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BOOK REVIEWS

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THE SCOPE AND LIMITS OF THE FREUDIAN APPROACH TO LITERATURE

In such works as *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1917), and *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1940), Sigmund Freud gave modern psychology a new understanding of the depths and dynamics of the human personality. As the matrix of personality, the *id* is the totality of what an individual has inherited psychologically, including the instincts. From this inner world of subjective experience, the *ego* and *superego* become differentiated. Because the organism must do business with the outside world, the *ego* comes into existence and becomes the means of communicating with reality. If the *id* is preoccupied with the needs of our subjective reality, the *ego* distinguishes between what the *id* wants and what the external world requires. Thus in simple terms the *id* represents the *pleasure principle* whereas the ego embodies the *reality principle*. It should be borne in mind, however, that the *ego* is at the service of the *id* since the *ego* seeks to fulfil the *id*'s needs in such a way as is acceptable to the environment. Indeed, the *ego* uses its energy to integrate all three systems.

A third system, the *superego*, is the watchdog of traditional values and ideals of society as we have learned them. Representing the ideal rather than the real, the *superego* seeks achievement and perfection more than anything else. It does this in three successive stages: 1) by inhibiting the sexual and aggressive impulses of the *id*; 2) by admonishing the *ego* to exchange moral goals for animal goals; and

3) by striving for perfection. In simple terms the *id* is governed by biological hungers, the *ego* by psychological satisfactions, and the *superego* by the need of social recognition.

Of considerable renown is Freud's discussion of the *life* and *instincts*. Evidently the *libido*—characterized by the instincts of hunger, thirst, and sex—expresses the *life instinct*. Counter to this drive is the death instinct which is destructive by nature and may either turn outward against others or inward toward self and lead to suicide.

The human psyche is an interplay of driving forces *(cathexes)*, which are inhibited by *defence mechanisms* or *anticathexes*. The opposition between these forces explains all personality conflicts. The tensions we feel are due to the counteraction between a drive and a restraining force. As a result of such conflicts, one experiences a variety of anxieties, which are warning signals to the individual to do something positive about his troubling situation. The person learns to resolve his tensions, conflicts, and anxieties in two basic ways: 1) by *sublimation*, i e., by seeking to reach an admirable cultural achievement, or 2) by setting up *defence mechanisms*, by which to deny or distort reality so as to make it *appear* less threatening. There are two commonly known defence mechanisms. One is projection where one attributes one's own feelings or attitudes to others, such as 'He dislikes me' for 'I hate his guts'. Another form of defence mechanism is to pretend warm emotions or concern for someone in order to disguise indifference or dislike.

Closely connected with Freud's psychoanalysis is the concept of the *Oedipus Complex*. Oedipus—the Theban hero—slew his father, married his mother, and begot children by her. In psychoanalytical reasoning, the feelings aroused by the *libido* are such that a male child develops a sexual desire for the mother, but represses it for fear of punishment from the father, and if the child's desire is recognized, the father may feel hostile toward the son. Sometimes the boy's fear

develops into a *fear of castration.* The *superego* develops in the child and acts against his incestuous and aggressive inclinations.

The concepts of Freud naturally led to characteristic methods of research. These may be described as follows : 1) Since a patient's mind represents a totality, his psyche must be an interlocking network of experiences. Thus the diagnostician can explore all evidence of these experiences via the patient's dreams and free associations, comparing and contrasting part of the evidence against another and striving to discover the internal consistency of that inner world. 2) When Freud had a hunch as to the dominant tendency of a personality, he checked and rechecked it many times before deciding upon a final interpretation. 3) Freud was ready at any time to revise his hypothesis in the light of new evidence which might confute his earlier intuitions. 4) Of utmost importance, the information gleaned from the patient's free association of ideas was studied for the manner of stating those associations, and the psychoanalyst sought to fathom their meanings. Freud himself developed a fine sensitivity to slips of the tongue, errors of memory, and mistakes of any kind, drawing astute inferences from these. Regardless of the apparent contradictions or disconnectedness of evidene, Freud through infinite patience was usually able to decipher a logical or coherent pattern which reveals the secret of the personality.

What usually strikes the non-specialist's imagination is Freud's concern with the neurotic and psychotic. Writers usually associate Freud's psychoanalysis with uncovering *traumatic* experience which brings about regression to an earlier stage of development. Indeed, the clinical study of *traumata* reveals how the mind may vortex about a psychic wound, and a patient's free associations often reach back to the source of a forgotten grief.

Twentieth century American and British literature frequently portrayed the pathos or tragedy of traumatic victims.

Sherwood Anderson's collection of short stories, *Winesburg, Ohio*, presented intense psychological portraits of neurotic individuals. His novel *Dark Laughter* satirized pseudo-individuals abased by sexual neurosis. The playwright Eugene O'Neil combined Freudian psychology and expressionistic dramatic devices to awaken audiences to man's subconscious life. William Faulkner's use of 'interior monologue' set forth memories which haunted the lives of characters in *The Sound and the Furv* and *As I Lay Dying*. Arthur Miller in *Death of a Salesman* depicted in the figure of Willy Loman an everyman pulled down into a whirlpool of psychotic self-pity. The English novelist D. H. Lawrence used the Oedipus Complex in his *Sons and Lovers*. These representative examples clearly show that writers have *consciously* used Freud's theories as a means to explore greater depths of characterization and to reveal a philosophy of life.

When the psychoanalytical approach is employed to examine literary works with the pronounced and declared use of Freudian theory, one cannot really object to the employment of methods adopted from that science to analyze and interpret literature—if the critic conscientiously uses Freudian terminology and methodology

A well-known disciple of Freud who made conscientious use of psychoanalytical concepts (in *Hamlet and Oedipus*) was Dr Ernest Jones. Jones examined Hamlet as if the personage were a real person, and through Hamlet he studied the psyche of the author Shakespeare. Jones limits his view of human nature to characteristic mental illnesses, and evidently he believes the destiny of a person is determined by inner and outer causes over which the individual has little or no control Like Freud, he regards man as a victim of childhood *traumata*, uncontrollable impulses, and mental disease.

In his study of the play *Hamlet*, Jones clearly states the hypothesis for his analysis : 'this deterministic point of view . . . is the characteristic . . . of modern psychology.'[1] If

this determinism is his major premise, Jones's minor premise is to attribute Hamlet's suffering and inner conflicts to a psychopathological origin. According to this view, the play portrays the 'hero's unavailing fight against what can only be called a disordered mind.'[2] Jones considers the mystery of the play to centre on Hamlet's delay in revenging his father's murder, and the 'cause' of that inability to act is Hamlet's *Oedipus Complex*, i. e., Hamlet's *superego* acts against his own incestuous drives to prevent him from striking out against the father image represented by the treacherous uncle Claudius.[3] Jones then goes beyond the psychoanalysis of Hamlet as personage to attribute the source of the play to Shakespeare's attempt to work out his own neuroses and psychoses. Thus the psychoanalyst ascribes the *Oedipus Complex* to Shakespeare himself and asserts that this complex is the psychic source of *Hamlet*.[4]

It must be said that Jones's general approach in *Hamlet and Oedipus* is thorough. Recapitulating the main interpretations of *Hamlet* of the past, Jones provides a sufficient context for his own analysis and interpretation. He complements this erudite approach by showing how the Hamlet story relates to similar myths, and finally he explicates the play by extrapolating details from Shakespeare's little known life.

Despite Jones's methodical development of his thesis, there are a number of objections to his psychoanalytical study of Hamlet. First, Shakespeare had no knowledge of Freud or of modern psychological theory to consciously apply Freudian concepts in the creation of the play. Thus at best Shakespeare *unconsciously* represented the *Oedipus Complex* in *Hamlet*. To be sure, a counter objection would be that clinical patients themselves often lack psychoanalytical knowledge, which ignorance does not prevent them from being psychoanalyzed. Nevertheless, it is difficult to accept Jones's hypothesis that the presence of *unconscious* elements in any psyche *necessarily* and *always* finds expression in con-

sciously controlled efforts and willed actions. Indeed, artistic selection would tend to exclude the psycho-neurotic and include the healthful and socially admissible in order that the communication be as successful and acceptable as possible. One's professional performance as compensation for one's private defects may sublimate these unconscious weaknesses or quite overcome their tendency to disorder. In fact, it appears axiomatic that where clarity and order reign supreme in artistic or literary composition, there all or nearly all personal imperfections have been overcome.

The second objection is to the assumption that Shakespeare himself was a victim of the very neurosis of his protagonist Hamlet. Were we to use that assumption on all Shakespeare's characters and plays, we would quickly discover the absurdity of Jones's pseudo-scientific hypothesis. For if Shakespeare's mind reflected the supposed complexes, neuroses and psychoses of each and every hero or villain in the whole range of his histories, comedies and tragedies, Shakespeare would surely be the world's greatest case history of a multiple split personality Rather than being a lunatic of the proportions of a genius Shakespeare possessed the positive power to create characters who will continue to teach men good sense and the meaning of human destiny for centuries to come.

The third objection to Jones's study of *Hamlet* is that he wilfully forces a psycho-neurotic model (the *Oedipus Complex*) on a basically sound-minded protagonist (Hamlet) and then selects all evidence from within the play which seems to corroborate the psychoanalytical point of view. However, the reason Jones's psychoanalytical interpretation is based on inadequate evidence from within the play is that he neglects or intentionally excludes evidence contrary to his supposition. Freud himself would hardly have committed such an error or followed such an un-scientific procedure.[5]

For the purpose of illustrating the failure of Jones's psychoanalytical approach to explicate the play, let us

provisionally accept the *Oedipus Complex* as *modus operandi* and apply it to another major figure in *Hamlet*.

If anyone may be said to suffer from this complex, it is King Claudius. Younger than the queen, Claudius was also the cadet to the elder Hamlet. Hence Claudius satisfies most of the conditions we might diagnose as the *Oedipus Complex*, for Claudius is the real usurper. By killing Hamlet Senior and marrying his elder brother's wife, Claudius psychologically killed the father figure in the older Hamlet. Since the Prince jeopardizes the benefits of Claudius's Oedipal murder and the continued sexual conquest of the Queen, Claudius acts to have the youth executed (in England) and that failing, he plots to destroy Hamlet through the rash Laertes, who is impelled to revenge the death of his own father Polonius. Contrary to Jones's reasoning, if the Prince actually suffered from the *Oedipus Complex* that state of mind should have made it all the easier for him to kill Claudius as the usurper of his own and his father's position, rather than inhibit Hamlet's action against Claudius. Indeed, Hamlet may have been revolted by his perception of the *Oedipus Complex* exemplified by the hasty intimacy between Claudius and the Queen. Such intuitive awareness would explain in part Hamlet's bitter reproach to his mother. Thus his anger with her may be regarded as his loyal representation of his father's memory to a faithless wife. Furthermore, Hamlet's antic disposition is contrasted to Ophelia's real insanity, and Laertes's hot-headed reaction to Polonius's death reveals just how rational and circumspect is Hamlet's own vengeance.

In sum, *if* we were to accept the *Oedipus Complex* as a viable concept with which to examine *Hamlet*, the complex would apply to the villain rather than to the protagonist. This difference is not without significance, for it would thus be recognized as an evil or as a sick inclination requiring sublimation. Just as a physician does not have every disease he diagnoses and cures and just as the psycho-

analyst himself does not have every neurosis or psychosis he detects, so Shakespeare himself may have recognized the *Oedipus Complex* in his villain and portayed it as a villainous propensity. In the same way Hamlet sensed the loathsome implications of the incestuous relationship between Claudius and the Queen. Indeed, the consequences of Oedipal action were shown by Sophocles to be rooted in *hubris* (overweening pride) and *hamartia* (blindness), which are more truly archetypal 'causes'. Their Elizabethan corollary, *ambition* and *unscrupulousness*, would seem to provide a more viable basis for the interpretation of *Hamlet* than the more restricted and less universally active *Oedipus Complex* which is supposed to be essentially limited to children between three to six years of age rather than to be characteristic of the adult.

In any case, the supposed psychic hiatus between Hamlet-Oedipus Complex-Shakespeare simply is not proved by Jones in the face of counter possibilities. The tenuous analogy of most psychoanalysts-turned-literary-critics is the Romantic notion of the artist as neurotic, which in the entire range of literature must be limited to very few authors such as Nerval, Byron. Baudelaire, and Verlaine. With an assumption as questionable as that of Jones, Freudian literary criticism seems bound to fail.

Freudian Psychocriticism in France

In recent years there has emerged in France a Freudian school of psychocriticism which seeks out an author's involuntary association of ideas beneath his conscious structuring of literary texts. Whereas psychoanlysts like Ernest Jones had been preoccupied with the artist who created the works French psychocritics like Charles Mauron keep the author's texts in view.

Representative of one important trend in *la nouvelle critique* (the French 'new criticism'), Mauron's *Des Metaphores obsedantes au mythe personnel* (1963) and subsequent

works employs a psychocritical method which pursues four main operations : 1) an author's works are superimposed in order to discover patterns of obsessional images; 2) the themes which thereby emerge are analyzed so that the author's personal myth may be revealed; 3) shaped by psychocritical analysis, the material is further sifted until a dynamic image of the unconscious personality is found; and 4) these psychocritical findings are tested by the author's biography.

For Mauron, psychocriticism is different from psychoanalysis only in degree, and the method he pursues aims at being scientific instead of literary. He studies the poetry of Mallarme, Baudelaire, Nerval and Valery in order to discover their personal myths, which he believes are often the manifestation of a superior self. This myth reveals how the personal unconscious reacts to circumstances as representative of *homo sapiens* To be sure, the psychocritical interpreter needs a scientific knowledge of the unconscious.

Although Mauron's viewpoint and procedure at first sight appear orderly enough, Professor Robert Emmet Jones in *Panorama de la Nouvelle Critique en France de Gaston Bachelard a Jean Paul Weber* (1968) attacks the fundamental hypotheses of Mauron's approach.[6] To begin with, Emmet Jones questions whether Freudian complexes are indeed applicable to the whole human race (p. 162). He doubts the validity of using biographical materials to verify the intrinsic study of the literary work itself (p. 164). Furthermore, he discredits the assumption that one's every conscious act is dictated solely by unconscious influences (p. 166), and he asks ironically whether only psychiatrists are qualified to write literary criticism (p.169).

Emmet Jones attacks in particular Mauron's psychic determinism because it limits the expressive significance of artistic creativity (p. 173). even though Mauron views the creative act as an effort of the individual consciousness to integrate the personality. Nor does Emmet Jones accept

the psychoanalytical model as capable of describing the poet's mind.

Professor Jones sees the determination to find Freudian figures everywhere as tending to make literary works into psychological cliches (pp. 177-8). As a matter of fact, the jargon adds nothing to our understanding (p. 183). Worse, by reducing literary analysis to a unique formula, the psychocritical approach has narrowed the horizons of the literary work. Mauron's formula may work well enough with a few authors with a homogenous *oeuvre*, but any attempt to apply the psychocritical approach to major figures such as Victor Hugo, Honore de Balzac, or Moliere is bound to reveal its limitations (p. 174). Indeed, Mauron's study of Racine has reduced the great tragedian, 'to a series of unconscious desires and traumatisms' (p. 185). Emmet Jones concludes that the psychocritical approach is based on a pseudo-science.

Professor Emmet Jones is not the only literary scholar to voice his objections to the psychoanalytical approach to literature. Rene Wellek in *Concepts of Criticism* (1963) disapproves of the view that the artist is a neurotic whose creativity keeps him from a nervous breakdown. Furthermore, Wellek finds the prevalent search for sexual symbols to be not only boring but also a violation of the meaning of the artwork.[7] In a broader context. Wellek in the *Theory of Literature* (1957) doubts that the psychology of an author can be understood through assigning 'the ideas, feelings, views, virtues. and vices of their heroes' to their author's personality. No such cause and effect relationship between the author's private life and the artwork exists.[8] Thus Wellek rejects the basic assumption of Ernest Jones's *Hamlet and Oedipus*. In effect, the only psychology of literature Wellek finds admissible is the study of types and laws intrinsic to the literary work itself.[9]

Another scholar to question the validity of the psychoanalytical approach to literature is Herbert J. Muller. In

Science and Criticism (1964), he regarded Freud's interpretation of psyche as a manifestation of dualistic reasoning. Muller contrasts Freud, who split mind into a fundamental opposition between *id* and *superego*,[10] to Adler who 'interprets behaviour as an organized striving toward a definite goal in which consciousness and unconsciousness are not antagonists but different means to a common end.'[11] Furthermore, Muller explains why depth psychology has failed to truly account for psyche. When 'Freud analyzed only a function of the total personality, . . . he misinterpreted the whole because he tried to explain it in terms of the part; he misinterpreted the part because he ignored its organic relation to the whole.'[12]

If the reader is reluctant to accept the judgment of Freud or the Freudian approach from someone outside the field of depth psychology, it should be made clear how Carl G. Jung's view of psyche has marked differences from Freud's. In the *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (1933), Jung does not deny that many neuroses are traumatic in origin; he contests the assertion that they arise without exception from some crucial childhood experience.[13] He sees Freud's concept of sexuality as so elastic that anything happening to the individual can be interpreted according to that psychic prime mover (p. 21). Jung admits that the Freudian viewpoint corresponds to psychic realities, but it does not represent the sole truth (p. 56). In other words, Freud interprets man almost exclusively in the light of man's defects (p. 116).

To Jung, Freud's teaching is 'one-sided in that it generalizes from facts that are relevant only to neurotic states of mind'. Within these limits 'Freud's teaching is true and valid', but it is 'not a psychology of the healthy mind.' In short, Freud failed to examine his assumptions adequately (p 118). Indeed, the contrast between Freud and Jung rests on the 'essential differences in their basic assumptions' (p 128). Thus Jung departed from Freud's way because Jung came upon facts which required him to alter his theory. Failure promp-

ted Jung to change his perspective and his methods (p. 57).

Jung challenges whether psychology can seriously be used as approach to literary criticism. He notes that the proliferation of psychologies in the twentieth century amounts to a confession that psychologists are perplexed as to what psyche is (p. 29). Furthermore, 'the present state of development of psychology does not allow us to establish those rigorous causal relations which we expect in science' (p. 153). In fact, it may be asserted that creativity is the very antithesis of causality, and thus it is more or less senseless to attempt to impose a causal explanation on an artwork.

Jung also finds it an error to try to explain artistic creation from personal factors found in the artist. As he puts it, 'the truth is that it (such an explanation) takes away from psychological study of the work of art and confronts us with the psychic disposition of the poet himself (p. 160). Freud's *Leonardo da Vinci* sought to unlock the meaning of a work of art by exploring the personal experiences of the artist (p. 167). Jung categorically denies that such analysis accounts for the work itself (p. 168). The artist as a person must be distinguished from the artist as creator. Indeed, the ruthless passion for creation may override every personal desire (p. 169). It is his art which explains the artist 'and not the insufficiencies and conflicts of his personal life (p 170).

By the 1970's Jung's arguments were joined by those of other eminent psychologists. H H. Murray, A. Angyal, A. Maslow, and V. A Frankl have largely rejected the major hypothesis of Freudian psychoanalysis, I. e., scientific determinism.

Summary of Objections to Freud's Psychoanalysis

The objections to the Freudian approach stem from the consequences of Freud's assumptions, and these objections may be summed up as follows. Freud's psychoanalysis

rests on the questionable assumption that psyche may be fully interpreted in the light of its weaknesses (neuroses, complexes, and psychoses). Apparently Freud thought that parts of the psyche represented the whole. Hence the psychoanalytical approach is bound to misinterpret a literary work not expressly using Freudian theory, for this approach judges the whole meaning of a poem, story or play according to the restricted meanings of a limited number of psychic elements. In this way the significance of a literary work is violated by the psychoanalytical preoccupation with a few parts to the exclusion of others.[14]

A second serious objection to the Freudian approach is that psychoanalysis rests on the philosophy of scientific determinism. (The theory regards all natural occurences as determined by anterior causes or according to natural laws. As applied to psyche, determinism is the theory that ulterior causes determine men's decisions.) Based on such an assumption, psychoanalytical criticism cannot possibly fathom the meaning of man's creativity. If anything accounts for the way an artwork coordinates and integrates human experience into a meaningful whole, it is creativity, not causality. Put another way, in so far as a literary work surpasses the conditions and influences of its time, causality is not effective, and the truly original work clearly manifests its inherent power to transcend the past. Thus genuine creativity cannot be explained by causality.

A third objection is the deceptively self-evident equation between author-hero-work. In fact, the fictional hero and the literary work always go beyond the author's life in some way. The reason for this fact is that personality prevents any perfect remembrance of past events, and in the literary work, personality and talent transform experience into as universal a meaning as possible.

Another reason that the equation between author-hero-work is deceptive is that it is based on a concept of causality derived from physics. According to the logic of physics,

such symmetrical causation does not exist in the realm of psyche when effects are far less than the cause, as in the case of apathy, or far greater as with *traumata* Thus in the world of psyche, if such symmetry may be evidenced in our aesthetic notions of balance, harmony, and unity, nevertheless, the psyche is ruled by asymmetry between cause and effect. Indeed, many techniques of poetry, drama and fiction are used to build up psychic expectations and suspense, to intensify experience, and finally to effect a *catharsis* of pity and anguish. Literature provides such emotional gratification by reason of the fact that psyche responds sympathetically and imaginatively to cause. Thus the effect of literature is brought about by appealing to the asymmetrical nature of psyche. If, in the future, students wish to use a psychological approach to literature, they must find another method of analysis than that based on symmetrical concept of psychic causation.

One final comment on the capacities of psyche is necessary. If neuroses, complexes and psychoses show the negative effects of psychic asymmetry, man's creativity manifests the positive powers of the mind. In so far as a literary work transcends reality by organizing and intensifying the experience of it in a meaningful way, there we find causality subordinated, subdued, or transformed into a higher reality by some creative power in man. By shaping a tiny idea into a work of art, the mind constructively surpasses its own past; and any causal account of that process cannot adequately explain what has taken place.

Conclusion

Let us now examine the most sacrosanct assumption of the Freudian psychoanalytical school of criticism. By comparing and contrasting its precepts and methods with those of its closest kin, the intrinsic study of literature, we can test the validity of Freudian assumptions as applied to literature. The proposed comparison and contrast should demonstrate

how erroneous assumptions may lead us to misread facts, to misuse methods, and to lose precious years in futile research.

The assumptions that psychoanalysis and the intrinsic study of literature *seem* to share are the following :

1) Both the psyche and the literary work embody a self-contained, coherent order of human experience.

2) Both the psyche and the literary work are amenable to a method of investigation which will reveal the self-consistency of the manifest. intrinsic order.

3) Both the psyche and the literary work deal with the human being at grips with life-and-death situations. Both deal with problems of anxiety, pain, suffering, and the elusiveness of happiness

4) Both the psyche and the literary product show the infinite variety of human experience as well as reveal certain archetypal characteristics.

5) Both the psyche and the literary product aim at discovering some meaning to experience, and both shape or pattern experience in such a way as to give inchoate sensations and sentiments some kind of significance.

These apparent similarities between psyche and literature have led literary students to believe there is sufficient basis for psychoanalyzing literature and authors.

Unfortunately, to each of the above assumptions there is a serious objection which invalidates Freudian psychoanalytical theory and methods when applied to literature. These objections may be stated as follows :

1) Psychoanalysis studies the unconscious associations in a patient's dreams or in his semi-conscious associations when preaccupied with self. The study of these associations reveals the deeper preoccupations of the subconscious. By contrast, the literary product is the outcome of the conscious choice and artistic selection of experiences most important to convey meaning. Put another way, the revelations of a patient are due to a will-less state of mind whereas the

artist's product is due to discipline, sustained effort, and a clearly conscious act of the will.

There is also a difference in the self-contained, coherent order of human experience examined by the psychoanalyst and the experience portrayed by the literary artist. The psychoanalyst uncovers subconscious preoccupations and complexes whereas the creative artist has transformed subconscious materials via sublimation to a superior order of understanding. (This must surely be true of the greatest writers such as Shakespeare, Racine, Moliere, Dante, and Dostoyevsky who are able to communicate human experience effectively across different cultures.)

2) Although the method of investigation pursued by the psychoanalyst is adequate to his purposes, it is inadequate in examining the intrinsic order and self-consistency of an artwork because the clinician is only looking for subconscious materials or complexes, not for the sublimated expression of experience. At least the Freudian approach does not look for any possible macifestation of the suprapersonality characteristic of the truly creative mind.

3) While both psyche and literature deal with life and death situations, and while both confront human suffering and the elusiveness of happiness, only art and literature express a philosophy of life. That is, by reason of coming to terms with fate or destiny, the pessimistic artist or optimistic author manifests a superiority of sheer intelligence over that of neurotics and psychotics. Indeed, the attitude of mental patients is that of a victim whereas the outlook of the artist is basically heroic. In general, psychonalysts show little interest in the heroic. Put another way, the artist's understanding and superiority, which are the result of creative thinking, simply surpass in every way the philosophical determinism which is the core of psychoanalysis.

4) Whereas both psyche and literature reveal the variety of human experience, the psychoanalytical approach tends to dwell on an image of man as unstable, unpredictable

(except in so far as being characteristically neurotic or psychotic), irresponsible, and unable to cope with the problems of life. It tends to make mores and ethics appear relative to individual biological and psychological needs. This psychic relativity is coupled with a view of human nature as in a state of perpetual flux because the psyche is eratically actuated by fears and anxieties. This is a kind of Heraclitan view of the inner world of the individual at war with himself, a battle between lower instincts and higher impulses, a victim of his own inner dualism since he is unable dialectically to resolve conflicts except through the agency of the god-clinician.

In opposition to this image of man, literature has provided us with an idea of man's more stable and enduring traits which enable him either to survive, to understand, or to solve the problems of life creatively. Moreover, mores and ethics count in literature and are the reason for noble actions. Although literature has pictured the pathos and tragedy of human existence, it has also shown mankind at grips with existence—in combat with that which would humiliate or destroy the individual. These heroic propensities in man are seldom if ever explored by psychoanalysts. In sum, in Freudian depth psychology the archetype is man as victim. The archetype of man provided by literature gives humankind a choice between victimization and heroic resistance. Thus the Freudian psychoanalytical interpretation of literature must neglect much of what makes literature an art and a philosophy of life.

5) While it is true that both the psyche and the literary work aim at discovering some meaning to experience, psychoanalysis has a distinct and different view of semantic sense from that of intrinsic literary criticism. For psychoanalysis, meaning is to be found in the chaotic, the diseased, or in the deceptively senseless. Psychoanalytical meaning is that which reveals the patient's inability to come to terms with himself or his world. In literature, on the other hand,

the individual seeks his meaning in the world order or seeks out what makes life significant and worth living.

In so far as Freudian psychoanalysis is preoccupied with traumata and archetypes as psychic causes over which man has little or no control, this philosophy of mind is fatalistic. In so far as literature is preoccupied with human purpose, or even with the failure to find such purpose, literature is teleological. In other words, traditionally, literature has shown that mankind's deepest, most enduring instinct is to find one's place in the cosmic scheme of things and to synchronize the single destiny with the purpose manifest in the universe. If psychoanalysis reasons backward in time to the dark causes of human action, literature itself represents man as reasoning forward in time to the teleological meaning of human life. In so far as psychoanalysis neglects this vital awareness in man, this approach to literature must remain blind to the light that literature gives.

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NOTES

[1] Ernest Jones, *Hamlet and Oedipus* (Garden City, N. Y., 1954), p. 15.

[2] Ibid., p. 18.

[3] The core of Jones's argument appears on pages 91-103.

[4] Jones seems to have made only a limited use of Freud's theory of psyche to explain how an artwork springs from an artist's mind. Jones insists that the work arises from the *id* whereas an artistic composition is more likely to result from the interaction of *id, ego* and *superego* with the latter predominant. It would seem that the artist's higher consciousness (*superego* or suprapersonality) produces the artwork through sublimation rather than the subconscious. If true, art is the consequence of the healthful drives of the mind's superior functions rather than the manifestation of any complex arising out of the destructive impulses of a disordered mind.

[5] Indeed, Jones's logic simply disintegrates in the face of the more cogent view of *Hamlet* as a story of retribution. While Jones belie-

ves Hamlet's repugnance to revenge his father is due to the youth's *Oedipus Complex*, it must be obvious that revenge by murder must be repugnant to anyone of Hamlet's education and nobility of soul. In other words, Hamlet's task of revenging his father is hindered above all by his highly civilized intelligence and his educated conscience. Furthermore, the prince wants irrefutable proof that the king is a murderer so that Claudius can be brought to public justice. In short, Hamlet must prove to all the world that his uncle is guilty of fratricide—the most repellent crime to a Christian soul because it re-enacts the crime of Cain, which is a theme closer to Shakespeare's religious upbringing than any conscious use of the *Oedipus Complex*.

Obviously, then, Hamlet wants to bring justice, to set the time aright, not to commit murder. This difference makes us realize that Hamlet's moral problem is centred in the distinction between revenge and retribution. Revenge demands destroying an enemy and humiliating him, regardless of the means. Retribution, on the other hand, signifies acting for someone to punish a wrong done onto that person, and since such retribution is often regarded as an act of fate or providence, the agent is obliged to act in a moral way. By seeking vengeance in such a way in behalf of his father, Hamlet is avenging his father, not revenging himself. Hamlet is not a revenge play but a play of retribution.

[6] Robert Emmet Jones. *Panorama de la Nouvelle Critique en France de Gaston Bachelard a Jean Paul Weber* (Paris, [1968]), pp. 153-86. Further page-references are in the text.

[7] Rene Wellek. *Concepts of Criticism* (New Haven & London, 1963), p. 349. Wellek does point out an example of the judicious use of the psychological approach in Edmund Wilson's *The Wound and the Bow*.

[8] R. Wellek and A. Warren, 'Literature and Biography', *Theory of Literature* (New York 1956), pp. 65-6

[9] Ibid., 'Literature and Psychology', p. 69.

[10] Herbert J. Muller. *Science and Criticism: The Humanistic Tradition in Contemporary Thought* (New Haven & London, 1964), p. 155.

[11] Ibid., p. 147.

[12] Ibid., p. 147.

[13] Carl G. Jung. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (New York, 1933), p. 6.

[14] This is the main objection of the neo-Aristotelians to the New Critics, who, according to the Chicago scholars, tend to dwell too much on parts (ironies, paradoxes and the like) to the neglect of structural matters as depicted in Aristotle's *Poetics*.

Bernard J. Paris

BARGAINS WITH FATE : A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE'S MAJOR TRAGEDIES

A strange state of affairs has existed in Shakespeare criticism for the past fifty years. Shakespeare was gifted with remarkable powers of psychological intuition, and one of his greatest achievements was the creation of highly individualized characters who seem to have a life of their own and to invite the same kind of analysis that we give real human beings. In the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, these characters received much praise and attention; but since the 1930's, most critics have turned away from them as objects of study and have regarded those who talk about them in motivational terms as guilty of profound misunderstanding of the nature of literature. It has become a dogma of modern criticism that literary characters are not real people and that they are not to be understood as though they were: they do not belong to the real world in which people have internal motivations, but to a fictional world in which everything they are and do is part of the author's design, part of a teleological structure whose logic is determined by purely artistic considerations. We have made impressive advances in our appreciation of many aspects of Shakespeare's art; but under the influence of this dogma, we have retrogressed in our understanding of his characterization. We have insisted upon interpreting his plays as though they were about almost anything except the inner conflicts and interactions of the major characters. As a result, we have often distorted them beyond recognition and have failed to do justice to one of the chief sources of their power.

I am not suggesting, of course, that we should analyze *all* of Shakespeare's characters in motivational terms. To respond to literary characters appropriately, it is essential to recognize that there are different kinds of characterisation which require different strategies of interpretation. The best available taxonomy is that of Scholes and Kellogg, which distinguishes between aesthetic, illustrative, and mimetic characterization. Aesthetic characters are stock types who must be understood primarily in terms of their technical functions and their formal and dramatic effects. Illustrative characters are 'concepts in anthropoid shape or fragments of the human psyche parading as whole human beings.' We try to understand 'the principle they illustrate through their actions in a narrative framework.'[1] When we encounter a fully drawn mimetic character, 'we are justified in asking questions about his motivation based on our knowledge of the ways in which real people are motivated' (p. 87). Mimetic characters usually have aesthetic and illustrative functions, but they are so highly individualized that they must also be understood in psychological terms.

We do not find many mimetic characters in Shakespeare's comedies and romances, but a number of the leading figures in the histories and the tragedies are among the greatest psychological portraits in all of literature. The outcome of the action is predetermined in these plays by their source and genre, but Shakespeare's objective is to make the behaviour of his personages flow from their inner motivational systems and to make their fates appear to be the inevitable outcome of their characters interacting with circumstance. The kind of arbitrary behaviour which is perfectly acceptable in the comedies and romances would be very disturbing in the histories and tragedies, where, by convention, characters are supposed to feel, think, and act in accordance with their natures.

Shakespeare's greatest mimetic portraits occur, of course, in the major tragedies. Whatever else they may be, Hamlet,

Iago, Othello, Lear, and Macbeth are imagined human beings whose behaviour must be understood in motivational terms. The next question to consider is, what psychological theory should we use in our effort to comprehend them? Some critics argue that we should explain the behaviour of these characters from the perspective of Renaissance psychology, as Shakespeare would have understood them. This way of approaching the characters is of considerable historical interest, of course, but it cannot satisfy our need to make sense of them for ourselves. One of the features of mimetic characters is that our understanding of them will change along with our changing conceptions of human nature. Each age has to reinterpret these characters for itself, according to its own lights. Renaissance psychology is of little help, moreover, in helping us to appreciate Shakespeare's almost unbelievable genius in mimetic characterization. The great artist sees and portrays far more than he can comprehend. To analyze Shakespeare's characters primarily in terms of his conceptual understanding of them is to deny the vitality which is the source of their greatness and to make them into mere embodiments of psychological ideas. Literature as a form of knowledge is far in advance of the conceptual systems which are contemporaneous with it, and it is highly reductive to understand it primarily in terms of those systems. Shakespeare's mimetic characterizations embody perceptions about human psychology which neither the author nor his audience were even close to understanding in an analytical way. Renaissance psychology has long been outmoded, but Shakespeare's great characters still seem like imagined human beings who are very much like ourselves.

If we are to understand these characters in a truly satisfying way, it must be by using a psychological theory which makes sense to us. Of all the available theories, the one which makes the most sense to me is that of Karen Horney; and it is from a Horneyan perspective that I shall analyze Shakespeare's characters. I find Horney's theory

to be highly congruent both with my own experience and with much of the literature which I am trying to understand. Many authors from a variety of periods and cultures seem to have intuitively grasped and mimetically portrayed the same patterns of inner conflict and interpersonal relations which Horney has analyzed. Her theory permits me to recover their intuitions and to formulate them in conceptual terms. It has its limitations, of course. Different psychological theories address themselves to different aspects of human experience, as do different works of literature. There are many works about which I can say very little from a Horneyan perspective, but there are others with which the theory works remarkably well, including a great many of Shakespeare's plays.[2] Before I can proceed with my discussion of the tragedies, I must give a brief account of Horney's theory.[3]

People, when they fail to receive all of the things which they need in order to grow in a healthy, self-actualizing way, develop, according to Horney, three basic strategies of defence : they move toward people and adopt the self-effacing or compliant solution; they move against people and adopt the aggressive or expansive solution; or they move away from people and become detached or resigned. Each of these solutions carries with it certain needs, qualities, inhibitions, anxieties, character traits and values. Each solution involves also a view of human nature, a sense of the world order, and a bargain with fate in which certain qualities, attitudes, and behaviours are supposed to be rewarded.

In the course of his development, the individual will come to make all three of these defensive moves compulsively, and since they involve incompatible character structures and values, he will be torn by inner conflicts. In order to gain some sense of wholeness, he will emphasize one move more than the others, but the subordinate trends will continue to exist. When they are for some reason brought closer to the surface, he will experience severe inner turmoil and, in some cases, psychological paralysis. When his predominant solu-

tion fails, he may embrace one of the repressed attitudes.

The person in whom compliant trends are dominant tries to overcome his anxieties by gaining affection and approval and by controlling others through his dependency upon them. His values lie in the direction of goodness, sympathy, love, generosity, unselfishness, and humility. He does not hold these values as genuine ideals, but because they are necessary to his defence system. He must believe in turning the other cheek, and he must see the world as displaying a providential order in which virtue is rewarded. His bargain is that if he is a good, loving, noble person who shuns pride and does not seek his private gain or glory, he will be well treated by fate and other people. He needs to believe not only in the fairness of the world order, but also in the goodness of human nature; for if people are not good, then his own virtue is a source not of strength, but of vulnerability.

The person in whom aggressive tendencies are predominant has goals, traits, and values which are quite the opposite of those of the compliant type. He needs 'to achieve success, prestige, or recognition.'[4] What appeals to him most is not love, but mastery. There are three aggressive types: the narcissistic, the perfectionistic, and the arrogant-vindictive.

The narcissistic person seeks to master life 'by self-admiration and the exercise of charm.'[5] He has an 'unquestioned belief in his greatness and uniqueness' which gives him a 'buoyancy and perennial youthfulness' (*NHG*, p. 194). His insecurity is manifested in the fact that he may speak incessantly of his exploits or of his wonderful qualities and needs endless confirmation of his estimate of himself in the form of admiration and devotion' (*NHG*, p. 194). He sees the world as a fostering parent and expects continual good fortune in the form of good luck and the fulfilment of his wishes by fate and by other people. His bargain is that if he holds onto his dreams and to his exaggerated claims for himself, life is bound to give him what he wants.

The perfectionistic person identifies himself with his high

standards on the basis of which he looks down upon others. What matters most to him is his sence of his own rectitude, 'the flawless excellence of [his] whole conduct of life' (*NHG*, p. 196). He needs respect from others as a confirmation of his achievements. The perfectionistic person's bargain is based on 'a "deal" he has secretly made with life. Because he is fair, just, dutiful, he is entitled to fair treatment by others and by life in general. This conviction of an infallible justice operating in life gives him a feeling of mastery. His own perfection therefore is not only a means to superiority but also one to control life' (*NHG*. p. 197).

The arrogant-vindictive person is extremely competitive; he must retaliate for all wrongs and triumph over all rivals. In his relations with others, he is at once ruthless and cynical. He believes that might makes right and that the world is a jungle in which the strong annihilate the weak. He wants to be hard and tough and regards all manifestation of feeling as a sign of weakness. He fears the emergence of his own compliant trends because they would make him vulnerable in an evil world, would confront him with self-hate, and would threaten his bargain, which is essentially with himself. He does not count upon the world to give him anything, but he is convinced that he can reach his ambitious goals if he remains true to his vision of life as a battle and does not allow himself to be seduced by the traditional morality.

The basically detached person pursues neither love nor mastery; he worships. rather, freedom, peace, and self-sufficiency. He handles a threatetening world by removing himself from its power and by shutting others out of his inner life. He believes, 'consciously or unconsciously, that it is *better* not to wish or expect anything' (*NHG*, p. 263). He does not usually rail against life, however, but resigns himself to things as they are and accepts his fate with ironic humor or soical dignity. He tries to escape frustration by being independent of external forces, by feeiing that nothing matters, and by concerning himself only with those things

which are within his power. His bargain is if he asks nothing of others, they will not bother him; that if he tries for nothing, he will not fail; and that if he expects little of life, he will not be disappointed.

While inter-personal difficulties are creating the movements toward, against, and away from people and the conflict between these moves, concomitant intrapsychic problems are producing their own defensive strategies. To compensate for his feelings of self-hate, worthlessness, and inadequacy, the individual creates an idealized image of himself and embarks upon a search for glory. 'In this process,' says Horney, 'he endows himself with unlimited powers and with exalted faculties; he becomes a hero, a genius, a supreme lover, a saint, a god' (*NHG*, p. 22). The creation of the idealized image produces a whole structure of defensive strategies which Horney calls 'the pride system.' The individual takes an intense pride in the attributes of his idealized self, and on the basis of these attributes he makes 'neurotic claims' upon others. He feels outraged unless he is treated in a way appropriate to his status as a very special being. His unrealistic claims make him extremely vulnerable, of course, for their frustration threatens to confront him with his 'despised self,' with the sense of worthlessness from which he is fleeing.

The individual's pride in his idealized image also leads him to impose stringent demands and taboos upon himself ('the tyranny of the should'). The function of the shoulds is 'to make oneself over into one's idealized self' (*NHG*, p. 68). Since the idealized image is for the most part a glorification of the self-effacing, expansive, and resigned solutions, the individual's shoulds are determined largely by the character traits and values associated with his predominant trend. The shoulds are a defence against self-loathing, but they tend to aggravate the condition which they are employed to cure, since they are impossible to live up to, and the penalty for failure is the most severe feeling of worthlessness and self-contempt.

My thesis about the major tragedies is that each of the central characters has a bargain with fate in which the personality traits, values, and actions prescribed by his dominant solution are supposed to produce magical results, and that threats to that bargain precipitate a psychological crisis which is in large part responsible for his tragic fate. The failure of the character's bargain calls his whole strategy for living into question and generates rage, anxiety, and self-hate. He behaves in a way which is destructive to both himself and others in the course of his attempts to restore his pride, repair his defences, and hold onto his idealized image of himself. I cannot begin to do justice here to the complexity with which Shakespeare portrays these processes in his great tragic characters. To give you an idea of my approach, I shall identify the bargains of Hamlet, Iago, Lear, and Macbeth and indicate the course of their psychological crises. It is possible to treat Othello, Desdemona, and Lady Macbeth within the same framework but space does not permit.[6]

Hamlet's crisis is precipitated by the death of his father, the ascension of Claudius, and his mother's remarriage. Hamlet is so profoundly affected by these things because he is a predominantly self-effacing person whose entire strategy for living has been undermined by the fate of his father. Hamlet and his father are similar psychological types. They both strive to be noble, good, and loving; and they both expect these qualities to be rewarded. They are conscientious, dutiful, religious men who exalt women, are faithful to their oaths, and place a high value upon sexual purity. They have lived up to their shoulds, but their claims have not been honoured, and their bargain is in ruins. In his first soliloquy, Hamlet is in despair because he experiences his father's fate as though it were his own. His father was the kind of man that Hamlet has aspired to be, and his memory has been foully dishonoured. What promise does life hold for Hamlet in such a world? Will he, too, be mocked by the objects

of his affections, betrayed by the people to whom he has been faithful, abandoned for base creatures by those from whom he deserves loyalty and appreciation? Even before he learns of the murder, the fate of his father shows that the world is not a just order, but an unweeded garden in which good people are abused, the vicious triumph, and fair appearances are untrustworthy. It is unbearable to Hamlet that the aggressive Claudius has gained the love, power, and recognition which should be the reward of virtue. This is not a world with which his kind of person can cope or in which he sees much hope of reward. He wants to escape by melting away into nothingness.

Hamlet's oppression in his first soliloquy derives not only from the breakdown of his bargain, but also from the repression of his rage. There is a struggle going on within him between aggressive and compliant tendencies. He is furious with Gertrude: and he wants to express his outrage, to hurl accusations, to say all the things which he finally does say in the closet scene. He has strong taboos against such behaviour, however, especially towards a mother; and all he can do is accuse her with his misery and grief. In typical self-effacing fashion, he turns his rage against himself and experiences his murderous impulses toward his mother as a wish for his own death.

His encounter with the ghost intensifies Hamlet's inner conflicts. The wrongs done to his father are greater than Hamlet had imagined, and the ghost's outrage feeds his already seething indignation. Hamlet cannot help feeling ambivalent, however, about being an avenger. It is a matter of love, of loyalty, and of manliness for him to carry out the ghost's commission; and he swears to do so. But there is both in Christianity and in Hamlet's self-effacing defence system a strong taboo against vindictive behaviour. The ghost himself is not a single-minded revenger. He is protective toward Gertrude and fearful of his son's damnation: 'But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,/ Taint not thy mind, nor

let thy soul contrive/Against thy mother aught . . .' (I, v). Hamlet is supposed to be aggressive, but also to be good; to avenge his father, but not to taint his mind; to stop the incest, but not to contrive anything against his mother. The ghost's conflicting messages correspond to Hamlet's own inner conflicts and contribute to his paralysis.

After his encounter with the ghost, Hamlet is paralyzed by a cross-fire of conflicting shoulds. He hates himself for not being aggressive, but fears damnation if he is. He would like to escape his inner conflicts by dying, but suicide is a sin. His disillusionment with Ophelia and the Mousetrap scene release his anger, and he becomes capable of violence. His conflicting trends manifest themselves now by turns, with resignation becoming stronger as the play proceeds. By killing Polonius, Hamlet irrevocably violates his self-effacing shoulds and destroys his claim to innocence. His fate is now settled: he must purge the world of evil and be punished himself for the crimes which he commits in so doing. Hamlet accepts the will of heaven, resigns himself to his doom, and readies himself to die. His acceptance of fate is rewarded with a wish-fulfilment ending in which his needs for punishment, revenge, vindication, and escape are all fulfilled.

Iago and Hamlet are opposite psychological types. Iago is an arrogant-vindictive person who sees the world as a jungle in which the strong exploit the weak and in which goodness does not pay. As he is at pains to explain in the opening scene with Roderigo, the compliant bargain does not work, and those who expect it to are fools. There are two knids of people in the world: the realists, who exploit others lest they be exploited themselves; and rhe fools, who trust other people's professions of loyalty and love and are abused as a result. The bargain of the compliant types whom Iago scorns is with their masters. Iago's bargain is with himself. He trusts no one and has no belief in a moral order either in human affairs or in the universe. In his explanations to Roderigo, he makes clear the nature of his pact with him-

self. If he is to succeed in this crooked world, he must not be taken in by the traditional code of values, which is simply an instrument by which the powerful exploit the weak. He must never be guilty of loyalty or unselfish behaviour; he must attend constantly to his own interests; and, above all, he must always conceal his true purposes and feelings.

The promotion of Cassio is for Iago a bitter defeat which threatens his self-esteem, his value system and, indeed, his whole strategy for dealing with life. He has played the role of faithful servant in order to advance his own interests, and he has had an immense pride in his cleverness and in the success of his duplicity. But his scheming has, in fact, failed. Othello has benefitted from his service but has given the reward which he was expecting to someone else. Iago, the exploiter, has been exploited. Iago experiences this as a profound humiliation which calls into question his cleverness, his manipulative ability, and the whole system of rationalizations by which he justifies his code of egoism and deception. The blow to his pride is all the worse because Cassio is precisely the kind of person whom Iago scorns. He really is loyal, he really is dutiful, and he really does love his master. In Iago's version of reality, Cassio is the kind of person who is exploited, whereas tough-minded fellows like himself beat the system. Iago's reaction to Cassio's success is similar in a way to Hamlet's response to the triumph of Claudius. If those kind of people succeed, then the world is not what he has thought it to be.

Iago hates Othello not only because he has hurt him so badly by promoting Cassio, but also because he is bitterly envious of the success which the Moor has achieved through his marriage to Desdemona. Iago suffers from a pervasive envy of everyone who seems to possess something which he is lacking, whether it be wealth and prestige, physical attractiveness, or the love of a devoted woman. The promotion of Cassio has reminded Iago of Othello's power and of his own inferior position. Othello's marriage adds to his prestige and

makes Iago feel all the more poignantly his own loveless state.

Iago responds to his crisis by plotting revenge. He has certain practical objectives, such as gaining the lieutenancy; but the primary values of his plot are psychological. Through it he seeks to express his rage, to restore his pride, and to assuage his inner torments. Iago's plot is the crucial test of his idealized image. He must he able, through his cleverness, to turn humiliation and defeat into a triumph of grandiose proportions. He needs to validate not only his idealized image, but also his bargain, which has been threatened both by his own disappointment and by the success of others. According to his vision of life, we live in a 'monstrous world' in which 'To be direct and honest is not safe' (III, iii). Since fate is not destroying the honest people, he must do so himself in order to prove that his behaviour is required by reality. If their bargain works, and his does not, he will be exposed to severe inner conflicts and unbearable self-hate. He must be a villain in order to avoid feeling like a monster. Iago's plot serves, finally, to assuage his envy. He envies Cassio's attractiveness to women, Othello's happiness in love, and the Moor's confidence and self-possession. All of these things intensify his feelings of inferiority and his sense of the emptiness of his own life. He responds by trying to prove that what he envies is really dangerous or not worth having and by trying to make those whom he envies even more miserable than he is himself.

Iago over-reaches himself, of course, and his plot unravels. He holds onto his pride at the end in the only way that is left open to him. He will prove his self-control and thwart his tormentors by never speaking word. The rest, we can be assured, is silence.

King Lear is a predominantly narcissistic person whose psychology has been profoundly affected by the experience of being a king. He has been made to feel that he is 'everything' (IV, vi), and he requires his sense of importance to be

constantly nurtured. The function of others is to satisfy his desires: 'Better thou/Hadst not been born,' he tells Cordelia, 'than not t' have pleased me better.' (I, i). As is typical in the narcissistic person, Lear's idealized image is not compensatory in nature. but is derived from the special treatment which he has received from other people. Since he has always felt like his glorified self, his project is not to actualize his idealized image, but to maintain it. His bargain with fate is that if he insists upon being treated in accordance with his exalted status, his claims will have to be honoured. This is a major reason for his irascibility, his autocratic behaviour, and his refusal to tolerate any frustration.

Lear gives up his throne because he has a dream of an idyllic state in which he will have the pomp, pre-eminence, and perquisites of the crown while being relieved of its responsibilities. Instead of having to care for the kingdom, he will be cared for by his worshipful daughters, especially Cordelia. In Lear's mind, what he is doing is incredibly generous, and he expects in return his daughter's undying gratitude. Lear proposes the love test as a means of getting an immediate return on his investment, a first instalment, as it were, of the adulation with which he expects to be regaled for the rest of his life. Cordelia's response is terribly disappointing not only because she will not try to outdo her sisters in professions of devotion, but also because when she does speak, she says precisely what Lear does not want to hear. He wants to be assured that he alone counts, that nothing else matters, that her affection will not diminish when she takes a husband; but she tells him that she loves him 'according to [her] bond; no more nor less' (I, i) and that when she marries, her husband will take half of her love with him.

As Lear sees it, he is giving his daughters 'all' and has a right to be told by them in return that he is 'everything'. Cordelia's setting limits to her love constitutes a denial of his claims and calls his idealized image into question. The intensity of his rage is a measure of the degree to which he

is threatened. His retaliation is so immediate and so extreme because of his need to restore his pride.

Once he relinquishes his kingdom to his daughters, Lear is subjected to a series of increasingly severe indignities which are terrible blows to his narcissism. He would like to retaliate, as he did with Cordelia and Kent; but he has given away his power, and all he can do is to attack his daughters verbally and to call down curses upon them. The impotence of his rage increases its intensity. He feels that he needs to be patient, but he cannot resign himself to such terrible violations of his claims and such a diminution of his status. He is on the verge several times of breaking down and appealing for pity. but he has powerful taboos against such 'womanly' behaviour, and he would rather tear out his eyes or have his heart shatter into a thousand pieces than give his enemies that satisfaction. He is stymied, much as Hamlet was at the end of the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy. He cannot submit, he cannot retaliate, and he cannot accept what is happening to him. It is his inability to find a workable defence which is the primary cause of his madness.

His reconciliation with Cordelia is of tremendous importance to Lear, for it provides him with an escape from his maddening plight and gives him something to live for. In the presence of Cordelia, his self-effacing trends emerge very strongly, and he is tortured by guilt and self-hate. He relieves his guilt by admitting his folly and asking for forgiveness; and he is absolved by Cordelia, who treats him with great tenderness. Her love restores to him the paradise of which he had dreamed at the beginning; he can once again set his rest on her kind nursery. His rage is dead, his sense of injustice is gone, and he is no longer concerned with revenge. He wishes to live now only for love.

The gods do not throw incense upon Cordelia's sacrifice, however; and Lear's new solution is shattered by her death. He is once again overwhelmed by the injustice of life, in which lower creatures have breath, but Cordelia has none.

To escape from his unbearable emotions, he imagines the movement of her lips; and he dies, like Gloucester, from the shock of joy in the midst of his despair.

Hamlet, Iago, and Lear have their bargains violated by the behaviour of other people, by external events. The case of Macbeth is somewhat different. Macbeth is a perfectionistic person who has always abided by the values of his society. His aggressiveness has been expressed, like Othello's, in the 'big wars that make ambition virtue' (Othello III. iii). He has searched for glory in honourable ways, through loyal service to king and country; and, as the play opens, he is receiving all of the recognition which he can reasonably expect. Macbeth then violates his own bargain by sacrificing the virtue and honour and golden opinions (I, vii) which he values so much in order to satisfy his lust for absolute power. He does this only after much hesitation, since he is caught in a crossfire of conflicting shoulds. Lady Macbeth understands his character perfectly : 'What thou wouldst highly / That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,/ And yet wouldst wrongly win,' (I, v). It is most unlikely that Macbeth would have murdered Duncan without the prodding of his wife, a predominantly arrogant-vindictive person who makes him feel ashamed of his scruples.

Unlike his Lady, Macbeth knows that he cannot kill the king with impunity; his own perfectionistic solution tells him that such a 'horrid deed' is bound to bring retribution. He would be willing to make a new bargain in which he sacrificed the rewards of virtue in the after-life in exchange for a guarantee of earthly success, but he knows that this will not work, for 'We still have judgment here' (I, vii). After he commits the murder, Macbeth's project is to make his new bargain work, despite its impossibility. This is one reason why he becomes so ruthless and bloodthirsty. Having sacrificed his 'eternal jewel' (III, i) and exposed himself to ceaseless anxiety and self-hate, he feels that he has nothing more to lose; and he is determined to assure himself of the

earthly glory for which he has paid such a terrible price. His murderous behaviour is also aimed at giving him a feeling of safety (he lives in constant fear) and, strangely enough, at reducing his self-hate.

His 'torture of the mind' is produced, in part at least, by the conscientious side of him which had made him shrink from his bloody thoughts before he killed Duncan and from his terrible deed as soon as it was committed. This side of him emerges most powerfully after the appearance of Banquo's ghost :

> It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood.
> Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;
> Augures and understood relations have
> By maggot-pies and choughs and rooks brought fourth
> The secret'st man of blood. (III, iv)

These anxieties are so unbearable to Macbeth that he violently recoils against his conscientious feelings and determines to rid himself of them by impulsively acting out all of his violent thoughts : 'My strange and self-abuse/ Is the initiate fear that wants hard use,/ We are but young in deed' (III, iv). He wishes to make himself into a hardened criminal in order to gain some peace of mind. He seems to have achieved his goal when he fails to react to the cry of women which signals the death of his wife : 'I have supp'd full with horrors./ Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thought,/ Cannot once start me' (V, v). The peace which he has achieved is, however, the peace of despair. He still longs for the 'honour, love, obedience, troops of friends' (V, iii) which he once had, but he knows that he can never have them again, and he is ready for death.

In his tragedies Shakespeare has created a series of great mimetic characters whose defensive strategies, inner conflicts, and bargains with fate are well described by Karen Horney's theories. Shakespeare seems intuitively to have understood not only how the various defensive strategies work, but also the fact that they are self-defeating. The world of his tragedies is one in which narcissistic, perfectionistic, arrogant-

vindictive, and self-effacing people are all destroyed. There is a moment in *Macbeth* in which the inadequacy of the self-effacing solution is articulated with great explicitness. Lady Macduff's first response to the messenger's warning of impending danger is to say 'I have done no harm.' She invokes the self-effacing bargain in which innocence is magically protected. She immediately realizes, however, the unrealistic nature of her thinking :

> But I remember now
> I am in this earthly world, where to do harm
> Is often laudable, to do good sometime
> Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas,
> Do I put up that womanly defence
> To say I have done no harm ? (IV, ii)

I should like to conclude by observing that when we turn from the tragedies to the romances, we find ourselves in a world in which this womanly defence works extremely well.

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NOTES

[1] Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (New York, 1966), p. 88.

[2] See *A Psychological Approach to Fiction: Studies in Thackeray, Stendhal, George Eliot, Dostoevsky, and Conrad* (Bloomington, 1974); 'Experiences of Thomas Hardy' in *The Victorian Experience*, edited by Richard A. Levine (Athens, Ohio, 1976), pp. 203-37; 'Herzog the Man: An Analytic View of a Literary Figure', *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, XXXVI (1976), 249-60; and *Character and Conflict in Jane Austen's Novels: A Psychological Approach* (Detroit, 1978).

[3] For a fuller account of Horney's theory, see *A Psychological Approach to Fiction*, Ch. 2.

[4] Karen Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts* (New York, 1945), p. 65.

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

[6] I am at work on a book—*Bargains with Fate: A Psychological Approach to Shakespeare*—in which all of these characters will be discussed at length. For a fuller treatment of Hamlet than the one offered here see 'Hamlet and His Problems: A Horneyan Analysis', *The Centennial Review*, XXI (1977), 36-66.

J. J. M. Tobin

NASHE AND THE TEXTURE OF *ROMEO AND JULIET*

There is general agreement that Shakespeare's 'method of composition differed from play to play,'[1] and that usually 'he combined two or more'[2] sources in the course of writing a single drama. *Romeo and Juliet*, however, is among those few plays which seem to have had a single source, as Professor Bullough has argued,[3] and as Professor Muir seems to think possible.[4] Without disputing the fact that Arthur Brooke's *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562) is the main source of the tragedy, I suggest that Shakespeare made considerable use of Nashe's pamphlet *Have with you to Saffron-walden*, (1596, but in manuscript circulation for several months previous to publication),[5] the most spirited and memorable of Nashe's attacks upon Gabriel Harvey.

Indeed, so considerable is the influence of Nashe's pamphlet upon *Romeo and Juliet*, a pamphlet from which Shakespeare is known to have borrowed later in *1* and *2 Henry IV* and *Twelfth Night*,[6] that diction from the work has affected more than twenty passages in the tragedy, from the very opening lines of the play to the suicide of Romeo in the tomb of the Capulets in the last scene. Some of this influence has textual significance in a play of vexed provenance and some of it shows how Nashe has been used to develop character, especially the characters of Mercutio and Tybalt, each of whom is referred to but once in Brooke.[7] All of it reveals how Shakespeare, by habit a borrower from Nashe, enriched the texture of his play with elements from Nashe's attack upon the irascible and Italianate Harvey, an

attack only part of the on-going argument between the two men likened by Nashe to Italian familial street brawling: 'Harvey and I (a couple of beggars) take upon us to bandie factions, and contend like the Ursini and Coloni in Roome.'[8]

Shakespeare used *Have with you to Saffron-walden* in eight of the twenty-four scenes of the play, and often at the most telling moments. The opening of the tragedy with the comic dialogue between hubristic Samson and Gregory[9] owes much of its phrasing to part of the dialogue among Nashe's fictional supporters in the pamphlet as a comparison of the two texts will reveal :

> Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals.
> No, for then we should be colliers.
> I mean, and we be in choler, we'll draw.
> Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of collar. (I. i. 1-5)[10]

...and *draw* him in *cole* more artificially than the face in *cole* that Michaell Angelo and Raphaell Urbin went to buffets about. I would you might be *cole-carriers* or pioners in a *cole*-pit, whiles *colliers* ride upon collimol cuts, or there be any reprisalls of purses twixt this and *Cole*-brooke.

Respond : Pacifie your conscience, and leave your imprecations; *wee will beare no coales*, never feare you. (53)

The *Variorum* notes only the clause, 'We will bear no coales,' ignoring the Italian setting of the previous part of the paragraph, the context of blows' being exchanged, and the words 'draw,' 'carriers,' and 'colliers.' In addition, Sampson's boasting, 'I will *take the wall of* any man or maid of Montague's' (I i. 12) recalls Harvey's pompous behaviour at Audley End when he was introduced to Queen Elizabeth and her court, making 'no bones to *take the wall of* Sir Philip Sidney' (76). One notes that Sampson's sexual innuendo, 'I will be civil with the *maids;* I will cut off their heads ... Ay the heads of the *maids*, or their *maid*enheads, take it in what sense thou wilt' (I. i. 22-3, 25-6) recalls Harvey's sexually aggressive behaviour as described by Nashe on the previous page.

Was hee at his pretie toyes and amorous glaunces and purposes with the Damsells, & putting baudy riddles unto them. In fine some Disputations there were, and he made an Oration before the *Maids* of Honour . . . He would have had the *Maids* of Honor thriftely cudgeld belike, and lambeakt one after another. (75)

The next character to reveal a Nashean quality is also comical. The Nurse in dialogue with Lady Capulet refers to the earthquake eleven years past, a reference to an upheaval which has misled many scholars in their attempts to date the play. I take it that the reference has no value for such dating, but results from the general association of Harvey in *Saffron-walden* with the earthquake of 1580. Nashe refers to both Harvey's book on the upheaval and his Italianate ways in

he would needs crosse the seas to fetch home two penniworth of Tuscanisme: from the sea to the earth againe he was tost, videlicet shortly after hee became a roguish Commenter uppon *earth-quakes*, (61)

and

or rather some *prettie* while before, when, for an assay or nice tasting of his pen, he capitulated on the *births* of monsters, horrible murders, and great burnings: and afterward, in the yeare when the *earth-quake* was, he fell to be a familiar Epistler, . . . hee enterlaced his short but yet sharpe iudiciall of *Earth-quakes*, . . . How that thriv'd with him some honest Chronicler helpe me to *remember*, for it is not comprehended in my braines Diarie or Ephemerides : (69-70)

One notes similar diction in Lady Capulet's, 'Thou knowest my daughter's of a *pretty* age' (I. iii. 10) and the Nurse's 'Even or odd, of all days *in the year* . . . I *remember* it well./ 'Tis since the *earthquake* now eleven years' (I. iii. 16, 23-24). There is no mention of earthquakes singular or plural in *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Richard II*, or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, works written in the same period as *Romeo and Juliet*.

The most humorous of all the scenes in *Romeo and Juliet* is Act II, scene iv and not surprisingly, it is the most heavily influenced by *Saffron-walden*. First, there is Mercutio's

epithet for Tybalt, 'Prince of Cats,' (II. iv. 19), a phrase that echoes Nashe's 'not *Tibault* or Isegrim, *Prince of Cattes*, were endowed with the like Title' (51). The *Variorum* partially notes this parallel, but does not add that Nashe's words are attributed to his friend, Bentivole, and that 'Benvolio' who asks Mercutio' 'What is Tybalt' (II. iv. 18) is Shakespeare's own addition to the names to be found in his hitherto acknowledged sources.[11] Second, and textually most interesting is Mercutio's indictment of recent affectations in speech, 'the pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes (Q1/phantasimes), these new tuners of accent' (II. iv. 28-9). The 'bad' quarto reading seems to me preferable to the frequently accepted conjecture 'phantasimes,' chiefly on the basis which I have noted elsewhere[12] that the word 'fantasticoes' is unique in the canon and like some ten other words and phrases unique in the canon occurs in *Have with you to Saffron-walden*. In a context of novelty and romance Nashe cites his current attitude:

> I am faine to let my Plow stand still in the midst of a furrow, and follow some of these new-fangled Gallardos and Senior *Fantasticos*, to whose amorous Villanellas and Quipassas I prostitute my pen in hope of gaine; (31)

G. Blakemore Evans indicates in his *Riverside* edition that

> it has been necessary in some 60 cases, not including the correction of mere typographical errors, to adopt the reading of Q1, or of later quartos or F1 supported by Q1, since, 'bad' quarto or not, it is the only other text which may be said to derive independently, however indirectly, from some form of Shakespeare's manuscript. Q1 also supplies lines or part-lines at I. iv. 7-8, II. ii. 41, 163, and IV. v. 127, as well as a number of valuable descriptive stage directions.[13]

'Fantasticoes' carrying as it does the weight of a source elsewhere pervasive in the play, ought to be yet another of the properly invoked Q1 terms.

When Mercutio and Romeo jokingly exchange puns on Romeo's worn out pump they use the diction which Nashe

had provided in his mocking pen-portrait of Gabriel Harvey. Mercutio urges Romeo to

> Follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump, that when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, sole singular. (II. iv. 61ff.)

and Romeo responds with, 'O single-sol'd jest, soly singular for the singlenessl' (II. iv. 64-5). Nashe had announced his description of the appearance of Harvey with

> . . . here let them behold his lively counterfet and portraiture, not in the pantofles of his prosperitie, as he was when he libeld against my Lord of Oxford, but in the single-soald pumpes of his adversitie, with his gowne cast off, untrussing, and readie to beray himselfe, upon the newes of the going in hand of my booke I (38)[14]

The response of Romeo and Mercutio to the arrival of the Nurse and Peter, *'A sail, a sail:/Two, Two'* (II. iv. 102-3) parallels in its construction of ejaculation and arithmetic Nashe's *'a sentence, a sentence* . . . there's *two;'* (43) in the midst of the beginning of the antiphonal criticism of Harvey's style by Bentivole. Interestingly, Ql gives 'sail' to Mercutio and 'Two' to *Benvolio.*

Mercutio's bawdy joking at the Nurse's expense (II. iv. 132ff.) on 'hare'/'hore'/'whore' seems to have been prompted by Nashe's 'Shall wee have a *Hare* of him then? a male one yeare, and a female another . . . but he must have his *whoore* . . .' (111). The context is of the mysterious *'Gentlewoman'* (111) who is given credit for having inspired if not written all of Harvey's works. One notes the *'gentlewoman'* address to the Nurse at II. iv. 110 & 115. Benvolio's intentional malapropism in 'She will *indite* him to some supper' (II. iv. 129) is made somewhat more understandable by Shakespeare's recalling Harvey's gentlewoman who had indited Gabriel's works.

The concluding play between the Nurse and Romeo with its unique phrase, 'with an R' (II. iv. 208ff.), has a parallel in *Saffron-walden.* It will be remembered that the Nurse talks

of 'ropery'/'roperipe'[15] at II. iv. 146 and Romeo refers to a rope ladder at II. iv. 189. Nashe has

> . . . his father . . . provided that the first letter each of his sonnes names began with should allude and correspond with the chiefe marts of his traffick, and of his profession & occupation; as Gabriell, his eldest sonnes name, beginning with a G. for Gallowes, John with a J. for Jayle, Richard *with an R.* for Ropemaker; as much to say as all his whole living depended on the Jayle, the Gallowes & making of Ropes. (58)

Tybalt as 'Prince of Cats', Mercutio's 'fantasticoes', Romeo's 'single-sold' pump, the arithmetical ejaculation of Romeo/Benvolio and Mercutio, Mercutio's play on hare/hoar/whore, Benvolio's intentional malapropism, and the Nurse's query over the letter 'R', all derive from words and phrases in *Have with you to Saffron-walden*. In addition, the pairing of Benvolio and Mercutio as friends to Romeo owes much to Nashe's anti-Harvey companions, Bentivole and Don Carneades (whose wit is at the heart of Mercutio's humour). Their duet performance in the criticising of Harvey parallels the teasing of Romeo for his seeming affectation by Benvolio and Mercutio. Bentivole and Carneades are described by Nashe in the following way:

> . . . so hath hee (in most fervent devotion to my well doing) uncessantly perswaded me to preserve my credit from jadish dying of the *scrathes*, by powerfull through enkindling this Pinego Rimino everlasting fire of damnation.
>
> For Domino Bentivole and Don Carneades de boune compagniola, they be men that have as full shares in my love and affection as the former.
>
> The antecedent of the two, beside true resolution and valure (wherewith he hath ennobled his name extraordinarie) and a ripe plesant wit in conversing, hath in him a perfect unchangeable true habit of honestie, imitating the Arte of Musique, which the Professours therof affirme to be in finite and without end.
>
> And for the subsequent or hindermost of the paire, who likewise is none of the unworthiest retainers to Madame Bellona, hee is another Florentine Poggius for mirthful sportive conceit & quick invention,

> ignem faciens ex lapide nigro, (which Munster in his Cosmography alledgeth for the greatest wonder of England,) that is, wresting delight out of anie thing. (22)

We have here the natures of Benvolio, Romeo's benign friend, and Mercutio, Romeo's quickly inventive friend. I note that Shakespeare's sources gave him little hint as to how to expand the icy-handed Mercutio of Brooke et al. into the witty figure of the tragedy.[16]

The following scene has but a single borrowing from *Have with you to Saffron-walden*. The Nurse's description of Romeo to Juliet, 'he is not the *flower of courtesy*' (II.v.43) recalls in its phrasing, unique in the canon, the statement of Nashe's Bentivole, 'it is a common scoffe amongst us, to call anie foolish prodigall yong gallant, the gentleman or *floure of courtesie*' (49).

The irascibility of Tybalt, a quality which Shakespeare develops from the single mention of Tybalt and his 'furious rage' (972) in *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* is derived from Nashe's description of the irascible Gabriel Harvey as is Mercutio's comic application of that quality to Benvolio. The early part of the first scene of Act III seems to have been affected by Nashe's

> . . . he is verie seditious and mutinous in conversation, picking *quarells* with everie man that will not magnifie and applaud him, libelling most execrably and inhumanely on *Jacke* of the Falcon for that he would not lend him a messe of mustard to his red herrings; yea for a lesser matter than that, on the Colledge *dog* he libeld onely because he proudly bare up his taile as hee past by him. (68)

On the following page Nashe writes,' . . . admit Piers himselfe for his *Tutor* . . .' One notes the exchange between Benvolio and Mercutio at III. i. 1 ff. with the former's being teased by Mercutio and called especially quarrelsome. Note especially 'thou art as hot a *Jack*' (III. I. 11), 'thou wilt *quarrel* with a man that hath a hair more or less' (17), '*quarrel*' (19), '*quarrels*' (22), etc., and the similarly trivial canine offence, 'because he hath waken'd thy *dog*' (26). Mercutio concludes

'and yet wilt thou *tutor* me from *quarrelling*' (29-30). Mercutio's epithet for Tybalt, 'rat-catcher' (III. i. 75), a phrase unique in the canon, echoes Nashe's term for Harvey in *Saffron-walden* 'a common Mounte-banke *Rat-catcher*' (67).

In this same scene Benvolio's 'We talk here in the *public* haunt of men./Either withdraw unto some *private* place,' (III. i. 50-1) echoes Nashe's version of his Cambridge meeting with Harvey, 'what a stomacke I had to have *scratcht* with him, but that the nature of the place hindred mee . . . wherein all *quarrels* might be discust and drawne to an attonement . . . or that a *publique* wrong in Print was to be so slubberd over in *private*. . . . (92-3, the latter the same page Shakespeare borrowed from in V. i. for the description of the apothecary). Here one notes the words *scratched* and *quarrels, private, publique* and the general theme of the impropriety of confusing public and private matters.

At least twice in *Have with you to Saffron-walden* Nashe gives an Italianate parallel to the play set in Verona. As cited above, early on he mock-heroically compares his quarrel with Harvey to strife between prominent Italian families, 'Harvey and I (a couple of beggars) take upon us to *bandie* factions, and contend like the Ursini and Coloni in Roome; . . .' (19). 'Bandie' is echoed by Romeo as he attempts to separate Tybalt and Mercutio, 'the Prince expressly hath/Forbid this *bandy*ing in Verona streets' (III. i. 88-9). Later Nashe recalls the Queen's comment after Harvey's introduction to her at Audley End, 'how he lookt like an Italian' (78).

Act III, scene v has three clear borrowings from *Saffron-walden*, Juliet's description of a meteor, her phrase at the end of the aubade duet, and her father's vicious indictment of her. Juliet's 'It is some meteor that *the sun exhal 'd*' (III. v. 13) echoes Nashe's planetary reference 'for never wer Empedocles devils so tost from the aire again into the sea, & from the sea to the earth, and from the earth to the air againe *exhaled by tha Sunne . . .*' (61).

Juliet's 'hunt's-up' at III. v. 34 is unique in the canon. The phrase appears on the title page of *Saffron-walden* in *Have with you to Saffron walden, or Gabriell Harveys Hunt is up*. Capulet's *'green-sickness' carrion'* (III. v. 156) is derivative of *'graen sicknes . . . carrion'* of *SW*, 54. Moreover, there is a second *'greene sicknes'* (112) in the midst of the attack on Harvey's Gentlewoman whose sonnet includes the line 'Ist possible for *puling* wench to tame' with its adjective prompting Capulet's 'wretched *puling* fool' (III. v. 183).

Act four has only one borrowing from *Saffron-walden*. Nashe describes Harvey's confusion upon his release from prison and his concern over 'whither he might go to set up his rest' (101). The Nurse uses this phrase, unique in the canon, to say that 'The County Paris hath *set up his rest*' (IV. v. 6).[17] Romeo uses a similar expression in the burial vault of the Capulets. 'O here/Will I *set up* my everlasting *rest*' (V. iii. 109-10).

In Act V, scene i the description of the apothecary from whom Romeo obtains poison is particularly indebted to diction in *Saffron-walden*. Romeo's purchasing of the mortal drug in V. i. 37ff. has, along with its unique 'alligator' (V. i. 43) which echoes the 'Alligatur' on the same page of *Saffron-walden* as 'Rat-catcher' (67) in 'of an *Apothecaries* Crocodile, or dride *Alligatur*,'[18] the *'dram* of poison' (V. i. 60), the 'mortal drugs' (V. i. 66), the *'cheeks,/. . . starveth . . .'*(V i. 69-70), each of which derives from

> . . . whether he wold have lent me a precious *dram* more than ordinarie, to helpe disgestion: he may be such another craftie *mortring Druggeir*, or Italian porredge seasoner, for anie thing I ever saw in his complexion . . . It is of an adust swarth chollericke dye, like restie bacon, or a dride scate-fish; so leane and so *meagre* (cf. *'meagre* were his looks, V. i. 40) . . . or take him for the Gentlemans man in the Courtier, who was so thin *cheekd* and gaunt and *starv'd*, . . . (93)

The context of Italianate poisoning common to both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Saffron-walden* is particularly suggestive

of Shakespeare's having borrowed diction from Nashe, Brooke's text offers none of the underlined words.

The final speech of Romeo in the final scene of the tragedy has been affected in several instances by the diction on two pages of Nashe's *Have with you to Saffron-walden*. Some greater weight should be given to Q2's 'pallat' as against F's 'palace.' Not only does 'pallat' (pallet/bed) pick up Romeo's 'Why I descend into this *bed* of death' at V. iii. 28, but it also has a very close parallel in Nashe's 'and even by that single bountie dubble stick him unto me to be my devoted beadsman till *death*, but not a pinnes head or a moaths *pallet* roome gets he of anie farther roome contribution' (42). There appears on the same page, 'let it *lighten* and flash presently in thy adversaries *face* . . . as *lightning* and thunder never *lightly* goe asunder . . . *lightning* and *lightning* . . .' and Romeo's 'Let me peruse this *face*' (V. iii. 74—i.e. the face of his adversary), 'full of *light*' (V. iii. 86), 'A *lightning* before death . . . Call this a *lightning* ?' (V. iii. 90-1). Still, on the same page, with its '*death*' and '*ballet*' there is a reference to Harvey's 'winding *sheet*' —Romeo observes 'Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody *sheet*' (V. iii. 97); we recall that Harvey and Tybalt are linked by their both being compared to the '*Prince of Cattes*' (51), '*Prince of Cats*' (II. iv. 19). Again, on the same page, in the same sentence are '*detested and rotten*'—see Romeo's 'Thou *detestable* maw . . . *rotten* jaws' (V. iii. 45, 47). Of particular interest is Romeo's nautical imagery at V. iii 76 'my *betossed* soul' and V. iii. 117-8, 'Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on/The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark.' It is hard to understand how Romeo, an inland Veronese, might be so drawn to marine thoughts. Yet, his creator had read Nashe's *Saffron-walden* and had seen, '*Tossing* . . . is proper to the sea . . . *tosse* water . . . *tost* or cast water . . .' and, (I note the constellation of the theme of death, the nautical reference with the verbal 'tossing', the parallel grammatical construction, and the idea of

speed) 'there is not a hairs difference betwixt being burnd and being drownd, since *death* is the best of either, and the paine of dying is not more tedious of the one than of the other. *O, You* must not conclude so desperate, for everie *tossing* billow brings not *death* in the mouth of it . . . give place to fire or furie and you shall *quickly* see it consume itselfe' (39). Compare Romeo's '*O you*/ . . . *death*/ . . . drugs are *quick*' (V. iii. 113, 115, 120).

The mystery of Shakespeare's creative genius remains in the nature of the thing still mysterious. What can be gained in the study of Shakespeare's use of his sources is some better understanding of his intention, and, often, some clearer perception of the more likely reading in textual cruces. In the case of *Romeo and Juliet* Shakespeare has taken the plot line presented in Brooke's *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* but for the texture of his play he has borrowed from Nashe's *Have with you to Saffron-walden* in more than twenty-five instances. From Nashe's jocular indictment of Harvey expressed in the most vital prose Shakespeare found material for the development of characters, especially Mercutio and Tybalt, as well as Tybalt's sobriquet 'Prince of Cats,' the pairing of Benvolio and Mercutio, and the basis for the name of the former and his mock irascibility in Bentivole and Don Carneades, the meteorological allusions to earthquakes, exhaled meteors, and lightning, the description of the apothecary who sells Romeo the poison, many of the terms in the humorous opening of the play and in the highly comical fourth scene of the second act, as well as elements in the anger of Capulet and the grief of Romeo, and much, much more.

What seems clearest to the student of Shakespeare's sources is the fact that Nashe is a pervasive influence, chiefly for matters of texture, and that the disintegrators of bygone days who found some items from the many which are present in the text had the worng end of the

interpretive stick—it is not that Nashe wrote parts of Shakespeare's plays, proof of which lies in parallels of phrase, but that Shakespeare habitually read Nashe's prose (and verse) and in the finest tradition of the co-opting practices of the Elizabethan period made Nashe another domestic source like Holinshed. However, it was not the overall plot structures which he could find in Nashe's work but rather motifs like the parodic story of Hero and Leander from *Lenten Stuffe* which he used in *As You Like It*,[10] or the dishonorable drunkenness of the Danes from *Pierce Penilesse* which he made use of in *Hamlet* or Harvey's pretensions and puritanism from *Have with you to Saffronwalden* which were put into the character of Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, as well as the great number of striking terms and vivid phrases which fill each of the works of Nashe.

If Greene's complaint that Shakaspeare had beautified himself with the feathers of the university trained wits still carries with it the idea of plagiarism rather than social presumption, then Greene was quite right and Nashe's was the plumage most cheefully stolen, and never better displayed than in *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] Kenneth Muir, *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (London, 1977), p. 13.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (London, 1957), I, 274: 'Whether or no Shakespeare read Boaistuau is uncertain. But he did not need him, nor indeed Painter's translation, though he surely knew this latter. Undoubtedly his main and perhaps sole source was Arthur Brooke's long poem *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*.'

[4] Muir, p. 39.

[5] See R. B. McKerrow, *The Works of Thomas Nashe* (London, 1904-10, repr. 1958), IV, p. 302. Page references following quotations from *Have with you to Saffron-walden* are to McKerrow's edition, Volume III.

[6] See Muir, p. 95, for reference to the Nashe parallels in *1 and 2 Henry IV* noted by J. D. Wilson and G. Blakemore Evans and see J. J. M. Tobin, 'Nashe, Harvey, and *Twelfth Night*, *English Studies* (forthcoming).

[7] Noted by Muir, pp. 41-2.

[8] McKerrow, III, p. 19.

[9] Nashe refers to his adversary Harvey as '*Gregorie* Huldricke, my Antagonist' (31), but it is more likely that the Capulet servants are comically named for archetypal warriors. See my 'On the Names "Hermia" and "Helena" ' in *American Notes and Queries*, Vol. 17, No. 5 (forthcoming).

[10] Quotations and line numbering are from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans et al. (Boston, 1974).

[11] Ql spells the phrase 'Prince of *cattes*' in the manner of Nashe.

[12] See my 'Nashe and *Romeo and Juliet*', *Notes and Queries* (April, 1980).

[13] *Riverside*, p. 1093. Evans, however, prefers John Crow's conjectural 'phantasimes' over Ql's 'fantasticoes' at II, iv. 29.

[14] McKerrow notes 'single soald' here and in *Pierce Penilesse*, IV, 95, 321.

[15] In terms of Nashe and II. iv., the Nurse's 'ropery' at 146 is quite in keeping with the number of 'rope' references in *Saffron-walden*, but Ql's 'roperipe' is close to the '*Rupenrope*' of *SW*, 65. McKerrow notes the parallel, Vol. IV, p. 802.

[16] Brooke, as in Bullough, I, p. 311.

[17] McKerrow compares the less exact 'set up your rests' of *Terrors of the Night*, I p. 384.

[18] The *Variorum* notes 'an Apothecaries Crocodile, or dride *Alligatur*' of page sixty-seven, but does not add the 'Rat-catcher' earlier in the same sentence. 'Alligatur' and 'ratcatcher' are unique in the canon at *Romeo and Juliet* V. i. 43 and III. i. 75. McKerrow noted the parallel with 'Alligatur,' IV, p. 335.

[19] For Shakespeare's use of images from Nashe's play, *Summers Last Will and Testament* in *1 and 2 Henry IV*, see Muir, pp. 95-6.

[20] See the observation of J. Dover Wilson in his *New Cambridge* edition of *As You Like It* and my 'New Sources for *As You Like It*.' *English Language Notes*, March 1980.

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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING AND THE MASKS OF REALITY

Much Ado About Nothing is one of the most cunningly contrived comedies of Shakespeare in which some of the known dramatic conventions of European fiction have been accepted at their face value and yet transcended to the farthest extent. It has also its complement of the tragic though the latter does not overweigh the comic intention and the resolution of the tangled threads leads to a harmonious conclusion. In this play the comic action turns on a double plot, knit together by the common motif of credulity and self-deception, and the scenes, preceding and following the great Church scene and to which Dogberry and Verges provide the undersong, are tenuously connected with it. Claudio and Hero, inspite of their obvious frailties, are the focus of attention at one end of the scale, and Benedick and Beatrice, attract us on the other. The first pair of lovers seems to have an unsure grasp over reality that almost always tends to elude them and this betrays both their essential shallowness and their gullibility. Claudio, once we get into his skin, gives the impression of one who is at once raw and prim and hence is hardly attractive. Despite his apparent exhilaration he does not seem to be involved in passion but only in the dream of passion. He is not half so nimble, subtle and sophisticated as Benedick and he makes us believe that his soul has been fed on the phantasies of love. The moment he returns from war (and he is reported to have returned with laurels) he lets himself be distracted by the process of love-making and unburdens himself thus :

O my lord,
When you went onwards on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand,
Than to drive liking to the name of love :
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying I liked ere I went to wars.[1] (I. i. 274-83)

This sounds not only pretty lukewarm but also underlines the fact that inspite of the 'soft and delicate desires' that 'come thronging' on him, as on a romantic lover, Claudio can conveniently transfer his impulses from one sphere to another. Love for him is a commodity relation and not the vital flame of his soul. Similarly, his later avowal 'In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that ever I look'd on' (I, i, 174) has the air of being rather innocuous and naive. It looks as though it is more the visual image of Hero than the warm and palpable reality of a human being that catches his eye and stimulates his imagination. The most pressing compulsion behind his actions is naivety rather than a fully-formed judgment or faith. Claudio and Hero are not committed to a pure and concrete intimacy and yet a sort of make-believe of love springs up between them suddenly and with precipitance. Hero is a remarkably neutral and colourless heroine in Shakespeare : her emotions are never aroused to any pitch of intensity and in moments of urgency she stands pathetically in need of prompting. In her case, no less than in the case of Claudio, love depends on hearsay as also on first sight : as lovers they are hesitant and inarticulate, are creatures of the eye and not of the mind. What strikes as most unusual about this relationship—and this renders it all the more vulnerable—is that she allows herself to be courted by proxy. Don Pedro, gifted with equanimity, tact and selflessness, volunteers himself to win Hero's hand and then pass her on to Claudio. This wooing by

proxy, highly incredible and unconvincing as it is, is done in the course of a masked dance where deceitful appearances are treated on a par with reality. Not only do Don Pedro and Hero move as shadowy figures but all the pairs of lovers are exposed to our sight simultaneously under the cover of mistaken identities. This creates the impact of a pell-mell gathering in which characters behave like ghosts of the mind and remain incognito. While Don Pedro is still engaged in the business of vicarious courtship of Hero, Don John, recognizing Claudio, worms himself into his favour and poisons his mind in respect of his benefactor. Under the pressure of these insinuations Claudio not unexpectedly comes to harbour grave misgivings about this kind of wooing and feels disconcerted :

> Friendship is constant in all other things
> Save in the office and affairs of love:
> Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues:
> Let every eye negotiate for itself
> And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch
> Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
> This is an accident of hourly proof,
> Which I mistrusted not. (II. i. 162-9)

Don Pedro's shrewd and skilful handling of this situation turns out successful and Claudio's marriage with Hero seems for all intents and purposes to be in the offing. Though the impression of everything being manipulated beforehand is inevitable yet one does not suspect any untoward or sinister move contemplated by any one in any quarter. Claudio is however contented with the superficies of things and is not bothered with what lies behind them. For him the testimony of the eye constitutes the only viable image of reality and things are taken by him on trust rather than tried and tested on the anvil of experience. David Ormerod's impeccably constructed thesis, according to which the whole thematic pattern of the play has been worked out in terms of the 'faith-fashion' antithesis, seems to err on a slight point of

detail. 'Faith', he argues cogently, 'is judgment and eyesight supplemented by imagination.'[2] Claudio is lamentably lacking in judgment, his eyesight is not supplemented by the imagination and therefore 'faith' very obviously cannot be predicated of him. Benedick regards him as an epitome of 'fashion'—its other coordinates being 'appearance' and 'opinion'—when he pointedly though cryptically comments thus : 'The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience : and so I leave you'. (I. I, 263-67). The suggestion of fashion-mongering, of being preoccupied with frills of experience rather than with its tenuous texture, is conveyed here with great dexterity and sense of indirection. Hence his observation that 'Claudio was once a Hercules'[3] (Hercules being an archetype of the virtues that Ormerod associates with 'faith') has therefore no legs to stand on. Small wonder that the naive and uncritical acceptance of love's sovereignty by Claudio, based as it is on an inadequacy of experience, meets shipwreck as things are manoeuvred by the malevolency of Don John.

In the context of the other relationship Benedick and Beatrice apply the test of pragmatism in order to get the bearings of each other and move forward with enough self-assurance Whereas Claudio's assessment of Hero is based on a very slight foundation of knowledge (he falls in love boyishly with her pretty face and thus Beatrice's pejorative epithet of 'Count Comfect' sticks to him deeply) Benedick and Beatrice are adepts at polished and heartless repartee. They are alert and open-eyed and undergo the process of mutual disengagement with a keen relish for it. Both of them are comic figures but do not degenerate into being ridiculous, and inspite of the fact that they are bubbling with self-confidence, are wary of betraying themselves. Benedick is soldierly and resourceful, demonstrates a pretentious misogyny that makes him recede into adolescence and can

on no account be persuaded to surrender himself to Beatrice. Despite her being mercurial and shrewish she is constant and loyal, and is also quick to build up a defence mechanism when in reply to Leonato's 'I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband' she makes every single word of hers loaded with a dash of mordant irony thus : 'Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust ? to make an account of her life to a clod of way-ward marl ?' (II, I, 56-8). This self-portrait of Beatrice is added lustre to by Hero thus :

> Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
> Misprising what they look on, and her wit
> Values itself so highly that to her
> All matter else seems weak. (III, i, 51-54)

A still more perceptive comment that reflects Beatrice's delightful perversity and her apparent unconcern for any ethical norms, is brought to view by Hero in this connection :

> I never yet saw man,
> How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
> But she would spell him backward:
> So turns she every man the wrong side out,
> And never gives to truth and virtue that
> Which simpleness and merit purchaseth. (III, i, 59-70.)

Both Benedick and Beatrice try to steal a march over each other not only in amazing feats of verbal brilliance, adding up layer after layer of witty sarcasm, but also in the sheer virulence of their tongue. Both of them also show an open and unconcealed hatred for the opposite sex. Hence Don Pedro, fond of the pastime of match-making in conformity to the social conventions of Messina, proposes to himself the Herculean task of bringing them 'into a mountain of affection th' one with th 'other' (II, i, 340-42). This is done by the use of the familiar device of eavesdropping that takes place in the pleached bower—the symbol of whatever is circuitous and labyrinthine—by which each of them is enabled to overhear

other's denigration and this eventually works out a kind of therapy. This starts in effect the incipient movement towards that 'enraged affection' that is 'past the Infinite of thought' and seems to be reciprocal. And 'never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion' as each of them gradually begins to discover for the other. But wit-combat is the chief weapon wielded by both and the instinct to quarrel lies in their very marrow. 'Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably', says Benedick and very truly so. It is through their witty acrobatics that each is able to try the strength of the other and it is also the instrument of measuring their inner potential. When the web of illusions is broken eventually both of them emerge as their true selves, shorn of entrenched preconceptions and strong prejudices, and discover their common meeting-ground. When Benedick overhears some of his intimate friends testify to the fact that Beatrice is deeply in love with him he is driven to abjure all his waywardness or throw off his mask and come out with this self-confession 'I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage : but doth not the appetite alter ? . . . Shall quips and sentences and these paper-bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour ? No; the world must be peopled' (II, iii, 223-30). There is something frank and delightful about this somersault, this unconvering of a man muffled up in his folds of pretension, and the conclusion that is climaxed by his train of thought is downright comic. Beatrice, likewise, is entrapped by Hero and Ursula when she, 'like a lapwing, runs/Close by the ground, to hear our conference' (III, i, 24-25). On being acquainted that Benedick is 'horribly in love' with her but is apprehensive of being scoffed at by a termagant if he were to publicize the ardour of his passion the whole citadel of her egotism comes crashing and she declares almost ecstatically :

> And, Benedick love on; I will requite thee,
> Taming my wild heart to thy longing hand :

> If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
> To bind our loves up in a holy band;
> For others say thou dost deserve, and I
> Believe it better than reportingly. (III. i, 111-16)

One may be tempted to comment that both Benedick and Beatrice are being haled into love inspite of themselves and emerging out of the welter of deceitful appearances into the blaze of reality. Putting it differently it is worth stressing that both of them begin to recognize the transcendent value of relation in the sense of entering into each other's order of reality that had been curtained for them earlier.

Hero's public denunciation by Claudio at the altar, when they were on the point of being joined together eternally, comes as a dreadful shock and almost every one is benumbed into utter amazement. It amounts to a kind of sacrelige that betrays the brittle foundation on which their mutual romantic love had rested. Hero is shaken to the very roots of her being when she is slandered by Claudio who had been egged on to do it by the machinations of Don John—a recently released prisoner of war and one whose deeply ingrained malignity, like that of the later Edmund, is traceable ultimately to the fact of bastardy. Early we catch a glimpse of him while he is engaged in an intimate dialogue with Conrade thus:

> 'I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain . . . If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the meantime, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.'
> (I, iii, 24-34)

Don John is sketched in as an early adumbration of a Shakespearian villain and hence has much simpler dimensions of personality than an Iago or an Edmund. He reveals himself well enough in the juxtaposition of the canker (of

malice and hatred) and the rose (of natural and spontaneous love). He prides himself on his self-sufficiency and is tormented by his consciously willed isolation. He is therefore given to brooding over his real and imagined injuries and deprivations and has of necessity created the hell of his thwarted ambitions. His whole attitude is dictated by the accumulated bitterness of a life-time that corrodes him inwardly. No part of his being is irradiated by the mystery of joy and no warmth of feeling emanates from the ashes of his melancholy. Betrice's forthright reaction to him: 'How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after' (II, i, 3-4) is a shrewd and succinct summing up of the man. Margaret—one of Hero's maidservants—is asked by Borachio—Don John's chief confidant—to impersonate her mistress and appear at her chamber-window at midnight and respond to her call in Hero's very accents. Claudio and Don Pedro are induced to be eye-witnesses to this clandestine meeting of Margaret and Borachio in the guise of their superiors. This supposedly oracular proof becomes the iron in Claudio's flesh as far as Hero's fidelity towards himself is concerned. He is indeed maddened by a fit of jealousy and consternation and that results in Hero's utter undoing. Hence when in the course of a brief encounter with him later and while reiterating his phrases like 'bashful sincerity' and 'comely love' Hero asks Claudio: 'And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?' his brain at once catches fire from this query and he bursts out saying:

> Out on thee Seeming! I will write against it:
> You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
> As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
> But you are more intemperate in your blood
> Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
> That rage in savage sensuality. (IV. i, 53-8)

The implicit but stark opposition between 'seeming' and 'being' is linked to and reinforces the one between Chastity

and Intemperance, and both are conveyed in tragic undertones. The accent falls on the chaos that results from a headlong plunge into the vortex of passion, the reckless, unrestrained sensuality of the beasts. The discrepancy between the 'outward' and the 'inward', the public and the private postures is accentuated in a later context and the whole issue clinched in terms of a Kierkegaardian paradox thus :

> O Hero ! what a Hero hadst thou been,
> If half thy outward graces had been placed
> About thy thoughts and counsels of thy breast !
> But fare thee well, most foul, most fair ! farewell,
> Thou pure impiety and impious purity ! (IV, i, 97-101)

Beatrice, on the contrary, is intuitively convinced of Hero's innocence, of the fact that she had been maligned deliberately, and in a bid to test the genuineness of Benedick's love for her own self, she assigns him the formidable task : 'Kill Claudio ! The urgent, dry, matter-of fact tone of this peremptory command has the effect of forcing Benedick out of his complacent generosity into a shocked bewilderment and his very decisive, almost conclusive reply is : 'Ha! not for the wide world ' (IV, i, 286). The intensity of Beatrice's reaction is reflected in the mouthfuls of condemnation to which Claudio is mercilessly subjected :

> 'Is a' not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman ? O that I were a man ! what, bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour,—O God, that I were a man ! I would eat his heart in the market-place.
> (IV, i, 297-303)

This indignation is blind, savage and blood-thirsty and gushes forth out of the depths of her soul. For a moment Benedick is stunned by this impetuous and absolute command that comes upon him with the terrific force of a volcano. But a man of his sweet reasonableness is hard put to it to

reconcile his inner promptings with the compulsions of a specific situation. And Beatrrice can in no way be pacified but is moved to still greater excess of perturbation, not unmixed with a grain of wistfulness.

> O that I were a man for his sake, or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake ! But manhood is melted into courtsies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too; he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving. (IV, i, 313-20).

Beatrice is caught in the see-saw of emotions, wishing somebody (Benedick in this context) to take up the job of confounding Claudio and yet despairing to compel him to do it. For her therefore all the chivalric virtues are for the time being at any rate fallen into desuetude, become empty names without any connotation. Before the die is cast Benedick seeks the last bit of reassurance from Beatrice: 'Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero ?' (IV, i, 325). And with her prompt and incisive reply, 'yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul' (IV, i, 326), he makes up his mind and comes out, as if with the flash of lightning, 'Enough ! I am engaged : I will challenge him . . . By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account' (IV, i, 327-29). In other words Benedick promises to sanctify his love for her by turning his words into deeds. Meanwhile Borachio makes a clean confession of how he had been hired by Don John to besmear the reputation of the immaculate Hero and this is casually overheard by Dogberry and the Watch. The ordeal for Benedick is thus bypassed in the excitement that precdes and follows the discovery of the intrigue.

Borachio's confession and its leakage through the forthrightness of Dogberry and his associates not only bring about Don John's exposure but ultimately the unfounded suspicion of Hero's infidelity is also removed from Claudio's

mind. Like Beatrice, the Friar, too, is involuntarily persuaded of Hero's innocence and refuses therefore to lend credence to the fiction of her perfidy. In support of his instinctive perception he invokes the authority of his ripe judgment and wide experience of men and things. In the midst of those who are purblind on account of their defective vision he represents the 'voice of sanity' and detachment. He therefore suggests that a public announcement of Hero's death be made in the hope that it may sting the conscience of Don Pedro and Claudio. Such an announcement may be treated as a further variation on the motif of 'seeming' though in a different setting and for entirely unanticipated reasons. Further, that Claudio may be kept unillumined so that protracted contemplation over this tragedy may help in the restoration of Hero's true image in his beclouded mind :

> When he shall hear she died upon his words,
> The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
> Into his study of imagination,
> And every lovely organ of her life,
> Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
> More moving-delicate and full of life,
> Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
> Than when she lived indeed: (IV, i, 120-27)

Here not only are death and life juxtaposed but it is also suggested obliquely that what is believed to be death on the premises of reason (or unreason) may be transformed into its opposite by the alchemy of the imagination. And it is not altogether impossible that this unique artifice of the imagination may gather to itself a greater semblance of reality than is ordinarily or otherwise possible. He also exploits in this context the biblical theme of dying into life when addressing Hero he says : 'Come, lady, die to live : this wedding day/Perhaps is but prolong'd : have patience and endure' (IV, i, 250-51). Here creation and renewal—the two ultimates that matter—are conceived in terms of

love and love is the major component in the process of redemption. It may be added that Claudio is so much sobered and prostrated at long last : 'yet sinn'd I not/ But in mistaking' (V, i, 267-68) that he is even prepared, in sheer desperation, to accept a second bride—Leonato's fictitious niece—in reparation for the lost Hero.

Dogberry and Verges are not peripheral characters : they exist not on the fringes of the plot but at the very heart of the action. They also contribute conspicuously and in no small measure to the shifting fabric of confusion and misapprehension that is so pervasive in the play. Unlettered though they are, their uncouthness, their upside-down euphuism and their malaprop sense of language is exciting and has a functional significance in the play. The errors committed by Dogberry not only on the linguistic plane but also in counting numbers, in fixing up the sequential order of things and in referring to conclusions earlier than the premises on which they are based indicate that the norm has been disregarded and dislocated and this evokes apparently the sense of the ridiculous. The polished and scintillating wit of Benedick and Beatrice is a measure of their competence and helps us in placing them in their proper context. Dogberry and Verges have their own perspective on things that is in consonance with the way in which they come to accommodate themselves with their own immediate environment. Their dislocation of the common idiom of speech has its own logic and serves the cryptic pupose of helping them penetrate through the shams and attitudinizings of other characters in the play. Dogberry's assertion : 'I am a wise fellow; and which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina : and one that knows the law, go to ; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him' (IV, ii, 77-83) that reflects a variety of *hybris*, has its own exquisite flavour and accentuates, by way of a comic

parallel, the self-conceits of his superiors in the social scale. The distortions of language and the deliberate collapse of due order and propriety effected by him erect a barrier against reality as normally apprehended and perceived by both Dogberry and Verges. Their evocation of the Deformed thief—an allegorical icon of man's asborption into the ephemeral and the mutable—is linked up with Borachio's : 'Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man '(III, iii, 112-14). In other words, it is worth while to dwell on the difference between the form of outer clothing ('fashion') and that of the wearer of it ('a man'), and the latter, it hardly needs saying, is not determined by the former. Or, there is always a hiatus between man's outward ostentation and his real and intrinsic worth. This recalls to mind Langland's highly sensitized phrase 'in contenuance of clothying' that has a subtle and ironical bearing upon the discrepancy between 'apperance' and 'reality' as observed in the daily commerce of living. What is stressed by Dogberry, while giving instructions to the Watch in dealing with the different odd kinds of delinquents, is that one ought to avoid too much interference in cases of lack of consonance with the letter of the law, for what counts in the ultimate analysis is man's inherent integrity and his unswerving attachment to a few simple and basic principles. Dogberry is not so much concerned with the surface of things as with their hidden depths or he may be wrong or erratic about the former but is unerringly right about the latter. He is consequently vouchsafed a vision as rare and as fugitive as that of Bottom, and his perspicacity derives from it.

In the play's persistent concern with 'appearance' and 'illusion' the device of the mask as employed by Shakespeare acquires a special significance. It 'affords opportunities for parody, for confession, and for *double entendre*,'[4] and these have been fully exploited by Shakespeare. What sets the plot of the play in motion is the confusion of identities occasioned by the wearing of masks in a formal dance and what brings

about the denouement is the act of unmasking in the course of another dance that apparently rounds up the action. The mask device thus inevitably becomes the integrating factor for the various motifs that are operative in the play. This comedy underscores the multiple stances that it is possible to take towards Reality. 'Man is a giddy thing' indeed, for sometimes he is convinced that deceptions constitute the simulacrum of reality and at others he is equally persuaded that they ought to be discarded in order to reach certitude. Claudio is for long incapable of penetrating through the romantic claptrap but eventually he is not only allowed a full glimpse of Hero's beauty but he also accepts her as a cherished icon of faith after all the deceits of appearances are known for what they are. Similarly, Benedick and Beatrice—the seeming contraries—shed their assumed antagonisms and are inevitably drawn together as if by a secret magnetism. They seem to have been really in love with each other and because of their satiric intelligence and their capacity to sort out things recognize both the grace and the necessity of love. Opposed to the blind and vague romanticism of Claudio and Hero theirs is a kind of religious commitment to which they are not so much converted as thrown back by a reversal of direction. For them the theatrical unmasking becomes a metaphor for the self-vision attained by each. Similarly, while Leonato is torn by conflicting impulses and is at the mercy of his vacuous rhetorical gestures, Don John continues to be the prisoner of his negative attitudes that he fails to transform into anything positive. Dogberry and Verges, through their topsy-turveydom, fumble through to the centre of light and their eyes never flinch from it. They are not only 'instruments of clarification' but also prove their solid honesty and unquestionable virtue. They succeed in tearing the veil of appeances much more deftly than their superiors and thus demonstrate the fact that truth 'may be discovered in unexpected ways and in unusual places.'[5] The fact that the various characters are able to

join the dance celebration shows that the scales have fallen off their eyes and they are now able to participate in life's feast.

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Robert C. Johnson

SILENCE AND SPEECH IN *CORIOLANUS*

Reading a play one often tends to concentrate on the particular passage, giving little thought to the effect of these lines on the silent characters who watch and listen on stage. To be sure only the first-time reader of *Hamlet* is not aware of Hamlet's hovering presence as he reads sixty-four lines of poetry discussing state affairs and the concerns of Laertes. The audience focuses its attention on the silent character dressed in black in contrast to the gay robes of the court. The visual effect is impressive and builds suspense up to the moment when Hamlet utters his aside, 'A little more than kin, and less than kind' (I.ii.65).[1]

In commenting upon a performance of *Richard III*, Robert Hapgood writes, 'I listen to Queen Margaret delivering her curse, but it is Douglas Watson as Richard III that I watch, as (like me) he watches and listens. Even when he is silent, Richard dominates the stage.'[2] J. L. Styan has also commented upon such silences; the reader 'should always ask himself why Shakespeare arranges for a character's entrance when he has little or nothing to say. "To be, or not to be" is not the same when read as when Hamlet is seen speaking it with the pitifully ardent Ophelia praying behind him.'[3]

In 1929 Alwin Thaler published his book, *Shakspeare's Silences;* the opening chapter by that same title is but sixty-three pages long, but Thaler made some important observations on the necessity of recognizing the significance of the silence of many of Shakespeare's characters. He also offered an important caution: 'To wit: though it is our duty to seek to understand the meaning of these silences, we

must recognize that in reasoning *ex silentio* it is hazardous to present one's conclusions as though they were incontrovertible facts. They cannot be more . . . than possible or, at best, plausible explanations.'[4] More recently Bruce Sajdok has studied over 800 examples of the silent character in Shakespeare. He notes: 'For a critic to overlook these moments of silence so obvious to any audience is to neglect one of the principal facets of Shakespeare's dramatic method.'[5]

The performance of course is crucial, and the silent character can, actually must, through facial expressions and body language, convey a specific and non-ambiguous meaning.

Of course the text often helps Banquo and Macbeth confront the witches; Macbeth is speechless, but Banquo makes it quite evident what stage business we are to expect. 'Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear/Things that do sound so fair?' (I, iii, 51-52). In such a case the reader can easily imagine the performance

There are, however, many silences that are ambiguous. The actor or actress can resolve the ambiguity, even though in some cases there will be alternate versions.

Act II, scene iii, of *All's Well That Ends Well* offers a simple example; the scene begins with the entrance of Lafeu, Bertram, and Parolles,

> Lafeu. They say miracles are past, and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless. Hence it is that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknowen fear
>
> Parolles. Why, 'tis the rarest argument of wonder that shot out in our latter times.
>
> Bertram. And so 'tis. (II, iii- 1-9)

This is the last word Bertram speaks until Helena chooses him as her husband 'My wife, my liege? I shall beseech your Highness,/In such a business give me leave to use/The help of mine owe eyes.' (II, iii, 106-108). During this interval of some one hundred lines Parolles echoes the

astonishment of Lafeu who is overwhelmed by Helena's having cured the King. The King and Helena enter and the lords of the court are summoned. From this group, then, Helena proceeds to pick her future husband. In reading this scene we might forget about Bertram, but obviously Shakespeare does not allow the theatre audience to do so. Bertram is on stage, demanding our attention. Surely he cannot be there merely to stand inconspicuously to the side. The audience and Bertram know what reward Helena will receive now that the king has been cured. That Bertram suspects that he is in some danger could easily be indicated by the skilful actor. At least initially in the scene Bertram may be contemplating the ironic situation in which he finds himself. He had come to the court to seek fame and prestige, and now he finds that it is Helena, a nobody, who has achieved this fame. When the king announces to all those assembled that Helena will be able to choose her husband from among these males, the tension mounts. The conversation between Helena and the sundry lords is commented upon by Lafeu, the effect of which is to increase the desirability of Helena in our eyes. But our attention in this part of the scene must be threefold: we watch and listen to Helena, but we are also distracted by Lafeu who stands off to the side. The reader may stop at this level, but the viewer is aware of Bertram who fears that he will be picked.

I would like to deal briefly with several other plays in which the silences of crucial figures create an ambiguity in the reading which, of course, can be resolved in several ways in the performance of the play. In the second scene of *The Winter's Tale* Leontes is unsuccessful in his attempts to persuade Polixenes to remain in Sicilia. He then sharply requests his queen, Hermione, to second his request, 'Tongue-tied our Queen ? Speak you.' (I. ii. 27). Except for one comment at line 33, Leontes is silent until line 86.

Leontes. Is he won yet?
Hermione. He'll stay, my lord.
Leontes. At my request he would not.
Hermione, my dearest, thou never spok'st
To better purpose. (I. ii. 86-89).

A little later Leontes falls into a jealous rage as he watches Hermione and Polixenes converse downstage. To some critics it is at this point that Leontes becomes instantly jealous. Another possibility, however, is that Leontes is testing his wife and that she has failed the test when he comments, '. . . thou never spok'st/To better purpose.' The problem is simplified when we turn to the stage; what is Leontes doing during the silent interval? Is he busy with other affairs, paying little attention to the conversation? If so, his jealousy later is separate from the opening part of the scene. Or is he pensive, viewing carefully the actions of Polixenes and Hermione who seem perfectly oblivious to their audltor. After all, Polixenes consents to stay at line 56, whereas Leontes does not bring himself back into the conversation until line 86. The silent figure of Leontes can, if the actor and director wish, dominate the scene. Leontes' presence can build a tension that legitimately explodes when he observes his wife and Polixenes go joyfully downstage again.

Peculiar silences abound at the end of *Measure for Measure*. The Duke reveals Claudio and proposes marriage in one breath.

If he be like your brother, for his sake
Is he pardon'd; and for your lovely sake,
Give me your hand and say you will be mine,
He is my brother too. But fitter time for that. (V. I 490-93).

Again what can be resolved by reading or re-reading the text? The performance is the thing. Isabella has thought that Claudio is dead; she has, in fact, sacrificed her brother to a principle—'More than our brother is our chastity' (II. iv. 185). She tells her brother of Angelo's request, and when he

weakens and pleads for his life, she turns on him with complete and withering scorn. When Isabella and Claudio meet in the last scene, it is for the first time on stage since they have so abruptly parted in the prison scene. What is Isabella's reaction? The Duke points to her brother and asks for her hand. What does Isabella do? Does she embrace her brother or take the Duke's hand or some combination of both? Though neither Isabella nor Claudio says a word at the end of the play, the spirit of reconciliation can be conveyed by the performers. The Duke after holding Isabella's hand briefly, declares there is a more fitting time to discuss his own happiness. He must first handle the unfinished business surrounding Angelo and Lucio. The last lines of the play suggest that the 'fitter time' has already arrived.

> Dear Isabel,
> I have a motion much imports your good,
> Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,
> What's mine is yours and what is yours is mine.
> So bring us to our palace, where we'll show
> What's yet behind, that['s] meet you all should know.
> (V. i. 534-39).

The audience watches the reaction of Isabella, and through her response all ambiguity can be removed. But let Isabella or Claudio avoid each other or exchange only a perfunctory greeting, the eyes of the audience focus upon these silent figures despite the Duke's commands to Lucio.

The Tempest also offers an ambiguous reconciliation. At the end of Act III Prospero confronts Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio with evidence of their guilt. Alonso recognizes his guilt, but both Sebastian and Antonio vow that they will fight against these fiends, Until Prospero confronts them in Act V the three remain under the spell of Ariel. When Prospero presents himself to the king, he addresses Sebastian and Antonio in a scornful aside, 'But you, my brace of lords, were I so minded, / I here could pluck his Highess'. frown upon you/And justify you traitors. At this time/I will tell no tales.'

(V. i. 126-29). Sebastian comments, 'The Devil speaks in him'. Prospero then turns specifically to his b other, Antonio :

> For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother
> Would even infect my mouth, I do forgive
> Thy rankest fault—all of them; and require
> My dukedom of thee, which perforce, I know
> Thou must restore. (V. i. 130-34).

It is not, however, Antonio or Sebastian who responds, but Alonso; and the emphasis turns to the union of Ferdinand and Miranda. Are we to assume that Prospero is not only reconciled with Alonso but also with Sebastian and Antonio? If we are to judge solely by the text we can not be sure since their silence might be caused by their precarious situation—Prospero can expose their recent plots against the King. Near the end of the play Sebastian does have three separate lines (278, 285. 300), an indication that he has become a part of the general enjoyment of Stephano and Trinculo's discomfiture. But earlier an exchange between Sebastian and Antonio (Antonio's only speaking part in the entire scene) indicates that the two of them still form a separate group (II. 263-66). If the text is ambiguous, the performance need not be. It is not, however, sufficient to claim that the two would not be noticed in the general happiness of the denouement. Sebastian and Antonio have played an important, albeit minor, role in the development of the usurpation theme. Their presence, silence, and action or lack of action will be marked in any performance.

The real test of any interpretation of Shakespeare, then, is finally in the performance. Does the theory hold up under the critical eye of the audience? One of the most intriguing silences in Shakespeare is that of Claudius in the play-within-the-play scene. Hamlet has instructed Horatio, and in a sense the audience, to keep his eyes on Claudius. Although there are distractions—the player king and queen, Hamlet's

actions with Ophelia and the questions he directs towards his mother—the audience would always be aware of what Claudius himself is doing. And what exactly is Claudius doing during the performance of the dumb show? It is of course possible that Claudius is not watching, that he is carousing, whispering to the Queen, observing Hamlet—the possibilities of inattention are many. But to suggest that Claudius' silence is due to his failure to understand is surely to weaken his character.

In *Othello* Emilia witnesses Othello berate his wife for losing the handkerchief. Her presence on stage is in many ways awkward, and the actress might convey through her actions, her facial expression, a reason for her non-intervention. The easy way out would have been for Shakespeare to have her leave the stage. J. L. Styan feels that Shakespeare wanted her there to heighten the tensions of the scene. 'She stands watching, overcome with astonishment that the Moor could be so uncontrolled . . .'[6] It is useless to speculate as we read what Emilia is doing; the actress, however, must resolve the problem. Bewildered, perhaps, by Othello's obsession with the handkerchief and confused further by Desdemona's false claim that she has not lost the handkerchief, Emilia's silence is excused indirectly by Desdemona's analysis of Othello's actions; the handkerchief is not important :

> Something sure of state,
> Either from Venice, or some unhatch'd practice
> Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,
> Hath puddled his clear spirit; and in such cases
> Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
> Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so;
> For let our finger ache, and it indues
> Our other healthful members even to a sense
> Of pain. Nay, we must think men are not gods,
> Nor of them look for such observancy
> As fits the bridal. Beshrew me much, Emilia,
> I was (unhandsome warrior as I am)

Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,
And he's indicted falsely.
Emilia. Pray Heaven it be state matters, as you think.
And no conception nor no jealous toy
Concerning you. (III. iv. 140-57).

Emilia knows only that her husband has the handkerchief, but she does not, can not, suspect the villainy that is going on. Furthermore Emilia had earlier admitted that Desdemona will 'run mad/When she shall lack it' (III, iii. 317-18). Thus Emilia is silent, choosing to cover up her indiscretion; Desdemona's concern over the handkerchief had been anticipated. It is only Othello's actions that are unusual and Desdemona explains them. Emilia's presence does heighten the tension, but we would expect Emilia to confess her actions to Desdemona, not to both Othello and Desdemona. When Emilia and Desdemona are alone, Desdemona relieves somewhat Emilia's fears.

J. L. Styan offers a much more complicated example of the ambiguity of another silent character. I quote his brief analysis of Richard II in full :

> In the scene of Richard II's resignation of his crown (*Richard II*, IV. i) it is as if the King talks himself off the throne while the usurper stands looking on in contempt and silent strength at Richard's diminishing stature. Richard has 132 lines to Bolingbroke's 14 in this scene, and the sinister taciturnity of the latter is pointed by the phrase 'silent king' (line 290) with which Richard addresses him.[7]

Such a reading of the scene—I admit an actor could convey this look of contempt—misses completely the real tension of the scene. It is Richard's moment, and no 'silent king' can wrest the audience's attention from the virtuoso performance of Richard. Bolingbroke's plans for the deposing of Richard do not work out as he had anticipated, for Richard makes everyone in the audience feel with him the poignancy of being deposed. Bolingbroke had arranged the

show so that 'in common view/He may surrender; so we shall proceed/Without suspicion.' (IV. i, 155-57).

But after Richard attacks the flatterers and compares himself to Christ who found 'truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none' (IV. I. 171), he offers the crown to Bolingbroke :

> Here, cousin, seize the crown.
> Here, cousin,
> On this side my hand, [and] on that side thine.
> Now is this golden crown like a deep well
> That owes two buckets, filling one another,
> The emptier ever dancing in the air,
> The other down, unseen, and full of water:
> That bucket down and full of teats am I.
> Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.
> Bull. I thought you had been willing to resign.
> K. Rich. My crown I am, but still my griefs are mine. (IV. I. 181–91).

The visual effect is crucial here. Richard offers the crown to Bolingbroke, emphasizing the word 'seize.' Bolingbroke, who is literally seizing the kingdom, is reluctant to take the crown on such terms, and Richard must thrust the crown towards him. Bolingbroke then places his hand on the crown, expecting Richard to release his grip. But Richard holds firmly to the crown and Bolingbroke, surely uneasy, holds to the other side. Bolingbroke's comment at line 190 is surely that of an uneasy, embarrassed usurper. The play he was to stage, in which he was cast in the major role, has been changed. Bolingbroke is merely a supporting actor, forced to improvise as the new star of the scene refuses to follow the script. 'I thought you had been willing to resign.' Surely Bolingbroke is finding it more difficult than he anticipated to proceed without suspicion. And it is not until line 204—'I give this heavy weight from off my head'—that Bolingbroke finally receives the crown. We must, thus, be aware of the visual effect of Bolingbroke's reaching for the crown, his holding it momentarily with Richard and then

dropping his hand away from the crown. It is surely a tense moment for the usurper.

What is crucial for the reader of Shakespeare then is that he be aware of the stage possibilities of each scene. If he has seen a Shakespearean production he will recognize how he at times finds himself concentrating upon silent characters. He must in his study become aware of this interaction, this tension that adds immeasurably to one's enjoyment and understanding of the play.

The play, however, in which silence is of the utmost importance, I feel, is *Coriolanus*. That Shakespeare is aware of the effectiveness of silence is evident in the stage direction which precedes Coriolanus's acquiescence to his mother's request—He 'holds her by the hand, silent.' The three silent figures, Criolanus and his mother upstage framing the sinister Aufidius who lingers downstage, dramatically emphasize the moment of decision and the fate that Coriolanus knowingly accepts : 'But for your son, believe it—O, believe it—/Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd. / If not most mortal to him' (V. iii, 187-89). Professor Styan has commented upon this scene : 'Volumnia's pleading with Coriolanus induces a more complex tension than the words alone allow when the scowling presence of Aufidius is seen upstage overlooking the figures of the mother and son '[8]

Later in the act Volumnia returns to Rome; the scene is short; besides the cries of the welcoming crowd there is only one speech.

> Behold our patroness, the life of Rome !
> Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
> And make triumphant fires ! Strew flowers before them !
> [Unshout] the noise that banish'd Martius !
> Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;
> Cry, 'Welcome, ladies, welcome !' (V. v. 1-6).

The problem is how should the actress portray Volumnia. Does she relish her triumph or does she reveal a troubled countenance that suggests she realizes what her son may

suffer? How to portray Volumnia at this point is crucial to an understanding of the play. I would suggest that the actress should portray Volumnia as one glorying in her triumphal return to Rome Her silent entry into Rome is then a moment of supreme triumph, for where before she had lived vicariously through the victories of her son, she can now enjoy the thrill, the excitement of her own victory, even if her victim is her son. Surely this scene is meant to recall the entry of Coriolanus to Rome in II, i. The difference is striking, for whereas Volumnia may relish her triumphal entry, Coriolanus had immediately silenced the shouts of welcome : 'No more of this, it does offend my heart;/Pray now, no more' (II, i. 168-69).

It has become a commonplace of criticism of *Coriolanus* that the protagonist is in many ways inarticulate, silent and that words have no real meaning in the world of Rome. I want to explore in some detail how this inability to adjust to and adapt the falseness of language finally defeats Coriolanus. The central emblem of Coriolanus's separation from the standard use or abuse of language is the scene emphasized by that stage direction, 'Holds her by the hand. silent.'

A few years ago James Calderwood published a brilliant essay on *Coriolanus* in which he demonstrated that the necessary sense of community was absent in Rome and that therefore the ritualistic appearance of Coriolanus in the gown of humility was meaningless since there was no shared agreement among the participants about the meaning of such an appearance. 'The ritual form, which should be a symbol of social order and harmony, has become meaningless because it is invested with false content. And in becoming meaningless in this fashion the ritual ironically becomes a true symbol of the social and political disorder into which Rome has fallen.'[9] And Calderwood goes on to demonstrate that words themselves have become meaningless. 'If the popular language is unacceptable, its words corrupt, its relation to truth shifting and elusive, then one must, or at least Corio-

lanus must, create a language of his own in which the validity and reliability of words are restored. And in his ruthless devotion to his own conception of truth we may see an attempt on Coriolanus's part to fashion a private language whose words, unlike those of the plebeians, are cemented to their meanings, and incapable of distortion.'[10]

Stanley Fish has offered a reading of *Coriolanus* using speech act theory which is supplementary to Calderwood's thesis. Fish also recognizes that the scene in which Coriolanus must ask the Plebeians for their votes is crucial. Coriolanus refuses to accept the meaning of the ritual because he feels that the citizens are incapable of judgment. 'He rejects the public (conventional) stipulation of competence and substitutes for it his own private assessment. He declares himself outside (or, more properly, above) the system of rules by which society fixes its values by refusing to submit to the (speech-act) condition under which its business is conducted'[11] Fish argues convincingly that there is a split between the play and the speech act theory. He is correct that the theory illuminates the play, because the theory gives the reader another way of describing the breakdown of language and communication in Rome.

Two other critics have also commented perceptively on Coriolanus's use of language. Carol Sicherman argues that 'Shakespeare uses both hero and play to conduct an extended exploration of the often precarious correspondence of words and meanings'[12] Her essay is highly dependent on Calderwood's thesis, but she does explore in greater depth the dominance of the theme of language in the play. Joyce Van Dyke, however, takes issue with the common view that Coriolanus is inarticulate and argues that Coriolanus is 'uncommonly sensitive' to words.[13] 'The problem is not that he lacks verbal resources, but that for him language, as a symbolic medium, seems useless for purposes of argument, which after all is intended to issue in action Coriolanus's tendency is always to convert verbal altercations into physical

ones; if words seem impotent to effect change, gestures or acts have an immediate and significant effect."[14]

Now each of these critics is correct, and when these essays are taken together they give us a penetrating and important overview of the play. But the concentration on the citizens and Coriolanus ignores the use of language by the Publicans, and especially by Volumnia. Colderwood is correct when he says that 'the plebeians' words have no stable point of reference, cannot be relied upon at any given moment to mean what they literally say, and hence come dangerously close to signifying nothing."[15] Wether or not Coriolanus must develop a private languge. as Calderwood argues, it is clear that Coriolnnus speaks to and about the plebeians in a manner which separates him from his fellow publicans. He thinks that they are despicable and he tells them that through his many curses.

But the play opens on a very different note. Language is not being used to attack and berate. Through Menenius's analogy of the state to the body, of the stomach to the senate, we see language being used in a very different way. Menenius interprets and orders, he describes the reality in a way which is both accurate and inaccurate—one possible interpretation, but only a possible interpretation.

What is clear in the play is that all of the publicans share Coriolanus's contempt for the citizens. It is Coriolanus who carries this hatred to the extreme and who expresses this hatred. Menenius uses language not to excite nor to berate, but to cajole and persuade.

When Cariolanus states that one connot trust the citizens because they so rapidly change their minds (I. i. 181-83), he does demonstrate the problem of the accuracy of language. But what is important to note is that the inaccuracy or inadequacy of language is not simply a problem of the citizens.

That language is not necessarily the true report of feelings or a deed is the subject of Act I, scene ix. But the idea has been introduced in a somewhat different way in

scene iii—the exchange between Volumnia and Virgilia. Virgilia will be later called 'My gracious silence.' (II. i. 175) In our first introduction to her we see a marked contrast between Volumnia's garrulousness and Virgilia's reticence. Volumnia opens the scene with the comment, 'I pray you, daughter, sing, or express yourself in a more comfortable sort.' (I iii. 1-3). But Virgilia has pledged that she will not leave her house until her husband has returned from the wars. To mingle with other people is to be forced to use language which will cover or distort her true feelings. Her recourse is silence. And when she greets her husband's return it is with silence—her face is filled with tears of relief at his safe return.

> My gracious silence, hail!
> Wouldst thou have laughed had I come coffined home
> That weep'st to see me triumph? (II. i. 175-77).

When words are inadequate to express one's feelings, silence is the appropriate response.

In I, ix the Romans have been victorious, and Cominius is attempting to find the proper way to praise Martius. The scene opens with Cominius describing the effect the report of Martius's actions will have. He stresses how different hearers will react in varied ways:

> If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
> Thou't not believe thy deeds: but I'll report it
> Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles;
> Where great patricians shall attend and shrug.
> I' th' end admire; where ladies shall be frighted,
> And gladly quak'd hear more; where the dull tribunes,
> That with the fusty plebeians hate thine honors,
> Shall say against their hearts, 'We thank the gods
> Our Rome hath such a soldier.' (I. ix. 1-9).

But Martius finds it difficult to hear or accept the praise and several times asks for the praise to cease. He finds it painful to hear his praises; one comment in particular is relevant to the theme of language:

No more, I say I For that I have not wash'd
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch . . .
Which, without note, here's many else have done . . .
You [shout] me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical;
As if I lov'd my little should be dieted
In praises sauced with lies.
(I. ix. 47-53)

From Cominius's point of view the deeds of Coriolanus are so great that it is difficult, if not impossible, to describe them sufficiently. But Coriolanus, for whom such deeds are simply his normal actions, any report will be exaggerated, a distortion. They agree, however, that language is not always accurate or adequate.

Cominius then declares that because of his actions at Corioles, Martius will henceforth be called Caius Martius Coriolanus. His new name will be a symbol of his new honour and renown. The name Coriolanus will not only now denote the specific person, but it will connote the great skill and honour evidenced at the battle before Corioles. It is a fittingly ironical ending to this scene, then, that Coriolanus's request that the poor man whose pardon he desires cannot be saved because Coriolanus has forgotten his name—the specific denotation which is absolutely essential to the granting of the wish.

For his deeds Coriolanus is also to be made consul, but before he can take office he must participate in the ceremony or ritual in which he asks the citizens for their voices or votes. He asks that he be allowed to forego this custom, but the answer is no. Menenius warns him that he must forego his usual speech: 'Pray you speak to 'em' I pray you, / In wholesome manner, (II, iii, 59-60). Coriolanus participates in the ritual on his own terms. He stands before the citizens in his gown of humility, but he neither shows his wounds nor begs for their voices. He instead demands their voices because of his own merit. The Citizens are confused. Coriolanus has, yet he has not, participated in the customary

ritual. And when the citizens discuss his behavior, they conclude that he mocked them and did not fulfil his part of the ceremony. They thus recall their votes, and the two sides confront each other, the Tribunes demanding the death of Coriolanus and he ready to fight the citizens. But Menenius sees a solution. He attempts to pacify the crowd, to quiet Coriolanus. 'Put not your worthy rage into your tongue.' (III. I. 240). Later Menenius develops further this idea that one of Coriolanus's faults is that he speaks exactly what he feels: 'His heart's his mouth; What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent' (III. I. 256-57). From Menenius's point of view the solution is easy; use language to flatter, to deceive—'What the vengeance, / Could he not speak 'em fair?' (III. i. 261-62). And Menenius is able to persuade the tribunes to give Coriolanus the opportunity to respond to the complaints of the citizens.

The next scene presents a striking contrast between the honest, forthright use of language advocated by Coriolanus and the views held by the other patricians and by Volumnia. Coriolanus is amazed that his mother has not applauded his latest verbal attacks:

> I muse my mother
> Does not approve me further, who was wont
> To call them woolen vassals, things created
> To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads
> In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder,
> When one but of my ordinance stood up
> To speak of peace or war.
>
> *Enter Volumnia*
>
> I talk of you:
> Why did you wish me milder? Would you have me
> False to my nature? Rather say I play
> The man I am. (III. ii. 7-16).

But Menenius and Volumnia recommend a different strategy. Coriolanus must be false to his true nature; he must use language to deceive. At line fifty-one Coriolanus asks

Volumnia to explain further what she would have him do. Until line 99, Volumnia explains in detail (supported occasionally by the comments of Menenius) how he must falsify his feelings:

> Because that now it lies you on to speak
> To th' people; not by your own instruction,
> Not by th' matter which your heart prompts you,
> But with such words that are but rooted in
> Your tongue, though but bastards, and syllables
> Of no allowance, to your bosom's truth.
> Now, this no more dishonors you at all
> Than to take in a town with gentle words,
> Which else would put you to your fortune and
> The hazard of much blood.
> I would dissemble with my nature, where
> My fortunes and my friends at stake requir'd
> I should do so in honor. (III. ii. 52-64).

Coriolanus remains silent, and his silence here is an interesting parallel to his silence before his mother's pleading in act V. Where there he listens to her impassioned pleas for Rome, here, he listens to her calculated instructions in hypocrisy. He decides to try her suggested techniques, but he does so with reluctance: 'Must I / With my base tongue give to my noble heart / A lie that it must bear? Well I will do't.' (III, ii. 99-101).

But it is part of the tragedy of Coriolanus that he cannot be false to his nature. When he confronts the tribunes he cannot flatter or deceive. When it is suggested that he has acted like a traitor, he immediately bristles and despite Menenius's caution to be temperate, he unleashes one of his curses against them. His attempt to be false to his true nature is a failure; he is banished from Rome and his claim that he banishes the citizen is an ironic attempt to use language to describe in a personal, unique way the specific reality.[16] It is also an action which returns Coriolanus to his true nature, for it expresses his sense of complete sufficiency and his complete honesty in his use of language.

In the last part of the play Coriolanus makes an important discovery about the use of language. When Coriolanus goes to Aufidius's house, he expects to be recognized even in his muffled apparel. And though he offers several hints, Aufidius does not recognize him until Coriolanus states his name. He carefully distinguishes between his traditional name, Caius Martius, and his newly won name, Coriolanus, a name which even he recognizes is inappropriate in Antium. And of course Aufidius always calls him Caius Martius and stresses this point when at the end of the play he calls him traitor.

Aufidius : Read it not, noble lords,
But tell the traitor, in the highest degree
He hath abus'd your powers.
Coriolanus : 'Traitor !' How now?
Aufidius : Ay, traitor, Martius !
Coriolanus : 'Martius'?
Aufidius : Ay Martius, Caius Martius ! Dost thou think
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name[17]
Coriolanus, in Corioles? (V. vi. 83-89).

The significance of a name, then, is stressed in the last part of the play. Where Coriolanus had insisted before on the action, on the deed, in the last part of the play the stress is on the word, on the description. This change from the action to the word is most emphatic in the confrontation between Coriolanus and his mother and the anti-climactic battle between Coriolanus and Aufidius.

First Cominius pleads with Coriolanus, but he returns to report that Coriolanus virtually ignored him and dismissed him 'with his speechless hand' (V. i. 67). Next it is Menenius's turn, but Coriolanus will not hear his pleading, boasting that nothing Menenius could say would change his mind : 'Mine ears against your suits are stronger than / Your gates against my force' (V. ii. 88-89). We learn subsequently (V. iii. 8-17) that Coriolanus does change his conditions slightly to honour Menenius, but

he tells Aufidius he will hear no more suits from Rome. It is at that moment (line 21) that his mother, wife, and son enter. Coriolanus at first wishes to deny the familial bond in the same way he has been able to break his ties with Rome. But Volumnia pleads with him. What is crucial in this scene is that Volumnia succeeds in presenting a particular and persuasive interpretation of the situation. It is but one way of perceiving the events, and Volumnia's choice has been to sever her ties with her son in order to preserve herself and the Roman society. How can the Volumnia we have seen earlier in the play argue that 'the end of war's uncertain.' (I. 141). She claims this now as a means of persuading. Later she asks, 'Think'st thou it honorable for a noble man/Still to remember wrongs ?' (II. 154-55). The arguments she uses are based on premises which allow her to sacrifice her son for the sake of her country. Her son who thought that he could sever the bonds of family and country discovers through his mother's interpretation of his decision that he finally cannot. It is both ironic and a significant part of Coriolanus's tragedy that he recognizes that while he cannot sever these bonds, his mother can break the familial bonds :

> O my mother, mother ! O !
> You have won a happy victory to Rome;
> But, for your son, believe it—O, believe it—
> Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
> If not most mortal to him. But let it come. (V. iii. 185-89)[15]

The silence of Coriolanus is broken. He reveals his common humanity and recognizes the price of that humanity. But does he not also recognize that language can and is used to interpret and misinterpret events—to persuade or deceive the plebeians or to dissuade the potential conqueror of Rome?

When Coriolanus returns with Aufidius he for the first time attempts to use speech to interpret an event. In Act V, scene vi, lines 70-83, he attempts to justify the peaceful

pact with Rome. The normally reticent, even at times inarticulate, Coriolanus attempts to use speech to persuade, to interpret, to convince the citizens of Corioli that his decision was the correct one. His attempt falls. He is branded a traitor and is killed.

A more skilled student of language would have survived in the world of this play. He has the two extremes—silence or a curse. But in a play where language can hide true intent and meaning, the forthright curse and silence are noble alternatives. Whereas in the other plays I have looked at the silent character has a specific dramatic intent, in *Coriolanus* the idea of silence seems to be a focal point of the play—a distinctive and ennobling characteristic of the title character. 'Holds her by the hand, silent' is, I think, the most striking emblematic moment in all of Shakespeare.

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NOTES

[1] All quotations are from the *Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans (Boston, 1974).

[2] Robert Hapgood, 'Shakespeare and the Included Spectator,' *Reinterpretations of Elizabethan Drama: Selected Papers from the English Institute*, edited by Norman Rabkin (New York, 1969), p. 121.

[3] J. L. Styan, *Shakespeare's Stagecraft* (Cambridge, 1967), p. 192.

[4] Alwin Thaler, *Shakespeare's Silences* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 8.

[5] Bruce Thomas Sajdok, *Silence on the Shakespearean Stage*, DAI 35 (1975): 4455A.

[6] Styan, p. 107.

[7] Styan, pp. 105-6.

[8] Styan, p. 192.

[9] James L. Calderwood, '*Coriolanus*: Wordless Meanings and Meaningless Words,' *Studies in English Literature*, 6 (1966), p. 211.

[10] Calderwood, p. 214.

[11] Stanley E. Fish, 'How To Do Things With Austen and Searle: Speech Act Theory and Literary Criticism,' *MLN*, 91 (1976), p. 985.

[12] Carol M. Sicherman, '*Coriolanus*: The Failure of Words,' *ELH*, 39 (1972), pp. 189-90.

[13] Joyce Van Dyke, 'Making a Scene: Language and Gesture in *Coriolanus*,' *Shakespeare Survey*, 30 (1977), p. 135.

[14] Van Dyke, p. 137.

[15] Calderwood, p. 213.

[16] Carol Sicherman has pointed out the similarity between Coriolanus's banishing of the citizens and John of Gaunt's attempt to cheer up Bolingbroke —'Think not the King did banish thee/But thou the King' (p. 201).

[17] In V. i Cominius reports that Coriolanus would not answer to the name of Coriolanus or any name and planned to earn a new name through his victory over Rome (V. i. 9-15).

[18] An excellent, brief discussion of the 'theme of silence' in this scene is in Maurice Charney's *Shakespeare's Roman Plays*(Cambridge,1963) pp. 192-96.

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LYTTON STRACHEY : MAJOR BIOGRAPHIES

Some eight years ago, the editor of one of the posthumous collections of Lytton Strachey's miscellaneous writings remarked in the Introduction : 'It is a great tribute to his art that forty years after his death his books are still read for pleasure; one would be unlikely to turn to *Eminent Victorians* for instruction, for the four biographical sketches it contains are too short to convey much information to the serious student. *Queen Victoria* and *Elizabeth and Essex* too continue to appear, often in new editions, though they have been superseded, as biographies, by newer and fuller studies.'[1] If we are to believe this apparently complimentary, but, in a way, rather disturbing account of the prevailing attitude to Lytton Strachey's books, we should conclude that the situation has not improved much since the first appearance of *Eminent Victorians* in 1918. Over the years Strachey has either been admired for his wonderful prose style and the artistic design of his biographies (as if these existed by themselves), or denounced for his lack of reverence for everything between heaven and earth and his ruthless manipulation of not particularly accurate historical facts for doubtful creative ends. A schism continues to beset the readers of Strachey's biographical works. The epicurian and 'the serious student' are still at loggerheads, though, at times, the two have struck a compromise. If some people read Strachey just for 'pleasure', while others refuse to turn to him for 'instruction', there is something basically wrong with their respective approaches; and perhaps it will not be out of place to redefine, with reference to Strachey, the concepts of pleasure and instruction, and to explore the possibilities of their fusion.

We are not exactly going back to the cherished classical ideal of art and literature, though the fact should be borne in mind that Strachey was, in many ways, a thorough classicist.

There is no harm in reading a book, especially a work of literature, just for pleasure; it may even be laudable. But if it implies a tacit rejection or undermining of the thematic aspect of the work in question, it is likely to lead to the common delusion about the independent existence of form. Much, for instance, has been made of Strachey's prose style Strachey undoubtedly wrote exceptionally good prose, and his sense of form was exquisite, but it would be futile to imagine this marvellous form as an entity divorced from the pattern of meaning that not only sustains it like the backbone, but is, in effect, its very lifeblood. For illustration let us turn to the concluding part of *The End of General Gordon*. Here Strachey describes how Gordon's head was presented to the Mahdi and how it was finally disposed of :

> The trophy was taken to the Mahdi: at last the two fanatics had indeed met face to face. The Mahdi ordered the head to be fixed between the branches of a tree in the public highway, and all those who passed threw stones at it. The hawks of the desert circled about it—those very hawks which the blue eyes had so often watched.

A fine suggestivity informs this subtle, austere and remarkably well executed piece of description, and its controlled pathos becomes all the more poignant as the mention of 'the blue eyes' magically transports us to the very first paragraph of the biography where we remember to have come across 'the large blue eyes, with their look of almost childish sincerity.' One cannot but praise such superb artistry but to think that the above passage owes its tremendous effect entirely to a supreme mastery of the medium is to state only a half truth. The passage succeeds because it brings to our mind the whole corpus of that enigmatic reality which worked in its inscrutable ways the doom of General Gordon, and which continues to be an uncalculated factor in the affairs of man. Strachey wrote well because he thought and had a

firm grasp of reality. It may be all very well in the course of an illustrative talk on the graces of English prose to pick up one of Strachey's numerous witticisms or to choose for exclusive admiration a particularly smart turn of phrase. But to confine one's appreciation to these is to miss the entire point of Strachey's literary endeavour. He was himself conscious of the distortions that a fragmentary view of a work of art might produce as he, perhaps, echoing G.E. Moore, observed, in a rather different context, in his essay 'Art and Indecency': . . . works of art must be considered as complex wholes, composed af a great number of parts . . . to consider the value of their parts in isolation is futile : it will give no indication of the total value of the whole.'[2] Strachey's preoccupation with the form of his work was overwhelming; and the tendency to produce an almost calculated impression of breathtakingly brilliant writing is, at times, too manifest, especially, In *Queen Victoria* and *Elizabeth and Essex*. Virginia Woolf, as she finished reading *Queen Victoria*, wrote to Strachey : '. . . Occasionally I think one is a little conscious of being entertained. It's a little too luxurious reading—I mean, one is willing perhaps to take more pains than you allow.'[3] The dazzling surfaces and the impeccable form of the biographies combined with the popular notion of the author's Bloomsbury background, might have distracted, at least part of the reader's attention, trom that keenly felt and highly organized experience of history that had gone Into the creation of the underlying wholes of solid and vibrant meaning—not just a mass of cold facts but a pulsating reality. Certain disagreeable aspects of this edifice of meaning that Strachey built with so much love and care might also have repulsed some even of the otherwise well-disposed and sympathetic readers thus confining their adulations to the outermost of these literary organisms. This partially explains fhe extraordinary interest shown in the formal perfection of Strachey's works.

Strachey's prose style had Its limifations and some of these were pointed out fairly early. As he read out the first

two essays of *Eminent Victorians* to his friends, Venessa Bell remarked that his prose was 'too brimful of cliches'. A similar criticism was made in a more formal way by Herbert Read. Comparing the celebrated last paragraph of *Queen Victoria* with a passage from James Joyce, Read cited some of Strachey's phrases (such as : 'grief sweeping over the country', 'to glide into the oblivion,' 'the secret chambers', 'the shadows of the past'', 'through the Cloud of Years') to make the following observation : '. . . here in eighteen lines are eighteen images or analogies, not one of which is freshly felt or sincerely evoked, and consequently not one of which evokes in the mind of the reader the definite image it actually portends'. Strachey is reported to have considered this harsh criticism to be right. Apart from the validity or otherwise of this kind of critical comment, the fact to be noted is that Strachey's reputation as a perfect artist was not altogether unchallenged. However, this reputation, by no means mythical or unfounded, has endured and critics like Max Beerbohm have greatly strengthened it. One has no quarrel with this view of Strachey's achievement except that it should not eclipse the fuller implications of the writer's total vision.

Even those critics, who found the contents of the biographies, particularly *Eminent Victorians*, wholly or partly unacceptable, had a word of praise for the author's style, and this group included F. A. Simpson whom Strachey's biographer Michael Holroyd calls 'the arch-detractor'.[4] Strachey's hostile readers fall into two distinct categories : the ordinary ones whose moral and emotional susceptibilities were wounded by the biographer's bold and unconventional manner and who saw his treatment of his subjects as an act of gross impropriety; and experts (scholars and historians) who not only considered Strachey's knowledge of the historical facts to be inadequate but also accused him of deliberately twisting these facts : an oft-quoted example being Sfrachey's account of Manning's meeting with the Pope in 'Cardinal Manning'. The first of the above two modes of reaction was

largely contemporary, and had a lot to do with the cultural hangover from the Victorian period; it was bound to wear down with the passage of time. In fact one is now a little astonished at the vehemence with which *Eminent Victorians* was denounced in certain quarters. But the second type of reaction has a more abiding interest as it focuses on the nature of our expectations from a work of literature.

Strachey fashioned his biographies out of the existing lives, histories, memoirs and journals of his subjects. He took great pains in collecting most of the relevant facts but he did not use them the way a regular historian would do, for he aimed at artistic creation rather than historical exploration. His much proclaimed detachment was, as Michael Holroyd rightly points out, 'part of a literary mannerism skilfully employed so as to bring into sharper relief his irony and power of denigration.'[5] A total detachment would have deprived the biographies of much of their true significance, for Strachey recreated history with a view to interpreting truth. He, nevertheless, wanted his works 'to be of interest from the strictly biographical no less than from the historical point of view.' This was perhaps invitation enough for the champions of factual accuracy to launch their onslaught on *Eminent Victorians*. Even when apparently based upon objective evidence, most of these attacks were not free of a partisan bias and often betrayed a woefully inadequate knowledge of creative literature and its norms. That a work of literature should not be read as a piece of history is a dictum of plain common sense. But the immediate impact of *Eminent Victorians* was probably so overwhelming, and its revolutionary quality so irresistible, that the antagonists could counter it only outside the precincts of literature. However, the choice of the form of biography for an unusual kind of creative expression involves the writer in a tangle of dual loyalty : should he strictly abide by the historical facts available to him, or trust his instinct and imagination for producing the desired effect? Another important issue is

that of the biographer's point of view, particularly if it amounts to putting a subjective canstruction on recorded history, as Strachey is generally believed to have done. Harold Nicolson, for one, regarded the biographer's point of view as something alien to the spirit of 'pure' biography. But Strachey has, obviously, not written any 'pure' biographies; perhaps even *Queen Victoria* is not so 'pure' as its popular reputation would have us believe. The uninitiated reader of unconventional biographies like Strachey's finds himself confronted with a peculiar dilemma : if he is reading an account of what actually happened in the past why should the whole thing have an unmistakable air of fiction about it and occasionally call for a willing suspension of disbelief? Now even the most down-to-earth histories have a tinge of fantasy about them and the tendency to paint the past in quaint colours is by no means uncommon among all manners of chroniclers. There is also that biography which reads like a piece of bad fiction. Strachey's use of the fictional mode was distinctly different. His deflation of the Victorian pretensions is too well-known; and his attitude to the Elizabethan age was not altogether uncritical, though much has been said about his romantic attachment to that period of English history. One just cannot think of Strachey without his pervasive irony. Such a writer is least likely to exploit the conventions of fiction to give his narrative a charming aura of unreality. Strachey wrote within the framework of certain modes of fictional narration and drama not simply because he aimed at turning his biographies into perfect organic wholes of lasting value but because he had realized that there was no other way of communicating his vision of history as he wanted to communicate it. Though he declared in the preface to *Eminent Victorians* that he was presenting only some 'haphazard visions,' and his intention was not 'to construct a system or prove a theory', there can be little doubt about the unifying thematic structure of the major biographies. Not one of them is totally unrelated to the others. Whatever

significance or relevance they have today it lies in this unity which must be discovered and emphasized for a comprehensive appraisal of Strachey's achievement. His biographies may have been superseded as historical documents, but this is not important in the context of literature and highly unlikely to affect the true worth of a book of genuine literary merit. The 'serious student' can still profitably turn to these biographies for 'instruction' provided he learns to read them as works of literature.

In retrospect, *Eminent Victorians*, often called a piece of 'polemic' and 'virulent propaganda' appears to be Lytton Strachey's most important book. It may have some historical inaccuracies, even artistic flaws, but it presents the author's view of the human situation with an unmatched coherence, clarity and emphasis. The four short biographies apparently concentrate upon a particular period of Britain's history and their subjects serve as focal points for mapping out the psychological landscape of this period. The peculiar Victorian perspective of these biographies cannot be ignored but their relevance is not confined to it. They have a larger universal significance which can be appreciated only if we take them as a sustained creative effort at dramatizing the contrast of appearance and reality. Such a generalized and abstract interpretation of *Eminent Victorians* may seem to conflict with what the author declares so emphatically in the Preface: 'Human beings are too important to be treated as mere symptoms of the past. They have a value which is independent of any temporal processes . . . which is eternal, and must be felt for its own sake.' While not undermining the value of individual human beings, one may try to rediscover this value in the context of a work of art where it exists as an intrinsic part of a web of meaning which is, in essence, symbolic.

Sigmund Freud viewed *Eminent Victorians* as 'a treatise against religion'. Michael Holroyd also thinks that the book embodies Strachey's 'greatest and most prolonged onslaught upon the evangelicalism that was the defining characteristic

of Victorian culture, and which, in his view, had been indirectly responsible for the first World War.'[6] While it is true that organized religion played an important part in shaping many of the typical Victorian attitudes, and Strachey was most unsparing in his criticism of it; his real target lay elsewhere. He is not so much concerned with pronouncing upon the faith itself, as he is interested in exposing what the adherents have made of the faith in a particular age; how they have used it to justify their psychological disorders and the inconsistencies of their conduct, or simply to further their selfish ends So the focus is on the complexity of human behaviour; and religion comes in for comment only as it influences it in a decisive way. Strachey emphasizes what his subjects do rather than what they think or believe, and, at times, his method seems very close to that of the behaviourists. Both Manning and Newman embrace the same faith but as human individuals the two Cardinals do not have much in common : 'the eagle and the dove' metaphor dramatizes this contrast. Strachey was so keen on contrasting their characters that he did not mind being a little unfair to Manning. As he himself admitted he 'oversentimentalized' the portrayal of Newman 'to make a foil for the other Cardinal.' This again underscores the semi-fictional mode in which the biographies have been cast as also the fact that the whole process of creation is predominantly governed by certain literary conventions.

'Cardinal Manning', generally regarded as the most caustic and least convincing of the quartet, came in for the severest criticism from the historical point of view. Even othewise, it has its limitations; for instance, the biographer's attitude is not only preconceived but also a little too evident :

> He belonged to that class of eminent ecclesiastics—and it is by no means a small class—who have been distinguished less for saintliness and learning than for practical ability . . . . What had happened ? Had a dominating character imposed itself upon a hostile environment ? Or was the nineteenth century after all not so hostile ? . . . or, on the other

hand, was it he who had been supple and yielding? he who had won by art what he would never have won by force, and who had managed, so to speak, to be one of the leaders of the procession less through merit than through a superior faculty for gliding adroitly to the front rank ?

It has been rightly observed that the rhetorical questions raised in the opening paragraph (as sampled above) do not necessarily lead to a genuine exploration of Manning's character, but the questions are important, as they contain the very essence of Strachey's diagnosis of the Victorian ills: 'Was there something in it, [the nineteenth century] scientific and progressive as it was, which went out to welcome the representative of ancient tradition and uncompromising faith?' What is really disturbing is not that a man of religion like Manning (as Strachey depicts him) existed, for there must have been numerous others like him in all ages, but the fact that he succeeded so marvellously and was wholly acceptable. The author's implication (irrespective of our response to it) is clear : the society that identifies itself with Manning and rejects Newman must be in a state of serious moral decay. Much as Strachey would protest both Manning and Newman emerge as essestially symbolic entities, and the conflict of the two persists, in one form or the other, through the central thematic structure of *Eminent Victorians*.

The general atmosphere of 'Cardinal Manning' is sombre, but occasionally Strachey's satirical wit brightens it in a most refreshing way. Writing of Manning and his two illustrious contemporaries at Oxford, he observes : 'To those three young men, indeed, the whole world lay open. Were they not rich, well-connected, and endowed with an infinite capacity for making speeches.?' It should be noted that even this, apparently light-hearted, little remark is unmistakably directed against the moral and intellectual predilections of the time. Though clearly sympathetic to Newman, Strachey cannot help being mock-ironic even towards him, particularly in the earlier chapters :

No, the waters of the true Faith had dived underground at the Reformation, and they were waiting for the wand of Newman to strike the rock before they should burst forth once into the light of day. The whole matter, no doubt, was Providential—what other explanation could there be ?

Some of the calculated comic effects serve as indirect comment on certain institutional beliefs and practices, for instance the ways of the Roman Catholics :

During one of these functions an unexpected difficulty arose: the Master of the Ceremonies suddenly gave the word for a halt. and on being asked the reason replied that he had been instructed that moment by special revelation to stop the procession. The Cardinal (Wiseman), however was not at a loss 'You may let the procession go on', he smilingly replied. 'I have just obtained permission, by special revelation, to proceed with it.'

Such passages occur in all the four biographies by way of comic relief, for the inevitability ol failure and defeat is always there in the background. What the author is trying to dramatize is the failure of success, 'Cardinal Manning' and 'Dr. Arnold' appear to be caricatures, because Strachey has mainly relied upon exaggeration for projecting their truimphs which he interprets as ignominious defeats.

Compared to 'Cardinal Manning','Dr. Arnold' makes lighter reading : the career of the Rugby headmaster provided Strachey with an easier and surer target of ridicule : 'He would treat the boys at Rugby as Jehovah had treated the Chosen people : he would found a theocracy and there should be Judges in Israel.' The biographer is uncharacterestically positive and emphatic in his criticism of Dr Arnold's doctrines, and his indictment of the British public school system ranks among the best of its kind. For a moment, he seems to have dropped his usual cynical manner and comes out in favour of what he thought would have been a much more purposeful and humane system of education, capabale of transforming the entire moral and intellectual landscape of England, had it not fallen into the hands of a man like Tho-

mas Arnold. Here too the focus of tragedy is the same as in 'Cardinal Manning' : the acceptablIity accorded to Dr Arnold and his dehumanizing ideas. Strachey's debunking of the Headmaster is chiefly centred upon his strong dislike of these ideas and not so much upon their propagator. It should be noted that he writes with a befItting dignity about the death of Thomas Arnold which lends a certain balance to the portrayal. Manning and Arnold are two vastly different characters (for instance, the latter did not indulge in any behind-the-scene manoeuvres as, according to Strachey, did the former), yet they have complementary roles in the biographer's symbolic scheme, and in the final analysis, come out as essentially negative figures. Besides, the two biographies treat the question of moral guilt in its psychological aspect as an important secondary theme.

A variation in technique marks the handling of the failure of success theme in 'Florence Nightingale'. After allowing Miss Nightingale's heroic struggle its due share of applause, Strachey proceeds to probe deeper into the darker recesses of her character, which is quite in accordance with his declared aim of shattering the myth of the Lady with the Lamp. His penetrating intellect and uncanny judgment had discovered, in the vicissitudes of his subject's illustrious career, a pattern that, in a manner of speaking, bracketed her with the Cardinal and the Headmaster (though not quite), and harmonized her story with the general tone of the book. Strachey has, however, not stressed this pattern at the expense of objectivity and fairplay; one wonders why J K. Johnstone considers the turning of Florence Nightingale's epic into a mock-epic to be a major artistic flaw, for otherwise the biography would have struck a discordant note in the well-conceived quartet and defeated the very purpose of confronting the reader with a coherent pattern of meaning. The presentation of Miss Nightingale's character is not only subtle and comprehensive but also endowed with a unique significance : it startles the reader by confronting him with the not-so-human interior of

a humanitarian civilization, and the reader realizes to his horror how wholly good intentions can lead to a kind of death in life : '. . . one has the impression that Miss Nightingale has got the Almighty too in her clutches, and that, if He is not careful, she will kill Him with overwork.' Strachey has somewhat exaggerated the tragedy of Sidney Herbert, as he wanted to expose, in no ambiguous terms, the ruthlessness of Florence; but there is no outright condemnation of the 'woman of action' like that of Manning's or, to a lesser degree, Arnold's. The general criticism of Miss Nightingale is perceptive but mild: calling her simply an empiricist, Strachey remarks : 'a true comprehension of the scientific method itself was alien to her spirit.' The quality of the biographer's vision has not changed, but a new dimension has been added to it : with his better grasp of the complexity of life, he has developed a sense of the inadequacy of man's powers before the dark and innumerable challenges of life. This is neither pessimism, nor really a defeatist outlook, for the author has not lost his faith in the imagination, and holds the Victorians' distrust of the imagination as chiefly responsible for much of their misery.

The End of General Gordon closely conforms to the pattern of tragic drama : a weird setting, a hostile environment, omens, premonitions; and above all a semi-retired military adventurist who has all the makings of a tragic hero in him. There is a certain inevitability about the fate of the General, but Strachey's view of the disaster is not wholly fatalistic, for had it been so, he would not have been so bitter about the 'rescue' that came a little too late. He has been criticized for unduly emphasizing the eccentricities of Gordon, but this again shows that he was not ready to interpret the tragedy as totally illogical. Besides, Strachey has also pointed out the contradictions of his subject's character : for instance, Gordon often thinks of making a compromise with Zobeir whom he regards as the greatest slave hunter; he even sanctions slave trade in Sudan.

Certainly the author has come a long way from 'Cardinal Manning' and 'Dr. Arnold'. With an increased consciousness of the fearfully limited human options, Strachey's sarcasm had lost some of its bite in 'Florence Nightingale'; the greater maturity of his vision in *General Gordon* lent a tragic dignity to his irony. The theme of an exceptional individual's isolation is touched upon in the first two biographies of *Eminent Victorians* (Newman, Sidney Herbert—even Florence Nightingale—are all lonely figures), but it finds a fuller expression in *General Gordon*. Despite his popularity, the General is essentially a recluse; his loneliness intensifies the horror of his approaching end, but it is not merely a product of his unfortunate circumstances; it is ingrained in him. Strachey tried two more variations on this theme as he presented the characters of Albert and Essex in his succeeding books.

Queen Victoria, generally regarded as the author's masterpiece for its historical authenticity, balanced characterization and sophisticated form, is a less significant book than *Eminent Victorians*. The two books are not really so different as they are made out to be, nor is *Queen Victoria*, in any sense, an unrepresentative piece, but it has despite its brilliance, vast spaces filled with amusing trivia; and its atmosphere is not appreciably charged with that vigorous intellectual quality which dominates *Eminent Victorians* in a most remarkable way. One cannot agree with Michael Holroyd in describing *Queen Victoria* as 'a perfectly constructed life that playfully enhanced the legend of the little old lady on the throne', and marked Strachey's reversion 'to his natural romamticism' from 'the anarchism of *Eminent Victorians*'.[8] Strachey is said to have been a little disturbed by the extraordinary popularity of the book, for clearly his purpose was not to foster or enhance any legend. No doubt, he regarded the queen with reverence, even affection, and almost excluded the element of disparagement from the biography; yet his umistakable irony, though

somewhat muted, plays an important part in determining the tone of the narrative :

> The last vestige of the eighteenth century had disappeared; cynicism and subtlety were shrivelled into powedr; and duty, industry, and domesticity truimphed over these. Even the very chairs and tables had assumed, with a singular responsiveness, the forms of prim solidity. The Victorian Age was in full swing.

Sometimes this ironic tone playfully points to the irony of fate as in the following passage :

> When the question arose as to whether the decorations upon the walls of the new buildings, should or should not have a moral purpose, he spoke strongly for the affirmative. Although many, he observed, would give but a passing glance to the works, the painter was not therefore to forget that others might view them with more thoughtful eyes . . . . The frescoes were carried out in accordance with the Commission's instructions, but unfortunately before very long they had become, even to the most thoughtful eyes, totally invisible. It seems that His Royal Highness's technical acquaintance with the processes of frescoe painting was incomplete.

This conflict of dream and reality, deeply grounded, as it is, in a consciousness of fate, provides a very significant perspective for a comprehensive view of Victoria's highly successful life : the central figure in this perspective is not the Queen, but the lonely 'un-English' Prince who was 'never to relax' :

> For inspite of everything he had never reached to happiness. His work, for which at last he came to crave with almost morbid appetite, was a solace and not a cure; the dragon of his dissatisfaction devoured with dark relish that ever-growing tribute of laborious days and nights; but it was hungry still. The causes of his melancholy were hidden, mysterious, unanalysable perhaps—too deeply rooted in the innermost recesses of his temperament for the eyes of reason to apprehend . . . . There were contradictions in his nature, which, to some of those who knew him best, made him seem an inexplicable enigma: he was severe and gentle; he was modest and scornful; he longed for affection and he was cold . . . . There was something that he wanted and he could never get.

This analysis of Albert's character is not dramatic, it may not even be wholly objective; but what is important is the mode of perception which characterizes this analysis and which is common to all of Strachey's biographies. As one reads the above passage, one is, in various ways, reminded of all the 'outsiders' the author has portrayed : Newman, Sidney Herbert, Gordon and Essex. This testifies to the unity of Strachey's vision of human destiny as it is concretized in the three major biographical books. There are many points of similarity between 'Florence Nightingale' and *Queen Victoria*, and despite their obvious differences, the former seems to be a prototype of the latter. In the same way *General Gordon* and *Elizabeth and Essex* may also be read as complementary pieces. Strachey's masterly use of a formidable number of technical devices for producing a variety of formal effects should not distract our attention from the fact that he was all the time experimenting with a limited set of ideas and character-types in different permutations and combinations. He has created a large number of characters, but they, like the Victorian prime mimisters, appear only in relation to the central figures of the biographies.

Elizabeth and Essex has the reputation of being a less successful work than either *Eminent Victorians*, or *Queen Victoria*. However G. M. Trevelyan, describing the book as a 'a piece of life' rather than 'a piece of satire', declared it to be Strachey's best achievement. E. M. Forster, too, greatly admired it though he has certain reservations about some of the biographer's facts. The biography has some obvious blemishes : despite a limited canvas the narrative is not particularly compact and the general style of writing compares poorly with the masterly prose of the earlier books. Though there are patches of remarkably beautiful and effective narration, there also occur such passages as : 'Though the precious citadel itself was never to be violated, there were surrounding territories, there were outworks and bastions over which exciting battles might be fought, and which might

even, at moments, be allowed to fall into the bold hands of an assailant.' We are not criticizing the passage for its rather unpalatable innuendo, but because its sustained war-metaphor produces an impression of cheapness and poor taste and turns the passage into an example of bad prose and unconvincing psychological analysis. This brings us to the central point of our criticism of the biography.

Strachey has, undoubtedly, tried to view the Elizabeth-Essex affair in the light of some Ferudian principles, and Freud himself approved of his analysis. But this analysis cannot form the nucleus of any critical appraisal of the book's value as a work of literature. Though Strachey always aimed at presenting the inner life of his characters, his powers of psycho-analysis were of a limited order, and he could seldom convince the reader when he took an exclusively psychological stance :

> The sort of ardour which impels more normal youth to haunt Music Halls and fall in love with actresses took the form, in Froude's case, of a romantic devotion to the Deity and intense interest in the state of his own soul. He was obsessed by the ideas of saintliness, and convinced of the supreme importance of not eating too much. ('Cardinal Manning').

Excellent humour but commonplace psychology. Strachey's interpretation of Florence Nightingale's childhood habits serves as another example of an oversimplified and stereotyped notion of the complex process of motivation Even where the analysis is of a more sophisticated kind it is not extraordinary; for instance, here we get a glimpse into Elizabeth's mind :

> Deep in the recesses of her being, a terrific courage possessed her. She balanced and balanced, and if one day she was to find that she was exercizing her prodigies of agility on a tightrope over an abyss—so much the better ! She knew that she was equal to any situation. All would be well. She relished everything—the diminution of risks and the domination of them; and she would proceed, in her extraordinary way, with her life's work, which consisted . . . of what ? Putting out flames ? Or playing with fire ? She laughed; it was not for her to determine !

One wonders if the general tenor of Strachey's style was really suitable for depicting a character in essentially psychological terms. The Freudian thesis has only a shadowy presence in the biography : the real significance of the work lies elsewhere. The interaction of character and circumstance plays a very important role in Strachey's writings, and he succeeds in bringing a character to life only where he is able to place it in its environment, and create in the reader a consciousness about all the operative forces of that environment; Gordon's tragedy, for instance, could not have been so over-whelming without its peculiar background.

Some critics have observed that the structure of *Elizabeth and Essex* is like that of a five-act Elizabethan play : not only the structure but the very spirit of the biography is one of an intensely tragic drama. The author called it 'a tragic history'; and Michael Holroyd has discovered a parallel between it and *Antony and Cleopatra*. *Elizabeth and Essex* is not a tragedy simply because of the hero's sad end, but because it confronts the reader with the staggering complexity of experience and makes him painfully conscious of 'something too deep rooted for the eyes of reason to apprehend.' What is even more remarkable is that this consciousness would not have been totally absent even if the story had ended on a diffrent note. Elizabeth, at times, looks rather like an agent of fate than a flesh and blood creature.

No doubt, there are other points of interest also; for instance, Strachey's brilliant evocation of the peculiar Elizabethan atmosphere, which invariably diverts the mind to the dullness of the Victorian age, and reiterates the theme of a nation's loss of vitality. Bacon has been presented as a very powerful negative figure and takes his place next to Manning : in some ways Bacon's portrayal is more effective and less controversial than that of the Cardinal. One, however, cannot see the point of viewing Essex's character as a projection of Strachey's own personality and porblems.

Elizabeth and Essex has an enduring value because it

succeeds in dramatizing the emptiness that states us in the face from the centre of the fullness of life. Though overwhelmingly conscious of this emptiness, Strachey did not turn his back upon the fullness of life. He may have distorted some facts, or taken a purely subjective view of them, but one cannot condemn him as a dishonest intellectual pronouncing upon life from the comfort of his ivory tower, as F. R. Leavis has, unfairly, done.[9]

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[8] *Lytton Strachey by Himself : a Self-Portrait*, edited and introduced by Michael Holroyd, (London, 1971), p. 159.

[9] F. R. Leavis, Review of *Two Memoirs* by J. M. Keynes, *Scrutiny*, XVI, (1949), p. 246.

BOOK REVIEWS

Shakespeare's Late Plays : Essays in Honor of Charles Crow, edited by Richard C. Tobias and Paul G. Zolbrod (Athens, Ohio, 1974), xiv + 236 pp.

This volume is a tribute paid to Professor Charles Crow on his retirement from the English Faculty of the University of Pittsburgh by his former colleagues and students. Except for one essay on a prose passage in *King Lear*, all essays are concerned, as Zolbrod puts it, 'with what Shakespeare ultimately becomes as he seeks to transcend the dark vision of his tragedies'. The collection includes six essays on *The Tempest*, and single essays on *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *Coriolanus*, *Timon of Athens*, and *King Lear*. One essay is concerned with the role of the supernatural in the last plays and five with the problem of genre in the last plays : *Pericles*, *Coriolanus*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Tempest*. Surprisingly enough, there is no individual essay on *The Winter's Tale*.

The most significant contribution to this volume is L. C. Knights's essay on *The Tempest*. Knights draws our attention to four aspects of technique which distinguish this play from the other late plays of Shakespeare. Observance of the unities of time and place, he urges, requires that 'important experiences should be rendered by a rather spare, at times almost conventional, notation'. Hence the use of symbolism and the brief representation of psychological states. For the same purpose, a special emphasis is put on formal, masque-like effects which abound in visual suggestion, on the use of music and song, and a great variety of modes of speech with a corresponding variety of interest and awareness. Much of the baffling complexity of meaning in the play indeed stems

from this distinctive dramatic technique. Professor Kinghts also traces Prospero's moral development through the play and concludes that 'the end of the play is an acceptance of the common conditions and common duties of life—of a recognition of the intractabilities and the limitations of our lives'. Professor Knights's analysis of the play is marked by his characteristic grace and lucidity of style. Elton D. Higgs ('Post Creation Freedom in *The Tempest*'), too, like Knights, is concerned with Prospero's moral development. *The Tempest*, he affirms, embodies Shakespeare's 'profoundest comments on the Janus-like nature of new beginnings in the life of man.' Prospero's final decision to relinquish his supernatural control over the situation makes him once again 'vulnerable to the ambiguous potential of normal human society'. Higgs's comments on the Epilogue too are perceptive : 'The theme of creation has become the theme of rebirth', and in art, as in life, we get 'a chance to know ourselves better and return renewed to face the exhilarating uncertainties of our freedom'. The other essays on *The Tempest* are of uneven merit. Mike Frank ('Shakespeare's Existential Comedy') is mainly concerned with the concept of nature in the play. His approach is motivated by a denial of theological meaning in the play. His observations on the various antinomies in the play—nature and nurture, art and science, matter and spirit—though nothing new, are interesting, but he goes too far in identifying Caliban with the principle of nature and in dismissing his bestiality as of little consequence. His schematic approach also leads him to a gross misunderstanding of Prospero's famous 'Our revels now are ended' speech; 'he recognises that the principle of Caliban, earth, will eventually overwhelm the principle of the play, spirit. His use of the word 'perfect' for both Caliban and Ariel, too, is dubious. Gerald Schorin's designation of the play's genre as 'tragicomic romance' is too abstract. He also pushes the mythical interpretation of theme and character in the play too far. His view that 'the

concept of the *fortuna rota* serves as a model for its tripartite structure' leads him to an improbable conclusion : that with the return of Prospero to his dukedom as 'the wheel runs through a full circle' there is 'the implicit threat that Antonio will reinstate the whole process of usurpation'. Theresa Coletti ('Music and *The Tempest*') claims that music 'directs all of the play's moments into a total vision that is the play'. She frequently refers to Prospero's magic as his music as if to mean that his power and its use are identical, and makes a curious comment on the ending of the play : 'Prospero breaks his staff and drowns his book, and thus he abandons his music as well. There is the suggestion, I think, that from now on the attainment and preservation of freedom and forgiveness will be a thoroughly human effort in which music can no longer intervene.' It is surely a bathetic comment on the role of music in the play (as well as a denigration of its value in life, for one may like to abjure magic but not music). Andrew Solomon's reading of *The Tempest* is at best an interesting survey of the plot of the play which he ends with an uncritical outburst of bardolatry : 'I would couple Shakespeare with no one, nor any of his plays with *The Tempest*. This final play of Shakespeare takes us to the frontier of aesthetic experience via a kind of magic never rough, howsoever necessary to abjure.'

The two general essays on the last plays, by Kenneth Muir ('Theophanies in the Last Plays') and Diana T. Childress ('Are Shakespeare's Last Plays Really Romances ?') deserve attention because they are more respectful towards the text of Shakespeare than many others in the volume. Kenneth Muir offers an informative study of the function of the gods in the plays written after 1606. He concludes that 'although one gets the impression of a theocentric universe in which things are working together for good—and although this was clearly intentional—nevertheless the happy endings depend equally on the actions of the characters themselves. It may however be debated whether the share of the actions of the

characters in their happy ending is 'equal', or more, or less. Diana T. Childress argues shrewdly to prove the inadequacy of the term 'romances' to describe the complex nature of the last plays. In examining the issue of genre, she rightly stresses the need to consider the contemporary modes end principles of composition which may have inspired Shakespeare. The term 'romances', in her view, is anachronistic. Moreover, although Shakespeare uses 'romance' or 'folklore' 'the response he elicits from us is less participatory or naive.' He resorts to several devices to alienate the spectators from the action taking place on the stage, the chief of them being the use of the 'narrator' and humour—even the grotesque.

Among the essays on the individual plays, Michael Tinker's on *Timon* is the best. It examines the imagery and structure of the play to show its antimaterialistic stance, and soundly sums up its central idea : 'The existence of Flavius gives the lie to Timon's neat little syllogism : all men are evil; . . . The tragedy lies in Timon's inability to reject the syllogism even after its major premise has been proven false.' R. C Crowley ('*Coriolanus* and the Epic Genre') tries hard to show Coriolanus as an epic hero, but almost recants when he places the play generically between the history plays and the 'pure' tragedies. Andrew Walsh ('Heritage in *Pericles*') goes into Shakespeare's narrative sources with particular emphasis on the traditional elements including riddles, the seven deadly sins and emblematic devices. Leonard Powlick ('*Cymbeline* and the Comedy of Anticlimax') takes considerable pains to show that the comic effect is contrived through the technique of deflation, of anticlimax, but his concluding remark : 'the play shows not a diminishing of Shakespeare's dramatic powers but reaffirmation of his faith in men and in life' is both deflective and inapt. He also misinterprets Imogen's conversation with Iachimo when he suggests that she 'calls for help' against her husband. No less deplorable is his misquotation : '*Feel* no more the heat of the sun'. Alex Newell in his study of a prose passage in *King Lear* mostly

utilises a good deal of familiar material. The introductory essay ('From Iago to Prospero') by Paul G. Zolbrod, one of the editors, is typical of the general approach in most of the essays in the volume—too subjective and schematic, even arbitrary at times. He develops a remote resemblance between the storm in *Othello* and that in *The Tempest* and draws far-fetched parallelisms; such as, 'Like Iago, we find, Prospero tampers with the lives of others', and further, 'the black magic of Iago has its counterpart in the more positive and appealing magic of Prospero.' He could have as well ascribed this black magic to Edmund (in the prose passage discussed by his friend Alex Newell).

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The Self-Begetting Novel, by Steven G. Kellman (London, 1980), 161 pp.

Roland Barthes has said that fictional structures owe little to what are generally known as their authors; structures generate themselves. In much the same way, Michael Butor has turned away in disgust from 'authorly' texts. His favourites are such texts as are for all intents and purposes capable of independent reproduction, texts which register their authors' names just as one would passingly acknowledge the name of the midwife who supervised at one's birth. Texts write themselves and authors do no more than observe and expedite their birth. From this the question arises : 'Is it the work that assigns a banal midwife job to its author or the author who creates a work that will then turn

the author himself into a mere midwife ?' The answer should be plain to all 'ordinary' authors, critics and readers with their ordinary share of commonsense; but then, pray, where would the chic Structuralist sophistication be if works were to be approached or evaluated commonsensically ? No, to any real Structuralist, a literary text is the result of a dreamy operation involving neither fertilization nor conception. A literary mammal begets itself; it is autogamous, as it were, and never its own father's baby. The self-begetting novel which is the subject of Steven Kellman's book is intolerant of any geneology or generational link-up.

Kellman curiously fails to relate his chosen theme, the Modernist obsession with self-begetting, to a similar, essentially artistic, fantasy of the Romantics. In effect, both Blake and Wordsworth were begetting artistic selves for themselves, selves distinct from both their socially accepted and their natural selves. In fact, this obsession in the Modernists is only a remnant of Romanticism, a remnant of its 'Satanic Impertinence'. Kellman's definition of the self-begetting novel, on the one hand, touches the novel's ambition to father itself and, on the other hand, emphasizes its attempt to fashion an artistic self. His terminology is derived from the current Structuralist criticism and from the recent criticism of the Romantics; only he carries their methods to a bewildering degree of application. Proust and his followers created artistic selves for themselves in the process of creating works which in the process of getting read would create artistic selves for their artist-heroes who would start writing the same books that these authors had already created which . . . Sounds dizzying ? Well, it is meant to. The self-begetting novel creates both itself and a self. It is not at all an ordinary infant.

A post-War Modernist subgenre, the self-begetting novel, rejects the banal idea of parents and children in favour of self-procreation. It is 'an account, usually first-person, of the development of a character to the point at which he is

able to take up his pen and compose the novel we have just finished reading.' The definition sounds fairly general and encourages one to expect a discussion of most *Kunstlerromans* and reflexive novels. Kellman, however, has no intention of discussing Goethe, Kierkegaard and other 'fathers' of self-begetting fiction. His forte is French Modernist fiction in general and Proust in particular. Indeed, at times one suspects that Kellman carved out a general looking definition from his study of Proust's work. The suspicion is confirmed by the way he introduces several arbitrary qualifications to his definition just to exclude all such novelists as did not write under the shadow of Proust. He devotes one chapter each to the British and the American attempts at self-begetting fiction but the two chapters are in effect mainly an attempt at noting the influence of Proust in those countries. A true self-begetting novel, according to Kellman, will have an inescapable arty air about it; it will, in other words, have a number of aesthetes among its characters. Its protagonist will aspire to create a form similar to the one that already contains him. And finally (really !) the protagonist will suffer continual artistic labour pains, both false and real. Kellman approvingly quotes Henry Miller's Henry in *The Tropic of Capricorn :* 'Women get up to offer me their seats. Nobody pushes me anymore. I am pregnant. I waddle awkwardly, my big stomach against the weight of the world.' He sees no parodic intent in the passage; he is greatly pleased to note that the labour image appears even in American fiction, that 'preserve of idiots, children, miscreants, and other miscellaneous naifs.' In Miller's Tropic novels, both a novelist and his novels are being simultaneously begotten. And Henry Miller was heavily influenced by Proust.

It is in French Modernist fiction that Kellman finds the most satisfactory illustrations of his theme, and these illustrations are both paradigmatic and parodic. Proust's epic work is obviously the paradigm of the subgenre. *A la*

Recherche du Temps Perdu is a tightly constructed book which is at the same time open-ended, constantly becoming, never finally being. Proust invites the reader to follow Marcel on a quest which begins at Combray and ends at the point which again returns us to Combray itself. 'We must become re-readers, and Marcel must write the novel which begins again at Combray, which in fact never ceases to begin again at Combray.' This is deliberately cyclical, circular, and after each cycle Marcel joins an ever-expanding pedigree of fictive novelists, while a new Marcel with all his struggles still before him is born. After each cycle, that is to say, Marcel the child fathers a new Marcel the child; Marcel the artist begets a new Marcel the artist.

From Proust to Sartre, that 'poor man's Proust', may be but one step, but the step is not towards self-begetting as Kellman would like us to think. For one thing, Sartre's Requentin is there in *La Nausee* not as a spokesman of the artist but of the philosopher. For another, he does not live to beget an artistic self; he perhaps dies. There are surely some similarities between the works of Proust and Sartre; both Marcel and Roquentin find some kind of salvation in music; each plans to write a novel. But *La Nausee* is not self-begetting even according to Kellman's own definition. Kellman conveniently disregards the problematic ending of Sartre's novel and rushes to Sartre's despairing admission, 'I *was* Roquentin,' in order to conclude that 'the novel Roquentin is to write will succeed in immortalizing a roquentin.' This shift from Roquentin to a roquentin is important: it makes us gasp in wonder and ask, 'Where is Roquentin? Where is the novel he is to write? If that novel is not really *La Nausee*, how is it then self-begetting?' The willingness with which Kellman uses extratextual, intentionalistic statements of Sartre to support his thesis makes a mockery of his Structuralist stance. The self-begetting novel denies fatherdom to its father, but derives its identity from the same father!

With Claude Mauriac and Samuel Beckett, the subgenre of self-begetting fiction begins to show signs of self-exhaustion and self-disgust. In Beckett's triology *(Molloy, Malone Dies* and *The Unnamable*) the emphasis turns from self-begetting to self-aborting. Here, the hero's quest becomes the quest for death, but even so these novels do beget themselves right in the process of destroying themselves. Beckett's Moran begins by constructing a form with his 'It is midnight. The rain is beating on the windows.' But at the end, Moran demolishes the form : 'It was not midnight. It was not raining.' But, according to Kellman, even suicide does not help the self-begetting novel in ending itself. 'You've been sufficiently assassinated, sufficiently suicided, to be able to stand on your own feet, like a big boy,' says the narrator in *The Unnamable*. But Kellman rightly points out that the self's fascination with death in Beckett's fictional world 'is paradoxically what perpetuates it.' Each M., be it Molloy, Moran, Malone or Mahood, in his seemingly terminal determination to put an end to both life and literature (speech) begets both himself and his tale of futility. In the process of attempting to destroy art, Beckett's narrators also create it.

Kellman's chapters on Proust and Beckett are easily the best part of his work. Its weakest part is his discussion of some British and American works; the discussion seems to have little rationale, little consistency; the intention appears to win a wider readership for the book. He grudgingly includes the name of James Joyce and finally comes to maintain that while *Ulysses* does not beget a self (which is just another way of saying that the novel has a far broader scope than is needed for a self-begetting novel), *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is not self-begetting because Stephen is not Joyce, because Joyce may well be mocking this pathetic priggish aesthete. This involves bad logic. To say that Stephen is not Joyce does not prove much; to say that he is a pathetic priggish aesthete is not tantamount to saying that a pathetic priggish aesthete cannot create an

artistic self in 'his' pathetic priggish self-begetting novel. Why cannot one say that *A Portrait*, however full of priggishness and sterile aestheticism it may otherwise be, does beget both itself and a self for its (pathetic, priggish) artist-hero? If, on the other hand, one were to accept what Kellman accepts, namely, that the self begotten through the course of the narrative must resemble the actual author's self, then it should be possible to include in the list of self-begetting novels works like *David Copperfield*, Hemingway's early novels, Christopher Isherwood's *Goodbye to Berlin* and so on. David in Dickens's novel is an autobiographical figure; he turns a novelist at the end; it is only too likely that the novel he would write should resemble the one of which he is already the hero. If David remains rather an unself-conscious kind of novelist, it is precisely because his own creator is an unself-conscious kind of novelist. If *David Copperfield*, unlike Mauriac's *The Marquise Went Out at Five O'Clock*, does not lay bare its part, it is because the author himself does not believe in laying bare his—or his novel's—parts, because Dickens does not want his novel to become 'a laboratory of narrative.'

If in his chapter on British fiction, Kellman refuses to consider any but post-Proust, self-conscious, French-conscious creators of self-begetting novels like Lawrence Durrell, Iris Murdoch and Doris Lessing, in his chapter on American fiction, he travels widely through American literary history, picking names here and there, names such as *Winesburg, Ohio*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Look Homeward, Angel* and *Pale Fire*. Of course, he is not comfortable until he reaches Henry Miller and Clyde Brion Davis, both owing more to the French tradition than to their native one. Homer Ziglar, the artist-hero of *The GAN . . .*, is as ambitious as Proust's Marcel: he begins to live only when he contemplates an 'all-inclusive' novel. 'Homer's literary legacy is presented in the form of his diary, the work we have just finished reading. The diary embodies him, and if we want Homer to recommence his

pathetic life we need only turn back to the first page of *The GAN . . .*' Kellman's analysis of Brion Davis's work is sketchy, but still when one remembers how much neglected that work has been it is something to be welcomed.

The most baffling thing about Kellman's chapter on American fiction is the space he finds for certain works that are neither self-begetting according to his own definition nor even novels as such. He discusses Emerson's essay on Self-Reliance, and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* as though they had anything to do with the tradition of self-begetting fiction. One wishes he had devoted this space to a discussion of Hemingway's *The Sun also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*, both of which are far closer to the spirit of his definition than *Walden* or *Leaves of Grass*. Similarly, he might have considered Nabokov and Herbert Lindenberg as authors of self-subversive novels.

To conclude, one does not know how to take Kellman's apparently sensible introductory statements regarding the psychological implications of self-begetting fiction. He quotes Freud and Otto Rank to support his assertion that this Narcissistic subgenre is a product of sham and delusion, that self-begetting is merely a fond fantasy. But committed as he is to watching Proust's shadows, pale or bright, straight or inverted, his awareness of the comic-pathetic nature of the subgenre gets superseded by his fascination for it. The result is that what should have been a descriptive study turns into a valuational one, what was, in his introduction, a childish autogamous fantasy assumes an ideal normative status, a kind of touchstone for his evaluation of much of twentieth century fiction.

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