to put the true and the false gods in a right relationship. It

records the beginning of conflict between his imagination, at home with the world's beauty and the spirits of the ancient nature-worship, and his religion that rejects them for the God of the Bible. The poem brings them into provisional accord. Without exactly denying the pagan gods it relegates them to a lower level of reality, making them lose their power when Christ is born. But the beauty of the stanzas, from the nineteenth to the twenty-fifth, very nearly turns them from a celebration of the new order into a dirge for the old.

> The lonely mountains o're,
> And the resounding shore,
> A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;
> From haunted spring, and dale
> Edg'd with poplar pale,
> The parting Genius is with sighing sent,
> With flowre-inwov'n tresses torn
> The Nimphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

This is not the voice of triumph but the subdued passion of regret. The departing gods are beautiful, even sullen Moloch is made to look more picturesque than gruesome. There is dignified pathos in Osiris, demoted suddenly from god to plain bull, 'trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud' and blinking dusky eyes at the star of Bethlehem. They are real as a dream is to the dreamer before he wakes; and in the last verse but one they are left in the world of shadows, 'following darkness like a dream':—

> So, when the Sun in bed,
> Curtain'd with cloudy red,
> Pillows his chin upon an Orient wave,
> The flocking shadows pale,
> Troop to th'infernal Jail,
> Each fetter'd Ghost slips to his several grave,
> And the yellow-skirted *Fayes*,
> Fly after the Night-steeds, leaving their Moon-lov'd maze.

Whatever his intellect intended, the feeling in the words is that night with its shadowy inhabitants is not an abode of terror but of mysterious beauty. All the same it must vanish when

> . . . all about the Courtly Stable
> Bright-harnest Angels sit in order serviceable.

The Angels are the solid reality, marshalled for the battle of life.

Denis Saurat has remarked that in *Comus*, and again in the well-known lines about night in *Paradise Lost* (IV. 601-12), Milton writes of darkness with a veiled excitement, an awareness of one life moving in many, that is missing from his daylight descriptions. It is as if that dismissal of the gods were a suppression of something in himself, thenceforward to remain outlawed, cut off from the scrutiny of the sun's intellectual light. Nevertheless the *Nativity Ode* bids such a courteous farewell that it seems as if truth and illusion would settle amicably on different levels of the mind.

War, first theological and then military, was to break up the settlement, but already in *Lycidas* he is uneasy about its viability. Pastoral elegy is an old-established classical form composed in a succession of movements. After the formal invocation comes the solitary mourner's sense of loss, then the sharing of grief with gods and friends who come to sympathise, then some consolation from the rituals of farewell, and at last the realisation that in some sense the dead man lives on. It is poetic compression of the actual experience of bereavement. Milton follows the pattern, but he interrupts it at two points: his own meditation on earthly and heavenly fame, and the arrival of St Peter to mourn among the river-gods. In form both are in keeping with the traditional style. Apollo speaks to the poet of true fame, and St Peter is even given a status among the assembled spirits of water by his title 'Pilot of the Galilean Lake.' But the tone and tenor of what is said belongs to an order of thought unfamiliar to the nature-gods, who are abashed by it. Milton's half-apology to them ('That strain I heard was of a higher mood', and 'Return, *Alphaeus*; the dread voice is past/That shrunk thy streams') deliberately draws attention to the interruptions; it is a way of saying that Christian values will not easily go into an art-form moulded in a pagan world.

He makes no such apology for the hope of immortality at the end of the poem, for that is fully in the tradition. Lycidas, translated to heaven, becomes a local guardian spirit on earth, and allowing for Christian terminology this is much like a classical apotheosis. What breaks the pastoral unity and makes the nature-gods retreat in the earlier passsages is the tone—a different kind of seriousness about this life and about individual responsibility, personal and social, which is the voice of Puritanism. It was this, in the end, which made him reject classical mythology as an inadequate form of expression.

By the time he wrote *Paradise Lost* twenty years of passionate controversy had cut Milton off irretrievably from the easy Spenserian synthesis. In his mind moral earnestness had parted company with the graces of tradition, the Hebraic with the Greek strain, and he was committed to the one against the other. The distance he had travelled is neatly defined in the difference between the *Nativity Ode* and the muster-roll of fallen angels in *Paradise Lost*, Book I. In the first the old gods were beautiful illusions doomed to fade when the true light dawns. Although they are presumably banished to hell, hell is not really present in that poem. In the second they are spirits of hell, who will stalk the world, disguised as gods, to delude mankind. That the two views are not logically incompatible in no way lessens the difference of feeling and moral attitude. And this more rigorous definition of Milton's values is evident elsewhere in his later poetry both to good and ill effect. One sees it in God's self-justification in Book III of *Paradise Lost*, in Raphael's warning to Adam to be lowly wise and not overrate intelletcual prowess (VIII. 172-78), in the lessons Adam draws from his preview of history (XII. 562-72)—all of them assertions of a God-centred universe with no room in it for any human greatness not rooted in humility.

Once again, but more organically than in *Lycidas*, the Christian values distort the classical form, so much so that the question 'Who is the hero of *Paradise Lost?*' cannot be conclusively answered. In poetry form and substance are not separable, and the epic form was evolved in a Greek heroic world

where the gods were unpredictable and human greatness, shown in action, was the one sure thing; daring, and the strength to vindicate it, the supreme qualities. Only the strong and the brave could afford to be just and generous, true to their word, protectors of the weak. An epic must have heroes, because human greatness is what it celebrates. But in the Christian ethos, interpreted with Miltonic rigour, human greatness is vanity and self-sufficient strength and daring are translated into the deadly sin of pride. The form of Milton's poem dictates that Satan shall be the hero, because he alone undertakes 'heroic action' in the epic sense, whereas the purpose of it absolutely denies the glory of his heroism.

Dryden is well aware of the view that epic poetry is basically unchristian. It is not his own view, but in *A Discourse Concerning the Origin and Progress of Satire* he states it explicitly before trying to refute it:—

> And 'tis true, that in the severe notions of our faith, the fortitude of a Christian consists in patience, and suffering, for the love of God, whatever hardships can befall him in the world; not in any great attempt, or in the performance of those enterprises which the poets call heroic, and which are commonly the effects of interest, ostentation, pride, and worldly honour; that humility and resignation are our prime virtues; and that these include no action, but that of the soul; when as, on the contrary, an heroic poem requires to its necessary design, and as its last perfection, some great action of war, the accomplishment of some extra-ordinary undertaking; which requires the strength and vigour of the body, the duty of a soldier, the capacity and prudence of a general, and, in short, as much, or more, of the active virtues, than the suffering.[2]

I do not think he refuted it adequately, but his statement of the point brings out Milton's dilemma. There was no other form to write in, because European traditions of poetry derive from Greek, not from Hebrew; but conscious as he was of the gulf between the two, he had to let the pressure of his values distort the form. With supreme mastery he remodelled the traditional epic: keeping all the minor rules, but ruthlessly demolishing the apparent heroism of Satan, and transforming the

central action, which is man's first disobedience, from a great enterprise to a miserable lapse opening the way to humility.

However, a moral conviction will not of itself eradicate a classical education. *Paradise Lost* glitters with classical mythology: Plato is in it too, and the science and history and geography and music of the ancients and their delight in physical perfection. As for Satan himself, however conscientiously his degeneration is brought about, it is difficult to deny that Milton's imaginative experience was at war with his conscious purpose, and that out of this conflict there grew a tragic figure whose epic defiance, doomed though it is from the start, is not on that account contemptible. 'We make poetry out of the quarrel with ourselves', said W.B. Yeats; 'out of the quarrel with others we make rhetoric'. *Paradise Lost* is a phase of Milton's tremendous struggle to pull himself unequivocally from the Greek to the Hebrew camp, and if the struggle had been less tremendous, so would the poem have been.

In *Paradise Regained* the quarrel is continued on the level of debate. Satan is now the shadow of his one-time self, with the insinuating, insistent subtlety of a shadow. He grades his temptations in a way that perhaps reflects Milton's own experience of temptation. He knows that Jesus is proof against beauty, the lust of the eyes:

> for Beauty stands
> In the admiration only of weak minds
> Led captive; cease to admire, and all her Plumes
> Fall flat.[3]

Hunger is easily resisted. Worldly power in different guises is more formidable, but Jesus' answers to it are composed and reasonable. Only when Satan shows him the intellectual glory of Athens he answers harshly, as if he were arguing against strong inner resistance; and certainly he is arguing against what Milton passiontately loved. Jesus declares that all the wisdom of the philosophers is folly; that all secular learning is unnecessary to the wise man and unedifying to the fool; that not only in ethics, politics and theology but in the

arts too the Bible is richer than all the Greek classics put together. The vehemence and onesidedness of his argument reveals the hold of what he is resisting. He does resist it, but by trampling it underfoot rather than by integrating it into his life's overruling purpose.

At first sight, *Samson Agonistes* might be a demonstration of Jesus' point that poetry can do without the Athenians. There is no classical imagery, for the drama is taken from the Bible at a period when the characters could have known nothing whatever about the Greeks. But even if every allusion to the Greeks is eliminated, there is no eliminating their sense of form, once it has truly possessed the mind of a poet; and this is what Milton's Jesus overlooked. *Samson Agonistes* is a flawless classical tragedy, except that, as in *Paradise Lost*, the un-Greek sense of values distorts the form from within, in a big way. The single great action is an action of submission. Samson is resolute in self-conquest, and rises before our eyes from the abandonment of despair to the confidence of self-abnegation; but he is not the hero.

> All the contest is now
> Twixt God and Dagon.

Samson and Manoa and the Chorus are all watching God, speculating on the mystery of his dealings with men, asking how he will vindicate his glory and his power, and when the action is completed it is God, not Samson, who stands fully revealed.

In *Paradise Lost* the imaginative energy was largely concentrated in Satan, the rebel against God's will. Samson, a figure no less massive, is God's willing instrument. If this is an index of the poet's mind it seems that Milton, in this last work, hadended the struggle with himself. And curiously, the last lines of each of the poems here surveyed endorse this, as if Milton had foreseen his own mental journey. The Angels at the end of the *Nativity Ode* are 'in order seviceable'—ready for a battle to come. At the end of *Lycidas* the uncouth swain

rose, and twitch'd his Mantle blew;
Tomorrow to fresh Woods, and Pastures new.

At the end of *Paradise Lost* Adam and Eve set out to face an unknown life :—

The World was all before them, where to choose
Thir place of rest, and Providence thir guide:
They hand in hand with wandring steps and slow,
Through Eden took thir solitarie way.

At the end of *Paradise Regained* Jesus, unobserved,

Home to his Mothers house private return'd.

—but the reader knows that he has not yet acted out his predestined task; he has only prepared himself to do so. Only in *Samson Agonistes* the action is truly brought to an end, 'with calm of mind, all passion spent'. Had Milton lived for another ten years it is hard to imagine what further road his poetry could have travelled.

He lived through an age when only the half-hearted could avoid taking sides. One half of himself took sides against the other and triumphed by inflexible will: but it was a costly victory, for much had to go down with the old gods and the complexities they stood for. At the end of the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus' old nurse came into the banquet hall to see him standing, blood-spattered, among the bodies of the suitors, she let out a yell of triumph. Odysseus checked her sternly with 'Be silent, woman! It is unholy to exult over dead men.' In *Samson Agonistes* when news of the massacre reaches the Chorus they sing their exultation over enemies fallen

While thir hearts were jocund and sublime,
Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine,
And fat regorg'd of Bulls and Goats.

(1676)

Samson's hardness one can accept; his relentless answer to Delilah—'All wickedness is weakness'—is stern to himself too, and is a necessary preparation for the trial of strength to

come. But this gloating of non-combatants over slaughter is repulsive. It is the dark side of the terrible singlemindedness of these whose god is the only true god, and a god of battles at that, and it makes one think with relief of Homer's humane detachment, and regret that Milton's early humanism had to evaporate in the flame of his zeal.

Perhaps the limitation is Milton's own; perhaps if the spirit of forgiveness had been in him the Christ of *Paradise Lost* might have been a more satisfying conception who could have transformed the poem. Or perhaps the fault was in his times, that burnt away man's humanity in ideological warfare. At any rate *Samson Agonistes* is like a hill of flint, stark, without a handful of soil for a grain of compassion to take root; grand, with repellent hardness inseparable from the grandeur.

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[1]Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I. x. 53-4.

[2]*The Poetical Works of Dryden*, edited by George R. Noyes, the Cambridge Edition (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), p. 288.

[3]*Paradise Regained*, II, 220—23.

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WORDSWORTH'S CONCEPT OF JOY

Wordsworth's concept of Joy is intimately related to his concepts of Imagination and Power. He regards it as the primary condition of the creative principle of Imagination and the spontaneous expression of Power that lies at the heart of the universe. It is also the end of Reason. On a plane of sheer physical reactions to the beauty and awe of life it may express the 'dizzy raptures' of a boy, or the 'passion' and 'appetite' of a young man, but on a higher level of feeling it expresses the very 'power of harmony' in the 'life of things' (*Tintern Abbey*). It is the essence of the cosmos, and is synonymous with its 'life':

> in all things now
> I saw one life, and felt that it was joy.
>
> (*Prelude* II, 429)

In the press of 'self-destroying, transitory things' that which subsists and ultimately remains is this 'Composure and ennobling Harmony': it is the 'Soul of Beauty and enduring life' (*Prelude* VII, 736-40).

The beauteous forms of Nature, apart from evoking emotional response, have the power to impress us with the principle of 'joy' which is the 'life' of the whole universe. One who 'lives and breathes For noble purposes of mind' discovers this principle (*Excursion* IV, 830-31). The 'common countenance of earth and heaven' speaks a 'higher language' to him. He feels

> Incumbencies more awful, visitings
> Of the Upholder of the tranquil Soul,
> Which underneath all passion lives secure
> A steadfast life.
>
> (*Prelude* III, 115)

At this moment of feeling all natural forms respire with life. As the poet says, 'I saw them feel:

> the great mass
> Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all
> That I beheld respired with inward meaning.
> Thus much for the one Presence, and the Life
> Of the great whole.
>
> (*Prelude* III, 126)

Expressing his gratitude to the 'Powers' of Nature Wordsworth declares that he found in them

> A never-failing principle of joy,
> And purest passion.
>
> (*Prelude* II, 465)

'Passion' has certainly an emotional undertone, but the poet is concerned not only with an aesthetic reaction to the colours and forms of Nature, but also with the value of the universe as a whole. His soul goes out to participate in this value. In *The Excursion* he tells us how to commune with Nature:

> the Man—
> Who, in this spirit, communes with the Forms
> Of nature, who with understanding heart
> Both knows and loves such objects as excite
> No morbid passions, no disquietude,
> No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must feel
> The joy of that pure principle of love
> So deeply, that. unsatisfied with aught
> Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
> But seek for objects of a kindred love
> In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.
>
> (IV, 1207)

It is implied here that the natural objects are a source of aesthetic enjoyment. Further, because of the exquisite combinations of their shapes and colours, they excite 'no morbid passions, no disquietude, No vengeance, and no hatred': in other words, as the poet said in *Tintern Abbey*, it is their privilege to lead us from 'joy to joy'. So far the passage is simple, but how are we to explain the 'joy of that pure principle of love' which one feels in creation? As we analyse the

passage, we find the poet associating the pleasure derived from the forms of Nature with the following assumptions:

1. Joy is basic to creation.
2. It is related to the 'Order of Nature' as interpreted variously by scientists, metaphysicians, and theologians.
3. It is integral to Love.

What the poet says about Nature is influenced by these assumptions, besides being coloured by emotion. 'Joy' as the 'life' of the creation develops into 'love' of it. What was or seemed to be an immanent value of creation as 'joy' is subsumed in its self-transcending character ('love'), but in this process 'joy' does not lose its spontaneity, nor does 'love' become a mere dogma. The objects of Nature tend to become a body of symbols, and joy in them or love of them causes the symbols to absorb the values symbolised. Every object thus acquires a power of its own, connoted by terms like 'kindred joy' and 'kindred love'.

In order to appreciate 'joy' as a 'never-failing principle of life', it is necessary to distinguish it from its metaphoric use in poetry.

The following lines addressed to the Celandine may be taken as illustrative of joy in a metaphoric way:

> Prophet of delight and mirth,
> Ill requited upon earth;
> Herald of a mighty band,
> Of a joyous train ensuing.
>
> (*To the Small Celandine*)

The same may be said of the following lines to the Daisy which speak of the 'cheerful Flower' as 'alert and gay' :

> Child of the Year! that round dost run
> Thy pleasant course—when day's begun
> As ready to salute the sun
> As lark or leveret.
>
> (*To the Daisy*)

In both the passsages the poet makes use of the simple device of Personification. The Celandine is a prophet of delight

and mirth, and also a herald of a mighty band of joyous followers. In the same way, the Daisy is a child of the spring, alert and gay in its pleasant course of life. In another poem on the same flower the poet played with similes in his 'fond and idle' humour. The flower is a 'demure' nun, a 'sprightly maiden', a 'queen' with a crown of rubies, a starveling in a scanty vest, a 'little Cyclops with one eye' ('To the same Flower'). Apparently the feeling of joy which the flower conveys and itself embodies is spent in 'freaks'. Wordsworth does not doubt the value of joy in these objects, but he is describing it under the capricious processes of Fancy, and the effects as such, in his own words, are 'surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined'.[1]

Leaving aside metaphoric expression, 'Joy' is apprehended by Wordsworth as illustrative of natural truth. When the objects of Nature are grasped with acute perception they become symbols of joy in the natural order. Consider, for instance, the following lines from the *Immortality Ode* where sensuous animism is blended with natural truth:

> The Rainbow comes and goes,
> And lovely is the Rose,
> The Moon doth with delight
> Look round her when the heavens are bare,
> Waters on a starry night
> Are beautiful and fair;
> The sunshine is a glorious birth.

The images of rainbow, rose, moon, starry night, clear sky, beautiful and fair waters, the glorious sunshine are all images of loveliness, and they are apprehended with such simplicity and intensity of feeling that their cumulative effect is one of joyful creation, of 'glorious birth'. The passage reveals the poet's grasp of the natural truth. The consciousness of joy in the universe is so little distinguished from sensuous impressions that sense and soul are interfused. There is an ever-creating novelty in the universe which lurks in the very apex of our images and irradiates them with a feeling of delight. This idea

is made explicit in the following lines where 'unwearied joy' is said to be bestowed on an object of Nature:

> It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in thee
> With purer robes than those of flesh and blood,
> And hath bestowed on thee a safer good;
> Unwearied joy.
>
> (*Miscellaneous Sonnets*, II, XXXI)

The spontaneity of joy in the object, the brook, is not a mere metaphoric expression of its ever-flowing movement, but of the reality that abides in it. Take, again, the lines from the poem *The Kitten and Falling Leaves* which Wordsworth placed among 'Poems of the Fancy':

> Such a light of gladness breaks,
> Pretty kitten from thy freaks,—
> Spreads with such a living grace
> O'er my little Dora's face.

The poet is expressing here his faith that every creature in the order of Nature is endowed with joy. No wonder then if the 'light of gladness' breaking from the kitten's freaks spreads over Dora's face. One may be inclined to dismiss the poem as a play of 'charming fancy' or metaphor,[2] but Wordsworth wanted the truth of the poem to be taken seriously. Robinson records that Wordsworth quoted from this poem 'to show that he had connected even the kitten with the great, awful, and mysterious powers of Nature'.[3]

We may discuss here Wordsworth's lyric, 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' to show how joy is associated with natural truth. First we have Dorothy's account in her *Journal*:

> It was a threatening, misty morning, but mild. We set off after dinner from Eusmere. . . . The wind was furious, and we thought we must have returned. . . . When we were in the woods beyond Galarrow Park we saw a few daffodills close to the water-side. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little cobny had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more; and at last, under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew am g

the mossy stones about and about them; some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with wind, that blew upon them over the lake; they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing. The wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot, and a few stragglers a few yards higher up; but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity, unity, and life of that one busy highway.[4]

Dorothy's account contains the raw material of her brother's poem. The flowers are apprehended by her as alive with human qualities. Among themselves they seem to be aware of their collective joy. There are, of course, 'a few stragglers' also, but the rest live as in a 'colony' tossing, reeling, dancing, and thereby contributing to social, mutual joy. Some of them, apparently tired, are resting their heads on stones as pillows. Two years later when Wordsworth recalled the scene he simplified the multiplicity of sensation recorded by Dorothy. The 'furious' wind was changed into a mild 'breeze' in keeping with the movement and joy of the flowers. The few stragglers that boycotted the 'jocund company' were dropped out. The charming but fanciful image of some of the daffodils resting against stones was also set aside. Wordsworth concentrated on Dorothy's focal perception—the 'colony' of flowers that 'tossed and reeled and danced'. He described them by the word 'crowd', further reinforced by terms like 'host', 'never-ending', 'continuous', 'ten thousand'. The key-word in the poem is 'dancing'. The flowers 'dance' in the breeze (stanza 1); they toss their heads in 'sprightly dance', while the stars shine and twinkle on the milky way (stanza 2); the waves too 'dance' beside them, but they outdo 'the sparkling waves in glee' (stanza3); the heart of the poet 'dances' with them (stanza 4). The vast number of the flowers also resounds in the numberlessness of stars and waves. Their joy is linked up with the 'twinkling' of stars and 'sparkling' of waves. Thus flowers, stars, and waves come to symbolise joy in the natural order. The note of cosmic harmony penetrates all elements. Set over against this universal harmony or 'glee' is the brooding spirit of man—the lonely

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