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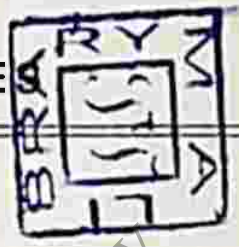

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G. Singh

F. R. LEAVIS : LATER WRITINGS

I

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

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

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

favour will naturally be those by which they feel themslves safe as distinguished intellectuals.

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

What made Leavis such a controversial critic was as much the challenge his insistence on the inseparability of the values of life and the values of literature represented, as

his judgments and evalutations themselves. This led him to challenge conventional opinion or academic authority in order to applaud what was both modern and original in D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, Yeats, Pound; or in writers like Blake, Wordsworh, Hopkins, George Eliot, Dickens or Conrad. In his lectures and tutorials as well as in his books and in *Scrutiny*, Leavis displayed his unmatchable powers of the 'close criticism' of text (whether prose or verse), and linked that criticism with a 'revaluation' of life itself or of its particular aspects. Leavis's own influence—and no critic in this century has been more influential—is not so much a question of accepting his evaluations as such even though the validity of few of his assessments can objectively be questioned now—as that of recognizing the impact his criticism made.

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

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

> . . . ignorance of the possibilities of life; ignorance of the effect the play must have on a kind of reader or spectator of whose existence the

> author appears to be unaware: the reader who has, himself, found serious work to do in the world and is able to be unaffectedly serious about it, who knows what family life is and has helped to bring up children and who, though capable of being interested in Mr Eliot's poetry, cannot afford cocktail civilization and would reject it, with contempt and boredom, if he *could* afford it

But then Eliot was not the type of person who would have readily understood the kind of seriousness Leavis professed and practised—Eliot who wrote in *The Criterion* of the frightful conseguences that might have ensued if Lawrence had been a don at Cambridge, 'rotten and rotting others'. And when Eliot wrote this Leavis was widely supposed at Cambridge 'to share the honour of the intention with Lawrence'.

II

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

context of a public platform, Leavis turns each lecture into something richly complex which simultaneously engages the attention of the critic and the pedagogue, the exegete and the polemicist.

'Anna Karenina' and Other Essays brings together sixteen essays, reviews or lectures that had already appeared in various periodicals, both English and American, dealing with such themes as *Anna Karenina, The Pilgrim's Progress, What Maisie Knew, The Shadow-Line*, 'The Americanness of American Literature', 'T.S. Eliot as Critic' and 'Johnson as Critic'. In many ways perhaps the most significant essay in the whole book is the one on 'T.S. Eliot as Critic' which, while evaluating the strength and originality as well as the shortcomings of Eliot's criticism establishes Leavis's own claim and stature as a critic—and not merely vis-a-vis Eliot. For while reviewing Eliot's book *On Poets and Poetry*—a book which Leavis finds 'at once so distinguished and so unimportant'—he compares it with Eliot's earlier critical writings which, through their fine intelligence, sensitiveness and consciousness of a rare kind, account for the decisive influence they exercised. Leavis singles out 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' as being pre-eminently the essay on which Eliot's reputation 'as a thinker, a disciplined intelligence notably capable of vigorous, penetrating and sustained thought' is based. And yet, in his searching analysis of the essay, Leavis exposes 'its ambiguities, its logical inconsequences, its pseudo-precisions, its fallaciousness, and the aplomb of its equivocations and its specious cogency', as well as the doctrine of impersonality Eliot expounds there. And when, while commenting on Keats's 'Ode to the Nightingale', Eliot observes that it contains a number of feelings which have nothing to do with the nightingale, but which the nightingale, 'partly because of its attractive name, and partly because of its reputation served to bring together', Leavis replies: 'As if there were not something else, more important, to be said about the relation of the ode to the

life, the living from which it derived the creative impulsion; derived something without full recognition of which there can be no intelligent appreciation of the "artistic process" or the art'.

Further on Leavis challenges other critical pronouncements of Eliot's—such as his regarding *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra* as being Shakespeare's 'most assured artistic success'; his offering Landor as a great poet; his backing Wyndham Lewis; his evaluations of *The Cenci* as the greatest of the verse-plays by nineteenth-century poets or of Dryden's *The Hind and the Panther* as a great poem; his considering Dryden one of the three greatest critics of poetry in English Literature (the other two being Samuel Johnson and Coleridge (which Leavis considers to be 'a portent of conventionality'); or 'that solemn. that hardly credible, discussion of Kipling's verse' and his regarding Auden and Spender as distinguished poets. In challenging such Eliotian positions Leavis is himself implicitly advancing those values—both critical and moral—which he rigorously upholds, even or especially when he is dealing with Eliot's poetry. The very fact that Eliot is often weak in value-judgment, especially so far as modern literature is concerned is ascribed by Leavis to 'some radical inner condition'—a condition that prevents him from being aware of the profounder, the essential criticisms *Family Reunion* and *The Cocktail Party* invite—criticisms that express 'one's sharpened sense of the importance of literature, and therefore of the relation of literature to life'.

Following the essay on Eliot as critic there is one on Johnson as critic in evaluating whom Leavis starts with an un-Eliotian observation : 'Johnson's critical writings are living literature as Dryden's (for instance) are not'—an observation that puts Eliot's assessment of Dryden in its piece. For Leavis Johnson's importance as a critic does not lie in what he says about the particular authors he deals with; nor in any direct instruction in critical thinking he may have to offer. It lies in the vigour and weight of Johnson's

critical as well as other writings—'the vigour that comes from a powerful mind and a profoundly serious nature, and the weight that seems to be a matter of bringing to bear at every point the ordered experience of a lifetime'. In this as well as in some other respects no two critics for Leavis are more unlike than Johnson and Eliot. And as in the case of Eliot, so also in that of Johnson, Leavis probes his limitations in order to be able to evaluate all the better what is both valid and original in Johnson's criticsm. Commenting on what is regarded as Johnson's 'defective ear', Leavis finds something positive about it insofar as that ear was the product of a training in a positive taste. But it is when Leavis considers Johnson's criticism of Shakespeare that he finds his limitations are at once more seriously disabling and more interesting. One major limitation in Johnson derives from the fact that his mind and sensibility were formed in and through a language which is utterly unlike the Shakespearian use of English. Leavis analyses this drawback, with all its implications, with an illuminating cogency and perception which, apart from the intrinsic soundness of what he says, reveals his instinctive liking for Johnson as a person as well as a critic.

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

his rational vigour and the directness of his appeal to experience, represents the best that criticism can do before Coleridge'.

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

Another illuminating essay in this book is the one on *The Pilgrim's Progress* which starts with the sentence: 'It is possible to read *The Pilgrim's Progress* without any thought of its theological intention'—a sentence that does away without any fuss with many cobwebs of theological exegesis. This, of course, does not mean that Leavis is considering the book merely as a literary masterpiece. He is profoundly conscious of its religious depth; but his way of being conscious of it is different in that it is morally as well as critically more subtle and more complex, so that Leavis's response to the book is based on the conviction that 'Bunyan's religion, like his art, comes from the whole man',

Hence, whether it is *Adam Bede* or *What Maisie Knew*, *The Europeans* or *The Secret Agent*, Leavis's approach and the strength and originality which characterize that approach —are dictated by his belief that the criticism of a novel—or of any other work of art for that matter and the criticism of life are one and the same thing, both revolving round the fundamental question : 'What do men live by and for?.' Thus, for example, it is the positing and dealing with this question that, more than anything else, makes *The Shadow-Line* the important novel it is, being central to Conrad's genius and therefore being, as Leavis calls it, 'Conrad's *Silas Marner*.'

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

In 'Eliot's Classical Standing', while analysing what constitutes the grounds for such a standing and why Eliot is more influential than Yeats or Hardy, Leavis affirms that although *The Waste Land* was very impressive and very

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

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

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

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

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

mined by his triple interest—university education, creative literature (including literary criticism) and the civilization we live in. Conceiving English literature as a living reality and 'a real and potent force in our time', and the real university as 'a centre of consciousness and human responsibility for the civilized world', Leavis goes on to explain how his concern for English Literature, far from implying any slighting of the sciences, or the other specialist studies, points to the desirability of having an English School 'that truly deserves the respect of those who are acquainted with intellectual standards in their own fields'.

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

literature.

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

In 'Eliot's "Axe to Grind" ' while dealing with Eliot's

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

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

insistent challenge to the thinking —the pondering, distinguishing, relating—mind'. And if Eliot, like Lawrence, is a creative writer who is also consummately a critic, it is because his creative works, like Lawrence's, are so many 'modes of thought.'

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

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

From Shakespeare Leavis proceeds to the novel and its importance in English literature. He quotes Lawrence to the effect that 'the novel is a great discovery: far greater than

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

This emphasis on the importance of the English novel has often exposed Leavis to the charge of provincialism. But Leavis contends that it is his business to emphasize the difference between 'the right kind of partialness, patchiness and incompletion and what is favoured by those who dismiss as "provincial" the spirit I have tried to define. Better then, be provincial than cosmopolitan, for to be cosmopolitan in these matters is to be at home nowhere, and he who is at home nowhere can make little of *any* literature—the more he knows, the larger is his ignorance'. One consequence of this wide-ranging cosmopolitanism is the 'portent' of the American influence in university English. This influence continues to grow and, says Leavis, 'it is a bad one, which, for America's sake as well as our own, we should resist'.

III

Dickens the Novelist came out in 1970—the centenary year of Dickens's death. It is the second book—after *Lectures in America* (1967)—in which F.R. Leavis and his wife Q.D. Leavis collaborate; but theirs was a collaboration which extended over the entire period of their working life. For the purpose, however, of this essay I shall confine myself to Leavis's essays alone. But what they both say in the preface applies equally, even though in a somewhat different

way, to what each has written. They tell us that their approach is not that of a general survey of Dickens, for 'all such enterprises are merely academic, and unprofitable critically'. Even the trend of some criticism as such, for instance the trend of American criticism of Dickens from Edmund Wilson onwards, is regarded by the Leavises 'as being in general wrong-headed, ill-informed in ways we have demonstrated, and essentially ignorant and misleading'. These considerations as well as their conviction that Dickens is the Shakespeare of the novel govern what they present in this book. In his essay on *Dombey and Son*—written originally as an introduction to the novel and published in *The Sewanee Review* in 1962—Leavis sees a decisive manner in Dickens's career insofar as it is not only the first essay in the elaborately plotted Victorian novel, but it also displays the characteristic qualities of his inexhaustible creativity—'the vigour of the perception and rendering of life, the varied comedy, the vitality of expression'. In this novel Dickens's genius is already functioning in a full and mature way, 'with an unusual intensity and there is a control from an unusual depth'. One of the highlights of that genius is present in the treatment of Mrs Dombey's death and in writing about it with admiring enthusiasm, Leavis's own style displays a characteristic quality of linguistic poise and control together with an evocative grip on the subtlety and delicacy of what he wants to convey. 'The theme as Dickens is possessed by it here' (viz. Mrs Dombey's death), we are told, 'is a different thing from what it becomes. For he *is* possessed by it: he is possessed by an intense and penetrating perception of the real—his theme *is* that. The art that serves it does not run to the luxuries of pathos and sensation or to redundancies. And it is astonishingly sensitive and plausible'. Leavis's interest in Dickens's language—or for that matter in the language of any other writer—is neither specialistically linguistic nor philological; it is essentially and altogether creative. In other words, the kind of language a writer uses and the way

he uses it are taken not merely as tokens of a writer's maturity or power, but as being of the very essence of the power, maturity and vision that are indispensable to a great artist. Having described Dickens as Shakespearian, Leavis goes on to comment on Dickens's language and asks us to consider 'tha vitality—the surprisingness combined with felicity, dramatic and poetic—of the speech on which he so largely renders these characters (Susan Nipper, Mr Toots, Mrs MacStinger, Cousin Feenix)'. It is these qualities—as manifest both in this novel and in subsequent novels—that constitute 'the inexhaustibly wonderful poetic life' of Dickens's prose.

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

Another major novel of Dickens Leavis examines is *Little Dorrit* apropos of which he asks how Dickens, while 'pursuing indefatigably his career as best-selling producer of popular fiction, could develop into a creative writer of the first order, the superlatively original creator of his art'. Throughout this essay Leavis answers this question by ascribing to Dickens certain qualities which account for this

development: intense interest in contemplating and pondering life around him; his undertaking, here as in other novels, the study of 'the criteria implicit in the evaluative study of life'; his aim of 'communicating generally valid truths about what can't be defined'. These general truths concern Dickens's criticism of Victorian civilization in such a way as to make his creative genius one with a potency of thought. Moreover what Dickens observes and presents undergoes 'the impersonalizing process' of his art—namely, that of transmuting his personal experience into something that is not personal.

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

> is not that Blake is more spiritual; rather, it can with a measure of truth be said to be that Blake's genius—which certainly suffered for lack of that essential kind of collaboration which Dickens's relations with his public gave *him*—led him to spend a vast deal of his life and effort wrestling with ultimate questions that inevitably defeated him. (That, presumably, is what Lawrence meant when he said that 'Blake was one of those ghastly obscene knowers'—the implication being that, tainted

with Urizenic malady, he failed to respect the force of his own insistence on essential 'wonder'.) The evidence of defeat is failure in his major creative enterprises—failure implicitly recognized by Blake himself as he makes attempt after attempt, aspiring to a possession of 'answers' that is unattainable.

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

IV

Nor Shall My Sword—a collection of seven essays, most of them published previously—came out in 1972. Its very title indicates both the polemical and the positive nature of the problems with which it deals. Apart from Chapters IV ("'English', Unrest and Continuity') and V ("Literarism" versus "Scientism": The Misconception and the Menace'), much of the discussion centres around the non-literary aspects and problems of contemporary civilization. In this book Leavis strikes an admirable balance between the critical and the polemical, between tradition and contemporaneity, rendering whatever he says at once appealing and challenging. If his thought has always a certain grip and cogency about it, it is because there is nothing narrowly or academically literary about his view of literature; and also because he commands the analytical subtleties and creative resources of English as few contemporary critics have been able to do. In fact, one can say of Leavis's English what A. E. Housman said of the classical scholar, Hugh Munro's, namely, that 'he wrote English so well that most scholars do not know he wrote it'.

Both the book's title and its dedication suggest the key role Blake has in Leavis's thinking about the problems of our civilization and especially about what constitutes the

ethos of the creatively humane as opposed to 'the hubris of technological-positivist enlightenment' or the so-called humanism of the technological-Benthamite world. For as against Blake's 'intransigent certainties' the only thing the present world can offer according to Leavis is 'a high standard of living in a vacuum of disinheritance.'

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

or wanting to believe, that a computer can write a poem.'

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

circumstance.

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

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

writers; what we find in his work—and in his personality—instead is 'a limitation of self-knowledge that can't transcend; a courage that he hasn't'.

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

That Lawrence, together with Eliot, should have been the central inspiration behind Leavis's writings as well as behind his own development as a critic is evident from the fact that on no modern writer has he written so often and with such a sense of commitment. That it is Lawrence who occupies pride of place is evident from the fact that Leavis has devoted two books to him: *D. H. Lawrence : Novelist* (1955) and *Thought, Words and Creativity : Art and Thought in Lawrence* (1976). In both he deals with *Women in Love*, *The*

Rainbow and *The Captain's Doll*, which not only shows that he attaches a key importance to these works in assessing Lawrence's genius, but also that since he first wrote about them he had been pondering on their significance, which justified his writing about them again and saying something quite new. In both these books what engages Leavis, coupled with Lawrence's art as a writer, is his thought on the problems of modern industrial civilization and on their relation to art, and Leavis, convincingly brings out, especially in *Thoughts, Words and Creativity*, what one can learn from Lawrence's attitude to the problems of his time.

In the first chapter entitled 'Thought, Words and Creativity,' while rejecting Eliot's unfavourable view of Lawrence's capacity for thought, Leavis analytically assesses the operative presence of the thought behind Lawrence's diagnosis of modern civilization, and shows how that thought was not and could not have been separable from his art. Thus both the thought behind *Women in Love* and the thought in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* derive 'in perfect directness from the one vital intelligence and the one achieved wholeness of individual being'. Leavis quotes Lawrence to the effect that 'it was the greatest pity in the world, when philosophy and fiction got split. They used to be one, right from the days of myth. Then they went and parted, like a nagging married couple, with Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas and that beastly Kant. So the novel went sloppy, and philosophy went abstract-dry. The two should come together again—in the novel'. In the following chapters Leavis demonstrates, through closely reasoned argument and exemplification how, inspite of his distaste for 'the kind of intellectuality that starts, as so much philosophical writing does, from a mathematico-logical assumption about the criteria of valid thought', Lawrence convincingly interweaves philosophy and fiction in his novels. The unity between the two is a hall-mark of his art; that is why the word 'thought' is used again and again by Leavis in characterizing Lawrence's creativity. But analysis and assessment of thought entail

the analysis of the nature of language on the importance of which Leavis comments as follows: 'individuals alone can mean, but they mean in order to meet and commune in meaning. Not only does the individual *need* relations with others, but the vital relations are creative—and creative of a reality that transcends language. Without the English language waiting quick and ready for him, Lawrence couldn't have communicated his thought : that is obvious enough'.

But Leavis's way of analysing Lawrence's thought and language is not that of a philosopher or a linguist. 'I think of myself', Leavis observes, 'as an anti-philosopher, which is what a literary critic ought to be—and every intelligent reader of creative literature is a literary critic'. It is as a critic, then that, for all his enthusiasm for Lawrence, and for all Lawrence's own enthusiasm for *The Plumed Serpent* which he regarded as 'my most important thing so far', Leavis finds this novel unsatisfactory—unsatisfactory primarily because of the absence of any sharp boundary between Lawrence's discursive thought and his fully creative act. Using *The Plumed Serpent* as a foil, he proceeds to deal with *Women in Love*—Lawrence's greatest novel—elucidating and exemplifying the relation of art to life, or the place of art *in* life, which is so integral a part of Lawrence's thought.

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

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

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

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W. B. YEATS, THOMAS HARDY AND PHILIP LARKIN

In 1966 Faber brought out a second edition of *The North Ship*, a volume of poems by Philip Larkin first published by the Fortune Press in 1945. The second edition contained one new poem and a witty introduction by Larkin that ruefully looked back on himself as a young man and on his first book of verse. He recalls a visit to the English Club at Oxford in 1943 by Vernon Watkins, who left behind some copies of Yeats's later verse, which Larkin collected and later returned to Watkins, having in the meanwhile fallen under Yeats's spell. After going down from Oxford, Larkin worked as a Librarian in Shropshire and, isolated in strange surroundings, became still more deeply enthralled by Yeats, whom he read in the *Collected Poems* of 1933. 'As a result', Larkin tells us,

> I spent the next three years trying to write like Yeats, not because I liked his personality or understood his ideas but out of infatuation with his music....In fairness to myself it must be admitted that it is a particularly potent music, pervasive as garlic, and has ruined many a better talent[1].

Larkin also explains how he was delivered from this infatuation :

> In early 1946 I had some new digs in which the bedroom faced east, so that the sun woke me inconveniently early. I used to read. One book I had at my bedside was the little blue *Chosen Poems of Thomas Hardy* : Hardy I knew as a novelist, but as regards his verse I shared Lytton Strachey's verdict that 'the gloom is not even relieved by a little elegance of diction'. This opinion did not last long; if I were asked to date its disappearance, I should guess it was the morning I first read 'Thoughts of Phena at News of her Death.'[2]

He goes on to speak of his 'considerable hesitation' over

republishing *The North Ship* and, in doing so, adds an untitled poem, of which he remarks:

> As a coda I have added a poem, written a year or two later, which, though not noticeably better than the rest, shows the Celtic fever abated and the patient sleeping soundly.

This account of Larkin's youthful infatuation with Yeats and his liberation by Hardy's example is straightforward and convincing. Larkin has repeatedly expressed his unbounded admiration for Hardy and acknowledged the nature and extent of his debt to him, a debt repaid not only in Larkin's prose and poetry but also by Larkin's allocation of more space to Hardy than to any other poet in his anthology, *The Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse* (1973). It is always unwise to ignore or to contradict what a poet of Larkin's stature has to say about his own development, and I do not propose to do so. Nevertheless, I think that Larkin's relationship with Yeats and with Hardy is worth exploring in some detail, and that the story is not so simple as it may at first appear.

Although it is possible to discern in *The North Ship* poems that owe something to the example of Auden and of Dylan Thomas, the overwhelming presence in several of the poems in this early volume is Yeats, especially the Yeats of the middle period. In poem I, Larkin employs a Yeatsian refrain : 'A drum taps : a wintry drum' :

> Let the wheel spin out
> Till all created things
> With shout answering shout
> Cast off rememberings;
> Let it all come about
> Till centuries of spring
> And all their buried men
> Stand on the earth again.
> A drum taps : a wintry drum.

Even more Yeatsian is poem XX, which catches the tone and phrasing of the older poet with remarkable skill.

For the first time I'm content to see
What poor mortar and bricks
I have to build with, knowing that I can
Never in seventy years be more a man
Than now—a sack of meal upon two sticks.

So I walk on. And yet the first brick's laid.
Else how should two old ragged men
Clearing the drifts with shovels and a spade
Bring up my mind to fever-pitch again ?
How should they sweep the girl clean from my heart
With no more done
Than to stand coughing in the sun
Then stoop and shovel snow onto a cart ?

This is not mere imitation of an established master by a gifted young poet. Larkin has so totally assimilated the work of Yeats that he writes Yeatsian poems because this is how the poems pour out from him. Or, to put the matter in another way, Yeats has taken possession of Larkin so completely that the dead poet speaks through the lips of the living. There is no question of deliberate pastiche, or literary allusion. Larkin very much dislikes such devices and his hesitation in republishing *The North Ship* may stem from his awareness that some poems in that collection might give rise to the charge that he was himself drawing on the kind of tradition and the 'common myth-kitty' that he finds so reprehensible.

The additional poem, XXXII, in *The North Ship* that Larkin calls 'not noticeably better than the rest' marks a distinct growth in his poetic maturity and independence. The first stanza does more than prove that the Celtic fever is abated : it reveals that Larkin has attained a new mastery of diction and of movement that owes nothing to any of his predecessors :

Waiting for breakfast, while she brushed her hair,
I looked down at the empty hotel yard
Once meant for coaches. Cobblestones were wet,
But sent no light back to the loaded sky,
Sunk as it was with mist down to the roofs.
Drainpipes and fire-escape climbed up

Past rooms still burning their electric light:
I thought : Featureless morning, featureless night.

Hardy's presence may be detected in this poem in the sense that Larkin is writing about an incident from everyday life without turning it into a portion of a metaphysical system or endowing it with some esoteric significance. Poem XX of *The North Ship* opens with a picture of a girl in a landscape :

I see a girl dragged by the wrists
Across a dazzling field of snow:

But the girl, like the two old ragged men, is merely an image in a symbolic landscape upon which is projected the emotional pattern of the poet's life. Poem XXXII faithfully records a moment in the existence of a man and a girl, and although Larkin does not attempt to describe her appearance, we may pay him the tribute that he pays to the power of photography in 'Lines on a Young Lady's Photograph Album' (a title reminiscent of those that Hardy often gives to his poems) :

what grace
Your candour thus confers upon her face !
How overwhelmingly persuades
That this is a real girl in a real place.

In every sense empirically true.

Yet, paradoxically, the very poem that demonstrates Larkin's recovery from the Celtic fever is a variation on a Yeatsian theme, the need to choose 'Perfection of the life, or of the work'. The speaker in the poem responds with gladness to the girl :

Turning, I kissed her.
Easily for sheer joy tipping the balance to love.

Then, almost immediately the fear assails him that the muse of poetry will desert him if he devotes his life to the girl instead of to his art :

> Are you jealous of her?
> Will you refuse to come till I have sent
> Her terribly away, importantly live
> Part invalid, part baby and part saint?

This is an early example of Larkin's ability to clinch a poem with a final line that stamps itself ineffaceably on the memory. It sums up with masterly concision an episode in late Romanticism when certain men thought of themselves as high priests of art, prepared to sacrifice normal human relationships out of devotion to their sacred calling. And although the line owes nothing to either Yeats or Hardy the device of ending a poem with such weight and resonance is more characteristic of Yeats than of Hardy.

Larkin has repeatedly expressed his admiration for Hardy, but whereas some of his early poems could be mistaken for drafts of unpublished work by Yeats, his later work is unmistakeably his own. This is partly because Larkin had matured by 1946 and was unlikely to succumb to the total invasion of his poetic personality by any other poet, partly because the music of Hardy is less pervasive and overwhelming than the music of Yeats. What Larkin learned from Hardy was, above all, a way of feeling and of understanding. In a radio programme on Hardy he tells us why he felt a sense of liberation when he encountered his work:

> When I came to Hardy it was with the sense of relief that I didn't have to try and jack myself up to a concept of poetry that lay outside my own life... One could simply relapse back into one's own life and write from it.[2]

Larkin, like Hardy, lets poems grow from some tiny event, some chance occurrence, that gathers round itself a whole range of associations and memories. In his contribution to D. J. Enright's anthology, *Poets of the 1950s* (1955), Larkin records his belief that 'the impulse to preserve lies at the bottom of all art'. It is this fidelity to experience, this truthfulness about himself, that gives Larkin's poems their individuality and their integrity.

Moreover, Larkin's emotional response to and moral judgment on experience is akin to Hardy's.

> What is the intensely maturing experience of which Hardy's modern man is most sensible? In my view it is suffering or sadness... [Hardy's work is a] continual imaginative celebration of what is both the truest and the most important element in life, most important in the sense of most necessary to spiritual development.[4]

Nor has Larkin any doubt that the experience of the poet determines the nature of his poetry:

> Separating the man who suffers from the man who creates is all right—we separate the petrol from the engine—but the dependence of the second on the first is complete.[5]

A reading of Hardy's 'Apology' that prefaces *Late Lyrics and Earlier* [6] serves as a good introduction to Larkin as well as to Hardy. In his 'Apology' Hardy expresses the hope that, until the destruction of the globe, 'pain to all upon it, tongued or dumb, shall be kept down to a minimum by loving-kindness'. A similar spirit inspires the whole body of Larkin's verse, especially in such poems as 'Myxomatosis', 'Deceptions', 'Love Songs in Age', 'Faith Healing' and 'Ambulances'. There are affinities also between Hardy's 'Apology' and two of Larkin's most celebrated poems, 'Church Going' and 'The Building'. Although he was an atheist, Hardy felt a strong emotional attachment to the Church of England, partly because in his youth he had worked on the fabric of its ancient churches. In his 'Apology' he looks to the Anglican Church with a wistful longing and faint hope:

> What other purely English establishment than the Church, of sufficient dignity and footing, with such strength of old association, such scope for transmutability, such architectural spell, is left in this country to keep the shreds of morality together?

Larkin has observed that the tone and argument of 'Church Going' are entirely secular, yet his tribute to the 'accountred frowsty barn' acknowledges that

It held unsplit
So long and equably what since is found
Only in separation - marriage, and birth,
And death - and thoughts of these.

But even Hardy's tentative faith in the Church's power to preserve what is valuable is modified in a footnote that runs: 'However, one must not be too sanguine in reading signs, and since the above was written evidence that the Church will go far in the removal of "things that are shaken" has not been encouraging.' And in 'The Building', one of Larkin's most saddening and saddened observations of human life and death, we can see from the Building a locked church and we must admit that for the crowds that come to the Building (it is never explicitly called the hospital) there is no consolation:

All know they are going to die.
Not yet, perhaps not here, but in the end,
And somewhere like this. That is what it means.
This clean-sliced cliff, a struggle to transcend
The thought of dying, for unless its powers
Outbuild cathedrals nothing contravenes
The coming dark, though crowds each evening try

With wasteful, weak, propitiatory flowers.

It would, I think, be possible to detect a number of emotional and verbal resemblances between individual poems of Hardy's and of Larkin's—there seem, for example, to be echoes of Hardy's 'Shut Out That Moon' in both 'Sad Steps' and 'Vers de Societe' ; and 'The Darkling Thrush' anticipates Larkin's characteristic mood of hope unfulfilled. Yet it would be misleading to conclude either that Larkin is merely rewriting Hardy in a late twentieth century idiom, or that he has sloughed off the effects of his early passion for Yeats.

Christopher Ricks, in his review of *The Whitsun Weddings*,[7] while noting Larkin's debt to Hardy, argues that:

in general nothing could be more different from the profusion of Hardy's undiscriminating poetic genius. Larkin's poetry is a refinement

of self-consciousness, usually flawless in execution; Hardy's conquers by sheer force of unself-consciousness It may seem hard to think of Tennyson as a poet whom Larkin would much admire. but some of his best effects are of an extraordinary marriage of Hardy's bluntness with Tennyson's fineness of phrasing.

Moreover, like all true poets Larkin writes in obedience to his daemon, even if the resulting poems may run counter to his own moral and aesthetic precepts. He has waged a long campaign against the Anglo-American modernist tradition in poetry, which owes so much to Symbolism. but despite this he selected for an American anthology called *Poet's Choice*[8] a poem from *The Less Deceived* entitled 'Absences', which ends :

> Above the sea, the yet more shoreless day,
> Riddled by wind, trails lit-up galleries:
> They shift to giant ribbing, sift away.
>
> Such attics cleared of me ! Such absences !

His comment on the poem is of interest: 'I fancy it sounds like a different, better poet than myself. The last line, for instance, sounds like a slightly unconvincing translation from a French symbolist. I wish I could write like this more often.' It is, therefore, not surprising that, however reluctantly, Larkin's verse still bears traces of his youthful devotion to Yeats. One constant stylistic device favoured by Larkin is the employment of compound adjectives : Anthony Thwaite has reckoned that, in *The Less Deceived* and *The Whitsun Weddings* alone, there are well over fifty such compounds. Both Hardy and Hopkins are fond of using compounds but I agree with Edna Longley when she observes that 'what differentiates the compounds of Yeats and Larkin from those of Hopkins and "neutral-tinted haps"—Hardy is the beautiful synchronisation of these potentially unwieldy units with the movement of the iambic line.'[9] She also makes the point that Larkin resembles Yeats in his command

of the grand manner, in his deployment of resonant, declamatory adjectives, in his mastery of the decisive, memorable, line. The poems in *High Windows* (1974), a volume that appeared after Edna Longley's essay, yield further proof that Larkin's poems still bear Yeatsian lineaments :

> Rain wind and fire! The secret, bestial peace !
>
> Under a cavernous, a wind-picked sky
>
> Beyond the light stand failure and remorse
>
> something they share
> That breaks ancestrally each year into
> Regenerate union

There is one poem in that volume, 'Dublinesque', that recalls Yeats, not only in its title, and in its theme—the funeral procession attended by a troop of street-walkers—but also in its very cadences. Larkin, like Yeats, has the gift of investing a simple phrase with a strange poignancy reinforced by a delicate, slightly off-beat rhythm. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to reproduce the effect in other languages, and this may account for the fact that Larkin, unlike Ted Hughes, has not been translated and has not achieved a wide reputation in continental Europe. The conclusion of 'Dublinesque', though it is stamped with Larkin's individuality, is by a poet who remembers the poetry of Yeats:

> As they wend away
> A voice is heard singing
> Of Kitty, or Katy,
> As if the name meant once
> All love, all beauty.

It seems to me also that Larkin's view of political and social change has been growing more and more akin to

Yeats's. 'Naturally the Foundation will Bear Your Expenses', like 'MCMXIV', expresses Larkin's emotional sympathy with those who died in war for their country, and his contempt for left-wing intellectuals who sneer at the ceremony at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day. These two poems from *The Whitsun Weddings* owe little to Yeats and are not particularly right-wing, but they may prepare the reader for certain poems in *High Windows*. 'Homage to a Government' has been criticised for being a disgracefully reactionary poem; but it is less savage than 'Going, Going', a lament for England, threatened by an engulfing tide of greeds and garbage:

> The crowd
> Is youg in the M1 cafe;
> Their kids are screaming for more—
> More houses, more parking allowed,
> More caravan sites, more pay.
> On the Business, Page a score
>
> Of spectacled grins approve
> Some takeover bid that entails
> Five per cent profit (and ten
> Per cent more in the estuaries).

This is a restatement in the world of the 1970s of Yeats's diatribes against the mob and the huckster.

Larkin displays even deeper affinities with Yeats in his response to sexual passion, the approach of old age and the prospect of death. Yeats shocked many of his admirers when, in the poems of his last phase, he spoke openly of lust and rage in language that by the standards of today seems restrained and decorous. In the same way Larkin's reflections on youthful sexuality in certain of the poems in *High Windows* sound a jarring note that has disconcerted many readers. Side by side with these brutalities one finds an intensity and purity of utterance that is again reminiscent of Yeats. Thus the title-poem, that opens with a harsh coarseness, ends in a moment of yearning and mystical awareness:

> Rather than words comes the thought of high windows:
> The sun-comprehending glass,
> And beyond it, the deep blue air, that shows
> Nothing, and is nowhere, and is endless.

We are a long way from Hardy's tender celebration of the joy and sadness of love.

Hardy often writes about old age, which he accepts as part of the natural order. There is sadness in the contemplation of mortality, the death of friends, the decay of strength, the loss of youth and beauty: but Hardy does not dwell upon the clinical details of what it means to be old and dying. Yeats, on the contrary, rages against bodily decrepitude and the terrors of death: Larkin, in his turn, describes the state of being old with a mixture of loathing and fear, and contemplates death with pure anguish. The very title of one poem, 'The Old Fools', sums up his horror and disgust as he faces the facts of old age:

> What do they think has happened, the old fools,
> To make them like this? Do they somehow suppose
> It's more grown-up when your mouth hangs open and drools,
> And you keep on pissing yourself, and can't remember
> Who called this morning?

Larkin has always rejected even the faint hope that we are immortal :

> At death, you break up: the bits that were you
> Start speeding away from each other for ever
> With no one to see.

It is a theme that he dwells on with even more sombre power in a recent poem, 'Aubade', one of his finest achievements.

But surely, it will be argued, Larkin's view of death is that of Hardy rather than of Yeats. It is true that Hardy, like Larkin, unflinchingly holds to the belief that we die utterly, whereas Yeats believes—well, it is not easy to pin

Yeats down to anything so straightforward as belief, but we may grant that Yeats envisaged some form of immortality or of reincarnation. The point is that, leaving aside doctrinal convictions, Larkin is nearer in spirit to Yeats than to Hardy when writing of old age and death.

Larkin's relationship to his two great predecessors is too shifting and subtle to be comprehended in a simple formula. It is fitting that the Oxford University Press should have asked Larkin to compile a successor to Yeats's *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* and, by an irony that both Yeats and Hardy would have relished, Larkin has produced, in the *Oxford Book of Twentieth Century Verse*, an anthology that is as idiosyncratic, as misguided and as prejudiced as Yeats's compilation. Any coherence that the anthology may possess is derived from Larkin's attempt to show that there is a tradition of twentieth century English verse that can be traced back to Hardy and that can be put forward as an alternative to the modernist, post-Symbolist tradition of which Yeats is the first great exemplar. Yet in his choice of poems, as in his critical writings, it is Pound and Eliot rather than Yeats against whom Larkin has launched his attack. Yeats, indeed, gets almost as many pages as Hardy in Larkin's anthology.

Larkin has always insisted upon the uniqueness and freshness of every individual poem; and he is suspicious of the claims that are sometimes made for literary tradition. Let us praise him, then, for the marvellous poems that he has given us; but let us also note that one of his achievements has been to develop in his work certain themes that he studied in the poetry of Yeats and of Hardy and to compose a music that, owing much to their example, is entirely and refreshingly his own.

The British Council
Oxford

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Piloo Nanavutty

BLAKE'S SATAN

Early in life Blake came to realise that error and deceit are rooted in self-righteousness. Satan is error personified. Blake draws its rise in the individual through the latter's complacency in his own self-righteousness. After describing its birth, Blake pillories its manifestations in various forms of hypocrisy. An alliance between Satan and Rahab, error and moral virtue, is now formed. From the individual, the disease spreads to church and state. The contradiction inherent in all error finally leads to its exposure. Error exposed, ceases to exist, and its place is taken by the truth. The permanent establishment of truth, however, requires the destruction of self-righteousness in which error flourishes. The willing self-sacrifice of the Divine Vision alone achieves this end. When the individual realises that fact, Blake's task is completed. Thus, the recurrent cycle of Satan's birth, growth and dissolution, in man and society, is admirably depicted through creative myth.

Satan, therefore, is one of Blake's most important symbols. A clear grasp of its working can be gained by tracing its history through a consecutive order of references from *Vala* to *Jerusalem*. A revaluation of the symbol from this standpoint discloses its profound significance and enriches our understanding of its meaning.

An attempt will now be made to describe Satan's birth and early manifestations in *Vala*, his blind and arrogant display of power in *Milton*, and his ultimate undoing in *Jerusalem*.

I

The first important reference to Satan in *Vala* occurs when the Saviour bends over the corpse of Albion (Man), which

has petrified into a 'Human polypus of Death', and fixes the limits of man's error and his weakness so that he may eventually be redeemed from those states:

> And first he found the Limits of Opacity, & nam'd it Satan.
> In Albion's bosom, for in every human bosom these limits stand.
> And next He found the Limit of Contraction & nam'd it Adam,
> While yet those beings were not born nor knew of good or Evil
> (*Vala*, IV, p. 340)[1]

This is restated in *Jerusalem*, with the addition:

> But when Man sleeps in Beulah, the Saviour in Mercy takes
> Contraction's Limit, and of the Limit forms Woman, That
> Himself may in process of time be born Man to redeem.
> (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 628)

Beulah, with Blake, is a state of spiritual repose where neither intellectual strife nor emotional conflict enter. Satan is the 'Limit of Opacity' because he contains within himself all errors in their entirety. Adam is named the Limit of Contraction because he forms the boundary line which prevents man from falling below a fixed limit of human weakness personified as Adam.

The symbol is now developed with elaborate complexity. From the individual, error speads to all men in general. Blake writes:

> The myriads of the dead burst thro the bottoms of their tombs,
> Descending on the shadowy female's clouds in Spectrous terror,
> Beyond the Limit of Translucence on the Lake of Udan Adan.
> These they nam'd Satan, & in the Aggregate they nam'd them Satan
> (*Vala*, VII b, p. 398)

A further comment follows soon after:

> For nothing could restrain the dead in Beulah from descending
> Unto Ulro's night, tempted by the Shadowy female's sweet
> Delusive cruelty, they descend away from the Daughters of Beulah
> And Enter Urizen's temple, Enitharmon pitying, & her heart
> Gates broken down; they descend thro' the Gate of Pity
> The broken heart Gate of Enitharmon which join'd to Urizen's temple
> Which is the Synagogue of Satan.
> (*Vala*, VIII, p. 399)

The dead here refer to the spectres, abstract ideas still waiting to be clothed in imaginative form by Enitharmon (Inspiration). So long as these abstract ideas lie quiescent in Beulah, they can do no harm. Lacking true vision, they are easily deceived by the Shadowy Female (unregenerate Nature), and force their way through the rational intellect (Urizen). Once they are embodied in the Reason, they become utterly self-centred and wholly evil.

Blake accuses the Jews of worshipping the 'God of this World', Satan. Hence the apt image of the Synagogue of Satan, symbolising aggregates of wicked men gathered to worship evil. Blake is even more explicit when describing the Shadowy Female as

> A False Feminine Counterpart, of Lovely Delusive Beauty
> Dividing and Uniting at will in the Cruelties of Holiness.
> Vala, drawn down into a Vegetated body, now triumphant.
>
> (*Vala*, VIII, p 409)

The Synagogue of Satan creates her from the fruit of Urizen's tree by devilish arts, and clothes her with scarlet robes and gems. On her forehead she flaunts her name, written in blood, Mystery. The Lake of Udan Adan is 'a Lake not of Waters, but of Spaces, Perturb'd black and deadly... form'd from the tears and sighs & death sweat of the Victims Of Urizen's laws, to irrigate the roots of the tree of Mystery', (*Vala*, VIII, p. 407). Whereas Udan Adan is a state of blurred conceptions, Ulro is a state of blind error, and in *Jerusalem* it is thus described :

> Such is the nature of the Ulro, that whatever enters
> Becomes Sexual, and is created and Vegetated and Born.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 635)

The point Blake is labouring to emphasize would appear to be this. The rational intellect (Urizen), when not subservient to the imagination, gets involved in barren mystifications in which error hides. The 'victims of Urizen's laws, are the imaginative impulses and inspiration crushed by the coercive reason, now wholly directed by Satanic tyranny. The Shadowy

Female is but one form of this tyranny. Appropriately enough she is said to be created by the Synagogue of Satan from the fruit of Urizen's tree of mystery. Error can hide successfully within rationalistic thought only if protected from discovery by elaborate mystifications. Naturally, such mystifications rest upon hypocrisy and deceit.

The conection between the temple of Urizen and the Synagogue of Satan still needs to be explained. Enitharmon is said to weave the vegetated bodies for the myriads of spectres, (abstract ideas) before they can descend into Ulro, the material world of blind error. Her heart gate is broken by pity, for, as Blake remarks elsewhere, 'pity divides the soul and man unmans.' Urizen, who was faith and certainty, is now changed to doubt, for reason, uncontrolled by the imagination, is painfully aware of its limitations, and therefore doubts the conclusions reached by its own restricted capacities (*Vala*, II, p. 306). Hence, it is only fitting that Urizen's temple should be Satan's Synagogue, as the final form which Satan takes is revealed in that passionate cry of Los (Imagination) :

> Will you suffer this Satan, this Body of Doubt that Seems but
> Is Not
> To occupy the very threshold of Eternal Life?
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 741)

The identity between Satan and Urizen, error and rationalistic thought, is clearly brought out by Blake in the following lines :

> Then Los and Enitharmon knew that Satan is Urizen,
> Drawn down by Orc & the Shadowy Female into Generation.
> (*Milton*, I. p. 480)

Imagination and Inspiration know that Error is embodied in Reason and made manifest in human life through passionate revolt, Orc, and the deceits of unregenerate Nature, the Shadowy Female.

The self-centred Reason, however is unaware, of being under the complete control of satanic error. Baffled and

frustrated, it plots revenge. Urizen lets loose his mighty rage and in self-deceit communes with the Synagogue of Satan and with Orc (Revolt) to undermine the world of Los (Imagination), when

> Terrified & astonish'd, Urizen beheld the battle take a form
> Which he intended not: a Shadowy hermaphrodite, black & opake;
> The soldiers nam'd it Satan, but he was yet unform'd & vast.
> Hermaphroditic it at length became, hiding the Male
> Within as in a Tabernacle, Abominable, Deadly.
>
> (*Vala*, VIII. 402)

The birth of Satan and the explanation of the symbol, however, do not follow till six pages later. At last, with convulsive groans, and heaving like an earthquake, the vast, hermaphroditic form brings forth an awful wonder, Satan, a monstrous, dehumanized image.

> A Male without a female counterpart, a howling fiend
> Forlorn of Eden & repugnant to the forms of life
> Yet hiding the shadowy female Vala as in an ark & Curtains,
> Abhorr'd, accursed, ever dying an Eternal death,
> Being multitudes of tyrant Men in union blasphemous
> Against the Divine image, Congregated assemblies of wicked men?
>
> (*Vala*, VIII, p. 408)

It is with deliberate intention that Blake reverses the roles of the male and female influences in the hermaphrodite. As E.J. Ellis remarks:

> The good feminine or good material is essentially Nature's faculty of being the vessel that holds the male vital power, the emotion in which the 'seed of contemplative thought' is carried, and the bad feminine is the carrier of the unformed reason and unformed memory or chaos that between them shall fight with imagination, trying to convince it of worthlessness and even of sin, and persuading it 'to try self-murder on its soul'... Throughout all mind, all life, feminine is one kind of influence, an emotional and beautiful kind, good when subservient to masculine and the masculine is absolutely dead and satanic without it, and only tends to build nature by the power of reason in the space which otherwise is void and virginal, with no result (since nature is nothing), not even with the result of death, which is the state of nothing.[8]

Blake's term, hermaphroditic, is always used to denote a condition in which the bad feminine and bad masculine combine to produce an attitude of mind which justifies cruelty in the name of goodness. Sloss and Wallis give an apt example when they point out that 'the religious habit of attributing mercy to God and then persecuting in His name, is an Hermaphroditic error'.[3]

The reversal mentioned earlier can now be explained. The hermaphroditic form, the womb from which Satan issues, holds the male principle within itself; but once this male power is manifested in the birth of Satan, then the evil female influence is seen to be hiding within it, for error defined, reveals the cause of that error.

Although the amorphous birth of error has just been shown, and the 'cruelties of holiness' exposed, the human reason is still unaware of the true nature of Satan. Error penetrates further into hypocrisy and deceit. Satan deludes the intellect by drawing its attention away from the actual state of things to sitting in judgment upon the Lamb of God in self-righteous pride. Urizen calls together the Synagogue of Satan 'to judge the Lamb of God to Death as a murderer & robber' (*Vala*, VIII, p. 409). The immediate result is the dividing of Vala into Tirzah and Rahab and their daughters. The elaborate hypocricies and deceits in which error hides can best be seen at work in the interplay between repressed sexual energies (Tirzah) and licence in sex leading to a hypocritical moral virtue(Rahab). Their daughters would symbolise the tortures of jealousy. These are the 'Delusive feminine powers' that inflict a cruel death on the Lamb of God. They nail him upon the Tree of Mystery, 'weeping over him and then mocking & worshipping, calling him Lord & King' (*Vala*, VIII, p.411). Christ takes upon himself the 'dark Satanic body in the Virgin's womb' so that when Rahab cuts off his body from the Lamb of God, it reveals 'to all in heaven & All on Earth, the Temple & the Synagogue of Satan, Mystery Even Rahab in all her turpitude' (*Vala*, VIII, pp. 408, 412). Los

(Imagination), now warns Rahab to distinguish between states and individuals in those states. 'The State nam'd Satan never can be redeem'd in all Eternity', but must be put off continually (*Vala*, VIII, p. 413).

Intent upon revealing the intricate manifestations of error, Blake now introduces the Satan-Palamabron myth which is more fully developed in *Milton*. Los describes how Satan accused Palamabron (Pity), and maddened the horses of Palamabron's harrow, whereupon Rintrah (Wrath), and Palamabron (Pity) cut him off from Golgonooza (City of Imagination and Art). Enitharmon, here symbolising compassion, weeps over him and creates him a moony space. He rolls down beneath the fires of Orc (Revolt), and by his mild arts tries to get dominion over all the worlds of Urizen (Reason). In order to prevent this, Palamabron calls down 'a great solemn assembly' when Rintrah, in fury, defends Palamabron and Satan is condemned. Satan and his companions roll down still further, and appear 'a dim world, crusted with Snow, deadly and dark.' Jerusalem (Spiritual Freedom), pitying, weaves them mantles of life and death times after times.

Now follows a list of those asked to die for Satan so that individuals in that state may be redeemed. Lucifer, Molech, Elohim, Shaddai, Pachad, Jehovah, refuse to die for Satan. Adam, though refusing, was compelled to die by Satan's arts. At last Jesus comes and dies willingly 'beneath Tirzah and Rahab' (*Vala*, VIII, 414). Rahab departs in pride and revenge. The war between Urizen (Reason) and Tharmas (Flesh) continues. Rahab triumphs over all taking Jerusalem a willing captive. When, however, Rahab hears Ahania (Urizen's parted soul) wailing over man's fall into mortality and death, and the voice of Enion, the Earth Mother, parent of Los and Enitharmon, from the caverns of the grave comforting Ahania with the conviction that the Saviour has descended into all forms of material life and death, then no spirit is left in her.

She plays fast and loose with the Synagogue of Satan and with Orc (Revolt) till

> The Synagogue of Satan therefore uniting against Mystery,
> Satan divided against Satan, resolv'd in open Sanhedrim
> To burn Mystery with fire & form another from her ashes...
> The Ashes of Mystery began to animate; they called it Deism
> And Natural Religion...
>
> (*Vala*, VIII, p. 422).

Once Rahab is destroyed, the Synagogue of Satan is near its dissolution. Night the Ninth is wholly taken up with the Last Judgment when Rahab and Tirzah give themselves up to consummation (*Vala*, IX, p. 424). Millions of the dead rise in 'flames of mental fire, bathing their limbs in the bright visions of Eternity'. The Synagogue of Satan and Tree of Mystery are burnt up. Destruction continues till all Mystery's tyrants are annihilated. Thus Blake's first major Prophetic Book draws to a dramatic close.

In *Vala*, Satan is dealt with as a composite symbol, being 'multitudes of tyrant men in union blasphemous against the Divine image'. He is at once a state and a personification of that state. Blake concentrates on three aspects of the symbol : Satan as the limit of all human error; the hermaphroditic nature of his birth and his character; and his intimate relationships with rational thought and sexual morality on the one hand, and with unregenerate Nature and revolutionary force on the other. An atmosphere of hidden deceit pervades the entire setting.

II

In *Milton*, Blake develops the symbol in various new directions. The conception of Satan as a Spectre is brought to the fore, and the very conditions of his birth revolutionised. According to Blake :

> The Spectre is the Reasoning Power in Man, & when separated
> From Imagination and closing itself as in steel in a Ratio
> Of the Things of Memory, it thence frames Laws & Moralities
> To destroy Imagination, the Divine Body, by Martyrdoms & Wars.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 699).

Still more explicit is the following passage :

> And this is the manner of the Sons of Albion in their strength:
> They take the Two Contraries which are call'd Qualities, with which
> Every Substance is clothed : they name them Good & Evil.
> From them they make an Abstract; which is a Negation
> Not only of the Substance from which it is derived,
> A murderer of its own Body, but also a murderer
> Of every Divine Member: it is the Reasoning Power,
> An Abstract objecting power that Negatives everything.
> This is the Spectre in Man, the Holy Reasoning Power,
> And in its Holiness is closed the Abomination of Desolation.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 564).

The changed conditions of Satan's birth now emerge. Los (Imagination) and Enitharmon (Inspiration) build Golgonooza (City of Imagination and Art), and the looms of generation, ages on ages. As a result,

> First Orc was born, then the Shadowy Female: then all Los's family.
> At last Enitharmon brought forth Satan, Refusing Form in vain.
>
> (*Milton*, I, p. 468)

Hints dropped by Blake elsewhere should be recalled. In *Vala*, VIIa, p. 371, Urizen is certain that Orc (Revolt) is Luvah (Passion). This is developed further :

> But when Luvah in Orc became a Serpent, he descended into
> That State call'd Satan. Enitharmon breath'd forth on the Winds
> Of Golgonooza her well beloved, knowing he was Orc's human remains.
>
> (*Vala*, VIII, p. 413).

Later, in *Jerusalem*, Blake explains :

> Satan is the State of Death & not a Human existence;
> But Luvah is nam'd Satan because he has enter'd that State.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 645).

Again, in *Milton*, Blake adds :

> But in the Optic vegetative Nerves, Sleep was transformed
> To Death in old time by Statan the father of Sin & Death :
> And Satan is the Spectre of Orc, and Orc is the generate Luvah.
>
> (*Milton*, I, p. 522).

Orc has just been described as 'burning in the fires of Eternal Youth' which are bound to contain an element of strong passion (Luvah). Moreover, according to Blake,

> every Man born is joined
> Within into One mighty Polypus, and this Polypus is Orc.
> (*Milton*, I, p. 522).

Satan being the father of sin and death attaches himself to Orc as 'the Holy Reasoning Power' which rationalises emotions instead of allowing them to 'Emanate Uncurbed in their Eternal Glory' as they do in heaven.[4] Hence, error becomes the false reasoning in revolt which then emerges as misguided passion.

As the Spectre of Albion, Satan is given yet another birth :

> Albion's Spectre from his Loins
> Tore forth in all the pomp of War:
> Satan his name : in flames of fire
> He stretch'd his Druid Pillars far.
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 598).

As Albion's Spectre, Satan is the assertive self-righteousness in opposition to the Divine Humanity, Jesus. The Seven Angels of the Presence tell Milton how they were compelled to unite by 'Satan, the Spectre of Albion, who made himself a God & destroyed the Human Form Divine' *(Milton*, II, p. 528). Those combined by the Divine Humanity are given 'human form', that is, living form, which will lead to fulness of spiritual vision. These combined

> by Satan's Tyranny, first in the blood of War
> And Sacrifice & next in Chains of imprisonment, are Shapeless Rocks...
> Calling the Human Imagination, which is the Divine Vision & Fruition
> In which Man liveth eternally, madness & blasphemy against
> Its own Qualities, which are Servants of Humanity, not Gods or Lords.
> (*Milton*, II, p. 528-9).

This is entirely in keeping with the character of Satan as Albion's Spectre described in *Jerusalem* as the 'Great Self-hood Satan, Worshipp'd as God by the Mighty Ones of the Earth' (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 612).

Satan as Spectre is found not only in Albion (mankind in general), but also in the poet, Milton, in Los, in Blake, and *in himself*, for it is the Spectre of Satan who opposes Milton's path when he seeks regeneration (*Milton* II,pp.540-1) Thus Satan is Enitharmon's first born, for Urizen is the first born of generation and also her last born, being Orc's human remains. He is in Orc, in Luvah and in Urizen.

This elaborating, unfurling of the symbol can be traced in detail. The daughters of Albion, who are threefold in head, heart and loins, control the natural functions in man, and create the three classes of men : the Elect, the Redeemed and the Reprobate. Satan belongs to the first class, and is doomed to annihilation from his birth :

> For the Elect cannot be Redeem'd, but Created continually
> By Offering & Atonement in the cruelties of Moral Law.
> (*Milton*, I, p. 470).

The Satan-Palamabron myth reappears, and takes up fourteen pages of description. Satan pleads with Los for Palamabron's station. Palamabron refuses to comply, but repeated entreaties undermine Los's integrity and at last he hands over the Harrow of the Almighty to Satan who promptly drives it in pity's paths. (*Milton*, I, pp. 469, 473). The Harrow symbolises the divine power in every human being which helps to build Jerusalem, spiritual freedom, in the life of the individual and in the life of nations. The Christian religion, says Blake, teaches that no man is indifferent to you, but that every man is either your friend or your enemy. Hence, Blake claimed the liberty of free mental intercourse so that 'corporeal friends' need not necessarily be 'spitirual enemies'.

Satan now deceives both himself and Los as to the real nature of his love for Palamabron. Theotormon and Bromion

contend on Satan's side. They play important roles in an early Prophetic Book, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*. Theotormon symbolises the prim moralist whose egotistic love is always based on selfishness and vanity. Bromion is the careless libertine who will selfishly take what he desires impervious to the ravage left behind. Thulloh, the friend of Satan, reproves him, and is promptly killed by Satan. According to Foster Damon, Thulloh represents the natural affinity and sympathy between friends. When a fundamental misunderstanding arises, this sympathy is the first to be destroyed.[5] Michael, spiritual war, is also against Satan. Enitharmon (compassion) attempts to reconcile the differences between the adversaries. She forms a space for Satan and Michael and closes them within (*Milton*, I, p. 477). The nature of this space is explained :

> The nature of a Female Space is this : it shrinks the Organs
> Of life till they become Finite & Itself seems Infinite.
>
> (*Milton*, I, p. 480).

Consequently, the rift is further widened. Palamabron calls down 'a great solemn assembly' and the judgment falls on Rintrah, wrath. As in *Vala*, it is Rintrah who enters Satan's bosom and forces the latter to show himself in his true colours.

Satan rages against the assembly, behaving like Urizen by drawing out his scroll of moral laws and cruel punishments, saying,

> I am God alone:
> There is no other! let all obey my principles of moral individuality.
>
> (*Milton*, I, p. 479).

His bosom grows opake against the Divine Vision, and a world of deeper Ulro (total error), is opened in it, 'a vast unfathomable Abyss.' Rintrah rears up walls of rock between Satan and Palamabron, but Satan 'not having the Science of Wrath, but only of Pity', rends the rocks asunder so that wrath is left to wrath and pity to pity. According to

Blake, wrath, with its dynamite of explosive energy, is a cathartic and creative force in life. Pity, on the other hand, being a passive quality, is weak, and can only divide the soul and unman man. Satan, as a Spectre, can understand the 'hard, cold, constrictive' reasoning power in man, and will, therefore, choose pity which divides and weakens the personality, but he will be blind to the cleansing, renovating power of wrath.

At this point in the myth, Satan sinks down 'a dreadful Death,' into the female space created for him by Enitharmon, and triumphant divides the nations. His Spectre also descends into the space. The Mills of Satan (barren logic) are segregated there, and Satan's Druid sons offer 'human victims' (imaginative ideas according to E. J. Ellis), on this altar. All the spectres of the dead now call themselves sons of God and worship Satan under the Unutterable Name (Tetragrammaton), (*Milton*, I, pp. 480-2).

Leutha next descends into the assembly to offer herself as a ransom for Satan. She is a daughter of Beulah, hence inspiration, but a false one. She enters Satan's brain, stupifying the masculine perceptions and keeping only the feminine awake (*Milton*, I, p. 483). Satan rages to devour Albion and Jerusalem (man and his spiritual freedem), but finally casts out Leutha from his brain. She appeals to the Divine Vision to save Satan, then hides herself in the space created for Satan by Enitharmon.

Again, as in *Vala*, Lucifer, Molech, Triple Elohim, Shaddai, Pahad and Jehovah are asked to die for man, but refuse. Then the poet, Milton, rises to offer to go to eternal death, saying,

> I in my Selfhood am that Satan : I am that Evil One !
> He is my Spectre! in my obedience to loose him from my Hells.
> To claim the Hells, my Furnaces, I go to Eternal Death.
>
> (*Milton*, I, pp. 488-9).

The furnaces are the 'furnaces of affliction', through which the creative genius in every man works towards regeneration.

The anguish of the process is always a hell to the Spectre or Selfhood in the individual.

The Satan-Palamabron myth now comes to an abrupt end. There is also an interruption in the account of Milton's death and the redemption of his Spectre. Blake has just shown how error enters the entire body politic of the world and divides the nations through mutually contradictory policies. These policies are introduced through false inspiration (Leutha), but in the end are exposed and cast out. Yet, not a single nation is prepared to sacrifice itself for the good of all. Hence the appeal to the Divine Vision to save the situation and redeem Satan himself.

Blake chooses this precise moment to develop the symbol in two different directions. Error now penetrates all physical nature and through it the daily life of man. It also enters the churches. Blake asserts that all the 'Living Creatures of the Four Elements' are, in the aggregate, named Satan and Rahab which he explains as follows:

> These are the Gods of the Kingdoms of the Earth, in contrarious
> And cruel opposition, Element against Element, opposed in War
> Not Mental as the Wars of Eternity, but a Corporeal Strife.
> (*Milton*, II, p. 526).

These elements are the Fairies (air), Nymphs (water), Gnomes (earth), and Genii (fire), who know only of generation. They cannot be regenerated but must be created continually, for they are under the domination of the 'four iron pillars of Satan's Throne', namely, Temperance, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, 'the four pillars of tyranny,' (*Milton*, I, p. 523). Desire repressed is the quality common to all four. There would be no necessity for the exercise of such virtues if it were not that in

> the Optic vegetative Nerves. Sleep was transformed
> To Death in old time by Satan the father of Sin and Death.
> (*Milton*, I, p. 522).

Once sin and death enter the world, the 'Idol Virtues of the Natural Heart' govern the whole man in triumphant pride.

The second direction in which the symbol develops is seen when Blake announces that Satan and Adam are states created into twenty-seven churches (*Milton*, II, p. 529). The limits of opacity and contraction (Satan and Adam) which the Saviour fixed in man, are now operating in the churches so that the churches may be destroyed but individuals redeemed.

There is a closely knit logic in the development of the symbol which should not be overlooked. Blake started by making Satan represent error in the individual. From the individual the error spread to Nature (the Living Creatures of the Four Elements), and then to society as embodied in church and state. As a Spectre, Satan 'frames Laws and Moralities to destroy Imagination, the Divine Body, by Martyrdoms and Wars.' Martyrdoms and wars, however, are first hatched in the human brain. Hence it forms the 'seat of Satan in its Webs.' Rationalistic thought is not the only murderer of the Imagination in man. The senses also betray the Divine in him. Fortunately, from brain, heart and loins gates 'open behind Satan's Seat to the City of Golgonooza', City of Imagination and Art, where

> The Sons of Los labour against Death Eternal, through all
> The Twenty-seven Heavens of Beulah in Ulro, Seat of Satan,
> Which is the False Tongue beneath Beulah: it is the Sense of Touch.
> (*Milton*, I, p. 518).

The twenty-seven heavens are the twenty-seven 'monstrous churches', false ways of worshipping God, created because

> The Elect must be saved from the Fires of Eternal Death,
> To be formed into the Churches of Beulah that they destroy not the Earth.
> (*Milton*, I, p. 512).

The Elect cannot believe in eternal life except by miracles and a new birth, while the redeemed 'live in doubts and fears perpetually tormented by the Elect', and the Reprobate alone never cease to believe.

A list of the twenty-seven heavens and their churches is given in *Milton*, II, p. 539). It is this extension of error in church and state which made Blake see the poet Milton as the Covering Cherub, false doctrine which once held the kernel of truth, but which now masquerades as the truth, and within him Satan and Rahab and the churches (*Milton*, II, pp. 537-8). According to Blake, Milton exalted the heathen gods and misinterpreted the true function of Christ.

After this digression, Blake renews the narrative of Milton's death and the redemption of his Spectre. The dissolution of Satan as a Spectre occurs when Milton enters the state of eternal annihilation. The prophecy of the Seven Angels of the Presence should be recalled at this point:

> And thou, O Milton, art a State about to be Created,
> Called Eternal Annihilation, that none but the Living shall
> Dare to enter, & they shall enter triumphant over Death
> And Hell & the Grave: States that are not, but shall Seem to be.
> (*Milton*, II, p. 529)

Milton now announces his mission :

> I come to discover before Heav'n & Hell the Self righteousness
> In all its hypocritic turpitude, opening to every eye
> These wonders of Satan's holiness, showing to the Earth
> The Idol Virtues of the Natural Heart, & Satan's Seat
> Explore in all its Selfish Natural Virtue, & put off
> In Self annihilation all that is not of God alone.
> To put off Self & all I have, ever & ever. Amen.
> (*Milton*, II, pp. 541-2)

Satan promptly retaliates by usurping the characteristics of God's justice without His mercy :

> I am God the judge of all, the living & the dead.
> Fall therefore down & worship me . . .
> I hold the Balances of Right & Just & mine the Sword.
> Seven Angels bear my Name & in those Seven I appear,
> But I alone am God & I alone in Heav'n & earth
> Of all that live dare utter this, others tremble & bow.

> Till All Things become One Great Satan, In Holiness]
> Oppos'd to Mercy, and the Divine Delusion, Jesus, be no more.
> (*Milton*, II, p. 542)

Christ, however, permits Satan to be surrounded by Cherubim and Seraphim 'lest he should fall apart in his Eternal Death'.

The Seven Angels of the Presence now urge Albion to awake and reclaim his Reasoning Spectre and subdue him to the Divine Mercy. Satan, hearing his doom, trembles round his body,

> Howling in his Spectre round his Body, hung'ring to devour
> But fearing for the pain, for if he touches a Vital
> His torment is unendurable : therefore he cannot devour
> But howls round it as a lion round his prey continually.
> (*Milton*, II, p. 543)

The term, body, is here used in opposition to form. The body can be destroyed, and in the above context, refers to the 'dark Satanic body, which the Saviour took upon himself in the Virgin's womb. It may also refer to the 'Serpent Bulk of Nature's Dross', meaning the entire physical creation. Satan cannot devour this body because of the Divine Humanity (Christ) incarnated in it. The vital or the essential Satan cannot touch, for that would entail the pain of being regenerated, and in the process Satan would be utterly destroyed, for error is burnt when the truth appears. This is Satan's eternal fate.

The poem ends with the reunion of Milton with the Saviour, and the descent of Jesus into Albion's bosom, 'the bosom of death,' so that the 'Great Harvest and Vintage of the Nations' may proceed to its eternal judgment and consummation without delay.

In *Milton*, Satan as a concept is developed in four main channels. He is introduced as a Spectre whose assertive self-righteousness is in opposition to the Divine Mercy of Jesus. He therefore enters the nations of the world and divides them one against the other. Furthermore, he poisons all physical nature in his attempt to destroy Jesus, and finally,

disrupts the churches. Thus in all walks of life Satan is seen displaying a blind and arrogant power, though, as yet, unaware of the fate that awaits him.

III

In *Jerusalem*, his greatest Prophetic Book, Blake widens and deepens the concept of Satan still further. In *Vala*, he had concentrated on the hermaphroditic nature of error as personified by Satan. In *Milton*, he showed the shifting nuances and the manifold forms which that error took. In *Jerusalem*, he makes error itself aware of its own inherent contradiction and eventual doom.

Although there are not many specific references to Satan by name, as the Spectre of Los and the Spectre of Albion he is constantly in the foreground, being forced by Los to labeur in the furnaces of affliction and contribute his share towards the regeneration which will lead to the final consummatien. He still works in 'holy wrath and deep deceit', plotting revenge against the Divine in man, but now Los recognises all Satan's wiles, and the 'hypocritic Selfhoods' are drawn forth 'on the Anvils of bitter Death and Corroding Hell.' The eyes of Satan are turned inward, revealing to himself his own pride and self-righteousness till he realises he is still

> The Son of Morn in weary Night's decline,
> The lost Traveller's Dream under the Hill.
>
> (*The Gates of Paradise*, p. 763)

This realisation wrings from him the cry :

> O that I could cease to be! Despair! I am Despair,
> Created to be the great example of horror & agony; also my
> Prayer is vain. I called for compassion : compassion mock'd;
> Mercy and pity threw the grave stone over me, & with lead
> And iron bound it over me for ever. Life lives on my
> Consuming, & the Almighty hath made me his Contrary
> To be all evil, all reversed & for ever dead, knowing
> And seeing life, yet living not; how can I then behold
> And not tremble? how can I be beheld & not abhorr'd?
>
> (*Jerusalem*, I, pp. 665-6)

Los wipes away the tears from Satan's eyes, 'but comfort none could give or beam of hope'. Blake himself had stood in 'Satan's bosom and beheld its desolations' finding there 'a ruin'd Man, a ruin'd building of God, not made with hands'. However greatly he may be moved by the fate awaiting error and evil in himself, he has no choice but to root them out, for 'Error is created: Truth Eternal'. That which is created can be annihilated, but the truth cannot.

This statement regarding Truth and Error forms the key to Blake's handling of the symbol in *Jerusalem*. Los cries :

> But still I labour in hope, tho' still my tears flow down;
> That he who will not defend Truth may be compell'd to defend
> A Lie: that he may be snared and caught and snared and taken:
> That Enthusiasm and Life may not cease...
>
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 563)

As a starting point for the new developments in error, Blake describes the separation from Los of his Spectre and Emanation. The cause of this separation are the Sons of Albion and their 'starry wheels'. Blake explains the term :

> The Vegetative Universe opens like a flower for the Earth's centre
> In which is eternity. It expands in Stars to the Mundane Shell
> And there it meets Eternity again, both within and without.
> And the abstract Voids between the Stars are the Satanic Wheels.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 571)

Error, separated from the Imagination, makes every effort to subdue it by the triple temptation of doubt, despair and shame (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 565). Satan cannot succeed, because the Imagination is not a state but the Human Existence itself. Satan, therefore, turns his fury and might on unsuspecting man (Albion). The latter analyses his symptoms, but does not know that Satan is the cause. Albion speaks in despair:

> The disease of Shame covers me from head to feet. I have no hope.
> Every boil upon my body is a separate & deadly Sin.

> Doubt first assail'd me, then Shame took possession of me.
> Shame divides families. Shame hath divided Albion in sunder.
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 587)

He is left to rot in the Chaos of Satan, 'an orbed Void of doubt, despair, hunger and thirst and sorrow' (*Jerusalem*, I, pp. 575, 582). His children desert him. His 'Wild Ani'mations' and his cattle flee from him. His limbs are darkened, for the sun, moon and stars once contained within him, now wander away from his presence.

In his dejection, Albion is subject to various delusions. The very first of these is a false conception of God, described by the Spectre in these words :

> the joys of God advance,
> For he is Righteous, he is not a Being of Pity & Compassion,
> He cannot feel Distress, he feeds on Sacrifice & Offering,
> Delighting in cries & tears & clothed in holiness and solitude.
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 565)

From such a conception of God, it naturally follows that Albion imputes sin and righteousness to individuals rather than to the states in which they are at the time. This is another Satanic delusion. Albion cries,

> O Human Imagination, O Divine Body I have Crucified,
> I have turned my back upon thee into the Wastes of Moral Law...
> O my Children
> I have educated you in the crucifying cruelties of Demonstration
> Till you have assum'd the Providence of God & slain your Father...
> Injury the Lord heals, but Vengeance cannot be healed...
> For not one sparrow can suffer & the whole Universe not suffer also.
> In all its Regions, & its Father & Saviour not pity & weep.
> But Vengeance is the destroyer of Grace & Repentance in the bosom
> Of the Injurer, in which the Divine Lamb is cruelly slain...
> But many doubted & despair'd & imputed Sin & Righteousness
> To Individuals & not to States, & these slept in Ulro.
> (*Jerusalem*, I, pp. 594-6)

In order to root out sin, Albion becomes the punisher and judge, making the wise die for an atonement in moral severity. This is the deadliest of the Satanic delusions, as it destroys mercy in the victim of moral severity and leaves him a prey to despair and death. Los is the only one who views the actuality in its true perspective (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 623).

Once Error isolates man from the healthy and normal influences in his life, it organises all destructive forces for his complete annihilation. Thus the eleven Sons of Albion are absorbed by Hand, the twelfth. They rend their way through Albion's loins and start a reign of terror and persecution, seeking to annihilate Jerusalem and her children (*Jerusalem*, I, pp. 582-3). The Friends of Albion willingly permit themselves to be shut up in his bosom

> Which harden'd against them more and more as he builded onwards
> On the Gulph of Death in self-righteousness that roll'd
> Before his awful feet, in pride of virtue for victory.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 584)

Los also permits himself to be shut off from Eternity and be roofed inside Albion's cliffs of despair and death (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 585). Albion now takes up his stand beneath the tree of 'Moral Virtue and the Law of God who dwells in Chaos hidden from the human sight'. He builds twelve altars and calls them Truth and Justice.

> And Albion's Sons
> Must have become the first Victims, being the first transgressors
> But they fled to the mountains to seek ransom, building a Strong
> Fortification against the Divine Humanity and Mercy,
> In Shame & Jealousy to annihilate Jerusalem.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, I, p. 601)

Yet the Divine Vision hovers over Albion 'like a silent Sun' and the Divine Voice speaks:

> I elected Albion for my glory: I gave to him the Nations
> Of the whole Earth. He was the Angel of my Presence, and all

The Sons of God were Albion's Sons, and Jerusalem was my joy.
The Reactor (Satan) hath hid him thro' envy. I behold him,
But you cannot behold him till he be reveal'd in his System.
Albion's Reactor must have a Place prepar'd. Albion must Sleep
The Sleep of Death till the Man of Sin & Repentance be reveal'd,
Hidden in Albion's Forests he lurks: he admits of no Reply
From Albion, but hath founded his Reaction into a Law
Of Action, for Obedience to destroy the Contraries of Man,
He hath compell'd Albion to become a Punisher & hath possess'd
Himself of Albion's Forests & Wilds, & Jerusalem is taken.
(*Jerusalem*, II, p. 602)

Albion goes to Eternal Death. In Me all Eternity
Must pass thro' condemnation and awake beyond the Grave.
No individual can keep these Laws, for they are death
To every energy of man and forbid the springs of life.
Albion hath enter'd the State Satan! Be permanent, O State!
And be thou for ever accursed! that Albion may rise again.
(*Jerusalem*, II, p. 616)

Albion, unaware of his own state, falls into further delusions. He worships his own shadow :

Above him rose a Shadow from his wearied intellect,
Of living gold, pure, perfect, holy; in white linen pure he hover'd,
A sweet entrancing self-delusion, a watery vision of Albion,
Soft exulting in existence, all the Man absorbing.
Albion fell upon his face prostrate before the wat'ry Shadow,
Saying: 'O Lord, whence is this change? thou knowest I am nothing!'
And Vala trembled & cover'd her face, & her locks were spread on the pavement.
(*Jerusalem*, II, p. 603)

Later, he worships Vala as the Divine Vision and is persuaded by her that the Imaginative Human Form is her creation. Albion speaks idolatrously to Vala :

Whence comest thou? who art thou, O loveliest? the Divine Vision

Is nothing before thee : faded is all life and joy.
(*Jerusalem*, II, p. 612)

Vala replies,

Know me now Albion : look upon me. I alone am Beauty.
The Imaginative Human Form is but a breathing of Vala :
I breathe him forth into the Heaven from my secret Cave,
Born of the Woman, to obey the Woman, O Albion the mighty.
For the Divine appearance is Brotherhood, but I am Love
Elevate into the Region of Brotherhood with my red fires.
(*Jerusalem*, II, p. 613)

Luvah now strives to gain dominion over Albion, and in revenge, Albion separates him from his counterpart, Vala. This enables Satan to exercise his tyranny with redoubled force. Los describes how the oppressors of Albion

buy his Daughters that they may have power to sell his Sons.
They compel the Poor to live upon a crust of bread by soft mild arts:
They reduce the Man to want, then give with pomp and ceremony :
The praise of Jehovah is chaunted from lips of hunger & thirst
(*Jerusalem*, II, pp. 606-7)

Los next takes his globe of fire and searches the interiors of Albion's bosom,

in all the terrors of friendship entering the caves
Of despair & death to search the tempters out, walking among
Albion's rocks & precipices, caves of solitude & dark despair,
And saw every Minute Particular of Albion degraded & murder'd
But saw not by whom . . .
Every Universal Form was become barren mountains of Moral
Virtue, and every Minute Particular harden'd into grains of sand,
And all the tendernesses of the soul cast forth as filth & mire
Among the winding places of deep contemplation intricate.
(*Jerusalem*, II, pp. 607-8)

Yet he realises that even if he found Satan and his brood he dare not take revenge,

for all things are so constructed
And builded by the Divine hand that the sinner shall always escape,

> And he who takes vengeance alone is the criminal of Providence
> If I should dare to lay my finger on a grain of sand
> In way of vengeance, I punish the already punish'd.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, II. pp. 608-9)

At this point Albion turns his back upon the Divine Vision and is on the verge of falling into non-entity. A further delusion confronts him in the shape of his Spectrous Chaos, 'an Unformed Memory'. He tempts Albion, saying,

> I am your Rational Power, O Albion, & that Human Form
> You call Divine is but a Worm seventy inches long
> That creeps forth in a night & is dried in the morning sun,
> In fortuitious concourse of memorys accumulated & lost.
> It plows the Earth in its own conceit, it overwhelms the Hills
> Beneath its winding labyrinths, till a stone of the brook
> Stops it in midst of its pride among its hills & rivers.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, II, 611)

The Divine Vision now forms the limits of the two states, Satan and Adam, in Albion's bosom, entreating him to turn away from Satanic domination (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 620). Los implores the twenty-four friends of Albion, named after twenty-four English cities, to sacrifice themselves for his sake (*Jerusalem*, II, 623-7). London dies for him, Bath and Oxford plead with him, but all to no avail. 'The soul drinks murder & revenge & applauds its own holiness' (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 627). Albion demands righteousness and justice from Los. The latter defies Albion and returns righteousness and justice but adds mercy as well. He implores Albion not to destroy, by Moral Virtue, 'the little ones', the 'infant loves and affections', which belong to God alone (*Jerusalem*, II, pp. 628, 629).

Satan now assaults the four Zoas who are the four eternal Senses of man, and the highest state in which eternity can be enjoyed (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 618). The corrupted Zoas drink 'the shuddering fears & loves of Albion's Families, destroying by selfish affections the things they most admire' (*Jerusalem*, II, 626). Urizen (Reason) turns 'cold & scientific.' Luvah (Passion) 'pitys and weeps'.

Tharmas (Body), becomes 'indolent and sullen', while Urthona (Spirit), doubts and despairs (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 631). They call on God to deliver Jerusalem and Albion. Yet, when rallied by Los, the spiritual form of Luvah, and the only Zoa who does not suffer corruption through Satan's wiles, they surround Albion with 'kindest violence' and bear him, against his will, towards Eden, the spiritual life (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 634).

Satan's aims and his secret workings are at last exposed. Erin, one of the Daughters of Beulah, cries :

> The Visions of Eternity, by reason of narrowed perceptions,
> Are become weak Visions of Time & Space, fix'd into furrows of death,
> Till deep dissimulation is the only defence an honest man has left.
>
> O Polypus of Death! O Spectre over Europe and Asia,
> Withering the Human Form by Laws of Sacrifice for Sin!
> By Laws of Chastity & Abhorrence I am wither'd up :
> Striving to create a Heaven in which all shall be pure & holy
> In their Own Selfhoods: in Natural Selfish Chastity to banish Pity
> And dear Mutual Forgiveness, & to become One Great Satan
> Inslav'd to the most powerful Selfhood: to murder the Divine Humanity
> In whose sight all are as the dust & who chargeth his Angels with folly!
>
> (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 643)

Chastity and Virginity are Blake's terms for abstinence, a negative virtue which emasculates the personality instead of developing it. The contrasting term to these is his use of circumcision, signifying self-sacrifice. This is clearly brought out in the statement,

> Establishment of Truth depends on destruction of Falsehood continually,
> On Circumcision : not on Virginity, O Reasoners of Albion.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 655)

Satan now completely overthrows Albion and triumphs in his fall. Albion sinks a 'Rocky fragment from Eternity

hurl'd by his own Spectre, who is the reasoning power in everyman, into his own Chaos, which is the Memory between Man & Man', (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 651). Silent broodings of deadly revenge fill Albion from head to foot, while he watches his Sons 'assimilate with Luvah, bound in the bonds of Spiritual Hate from which springs Sexual Love as iron chains'. Satan mocks and taunts, assuming God-like attributes :

> I am God, O Sons of Men! I am your Rational Power!
> Am I not Bacon & Newton & Locke who teach Humility to Man,
> Who teach Doubt & Experiment & my two Wings, Voltaire, Rousseau?
> Where is that Friend of Sinners? that Rebel against my Laws
> Who teaches Belief to the Nations & an unknown Eternal Life?
> Come hither into the Desart & turn these stones to bread.
> Vain foolish Man! wilt thou believe without Experiment
> And build a World of Phantasy upon my Great Abyss,
> A World of Shapes in craving lust & devouring appetite ?
> (*Jerusalem*, III, pp. 651-2).

The Eternals now descend from Eden to sacrifice themselves for Albion. The seas, the stars, the sun, moon, heaven and earth all league themselves with the Eternals to save Albion and Jerusalem. Then the Eternals elect seven to represent them : Lucifer, Molech, Elohim, Shaddai, Pahad, Jehovah and Jesus.

Having conquered Albion, Satan divides families in cruelty and pride. Albion flies still further from the Divine Vision, but this time there is no escape, for the Plow of Nations goes over him and he is ploughed in with the dead (*Jerusalem*, III, 658). The Plow of Nations symbolises the political nemesis which follows the division of Albion's families. Man must face the consequences of his acts, both in private and public life. He can escape from them only to a limitd extent. Then he reaches the Rock of Ages, the Divine Vision itself opens to him the centre of his selfishness, though he is still a long way from salvation.

Not content with bringing political confusion among mankind, Satan enters pleasure and affection and corrupts them to the core:

> Rational Philosophy and Mathematic Demonstration
> Is divided in the intoxications of pleasure & affection.
> Two Contraries War against each other in fury & blood.
> And Los fixes them on his Anvil, incessant his blows...
> To Create a World of Generation from the World of Death.
> Dividing the Masculine & Feminine, for the comingling
> Of Albion's & Luvah's Spectres was Hermaphroditic.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 659)

The two contraries are Pity and Wrath, and the two worlds in which they appear are the world of Mercy and the world of Justice. The co-mingling of the spectres is described as hermaphroditic or self-contradictory, because Luvah is to be cast into the Wrath and Albion into the Pity. Passion will emerge unscathed through the fiery trial of Wrath, but sinful man must be redeemed through pity and mutual forgiveness, (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 674). Blake identifies Albion's Spectre with Luvah (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 662), as earlier he had described how Luvah strove to gain dominion over Albion and suceeeded (*Jerusalem*, I,p. 604). Los is forced to divide the Masculine and the Feminine, Spectre and Emanation, because they are already 'Hermaphroditic Condensations' divided by Jealousy and Pity through the 'severe War & Judgment' of Albion's Sons. (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 659).

Satan's power is still further manifested when the four Zoas 'rush around on all sides in dire ruin' while

> Furious in pride of Selfhood the terrible Spectres of Albion
> Rear their dark Rocks among the Stars of God, stupendous
> Works! A World of Generation continually Creating out of
> The Hermaphroditic Satanic World of rocky destiny.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 660)

The rocks symbolise the reasonings and 'unhewn Demonstrations' which are piled up to the stars, stretching from pole to pole, forming

> The Building of Natural Religion & its Altars Natural Morality,
> A building of eternal death, whose proportions are eternal despair.
> (*Jerusalem*, III, 678)

The rocks are also described as the 'Atomic Origins of Existence, denying Eternity by the Atheistical Epicurean Philosophy of Albion's Tree' (*Jerusalm*, III, p. 682). The significance of Albion's Tree is explained in these words:

> The Human Form began to be alter'd by the Daughters of Albion
> And the perceptions to be dissipated into the Indefinite Becoming
> A mighty Polypus nam'd Albion's Tree...
> (*Jerusalem*, III, 680)

The self-contradictory, Satanic world of rocky destiny now completely overpowers Jerusalem, so that she goes insane and 'raves upon the winds, hoarse, inarticulate'. Vala triumphs in pride of holiness

> To see Jerusalem deface her lineaments with bitter blows
> Of despair, while the Satanic Holiness triumph'd in Vala
> In a Religion of Chastity & Uncircumcised Selfishness
> Both of the Head & Heart & Loins, clos'd up in Moral Pride.
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 664)

The Divine vision comforts Jerusalem, and adds,

> Luvah must be Created
> And Vala, for I cannot leave them in the gnawing Grave
> But will prepare a way for my banished one to return.
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 669)

Satan triumphs still further when all the Daughters of Albion combine into one, Vala, and she vegetates into a 'hungry Stomach & a devouring Tongue'. In vivid language Blake describes how Satan acts through her:

> Her Hand is a Court of Justice: Her Feet two Armies in Battle:
> Storms & Pestilence in her Locks, & in her Loins Earthquake
> And Fire & the Ruin of Cities & Nations & Families & Tongues.
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 673)

The Spectre now draws Vala into his bosom, while she turns the spindle of destruction and weaves the flax of human miseries (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 674).

Not only does Satan combine all the Daughters of Albion into one, and absorb them, but he does the same with all the Sons of Albion :

> Then all the Males conjoined into One Male. & every one
> Became a ravening eating Cancer growing in the Female,
> A Polypus of Roots, of Reasoning, Doubt, Despair & Death...
> Devouring Jerusalem from every Nation of the Earth.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, III. p. 688)

With tender loathing Blake describes the exquisite tortures the Sons and Daughters of Albion inflict upon their victims and upon one another. In the process, Luvah is crucified on Albion's Tree (*Jerusalem*. III, pp. 676-691). The indulgence of Satanic cruelty, however, brings with it its own nemesis, for the persecutors share the fate of their victims :

> Hark ! & Record the terrible wonder! that the Punisher
> Mingles with his Victim's Spectre, enslaved & tormented
> To him whom he has murder'd, bound in vengeance & enmity.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 639 and III, p. 678)

The peak of Satan's triumph is reached when the ruined Zoas themselves become Spectres :

> The Four Zoas clouded rage...
> In opposition deadly, and their Wheels in poisonous
> And deadly stupor turn'd against each other, loud & fierce,
> Entering into the Reasoning Power, forsaking Imagination,
> They become Spectres...
>
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 699)

> Satan now enters the twenty-seven heavens and their churches,
> But Jesus breaking thro' the Central Zones of Death & Hell,
> Opens Eternity in Time & Space, triumphant in Mercy.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, III, p. 702)

Not content with his many victories, Satan makes a final assault on Los, the last incorruptible Zoa. He comes between Los and Enitharmon (Imagination and Inspiration), making 'their places of joy & love excrementitious, continually

building, continually destroying in Family feuds' (*Jerusalem*, IV, pp. 727-30). He next attempts to seduce Los into the indefinite through magic and occultism. He repeats the Smaragdine Table of Hermes, and builds stupendous works, but Los in 'strict severity self-subduing', destroys Satan's works.

> Thus Los alter'd his Spectre, & every Ratio of his Reason
> He alter'd time after time with dire pain and many tears
> Till he had completely divided him into a separate space.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 738)

Once Satan is isolated, he is seen to be identical with Antichrist :

> Thus was the Covering Cherub reveal'd, majestic image
> Of Selfhood, Body put off, the Antichrist accursed...
> In three nights he devour'd the rejected corse of death.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 731)

As Foster Damon explains, Antichrist is the distorted image of Christ. The latter cast off the flesh in the grave, but the Antichrist absorbed the corruptible body of physical death.[6] In spite of Satan showing himself in his true colours, the spectre Sons of Albion appropriate

> The Divine Names, seeking to vegetate the Divine Vision
> In a corporeal & ever dying Vegetation & Corruption;
> Mingling with Luvah in One, they become One Great Satan.
>
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 735)

The tyrannic, coercive powers in Satan become manifest in men who try to dominate the whole of society; forcing every individual to obey them on pain of death and torture. In order to be effective, they must persecute with passion (Luvah). Hence the 'mingling' described above.

Los, however, is the first to perceive the solution of Satanic error in the regenerated life :

> Sexes must vanish & cease
> To be when Albion arises from his dread repose, O lovely Enitharmon :
> When all their Crimes, their Punishments, their Accusations of Sin,

All their Jealousies, Revenges, Murders, hidings of Cruelty in Deceit
Appear only in the Outward Spheres of Visionary Space and Time,
In the Shadows of Possibility, by Mutual Forgiveness for evermore.
And in the Vision & in the Prophecy, that we may Forsee & Avoid
The terrors of Creation & Redemption & Judgment...
(*Jerusalem*, IV, pp. 739-40).

Forgiveness of sins with Blake is no lofty and distant charity, but a willing, though painful, self-annihilation (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 749; cf. II, p.601). Creation, redemption and judgment are the results of erroneous action in human life, and Blake gives these names to the three states of Ulro, blind error (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 618). The Accuser, the Judge and the Executioner form Satan's unholy trinity. Hence, he can only know of a distorted salvation. By accusation of sin, he creates in man a state of 'Torments, Despair; Eternal Death' (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 619). To redeem him from that state, he judges and punishes. In punishing, he executes the divinity in man. Hence the need to imitate Christ's unconditional forgiveness which is based on a willing self-sacrifice. 'Without Forgiveness of Sins, Love is Itself Eternal Death', wrote Blake, for, according to him, 'There is none that liveth and Sinneth not' (*Jerusalem*, III, pp. 673, 666).

Los again comforts his children, saying,
Fear not my Sons, this Waking Death; he is become One with me.
Behold him here! We shall not die! we shall be united with Jesus.
Will you suffer this Satan, this Body of Doubt that Seems but is Not,
To occupy the very threshold of Eternal Life? If Bacon, Newton, Locke
Deny a Conscience in Man & the Communion of Saints & Angels,
Contemning the Divine Vision & Fruition, Worshipping the Deus

> Of the Heathen, The God of This World, & the Goddess Nature,
> Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Druid Dragon & hidden Harlot,
> Is it not the Signal of the Morning which was told to us in the Beginning?
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, pp. 741-2)

The final dissolution of Satan and all he stands for takes place when Albion rises from his dread repose and meets his Saviour. He realises that Satan is his own cruel and deceitful selfhood which works against the Divine Vision. Albion's love for Jesus is not enough to annihilate the Selfhood. That act requires the sacrifice of the Divinity itself. Jesus says :

> Fear not Albion : unless I die thou canst not live:
> But if I die I shall rise again & thou with me.
> This is friendship & Brotherhood : without it Man is Not.
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 745)

> Albion stood in terror, not for himself, but for his Friend
> Divine; & Self was lost in the contemplation of faith
> And wonder at the Divine Mercy...
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 746)

In haste Albion calls upon his friends to combat Eternal Death, and without a thought, flings himself into the furnaces of affliction.

> All was a Vision, all a Dream : the Furnaces became
> Fountains of Living Waters flowing from the Humanity Divine!
> (*Jerusalem*, IV, p. 746)

The symbol is now fully rounded. In *Jerusalem*, Blake deals with every aspect of error. He starts by making error aware of its own inherent contradiction and eventual doom. He then shows how Satan attacks man and subjects him to one delusion after another, through the temptations of doubt, despair and shame. Satan conquers man and his spiritual freedom (Albion and Jerusalem), divides families in cruelty and pride, corrupts the affections, brings chaos into church and state, ruins man's highest energies (the four Zoas) and finally, reveals himself to be what he is, the Antichrist.

The first step towards the removal of Satanic error is for man to realise that Satan is his own deceitful Selfhood which works against the Divine Vision. Yet neither this realisation, nor his love for Jesus will enable him to eradicate the self-righteousness in which error flourishes. Only the self-sacrifice of the Divine Vision itself can achieve this result. Believing as he did that the glory of Christianity is to conquer by forgiveness, Blake is consistent throughout in his treatment of error and its annihilation.

The above critical analysis of Blake's history of error, from its rise to its fall, is powerless to convey the subtlety with which the symbol works in the elaborate setting of the Prophetic Books. Nor do the bleak, cut and dried, definitions of his mythological characters help to transmit the richness of their content. This can only be savoured by reading the originals as he meant them to be read. By combining word and image, Blake compels the reader to a passionate appropriation of the truth. This is his prime concern in all his works.

> O search & see : turn your eyes upward: open O thou World
> Of Love & Harmony in Man : expand thy ever lovely Gates!
> (*Jerusalem*, II, p. 636)

New Delhi

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A. A. Ansari

THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY IN *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*

The presence of tonal ambiguities is pervasive both in the characters and the matrix of circumstances in which they are involved in *Troilus and Cressida*. In it are focalized the themes of honour and love and a complex image of their intertwining set up in terms of the antithetical characters. The play provides evidence of a close correspondence between its conceptual framework and the dramatic design relevant to it. Concurrently, it also presents two divergent orders of experience or modes of civilization—the Trojan and the Greek. The Trojans are, by and large, creatures of the moment and are passionate, volatile and idealistic; the Greeks, on the contrary, are level-headed, restrained but also reduced to a state of inertia by being 'crammed' with reason and expediency. That the members of both the camps are subjected to a dispassionate, critical scrutiny by Shakespeare is evident from the exposure of their animating impulses in what goes on in the Greek senate and the Council in Troy. The calculated pragmatism of the Greeks and the immediacy of the Trojans are shown to be equally flawed, and only Ulysess and Hector in their own way seem to emerge as representatives of the norm of sanity and equipoise. Over the crucial issue of the legendary Helen, who had been raped by Paris and retained by the Trojans for an old aunt of theirs, the behaviour of the Trojans is motivated by 'pleasure' and that of the Greeks by 'revenge'. Alongside this is glimpsed the crescendo of the emotional life of Troilus and Cressida leading on to the eventual return of the latter to the Greeks aud her ignomi-

nous surrender to Diomed. This theme grows out of and is assimilated with the larger theme of war and state diplomacy between the two rival powers. The subtlety, the indeterminacy, the fatal and seductive charm of Cressida's responses, and the intricate web of illusions in which Troilus is doomed to be entangled constitute the core of the tragic dilemma in the play.

The sense of being in a labyrinth characterises the play's action as a totality and even the relationship between Troilus and Cressida partakes of it in a large measure. Una Ellis-Fermor's view that 'an implacable assertion of chaos as the ultimate fact of being'[1] is the indelible impression about *Troilus and Cressida* has much to support it and this chaos has been formalised through the structuring of experience in the body of the play. Its explicit, theoretical statement is to be found in Ulysses's famous Degree speech that is concluded thus:

> Then everything includes itself in power,
> Power into will, will into appetite;
> And appetite, an universal wolf,
> So doubly seconded with will and power,
> Must make perforce an universal prey,
> And last eat up himself.[2]
>
> (I, iii, 119-23)

The coalescence of power, will and appetite prepares the ground for the ultimate and precipitate descent into irretrievable chaos—the state of savagery as visualized by Hobbes. With the individual as the specific point of reference chaos may seem to result from a lack of coordination between thought and action, passion and judgment, impulse and control, and this fact is concretized thus:

> That 'twixt his mental and his active parts
> Kingdom'd Achilles in commotion rages
> And batters down himself:
>
> (I, iii, 183-5)

This is the application of the orthodox Elizabethan political doctrine to the microcosm which eventuates into complete disintegration. Similarly, when Troilus formulates his query early in the play thus:

> Tell me, Apollo, for thy Daphne's love,
> What Cressid is, what Pandar, and what we?
> Her bed is India; there she lies, a pearl:
> Between our Ilium and where she resides,
> Let it be call'd the wild and wandering flood;
>
> (I, ii, 105-9)

he discloses this sense of the chaotic (or stressed dubiety), the sense of confusion and perplexity in regard to the identity of Cressida and his own relationship with her. By exploiting the myth of Apollo and Daphne (and here he betrays his poetic impulses) the shifting area of contact between them is being underlined. In 'the wild and wandering flood' lying between 'our Ilium and where she resides' is evoked not only the image of excited feelings but also of the chaos born out of the fact of inaccessibility. The total impact of these lines is that Troilus seems to be lost in the sea of speculation and is unable to say precisely at what point their two identities are likely to intersect each other. Earlier he made this ejaculation:

> Each Trojan that is master of his heart,
> Let him to field; Troilus alas! hath none.
>
> (I.i, 4-5)

This may be construed a piece of self-dramatization but it is nonetheless true that Troilus is the divided image. He has a rather uncertain grasp over the realities of the situation and he is pretty unsure as to where his predilections will lead him. He is fallen into a state of dizzy bewilderment, is mercurial and unstable and his indentity suffers from lack of cohesiveness.

Troilus has a strong tendency towards dispersion and 'seems to be reaching desperately for some kind of centre,

though beset costantly by the fear that he will derive from love not self-possession but self-loss'.[3] This basic anxiety and this sense of self-loss taints the kinesis that he so amply demonstrates and epitomizes. Undoubtedly he feels irresistibly drawn towards Cressida so much so that he is avid of being merged with her completely. But surprisingly, however, this ardent hankering after mergence also makes him realize simultaneously that he is a free human agent—a self-contained as well as a distinct though fragmented personality. This is more or less anticipated by Pandarus when he talks of him in his usual derisive and scathing tones but without being aware of their full and far-reaching implications:

> Cres. 'Tis just to each of them; he is himself.
> Pan. Himself! Alas! poor Troilus. I would he were.
> Cres. So he is.
> Pan. Condition, I had gone bare-foot to India.
> Cres. He is not Hector.
> Pan. Himself, no, he's not himself: would a' were himself!
> (I, ii, 74-81)

Here Cressida and Pandarus seem to be arguing at cross-purposes. She is engaged in the effort to distinguish between Troilus and Hector in the sense of their being two distinct personalities. But for Pandarus this is more or less pointless, for he is wholly persuaded of the fact that Troilus, whether a discrete entity or not, is not an entire being in himself. There is division at the heart of his existence and there is precious little chance of its being healed up.

It was hinted at earlier that one of the problems posed in the play relates to the question whether Helen, described in a Marlovian hyperbole and to whom Paris had lost his heart, should be returned to Sparta's king, Menelaus, she lawfully belonged to. Hector and Troilus, both Trojans, hold diametrically opposite views on the matter. Apart from other arguments—arguments based on the 'moral laws of nature and of nations'—invoked and elaborated by him later, Hector begins by upholding that Helen is not worth the stakes

involved in retaining her. This is, however, controverted by Troilus and this initiates a vital and tricky debate which is also of primary significance:

Hec. Brother, she is not worth what she doth cost
The holding.
Tro. What is aught but as 'tis valued?
Hec. But value dwells not in particular will;
It holds his estimate and dignity
As well wherein 'tis precious of itself
As in the prizer. 'Tis mad idolatory
To make the service greater than the god;
And the will dotes that is inclinable
To what infectiously itself affects,
Without some image of the affected merit.
Tro. I take today a wife, and my election
Is led on in the conduct of my will;
My will enkindled by mine eyes and ears,
Two traded pilots 'twixt the dangerous shores
Of will and judgment. How may I avoid,
Although my will distaste what it elected,
The wife I chose? there can be no evasion
To blench from this and to stand firm by honour.
(II, ii, 51-68)

The passage has the air of a disquisition, conducted adroitly and with a sense of urgency, and it has a close bearing upon the philosophical issues raised in the play. What Hector and Troilus are anxious about is to crystallize their views regarding 'Value': whereas for Hector it has an objective status and is determined externally, Troilus sponsors the notion of relative and asessed value. 'Honour', by which the latter swears, is an important constituent in the spectrum of values prescribed by the code of chivalry and implies a firmness of commitment. Hector believes in the body of the law or principles of social and political conduct that have an element of rigidity about them. Such a law as envisioned by him contains its validity and warrant within itself and may in that sense be regarded autonomous. For Troilus, on the contrary, value is created by what 'the parti-

cular will'—the complex of subjective experiences and criteria of judgment—pours into it. For Hector, the appraiser ('the prizer') and the object of appraisal ('the service') are almost identifiable, and the wholly personal evaluation is no better than 'mad idolatory', and the 'will', without incorporating into itself some 'image of the attested merit' grows unhealthy and infectious and becomes, therefore, undependable. Troilus's contention that the 'eyes' and 'ears' act as a mediator or pilot between 'will' and 'judgment' does not seem to be happily phrased, because 'will' in the sense of passion and physical or sexual appetite—its commom enough connotation in Shakespeare is hardly distinguishable from 'eyes' and 'ears'—the inlets of the data of sense experience. It may, therefore, be more adequate to maintain that judgment arbitrates between the senses and the conative faculties of man. What Troilus seems to insist upon is that subjective assessment is the only criterion of value that may be legitimately trusted. And once made it entails an irrevocableness of action that contributes towards the achievement of stability. 'Honour' is a mere husk or an empty abstraction if it is dissociated from the act of human apperception. It is, therefore, obvious that Hector, who later on performs a somersault in the sense of abandoning his firmly held position and identifying himself completely with the viewpoint of Troilus and Paris, assumes here a very objective stance. Troilus, on the contrary, takes a subjectivist attitude because for him 'value' is projected by the human vision and has an element of inherence about it.

In a brief but highly significant soliloquy Troilus unburdens himself thus:

> I am giddy, expectation whirls me round.
> The imaginary relish is so sweet
> That it enchants my sense. What will it be
> When that the watery palate tastes indeed
> Love's thrice reputed nectar? death, I fear me,
> Sounding destruction, or some joy too fine,

> Too subtle-potent, tun'd too sharp in sweetness
> For the capacity of my ruder powers :
> I fear it much; and I do fear besides
> That I shall lose distinction in my joys;
>
> (III, iii, 17-26)

This is the poetry of anticipation and reflects the same kind of subjectivism as is evidenced by his cogitations on 'Value'. It also betrays a preoccupation with possibility and is marked by hurried and fevered overtones. There is as well an emphasis on the keenness of physical sensations, on tasting 'love's thrice-reputed nectar' through the palate. The imaginary relish is deeply soaked in sweetness and seems to be in excess of what his raw, uncultivated powers can properly respond to and assimilate. What is even more worth attention is the sheer menacing power of this heightened emotionality or ecstasy and his incapacity to distinguish these pell-mell joys the one from the other. Giddiness or 'an intolerable anxiety' is what characterises the turmoil into which he has been flung. Later, in conversation with Cressida, he speaks to the following effect: 'This is the monstruosity of love, lady, that the will is infinite and the execution confined; that the desire is boundless, and the act a slave to limit.' (III, ii, 85-8). Here the infinity of love and the frustrating barriers that are interposed between the lover and the object of his adoration are visualized as two distant poles. Or in a wider perspective, it is the discrepancy between the ideal and the fact that is being glanced at. But that 'the will is infinite' and 'the desire is boundless' enforces the recognition of the extensive reach of the human potential. Man's volition is indeed hedged in by all kinds of obstructions but the existence of this potential is nevertheless undeniable. The tenuous relation between this statement and the earlier colloquy between Hector and Troilus lies in the fact that the subjective assessment is the ultimate source of 'Value'.

For purposes of juxtaposition it would be intriguing to

keep spotlit in mind the following lines utterd by Cressida:

> I have a kind of self resides with you;
> But an unkind self, that itself will leave,
> To be another's fool
>
> (III, ii, 158-60)

Though preceded by 'Prince Troilus, I have loved you night and day/For many weary months' (III, ii, 124-5), the lines quoted above sound pretty disingenuous, for Cressida is not a divided self in the same sense as Troilus: it is a brazen lie thrown in the face of Troilus merely to hoodwink him. In other words, the two halves of her self—the one that she pretends to leave with Troilus and the other that will lend itself to be another's fool—are not self-subsistent but fabricated on purpose to deceive Troilus. This piece of sophistry also smacks of dramatic irony the full force of which explodes only in the last Act of the play. As against this may be placed the following spontaneous articulation by Troilus:

> I am as true as truth's simplicity,
> And simpler than the infancy of truth.
>
> (III, ii, 181-2)

And he adds significantly:

> True swains in love shall in the world to come
> Approve their truths by Troilus...
> Yet, after all comparisons of truth,
> As truth's authentic author to be cited,
> As true as Troilus shall crown up the verse
> And sanctify thier numbers...
>
> (III, ii, 185-94)

In a later context, in response to Cressida's query : 'My lord, will you be true?' Troilus repeats his earlier stance with an extra measure of emphasis :

> Who, I? alas! it is my vice, my fault:
> While others fish with craft for great opinion,
> I with greater truth catch mere simplicity;
>
> (IV, iv, 102-4)

Even making allowance for a bit of swagger (Troilus regards

himself the grand exemplar of truth), all these assertions put together bring out his genuine concern with the notion of authenticity. The reiteration of the concept of truth is both revelatory and significant. 'Truth' and 'simplicity' may be treated as the means through which the bonds of authenticity have to be forged. To all intents and purposes 'truth' seems to be Troilus's ideal and it is to be achieved by undergoing a radical conversion through anguish and leading on to the assumption of freedom. To 'catch mere simplicity with greater truth' is tantamount to the choice of freedom as against determinism and of moral responsibility which also enables one to accept one's past as part of facticity and transcend it by looking up to possibility. It is quite legitimate to surmise that the line 'while others fish with craft for great opinion' contains a tangential reference to Hector who is polarized with Troilus. One may thus be hard put to agree with Mr Bayley when he comments: 'The "truth" of Troilus goes by default in such a play : it is on the division of Cressida that Shakespeare concentrated.'[4] Not the division of Cressida as such but as it is internalized by Troilus himself as will become apparent later. For Troilus honour, fidelity (or truth) and love are inextricably bound together and this complex structure of values (also enjoined by the chivalrous ideal) that Troilus conforms and adheres to has been damaged by 'the envious and calumniating time'. The frustration generated in him derives partly from the action of time and partly from being forced to reading facticity into transcendence. What he is constantly required to do is to realize the duality between being in the world and being in the midst of the world. The simplicity, to the achievement of which Troilus declares himself to be dedicated, is equivalent to a spontaneous recognition of the opposite poles of the past to which one wishes to cling and of the open future towards which one has to move in one's flight of transcendence. Hence when L. C. Knights asserts that 'it is Troilus's subjectivism that commits him to a world of time, appearance, and

what M. Fluchere calls "an intolerable anxiety",[5] one is tempted to make the counter suggestion that it is precisely this attitude of subjectivism that releases Troilus from the world of appearances and the despotism of time. It might be added that when Cressida, in a large sweep of rhetorical gesture, begins by saying :

> If I be false, or swerve a hair from truth,
> When time is old and hath forgot itself,
> When water-drops hath worn the stones of Troy
> And blind oblivion swallow'd cities up,
> And mighty states characterless are grated
> To dusty noting, yet let memory,
> From false to false, among false maids in love,
> Upbraid my falsehood.
>
> (III, iii, 196-203)

and reaches the climactic point to the following effect :

> Yet let them say, to stick the heart of falsehood
> 'As false as Cressid'.
>
> (III, iii, 207-8)

it strikes an ominous note in view of the devouring jaw of destruction to which all human achivements fall a prey. The falsehood she charges herself with is more or less interchangeable with a kind of inauthenticity or 'wither'd truth' as Troilus puts it succinctly. Unlike Troilus she seems to be conscious only of facticity and is incapable of walking over into the region of transcendence and thus attaining some degree of moral responsibility or freedom.

Reference was made earlier to the fact that Hector, though arguing all along to the contrary, came round to the seemingly fallacious logic of Troilus and Paris that Helen should not be returned to the Greeks. But the Greeks decided, with a free consensus and at the instance of Calchas, that Antenor was to be handed over to the Trojans as a bargain counter and that Diomed should take charge of Cressida on their behalf and bring her back to the Greek camp. To Troilus this meant, of course, that all his hopes of the

consummation of his tremulous, fevered, and ecstatic love for Cressida were to be wrecked totally after he had enjoyed only a brief and flickering moment of felicity with her. When the decision is communicated to them and Cressida expresses her scepticism by saying: 'And is it true that I must go from Troy?' Troilus replies abruptly but with a sense of finality': 'From Troy and Troilus'. And in sheer precipitance comes this explosion of passion :

> And suddenly; where injury of chance
> Puts back leave-taking, justles roughly by
> All time of pause, rudely beguiles our lips
> Of all rejoindure, forcibly prevents
> Our lock'd embrasures, strangles our dear vows
> Even in the birth of our own labouring breath.
> We too, that with so many thousand sights
> Did buy each other, must poorly sell our-selves
> With the rude brevity and discharge of one.
>
> (IV, iv, 33-41)

The passage registers the shock of painful surprise, a pounding of heart, an inner wrenching that one may find it impossible to recover from. All the verb forms employed here like 'puts back', 'justles roughly by',' rudely beguiles', 'forcibly prevents' and 'strangles' betray the sense of jolt, of the complete blockage of energy. Phrases like 'injury of chance' at the beginning and 'the rude brevity and discharge' towards the close are also matched with each other and reflect the ceaseless and continuing violence done to their inmost selves. For till this moment Troilus and Cressida were the sole dwellers in this sanctuary of love. But the culminating point of tragic experience occurs when a little later Troilus obtains an unmistakable oracular proof of Cressida's perfidy, for she capitulates before Diomed unashamedly. The opening of V, ii in which Troilus's impetuosity is held in check by Ulysses when the former was about to burst forth is almost breath-taking. Troilus watches Cressida stroking the cheek of Diomed and when Ulysses essays admonishingly, 'Come, come', Troilus is made to reply in a magnificently stoic mood:

Nay, stay: by Jove, I will not speak a word :
There is between my will and all offences
A guard of patience: stay a little while.

(V. ii. 48-50)

In fact most of the time that Cressida and Diomed are together and exchanging the intimacies and softnesses of love Troilus is both torn asunder by an excruciating mental torture and also exercising upon himslf a kind of Jobean patience. And this is analogous to the need for 'Patience' felt by King Lear in the moment of his exasperation of disillusionment with both Goneril and Regan when he pathetically realized that he was on the brink of utter collapse. When both the paramours leave and Ulysses inquires: 'Why stay we then?' Troilus comes out with the heart-rending reply thus:

But if I tell how these did co-act,
Shall I not lie in publishing a truth?
Sith yet there is a credence in my heart,
An esperance so obstinately strong,
That doth invert the attest of eyes and ears,
As if those organs had deceptious functions,
Created only to calumniate;
Was Cressid here?

(V. ii. 114-21)

Truth here connotes no more than a factual statement that is relevant within a particular context—a fact that evokes here a strong sense of revulsion. Further, 'eyes' and 'ears'—'the two traded pilots between the dangerous shores of will and judgement'—whose mediation could be trusted earlier seem now to be degraded to 'organs' with 'deceptious functions' because Troilus, with the desperate and compulsive need to continue to hold fast to his own image of Cressida, would not accept their testimony, however incontrovertible it might appear. The emotional flurry in which he seems to be involved puts him in such grave uncertainty that he would and yet would not believe in the lucidity of his own sense-preceptions. When in reply to his own query : 'Was Cressida here?'

Troilus says 'She was not, sure', and is contradicted firmly by Ulysses's 'Most sure, she was', he asserts emphatically: 'Why, my negation hath no taste of madness'. Thus it becomes plain that Troilus has already allowed Cressida to be carved into two distinct and mutually exclusive images. Ulysses counters him by saying, with a degree of naivety and with the presistent, unconscious refusal to fathom the depths of Troilus's psyche : 'Nor mine, my lord: Cressida was here but now.' Troilus is thus left with no option but to suggest that in case Ulysses insisted upon identifying her as the real Cressida one had better eschew measuring the whole of womankind in general by her model :

> Let it not be believe'd for womanhood!
> Think we had mothers; do not give advantage
> To stubborn critics, apt, without a theme,
> For depravation, to square the general sex
> By Cressid's rule: rather think this not Cressid.
>
> (V, ii, 125-9)

Though deceptively simple the phrase 'think we had mothers' comes upon us invested with an incalculable load of misery. The image of Cressida that Troilus has been nestling in his heart for so long has suffered not only obscuration but also defilement. But Ulysses, because of his matter-of-factness and insensibility, is incapable of grasping this fact. And the same is true of the sharp-tongued, scurrilous and flippant Thersites when he says about Troilus :

> Will he swagger himself out on's own eyes?
>
> (V.ii,132)

He is not inclined to give Troilus the credit for looking at things with more than Blake's single, perverted vision, and this provokes Troilus to make an extremely ambivalent statement thus :

> This she? no; this is Diomed's Cressida.
> If beauty have a soul, this is not she;
> If souls guide vows, if vows be sanctimonies,
> If sanctimony be the gods' delight,

If there be rule in unity itself,
This is not she. O madness of discourse,
That cause sets up with and against thyself;
Bi-fold authority! where reason can revolt
Without perdition, and loss assume all reason
Without revolt: this is, and is not, Cressida.
Within my soul there doth conduce a fight
Of this strange nature that a thing inseparate
Divides more wider than the sky and earth;
And yet the spacious breadth of this division
Admits no orifice for a point as subtle
As Ariachne's broken woof to enter.
Instance, O instance! strong as Pluto's gates;
Cressid is mine, tied with the bonds of heaven:
Instance, O instance! strong as heaven itself;
The bonds of heaven are slipp'd, dissolv'd, and loos'd;
And with another knot, five-finger-tied,
The fractions of her faith, orts of her love,
The fragments, scraps, the bits and greasy reliques
Of her o'er-eaten faith, are bound to Diomed.

(V, ii, 133-56)

The whole passage reflects the psychosis of the dazed man, caught within the meshes of his own idealism and tugging at them in the effort to achieve an inner poise if such a poise is at all within his reach. The shiftings and slitherings of Cressida's identity are the focus of critical attention here. Apart from betraying the nightmare moment of experience the divergent promptings of instinct and the precarious positions they lead on to are of the essence of this disturbing utterance. Troilus begins with the assumption: 'This is Diomed's Cressida', for she belies his own image of her, and the sharp discrepancy between the two images is lascerating his heart. His own image of her rested on the fiction that beauty like that of Cressida is the hypostasis of a pure soul. That fiction now stands broken and hence the Subjunctive is replaced by what really obtains within his own experiential universe. His idealism receives a rebuff and he, therefore, reaches the shattering conclusion that 'This is not she': that is, her former identity with which

Troilus has been familiar in the past has now come to grief. The sense of disjunction pertaining to her can be explained away by an exercise of logic. But the findings of logic, however irrefragable the processes pursued by it, are often specious and misleading. Opposed to reason and transcending it, as a mode of cognition, is the non-logical apprehension, and following its lead Troilus feels firmly persuaded that the personal identity of Cressida—she being 'the heart of darkness' as she herself puts it—has now suffered a wider breach than what separates the sky and the earth. And yet such is the ambivalence of the imaginative perception that his mind reverts to the belief that the breach or opening is after all not very comprehensive. The 'bi-fold authority' is synonymous with the power of the soul which renders possible the coexistence of the deductions of logic and the epiphanies of the poetic intuition. Or in other words, it is this power which enables him to wrest from the seeming chaos of opposed possibilities the real existence of both halves of the single identity of Cressida—the one being the product of reason and the other which is the embodiment of 'Value' or of subjective evaluation.

Two contrary movements again start in Troilus's subconscious mind. Drawing for evidence upon the body of experience accumulated in the past—experience whose credibility cannot be questioned at will—makes Troilus believe that Cressida still belongs to him. There is a suggestion of muscular strength in the image evoked by Pluto's gates, and this image offers a kind of psychological support for one's latent wishful thinking. But the testimony of 'eyes' and 'ears'—no less compelling and persuasive—drives home the conviction that she is not his but has been appropriated by Diomed. This latter agonizing conclusion that cuts across his heart like a sharp blade follows inevitably the premise that 'the bonds of heaven', like filaments of steel, with which Cressida seemed to be tied to him, have now worn out and dissolved. There is thus a tension generated by the flesh

and blood Cressida—Diomed's or anybody's darling on the one hand, and the one whom his own imagination had manufactured on the other. The chivalrous values that once inspired Troilus who says about himself:

> never did young man fancy
> With so eternal and so fix'd a soul.
>
> (V. iii, 161-2)

have now become corrupted and denuded of their significance: the pure breath of heaven is grown infectious, putrefying and sickening. For Troilus the only course now left is to outgrow the sphere of idealistic love, exercise an active control over affairs in the contingent world and identify himself thoroughly with the Trojan cause. The shift from pure love to blind and animal harted is underlined thus:

> Hark, Greek, as much as I do Cressid love,
> So much by weight hate I her Diomed;
>
> (V. iii, 163-4)

These two are the orbits in which Troilus seems to be moving in the course of the play, and this accounts for his lack of stability.

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Horst Oppel

THE PHENOMENON OF ACCELERATION IN *KING LEAR*

The structure of time in *King Lear* is of a special nature for which there is scarcely an equivalent in Shakespeare's other plays. As previous research has already indicated, everything that happens in this tragedy 'precipitates the action at such a pace that there is little or no time for afterthoughts'.[1] The breathtaking course of events is part of the basic concept of the entire work.

Lear, who is incapable of bridling his 'hideous rashness' (I, i, 151)[2], condemns Cordelia and Kent without taking the time to consider the warning inherent in their words. After his youngest daughter disappoints him, he is overtly hasty to cast aside his original, well-considered plan for the division of his kingdom and to embark on a new course of action without consulting his advisers. The Gloucester subplot is introduced under the same omen of exaggerated haste. Gloucester does not take time to investigate the accusations raised against Edgar and promptly makes a rash decision. After destiny has run its course, he clings to the single thought of reaching Dover as quickly as possible. Even after he has been blinded, his zeal to reach his destination is not lessened. In a brief space of time Goneril and Regan resolve to limit their father's power, 'We must do something, and i' th' heat' (I, i, 308). Just before this Goneril had cautioned her sister: 'Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both' (I, i, 283-84). After being insulted by Goneril Lear immediately turns to his second daughter for solace. He even sends a messenger ahead, despite the fact that he himself sets

forth in his journey without delay. Goneril and Albany, too, unhesitantly pursue a common purpose and they in turn also place their trust in the swiftness of a messenger, even though they set out very shortly after him.

After the stormy introduction, the speed of events continues to be intensified and rapidly encompasses all characters and events. For instance, taking the distance involved into consideration, the news of the impending French invasion arrives so quickly that it defies credibility. All events triggered by this news follow in rapid succession. There is not even enough time remaining for the description of the final battle. This is quite a contrast to the detailed development of battle themes, defiant speeches and individual encounters which Shakespeare's histories or *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar* permit. There is no time for such things in *King Lear*.

Edmund is so caught up in the flurry of events that he is unable to decide whether it is Goneril or Regan who means more to him. The order to liquidate Lear and Cordelia is again given hastily, although it is not unpremeditated. Albany is in such a hurry to settle his political affairs which he feels to be so urgent that he forgets about Lear and Cordelia. Kent is so busy with his secret plans (IV, iii, 52-53 and IV, vii, 9), that he cannot find time for the most obvious matters—even if we are never told what these matters actually consist of and what this 'intent' is. At the end he has no time left to follow through on Albany's assignment to take over the governmental duties together with Edgar. Even minor characters such as the officious Oswald never come to rest; we remember them as constantly rushing. It is not accidental that Oswald dies while on extremely pressing official business.

The phenomenon of acceleration is familiar to us through the Christian doctrine which views the course of history as the history of salvation. According to Ernst Benz,[3] the Christian concept assumes that not man rules history and

accelerates developments himself, but God alone, as the creator and preserver, can lengthen or shorten the span of time according to His own will. Christian belief is based upon the conviction that world history is being rapidly propelled toward its end and its fulfilment, namely the longed-for redemption at the irrevocable Last Judgment. This explains why central events of salvation in the New Testament are marked by a strange haste. Everything that happens is understood to proclaim the dawning of a new era. Numerous testimonies in the gospels of the apostles herald the speed with which something must be done while there is still time. Precise signals are given in the Apocalypse which mark the ever shortening span of time and indicate the ever increasing affliction and ever nearing Hour of Judgment and Salvation. Even God's antagonist is aware of the crush of time : 'for the devil...knoweth that he hath but a short time' (*Revelation* XIII, 12). He is so zealous that the ordeal of the final days threatens to suffocate and lame even the Chosen Ones (*Matth.* XXIV, 21; *Mark* XIII, 20). Martyrs who suffer the total wrath of the devil pray to God not to postpone the final judgment any longer. They call out to Him 'with a loud voice' (*Revelation* VI, 10) to destroy their enemies, who are also His enemies, as quickly as possible.

The basic concept of the Christian doctrine of history, in which the phenomenon of acceleration plays such a decisive role, helped to shape the Protestant theological history from the very beginning. This in turn is one of the fundamental aspects of Elizabethan drama. Jacobus Acontius is one of the men who fostered these ideas. Acontius was active in Milan, Switzerland, Strassbourg and finally in England, where he acquired fame as the king's engineer for fortifications. In his treatise on the *Stratagemata Satanae* (1565) he gives an exact description of the offensive and defensive tactics used in the continuous opposition between God and Satan, whereby not only the expediency of the measures, but also an estimation of the brief time

available to carry them out is considered.

Elizabethan dramatists were already familiar with the constellation of a war between good and evil powers over *humanum genus* in the tradition of medieval drama. The *Castle of Perseverance* (c. 1425) offers the typical example of allegorized morality : the strategies of the three enemies of mankind—Mundus, Belyal and Caro—are treated in such detail and with such burlesque effects that the classification of the protagonists as virtuous or vice-ridden is almost secondary. The view that matters of conscience are decided on the battlefield of the soul is an accepted part of Elizabethan thought. As Macbeth knows (I. vii, 9), once 'bloody instructions' have been issued, they precipitate a fight to the finish. In his early works Shakespeare already makes metaphorical use of 'heroic warfare' to depict the internal strife in which a character is involved. It is said of Tarquin after he has completed his infamous deed, 'his soul's fair temple is defaced;/To whose weak ruins muster troops of cares' (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 719-20). These 'troops of cares' are echoed in Macbeth's reference to 'troops of friends'.

All earthly events occur within a context of too little time. Hamlet takes this into consideration when he observes that we have access to a 'long life' (III, i, 69) only after death. Perhaps the often quoted verses in Hamlet's soliloquy where he speaks of 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' and deliberates taking 'arms against a sea of troubles' (III, i, 58-59) can be understood in the above mentioned context. It is a tantalizing proposition in any case to imagine that Hamlet, who, according to the stage directions in the First Quarto, appears 'pouring upon a book', could have *Stratagemata Satanae* still fresh in his mind (from his previous reading) and now have taken to reading perhaps Cardano's *Comforte* (1576), which would teach him how best to handle the 'discommodities of life' (Cardano). In his monologue Hamlet seemingly converts the theoretical argumentation into metaphorical concepts.

The statement that in contrast to the 'long life' after death man must resign himself to the brief time alotted to him in life is supported by Richard Hooker in several of his works. He is convinced that '...the time of man is a man's continuance from the instant of his first breath till the instant of his last gasp'.[4] This context concurs with the passage ('I will preach thee') in which Lear counsels the abased Gloucester 'we came crying hither' (IV, vi, 180). Edgar confirms this: 'Men must endure/Their going hence even as their coming hither' (V, vii, 9-10). The latitude permitted man is so limited that he can have only fleeting experiences and is hardly allowed time to master them fully. Over and over again in the metaphorical language of the Elizabethan poets the concept of the brevity of life is connected with the warning of the danger of postponement.[5]

The disquieting aspect about *King Lear* is the way this play takes up the theme of acceleration and thereby touches upon concepts within the realm of Protestant theological history, but at the same time radically reverses all Christian concepts related to the promised end with trust in a blissful Second Coming. In accordance with this reversal all the characters in *King Lear* seemingly view their own era as the last one. Thus Edgar and Albany find it difficult in the end to set great store by the future, despite their dutiful willingness to assume the regency.[6] It is not as if they were awaiting the great day of reckoning in the Christian sense. On the contrary, it seems as if the great days were already past. The powerless gestures of those standing beside the unfortunate father, who is holding his murdered daughter in his arms, remind us of Judgment Day. Kent's uneasy question, 'Is this the promis'd end?' already indicates the relentless anxiety that not the slightest sign of salvation is visible. Edgar enlarges this matter by his question: 'Or image of that horror?' That can only mean that the horrors prophesied for the Day of Judgment will await them, but nothing will remain of the salvation for the Just in this

world. All Albany can do is to ask the heavens to plummet down and obliterate the unbearable sight: 'Fall and cease'. Whereas the Christian doctrine of acceleration fosters the impression that God cannot wait to receive man into His grace, the opposite seems to hold true in *King Lear*: the gods seem to be taking more time before interceding in earthly affairs than man can endure.

We are touching a central issue when we ask if the basic character of *King Lear* is heathen or Christian. Without doubt there are a number of parallels in biblical passages, but this does not simplify the question of the primary intent of the tragedy.[7] If there is one single motif in Shakespeare's tragedy compatible with the biblical ethos, it is the quality of human blindness and its healing by true vision. *John* IX, 39 lets the Son of God proclaim: 'For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind'. No further explanations are necessary regarding the extraordinary emphasis placed on the 'sight pattern' in *King Lear*.[8] It is, however, questionable whether this is adequate to justify interpreting the tragedy as 'a Christian drama'.[9] One could argue that Shakespeare introduces higher powers in order to give his characters more profile. This is Theodore Spencer's understanding when he states: 'In fact Shakespeare seems in this play deliberately to use the way a man thinks of the gods as an indication of character'.[10] But this does not disprove the paradox William Empson points out: 'Every time Lear prays to the gods, or anyone else prays on his behalf, there are bad effects immediately'.[11] Divergent opinions about the 'Christian' or 'heathen' nature of *King Lear* justify the attempt to determine if the phenomenon of acceleration, which greatly influences the structure of the tragedy, throws more light upon the dramatist's intentions.

It should not be forgotten that the phenomenon of acceleration in biblical contexts is developed within certain forms and concepts which are actively involved in accelera-

tion: the form of vision (those filled with the Holy Spirit see the future realized in the present), the idea of acceleration as protection against temptation, and the belief in pilgrimage (believers hurry toward the goal of perfection in order to reach the place where their hopes will be fulfilled in time). These three concepts all appear in altered context in *King Lear*. The range of vision stretches from the Fool's prophecies to Lear's proclamation of the idea of justice and equality of all men who are unaffected by the shortcomings of human nature and worldly institutions. But these visions are marked by the signs of folly and bewilderment: they do not indicate the Second Coming as already having been revealed, but expose present calamities as irreversible and unchanging parts of human nature. The conception of asceticism is treated in the same way. Edgar as Poor Tom pretends to be 'one that slept in the contriving of lust, and wak'd to do it' (III, iv, 90-91) in order to fictively depict the sinfulness of his past life and the causes for his present abasement. Lear, too, wallows in his revulsion for the passion that consumes all living beings, but more justifiably than Edgar. Thereby Lear comes to terms with his own past, which was probably not exempt from temptations of the flesh. However, neither Lear nor Edgar view asceticism as the way to prepare themselves for the approaching fulfilment in the realm of God, where all carnal desires are permanently overcome. They also do not undertake their journey in order to hurry toward perfection. But, they are in continual motion, as are all the characters in *King Lear*, and are directed toward a specific goal: all are rushing to Dover.

This is one of the strange characteristics of this tragedy which makes it difficult to comprehend and allows for various interpretations. All we know for sure is that all the characters, even the blinded Gloucester, are striving to reach this place as if the security they all painfully lack were awaiting them there. Only the rebels have substan-

tial reasons to expect their success or failure to be decided at Dover. It is disturbing, then, that all the other characters steadfastly pursue this same goal and an explanation is called for. A correlation to Christian ideas is a possible explanation, but it is, of course, not completely convincing. Roy W. Battenhouse proposes the theory that 'all the characters in the play find themselves moving eastward, as if toward a place and moment of final judgement and accounting'.[12] But the Christian anticipation of redemption in the East is not fulfilled. The pilgrimage represents not, as religious terminology would demand, known stages in a certified spiritual progress. The sense of journey is not guaranteed by any form of consummation. Instead, just the opposite occurs: the Holy Land becomes a place where senseless murders take place. The 'loud voice' of the martyrs is silenced. It is not the resurrection that triumphs, but rather suffering and death.

The Christian doctrine of historical development as a history of salvation charges believers to prepare in time for the Last Hour of Judgment and Redemption. All preventative measures serve the one and only purpose of being prepared for this moment. The basic difference between this concept and Shakespeare's tragedy is obvious. In addition, all the characters in *King Lear* plan ahead and constantly try to prevent things from happening, but their attempts turn out to be useless, often even ruinous.

Almost all of the characters in *King Lear* actively try to forestall events (even Albany comes around at a late date). Edmund is given the opportunity to present an extensive report of the preparations he has made. Not only he, but also Goneril and Regan fail in their attempts to mould their futures. The preventative measures of the 'wicked' characters have drastic results; they are not only ineffective but even contribute to their downfall (which is certainly in accordance with the idea of Christian acceleration). Frustrating, however, is the experience that the 'virtuous' characters

share this fate. The doctrinal relationship of cheerful calculations and depressing results embraces almost every aspect of the play. It solidifies ideas into incidents. *King Lear* seems to illustrate the unforeseen potentials that lie waiting to be hatched from a single choice or a general expectancy. The pattern of the unexpected is so completely worked out that one would be tempted to speak of an anti-Christian theme in Shakespearian tragedy if Cordelia's martyrdom did not maintain the claim to 'Christian configurations'[13] visible in her as well as in Edgar's characterization. This context is reflected when Cordelia cherishes the thought, something similar to the Christian conviction, that all atrocities will one day be made known: 'Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides' (I,i,280). Of course, the fact remains unchanged that haste in *King Lear* does not prove to be unerring in the Christian sense of the Last Judgment, but overshoots its goal. Even the instruments of haste remain ineffective in this tragedy. Letters are forgotten or do not reach the proper recipient. Messengers are intercepted or, like Kent, are put into stocks; or they arrive too late, despite the quickest possible execution of the orders (like the messenger, who is supposed to free Lear and Cordelia from prison).

The shift to an anti-Christian position which Shakespeare achieves with the help of acceleration is confirmed by other essential characteristics of the tragedy which are utterly irreconcilable with Christian thought. In *King Lear* it is most conspicuous that good and bad characters suffer indiscriminately the same fate. In the words of D. G. James: 'Evil drives on, dynamic and masterful, but to its own destruction; Good is still, patient, and enduring, but it is also destroyed; no limit, not even that of death, is put to what it must endure'.[14] The 'resurrection' granted Lear by the graceful powers of Cordelia has elements of absurdity : he experiences 'healing' only in order to be capable of being subjected to even more intense suffering. Likewise the Christian concepts of repentance and atonement are per-

verted. In his last hour Edmund is admittedly prepared to acknowledge his guilt and to exonerate himself: '. . . some good I mean to do/Despite of mine own nature' (V, iii, 243-44). However, we do not know whether that is his honest intention or if this is the final triumph of inveterate wickedness. Does he remember Lear and Cordelia only when he is convinced that it is already too late to prevent the bloody deed?[15] The acceleration of events ruthlessly disregards the intentions and feelings of those concerned.

One might adhere to the opinion that the structure of *King Lear* automatically precludes the singling out of certain interpretations, because the law of constant contradiction and the continual reversal of freshly stated postulates dominates. S. L. Goldberg characterizes the dramatic plot as 'a series of destructive ironies, abrupt reversals, breaks, sharp disjunctions, each of which subtly engages our assent, but which together form . . . a process wherein reality declares itself in the very revenge it takes upon every belief, upon every expectation or assertion of meaning and value within which men try to contain it'.[16] We might add that the effects caused by the structural principle of acceleration confirm this impression. In any case, the clever compromise offered by J. C. Maxwell, that *King Lear* is 'a Christian play about a pagan world',[17] does not quite solve the riddle. It does help to lessen the disagreement between the defenders of the Christian position and their opponents, which explains why this compromise has been enthusiastically accepted or modified.[18] However, it simply does not satisfactorily explain the complex structure of this tragedy.

The impressions gleaned from a survey of the phenomenon of acceleration make it impossible to support Roy W. Battenhouse's contention: '. . . the play is Christian in its implicit world view, while not so in its setting or explicit atmosphere'.[19] One can more readily accept R M. Frye's hypothesis: 'Though Shakespeare was not intent upon dramatizing the Christian tradition, he could and did appeal

to important elements of that tradition in constructing his actions and characters'.[20] One could agree with Carolyn French that the dramatic structure can be described as 'a rationale derived primarily from Christian theology which orders the action on an intellectual level'.[21] This would also mean that the phenomenon of acceleration is accorded a significant role, even though it tends to underline the risk the dramatist was taking. He was reversing the current conceptions of moral theology.

Similar observations may have encouraged Kenneth Muir to make the cautious but unequivocal statement: 'Shakespeare seems to be considering the possibility that the world is not providentially governed and to be asking *What then*'.[22] Modern directors have also arrived at similar conclusions about the intentions the dramatist may have had. Thus, Brook and Marowitz considered expressing this disturbing 'What then ?' in their own way by letting the tragedy end with an even more violent storm than the one that rages in the scenes on the heath. As Marowitz puts it: 'Once the final lines have been spoken, the thunder could clamor greater than ever before, implying that the worst was yet to come'.[23] In *King Lear* neither world history nor the individual existence of man is propelled toward the salvation which Christ announced. No world beyond this one is asserted. No herald is expected to proclaim : 'Now is the judgment of this world' (John XII, 31). It can be ascertained from his last plays, the romances, that Shakespeare was not permanently content with the outlook offered in *King Lear*.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Unnatural Scene: A Study in Shakespearean Tragedy. By MICHEAL LONG (London: Methuen & Co Ltd), 1976, x + 266 pp.

Shakespeare criticism has singularly shied away from the search for a cohesive design that would, while envisaging the crux of the early comic vision in terms of a really evaluative concern for life, also perceive the continuities that mark its modulation into the ethos of the 'problem' plays and the tragedies. The comedies, no dobut, have been subjected to a searching scrutiny—in the criticism of Charlton, Barber and Frye, among others—for their underlying patterns and general 'metaphysical' import. Recent criticism has also been preoccupied with the intricate design of themes and motifs that unite the comedies and the late romances into a mosaic of remarkable continuities and recurrences. The same, however, cannot be said of how the early and middle comedies impinge on the world of the tragedies. The suggestion is not that the serious criticism of the comedies has altogether lacked an integrative dimension or been soleley preoccupied with isolated, local features: some of the ciritical perspectives, on the contrary, have been wide-ranging and inclusive—contemporary intellectual concerns, dynamics of social life, typological and mythical patterns and archetypes—perspectives that involve the tragedies as well as the romances. The book by Mr Michael Long is, however, the first detailed study that seeks to appraoch the tragedies (and the 'problem' plays) from the standpoint of the comedies and discovers in both the under-presence of a single, unified thought-model. That the book succeeds in doing so, and that it abounds in some very perceptive and illumina-

ting comments on the plays it studies makes it stimulating reading, and this notwithstanding Mr Long's singular (and surprising) failure to see that the Last Plays, too, get their vitality and significance not only by standing in a living relation to the world of the 'kinetic' (to use one of Mr Long's terms), but also by harnessing it in the service of an Apollonian vision that transcends the trauma of Being and, not unlike the 'live and festal Fiction' of *Macbeth*, never really degenerates (as Mr Long would have us believe) into the 'Doric solemnities' of a falsifying religious-pastoral ideology. Mr Long is certainly right in pointing out that whereas in *King Lear* the Apollonian vision—the 'metaphysic of spring' —is short-lived, in *Macbeth* it is sustained throughout and that it is this vision (and not any abstract ideology of 'order') that is juxtaposed against the 'witches' cauldron'—the tumultuous, uncreative frenzy of Nietzsche's 'barbarian Dionysos'. This is certainly very perceptive, though a recognition of this does not necessarily entail a deliberate denigration of plays like *The Winter's Tale*. But this is to anticipate.

Mr Long has been able to provide a uniform thought-model or latent conceptual framework for the comedies as well as the tragedies by incorporating the festive and release patterns of Shakespearian comedy (as envisaged by Professor Barber) into perspectives borrowed from the vitalistic tradition of German thought. The exact meeting-point of the two has a sociological dimension. The comedies celebrate the disruption of an established social order by the intrusion of forces from a dimly-apprehended, mysteriously invigorating world of 'Nature'. The Law that governs the social order at the start and which undergoes complete transformation near the end is negative, fossilised and totally denuded of all organic life—representing only the dead forms of the processes of socialisation. The basic concerns in the comedies are therefore essentailly cultural in the sense that in them particular societies come to face unforeseen challenges and, while trying to cope with them, to discover the true

sources of spiritual rejuvenation which helps them in adapting themselves to the new contingencies in accordance with the demands of the world of raw kinesis. 'The image of the house surrounded by the fields or woods', Mr Long rightly points out, 'is the central one [in the comedies]—a house which can open its doors and allow free movement back and forth between the society indoors and the wide world without' (p. 7). What unites the world of comedies with that of the tragedies, the emblem, so to say, of Shakespeare's uninterrupted ontolegical concern, is the same image of the houses surrounded by fields or woods—culture in its environs of wild, uncontrollable energy. 'But here we have houses which do not open their doors, except to cast out the errants to their fate. They keep their doors firmly shut and their bulwarks impregnable fearful of volatility and therefore preventative of release' (p. 7). Looked at from this point of view the tragedies are as much concerned with socialisation and all that the process entails as the comedies; consequently, the attempt to approach the hero of the tragedy, the victim of the trauma that results from the impingement of the mysteriously 'other' on workaday reality, as someone moving in total isolation in a world devoid of all social contextualisation, does not do enough justice to what Mr Long rightly calls Shakespeare's social-psychological realism. Incidentally, this seems quite a legitimate way of synthesising the apparent contrariety of dramatic modes in Shakespeare—the 'realistic' evocation of particular social contexts thereby acquiring a more functional role in the overall archetypal design.

While the basic comic-festive movememt may be traced from Law into release, that is, the reversion of the socialised from their contact with the heliday world of wild energies to workaday reality the pattern of the tragic movement is also along similar lines: it follows the course of a similarly socialised consciousness moving from cultural rigidity into trauma: 'What we see in the tragedies is the fatal inadaptability

of cultures and the fatal inadaptability of minds trained in and adjusted to a given set of civilised mores' (p.7). Thus, the tragedies and the 'problem' plays are seen to be based on a thought-model that is the same as in the comedies since 'release' and 'trauma' both are a result of the contact with the kinetic—the mysterious 'other' that is both creative and destructive and which is apprehended by Shakespeare's imagination through a variety of means Shakespeare gives us, suggests Mr Long, spurtive glimpses of this world of vital energies in his poetry of wild 'Nature' and also in that of passion and dreams. We also come into contact with this world through the poetry of unconscious pun, the slip that accidentally pushes us into an unlooked-for encounter with the hidden world of the kinetic. What Mr Long has attempted to do, it is apparent, is to move back from the anthropology-oriented conception of the holiday-world of Shakespeare's comedies (as in Barber's criticism), through Freud (whom he mentions in passing), to the nineteenth century German vitalism of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche—a main source of inspiration and encouragement for both anthropology and psycho-analysis. It was not purely fortuitous that both these German thinkers had also speculated about the nature and origin of tragedy. It is from them that Mr Long borrows certain concepts in order to illuminate not only the nature of the trauma—analogous to comic release—but also a metaphysical conception of the reality that Shakespearian tragedy probes and mediates. Philosophical theories of tragedy are notoriously difficult to manipulate when it comes to detailed aesthetic criticism of individual plays. Given, however, the proposition that no adequate criticism of the art of tragedy, especially of Shakespearian tragedy, is possible without some kind of a wider philosophical perspective, howsoever vague, it is possible to see that pure formalism whether of the neo-classical or modern variety cannot come to terms with an art with a patently metaphysical bias. It was not, however, the dogmatic formalism of the neo-classical age

alone that had hindered its appreciation of Shakespearian tragedy, Mr Long usefully reminds us; the trouble was with its world-view, with its 'complacent and myopic attachment' to the idea of social order or cultural achievement (p.12). It was the Socratic man, the man who was given to theorising the vital realities of life into neat, easily comprehensible categories — it was the conception of the Alexandrian man, so Nietzsche believed, which had dominated European consciousness after it had lost touch with the roots whence tragedy springs. Nietzsche's speculative system rears its central edifice —though in the process it also largely modifies it—on Schopenhauer's concept of the Universal Will. With a remarkable disregard for the main intellectual traditions of the West both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche infuse into the incorporal ghost of the Kantian 'Thing-in-itself' the vital, pulsating energies of the experiencing self; the yearning spirit, the irreducible minimum that comprises the individual consciousness comes to inhabit and possess the entire universe. In the fragmentation of the primal unity of existence Nietzsche finds the trauma of being, and the Apollonian vision — the rarest form of the pattern-imposing consciousness, the stasis of pure contemplation, the *Vorstellung* or Representation of Schopenhauer's conception—this stilling, form-giving dream of existence acquires its highest value and significance when it comes into contact with the primordial, Dionysian reality of existence. It is only in tragedy that Apollo learns to speak the language of Dionysos : the metaphysics of the art of tragedy lies in the fact that it is in the art of tragedy alone (or in music) that a clue to the true metaphysics of being is to be found.

Mr Long dissociates himself from the epistemological implications of this world-view though what he calls the Shakespearian kinesis—the intuitively defined source of all energising principles—would require an epistemological base (and it does certainly require one) that may not be very different. Both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche inhabit a

Godless, purposeless world, a world without an eschatology, and at least in Nietzsche, the world of turbulent Dionysian energies has a certain ambiguity about it—an ambiguity that Nietzsche himself recognizes since his Dionysos has a dual aspect: a Greek one suggesting life's creative vitalities and another, that of a barbarian, denoting terror and destruction. Now whatever the relevance of this duality to Nietzsche's own specualtive system, its application to the study of Shakespeare raises problems, so it appears to the present reviewer, that Mr Long—despite his brilliant analyses of plays like *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra*—has chosen to ignore. Shakespeare certainly did not live in a world that was beyond Good and Evil—in a kind of morally neutral space of creative and destructive energies—though, being the creative artist that he was, he would not permit himself (except dramatically) the 'vulgarisations' of either the Doric or the Theoretical man. It should be obvious that the Shakespearian kinesis—given that Shakespearian 'metaphysics' implies one—is a far cry from Nietzsche's world of the kinetic that rejects all teleology, recognises 'the witches' cauldron' but has no use for it in the scheme of the ultimate values except as an isolated, though 'real', datum of a 'polytheistic' mythology of experience. Mr Long is no doubt aware of the difficulties involved in Nietzsche's conception of the barbarian Dionysos. *The Birth of Tragedy* was an early work which Nietzsche himself came to look at critically in later years, and in writing it he had been working with concepts that he only imperfectly understood. His break with Christianity had been for him nothing short of the traumatic though with the fullest intensity of his inner being he also felt the need to recognise the facets of experience that traditional Christianity had not only fomulated but also assimilated into its peculiar schematisation of religious consciousness. Thus Nietzsche lived in the vacuum caused by his rejection of Christianity—but not Shakespeare. This, of course, does not amount to an outright denial of analogical

relationship between apparently different thought-patterns though the specific difficulties noticed in this case need to be stressed. In using Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as thought-models for Shakespearian tragedy there is the possibility that an important dimension of the ethos of Shakespeare's work may be missed: the Shakespearian kinesis is suffused with a quality that ultimately derives from a structure of values in which the moral does not terminate with the awareness of the numinous. This is in contrast with Nietzsche's amoralism, who like Schopenhauer before him, placed the idea of tragedy (in Mr Long's words) 'at the point of social complacency's most extreme breakdown, where no system of moral evaluation with any right to claim any adherent can do justice to what happens and what is felt when the 'other' world does its worst with human attempts to make institutions out of it' (p. 12). This is certainly true of the metaphysic that Nietzsche ascribes to the art of tragedy, but in Shakespeare—if the words mean what they do—moral evaluation (not 'the law-court criminal Macbeth', but 'the act that cuts him off from the springs of life and creativity') is never suspended out of action; we only come to see it under the aspect of, and really emanating from, a level of being that is at once more true and extremely unfamiliar.

Mr Long's unwillingness to suggest the crucial difference between the Shakespearian thought-model and the one in the speculative system of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche thus has its difficulties of a general nature as a result of which the 'Natural' world of creative possibility—realized in the imagery and structural features noted by Mr Long—is deprived of its traditional Christian framework: a matter not merely of the abjurement of the historical method. Traditional Christianity —not the obtrusively ideological variety of some of Shakespeare's interpreters but the one deriving from an implied frame of values—is the unifying principle in which cohere and subsist different levels of being—the moral, the psycho-

logical and the religious, so that Shakespeare lets us come into contact with the world of vital energies and movements not as helpless prisoner but as free agents in search of a way out of all that is implied in Schopenhauer's conception of blind Will. A disinclination to recognise this may encourage one, as it does Mr Long, to denigrate the plays of Shakespeare's final period which would, in a contrary evaluation, seem as part of a greater fulfilment and not as vulgarisation of the tragic insight.

To say all this is not to detract from the undoubted merit of the book in its attempt to synthesize the *ouvre* into a single metaphysical pattern—howsoever one may wish to disagree with the exact definition of that pattern. One of the areas where the book proves to be most stimulating is in the application of the moral-psychological aspects of the thought of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche to the major tragedies of Shakespeare. It is obvious that Mr Long could not have achieved such an appreciative understanding of what may be termed as the social dynamics of the plays without a personal enthusiasm of his own. As it is, the moral-psychological thought of the German philosophers helps him to a sharpness of focus that highlights ethical issues within the framework of a regenerative dialectics of culture. One of the key ideas in Mr Long's book—rich in its suggestiveness of the tragic impasse—lays stress on the fact that men live in private universes of their own making, and that a certain falsity attaches to all such universes. The idea is ultimately Kantian in origin though it was later appropriated by Schopenhauer as epistemological reinforcement for his pessimistic ethic of resignation. Nietzsche also found in the idea a whole spectrum of intellectual fortification, so to say, that seek to deny or contain the Dionysian reality of life. In Shakespearian terms, it may be taken to signify the ideal norms of behaviour that a particular society selects for itself and which ultimately leads it to a refusal to acknowledge the existence of a more vital order of being. It has already been pointed out that

Mr Long does not take the tragic figures as solitaries inhabiting the supranormal world of tragedy. On the contrary he rightly seems to lay stress on the rich and unique documentation of social fact in most of the plays he has discussed. It may not all be very original, but the insistent critical attention he gives to these aspects certainly lends to them a new dimension. Moving on, for example, from the anti-sentimental, anti-romantic stance adopted by F.R. Leavis *vis-a-vis* Othello's 'nobility', he comes to locate the Venetian incapacitating *Vorstellung* in the courtesy-culture that ultimately vitiates even its conception of love and human relationship. The vulnerabilty of the Venetian ideal is traced in a group of characters, and the play shows how it collapses in face of the workings of *die Will* or raw kinesis as it is realized in the sex and will obsessed language of Iago. A similar denial of the kinetic is to be found in the ideal of patrician Rome in *Coriolanus*, an ideal that resembles Nietzsche's conception of the Doric, an intellectual construct that hedges in Dionysian reality with its inflexible sense of order—'a perpetual military encampment', as Nietzsche put it.

The ossification of culture through a lack of contact with the ultimately real is best illustrated in *Hamlet*, a play whose cultural mores and social ethos have been thoroughly subjected to critical scrutiny in recent decades. For Mr Long the dominant characteristic of the Elsinorean society is philistinism—embodied chiefly in the person of Claudius. What Hamlet does is to release into this dead world some of the traumatic energy from the world beyond Elsinore, the energy that is 'exhilarating and terrifying by turns' (p.152). Notwithstanding the subtlety of Mr Long's analysis, what, however, strikes the reader, here as elsewhere, is the feeling that its exact ethical-religious form gives to the Shekespearian kinesis a quality that is radically absent from the neutral, more 'essential', conception of the German philosophers.

It is ironical that speculative thought, even when it seeks to undermine thought itself, cannot escape the destiny of

transforming itself into a subjective *Vorstellung*, a rationalisation of individual will. The speculative philosophies of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche might indeed help us visualise the world of Shakespeare's art with a little more clarity, but they, too, come under an ironical focus as products of circumscribing history, and as such might prove to have not inconsiderable limitations in a true appreciation of Shakespeare.

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Keats: The Religious Sense. By ROBERT M. RYAN (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 1976, VIII+236 pp.

What prompted the author to consider in some detail Keats's attitude to religion, particularly to the Christian faith, was the absence of any full-length study on the subject. Giving an outline of his plan in the foreward, he has expressed his dissatisfaction with the manner the subject has so far been treated. He points out that Keats has been presented either as a near pagan (H.N. Fairchild, Walter Everts), or as an original thinker (Middleton Murry, Clarence Thrope) or as one who had no 'serious involvement with religious concerns' (Stuart M. Sperry). The author thinks that these distortions crept in because enough attention was not paid to Keats's place in the tradition of natural religion. His own submission is that neither an evangelist nor an agnostic, Keats was not 'an especially original thinker in theology', but 'he was determined to find his own way in religion'. It has been made clear at the outset that the author is speaking of religion 'in

a rather strict traditional sense', and the study that follows a chronological pattern excludes most of the major poems of Keats, for they are not of any particular help in building up his thesis. Thus the data is mainly confined to the letters and a few 'short occasional poems'. The author's principal endeavour, in which he has succeeded to a remarkable degree, has been to put Keats's comments and observations on religion in proper perspective and to compare them with those of his contemporaries with whom the poet discussed the subject.

The introductory chapter 'The Religious Milieu' which deals with the state of religion in England in the formative years of Keats contains a number of insights. Keats was brought up in a period that, following the French Revolution and after, was marked by a revival of interest in formal religion. The official church, poorly managed as it was, however, did not have much to attract a man like Keats. The bishops always sided with the Tories and overlooked the interests of the masses; faith was reduced to 'a system of polite ethics', and a kind of 'pious utilitarianism' dominated contemporary religion at least within the church. Here the author makes the point that Keats's rejection of the orthodox Christian faith should always be seen in the context of 'the contemporary reality that clothed the ancient ideal'. He also shows how Keats could not be reconciled with the Evangelicals who had a distrust of the arts. His main contention seems to be that Keats's personal faith, that ultimately falls in the old tradition of natural religion, was considerably influenced by his friends like Leigh Hunt and Benjamin Bailey. One, however, feels that perhaps too much reliance has been put on the external evidence in concluding that Keats, in a sense, did not leave the church at all, for in his time it was possible (mainly due to the loose structure of the church), to remain a churchman even if one adhered to natural religion or questioned the divinity of Christ.

The author admits that it is not easy to trace how Keats

came to develop a critical attitude to Christianity. He does not agree with the view that the poet's early religious education had been largely neglected, and cites sufficient evidence to demonstrate that in his early years Keats was more exposed to religion than most boys of his background. In this connection he refers, in particular, to Keats's close association with his grandmother Mrs Jennings at Whose place the atmosphere was charged with religion, and on whose death the young poet wrote a sonnet. Hinting at a possible source for the sonnet (a book of poems for children that Keats must have read), he considers it to be closest to a 'devotional poem' Keats ever wrote. But even in this early composition, he discerns traces of the poet's tendency towards natural religion. He does not set much store by the use of religious imagery in the early verse of Keats and rightly regards it as largely derivative—a sign of Keats's attachment to Spenser and Milton.

In his attempt to trace the origins of Keats's disaffection with Christianity, the author refers to a number of probable influences that range from Voltaire to Leigh Hunt and the poet's teachers at Borough School of Medicine. He suggests that this disaffection was, perhaps, to begin with, due to the conflict of Keats's political views with those propagated by the church. While *The Examiner* did not have any significant role in shaping Keats's ideas on religion during the years 1809-11, Bishop Gilbert Burnet's *The History of My Own Times*—a book which was severely critical of the clergy and which Keats had read—must have been a potent influence. During his time at Clark's academy Keats got familiar with religion though at the same time he also started questioning some of the beliefs and practices. The author believes that the time immediately following the Enfield period marks the point at which Keats's thoughts on religion took a definite shape and he started moving away from Christianity. But unlike some contemporary scientists, the poet did not altogether repudiate religion. He usually remained

non-commital amidst religious debate and was generally tolerant. The author considers this detachment and objectivity to be the essence of what Keats acquired at the medical school.

While one entire chapter is devoted to the study of Keats's association with Leigh Hunt and his circle, another concentrates on the powerful influence of Benjamin Bailey. The author does not hold with some of the Christian friends of Keats that Hunt's influence was largely negative and correctly emphasizes the pertinent fact that Keats had been sceptical even before he met Hunt, and the latter, in a way, helped him in coming to grips with the whole problem of religion; to this extent he regards Hunt's contribution as a positive one. He however, concedes that, on the whole, Hunt's attitude to the Christian faith was critical and one of confrontation with the religious establishment. On the other extreme was Benjamin Robert Haydon, well-known British painter and an ardent champion of Christianity. In between the two the author places William Hazlitt whom he depicts as a more tolerant agnostic who could live without religion while Hunt could not. Discounting Haydon's influence on Keats in the sphere of religion, the author maintains that it is mainly the force of Hunt's views that accounts for the ambivalence in Keats's feelings towards religion around 1816 as expressed in some of the poems of the period. He convincingly draws a close parallel between the sestet of the sonnet, *Written in Disgust of Vulgar Superstition* and some sentences in an article by Hunt published in *The Examiner* less than a month before the sonnet was written. Lest the sonnet should be taken in isolation, attention has been invited to two poems (the *Good Koscuisko* sonnet, and *Sleep and Beauty*), composed about the same time that, in a manner of speaking, offset the bitter indictment of Christianity in the vulgar superstition sonnet and make Keats appear 'a pious young man'. While one may not agree with this assessment of Keats in the light of the above two poems, the fact cannot be denied that the author has

taken a comprehensive and integrated view of these poems by placing them in perspective.

It has been suggested that Keats, who had 'serious intellectual difficulties with important elements of the Christian creed' (for example the redemption of mankind by the suffering and death of Christ), started outgrowing Hunt's disgust with organized Christianity by the spring of 1817, and tried to understand more objectively even the orthodox view-point. The author ascribes this change to the influence of Benjamin Bailey. Keats stayed with Bailey for a month at Oxford. It is 'assumed' that the 'earnest conversation' between the two must have 'centred around Keats's refusal to accept Christianity as the divinely ordained path to salvation'. Quoting a passage from a pamphlet by Bailey the author shows Keats's mental preoccupation with the sort of issues raised by Bailey. Keats's view of the world as a 'vale of soul-making' stands in contrast to the contentions of Bailey in the passage. The poet was also unable to accept the doctrine of Atonement. The author admits that Bailey could not win Keats back to Christianity but he succeeded in softening the latter's hostility to the traditional faith. Book IV of *Endymion*, written after Keats's visit to Oxford, has been cited as indicative of the poet's newly acquired attitude of greater reverence for conventional religion.

The author has come out with a strikingly different interpretation of Keats's famous letter of 23 November 1817 to Bailey in which he had asserted that he was not certain of anything except 'the holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of Imagination'. The author thinks that 'to read the letter as a treatise in aesthetics or literary theory is to miss the central point'. In his view, 'Keats is addressing himself mainly to a theological question, and when the letter is examined in this light it reveals much about Keats's religious views at the end of 1817'. He has tried to explain certain phrases in the letter in the light of the vocabulary of 'the

moral sense school' of ethics and thus added a new dimension to the meaning of some of the most debated pronouncements of the poet. In this very stimulating, though somewhat controversial, part of the study, the author righty reminds us that the whole debate of Truth and Beauty had taken place in 1725 when Francis Hutcheson and his critics took up the question, and that this fact should not be ignored while considering Keats's ideas on the subject. Tracing admirably the development of the concept of Negative Capability in Keats's consciousness the author discovers a close link between the concept and the religious attitudes of Keats. Apart from their acceptability or otherwise, the above mentioned unconventional observations are worthy of critical attention.

The author is not able to give any plausible explanation for Keats's loss of interest in religious questions by early 1818. His suggestion that the development is understandable, for the poet was passing through the happiest period of his life, does not sound convincing. Similarly he has ascribed to the external circumstances of Keats's life (the mortal illness of his brother Tom) the renewed interest in Christianity before he turned from it again and developed an alternative. He, however, rightly points out that Keats's poetry of this period is marked by a sudden and intense consciousness of the dark aspects of nature, and makes the significant remark that natural religion has always felt uneasy about the problem of natural evil. Keats knew that organized religion did offer 'a coherent explanation of the distressed condition of the world and the human race', and also could afford 'some consolation and hope to men'. It was during this time that Keats developed a more positive response to Wordsworth and his philosophy.

The last chapter, entitled 'The Vale of Soul-making', brings into focus a number of complex issues related to the final phase of the development of Keats's metaphysical concerns which can hardly be touched upon within the space of this review. The author emphasizes the point that at no

time did Keats abandon his faith in a benevolent Deity. But he does not see 'a tendency towards Christianity' in Keats's admiration for Christ. Nevertheless he wishes to demonstrate that in the autumn, winter and spring of 1818-19 Keats, confronted with the mystery of sufferieg, probed afresh the merit of the Christian faith before he formulated his own system of soul-making. In this connection he draws attention to the reappearance of that kind of piety in the letters of the period that characterizes some of the early verse of Keats. He also notices an interesting proximity between Keats's views on religion in 1819 and those of Coleridge when the elder poet was the same age as Keats.

Coming to the question of Keats's final disenchantment with Christianity, the author discounts Benjamin Bailey's view that it was due to Keats's 'want of knowledge rather than faith', nor does he hold the poet's propensity to natural religion responsible for it. He offers a more coherent and viable explanation by taking into consideration Keats's inability to reconcile himself with the Christian idea of a historic fall and the Christian response to earthly suffering. Keats felt that Christianity evaded the problem of suffering because it could not accept that God made man to suffer. Once this fact is realized the creation appears as good and essentially beautiful. The author hints at the possibility of a link between this view and the famous lines in the *Grecian Urn*:'Beauty is truth, truth Beauty...'. Earlier, equating 'the dark night of the Soul' with the experience in the sonnet : 'Why did I laugh tonight ?', he regards the poem as a pointer to Keats's acceptance of death, which, by implication, involves acceptance of life. In his perceptive analysis of Keats's system of soul-making, he makes a valid observation by pointing out that the system takes for granted a belief in immortality—once this belief is shaken (as happened with Keats in the last days of his life), the system becomes pointless. Though the book contains an epilogue describing the last days of Keats's life, the author has rightly refrained from

speculating about the exact nature of the dying poet's feelings towards religion. Relying more on biography than on poetry, this scholarly study succeeds remarkably in giving an authentic history of Keats's faith and doubts. Some of the inferences may be disputed but not the validity and soundness of the approach which is what ultimately matters in academic research.

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A View of Victorian Literature. By GEOFFREY TILLOTSON (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 1978, 396 pp.

The book by late Professor Tillotson was originally to have formed part of the *Oxford History of English Literature*, but owing to reasons explained in her preface by Professor Kathleen Tillotson (who has ably edited the volume for its posthumous publication), it has now appeared independently. Concentrating on major literary figures, it gives a coherent and balanced account of the Victorian literary scene. The book is divided into nine chapters of which all but the first ('Earnestness') are on individual authors—Carlyle, Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte and Emile Bronte, Mrs Gaskell, Trollope, Tennyson and Browning. There is also an appendix on Thackeray's *Esmond*.

In the chapters on individual authors we are presented with a lively and convincing account of their impact on their age as well as of their achievement—an account based on a wealth of judiciously selected social and historical data and accompanied by perceptive critical comment. Professor Tillotson never allows modern preoccupations to creep into historical assessment; his endeavour always being to bring out

the uniqueness of an author in the perspectives of his time. In the chapter on Carlyle, for example, the quality of Carlyle's writing, the nature and spirit of his involvement in the problems of his own times and the wide and decisive influence he exercised on contemporary writers—Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, Newman, John Stuart Mill, Dickens, George Eliot and Morris—are all perceptively interwoven into a gripping account of Carlyle the man as well as Carlyle the writer. Professor Tillotson brings out the true significance of Carlyle's 'prophetic' role. It was, he suggests, Carlyle's socio-political writings and, permeating them all, his passionate conviction that the struggle for social betterment was 'the one true war' that constituted the basis of the Victorian gospel of social justice and of socialism itself. Carlyle's concern for the poor is a manifestation of that socialism and although it may have been prompted by sentiment, it did not lead to or end up in sentimentality. Nor was his challenge to the government of England, to all 'articulate speaking functionaries, real and imaginary Aristocracies'—as to how they were going to better the lot of millions of 'eager Working Men imprisoned in "impossibility" and Poor-Law Bastilles'—a mere gesture of political rhetoric. Carlyle's political thought, especially his reaction to the tenets enshrined in Mill's treatise on liberty, was the basis of his view of heroes and hero worship. For so far as man is a worshipping animal, he has to find some object for his worship. But what is thought worth worshipping by Carlyle is more secular than religious. In fact, as Tillotson observes, 'of all religious men Carlyle was the most frankly secular'. In this respect too, as in many others, he constituted 'the tangible equivalent of the *Zeitgeist*' and much more so than did Newman, Ruskin, or Matthew Arnold.

Tillotson also analyses Carlyle's style—a style 'rich, intense, exceptional'—to which writers like Matthew Arnold, Ruskin and Dickens responded so warmly. Of course, such a style was bound to have its oddities, mannerisms and defects which resulted in 'cumbrousness and clotkingness'

so that 'the rearranging of the straightforward word-order of a sizeable clause has the effect that going upstairs would have if we were to find the steps in the wrong order'. However this did not prevent mid-century writers from reading Carlyle as he ought to be read, that is, 'slowly and savouringly as poetry', while borrowing 'his individual words gratefully for their own purposes'.

In the chapters on Dickens and Thackeray we are given an intimate insight into the art of the novel as both the novelists themselves and the contemporary critics saw it. Tillotson assesses the achievement of these two novelists by placing them in their social and historical context as well as by analysing those characteristics of their work that have an abiding relevance to the art of novel writing at all times. After postulating that Dickens's novels were rooted in common life, as were Shakespeare's plays, Tillotson goes on to demonstrate how what Dickens's contemporaries thought as either 'damned low', a product of 'desultory' education, or grossly vulgar, was part and parcel of that power of creating persons which, as George Gissing observed, 'declares itself to critical and uncritical reader alike'. The mainspring of insipiration behind Dickens's characterization is his insight into human nature irrespective of its social class or milieu. As to the comic side of Dickens's genius, Tillotson rightly observes that 'even among the earliest and largely comic writings there is evidence that he was drawing his own painful knowledge of what was far from comic'.

In the chapter on Thackeray Tillotson expounds the attitude to which Victorian novelists conformed, and Thackeray more scrupulously than most. The comparison between the kind of novelist that Thackeray was and that Dickens was underlies Tillotson's critique on the latter. It is by instituting what he later on analyses with great subtlety, viz., the organic interdependence between the form and style of Thackeray's novels as such and the moral and psychological core behind them that Tillotson evaluates Thackeray's art

and his interpretation of the *Zeitgeist*. Thus we see how the 'conscious critic' and the 'rapt creator' in Thackeray are acting in perfect unison, 'the critic in him directing the creation, giving it, as it were, a spine'.

Contrasting the spirit and substance of Thackeray's dictum that novelists should not be in a passion with their characters but should regard them, good or bad, with a calm', are the novels of Charlotte and Emily Bronte. An avowed feminist Charlotte Bronte stamps her individual nature upon her novels, at times betraying what Harriet Martineau calls 'the unwholesome influences of seclusion, a mind preying upon itself'. Emily Bronte, on the other hand wrote, 'the one English novel that stands within hailing distance of *King Lear* and *Macbeth*'—a novel embodying the truth 'that takes in what exists and the truth that comes of criticising some of it by reference to truth as a whole'. It is a convincing proof of Emily's psychological depth and richness as well as of her creative power that, while implicitly believing that 'the mind will find what it needs in little or in much', she significantly contributes to 'that nineteenth-century rediscovery or reassertion that there is no dearth of quantity of matter when there exists the power to make a full use of the eyes'.

In some ways perhaps the most personal chapter on a novelist in this book is that on Mrs Gaskell—a chapter in which Tillotson's acumen as a critic, the range of his sympathy as well as of his scholarship and the felicitous efficacy of his style show themselves at their best. Among the frequent comparisons and contrasts he institutes, as he goes along between two or more writers, the one between Mrs Gaskell and some of her contemporaries is particularly illuminating. It is in analysing the way she handles people as well as events that Tillotson displays his intuitive sympathy with the novelist as well as his critical insight into her art. As to her treatment of the theme of love she is found capable of dealing with it just like Emily and Charlotte Bronte—that is by showing us 'what human love is when at what most of us

honour as its best,however unobtainable inferior human beings find it—the love that has no sex in it, and the sexual love that has no lust in it'.

The tradition of veracity and utmost fidelity to what one actually saw around oneself found, as Tillotson points out, 'no more unflagging disciple than Trollope', and he examines Trollope's art—his power to invent, to think, to write—with analytical subtlety, ascribing it to his power of observation. Trollope's absorption in the facts of contemporary life makes his genius 'as much that of the leader writer as of the novelist'. It also accounts for the kind of prose he wrote, or rather the kind of prose he makes his personages speak, being, as it is, in perfect accord with people's practical affairs, 'down to the last entry in the laundry-book.' This makes Trollope the most rewarding and most authoritative chronicler of the second half of the mid-nineteenth century England. As to the specific qualities of Trollope's art as a novelist Tillotson singles out for praise his power to narrate—'he can make an action scud as if before a stiff breeze'—as well as his ability to concentrate an issue into a great scene.

The last two chapters in the book are devoted to Tennyson and Browning. Tillotson states that 'allowance must always be made for an author's place in time' and that Tennyson cannot be blamed 'for taking over what we can call the furniture of his time, any more than Chaucer for the conventions of Courtly Love, or some writers of mid-twentieth century poems and novels for the use of 'four-letter words.' In some of the poems, for instance, Tennyson 'is not always successful with his human beings', and the characterization of Arthur in *The Idylls of the King* is unsatisfactory because of his writing being partly in the manner of the epic and partly in that of the novel. As to Tennyson's diction, Tillotson links its positive qualities as well as its defects with the conflict between idealism and realism that posed a sharper problem for poets than for novelists. However, Tennyson solved the problem with an easy felicity and 'the dignity and

beauty of his poetry was never in question, even when its topic, before he came to treat it, would have struck the idealists as incorrigibly unpoetical'.

Tillotson compares the thought content of Tennyson's poetry with Gray's 'divine truisms', such as 'the paths of glory lead but to the grave', to which Tennyson was so drawn as to say that 'he would rather have written Gray's 'Elegy' than the whole of Wordsworth' and that 'he would unfeignedly prefer it to all his own poetry.'

It is, however, in unravelling the secrets of Tennyson's metre and music—he calls him the supreme metrist in English because although Milton and Gray, Coleridge and T. S. Eliot, are equally infallible, 'they do not operate over so wide a range'—that Tillotson shows himself at his best as a critic of poetry. While analysing Tennyson's devices—his excessive use of alliteration or deliberate avoidance of it, or his attempt to supply 'traditional metres of controlled subtlety of rhythm' and the creation of metres strikingly beautiful— Tillotson praises Tennyson's inventiveness as displayed, for instance, in *Maud* which would be a *tour de force* 'if it were not all as easily accomplished as a tree accomplishes leaves'. Tillotson compares Tennyson and Browning as metrists by pointing out that the latter introduces (in 'Women and Roses') 'regular irregularities of the kind Tennyson used in 'The Daisy', but they pass unnoticed except by the specialist, whereas Tennyson's are beautifully obvious'. After quoting Goethe's exclamatory encomium on *Paradise Lost*—'How greatly it is planned'—Tillotson observes apropos of the *Idylls of the King* that it comes 'nearest to earning this high commendation'. The unity of *In Memoriam*, on the other hand, is described as being a 'linear, undulant unit of an argument with circlings, pausings, antiphonal returns'. In varying degrees all these qualities, structural, metrical and musical, are exemplified by 'the greatest of all the lyrics'—namely, one of the songs ('Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white). It is a

lyric in which 'sensuousness, colour, liveliness, sweetness', all exist along with delicacy to the point of precision.

One important characteristic of Browning's poetic achievement that Tillotson notices (in his chapter on the poet) and one by virtue of which he may be regarded as a more vital and more relevant presence in twentieth-century poetry than either Tennyson or Hopkins—is the balance he strikes between the claims of man and nature, not so much in the manner of Wordsworth as in the manner of many of the greatest novelists. If Keats, Tennyson, Arnold and Swinburne were largely drawn to things in nature that enchant the eye, Browning was drawn to those that absorb the mind. As Tillotson rightly points out, Browning's poems include as many natural things as theirs, but they also contain 'brilliantly odd things, or brilliantly odd aspects of such things as are usually claimed as wholly beautiful'. Browning is compared with Tennyson, especially with regard to his treatment of love. Browning's love poetry 'showed up Tennyson as unnecessarily squeamish. He spoke out where Tennyson hinted, he criticized where Tennyson accepted'. Browning is also compared with other Victorian poets and one finds a much more complete and close account of sexual love provided in his poems than in the poems and novels of his contemporaries.

Browning's interest in Renaissance Italy—and he was a pioneer in that field—as well as in music (according to Tillotson 'not many of our poets since the seventeenth century have understood music as a thing made' the way Browning did) are important factors in his poetry. Tillotson aptly remarks that Browning's passionate love of and his technical interest in it accounts for 'his sanity, his power of making connections, and his knowledge of what music amounts to'.

Among Browning's defects Tillotson numbers his 'reckless individualism of form' (as noted by Henry James), his often writing at too great length, his inability to stop when he has done all he needs, his occasional cloudiness of expre-

ssion as well as of thought, and the fact that he expects a great deal from his readers without caring to provide annotation'.

In his impressively lucid and convincing summing up Tillotson draws attention to the energetic nature of Browning's rhythms. While striking a balance between Browning's virtues and his limitations, Tillotson observes: 'Admittedly, his technique cannot sustain the standard set by his felicities. But these felicities are frequent, and there is a pleasure for the reader in the sheer inventiveness that offsets the intermittent failure to sustain competence'. If Tillotson lays so much emphasis on Browning's technique, structure and form, rather than on his sytle, diction and imagery, it is not only because Browning loved experimenting with them, but also because he excelled in them. His love of elaboration, as seen in what Tillotson calls 'the architecture as well as the individual bricks and stones of his poem', is partly motivated by the opportunity it offered him for sharpening his picture of human eccentricity. On the metrical plane too, the most frequent transition from the elaborate to the simple, or to 'such slippered couplets as those of "My Last Duchess" or the half-flexible blank verse of "Bishop Orders His Tomb"' is the consequence of the role the metre is given in the poem; namely, that of proclaiming that the lines will be more nearly like the prose we speak.

A View of Victorian Literature embodies a comprehensive grasp of the subject and a whole-hearted sympathy with the various currents of Victorian thought and feeling, and especially of the mid-century which wasa time for'sensations of the mind in unprecedented abundance'—sensations that Tillotson treats as such and not merely as historical data. The numerous critical insights that each one of the chapters affords—insights conveyed in a style that is both penetrating and graceful—are an integral part of a very attentive and intimate reading of Victorian literature, a reading which is both objec-

tive and richly documented, but which nevertheless has the ring of a personal involvement and authority.

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