MA-ENG-203

LITERARY CRITICISM AND THEORY

DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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PREFACE

In this course, we shall deal with various aspects of **Literary Criticism and Theory**

- Western Classical Literary Criticism
- Neo-Classical Criticism
- Modern Criticism
- Post-Modern Criticism

SYLLABUS

LITERARY CRITICISM AND THEORY
(MA-Eng.-203)

Course Content

Unit-I : Western Classical Literary Criticism :

(A) Aristotle : The Poetics

(B) Longinus : On the Subtime

Unit-II : Neo-Classical Criticism :

(A) John Dryden–Essay on Dramatic Poesy.

(B) Dr. Johnson's – Lives of Poets.

Unit-III : Modern Criticism :

- T.S. Eliot : (A) Tradition & Individual Talent
- I.A. Richards : (A) Principles of Literary Criticism (Chapter 1st to 7th)

Unit-IV : Post-Modern Criticism:

- Ferdinand de Saussure : "Nature of linguistics sign".
- Elaine Showalter : "Feminist Criticism in Wilderness".

CONTENTS

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WESTERN CLASSICAL LITERARY CRITICISMOEDIPUS THE KING-OPHOCLES

STRUCTURE

• LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to :

- discuss on the Aristotle: The Poetics
- examine the Longinus: On the Sublime.

• INTRODUCTION

Literary denunciation has probably existed for as long as literature. In the 4th century BC Aristotle wrote the Poetics, a compartmentalization and description of literary forms with many specific denunciations of contemporary works of art. Poetics developed for the first time the concepts of mimicking and purgisation, which are still pivotal in literary study. Plato's attacks on poetry as imitative, secondary, and false were formative as well. Around the same time, Bharata Muni, in his Natya Shastra, wrote literary denunciation ancient Indian literature and Sanskrit drama.

Later classical and gothic denunciation often focused on religious texts, and the several long religious traditions of hermeneutics and textual exegesis have had a profound influence on the study of secular texts. This was particularly the case for the literary traditions of the three Abrahamic religions: Jewish literature, Christian literature and Islamic literature.

Literary criticism was also employed in other forms of gothic Arabic literature and Arabic poetry from the 9th century, notably by Al-Jahiz in

his al-Bayan wa-'l-tabyin and al-Hayawan, and by Abdullah ibn al-Mu'tazz in his Kitab al-Badi.

Aristotle, (384 BC-322 BC) was a Greek philosopher, a student of Plato and teacher of Alexander the Great. His writings cover many subjects, including physics, metaphysics, poetry, theater, music, logic, rhetoric, glottology, politics, government, ethics, biology, and zoology. Together with Plato and Socrates (Plato's teacher), Aristotle is one of the most important founding figures in Western philosophy. Aristotle's writings were the first to create a compendious system of Western philosophy, encompassing morality and aesthetics, logic and science, politics and metaphysics.

Aristotle's views on the physical sciences tremendously shaped medieval scholarship, and their influence extended well into the Reninification, although they were ultimately replaced by Newtonian physics. In the zoological sciences, some of his observations were confirmed to be accurate only in the 19th century. His works contain the earliest known formal study of logic, which was incorporated in the late 19th century into modern formal logic. In metaphysics, Aristotelianism had a abstruse influence on philosophical and theological thinking in the Islamic and Jewish traditions in the Middle Ages, and it continues to influence Christian theology, especially the scholastic tradition of the Catholic Church. His ethics, though always dominant, gained renewed interest with the modern advent of virtue ethics. All aspects of Aristotle's philosophy continue to be the object of active academic study today. Though Aristotle wrote many elegant concordats and dialogues (Cicero described his literary style as "a river of gold"), it is thought that the majority of his writings are now lost and only about one-third of the original works have survived.

Longinus is the conventional name of the author of the disquisition. On the Sublime, a work which focuses on the effect of good writing. Longinus, sometimes referred to as Pseudo-Longinus because his real name is unknown, was a Greek teacher of eloquence or a solemn critic who may have lived in the 1st or 3rd century AD. Longinus is known only for his treatise On the Sublime.

• ARISTOTLE : THE POETICS

TEXT

Chapter 1: 'Imitation' the common principle of the Arts of Poetry

I propose to treat of Poetry in itself and of its various kinds, noting the essential quality of each; to inquire into the structure of the plot as precondition to a good poem; into the number and nature of the parts of

which a poem is composed; and similarly into whatever else falls within the same probe. Following, then, the order of nature, let us begin with the principles which come first.

Epic poetry and devastation farce also and Boisterous: poetry, and the music of the flute and of the lyre in most of their forms, are all in their general inception modes of replica. They differ, however, from one another in three respects: the medium, the objects, the manner or mode of imitation, being in each case distinct.

For as there are persons who, by conscious art or mere habit, emulate and represent various objects through the medium of colour and form, or again by the voice; so in the arts above mentioned, taken as a whole, the replica is produced by cadence, language, or 'accord', either singly or combined.

Thus in the music of the flute and of the lyre, 'accord' and rhythm alone are employed; also in other arts, such as that of the shepherd's pipe, which are essentially similar to these. In dancing, rhythm alone is used without 'accord'; for even dancing imitates character, emotion, and action, by candence movement.

There is another art which imitates by means of language alone, and that either in prose or verse—which, verse, again, may either combine different metres or consist of but one kind—but this has hitherto been without a name. For there is no common term we could apply to the mimes of Sophron and Xenarchus and the Socratic dialogues on the one hand; and, on the other, to poetic imitations in iambic, elegiac, or any similar metre. People do, indeed, add the word 'maker' or 'poet' to the name of the metre, and speak of elegiac poets, or epic (that is, hexameter) poets, as if it were not the imitation that makes the poet, but the verse that entitles them all indiscriminately to the name. Even when a disquisition on medicine or natural science is brought out in verse, the name of poet is by custom given to the author; and yet Homer and Empedocles have nothing in common but the metre, so that it would be right to call the one poet, the other physicist rather than poet. On the same principle, even if a writer in his poetic imitation were to combine all metres, as Chaeremon did in his Centaur, which is a medley composed of metres of all kinds, we should bring him too under the general term poet. So much then for these distinctions.

There are, again, some arts which recruit all the means above mentioned, namely, rhythm, tune, and metre. Such are Dithyrambic and Nomic poetry, and also Devastation and farce; but between them the

difference is, that in the first two cases these means are all employed in combination, in the latter, now one means is employed, now another.

Such, then, are the differences of the arts with respect to the medium of imitation.

Chapter 2: The Objects of Replica

Since the objects of replica are men in action, and these men must be either of a higher or a lower type (for moral character mainly answers to these divisions, goodness and badness being the distinguishing marks of moral differences), it follows that we must represent men either as better than in real life, or as worse, or as they are. It is the same in painting. Polygnotus depicted men as nobler than they are, Pauson as less noble, Dionysius drew them true to life.

Now it is evident that each of the modes of replica above mentioned will exhibit these differences, and become a distinct kind in imitating objects that are thus categorical. Such diverseness may be found even in dancing,: flute-playing, and harp-playing. So again in language, whether prose or verse unaccompanied by music. Homer, for example, makes men better than they are; Cleophon as they are; Hegemon the Thasian, the inventor of pastiche, and Nicochares, the author of the Deiliad, worse than they are. The same thing holds good of Dithyrambs and Nomes; here too one may portray different types, as Timotheus and Philoxenus differed in representing their Cyclopes. The same distinction marks off Devastation from Comedy; for Comedy aims at representing men as worse, Devastation as better than in actual life.

Chapter 3: The Manner of Imitation

There is still a third difference—the manner in which each of these objects may be plagiarized. For the medium being the same and the objects the same, the poet may emulate by portrayal—in which case he can either take another personality as Homer does, or speak in his own person, unchanged—or he may present all his characters as living and moving before us.

These, then, as we said at the beginning, are the three differences which distinguish creative replica—the medium, the objects, and the manner. So that from one point of view, Sophocles is an impersonator of the same kind as Homer—for both emulate higher types of character; from another point of view, of the same kind as Aristophanes—for both emulate persons acting and doing. Hence, some say, the name of 'drama' is given to such poems, as representing action. For the same reason the Dorians profess the contrivance both of Devastation and Farce, The

profess to farce is put forward by the Megarians—not only by those of Greece proper, who asseverate that it originated under their suffrage, but also by the Megarians of Sicily, for the poet Epicharmus, who is much earlier than Chionides and Magnes, belonged to that country. Tragedy too is claimed by certain Dorians of the Peloponnese. In each case they allure to the corroboration of language. The outlying villages, they say, are by them called {kappa omega mu alpha iota}, by the Athenians {delta eta mu iota}: and they assume that Comedians were so named not from {kappa omega mu 'alpha zeta epsilon iota nu}, 'to revel', but because they wandered from village to village (kappa alpha tau alpha / kappa omega mu alpha sigma), being excluded insolent from the city. They add also that the Dorian word for 'doing' is {delta rho alpha nu}, and the Athenian, {pi rho alpha tau tau epsilon iota nu}.

This may suffice as to the number and nature of the various modes of replica.

Chapter 4: The Origin and Development of Poetry

Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature. First, the intrusion of replica is implanted in man from childhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures, and through replica learns his earliest lessons; and no less universal is the pleasure felt in things plagiarized. We have corroboration of this in the facts of experience. Objects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to envisage when reproduced with minute fealty : such as the forms of the most contemptible animals and of dead bodies. The cause of this again is, that to learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers but to men in general; whose capacity, however, of learning is more limited. Thus the reason why men enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or deducing and saying perhaps, 'Ah, that is he'. For if you happen not to have seen the original, the pleasure will be due not to the replica as such, but to the implementation, the colouring, or some such other cause.

Replica, then, is one intuition of our nature. Next, there is the instinct for 'harmony' and rhythm, metres being manifestly sections of cadence. Persons, therefore, starting with this natural gift developed by degrees their special proficiencies, till their rude spontaneities gave birth to Poetry.

Poetry now deviate in two directions, according to the individual character of the writers. The graver spirits imitated noble actions and the actions of good men. The more in consequential sort plagiarized the

actions of meaner persons, at first composing satires, as the former did hymns to the gods and the praises of famous men. A poem of the mocking kind cannot indeed be put down to any author earlier than Homer; though many such writers probably there were. But from Homer onward, precedent can be recount—his own Margites, for example and other similar compositions. The pertinent metre was also here introduced; hence the measure is still called the elegiac or burlesque measure, being that in which people travesty one another. Thus the older poets were distinguished as writers of heroic or of burlesque verse.

As, in the serious style, Homer is pre-eminent among poets, for he alone combined dramatic form with excellence of replica, so he too first laid down the main lines of Comedy, by dramatising the prurient instead of writing personal derision. His Margites bears the same relation to Farce that the Communication and Odyssey do to Devastation. But when Devastation and Farce came to light, the two classes of poets still followed their natural bent: the caricaturists became writers of Comedy and the Epic poets were succeeded by Tragedians, since the drama was a larger and higher form of art.

Whether Devastation has as yet perfected its proper types or not; and whether it is to be judged in itself, or in relation also to the audience—this raises another question. Be that as it may, Devastation—as also farce— was at first mere spontaneity. The one originated with the authors of the Dithyramb, the other with those of the phallic songs, which are still in use in many of our cities. Devastation advanced by slow degrees; each new element that showed itself was in turn developed. Having passed through many changes, it found its natural form, and there it stopped.

Aeschylus first introduced a second actor; he slacken the importance of the Chorus and assigned the leading part to the dialogue. Sophocles raised the number of actors to three, and added scene-painting. Moreover, it was not till late that the short plot was discarded for one of greater compass, and the freakish articulation of the earlier concepiscantc form for the stately manner of Devastation. The dactyl measure then replaced the anagestic tetrameter, which was originally employed when the poetry was of the concupiscent order, and had greater biases with dancing. Once dialogue had come in, Nature herself discovered the appropriate measure. For the biases is, of all measures, the most vernacular : we see it in the fact that conversational speech runs into biases lines more intermittently frequently than into any other kind of balled; rarely into hexameters, and only when we drop the vernacular cadency. The additions to the number of'episodes' or acts,

and the other accessories of which tradition; tells, must be taken as already described; for to discuss them in detail would, doubtless, be a large undertaking.

Chapter 5: Definition of the Ludicrous, and a Brief Sketch of the Rise of Farce

Farce is, as we have said, an replica of characters of a lower type, not, however, in the full sense of the word bad, the Ludicrous being merely a subdivision of the nasty. It consists in some defect or ugliness which is not painful or ruinous. To take an obvious example, the comic mask is ugly and distorted, but does not imply pain.

The successive changes through which devastation passed, and the authors of these changes, are well known, whereas Farce has had no history, because it was not at first treated seriously. It was late before the Archon granted a comic chorus to a poet; the performers were till then voluntary. Comedy had already taken definite shape when comic poets, flawlessly so called, are heard of. Who furnished it with masks, or prologues, or increased the number of actors—these and other similar details remain unknown. As for the plot, it came originally from Sicily; but of Athenian writers Crates was the first who, abandoning the 'dactyl' or burlesque form, generalised his themes and plots.

Epic poetry agrees with Tragedy in so far as it is an replica in verse of characters of a higher type. They differ, in that Epic poetry admits but one kind of metre, and is narrative in form. They differ, again, in their length: for Devastation endeavours, as far as possible, to confine itself to a single revolution of the sun, or but slightly to exceed this limit; whereas the Epic action has no limits of time. This, then, is a second point of difference; though at first the same freedom was admitted in Tragedy as in Epic poetry.

Of their constituent parts some are common to both, some bizarre to Devastation, whoever, therefore, knows what is good or bad Devastation, knows also about Epic poetry. All the elements of an Epic poem are found in Devastation, but the elements of a Tragedy are not all found in the Epic poem.

Chapter 6: Definition of Devastation.

Of the poetry which resemble in hexameter verse, and of Farce, we will speak hereafter. Let us now discuss Devastation, resuming its formal definition, as resulting from what has been already said.

Tragedy, then, is an replica of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language festoon with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper catharsis of these emotions. By 'language festoon', I mean language into which rhythm, 'accord,' and song enter. By 'the several kinds in separate parts,' I mean, that some parts are concluded through the medium of verse alone, others again with the aid of song.

Now as tragic replica implies persons acting, it necessarily follows, in the first place, that Spectacular equipment will be a part of Devastation. Next, Song and Diction, for these are the medium of replica. By 'Diction' I mean the mere measured the words: as for 'Song,' it is a term whose sense every one understands.

Again, Devastation is the replica of an action; and an action implies personal agents, who necessarily possess certain distinctive qualities both of character and thought; for it is by these that we qualify actions themselves, and these—thought and, character—are the two natural causes from which actions spring, and on actions again all success or failure depends. Hence, the Plot is the replica of the action: for by plot I here mean the arrangement of the incidents. By Character I mean that in virtue of which we ascribe certain qualities to the agents. Thought is required wherever a statement is proved, or, it may be, a general truth articulate. Every Devastation, therefore, must have six parts," which parts determine its quality—namely, Plot, Character, Diction, Thought, Pageant, Song. Two of the parts constitute the medium of replica, one the manner, and three the objects of replica. And these complete the list. These elements have been employed, we may say, by the poets to a man; in fact, every play contains extravaganza elements as well as Character, Plot, Articulation, Song, and Thought.

But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For Devastation is an replica, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action and its end is a mode of action, not a quality. Now character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character: character comes in as ancillary to the actions. Hence the incidents and-the plot are the end of a devastation; and the end is the chief thing of all. Again, without action there cannot be a rendition; there may be without character. The tragedies of most of our modern poets fail in the rendering of character; and of poets in general this is often true. It is the same in painting; and here lies the difference between Zeuxis and Polygnotus. Polygnotus depicts character well: the

style of Zeuxis is benefit of conscientious quality. Again, if you string together a set of speeches expressive of character and well finished in point of insufficient and thought, you will not produce the essential tragic effect nearly so well as with a play which, however deficient in these respects, yet has a plot and artistically constructed incidents. Besides which, the most powerful elements of emotional: interest in Tragedy Peripeteia or Annulment of the Situation, and Recognition scenes—are parts of the plot. A further proof is, that gremlin in the art attain to finish: of diction and precision of enactment before they can construct the plot. It is the same with almost all the early poets.

The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a devastation : Character holds the second place. A similar fact is seen in painting. The most beautiful colours, laid on confusedly, will not give as much pleasure as the chalk outline of a portrait. Thus Devastation is the replica of an action, and of the agents mainly with a view to the action.

Third in order is Thought—that is, the faculty of saying what is possible and pertinent in given circumstances. In the case of magniloquence, this is the function of the Political art and of the art of eloquence : and so indeed the older poets make their characters speak the language of civic life; the poets of our time, the language of the speechifies. Character is that which affirms moral purpose, showing what kind of things a man chooses or avoids. Speeches, therefore, which do not make this apparent, or in which the speaker does not choose or avoid anything whatever, are not expressive of character. Thought, on the other hand, is found where something is proved to be, or not to be, or a general maxim is enunciated.

Fourth among the elements itemize comes Articulation; by which I mean, as has been already said, the expression of the meaning in words; and its essence is the same both in verse and prose.

Of the remaining elements Song holds the chief place among the paraphernalia.

The pageant has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its own, but, of all the parts, it is the least artistic, and connected least with the art of poetry. For the power of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors. Besides, the production of eye-catching effects depends more on the art of the stage machinist than on that of the poet.

Chapter 7: The Plot must be a Whole

These principles being established, let us now discuss the proper structure of the Plot, since this is the first and most important thing in Devastation.

Now, according to our definition, Devastation is an replica of an action that is complete, and whole, and of a certain magnitude; for there may be a whole that is wanting in magnitude. A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contradictory, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well formulated plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at random, but conform to these principles.

Again, a beautiful object, whether it be a living organism or any whole composed of parts, must not only have an orderly arrangement of parts, but must also be of a certain magnitude; for beauty depends on magnitude and order. Hence a very small animal organism cannot be beautiful; for the view of it is muddled, the object being seen in an almost indiscernible moment of time. Nor, again, can one of vast size be beautiful; for as the eye cannot take it all in at once, the unity and sense of the whole is lost for the spectator; as for instance if there were one a thousand miles long. As, therefore, in the case of animate bodies and organisms a certain vestness is necessary, and a vestness which may be easily fondled in one view; so in the plot, a certain length is necessary, and a length which can be easily fondled by the memory. The limit of length in relation to dramatic competition and voluptuous domonstration, is no part of artistic theory. For had it been the rule for a hundred calamities to compete together, the performance would have been regulated by the water-clock—as indeed we are told was hitherto done. But the limit as fixed by the nature of the drama itself is this: the greater the length, the more beautiful will the piece be by reason of its size, provided that the whole be limpid. And to define the matter roughly, we may say that the proper vastness is comprised within such limits, that the sequence of events, according to the law of probability or necessity, will admit of a change from bad fortune to good, or from good fortune to bad.

Chapter 8: The Plot must be a Unity

Unity of plot does not, as some persons think, consist in the Unity of the hero. For infinitely various are the incidents in one man's life which

cannot be reduced to unity; and so, too, there are many actions of one man out of which we cannot make one action. Hence, the error, as it appears, of all poets who have composed a Heracleid, a Theseid, or other poems of the kind. They imagine that as Heracles was one man, the story of Heracles must also be a unity. But Homer, as in all else he is of outweighing merit, here too—whether from art or natural genius—seems to have happily ascertained the truth. In composing the Odyssey he did not include all the adventures of Odysseus—such as his wound on Parnassus, or his counterfeit madness at the convening of the host—incidents between which there was no necessary or probable connection: but he made the Odyssey, and likewise the communication, to centre round an action that in our sense of the word is one. As therefore, in the other onomatopoeic arts, the replica is one when the object plagiarized is one, so the plot, being an replica of an action, must emulate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them is deranged or removed, the whole will be disunited and disturbed. For a thing whose presence or absence makes no visible difference, is not an organic part of the whole.

Chapter 9: Dramatic Unity

It is, moreover, evident from what has been said, that it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen—what is possible according to the law of prospect or necessity. The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with metre no less than without it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. Poetry, therefore, is a more metaphysical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular. By the universal, I mean how a person of a certain type will on occasion speak or act, according to the law of prospect or necessity; and it is this universality at which poetry aims in the names she attaches to the bigwig. The particular is—for example—what Alcibiades did or suffered. In Farce this is already apparent: for here the poet first constructs the plot on the lines of prospect, and then inserts characteristic names—unlike the caricaturists who write about particular individuals. But dramaturges still keep to real names, the reason being that what is possible is trustworthy: what has not happened we. do not at once feel sure to be possible: but what has happened is apparently possible: otherwise it would not have happened. Still there are even some calamities in which there are only one or two well known names, the rest being fictitious. In others, none

are well known, as in Agathon's Antheus, where incidents and names alike are fictitious, and yet they give none the less pleasure. We must not, therefore, at all costs keep to the received icons, which are the usual subjects of Devastation. Indeed, it would be absurd to attempt it; for even subjects that are known are known only to a few, and yet give pleasure to all. It clearly follows that the poet or 'maker' should be the maker of plots rather than of verses; since he is a poet because he imitates, and what he imitates are actions. And even if he chances to take an historical subject, he is none the less a poet; for there is no reason why some events that have actually happened should not attune to the law of the probable and possible, and in virtue of that quality in them he is their poet or maker.

Of all plots and actions the anecdotal are the worst. I call a plot 'anecdotal' in which the episodes or acts succeed one another without probable or necessary sequence. Bad poets compose such pieces by their own fault, good poets, to please the players; for, as they write show pieces for competition, they stretch the plot beyond its capacity, and are often forced to break the natural continuity.

But again, Devastation replica is an imitation not only of a complete action, but of events enlivening fear or pity. Such an effect is best produced when the events come on us by sunrise; and the effect is profound when, at the same time, they follow as cause and effect. The tragic wonder will then be greater than if they happened of themselves or by accident; for even parallelism are most striking when they have an air of design. We may cite the statue of Mitys at Argos, which fell upon his murderer while he was a hyetometer at a festival, and killed him. Such events seem not to be due to mere chance. Plots, therefore, constructed on these principles are necessarily the best.

Chapter 10: Definitions of Simple and Complex Plots

Plots are either Simple or Complex, for the actions in real life, of which the plots are an replica, obviously show a similar distinction. An action which is one and continuous in the sense above defined, I call Simple, when the change of fortune takes place without Annulment of the Situation and without Conceding.

A Complex action is one in which the change is escorted by such Annulment, or by Recognition, or by both. These last should arise from the internal structure of the plot, so that what follows should be the necessary or probable result of the precursory action. It makes all the difference whether any given event is a case of post-hoc.

Chapter 11: Reversal of the Situation, Recognition, and Tragic or Cataclysmic Incident Defined and Explained

Ammilment of the Situation is a change by which the action veers round to its opposite, subject always to our rule of probability or necessity. Thus in the Oedipus, the messenger comes to cheer Oedipus and free him from his alarms about his mother, but by divulging who he is, he produces the opposite effect. Again in the Lynceus, Lynceus is being led away to his death, and Danaus goes with him, meaning, to assassinate him; but the outcome of the precursory incidents is that Danaus is killed and Lynceus saved Recognition, as the name indicates, is a change from incomprehension to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune. The best form of recognition is coincident with a Annulmate of the Situation, as in the Oedipus. There are indeed other forms. Even inanimate things of the most trivial kind may in a sense be objects of recognition. Again, we may recognise or discover whether a person has done a thing or not. But the recognition which is most intimately connected with the plot and action is, as we have said, the recognition of persons. This recognition, combined, with Anmulmate, will produce either pity or fear; and actions producing these effects are those which, by our definition, Devastation represents. Moreover, it is upon such situations that the issues of good or bad fortune will depend. Recognition, then, being between persons, it may happen that one person only is recognised by the other-when the lag is already known—or it may be necessary that the recognition should be on both sides. Thus Iphigenia is revealed to Orestes by the sending of the letter; but another act of recognition is required to make Orestes known to Iphigenia.

Two parts, then, of the Plot—Anmulment of the Situation and Recognition— turn upon surprises. A third part is the Scene of Suffering. The Scene of Suffering is a catastrophic or painful action, such as death on the stage, bodily torment, wounds and the like.

Chapter 12: The 'quantitative parts' of Devastation Defined

The parts of Devastation which must be treated as elements of the whole have been already mentioned. We now come to the denary parts the separate parts into which Tragedy is divided namely, Prelude, Episode, Exudate, Choric song; this last being divided into Parode and Stasimon. These are common to all plays: unique to some are the songs of actors from the stage and the Commoi.

The prelude is that entire part of a devastation which precedes the Parode of the Chorus. The Episode is that entire part of a devastation

which is between complete choric songs. The exudates is that entire part of a devastation which has no choric song after it. Of the Choric part the Parode is the first undivided pronouncement of the Chorus: the Stasimon is a Choric ode without elegiac or anapestic throb: the Commos is a joint moaning of Chorus and actors. The parts of Devastation which must be treated as elements of the whole have been already mentioned. The vicenary parts the separate parts into which it is divided—are here itemized.

Chapter 13: What Constitutes Tragic Action

As the sequence to what has already been said, we must proceed to consider what the poet should aim at, and what he should avoid, in constructing his plots; and by what means the specific effect of Devastation will be produced.

A perfect devastation should, as we have seen, be arranged not on the simple but on the complex plan. It should, moreover, emulate actions which excite pity and fear, this being the idiosyncratic mark of tragic replica. It follows plainly, in the first place, that the change, of coincidences presented must not be the spectacular of a ethical man brought from prosperity to nisfortune: for this moves neither pity nor fear; it entirely shocks us. Nor, again, that of a bad man passing from misfortune to affluence: for nothing can be more alien to the spirit of Devastation; it possesses no single tragic quality; it neither satisfies the moral sense nor calls forth pity or fear. Nor, again, should the downfall of the utter transgressor be exhibited. A plot of this kind would, doubtless, satisfy the moral sense, but it would inspire neither pity nor fear; for pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves. Such an event, therefore, will be neither pitiful nor terrible. There remains, then, the character between these two extremes,—that of a man who is not remarkably good and just,-yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice or perversion, but by some error or infirmity. He must be one who is highly renowned and prosperous— a personage likes Oedipus, Thyestes, or other illustrious men of such families.

A well-constructed plot should, therefore, be single in its issue, rather than double as some maintain. The change of fortune should be not from bad to good, but, retrograde, from good to bad. It should come about as the result not of vice, but of some great error or infirmity, in a character either such as we have described, or better rather than worse. The practice of the stage bears out our view. At first the poets recounted any legend that came in their way. Now, the best calamities are founded on the story of a few houses, on the fortunes of Alcmaeon, Oedipus,

Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus, and those others who have done or suffered something terrible. A devastation, then, to be perfect according to the rules of art should be of this construction. Hence they are in error who chastise Euripides just because he follows this principle in his plays, many of which end unhappily. It is, as we have said, the right ending. The best proof is that on the stage and in dramatic competition, such plays, if well worked out, are the most tragic in effect; and Euripides, faulty though he may be in the general management of his subject, yet is felt to be the most tragic of the poets.

In the second rank comes the kind of devastation which some place first. Like the Odyssey, it has a double thread of plot, and also an opposite holocaust for the good and for the bad. It is accounted the best because of the weakness of the spectators; for the poet is guided in what he writes by the wishes of his audience. The pleasure, however, thusly derived is not the true tragic pleasure. It is proper rather to Comedy, where those who, in the piece, are the deadliest enemies—like Orestes and Aegis thus— quit the stage as friends at the close, and no one destroys or is slain.

Chapter 14: The Tragic Emotions of Pity and Fear should Spring Out of the Plot Itself

Fear and pity may be aroused by picturesque means; but they may also result from the inner structure of the piece, which is the better way, and indicates a superior poet. For the plot ought to be so constructed that, even without the aid of the eye, he who hears the tale told will thrill with horror and melt to pity at what takes place. This is the impression we should receive from hearing the story of the Oedipus. But to produce this effect by the mere pageant is a less artistic method, and dependent on beside the point aids. Those who employ spectacular means to create a sense not of the terrible but only of the monstrous, are strangers to the purpose of devastation; for we must not demand of Devastation any and every kind of pleasure, but only that which is proper to it. And since the pleasure which the poet should afford is that which comes from pity and fear through replica, it is evident that this quality must be impressed upon the incidents.

Let us then determine what are the circumstances which strike us as terrible or pitiful.

Actions capable of this effect must happen between persons who are either friends or enemies or indifferent to one another. If an enemy kills an enemy, there is nothing to excite pity either in the act or the intention, —except so far as the suffering in itself is pitiful. So again with

indifferent persons. But when the tragic incident occurs between those who are near or dear to one another—if, for example, a brother kills, or intends to kill, a brother, a son his father, a mother her son, a son his mother, or any other deed of the kind is done—these are the situations to be looked for by the poet. He may not indeed destroy the framework of the received legends—the fact, for precedent, that Clytemnestra was slain by Orestes and Eriphyle by Alcmaeon but he ought to show invention of his own, and skilfully handle the traditional material. Let us explain more clearly what is meant by skilful handling.

The action may be done consciously and with knowledge of the persons, in the manner of the older poets. It is thus too that Euripides makes Medea slaughter her children. Or, again, the deed of horror may be done, but done in incomprehension, and the tie of kinship or friendship be discovered afterwards. The Oedipus of Sophocles is an example. Here, indeed, the incident is outside the drama proper; but cases occur where it falls within the action of the play: one may allude to the Alcmaeon of Astydamas, or Telegonus in the Wounded Odysseus. Again, there is a third case—to be about to act with knowledge of the persons and then not to act. The fourth case is> when some one is about to do an irreparable deed through ignorance, and makes the discovery before it is done. These are the only possible ways. For the deed must either be done or not done—and that wittingly or unwittingly! But of all these ways, to be about to act knowing the persons, and then not to act, is the worst, It is shocking without being tragic, for no disaster follows. It is, therefore, never, or very rarely,. found in poetry. One instance, however, is in the Antigone, where Haemon threatens to kill Creon. The next and better way is that the deed should be influited. Still better, that it should be inflicted in ignorance, and the discovery made afterwards. There is then nothing to shock us, while the discovery produces a startling effect. The last case is the best, as when in the Cresphontes Merope is about to slay her son, but, recognising who he is, spares his life. So in the Iphigenia, the sister recognises the brother just in time. Again in the Helle, the son recognises the mother when on the point of giving her up. This, then, is why a few families only, as has been already observed, furnish the subjects of devastation. It was not art, but happy chance, that led the poets in search of subjects to impress the tragic quality upon their plots. They are enforced, therefore, to have recourse to those houses whose history contains moving incidents like these.

Enough has now been said concerning the structure of the incidents, and the right kind of plot.

Chapter 15: The Element of Character in Tragedy

In respect of Character there are four things to be aimed at. First, and most important, it must be good. Now any speech or action that demonstrates moral purpose of any kind will be expressive of character: the character will be good if the purpose is good. This rule is relative to each class. Even a woman may be good, and also a slave; though the woman may be said to be an minion being and the slave quite worthless. The second thing to aim at is propriety. There is a type of manly valour; but valour in a woman, or unscrupulous cleverness, is inappropriate. Thirdly, character must be true to life: for this is a distinct thing from goodness and propriety, as here described. The fourth point is consistency: for though the subject of the imitation, who suggested the type, be inconsistent, still he must be consistently inconsistent. As an example of motiveless degradation of character, we have Menelaus in the Orestes: of character indecorous and inappropriate, the lament of Odysseus in the Scylla, and the speech of Melanippe: of inconsistency, the Iphigenia at Aulis—for Iphigenia the petitioner in no way resembles her later self.

As in the structure of the plot, so too in the enactment of character, the poet should always aim either at the necessary or the probable. Thus a person of a given character should speak or act in a given way, by the rule either of necessity or of probability; just as this event should follow that by necessary or probable sequence. It is therefore evident that the deciphering of the plot, no less than the complication, must arise out of the plot itself, it must not be brought about by the 'Deus ex Machina'—as in the Medea, or in the Return of the Greeks in the Iliad. The 'Deus ex Machina' should be employed only for events external to the drama—for predecessor or ensuring events, which He beyond the range of human knowledge, and which require to be reported or presaged; for to the gods we accredit the power of seeing all things. Within the action there must be nothing illogical. If the irrational cannot be excluded, it should be outside the scope of the devastation. Such is the illogical element in the Oedipus of Sophocles.

Again, since devastation is an replica of persons who are above the common level, the example of good portrait-painters should be followed. They, while reproducing the distinctive form of the original, make a likeness which is true to life and yet more beautiful. So too the poet, in representing men who are irascible or indolent, or have other defects of character, should preserve the type and yet exalt it. In this way Achilles is delineated by Agathon and Homer.

These then are rules the poet should observe. Nor should he neglect those appeals to the senses, which, though not among the essentials, are the collaterals of poetry; for here too there is much room for error. But of this enough has been said in our published treatises.

Chapter 16: Recognition: Its Various Kinds, with Examples

What Recognition is has been already explained. We will now itemize its kinds.

First, the least artistic form, which, from poverty of wit, is most commonly employed recognition by signs. Of these some are innate—such as 'the spear which the earth-born race bear on their bodies,' or the stars introduced by Carcinus in his Thyestes. Others are acquired after birth; and of these some are bodily marks, as scars; some external tokens, as necklaces, or the little ark in the Tyro by which the discovery is effected. Even these admit of more or less skilful treatment. Thus in the recognition of Odysseus by his scar, the discovery is made in one way by the nurse, in another by the swineherds. The use of tokens for the express purpose of proof—and, indeed, any formal proof with or without tokens—is a less artistic mode of recognition. A better kind is that which comes about by a turn of circumstance, as in the Bath Scene in the Odyssey.

Next come the recognitions invented at will by the poet, and on that account wanting in art. For example, Orestes in the Iphigenia affirms the fact that he is Orestes. She, indeed, makes herself known by the letter; but he, by speaking himself, and saying what the poet, not what the plot requires. This, therefore, is nearly in league to the culpability above mentioned—for Orestes might as well have brought tokens with him. Another similar instance is the Voice of the shuttle' in the Tereus of Sophocles.

The-third kind depends on memory when the sight of some object arouses a feeling: as in the Cyprians of Dicaeogenes, where the hero breaks into tears on seeing the picture; or again in the 'Lay of Alcinous', where Odysseus, hearing the balladeer play the lyre, recalls the past and weeps; and hence the recognition.

The fourth kind is by process of reasoning. Thus in the Choephori: 'Some one resembling me has come: no one resembles me but Orestes: therefore Orestes has come.' Such too is the discovery made by Iphigenia in the play of Polyidus the Sophist. It was a natural reflection for Orestes to make, 'So I too must die at the altar like my sister'. So, again, in the Tydeus of Theodectes, the father says, 'I came to find my son, and I lose my own life'. So too in the Phineidae: the women, on

seeing the place, implied their fate:—'Here we are doomed to die, for here we were cast forth.' Again, there is a composite kind of recognition involving false conjecture on the part of one of the characters, as in the Odysseus Disguised as a Messenger. A said <that no one else was able to bend the bow; ... hence B (the disguised Odysseus) imagined that A would> recognise the bow which, in fact, he had not seen; and to bring about a recognition by this means that the expectation A-would recognise the bow is false conjecture.

But, of all recognitions, the best is that which arises from the incidents themselves, where the startling discovery is made by natural means. Such is that in the Oedipus of Sophocles, and in the Iphigenia; for it was natural that Iphigenia should wish to dispatch a letter. These recognitions alone relinquish with the artificial aid of tokens or amulets. Next come the recognitions by process of reasoning.

In constructing the plot and working it out with the proper articulation, the poet should place the scene, as far as possible, before his eyes. In this way, seeing everything with the absolute acronyms, as if he were a spectator of the action, he will discover what is in keeping with it, and be most unlikely to overlook divergence. The need of such a rule is shown by the fault found in Carcinus. Amphiaraus was on his way from the temple. This fact escaped the observation of one who did not see the situation. On the stage, however, the piece failed, the audience being offended at the oversight.

Again, the poet should work out his play, to the best of his power with pertinent indication; for those who feel emotion are most cogent through natural sympathy with the characters they represent; and one who is flustered storms, one who is angry rages, with the most life-like reality. Hence poetry implies either a happy gift of nature or a strain of madness. In the one case a man can take the mould of any character; in the other, he is lifted out of his proper self.

As for the story, whether the poet takes it readymade or constructs it for himself, he should first sketch its general outline, and then fill in the episodes and enlarge on in detail. The general plan may be illustrated by the Iphigenia. A young girl is sacrificed; she disappears mysteriously from the eyes of those who sacrificed her; She is transported to another country, where the custom is to offer up all strangers to the goddess. To this ministry she is appointed. Sometime later her own brother chances to arrive. The fact that the oracle for some reason ordered him to go there, is outside the general plan of the play. The purpose, again, of his coming is outside the action proper. However, he comes, he is seized,

and, when on the point of being sacrificed, affirms who he is. The mode of recognition may be either that of Euripides or of Polyidus, in whose play he exclaims very naturally:—So it was not my sister only, but I too, who was doomed to be sacrificed'; and by that remark he is saved.

After this, the names being once given, it remains to fill in the episodes. We must see that they are relevant to the action. In the case of Orestes, for example, there is the madness which led to his capture, and his utterance by means of the purificatory rite. In the drama, the episodes are short, but it is these that give extension to Epic poetry. Thus the story of the Odyssey can be stated briefly. A certain man is absent from home for many years; he is jealously watched by Poseidon, and left desolate. Meanwhile his home is in a miserable predicament—suitors are wasting his substance and plotting against his son. At length, turbulent, he himself arrives; he makes certain persons enlighten with him; he attacks the suitors with his own hand, and is himself preserved while he destroys them. This is the quintessence of the plot; the rest is episode.

Chapter 18: Further Rules for the Tragic Poet

Every devastation falls into two parts—Complication and Deciphering or Clarification. Incidents extraneous to the action are frequently combined with a portion of the action proper, to form the Complication; the rest is the Deciphering. By the Complication I mean all that extends from the beginning of the action to the part which marks the turning-point to good or bad fortune. The Deciphering is that which extends from the beginning of the change to the end. Thus, in the Lynceus of Theodectes, the Complication consists of the incidents presupposed in the drama, the seizure of the child, and then again Deciphering extends from the allegation of murder to the end.

There are four kinds of Tragedy, the Complex, depending entirely on Annulment of the Situation and Recognition; the Piteous (where the motive is passion)—such as the calamities on Ajax and Ixion; the Ethical (where the motives are ethical)—such as the Phthiotides and the Peleus. The fourth kind is the Simple. <We here exclude the purely picturesque element>, exemplified by the Phorcides, the Prometheus, and scenes laid in Hades. The poet should endeavour, if possible, to combine all poetic elements; or failing that, the greatest number and those the most important; the more so, in face of the carping criticism of the day. For whereas there have formerly been good poets, each in his own branch, the critics now expect one man to surpass all others in their several lines of excellence.

In speaking of a devastation as the same or different, the best test to take is the plot. Identity exists where the Complication and Deciphering are the same. Many poets tie the knot well, but untangle it ill. Both arts, however, should always be mastered.

Again, the poet should remember what has been often said, and not make an Epic structure into a Devastation—by an Epic structure I mean one with a multiplicity of plots—as if, for cite, you were to make a devastation out of the entire story of the Iliad. In the Epic poem, owing to its length, each part assumes its proper vastness. In the drama the result is far from answering to the poet's expectation. The proof is that the poets who have dramatised the whole story of the Fall of Troy, instead of selecting portions, like Euripides; or who have taken the whole tale of Niobe, and not a part of her story, like Aeschylus, either fail utterly or meet with poor success on the stage. Even Agathon has been known to fail from this one defect. In his Annulments of the Situation, however, he shows a astounding skill in the effort to hit the popular taste—to produce a tragic effect that satisfies the moral sense. This effect is produced when the clever rogue, like Sisyphus, is outwitted, or the brave villain defeated. Such an event is probable in Agathon's sense of the word: 'it is probable', he says, 'that many things should happen clashing to feasibility'.

The Chorus too should be regarded as one of the actors; it should be an integral part of the whole, and share in the action, in the manner not of Euripides but of Sophocles. As for the later poets, their psalm-tune songs exist as little to the subject of the piece as to that of any other devastation. They are, therefore, sung as mere recesses, a practice first begun by Agnation. Yet what difference is there between introducing such psalm-tune recesses, and transferring a speech, or even a whole act, from one play to another?

Chapter 19: Thought, or the Intellectual Element, and Articulation in Devastation

It remains to speak of Articulation and Thought, the other parts of Devastation having been already discussed. Concerning Thought, we may assume what is said in the eloquence, to which inquiry the subject more strictly belongs. Under Thought is included every effect which has to be produced by speech, the subdivisions being—proof and rebuttal; the excitation of the feelings, such as pity, fear, anger, and the like; the suggestion of importance or its opposite. Now, it is evident that the dramatic incidents must be treated from the same points of view as the dramatic speeches, when the object is to evoke the sense of pity, fear, importance, or probability. The only difference is, that the incidents

should speak for themselves without verbal elucidation; while the effects aimed at in speech should be produced by the speaker, and as a result of the speech. For what were the business of a speaker, if the Thought were affirmed quite apart from what he says?

Next, as regards Articulation. One branch of the probe treats of the Modes of Pronouncement. But this province of knowledge belongs to the art of Delivery and to the masters of that science. It cite for instance—what is a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer, and so forth. To know or not to know these things involves no serious chastise upon the poet's art. For who can admit the culpability accused to Homer by Protagoras—that in the words, 'Sing, goddess, of the indignation, he gives a command under the idea that he utters a prayer? For to tell someone to do a thing or not to do it is, he says, a command. We may, therefore, pass this over as an probe that belongs to another art, not to poetry.

Chapter 20: Articulation, or Language in General

Language in general includes the following parts: Letter, Syllable, Connecting word, Noun, Verb, Inflexion or Case, Sentence or Phrase.

A Letter is an indivisible sound, yet not every such sound, but only one which can form part of a group of sounds. For even brutes utter indivisible sounds, none of which I call a letter. The sound I mean may be either a vowel, a semi-vowel, or a mute. A vowel is that which without impact of tongue or lip has an audible sound. A semi-vowel, that which with such impact has an audible sound, as S and R. A mute, that which with such impact has by itself no sound, but joined to a vowel sound becomes audible, as G and D. These are distinguished according to the form assumed by the mouth and the place where they are produced; according as they are aspirated or smooth, long or short; as they are acute, grave, or of an median tone; which inquiry belongs in detail to the writers on metre.

A Syllable is a non-significant sound, composed of a mute and a vowel: for GR without A is a syllable, as also with A—GRA. But the investigation of these differences belongs also to metrical science.

A Connecting word is a non-significant sound, which neither causes nor hinders the union of many sounds into one significant sound; it may be placed at either end or in the middle of a sentence. Or, a non-significant sound, which out of several sounds, each of them significant, is capable of forming one significant sound^-as {alpha mu theta iota}, {pi epsilon rho iota), and the like. Or, a non-significant sound, which marks the beginning, end, or division of a sentence; such, however, that it

cannot correctly stand by itself at the beginning of a sentence, as {mu epsilon nu}, {eta tau omicron iota}, {delta epsilon}.

A Noun is a composite significant sound, not marking time, of which no part is in itself significant: for in double or compound words we do not apply the separate parts as if each were in itself significant. Thus in Theodor us, 'god-given,' the {delta omega rho omicron nu} or 'gift' is not in itself significant.

A Verb is a composite significant sound, marking time, in which, as in the noun, no part is in itself significant. For 'man/ or 'white' does not express the idea of' when'; but 'he walks', or 'he has walked' does connote time, present or past.

Inflexion belongs both to the noun and verb, and expresses either the relation 'of, 'to', or the like; or that of number, whether one or many, as 'man' or 'men' ; or the modes or tones in actual delivery, e.g., a question or a command. 'Did he go?' and 'go' are verbal inflexions of this kind.

A Sentence or Phrase is a composite significant sound, some at least of whose parts are in themselves significant; for not every such group of words consists of verbs and nouns—the definition of man', for example—but it may dispense even with the verb. Still it will always have some significant part, as 'in walking', or 'Cleon son of Cleon'. A sentence or phrase may form a unity in two ways—either as signifying one thing, or as consisting of several parts linked together. Thus the Iliad is one by the linking together of parts, the definition of man by the unity of the thing signified.

Chapter 21: Poetic Articulation

Words are of two kinds, simple and double. By simple I mean those composed of non-significant elements, such as {gamma eta}. By double or compound, those composed either of a significant and non-significant element {though within the whole word no element is significant), or of elements that are both significant. A word may likewise be triple, quadrivial, or multiple in form, like so many Massilian expressions, e.g., 'Hermo-caico-xanthus who prayed to Father Zeus>'.

Every word is either current, or strange, or metaphorical, or ornamental, or newly-coined, or lengthened, or contracted, or altered.

By a current or proper word I mean one which is in general use among a people; by a strange word, one which is in use in another country. Plainly, therefore, the same word may be at once strange and current, but not in relation to the same people. The word {sigma iota

gamma upsilon nu omicron nu}, 'lance', is to the Cyprians a current term but to us a strange one.

Metaphor is the application of an alien name by transferee either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion Thus from genus to species, as: 'There lies my ship'; for lying at anchor is a species of lying. From species to genus, as: 'Verily ten thousand noble deeds hath Odysseus wrought'; for ten thousand is a species of large number, and is here used for a large number generally. From species to species, as: 'With blade of bronze drew away the life', and 'Cleft the water with the vessel of inflexible bronze'. Here {alpha rho upsilon rho alpha iota}, 'to draw away', is used for {tau alpha mu epsilon iota nu}, 'to cleave,' and {tau alpha mu epsilon iota nu} again for {alpha rho upsilon alpha iota}—each being a species of taking away. Analogy or proportion is when the second term is to the first as the fourth to the third. We may then use the fourth for the second, or the second for the fourth. Sometimes too we qualify the metaphor by adding the term to which the proper word is relative. Thus the cup is to Dionysus as the shield to Ares. The cup may, therefore, be called 'the shield of Dionysus', and the shield 'the cup of Ares.' Or, again, as old age is to life, so is evening to day. Evening may therefore be called 'the old age of the day', and old age, 'the evening of life', or, in the phrase of Empedocles, 'life's setting sun.' For some of the terms of the proportion there is at times no word in existence; still the metaphor may be used. For instance, to disperse seed is called sowing: but the action of the sun in dispersion his rays is nameless. Still this process bears to the sun the same relation as sowing to the seed. Hence the expression of the poet 'sowing the god-created light'. There is another way in which this kind of metaphor may be employed. We may apply an peculiar term, and then deny of that term one of its proper facets; as if we were to call the shield, not 'the cup of Ares', but 'the wineless cup'.

An ornamental word ...

A newly-coined word is one which has never been even in local use, but is adopted by the poet himself. Some such words there appear to be: as {epsilon rho nu upsilon gamma epsilon sigma}, 'sprouters', for {kappa epsilon rho alpha tau alpha}, 'horns', and {alpha rho eta tau eta rho}, 'mendicant' for {iota epsilon rho epsilon upsilon sigma}, 'priest'.

A word is lengthened when its own vowel is exchanged for a longer one, or when a syllable is inserted. A word is contracted when some part of it is removed. Precedent of lengthening are—{pi omicron lambda eta omicron sigma} for {pi omicron lambda epsilon omega sigma}, and {Pi

eta lambda eta iota alpha delta epsilon omega} for {Pi eta lambda epsilon iota delta omicron upsilon}; of shrinkage—{kappa rho iota}, {delta omega}, and {omicron psi}, as in {mu iota alpha/gamma iota nu epsilon tau alpha iota/alpha mu phi omicron tau epsilon rho omega nu/omicron psi}.

An altered word is one in which part of the ordinary form is left unchanged, arid part is re-cast; as in {delta epsilon xi iota-tau epsilon rho oraicron nu / kappa alpha tau alpha / mu alpha zeta omicron nu}, {delta epsilon xi iota tau epsilon rho omicron nu} is for {delta epsilon xi iota omicron nu}.

[Nouns in themselves are either masculine, feminine, or neuter. Masculine are such as end in {nu}, {rho}, {sigma}, or in some letter compounded with {sigma}—these being two, and {xi}. Feminine, such as end in vowels that are always long, namely {eta} and {omega}, and—of vowels that admit of lengthening—those in {alpha}. Thus the number of letters in which nouns masculine and feminine end is the same; for {psi} and {xi} are equivalent to endings in {sigma}. No noun ends in a mute or a vowel short by nature. Three only end in {iota}—{mu eta lambda iota}, {kappa omicron mu mu iota}, {pi epsilon pi epsilon rho iota}: five end in {upsilon}. Neuter nouns end in these two latter vowels; also in {nu} and {sigma}.]

Chapter 22: How Poetry Combines Elevation of Language with Perspicuity

The perfection of style is to be clear without being mean. The clearest style is that which uses only current or proper words; at the same time it is mean:—witness the poetry of Colophon and of Sthenelus. That diction, on the other hand, is lofty and raised above the commonplace which employs unusual words. By unusual, I mean strange (or rare) words, metaphorical, lengthened—anything, in short, that differs from the normal idiom. Yet a style wholly composed of such words is either a riddle or a argot; a riddle, if it consists of metaphors; a argot, if it consists of strange (or rare) words. For the essence of a riddle is to express true facts under impossible combinations. Now this cannot be done by any arrangement of ordinary words, but by the use of metaphor it can. Such is the riddle:—A man I saw who on another man had conscientious the bronze by aid of fire', and others of the same kind. A diction that is made up of strange (or rare) terms is a jargon. A certain infusion, therefore', of these elements is necessary to style; for the strange (or rare) word, the metaphorical, the ornamental, and the other kinds above mentioned, will raise it above the commonplace and mean, while the use of proper words will make it perspicuous. But nothing contributes more to produce a clearness of diction that is remote from commonness than the lengthening, contraction, and alteration of words. For by straying in exceptional cases from the normal idiom, the language will gain distinction; while, at the same time, the partial allegiance with usage will give perspicuity. The critics, therefore, are in error who censure these licenses of speech, and hold the author up to ridicule. Thus Eucleides, the elder, declared that it

would be an easy matter to be a poet if you might lengthen syllables at will. He caricatured the practice in the very form of his articulation as in the verse: '{Epsilon pi iota chi alpha rho eta nu / epsilon iota delta omicron nu / Mu alpha rho alpha theta omega nu alpha delta epsilon / Beta alpha delta iota zeta omicron nu tau alpha}, or, {omicron upsilon kappa / alpha nu / gamma / epsilon rho alpha mu epsilon nu omicron sigma / tau omicron nu / epsilon kappa epsilon iota nu omicron upsilon /epsildn lambda epsilon beta omicron rho omicron nu}. To employ such license at all obtrusively is, no doubt, malformed; but in any mode of poetic articulation there must be moderation. Even metaphors, strange (or rare) words, or any similar forms of speech, would produce the like effect if used without exclusive and with the express purpose of being infusion. How great a difference is made by the appropriate use of lengthening, may be seen in Epic poetry by the insertion of ordinary forms in the verse. So, again, if we take a strange (or rare) word, a metaphor, or any similar mode of expression, and replace it by the current or proper term, the truth of our observation will be apparent. For example Aeschylus and Euripides each composed the same iambic line. But the adaptation of a single word by Euripides, who employed the rarer term instead of the ordinary one, makes one verse appear beautiful and the other trivial. Aeschylus in his Phil-tetes says: {Phi alpha gamma epsilon delta alpha iota nu alpha / <delta>./ eta / mu omicron upsilon / sigma alpha rho kappa alpha sigma / epsilon rho thela iota epsilon iota / pi omicron delta omicron sigma}.

Euripides expediency {Theta omicron iota nu alpha tau alpha iota} 'feasts on* for {epsilon sigma theta iota epsilon iota} 'feeds on'. Again, in the line, {nu upsilon nu / delta epsilon / mu /epsilon omega nu / omicron lambda iota gamma iota gamma upsilon sigma / tau epsilon / kappa alpha iota / omicron upsilon tau iota delta alpha nu omicron sigma / kappa alpha iota / alpha epsilon iota kappa eta sigma, the difference will be felt if we proxy the common words, {nu upsilon nu / delta epsilon / mu / epsilon omega nu / mu iota kappa rho omicron sigma / tau epsilon / kappa alpha iota / alpha rho theta epsilon nu iota kappa omicron sigma / kappa alpha iota / alpha epsilon iota delta gamma sigma}. Or, if for the line, {delta iota phi rho omicron nu / alpha epsilon iota kappa epsilon lambda iota omicron nu / kappa alpha tau alpha theta epsilon iota sigma / omicron lambda iota gamma eta nu / tau epsilon / tau rho alpha pi epsilon iota sigma / omicron lambda iota gamma eta nu / tau epsilon / tau rho alpha pi epsilon zeta alpha nu),} We read, {delta iota phi rho omicron nu / mu omicron chi theta eta rho omicron nu / kappa alpha tau alpha theta epsilon iota sigma / mu iota kappa rho alpha nu / tau epsilon / tau rho alpha pi epsilon zeta alpha nu}.

Or, for {eta iota omicron nu epsilon sigma / beta omicron omicron omega rho iota nu, eta iota omicron nu epsilon sigma kappa rho alpha zeta omicron upsilon rho iota nu}.

Again, Ariphrades ridiculed the dramaturges for using phrases which no one would employ in ordinary speech: for example, {delta omega mu alpha tau omega nu / alpha pi omicron} instead of {alpha pi omicron / delta omega mu alpha tau omega nu}, {rho epsilon theta epsilon nu}, {epsilon gamma omega / delta epsilon / nu iota nu}, {Alpha chi iota lambda lambda epsilon omega sigma / pi epsilon rho iota} instead of (pi epsilon rho iota / 'Alpha chi iota lambda lambda epsilon omega sigma}, and the like. It is accurately because such phrases are not part of the current idiom that they give distinction to the style. This, however, he failed to see.

It is a great matter to observe exclusive in these several modes of expression, as also in compound words, strange (or rare) words, and so forth. But the greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor. This alone cannot be exposed by another; it is the mark of genius, for to make good metaphors implies an eye for similitude.

Of the various kinds of words, the compound are best adapted to Dithyrambs, rare words to heroic poetry, metaphors to iambic. In heroic poetry, indeed, all these varieties are serviceable. But in dactyl verse, which reproduces, as far as may be, familiar speech, the most appropriate words are those which are found even in prose. These are—the current or proper, the metaphorical, the ornamental.

Concerning devastation and replica by means of action this may satisfy.

Chapter 23: Epic Poetry

As to that poetic replica which is narrative in form and employs a single metre, the plot apparently ought, as in a devastation, to be constructed on dramatic principles. It should have for its subject a single action, whole and complete, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. It will thus resemble a living organism in all its unity, and produce the pleasure proper to it. It will differ in structure from historical compositions, which of necessity present not a single action, but a single period, and all that happened within that period to one person or to many, little connected together as the events may be. For as the sea-fight at Salamis and the battle with the Carthaginians in Sicily took place at the same time, but did not tend to any one result, so in the sequence of events, one thing sometimes follows another, and yet no single result is

thereby produced. Such is the practice, we may say, of most poets. Here again, then, as has been already observed, the preeminent excellence of Homer is apparent. He never attempts to make the whole war of Troy the subject of his poem, though that war had a beginning and an end. It would have been too vast a theme, and not easily fondled in a single view. If, again, he had kept it within moderate limits, it must have been over-complicated by the variety of the incidents. As it is, he detaches a single portion, and admits as episodes many events from the general story of the war—such as the Catalogue of the ships and others—thus variegate the poem. All other poets take a single hero, a single period, or an action single indeed, but with a multiplicity of parts. Thus did the author of the Cypria and of the Little Iliad. For this reason the communication and the Odyssey each furnish the subject of one devastation, or, at most, of two; while the Cypria supplies materials for many, and the Little communication for eight—the Award of the Arms, the Philoctetes, the Neoptolemus, the Eurypylus, the Mendicant Odysseus, the Laconian Women, the Fall of Ilium, the Departure of the Fleet.

Chapter 24: Further Points of Agreement with Tragedy

Again, Epic poetry must have as many kinds as devastation: it must be simple, or complex, or 'ethical', or 'pathetic'. The parts also, with the exception of song and spectacle, are the same; for it requires Annulments of the Situation, Recognitions, and Scenes of Suffering. Moreover, the thoughts and the diction must be artistic. In all these respects Homer is our earliest and sufficient model. Indeed each of his poems has a twofold character. The Iliad is at once simple and 'pathetic', and the Odyssey complex (for Recognition scenes run through it), and at the same time 'ethical'. Moreover, in diction and thought they are supreme.

Epic poetry differs from Devastation in the scale on which it is constructed, and in its metre. As regards scale or length, we have already laid down an adequate limit:—the beginning and the end must be capable of being brought within a single view. This condition will be satisfied by poems on a smaller scale than the old epics, and answering in length to the group of calamities presented at a single sitting.

Epic poetry has, however, a great—a special—capacity for increscent its dimensions, and we can see the reason. In Tragedy we cannot emulate several lines of actions carried on at one and the same time; we must confine ourselves to the action on the stage and the part taken by the players.. But in Epic poetry, owing to the narrative form, many events simultaneously concluded can be presented; and these, if relevant to the subject, add mass and dignity to the poem. The Epic has here an advantage, and one that conduces to grandeur of effect, to diverting the

mind of the hearer, and relieving the story with varying episodes. For sameness of incident soon produces satiety, and makes tragedies fail on the stage.

As for the metre, the heroic measure has proved its fitness by the test of experience. If a narrative poem in any other metre or in many metres were now composed, it would be found incongruous. For of all measures the heroic is the stateliest and the most massive; and hence it most readily admits rare words and metaphors, which is another point in which the narrative form of replica stands alone. On the other hand, the iambic and the trochaic tetrameter are stirring measures, the latter being akin to dancing, the former expressive of action. Still more absurd would it be to mix together different metres, as was done by Chaeremon. Hence no one has ever composed a poem on a great scale in any other than heroic verse. Nature herself, as we have said, teaches the choice of the proper measure.

Homer, admirable in all respects, has the special merit of being the only poet who rightly appreciates the part he should take himself. The poet should speak as little as possible in his own person, for it is not this that makes him an imitator. Other poets appear themselves upon the scene throughout, and imitate but little and rarely. Homer, after a few preliminary/initiative words, at once brings in a man, or woman, or other personage; none of them wanting in characteristic qualities, but each with a character of his own.

The element of the wonderful is required in Devastation. The irrational, on which the wonderful depends for its chief effects, has wider scope in Epic poetry, because there the person acting is not seen. Thus, the pursuit of Hector would be risible if placed upon the stage—the Greeks standing still and not joining in the pursuit, and Achilles waving them back. But in the Epic poem the absurdity passes unnoticed. Now the wonderful is pleasing: as may be implied from the fact that everyone tells a story with some addition of his own, knowing that his hearers like it. It is Homer who has chiefly taught other poets the art of telling lies skillfully. The secret of it lies in a delusion. For, assuming that if one thing is or becomes, a second is or becomes, men imagine that, if the second is, the first likewise is or becomes. But this is a false conjecture. Hence, where the first thing is untrue, it is quite unnecessary, provided the second be true, to add that the first is or has become. For the mind, knowing the second to be true, falsely infers the truth of the first. There is an example of this in the Bath Scene of the Odyssey.

Accordingly, the poet should prefer to be expected impossibilities to dubious possibilities. The tragic plot must not be composed of irrational parts. Everything irrational should, if possible, be excluded; or, at all events, it should lie outside the action of the play (as, in the Oedipus, the hero's ignorance as to the manner of Laius' death); not within the drama—as in the Electra, the messenger's account of the Pythian games; or, as in the Mysians, the man who has come from Tegea to

Mysia and is still speechless. The plea that otherwise the plot would have been ruined, is ridiculous; such a plot should not in the first instance be constructed. But once the irrational has been introduced and an air of likelihood imparted to it, we must accept it in spite of the ridiculousness. Take even the irrational incidents in the Odyssey, where Odysseus is left upon the shore of Ithaca. How intolerable even these might have been would be apparent if an inferior poet were to treat the subject. As it is, the absurdity is camouflaged by the poetic charm with which the poet invests it.

The diction should be elaborated in the pauses of the action, where there is no expression of character or thought. For, conversely, character and thought are merely conceited by a articulation that is over brilliant.

Chapter 25 : Critical Objections Brought Against Poetry and the Principles on Which They are to be Answered

With respect to critical difficulties and their solutions, the number and nature of the sources from which they may be drawn may be thus exhibited.

The poet being an impersonator, like a painter or any other artist, must of necessity emulate one of three objects—things as they were or are, things as they are said or thought to be, or things as they ought to be. The vehicle of expression is language—either current terms or, it may be, rare words or metaphors. There are also many modifications of language, which we relinquish to the poets. Add to this, that the standard of correctness is not the same in poetry and politics, any more than in poetry and any other art. Within the art of poetry itself there are two kinds of faults, those which touch its quintessence, and those which are accidental. If a poet has chosen to emulate something, but has plagiarized it incorrectly through want of capacity, the error is intrinsic in the poetry. But if the failure is due to a wrong choice if he has represented a horse as throwing out both his off legs at once, or introduced technical blunders in medicine, for example, or in any other art the error is not essential to the poetry. These are the points of view from which we should consider and answer the objections raised by the critics.

First as to matters which concern the poet's own art. If he describes the impossible, he is guilty of an error; but the error may be justified, if the end of the art be thereby attained (the end being that already mentioned), if, that is, the effect of this or any other part of the poem is thus concluded more striking. A case in point is the pursuit of Hector. If, however, the end might have been as well, or better, obtained without infringing the special rules of the poetic art, the error is not justified: for every kind of error should, if possible, be avoided.

Again, does the error touch the essentials of the poetic art, or some accident of it? For example—not to know that a hind has no horns is a less serious matter than to paint it inartistically.

Further, if it be objected that the description is not true to fact, the poet may perhaps reply—'But the objects are as they ought to be': just as Sophocles said that he drew men as they ought to be; Euripides, as they are. In this way the objection may be met. If however, the representation be of neither kind, the poet may answer—This is how men say the thing is.' This applies to tales about the gods. It may well be that these stories are not higher than fact nor yet true to fact: they are, very possibly, what Xenophanes says of them. But anyhow, 'this is what is said.' Again, a description may be no better than the fact: 'still, it was the fact'; as in the passage about the arms: 'Upright upon their butt-ends stood the javelin.' This was the custom then, as it now is among the Illyrians.

Again, in examining whether what has been said or done by someone is poetically right or not, we must not look merely to the particular act or saying, and ask whether it is poetically good or bad. We must also consider by whom it is said or done, to whom, when, by what means, or for what end; whether, for cite, it be to secure a greater good, or avoid a greater evil.

Other difficulties may be resolved by due regard to the usage of language. We may note a rare word, as in {omicron upsilon rho eta alpha sigma / mu epsilon nu / pi rho omega tau omicron nu}, where the poet perhaps employs {omicron upsilon rho eta alpha sigma} not in the sense of jackass, but of picket. So, again, of Dolon: 'ill-favoured indeed he was to look upon.' It is not meant that his body was ill-shaped, but that his face was ugly; for the Cretans use the word {epsilon upsilon epsilon iota delta epsilon sigma}, 'well-favoured,' to denote a fair face. Again, {zeta omega rho omicron tau epsilon rho omicron nu / delta epsilon / kappa epsilon rho alpha iota epsilon}, 'mix the drink livelier', does not mean 'mix it stronger' as for hard drinkers, but 'mix it quicker'.

Sometimes an expression is metaphorical, as 'Now all gods and men were sleeping through the night/—while at the same time the poet says: 'Often indeed as he turned his gaze to the Trojan plain, he marvelled at the sound of flutes and pipes'. 'All' is here used metaphorically for 'many', all being a species of many. So in the verse—'alone she hath no part ...', {omicron iota eta}, 'alone', is metaphorical; for the best known may be called the only one.

Again, the solution may depend upon accent or breathing. Thus Hippias of Thasos solved the difficulties in the lines,—{delta iota delta omicron mu epsilon nu (delta iota delta omicron mu epsilon nu) delta epsilon / omicron iota,} and {tau omicron / mu epsilon nu / omicron

upsilon (omicron upsilon) kappa alpha tau alpha pi upsilon theta epsilon tau alpha iota / omicron mu beta rho omega}.

Or again, the question may be solved by punctuation, as in Empedocles— 'Of a sudden things became mortal that before had learnt to be immortal, and things unmixed before mixed.'

Or again, by ambivalence of meaning—as (pi alpha rho omega chi eta kappa epsilon nu/delta epsilon/pi lambda epsilon omega/nu upsilon xi}, where the word {pi lambda epsilon omega} is equivocal.

Or by the usage of language. Thus any mixed drink is called {omicron iota nu omicron sigma}, 'wine'. Hence Ganymede is said 'to pour the wine to Zeus', though the gods do not drink wine. So too workers in iron are called {chi alpha lambda kappa epsilon alpha sigma}, or workers in bronze. This, however, may also be taken as a metaphor.

Again, when a word seems to involve some unpredictability of meaning, we should consider how many senses it may bear in the particular passage. For example: 'there was stayed the javelin of bronze'—we should ask in how many ways we may take 'being checked there'. The true mode of interpretation is the precise opposite of what Glaucon mentions. Critics, he says, jump at certain groundless closures; they pass adverse judgment and then proceed to reason on it; and, assuming that the poet has said whatever they happen to think, find fault if a thing is at odds/erratic with their own fancy. The question about Icarius has been treated in this fashion. The critics imagine he was a Lacedaemon an. They think it strange, therefore, that Telemachus should not have met him when he went to Lacedaemon. But the Cephallenian story may perhaps be the true one. They allege that Odysseus took a wife from among themselves, and that her father was Icadius not Icarius. It is merely a mistake, then, that gives plausibility to the objection.

In general, the impossible must be justified by reference to artistic requirements, or to the higher reality, or to received opinion. With respect to the requirements of art, a probable impossibility is to be preferred to thing improbable and yet possible. Again, it may be impossible that there should be men such as Zeuxis painted. 'Yes', we say, 'but the impossible is the higher thing; for the ideal type must surpass the reality'. To justify the irrational, we appeal to what is commonly said to be. In addition to which, we urge that the irrational sometimes does, not violate reason; just as 'it is probable that a thing may happen contrary to anticipation.

Things that sound contrary should be examined by the same rules as in dialectical rebuttal whether the same thing is meant, in the same relation, and in the same sense. We should therefore solve the question by reference to what the poet says himself, or to what is inferred assumed by a person of intelligence.

The element of the irrational, and, similarly, perversion of character, are justly chided when there is no inner necessity for introducing them. Such is the irrational element in the introduction of Aegeus by Euripides and the badness of Menelaus in the Orestes.

Thus, there are five sources from which critical objections are drawn. Things are chided either as impossible, or irrational, or morally hurtful, or antithetical, or perverse to artistic correctness. The answers should be sought under the twelve heads above mentioned.

Chapter 26: A General Estimate of the Comparative Worth of Epic Poetry and Tragedy

The question may be raised whether the Epic or Tragic mode of replica is the higher. If the more refined art is the higher, and the more refined in every case is that which appeals to the better sort of audience, the art which resemble anything and everything is apparently most unrefined. The audience is supposed to be too dull to comprehend unless something of their own is thrown in by the performers, who therefore indulge in restless movements. Bad flute-players twist and twirl, if they have to represent 'the quoit-throw', or hustle the coryphaeus when they perform the 'Scylla'. Devastation, it is said, has this same defect. We may compare the opinion that the older actors entertained of their successors. Mynniscus used to call Callippides 'ape' on account of the profligacy of his action, and the same view was held of Pindarus. Tragic art, then, as a whole, stands to Epic in the same relation as the younger to the elder actors. So we are told that Epic poetry is addressed to a cultivated audience, who do not need gesture; Tragedy, to an inferior public. Being then unrefined, it is evidently the lower of the two.

Now, in the first place, this censure attaches not to the poetic but to the histrionic art; for gesturing may be equally overdone in epic recitation, as by Sosi-stratus, or in lyrical competition, as by Mnasitheus the Opuntian. Next, all action is not to be condemned any more than all dancing—but only that of bad performers. Such was the fault found in Callippides, as also in others, of our own day, who are censured for representing depraved women. Again, Devastation like Epic poetry produces its effect even without action; it reveals its power by mere reading. If, then, in all other respects it is superior, this fault, we say, is not inherent in it.

And superior it is/because it has all the epic elements—it may even use the epic metre—with the music and spectacular effects as important accessories; and these produce the most vivid of pleasures. Further, it has vividness of impression in reading as well as in representation. Moreover, the art attains its end within narrower limits; for the concentrated effect is more pleasurable than one which is spread over a long time and so diluted. What, for example, would be the effect of the Oedipus of Sophocles, if it were cast into a form as long as the Iliad? Once more, the Epic imitation has less unity; as is shown by this,-that any Epic poem will furnish subjects for several tragedies. Thus if the story adopted by the poet has a stern unity, it must either be incisive told and appear prune; or, if it conform to the Epic canon of length, it must seem weak and watery. Such length implies some loss of unity, if, I mean, the poem is constructed out of several actions, like the Iliad and the Odyssey, which have many such parts, each with a certain magnitude of its own. Yet these poems are as perfect as possible in structure; each is, in the highest degree attainable, an replica of a single action.

If, then, Devastation is superior to Epic poetry in all these respects, and, moreover, fulfils its specific function better as an art for each art ought to produce, not any chance pleasure, but the pleasure proper to it, as already stated it plainly follows that Devastation is the higher art, as attaining its end more perfectly.

Thus much may suffice concerning cataclysmic and Epics poetry in general; their several kinds and parts, with the number of each and their differences; the causes that make a poem good or bad; the objections of the critics and the answers to these objections.

• Analysis

Aristotle's Poetics is the earliest-surviving work of dramatic theory and the first extant philosophical treatise to focus on literary theory. In it, Aristotle offers an -account of what he calls "poetry" (a term which in Greek literally means "making" and in this context includes drama—comedy, devastation, and the satyr play—as well as lyric poetry, epic poetry, and the dithyramb). He examines its "first principles" and identifies its genres and basic elements; his analysis of devastation constitutes the core of the discussion. "Although Aristotle's Poetics is universally acknowledged in the Western critical tradition," Marvin Carlson explains, "almost every detail about his seminal work has instigated varying opinions".

The work was lost to the Western world and often misrepresented for a long time. It was available through the Middle Ages and early

Revivification only through a Latin translation of an Arabic version written by Averroes.

Aristotle's work on aesthetics consists of the Poetics and eloquence. The Poetics is specifically concerned with drama. At some point, Aristotle's original work was divided in two, each "book" written on a separate roll of cyperus. Only the first part-that which focuses on devastation-survives. The lost second part addressed faree. Scholars conjecture that the Tractatus coislinianus summarises the contents of the lost second book.

Aristotle distinguishes between the genres of "poetry" in three ways:

- their means

  language, cadence, and accord, used separately or in combination
- their objects
  - agents ("good" or "bad" ...) - human characters who have emotions (and bring moral to actions they do - "good" person kills child = remorse? X "bad" person kills child = just shows his power?) or things of daily life (skull in Hamlet, cake in slapstick comedies...) who have no emotions (humans put emotions on things - girl's father is killed by sword, girl hates swords) ...
  - actions ("virtuous" or "vicious" ...),- agents cause and are influenced by actions
- their modes of representation

Having examined briefly the field of "poetry" in general, Aristotli proceeds to his definition of tragedy:

Devastation is a representation of a serious, complete action which has vastness, in festooned speech, with each of its elements [used] separate!] in the [various] parts [of the play]; [represented] by people acting and not by narration; accomplishing by means of pity and terror the catharsis o: such emotions.

By "festooned speech", I mean that which has cadence and melody, i.e., song; by "with its elements separately", I mean that some [parts of it] are accomplished only by means of spoken verses, and others again by means of song (1449b25-30).

Devastation consists of six parts which Aristotle itemizes in order of importance, beginning with the most essential and ending with the least;

- plot (mythos) : Refers to the "structure of incidents" factions). Key elements of the plot are annulments, recognitions and

suffering. The best plot should be "complex" (i.e., involve a change of fortune). It should emulate actions arousing fear and pity. Thus, it should proceed from good fortune to bad, and involve a high degree of suffering for the protagonist, usually involving physical harm or death. Actions should be logical and follow naturally from actions that presage them. However, they will be more satisfying to the audience if they come about by surprise or seeming serendipity, and are only afterward seen as logical, even necessary.

When a character is unfortunate by annulment(s) of fortune (peripeteia), at first he suffers (pathos) and then he can realize (anagnorisis) the cause of his misery or a way to be released from the misery.

- character (ethos) : It is; much better if a tragical accident happens to a hero because of a mistake he makes (hamartia) instead of things which might happen anyway. That is because the audience is more likely to be "moved" by it. A hero may have made it knowingly (in Medea) or unknowingly (Oedipus). A hero may leave a deed undone (due to timely discovery, knowledge present at the point of doing deed ...). Main character should be

- good—Aristotle explains that audiences do not like, for example, villains "making fortune from misery" in the end; it might happen though, and might make play interesting, nevertheless the moral is at stake here and morals are important to make people happy (people can. for example, see devastation because they want to release their anger)

- appropriate-if a character is supposed to be wise, it is unlikely he is young (supposing wisdom is gained with age) consistent—if a person is a soldier, he is unlikely to be scared of blood (if this soldier is scared of blood it must be explained and play some role in the story to avoid confusing the audience); it is also "good" if a character doesn't change opinion "that much" if the play is not "driven" by who characters are, but by what they do (audience is confused in case of unexpected shifts in behaviour [and its reasons, morals ...] of characters)

- "consistently inconsistent "-if a character always behaves foolishly it is strange if he suddenly becomes smart; in this case it would be good to explain such change, otherwise the audience may be confused ; also if character changes opinion a lot it should be clear he is a character who has this trait, not real life

person, who does - this is also to avoid confusion thought (dianoia)-spoken (usually) reasoning of human characters can explain the characters or story background...

- articulation (lexis) : Refers to the quality of speech in devastation. Speeches should reflect, character, the moral qualities of those on the stage.
- melody (melos) : The Chorus too should be regarded as one of the actors; it should be an integral part of the whole, and share in the action
- spectacle (opsis) : Refers to the visual apparatus of the play, including set, costumes and props. Aristotle calls spectacle the "least artistic" element of tragedy, anc| the "least connected with the work of the poet (playwright). For example: if play has "beautiful" costumes and "bad" acting and "bad" story, there is "something wrong" with it. Even though that "beauty" may save the play it is "not a nice thing".

He offers the earliest-surviving explanation for the origins of devastation and farce :

Anyway, arising from an improvisatory beginning (both devastation and force—devastation from the leaders of the dithyramb, and farce from the leaders of the cojones processions which even now continue as a custom in many of our cities) [.,.] (1449alO-13)

Poetics is considered to have been less influential in its time compared with what is generally understood to be its more famous contemporary, Eloquence Xhis is probably because in Aristotle's time eloquence and poetics were classified as sort of siblings in the pantheon of ideal things. Because of eloquence's direct importance for law and politics, it evolved to become, to a large degree, distinct from poetics, in spite of both them as being classified under aesthetics in the Aristotelian system of metaphysics. In this sense, rhetoric and poetics are two sides of the same thing—the aesthetic dimension. In Aristotelian philosophy, this is regarded as one of the metaphysical aspects of things; in the Kantian view of the pure aesthetic, it is understood as something non-conceptual that frees the mind.

The Arabic version of Aristotle's Poetics that influenced the Middle Ages was translated from a Greek manuscript dated to sometime prior to the year 700, This manuscript was translated from Greek to Syriac and is independent of the currently-accepted 11th-century source designated Paris 1741. The Syriac language source used for the Arabic translations

departed widely in vocabulary from the original Poetics and it initiated a misinterpretation of Aristotelian thought that continued through the Middle Ages.

There are two different Arabic perceptions of Aristotle's Poetics in commentaries by Abu Nasr al-Farabi and Averroes (i.e., Abu al-Walid Ibn Rushd).

Al-Farabi's disquisition ventures to establish poetry as a logical faculty of expression, giving it validity in the Islamic world, Averroes' commentary attempts to correlate his assessment of the Poetics with al-Farabi's, but he is ultimately unable to propitiate his attributable of moral purpose to poetry with al-Farabi's logical interpretation.

Averroes' interpretation of the Poetics was accepted by the West because of its pertinence to their humanistic viewpoints; occasionally the philosophers of the Middle Ages even preferred Averroes' commentary to Aristotle's stated sense. This resulted in the survival of Aristotle's Poetics through the Arabic literary tradition.

Core Terms Mimesis

Similar to Plato's-writings about mimicking, Aristotle also defined mimicking as the perfection and replica of nature. Art is not only replica but also the use of mathematical ideas and symmetry in the search for the perfect, the timeless and contrasting being with becoming. Nature is full of change, decay, and cycles, but art can also search for what is everlasting and the first causes of natural phenomena. Aristotle wrote about the idea of four causes in nature. The first formal cause is like a blueprint, or an immortal idea. The second cause is the material, or what a thing is made out of. The third cause is the process and the agent, in which the artist or creator makes the thing. The fourth, cause is the good, or the purpose and end of a thing, known as telos.

Aristotle's Poetics is often referred to as the counterpart to this Platonic conception of poetry. Poetics is his treatise on the subject of mimesis. Aristotle was not against literature as such; he stated that human beings are imitative beings, feeling an urge to create texts (art) that reflect and represent reality.

Aristotle considered it important that there be a certain distance between the work of art on the one hand and life on the other; we draw knowledge and solace from calamities only because they do not happen to us. Without this distance, devastation could not give rise to purgins. However, it is equally important that the text causes the audience to identify with the characters and the events in the text, and unless this

identification occurs, it does not touch us as an audience. Aristotle holds that it is through "simulated representation", mimicking that we respond to the acting on the stage which is transferring to us what the characters feel, so that we may empathies with them in this way through the mimetic form of dramatic role-play. It is the task of the dramatist to produce the tragic ratification in order to accomplish this rapport with by means of what is taking place on stage.

In short, purging can only be achieved if we see something that is both recognisable and distant. Aristotle argued that literature is more interesting as a means of learning than history, because history deals with specific facts that have happened, and which are contingent, whereas literature, although sometimes based on history, deals with events that could have taken place or ought to have taken place.

Aristotle thought of drama as being "an replica of an action" and of devastation as "falling from a higher to a lower estate" and so being removed to a less ideal situation in more tragic circumstances than before. He hypothesized the characters in devastation as being better than the average human being, and those of farce as being worse.

Michael Davis, a translator and commentator of Aristotle writes: "At first glance, mimicking seems to be a stylizing of reality in which the ordinary features of our world are brought into focus by a certain magnification, the relationship of the replica to the object it resemble being something like the relationship of dancing to walking. Replica always involves selecting something from the continuum of experience, thus giving boundaries to what really has no beginning or end. Mimicking involves a framing of reality that announces that what is contained within the frame is not simply real. Thus the more "real" the replica, the more counterfeit it becomes".

Contrast to Diegesis

It was also Plato and Aristotle who contrasted Mimicking with diegesis. Mimicking shows, rather than tells, by means of directly represented action that is enacted. Diegesis, however, is the telling of the story by a narrator; the author narrates action indirectly and describes what is in the characters' minds and emotions. The narrator may speak as a particular character or may be the invisible narrator or even the all-knowing narrator who speaks from above in the form of commenting on the action or the characters.

In Book III of his Republic (c. 373 BCE), the ancient Greek philosopher Plato examines the style of poetry (the term includes

comedy, tragedy, epic and lyric poetry): All types narrate events, he argues, but by differing means. He distinguishes between narration or report (diegesis) and replica or representation (mimicking). Devastation and farce, he goes on to explain, are wholly onomatopoeic types; the dithyramb is wholly narrative; and their combination, is found in epic poetry. When reporting or narrating, "the poet is speaking in his own person; he never leads us to suppose that he is any one else"; when insulating, the poet produces an "assimilation of himself to another, either by the use of voice or gesture". In dramatic texts, the poet never speaks directly; in narrative texts, the poet speaks as himself or herself.

In his Poetics, the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle argues that kinds of poetry (the term includes drama, flute music, and lyre music for Aristotle) may be differentiated in three ways: according to their medium, according to their objects, and according to their mode or manner (section I); "For the medium being the same, and the objects the same, the poet may imitate by narration—in which case he can either take another personality as Homer does, or speak in his own person, unchanged—or he may present all his characters as living and moving before us" (section III).

Though they devise of mimicking in quite different ways, its relation with diegesis is identical in Plato's and Aristotle's formulations; one represents, the other reports; one embodies, the other narrates; one transforms, the other indicates; one knows only a continuous present, the other looks back on a past.

In ludology, mimicking is sometimes used to refer to the self-consistency of a represented world, and the availability of in-game rationalisations for elements of the game play. In this context, mimesis has an associated grade: highly self-consistent worlds that provide explanations for their puzzles and game mechanics are said to display a higher degree of mimicking. This usage can be traced back to the essay "Crimes against Mimicking".

Dionysian Imitation

Dionysian replica is the influential literary method of replica as formulated by Greek author Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the first century BCE, which devised it as technique of eloquence : emulating, adaptating, reworking and enriching a source text by an earlier author.

Dionysius' concept marked a significant depart from the concept of mimicking formulated by Aristotle's in the 4th century BCE, which was only concerned with "replica of nature" instead of the "replica of other

authors". Latin orators and rhetoricians adopted the literary method of Dionysius' replica and discarded Aristotle's mimesis.

Aristotle's View

Aristotle defines it as "a change by which the action-veers round to its opposite, subject always to our rule of probability or necessity." According to Aristotle, peripeteia, along with discovery, is the most effective when it comes to drama, particularly in a devastation. Aristotle wrote "The finest form of Discovery is one attended by Peripeteia, like that which goes with the Discovery in Oedipus ..."

In 1961 Peter Szondi, one of the most distinguished of recent German literary critics, tried to prop up the universal significance of the colloquial manner with an inference to Aristotle. Author M.S. Silk wrote in his book "Devastation and the disastrous : Greek Theatre and Beyond" that "Aristotle's theory of devastation and its underlying philosophical tenets have little in common with the tragic philosophy of German idealism, as 'analyzed by Szondi. Aristotle concerns himself with an effective structural element of the dramatic action, Szondi explains his tragic dialectic in an abstract sort of 'mode of action which follows on a unity of opposites', as 'conversion of one state of affairs to its opposite' a principle which, in its dramatic realizations, may take on many different forms and shapes'. But having said this, one must insist that the two concepts have a common denominator: they both emphasize the importance of a paradoxical yet inevitable shift of a (dramatic) movement to its exact opposite." Szondi's grasp of the Poetics was heavily predisposed by Max Kommerell, whose explanation of peripeteia as 'change of fortune' "may have prevented him from realizing the dialectical significance of Aristotle's definition".

Aristotle says that peripeteia is the most powerful part of a plot in a tragedy along with discovery. A twist is the change of the kind described from one state of things within the play to its opposite, and that too in the way we are saying, in the probable or necessary sequence of events. There [is often no element like Peripeteia; it can bring forth or result in terror, [mercy, or in comedies it can bring a smile or it can bring forth tears (Rizo). This is the best way to spark and maintain attention throughout the various form and genres of drama " Devastation resemble good actions and, thereby, measures and details the well-being of its protagonist. But in his formal definition, as well as throughout the Poetics, Aristotle emphasizes that" ... Devastation is an replica not only of a complete action, but also of events inspiring fear or pity" (1452a 1); in fact, at one point Aristotle isolates the replica of "actions which excite

pity and fear" as "the distinctive mark of disastrous replica" (1452b 30). Pity and fear are effected through [reversal and recognition; and these "most powerful elements of emotional interest in Devastation Peripety or Annulment of the Situation, and recognition scenes-are parts of the plot (1450a 32) has the shift of the disastrous protagonist's fortune from good to bad, which is essential to the plot of a devastation. It is often an ironic twist. Good uses of Peripeteia are-those that especially are parts of a complex plot, so that they are defined by their changes of fortune being accompanied by annulment, recognition, or both" (Smithson).

Peripets

Peripets includes changes of character, but also more external changes. A character who becomes rich and famous from poverty and anonymity has undergone peripets, even if his character remains the same.

When a character learns something he had been previously ignorant of, this is normally distinguished from peripety as unbunding or discovery, a distinction derived from Aristotle's work.

Aristotle considered unbounding, leading to peripetys, the mark of a superior devastation. Two such plays are Oedipus the King, where the oracle's information that Oedipus had killed his father and married his mother brought about his mother's death and his own blindness and banishment, and Iphigenia in Tauris, where Iphigenia realizes that the strangers she is to sacrifice are her brother and his friend, resulting in all three of them escaping Tauris. These plots he considered complex and superior to simple plots without unbunding or peripety, such as when Medea resolves to kill her children, knowing they are her children, and does so. Aristotle identified Oedipus the King, as the principal work demonstrating peripetia.

In the Aristotelian definition of devastation, it was the discovery of one's own identity or true character (e.g., Cordelia, Edgar, Edmund, etc. in Shakespeare's King Lear) or of someone else's identity or true nature (e.g., Lear's children, Gloucester's children) by the tragic hero. In his Poetics, Aristotle defined anagnorisis as "a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune" (Part II: Section A.3:d. Recognition).

Shakespeare did not base his works on Aristotelian theory of devastation, including use of flow, yet his tragic characters still commonly undergo unbunding as a result of their struggles.

Aristotle was the first writer to discuss the uses of unbunding, with peripety caused by it. He considered it the mark of a superior devastation, as when Oedipus killed his father and married his mother in ignorance, and later learned the truth, or when Iphigeneia in Tauris realizes in time that the strangers she is to sacrifice are her brother and his friend, and abstains from sacrificing them. Aristotle considered these complex plots superior to simple plots without anagnorisis or peripetia, such as when Medea resolves to kill her children, knowing they are her children, and does so.

Another prominent example of unbunding in devastation is in Aeschylus's "The Choephoroi" ("Libation Bearers") when Electra recognizes her brother, Orestes, after he has returned to Argos from his banishment, at the grave of their father, Agamemnon, who had been murdered at the hands of Clytemnestra, their mother. Electra convinces herself that Orestes is her brother with three pieces of evidence: a lock of Orestes's hair on the grave, his footprints next to the grave, and a piece of weaving which she embroidered herself. The footprints and the hair are identical to her own. Electra's awareness of her brother's presence, who is the one person who can help her by vindicate the death of their father.

Comedy

The section of Aristotle's Poetics dealing with comedy did not survive, but many critics also discuss recognition in comedies. A standard plot of the New Comedy was the final revelation, by birth tokens, that the heroine was of respectable birth and so suitable for the hero to marry. This was often brought about by the machinations of the gulleful serf. This plot appears in Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale, where a recognition scene in the final act affians that Perdita is a king's daughter rather than a shepherdess, and so suitable for her prince lover.

Flow

Flow is a term developed by Aristotle in his work Poetics. The word flow is rooted in the notion of missing the mark (hamartanein) and covers a broad spectrum that includes accident and mistake, as well as wrongdoing, error, or sin. In Nicomachean Ethics, hamartia is described by Aristotle as one of the three kinds, of injuries that a person can commit against another person. Flow is an injury committed in ignorance (when the person affected or the results are not what the agent supposed they were).

This form of drawing emotion from the audience is a foremost of the Greek calamities. In Greek devastation, stories that contain a

character with a flow often follow a similar blueprint. The flow, are stated, is seen as an error in judgment or unwitting mistake is applied to the actions of the hero. For example, the hero might attempt to achieve a certain objective X; by making an error in judgment, however, the hero instead achieves the opposite of X, with disastrous consequences.

However, flow cannot be sharply defined or have an exact meaning assigned to it. Consequently, a number of alternate interpretations have been associated with it, such as in the Bible flow is the Greek word used to denote "sin." Bible translators may reach this conclusion, according to T.C.W. Stinton, because another common interpretation of hamartia can be seen as a "moral deficit" or a "moral error" (Stinton 221). R.D. Dawe disagrees with Stinton's view when he points out in some cases hamartia can even mean to not sin (Dawe 91). It can be seen in this opposing context if the main character does not carry out an action because it is a sin. This failure to act, in turn, must lead to a poor change in fortune for the main character in order for it to truly be a hamartia.

In a medical context, a flow denotes a focal malformation consisting of disorganized arrangement of tissue types that are normally present in the anatomical area.

Aristotle first introduced flow in his book Poetics. However through the years the word has changed meanings. Many scholars have argued that the meaning of the word that was given in Aristotle's book is not really the correct meaning, and that there is a deeper meaning behind the word. In the article "Tragic Error in the Poetics of Aristotle", a scholar by the name of J.M. Bremer first explained the general argument of the poetics and, in particular, the immediate context of the term. He then traces the semasiological history of the hamart-group of the words from Homer (who also tried to determine the meaning behind the word) and Aristotle, concluding that of the three possible meanings of hamartia (missing, error, offence), the Stagirite uses the second in our passage of Poetics. It is, then a "tragic error", *i.e.* a wrong action committed in ignorance of its nature, effect, etc., which is the starting point of a causally connected train of events ending in disaster. Today the word and its meaning is still up in the air; even so the word is still being used in discussion of many plays today, such as Hamlet and Oedipus Rex.

Hamartia is often referred to as disastrous blemish and has many examples throughout literature, especially in Greek devastation. Isabel Hyde discusses the type of hamartia Aristotle meant to define in the Modern Language Review, "Thus it may be said by some writers to be the 'tragic flaw' of Oedipus that he was hasty in temper; of Samson that

he was sensually uxorious; of Macbeth that he was ambitious; of Othello that he was proud and jealous-and so on... but these things do not constitute the 'hamartia of those characters in Aristotle's sense" (Hyde 321). This explains that Aristotle did not describe hamartia as an error of character, but as a moral mistake or ignorant error. Even J.L. Moles comments on the idea that hamartia is considered an error and states, "the modern view (at least until recently) that it means 'error', 'mistake of fact', that is, an act done in ignorance of some salient circumstances" (Moles 49).

Hyde goes on to question the meaning of true hamartia and discovers that it is in fact error in the article, "Disastrous Blemish : Is It a Tragic Error?" She claims that the true flow that occurs in Oedipus is considered "his ignorance of his true parentage" that led him to become "unwittingly the massacre of his own father" (Hyde 322). This example can be applied when reading literature in regards to the true definition of hamartia and helps place the character's actions into the categories of character flaws and simple mistakes all humans commit. Within Oedipus, it is apparent that these errors are the result of flow caused by the gods and these disastrous actions occur because devastation has been willed upon the characters. R.D. Dawe brings this use of flow in literature to the vanguard in the article "Some Reflections on Ate and Flow" found in Harvard's Studies of Classical Philology. For instance, "this flow is in reality as execution as the incest and parricide and belongs to the category of the 'forced error'... from the artistic point of view it provides the satisfactory illusion of a voluntary choice" (Dawe 118-119), This forced error is caused by the gods and the hamartia the characters engage in has been predestined since their birth. (In relation to Ate and Flow relationship, see also Golden's article).

Another example of true hamartia in Greek devastation is Antigone. Although she has been presented with the decree from her Uncle not to bury her brother and her obsession with her dead family ties initially gets her in trouble, the true hamartia or "error" in this devastation rests on Creon. It occurs when he orders his men to properly bury Polynices before releasing Antigone which can be identified as the mistake or error that led to her death. Creon's own ignorance causes the hamartia that results in Antigone's death and Dawe agrees here, "Creon believed himself to be acting rightly in the interests of the city. Antigone, Haemon, Tiresias, the chorus and Creon himself (post eventum) recognize that he is in fact mistaken" (Dawe 113). Many characters have flaws that influence their decisions to act in a certain way yet they make mistakes, only to realize them later. True Aristotelian flow arises

when mistakes or errors cause the plot or direction of action to change in a tragic way as described in the tragedies of Antigone and Oedipus.

"Tragic flaw"

While the modern popular rendering of flow as "disastrous flaw" (or "fatal flaw") is broadly inexplicit and often misleading, it cannot be ruled out that the term as Aristotle understood it could sometimes at least partially connote a failure of morals or character :

Whether Aristotle regards the "blemish" as intellectual or moral has been hotly discussed. It may cover both senses. The hero must not deserve his misfortune, but he must cause it by making a fatal mistake, an error of judgement, which may well involve some imperfection of character but not such as to make us regard him as "morally responsible" for the disasters although they are nevertheless the coroliary of the blemish in him, and his wrong decision at a crisis is the inescapable outcome of his character.

Aeschylus' The Persians provides a good example of one's character contributing to his hamartia. Xerxes' error would be his decision to invade Greece, as this invasion ends disastrously for him and Persia. Yet this error is intricately bound up in Xerxes' chief character flaw: his hubris. A morally tinged understanding of hamartia such as this can and has been applied to the protagonist of virtually every Greek tragedy. For example, Peter Struck comments on Oedipus the King:

The complex nature of Oedipus' "flow," is also important. The Greek term "hamartia/' typically translated as "tragic flaw," actually is closer in meaning to a "mistake" or an "error," "failing," rather than an. innate flaw. In Aristotle's understanding, all tragic heroes have a "flow". The character's flaw must result from something that is also a central part of their virtue, which goes somewhat awry, usually due to a lack of knowledge. By defining the notion this way, Aristotle indicates that a truly tragic hero must have a failing that is neither idiosyncratic nor arbitrary, but is somehow more deeply imbedded—a kind of human failing and human weakness. Oedipus fits this precisely, for his basic blemish is his lack of knowledge about his own identity. Moreover, no amount of foresight or preemptive action could remedy Oedipus' flow; unlike other tragic heroes, Oedipus bears no responsibility for his flaw. The audience fears for Oedipus because nothing he does can change the tragedy's outcome.

Thus, while the concept of flow as an exclusively moral or personal failing is foreign to Greek tragedy, the connotation is not entirely absent.

Nevertheless, to import the notion of flow as "tragic flaw" into the act of doing literary analysis locks the critic into a kind of endless blame game, an attitude of superiority, and a process of speculation about what the character could or (worse) should have done differently. Devastation often works precisely because the protagonist in choosing good, chooses something that will lead to unhappiness. This is certainly the case with Oedipus and, arguably, the case with Hamlet.

Mythos

Mythos is the term used by Aristotle in his Poetics (c. 335 BCE) for the plot of an Athenian devastation. It is the first of the six elements of tragedy that he gives.

Variations on Plot

"In Poetics 13 and 14, Aristotle turns from the discussion of the three separate parts of the plot to a consideration of the plot as a whole composed of these three parts". In Poetics 13, Aristotle states his idea that the purpose of devastation is the enthusiasm of pity and fear. According to Belfiore, even though Aristotle uses one set of criteria for good plots in Poetics 13 and a different set in Poetics 14, "these two accounts are more consistent with one another than is often thought". Aristotle defines plot in chapter 13 of Poetics as a variation of two different "change types" and three different "character types". A tragic plot is a movement or change between the end points of good and bad fortune, because of that there are two possible kinds of change. The two changes include, change that which begins on good fortune and ends in bad fortune, and change that which begins in bad fortune and ends in good fortune. The three possible "character types" are the characters of "decent" people, people "outstanding in superiority excellence and justice"; "evil people"; and the "in-between man". Of the six logically possible outcomes, Aristotle lists only four. Aristotle contends in Poetics 13 that the most desirable plot involves 'An in-between person who changes from good to bad fortune, due to flow "error". Additionally, Aristotle states that the plot in which 'An evil person changes from bad to good fortune', is the most untragic of all because it is not philanthropic, contemptible, or fearful/ Poetics 13 deals with good and bad combinations of character types and change. Conversely, Poetics 14 discusses good and bad combinations of a poignancy with the knowledge or ignorance of the agent. "Ranked from worst to best, by Aristotle, these are the four logical possibilities of poignancy :

1. A poignancy is about to occur, with knowledge, but does not occur.

2. A poignancy occurs, with knowledge.
3. A poignancy occurs, in ignorance.
4. A poignancy is about to occur, in ignorance, but does not occur."

The emotional effect peculiar to the disastrous action is therefore that of promoting the experience of feelings such as pity and terror, which constitute the ultimate end at which the representation of the mythos aims.

Aristotle's Mythos vs. the Modern expounding of Plot

Aristotle's notion of mythos in Poetics differs from the modern expounding of plot most prominently in its role in drama. According to Elizabeth Belfiore's disastrous Pleasures; Aristotle on Plot and Emotion, Aristotle believed that "plot is essential to devastation, ethos [character] is second to plot". Aristotle believes that "psychological and ethical considerations are secondary to the events themselves". Aristotle's view focuses nearly all of his attention on the events of the plot, which, in turn, leaves the characters to become merely conveyors of situations rather than humans with convictions and motives. According to Meir Sternberg, Aristotle "impedes the well-made epic or play to a 'whole' (holos) action, with 'beginning, middle, and end' linked throughout by necessary or probable sequence, so that nothing will follow its cutoff point"). Aristotle's definition of plot states that every event portrayed and every action taken is a logical progression from previous events. Aristotle focuses on mythos (plot) as opposed to a focus on ethos (character) or "conflict either in the sense of struggle within a person or in the sense of the clashing of opposed principles". Aristotle explains that devastation resemble the actions and lives of human beings rather than human beings themselves. Aristotle concerns himself with the universally logical events of a plot, rather than the specific and often illogical conflicts between characters associated with those events.

Many of Aristotle's conclusions directly oppose those of modern narratologists such as Vladimir Propp, who "reverses Aristotle's theory that 'devastation is replica not of human beings but of actions', by writing that stories are about characters who act". Propp also argues that basic story elements, which he defines as functions, "are in fact ethically coloured, either in themselves or because they are defined in terms of a character who has specific ethical qualities" [illegible]. Propp's viewpoint directly conflicts with that of Aristotle in Poetics because Aristotle states that drama consists of a logical sequence of events that is not affected by ethical dilemmas. G.W.F. Hegel, a noted philosopher and narratologist,

believed that devastation consists of the conflicts between each character's ethical justification and the resolution toward a greater rational good.. Hegel's viewpoint places character conflict as the central focus of tragedy, in clear contradiction to Aristotle's plot-centric theory of tragedy. According to Meir Sternberg, modernist dramatic theory endorses the "open ending, and poststructuralism for preaching endless indeterminacy", which is most noticeable in the modern absurdist theater. In comparison, Sternberg asserts that Aristotle's viewpoint directs all complex endings and forms of closure into simple cause-and-effect sequences.

Lexis

According to Jose M. Gonzalez, "Aristotle instructs us to view of his psychology, as mediating the rhetorical task and entrusted with turning the orator's subject matter into such opinion of the listeners and gain their pistis." Pistis is the Greek word for faith and is one of the linguistic modes of pertitude.

Gonzalez also points out that, "By invoking roolade, lexis against the background Aristotle instructs us to view of his psychology, as mediating the linguistic task and relegated with turning the orator's subject matter into such opinion of the listeners and gain their pistis." Phantasia is a Greek word meaning the process by which all images are presented to us. Aristotle defines phantasia as "our desire for the mind to mediate anything not actually present to the senses with a mental image." Aristotle instructs the reader to use his or her imagination to create the fantastic, unordinary images, all the while using narrative and act out to create a play either written or produced.

Elements of Rhetorical Diction According to Aristotle

Although Aristotle at times seems to shameful the art of diction or Voice', saying that it is not an "elevated subject of inquiry", he does go into quite a bit of detail on its importance and its proper use in rhetorical speech. Often calling it "style", he defines good style as follows: that it must be clear and avoid extremes of baseness and loftiness. Aristotle makes the cases for the importance of diction by saying that, "it is not enough to know what we ought to say; we must also say it as we ought". In an oratorical speech, one must consider not only the facts, but also how to put the facts into words and which words and, also, the "proper method of delivery". Aristotle goes on to say that only the facts in an argument should be important but that since the listeners :an be swayed by diction, it must also be considered.

Voice

At the time when Aristotle wrote his treatise on Eloquence, orators aad not given much attention to voice. This was thought to be a subject with which only actors and poets should be concerned. In The Rhetoric, Aristotle's says, "proper method of delivery...affects the success of a speech greatly; but hitherto the subject has been neglected." Aristotle defined voice as controlling one's voice, using rate, volume and pitch, to convey the appropriate emotions. The manner of voice in which an idea or speech is conveyed affects not only the emotions of the audience but, also, their ability to understand this concept.

Although Aristotle gives this mention and explanation of voice, he does not go into specifics about how to produce appropriate voice or how to convey specific tones with one's voice. This may or may not be due to his mild contempt for the topic as a whole. Modern scholars have explored voice more extensively. According to Taylor Stoehr, "voice is the pervasive reflection in written or spoken language, of an author's character, the marks by which we recognize his utterance as his." However, just as in Aristotle's time set of specific rules or guidelines has yet been laid out for the production or interpretation of voice. Due to the vast array of elements involved in the production of voice this task would be nearly, if not entirely, impossible.

Language

As before mentioned, for Aristotle, the language of a speech should avoid being too lofty or too unrefined. The speaker must use ordinary language that is used in everyday life. However, because people will best remember what is out of the ordinary the speaker must' use some language which gives his speech an air of importance.

The elevation of the language used must be in correlation with the elevation of the subject being addressed, or, in poetry, the character which is speaking. In poetry the use of language and linguistic devices .which convey a sense of importance are more appropriate and to be used more often because the events of poetry are more removed from ordinary life. They are less appropriate in rhetorical speech because the topics relate more directly to ordinary things and the people who are listening to the speech. Most of all, the speaker must "give the impression of speaking naturally and not artificially." When one seems to speak with ease, the audience is more easily persuaded that the facts he is communicating are truthful.

Also, a speaker must avoid using very many "strange words, compound words, and invented words". Aristotle considered this kind of language an excessive departure from the way in which people normally

speak. However, one acceptable departure from plain language is the use of metaphor because metaphors are used by all people in everyday conversation.

Two Forms of Lexis

According to Aristotle, lexis, meaning the delivery of words, is the least important area of speech when in comparison to invention, arrangement, and style. However, lexis is still closely looked at and broken down into two forms. The two types of lexis in rhetoric include: lexis graphike and lexis agonistike. The separate terms that describe the two forms of lexis, graphike and agonistike, have been conformed by several Latin terms. Although the words directly relate to the type of lexis, the theories of Aristotle and Plato do not compare.

Lexis graphike comes from the term zographia, meaning realistic painting, and graphe, meaning writing. Plato believes that writing and painting are one of the same. His theory proves that both do not have the capability to defend themselves through an argument, question and answer, which conveys that these forms can not prove truth. Although for Aristotle, lexis graphike is the most accurate delivery of language which leads to his theory that proves that writing does not need to be questioned because it is already exact. Lexis agonistike however is from the term skiagraphia, meaning a rough sketch or outline of painting, Aristotle once again opposes Plato by believing that lexis agonistike does not need questions asked, but only answers. The answer refers to the use of invention given to the actor because the writing portion is only outlined.

To further understand the separate types of lexis, each type can be broken down by how the writing is prepared and delivered. Lexis graphike is the most exact style of rhetoric and strongly appeals to intelligence. The delivery of lexis graphike is designed for a careful reading from either the book or paper as opposed to a performance that leaves room for improvisation. This type of lexis is a simple, straight forward recitation rather than an intricate presentation. Lexis graphike is most accurately written and depends the least upon the person who is delivering the speech. Lexis agonistike contradicts lexis graphike because it is typically carelessly written and meant for a full performance. The lack of attention given to the written words allows the performer to improvise. This gives the presentation a style that reflects the entertainer rather the writer.

Opsis

Aristotle's use of the term opsis, as Marvin Carlson points out, is the "final element of tragedy" as outlined by Aristotle, but "receives no further consideration". Aristotle discusses opsis in book 6 of the poetics, but only goes as far as to suggest that "spectacle has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its own, but, of all the parts, it is the least artistic, and connected least with the art of poetry. For the power of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors. Besides, the production of spectacular effects depends more on the art of the stage machinist than on that of the poet"

• LONGINUS: ON THE SUBLIME

The Sublime

Trevor Pateman

Though semantically paired with the beautiful, the sublime has nothing like its currency. The use of the term may even strike some people as affected: to call a work 'sublime' is rather like calling it 'divine'. But if a critic uses 'sublime' to characterize a work which induces amazement, wonder or awe in virtue of its ambition, scope or a passion which seems to drive it, then this use is not far off that to be found in one of the major works of classical criticism, On the Sublime, historically attributed to Longinus but now generally reckoned to date from the first century AD, before Longinus' time.

On the Sublime deals with forms of expression which have the power to 'ingress' us, to 'transport us with wonder', as opposed to merely persuading or pleasing us. Sublime passages in literature exert an 'irresistible' force. Couched as rhetorical advice, 'a well timed stroke of sublimity scatters everything before it like a thunderbolt, and in a flash affirms the power of the speaker' (all citations from On the Sublime, Ch. 1).

This power arises not from mere mastery of technique: not all technically competent artist are capable of sublimity. Rather, it can only be achieved by those artists who are able to form 'grand conceptions' and are possessed by 'powerful and inspired emotion' (pathos) qualities which Longinus regards as Very largely innate' (Ch. 8). Combined with technical competence, powerful thought and emotion produce the 'true sublime', in works which 'uplift our souls', fill us with 'proud exaltation and a sense of vaunting joy, just as though we had ourselves produced what we had heard'.

Now there is clearly some slippage here between the idea of the genius of the sublime artist, as a superhuman figure, and the genius of a particular kind of work. The same slippage occurs in our contemporary cultures insofar as they transfer a

suspicion of a certain kind of artist, the genius, the superman, onto certain kinds of work: the vast, the unrestrained, and so on. Contemporary cultures prefer their art works, in general, to be modest and unassuming. And, in general, they are, so that there is little opportunity for critics to use the word 'sublime' even if they were willing. (London's Tate Modern has, however, created a gallery space designed at least to house works which are very large and thus, at least potentially, sublime)

Sublime works are produced, nonetheless, even in unexpected places. The inception which informs Werner Herzog's film Fitzcarraldo is certainly grand: a man getting a steam boat dragged over a mountain in order to finance opera in the Amazon. The filming is as passionate as the hero. Insofar as the film produces bewilderment, wonder or awe it is properly characterized as sublime. Again, the all male Satyricon Theatre of Moscow performs a boite version of Jean Genet's The Maids with song, dance and mime which in virtue of the intensity of physically expressed passion conveyed undoubtedly renders the performance sublime though we would probably simply say 'astonishing'. Perhaps one should start thinking of some contemporary fiction as sublime Marquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude, for example. The large-scale sculptures of Anish Kapoor, also attract characterisation as "sublime".

On the Sublime was translated into French in 1674, and exerted a considerable influence in eighteenth century aesthetics, where beauty and sublimity are often paired. In this context the sublime often has a rather different meaning from what it has in Longinus, and this different meaning has also entered into our way of thinking. For example, in A *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) Edmund Burke generates a conception of the sublime in connection with our encounter with nature as well as art. The sublime now becomes that which causes astonishment, 'that state of the soul in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror' (p. 95). In lesser degrees, the sublime produces admiration, reverence and respect (p. 96). In greater degrees, the sublime is that which produces terror: 'terror is in all cases whatsoever, either more openly or latently the ruling principle of the sublime' (p. 97). So Burke's question then becomes, What terrifies us? Subjectively, it is the fear of pain. Objectively, we are terrified by vastness (the ocean), by insignificance (which hides the full extent of a danger from us), by what is powerful, and by what is infinite. (Says Burke, 'Infinity has a tendency to fill the mind with that sort of delightful horror, which is the most genuine effect, and truest test of the sublime' (p. 129): recall Pascal's 'I am terrified by the emptiness of these infinite spaces', in the Pensees). In relation to art ,Burke lists as sources of sublimity: vastness (e.g., of a building); unfinishedness (as in preparatory sketches); difficulty (as when we imagine the immense force

necessary to build Stonehenge); magnificence (especially when to some extent in a rich chaos); and colour (the sublime excludes white, green, yellow, blue, pale red, violet and the spotted and requires 'sad and fuscous colours, as black, or brown, or deep purple, and the like' p. 149).

Burke's constant recourse to nature to characterize aesthetic experience is standard in eighteenth century and later writing; it is also found, for example, in Kant's Critique of Judgement (1790), where it is used as it is by Burke get at the beautiful as well as the sublime. Of course, natural beauty is a concept of major importance to romantic thought. Here it is only to be observed that the relation of nature to the. aesthetic is one which divides contemporary aestheticians: for some, the beautiful and sublime in nature are paradigmatic for understanding the aesthetic value of art; for others, this approach - which treats it as a fortuitous fact that we also get aesthetic pleasure from art as well as nature - is totally misguided.

My own tendency is to side with the eighteenth century, especially in relation to how we think of the sublime. In addition, though the sublime is in one aspect characterized through its power to effect loss of control over ourselves - we are astounded by the sublime - in another aspect the characterization of the sublime is in terms of the mind at work: we are, says Burke, amazed, awe inspired, astonished by the sublime. This does not sound so very different from the (sense of) wonder in which all serious scientific response to the world is (also) rooted. Educationally, we might be well advised to think more in terms of assuring that children encounter the sublime than that they are initiated into the beautiful.

The concept of the sublime, as articulated by Burke, contains a lurking paradox. It is that we are drawn to things which cause us pain, indeed, terror, says Burke. Yet our whole psychology is built on the notion that we seek pleasure and shun pain. This paradox can be dissolved by saying that we find pleasure. in the encounter with imagined or fictional pain, or that the aesthetically painful is prophylactic of real pain, or that the 'pain' of the sublime is metaphorical that there is a pleasure in the sublime which we characterize as painful. The paradox is rather more obstinate than these summary resolutions suggest.

Authorship of On the Sublime

The author is unknown. In the reference manuscript, Parisinus Graecus 2036, the heading reports "Dionysius or Longinus", an ascription by the medieval copyist that was misread as "by Dionysius Longinus". When the manuscript was being prepared for printed

publication, the work was initially attributed to Cassius Longinus (c. 213-273 AD). Since the correct translation includes the possibility of an author named "Dionysius", some have attributed the work to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a writer of the 1st century CE. There remains the possibility that the work belongs to neither Cassius Longinus nor Dionysius of Halicarnassus, but, rather, some unknown author writing under the Roman Empire, likely in the 1st century. The error does imply that when the codex was written, the trails of the real author were already lost. Neither author can be accepted as the actual writer of the treatise. The former maintained ideas which are absolutely opposite to those written in the treatise; about the latter, there are problems with chronology.

Among further names proposed, are Hermagoras (a soliloquist who lived in Rome during the 1st century AD), Aelius Theon (author of a work which had many ideas in common with those of On the Sublime), and Pompeius Geminus (who was in epistolary conversation with Dionysius).

Dionysius of Halicarnassus

Dionysius of Halicarnassus wrote under Augustus, publishing a number of works. Dionysius is generally dismissed as the potential author of On the Sublime, since the writing officially attributed to Dionysius differs from the work on the sublime in style and thought.

Cassius Longinus

Accredited with writing a number of literary works, this disciple of Plotinus was "the most distinguished scholar of his day". Cassius received his education at Alexandria and became a teacher himself. First teaching at Athens, Cassius later moved to Asia Minor, where he achieved the position of advisor to the queen of Palmyra, Zenobia. Cassius is also a doubtful possibility for author of the treatise, since it is notable that no literature later than the 1st century AD is mentioned (the latest is Cicero, dead in 43 BC), and the work is now usually dated to the early 1st century AD. The work ends with a discourse on the decay of oratory, a typical subject of the period in which authors such as Tacitus, Petronius and Quintilian, who also dealt with the subject, were still alive.

The Treatise On the Sublime

On the Sublime is both a treatise on aesthetics and a work of literary criticism. It is written in an declamatory form and the final part, possibly dealing with public speaking, has been lost.

The treatise is dedicated to Posthumius Terentianus, a cultured Roman and public figure, though little else is known of him. On the Sublime is a compendium of literary epitomes, with about 50 authors spanning 1,000 years mentioned or quoted. Along with the expected examples from Homer and other figures of Greek culture, Longinus refers to a passage from Genesis, which is quite unusual for the 1st century:

A similar effect was achieved by the lawgiver of the Jews—no mean genius, for he both understood and gave expression to the power of the divinity as it deserved—when he wrote at the very beginning of his laws, and we quote his words: 'God said'—what was it?—'Let there be light.' And there was. 'Let there be earth.' And there was.

Given his positive reference to Genesis, Longinus has been assumed to be either a Hellenized Jew or readily familiar with the Jewish culture. As such, Longinus emphasizes that, to be a truly great writer, authors must have "moral excellence". In fact, critics hypothesize that Longinus avoided publication in the ancient world "either by modesty or by avaricious motives". Moreover, Longinus stresses that transgressive writers are not necessarily prideless fools, even if they take literary risks that seem "bold, lawless, and original". As for social subjectivity, Longinus accedes that complete liberty promotes spirit and hope; according to Longinus, "never did a slave become an orator". On the other hand, too much luxury and wealth leads to a decay in expressiveness—expressiveness being the goal of the sublime writer.

The Sublime

Longinus critically applauds and condemns certain literary works as examples of good or bad styles of writing. Longinus ultimately promotes an "elevation of style" and an essence of "simplicity". To quote this famous author, "the first and most important source of sublimity [is] the power of forming great conceptions." The concept of the sublime is generally accepted to refer to a style of writing that elevates itself "above the ordinary". Finally, Longinus sets out five sources of sublimity: "great thoughts, strong emotions, certain figures of thought and speech, noble diction, and dignified word arrangement".

The effects of the Sublime are: loss of rationality, an alienation leading to identification with the creative process of the artist and a deep emotion mixed in pleasure and elation. An example of sublime (which the author quotes in the work) is a poem by Sappho, the so-called Ode to Jealousy, defined as a 'Sublime ode'. A writer's goal is not so much to express empty feelings, but to arouse emotion in his audience.

In the treatise, the author asserts that "the Sublime leads the listeners not to persuading, but to bliss: for what is wonderful always goes together with a sense of dismay, and triumph prevails over what is only convincing or delightful, since persuasion, as a rule, is within everyone's grasp: whereas, the Sublime, giving to speech an invulnerable power and [an invulnerable] strength, rises above every listener".

According to this statement, one could think that the sublime, for Longinus, was^only a moment of avoidance from reality. But on the contrary, he thought that literature could model a soul, and that a soul could pour itself out into a work of art. In this way the treatise becomes not only a text of literary inquiry, but also one of ethical discourse, since the Sublime becomes the product of a great soul. The sources of the Sublime are of two kinds: inborn sources ("aspiration to vigorous concepts" and "strong and enthusiastic passion") and procurable sources (linguistic devices, choice o* the right lexicon, and "dignified and high composition").

The ethical aspect and attention to the "great soul" broaden the dimension of the work; begun in order to disprove the arguments of pamphlet of literary criticism, it ends by creating a new idea within the entire framework of aesthetics. The sublime, in fact, is a denominator of the greatness of the one who approaches to it, both the author's and the viewer's (or reader's). Between them an empathetic bond must arise. Then, the Sublime is a mechanism of recognition (arising from the impact of the work of art) of the greatness of a spirit, of the depth of an idea, of the power of speech. This recognition has its roots in the belief that everyone is aware of the existence of the Sublime, and that the Endeavour towards greatness is rooted in human nature. In the wake of these considerations, the literary genre and the subject-matter chosen by the poet assume a minor importance for Longinus, who proclaims that "sublimity" might be found in any or every literary work. He proves to be a very clever critic, for he excels the Apollodoreans by speaking of the critic as a form of positive "channeling" of the Genius, He passes beyond the rigid rules of the literary critics of his time, according to which only a regular (or "second-rate", as Longinus says) style could be defined as perfect.

On the other hand he admires the boldness of the Genius, which always succeeds in reaching the zenith, even if at the expense of forgivable lapses in style. Thus among examples of the Sublime may be rated (not in any order) Homer the dramaturge, Sappho, Plato, even the Bible, and a playwright like Aristophanes (since the author maintained that laughter' is a jocose pathos and therefore, "sublime", being "an

emotion of pleasure"). Nevertheless he did not appreciate the Hellenistic poets, perhaps because he did not understand their culture: "Would you prefer to be Homer or Apollonius? [...] No sane person would give just one devastation, the Oedipus Rex, in exchange for all lones's dramas."

The Sublime, moreover, does not apparent itself only in what is simply beautiful, but also in what is sufficiently distressing to cause bewilderment, surprise and even fear. It could be said that Helen of Troy may certainly have been the most beautiful woman in the world, but she was never sublime in Greek literature: however Edmund Burke cites the scene of the old men looking at Helen's "terrible" beauty on the ramparts of Troy—he regards it as an instance of the beautiful, but his imagination is captured by its sublimity. Hecuba in Euripides's The Trojan Women is certainly sublime when she expresses her endless sorrow for the terrible destiny of her children.

The Decay of Eloquence

The author speaks also about the decay of oratory, as arising not only from absence of personal freedom but also from the corruption of morals, which together destroy that, high spirit which generates the Sublime. Thus the treatise is clearly centred in the burning disagreement which raged in the 1st century AD in Latin literature. If Petronius pointed out excess of rhetoric and the imperious, unnatural techniques of the schools of expressiveness as the causes of decay, Tacitus was nearer to Longinus in thinking that the root of this degeneracy was the establishment of Princedom, or Empire, which, though it brought stability and peace, also gave rise to censorship and brought an end to freedom of speech. Thus oratory became merely an exercise in style.

Misleading Translations and Lost Data

Translators have been unable to clearly interpret the text, including the title itself. The "sublime" in the title has been translated in various ways, to include senses of elevation and excellent style. The word sublime, argues Rhys Roberts, is misleading, since Longinus' objective broadly concerns "the essentials of a noble and impressive style" than anything more narrow and specific. Moreover, about one-third of the treatise is missing; Longinus' segment on similes, for instance, has only a few words remaining. Matters are further complicated in realizing that ancient writers, Longinus' contemporaries, do not quote or mention the treatise in any way.

Limitations of the Writing

Despite Longinus' critical applaud, his writing is far from perfect. Longinus' occasional enthusiasm becomes "carried away' and creates

some confusion as to the meaning of his text. Furthermore, 18th-century critic Edward Burnaby Greene finds Longinus, at times, to be "too refined". Greene also claims that Longinus' focus on hyperbolical descriptions is "particularly weak, and misapplied". Occasionally, Longinus also falls into a sort of "irksome" in treating his subjects. The treatise is also limited in its concentration on spiritual predominance and lack of focus on the way in which language structures determine the feelings and thoughts of writers. Finally, Longinus' treatise is difficult to explain in an academic setting, given the difficulty of the text and lack of "practical rules of a teachable kind".

Writing Style and Eloquence

Despite its culpabilities, the disquisition remains critically successful because of its "noble tone," "apt precepts," "judicious attitude" and "historical interests", One of the reasons why it is so unlikely that known ancient critics wrote on the Lofty is because the disquisition is composed so differently from any other literary work. Since Longinus's linguistic formula avoids dominating his work, the literature remains "personal and fresh," unique in its originality. Longinus rebels against the popular eloquence of the time by implicitly attacking ancient theory in its focus on a detailed criticism of words, metaphors, and figures. More - explicitly, in refusing to judge similitude as entities unto themselves, Longinus promotes the appreciation of literary devices as they relate to passages as a whole. Essentially, Longinus, rare for a critic of his time, focuses more on "greatness of style" than "technical rules". Despite his criticism of ancient texts, Longinus remains a "master of candour and good-nature". Moreover, the author invents striking images and metaphors, writing almost lyrically at times. In general, Longinus appreciates, and makes use of, simple articulation and bold images.

As far as the language is concerned, the work is certainly a "unicum" because it's a blend of expressions of the Hellenistic koine dialektos to which are added elevated constructions, technical expressions, metaphors, classic and rare forms which produce a literary pastiche at the borders of linguistic experimentations.

Influences

In reading On the Sublime, critics have determined that the ancient philosopher and writer Plato is a "great hero" to Longinus. Not only does Longinus come to Plato's defense, but he also attempts to raise his literary standing in opposition to current criticisms. Another influence on the treatise can be found in Longinus' linguistic figures, which draw from theories by a 1st century BCE writer, Caecilius of Calacte.

Historical Criticism and Use of "On the Sublime"

- 10th century—The original disquisition, before translation, is copied into a gothic-manuscript and attributed to "Dionysius or Longinus".
- 13th century—A Byzantine soliloquist makes obscure references to what may be Longinus' text.
- 16th century—The treatise is ignored by scholars until it is published by Francis Robortello in Basel, in 1554, and Niccolo da Falgano, in 1560. The original work is attributed to "Dionysius Longinus" and most European countries receive translations of the disquistion.
- 17th century—Sublime effects become a desired end of much Baroque art and literature, and the rediscovered work of "Longinus" goes through half a dozen editions in the 17th century. It is Boileau's 1674 translation of the disquisition into French that really starts its career in the history of criticism. Despite its popularity, some critics claim that the disquisition was too "primitive" to be truly understood by a "too civilized" 17th-century audience.
- 18th century—William Smith's 1739 translation of Longinus on the Sublime established the translator and once more brought the work into prominence. Longinus' text reaches its height in popularity. In England, critics esteem Longinus' principles of composition and balance second only to Aristotle's Poetics. Edmund Burke's A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful and Immanuel Kant's Critique of the Power of Judgment owe a mortgage to Longinus' concept of the sublime, and the category passes into the stock-in-trade of Romantic intellectual discourse. As "Longinus" says, "The effect of elevated language upon an audience is not persuasion but transport", a fitting sentiment for Romantic thinkers and writers who reach beyond logic, to the wellsprings of the Sublime. At the same time, the Romantics gain some contempt for Longinus, given his association with the "rules" of classical poets. Such contempt is ironic, given the widespread influence of Lenginus on the shaping of 18th-century criticism.
- 19th century—Early in the 19th century, doubts arise to the authorship of the treatise. Thanks to Italian scholar Amati, Cassius Longinus is no longer assumed to be the writer of On the Sublime. Simultaneously, the critical popularity of Longinus' work diminishes greatly; though the work is still in use by scholars, it is rarely quoted. Despite the lack of public enthusiasm, editions and translations of On the Sublime are published at the end of the century.

- 20th century—Although the text is still little quoted, it maintains its status, apart from Aristotle's Poetics, as "the most delightful of all the critical works of classical antiquity". Also Neil Hertz's essay on Longinus in his book, The End of the Line. Hertz is in part responding to Thomas Weiskel's book The Romantic Sublime, probably the most influential recent account of British and German Romantic attitudes towards the Sublime of both Burke and Longinus. Laura Quinney treats the attractions grim declaration in analyzes of Longinus, particularly Weiskel's. Jonathan Culler has an cherishing of Hertz on Longinus in "The Hertzian Sublime". Anne Carson and Louis Marin have occasion to discuss Longinus as well and Harold Bloom and William J. Kennedy have significant accounts of his work. William Carlos Williams also uses three lines from the work as an epigraph to the Preamble to Kora in Hell.

• SUMMARY

- Aristotle considered epic poetry, tragedy, comedy, dithyrambic poetry and music to be imitative, each varying in replica by medium, object, and manner. For example, music imitates with the media of cadence and accord, whereas dance imitates with rhythm alone, and poetry with language. The" forms also differ in their object of imitation. Comedy, for cite, is a dramatic replica of men worse than average; whereas devastation resemble men slightly better than average. Lastly, the forms differ in their manner of imitation - through narrative or character, through change or no change, and through drama or no drama. Aristotle believed that replica is natural to mankind and constitutes one of mankind's advantages over animals.

- While it is believed that Aristotle's Poetics comprised two books - one on comedy and one on devastation-only the portion that focuses on devastation has survived. Aristotle devastation that tragedy is composed of six elements: plot-structure, character, style, spectacle, and lyric poetry. The characters in a devastation are merely a means of driving the story; and the plot, not the characters, is the chief focus of devastation. Devastation is the replica of action arousing pity and fear, and is meant to effect the catharsis of those same emotions. Aristotle concludes Poetics with a discussion on which, if either, is superior: epic or disastrous mimesis. He suggests that because devastation possesses all the attributes of an epic, possibly possesses additional attributes such as spectacle and music, is more unified, and achieves the aim of its mimesis in shorter scope, it can be considered superior to epic.

- Longinus critically hails and condemns certain literary works as examples of good or bad styles of writing. Longinus ultimately promotes an "elevation of style" and an essence of "simplicity". To quote this famous author, "the first and most important source of sublimity [is] the power of forming great conceptions." The concept of the sublime is generally accepted to refer to a style of writing that elevates itself "above the ordinary". Finally, Longinus sets out five sources of sublimity: "great thoughts, strong emotions, certain figures of thought and speech, noble diction, and dignified word arrangement".

• KEY WORDS

1. **Disastrousblemih** : "Disastrous blemish" (or "fatal flaw") is broadly imprecise and often misleading.
2. **Aristotle** : Aristotle was a Greek philosopher, a student of Plato and teacher of Alexander the Great.
3. **Longinus** : Longinus is the conventional name of the author of the treatise, On the Sublime, a work which focuses on the effect of good writing.
4. **Peripeteia** : Peripeteia includes changes of character, but also more external changes.
5. **Hamartia** : The word hamartia is rooted in the notion of missing the mark (hamartanein) and covers a broad spectrum that includes accident and mistake, as well as wrongdoing, error, or sin.

• REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Write down the detailed summary of Aristotle's "Poetics".
2. Explain the different terms used by Aristotle in his "Poetics".
3. Describe the structure and parts of Devastation.
4. Discuss the Longinus concept of misleading of translations and loss of data.
5. Enumerate the importance of writing style and rhetoric of Longinus, "On the Sublime".
6. In what ways Aristotle distinguishes the genre of poetry?
7. Mention Aristotle's six parts of devastation.
8. Define tragic flaw.
9. Define the term sublime.
10. Write down the concept of sublime.
11. What are the effects of sublime?

• SUGGESTED READING

- Poetics — Aristotle
- Aristotle's Poetics — Stephen Halliwell
- On the Sublime — Longinus

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2

NEO-CLASSICAL CRITICISM

STRUCTURE

• LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to :

- describe the John Dryden: Essay on Dramatic Poesy
- discuss the Dr. Johnson: Lives of Poets.

• INTRODUCTION

Samuel Johnson (18 September 1709 [O.S. 7 September]—13 December 1784), often referred to as Dr Johnson, was an English author who made lasting benefactions to English literature as a poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer. Johnson was a devout Anglican and committed Tory, and has been described as "plausibly the most distinguished man of letters in English history". He is also the subject of "the most famous single work of biographical art in the whole of literature": James Boswells Life of Samuel Johnson.

Johnson was born in Lichfield, Staffordshire, and attended Pembroke College, Oxford for just over a year, before his dearth of funds enforced him to leave. After working as a teacher he moved to London, where he began to write miscellaneous pieces for The Gentleman's Magazine. His early works include the biography The Life of Richard Savage, the poems London and The Vanity of Human Wishes, and the play Irene.

After nine years of work, Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language was ventilated in 1755; it had a far-reaching effect on Modern English and has been described as "one of the greatest single achievements of scholarship". The Dictionary brought Johnson fame and success. Until

the accomplishment of the Oxford English Dictionary 150 years later, Johnson's was perceived as the pre-eminent British dictionary. His later works included essays, an influential annotated edition of William Shakespeare's plays, and the widely read tale Rasselas. In 1763, he befriended James Boswell, with whom he later travelled to Scotland; Johnson described their travels in A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland. Towards the end of his life, he produced the massive and influential Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets, a assemblage of biographies and appraisals of 17th and 18th century poets.

Johnson had a tall and robust figure, but his odd indications and tics were confusing to some on their first encounter with him. Boswell's Life, along with other biographies, documented Johnson's behaviour and traits in such detail that they have informed the posthumous diagnosis of Tourette syndrome (TS), a condition not defined or diagnosed in the 18th century. After a series of illnesses he died on the evening of 13 December 1784, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. In the years following his death, Johnson began to be perceived as having had a lasting effect on literary condemnation and even as the only great critic of English literature.

• JOHN DRYDEN : ESSAY ON DRAMATIC POETRY

TEXT

[1] It was that memorable day, in the first Summer of the late War, when our Navy engag'd the Dutch: a day wherein the two most robust and best appointed Squadrons which any age had ever seen, refuted the command of the greater half of the Orb, the commerce of Nations, and the riches of the Universe. While these vast buoyant bodies, on either side, mov'd against each other in parallel lines, and our Country men, under the happy conduct of his Royal Highness, went breaking, by little and little, into the line of the Enemiès; the noise of the Cannon from both Navies reach'd our ears about the City: so that all men, being alarm'd with it, and in a dreadful suspence of the event, which we knew was then deciding, every one went following the sound as his fancy led him; and leaving the Town almost empty, some took towards the Park, some cross the River, others down it; all probing the noise in the depth of silence.

[2] Amongst the rest, it was the serendipity of Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius and Neander, to be in company together: three of the persons whom their wit intelligence and Calibre have made known to all the Town: and whom I have chose to hide under these borrowed names,

that they may not suffer by so ill a relation as I am going to make of their expatiate.

[3] Taking then a Flatboat which a servant of Lisideus had provided for them, they made sifters to shoot the Bridge, and left behind them that great fall of waters which hundred them from hearing what they desired: after which, having disengaged themselves from many Dary which rode at Harbour in the Thames, and almost block up the passage towards Greenwich, they ordered the Watermen to let fall their Oares more gently; and then every one favouring his own idiosyncrasy with a stern silence, it was not long ere they perceiv'd the Air break about them like the noise of distant Thunder, or of Swallows in a Chimney: those little fluctuate of sciund, though almost fading before they reach'd them, yet still seeming to retain somewhat of their first horrour which they had betwixt the Squadrons after they had attentively listened till such time as the sound by little and little went from them; Eugenius lifting up his head, and taking notice of it, was the first who felicitated to the rest that happy Omen of our Nations Victory: adding, we had but this to desire in corroboration of it, that we might hear no more of that noise which was now leaving the English Coast. When the rest had accord in the same opinion, Crites, a person of a sharp judgment, and somewhat too delicate a taste in wit, which the world have mistaken in him for ill nature, said, smiling to us, that if the appositeness of this battle had not been so exceeding great, he could scarce have wish'd the Victory at the price he knew must pay for it, in being subject to the reading and hearing of so many ill verses as he was sure would be made upon it; adding, that no Squabble could scope some of those eternal Rhimers, who watch a Battle with more conscientiousness then the Ravens and birds of Prey; and the worst of them surest to be first in upon the prey, while the better able, either out of modesty writ not at all, or set that due value upon their Poems, as to let them be often call'd for and long expected! there are some of those impertinent people you speak of, answer'd Lisideius, who to my knowledge, are already so provided, either way, that they can produce not only a Panegirick upon the Victory, but, if need be, a funeral dirge upon the Duke: and after they have crown'd his valour with many Lawrels, at last deplore the odds under which he fell, concluding that his courage deserv'd a better destiny. All the company smii'd at the conceipt of Lisideius, but Crites, more eager then before, began to make particular exceptions against some Writers, and said the publick Magistrate ought to send betimes to forbid them; and that it concerned the peace and quiet of all honest people, that ill Poets should be as well silenced as indting Preachers. In my opinion, replyed Eugenius, you chase your point too far; for as to my own particular, I am so great a lover of Poesie,'that I could wish them all rewarded who endeavor but to do well; at least I would not have them worse us'd then Sylla the Dictator did one of their brethren heretofore: Quern in concione vidimus

(says Tully speaking of him) cum ei libellum malus poeta de populo subjecisset, quod epigramma in eum fecisset tantummodo alternis versibus longiuculis, statim ex iis rebus quse tune vendebat jubere ei prsemium tribui, sub ea conditione ne quid postea scriberet. I could wish with all my heart, replied Crites, that many whom we know were as munificently thank'd upon the same condition, that they would never trouble us again. For amongst others, I have a mortal angst of two Poets, whom this victory with the help of both her wings will never be able to escape; 'tis easie to guess whom you intend, said Lisideius; and without naming them, I ask you if one of them does not unceasingly pay us with claspers upon words and a certain clownish kind of raillery? if now and then he does not offer at a maltreatment or Clevelandism, wresting and torturing a word into another meaning: In fine, if he be not one of those whom the French would call un mauvais buffon; one that is so much a well-wilier to the Satire, that he spares no man; and though he cannot strike a blow to hurt any, yet ought to be punish'd for the malevolence of the action, as our Witches are justly hang'd because they think themselves so; and suffer deservedly for believing they did mischief, because they meant it. You have described him, said Crites, so exactly, that I am affraid to come after you with my other terminus of Poetry: He is one of those who having had some advantage of education and antipode, knows better then the other what a Poet should be, but puts it into practice more unluckily then any man; his stile and matter are every where alike; he is the most calm, peaceable Writer you ever read: he never perturbs your passions with the least appositeness, but still leaves you in as even a temper as he found you; he is a very Leveller in Poetry, he creeps along with ten little words in every line, and helps out his Numbers with For to, and Vnto, and all the pretty Obscenitlys he can find, till he drags them to the end of another line; while the Sense is left tir'd half way behind it; he doubly crave all his Verses, first for want of thought, and then of countenance; his Poetry neither has wit in it, nor seems to have it; like him in Martiall:

Pauper videri Cinna vult, & est pauper

[4] He affects plainness, to cover his want of imagination: when he writes the serious way, the highest aviation of his fancy is some miserable Antithesis, or seeming conflict; and in the Comick he is still reaching at some thin narcissism, the ghost of a Jest, and that too flies before him, never to be caught; these Swallows which we see before us on the Thames, are just resemblance of his wit: you may observe how near the water they kneed, how many tenders they make to dip, and yet how infrequently they touch it: and when they do, 'tis but the surface: they skim over it but to catch a gnat, and then ascend into the ayr and leave it. Well Gentlemen, said Eugenius, you may speak your pleasure of these Authors; but though I and some few more about the Town may give you a peaceable hearing, yet, assure your selves, there are throngs who would think you malevolent and them injur'd: especially him who you first described; he is the

very Withers of the City: they have bought more Editions of his Works then would serve to lay under all the Pies at the Lord Mayor's Christmass. When his famous Poem first came out in the year 1660, I have seen them reading it in the midst of Change-time; many so impassioned they were at it, that they lost their bargain by the Candles ends: but what will you say, if he has been received amongst the great Ones? I can assure you he is, this day, the envy of a great person, who is Lord in the Art of Quibbling; and who does not take it well, that any man should encroach so far into his Province. All I would wish replied Crites, is, that they who love his Writings, may still admire him, and his fellow Poet: qui Bavium non odit, &c. is curse abundant. And farther, added Lisideius, I believe there is no man who writes well, but would think himself very hardly dealt with, if their Admirers should praise any thing of his: Nam quos contemnimus eorum quoque laudes contemnimus. There, are so few who write well in this Age, said Crites, that me-thinks any praises should be wellcome; then neither rise to the decorum of the last Age, nor to any of the Ancients; and we may cry out of the Writers of this time, with more reason than Petronius of his, Pace vestra liceat dixisse, primi omnium eloquentiam perdidistis: you have dissipated the true old Poetry so far, that Nature, which is the soul of it, is not in any of your Writings.

[5] If your argument (said Eugenius) to those who now write, be grounded onely upon your acclaim to Relic, there is no man more ready to adore those great Greeks and Romans than I am: but on the other side, I cannot think so abominably of the Age I live in, or so scandalously of my own Countrey, as not to judge we equal the Ancients in most kinds of Poesie, and in some excel them; neither know I any reason why I may not be as fervent for the Prominence of our Age, as we find the Ancients themselves in reference to those who lived before them. For you hear your Horace saying,

Indignor quidquara reprehendi, non quia crasse Compositum, illepideve putetur, sed quia nuper.

And after, Si meliora dies, ut vina, poemata reddit, Scire velim pretium chartis quotus arroget annus?

[6] But I see I am repugnant in a wide quarrel, where the arguments are not like to reach close on either side; for Poesie is of so large extent, and so many both of the Ancients and Moderns have done well in all kinds of it, that, in citing one against the other, we shall take up more time this Evening, than each mans occasions will allow him: therefore I would ask Crites to what part of Poesie he would impound his Squabbles, and whether he would defend the general cause of the Ancients against the Moderns, or oppose any Age of the Moderns against this of ours?

[7] Crites a little while considering upon this Demand, told Eugenius he approv'd his Postulations, and, if he pleased, he would limit their Dispute to Poignant Poesie; in which he thought it not difficult to prove, either that the Antients were superiour to the Moderns, or the last Age to this of ours.

[8] Eugenius was somewhat surpriz'd, when he heard Crites make choice of that'Subject; For ought I see, .said he, I have undertaken a harder Cont an than I imagin'd; for though I never judg'd the Plays of the Greek or Roman Poets comparable to ours; yet on the other side those we now see acted, come short of many which were written in the last Age: but my comfort is if we are orecome, it will be onely by our own Countreymen: and if we Capitulate to them in this one part of Poesie, we more surpass them in all the other; for in the Epique or Lyrique way it will be hard for them to show us one such amongst them, as we have many now living, or who lately were so. They can produce nothing so. courtly replevin, or which expresses so much the Conversation of a Gentleman, as Sir John Suckling; nothing so even, sweet, and flowing as Mr. Waller; nothing so Majestique, so correct as Sir John Denham; nothing so elevated, so copious, and full of spirit, as Mr Cowley; as for the Italian, French, and Spanish Plays, I can make it evident that those who now write, excel them; and that the Drama is wholly ours.

[9] All of them were thus far of Eugenius his opinion, that the sweetness of English Jingle was never understood or practis'd by our Fathers; even Crites himself did not much oppose it: and every one was willing to acknowledge how much our Poesie is improv'd, by the happiness of some Writers yet living; who first taught us to mould our thoughts into easie and significant words; to curtail the amenities of expression, and to make our Rime so properly a part of the Verse, that it should never mis-lead the sence, but it self be led and governed by it. Eugenius was going to continue this Expatiate, when Lisideius told him it was necessary, before they proceeded further, to take a standing measure of their Controversie; for how was it possible to be decided who writ the best Plays, before we know what a Play should be? but, this once agreed on by both Parties, each might have recourse to it, either to prove his own advantages, or discover the failings of his Combatant.

[10] He had no sooner said this, but all desir'd the favour of him to' give the definition of a Play; and they were the more tenacious, because neither Aristotle, nor Horace, nor any other, who writ of that Subject, had ever done it.

[11] Lisideius, after some modest denials, at last confess'd he had a rude Notion of it; indeed rather a Description then a Definition: but which serv'd to guide him in his private thoughts, when he was to make a judgment of what others writ: that he conceiv'd a Play ought to be, A just and lively Image of Humane

Nature, representing its Passions and Humours, and the Changes of Fortune to which it is subject; for the Delight and Instruction of Mankind.

[12] This Definition, though Crites rais'd a Logical Objection against it; that it was onely a genre & fine, and so not altogether perfect; was yet well received by the rest: and after they had given order to the Water-men to turn their Barge, and row softly, that they might take the cool of the Evening in their return; Crites, being desired by the Company to begin, spoke on behalf of the Ancients, in this manner:

[13] If Credence port and a Victory, Eugenius, in his own opinion, has already prevailed over the Ancients; nothing seems more easie to him, than to overcome those whom it is our greatest praise to have plagiarized well: for we do not only build upon their foundation; but by their models. Dramatique Poesie had time enough, computation from Thespis (who first invented it) to Aristophanes, to be born, to grow up, and to thrive in Manhood. It has been observed of Arts and Sciences, that in one and the same Century they have arrived to a great perfection; and no wonder, since every Age has a kind of Universal Genius, which inclines those that live in it to some particular Studies; the Work then being push'd on by many hands, must of necessity go forward.

[14] Is it not apparent, in these last hundred years (when the Study of Philosophy has been the business of all the Virtuosi in Christendome) that almost a new Nature has been divulged to us? that more blunder of the School have been detected, more useful Experiments in Philosophy have been made, more Noble Secrets in Opticks, Medicine, Anatomy, Astronomy, discover'd, than in all those gullible and doting Ages from Aristotle to us? so true it is that nothing spreads more fast than Science, when rightly and generally cultivated.

[15] Add to this the more than common emulation that was in those times of writing well; which though it be found in all Ages and all Persons that pretend to the same Prominence; yet Poesie being then in more deem than now it is, had greater Honours proclaim to the Professors of it; and ergo the Rivalry was more high between them; they had Judges ordered to decide their Merit, and Prizes to reward it: and Historians have been conscientious to record of Eschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Lycophron, and the rest of them, both who they were that surmounted in these Wars of the Theater, and how often they were crown'd: while the Asian Kings, and Grecian Common-wealths scarce afforded them a Nobler Subject then the unmanly Luxuries of a Debauch'd Court, or giddy Intrigues of a Schismatic City. Alit semulatio ingenia (says Paterculus) & nunc invidia, nunc admiratio incitationem accendit: Emulation is the Spur of Wit, and sometimes Envy, sometimes Admiration quickens our Venture.

[16] But now since the Rewards of Honour are taken away, that Impersonation Emulation is Malevolence into direct Malice; yet so indolent, that it contents it self

to denounce and cry down others, without attempting to do better: 'Tis a Prominence too unprofitable, to take the necessary pains for it; yet wishing they had it, is groading enough to impede others from it. And this, in short, Eugenius, is the reason, why you have now so few good Poets; and so many severe Judges: Certainly, to emulate the Antients well, much labour and long study is required: which pains, I have already shown, our Poets would want incouragement to take, if yet they had ability to go through with it. Those Ancients have been faithful Impersonator and wise Observers of that Nature, which is so torn and ill represented in our Plays, they have handed down to us a perfect congruence of her; which we, like ill Copyers, neglecting to look on, have accomplished monstrous and disfigur'd. But, that you may know how much you are obligated to those your Masters, and be ashamed to have so ill requited them: I must remember you that all the Rules by which we practise the Drama at this day, either such as relate to the justness and equilibrium of the Plot; or the Episodical Ornaments, such as Descriptions, Narrations, and other Beauties, which are not essential to the Play; were delivered to us from the Observations that Aristotle made, of those Poets, which either liv'd before him, or were his Contemporaries: we have added nothing of our own, except we have the confidence to say our wit is better; which none boast of in our Age, but such as understand not theirs. Of that Book which Aristotle has left us dafie oco Die?6ee96, Horace his Art of Poetry is an excellent Comment, and, I believe, restores to us that Second Book of his concerning Farce, which is wanting in him.

[17] Out of these two has been extracted the Famous Rules which the French call, Des Trois Vnitez, or, The Three Unities, which ought to be observed in every Regular Play; namely, of Time, Place, and Action.

[18] The unity of Time they apprehend in 24 hours, the compass .of a Natural Day; or as near it as can be strained and the reason of it is obvious to every one, that the time of the counterfeit action, or fable of the Play, should be proportion'd as near as can be to the duration of that time in which it is represented; since therefore all Playes are acted on the Theater in a space of time much within the compass of 24 hours, that Play is to be thought the nearest replica of Nature, whose Plot or Action is constricted within that time; and, by the same Rule which concludes this general proportion of time, it follows, that all the parts of it are to be equally subdivided; as namely, that one act take not up the supposed time of half a day; which is out of proportion to the rest: since the other four are then to be straightned within the compas of the remaining half; for it is unnatural that one Act, which being spoke or written, is not longer than ths rest, should be suppos'd longer by the Spectators; 'tis therefore the Poets duty, to take care that no Act should be imagin'd to exceed the time in which it is represented on the Stage, and that the intervalls and discrimination of time be suppos'd to fall out between the Acts.

[19] This Rule of Time how well it has been observ'd by the Antients, most of their Playes will witness; you see them in their Calamities (wherein to follow this Rule, is certainly most difficult) from the very beginning of their Playes, falling close into that part of the Story which they intend for the action or principal object of it; leaving the former part to be dispatched by Portrayal: so that they set the Audience, as it were, at the Post where the Race is to be concluded: and, saving them the exhausting expectation of seeing the Poet set out and ride the beginning of the Course, you behold him not, till he is in sight of the Goal, and just upon you.

[20] For the Second Unity, which is that of place, the Antients meant by it, That the Scene ought to be continu'd through the Play, in the same place where it was laid in the beginning: for the .Stage, on which it is represented, being but one and the same place, it is freakish to devise it many; and those far distant from one another. I will not deny but by the variation of painted Scenes, the Fancy (which in these cases will contribute to its own deceit) may sometimes imagine it several places, with some appearance of expectation; yet it still carries the greater likelihood of truth, if those places be suppos'd so near each other, as in the same Town or City; which may all be appreciated under the larger Persuasion of one place: for a greater distance will bear no proportion to the shortness of time, which is allotted in the acting, to pass from one of them to another; for the Observation of this, next to the Antients, the French are to be most applauded. They tie themselves so strictly to the unity of place, that you never see in any of their Plays a Scene changed in the middle of the Act: if the Act begins in a Garden, a Street, or Chamber, 'tis ended in the same place; and that you may know it to be the same, the Stage is so endowed with persons that it is never empty all the time: he that enters the second has business with him who was on before; and before the second evacuates the Stage, a third appears who has business with him.

[21] This Corneil calls La Liaison des Scenes, the cohesion or joining of the Scenes; and 'tis a good mark of a well elaborated Play when all the Persons are known to each other, and every one of them has some affairs with all the rest.

[22] As for the third Unity which is that of Action, the Dwellers meant no other by it then what the Logicians do by their Finis, the end or scope of an action: that which is the first in Intent, and last in Execution: now the Poet is to aim at one great and complete action, to the carrying on of which all things in his Play, even the very hurdles, are to be submissive; and the reason of this is as evident as any of the former.

[23] For two Actions equally arduous and driven on by the Writer, would destroy the unity of the Poem; it would be no longer one Play, but

two: not but that there may be many actions in a Play, as Ben. Johnson has observ'd in his discoveries; but they must be all submissive to the great one, which our language happily expresses in the name of underplots: such as in Terences Eunuch is the difference and accord of Thais and Phasdria, which is not the chief business of the Play, but promotes; the marriage of Chaerea and Chreme's Sister, principally deliberate by the Poet. There ought to be one action, sayes Corneile, that is one complete action which leaves the mind of the Audience in a full repose: But this cannot be brought to pas but by many other flawed ones which conduce to it, and hold the Audience in a delightful suspence of what will be.

[24] If by these Rules (to omit many other drawn from the Axioms and Practice of the Ancients) we should judge our modern Playes; 'tis apparent, that few of them would abide the tryal: that which should be the business of a day, takes up in some of them an 'age; instead of one action they are the Embodiments of a mans life; and for one spot of ground (which the Stage should represent) we are sometimes in more Countries then the Map can show us.

[25] But if we will allow the Dwellers to have strained well, we must acknowledge them to have replevin better; questionless we are impoverished of a great stock of wit in the loss of Menander among the Greek Poets, and of Cfflcilius, Affranius and Varius, among the Romans: we may guess of Menanders Excellency by the Plays of Terence, who translated some of his, and yet wanted so much of him that he was call'd C. Cassar the Half-Menander, and of Varius, by the Testimonies of Horace Martial, and Velleus Paterculus: Tis probable that these, could they be recuperated, would decide the dissension; but so long as Aristophanes in the old Farce, and Plautus in the new are extant; while the Calamities of Eurypides, Sophocles, and Seneca are to be had, I can never see one of those Plays which are now written, but it encreases my admiration of the Dwellers; and yet I must accept further, that to admire them as we ought, we should understand them better than we do. Doubtless many things appear flat to us, whose wit depended upon some custom or story which never came to our knowledge, or perhaps upon some Criticism in their language, which being so long dead, and onely remaining in their Books, 'tis not possible they should make us know it perfectly. To read Macrobius, explaining the tenancy and tawdriness of many words in Virgil, which I had before pass'd over without remuneration, as common things, is enough to assure me that I ought to think the same of Terence; and that in the purity of his style (which Tully so much valued that he ever carried his works about him) there is yet left in him great room for applause, if I knew but where to place it. In the mean

time I must desire you to take notice, that the greatest man of the last age (Ben. Johnson) was willing to give place to them in all things: He was not onely a ostensible Imitator of Horace, bux a learned Stealer of all the others; you track him every where in their Snow: If Horace, Lucan, Petronius Arbiter, Seneca, and Juvenal, had their own from him, there are few serious thoughts which are new in him; you will clemency me therefore if I venture he lov'd their fashion when he wore their cloaths. But since I have otherwise a great exaltation for him, and you, Eugenius, prefer him above all other Poets, I will use no farther squabble to you then his example: I will produce Father Ben. to you, dress'd in all the ornaments and colours of the Dwellers, you will need no other guide to our Party if you follow him; and whether you consider the bad Plays of our Age, or regard the good ones of the last, both the best and inferior of the Modern Poets will equally enjoin you to deem the Dwellers.

[26] Crites had no sooner left speaking, but Eugenius who waited with some impatience for it, thus began:

[27] I have observ'd in your Speech that the former part of it is cogent as to what the Moderns have availed by the rules of the Dwellers, but in the latter you are careful to secrete how much they have excell'd them: we own all the helps we have from them, and want neither exaltation nor appreciation while we accept that to overcome them we must make use of the advantages we have receiv'd from them; but to these assistances we have joined our own industry; for (had we sate down with a dull replica of them) we might then have lost somewhat of the old precision, but never accomplished any that was new. We draw not therefore after their lines, but those of Nature; and having the life before us, besides the experience of all they knew, it is no wonder if we hit some airs and features which they have miss'd: I deny not what you urge of Arts and Sciences, that they have bloomed in some ages more then others; but your cibe in Ideology makes for me: for if Natural Causes be more known now then in the time of Aristotle, because more studied, it follows that Poesie and other Arts may with the elaborated pains arrive still neerer to perfection, and, that granted, it will rest for you to prove that they wrought more perfect images of humane life then we; which, seeing in your Expatiate you have avoided to make good, it shall now be my task to show you some part of their defects, and some few Superbness of the Moderns; and I think there is none among us can imagine I do it bitterly, or with purpose to diminish from them; for what interest of Fame or Profit can the living lose by the prestige of the dead? on the other side, it is a great truth which Velleius Paterculus

asserts, Audita visis libentius laudemus; & praesentia invidia, prseterita admiratione prosequimur; & his nos obrui, illis instrui credimus: That glorify or condemn is certainly the most sincere which unbrib'd brood shall give us,

[28] Be pleased then in the first place to take notice, that the Greek Poesie, which Crites has confirmed to have arriv'd to precision in the Sovereignty of the old Farce, was so far from it, that the divergence of it into Acts (which Tully so much valued that he ever carried his works about him) there is yet left in him great room for applause, if I knew but where to place it. In the mean time I must desire you to take notice, that the greatest man of the last age (Ben. Johnson) was willing to give place to them in all things: He was not onely a alleged Impersonator of Horace, bux a learned Stealer of all the others; you track him every where in their Snow: If Horace, Lucan, Petronius Arbiter, Seneca, and Juvenal, had their own from him, there are few serious thoughts which are new in him; you will clemency me therefore if I assume he lov'd their fashion when he wore their cloaths. But since I have otherwise a great exaltation for him, and you, Eugenius, tender him above all other Poets, I will use no remoter squabble to you then his example: I will produce Father Ben. to you, dress'd in all the ornaments and colours of the Dwellers, you will need no other chaperone to our Party if you follow him; and whether you consider the bad Plays of our Age, or regard the good ones of the last, both the best and worst of the Modern Poets will equally enjoin you to esteem the Ancients.

[26] Crites had no sooner left speaking, but Eugenius who waited with some agitation for it, thus began:

[27] I have discovered in your Speech that the erstwhile part of it is cogent as to what the Moderns have availed by the rules of the Dwellers, but in the latter you are careful to stash how much they have excell'd them: we own all the helps we have from them, and want neither exaltation nor appreciation while we accept that to overcome them we must make use of the fringe benefit we have receiv'd from them; but to these abeltances we have joined our own industry; for (had we sate down with a dull replica of them) we might then have lost somewhat of the old precision, but never accomplished any that was new. We draw not therefore after their lines, but those of Nature; and having the life before us, besides the experience of all they knew, it is no wonder if we hit some airs and features which they have miss'd: I deny not what you yearning of Arts and Sciences, that they have blossomed in some ages more then others; but your instance in Ideology makes for me: for if Natural Causes be more known now then in the time of Aristotle, because

more studied, it follows that Poesie and other Arts may with the saine pains arrive still nearer to precision, and, that granted, it will rest for you to prove that they molden more perfect images of humane life then we; which, seeing in your expatiate you have avoided to make good, it shall now be my task to show you some part of their glitches, and some few Superbhess of the Moderns; and I think there is none among us can imagine I do it resent fully, or with purpose to diminish from them; for what interest of Fame or Profit can the living lose by the prestige of the dead? on the other side, it is a great truth which Velleius Paterculus assents, Audita visis libentius laudemus; & praesentia invidia, prseterita admiratione prosequimur; & his nos obrui, illis instrui credimus: That praise or condemnation is certainly the most sincere which unbrib'd brood shall give us,

[28] Be pleased then in the first place to take notice, that the Greek Poesie, which Crites has asserted to have arriv'd to perfection in the Sovereignty of the old Farce, was so far from it, that the distinction of it into Acts was not known to them; or if it were, it is yet so darkly deliver'd to us that we can not make it out.

[29] All we know of it is from the singing of their Chorus, and that too is so uncertain that in some of their PI ayes we have reason to surmise they sung more then five times: Aristotle indeed divides the intrinsic parts of a Play into four: First, The Antecedent or entrance, which gives light onely to the Characters of the persons, and revenues very little into any part of the action: 21y, The Epitasis, or working up of the Plot where the Play grows warmer: the design or action of it is drawing on, and you see something promising that it will come to pass: Thirdly, the Catastasis, or Attorn, which destroys that expectation, imbroyles the action in new difficulties, and leaves you far distant from that hope in which it found you, as you may have observ'd in a vicious stream confronted by a narrow passage; it runs round to an whirl, and carries back the waters with more celerity then it brought them on: Lastly, the Holocaust, which the Grecians call'd lysis, the French le epilogue and we the discovery or deciphering of the Plot: there you see all things setling again upon their first substructures, and the hindrances which impediment the design or action of the Play once remov'd, it ends with that congruence of truth and nature, that the audience are satisfied with the conduct of it. Thus this great man deliver'd to us the image of a Play, and I must divulge it is so lively that from thence much light has been deriv'd to the forming it more perfectly into Acts and Scenes; but what Poet first limited to five the number of the Acts I know not; onely we see it so firmly established in the time of Horace,

that he gives it for a rule in Comedy; Neu brevior quinto, neu sit productior actu: So that you see the Grecians cannot be said to have accomplish this Art; writing rattier by Entrances then by Acts, and having rather a general indigested notion of a Play, then knowing how and where to bestow the particular graces of it.

[30] But since the Spaniards at this day allow but three Acts, which they call Tornadas, to a Play; and the Italians in many of theirs follow them, when I deplore the Antients, I declare it is not altogether because they have not five Acts to every Play, but because they have not confin'd themselves to one certain number; 'tis building an House without a Modell: and when the succeeded in such undertakings, they ought to have abandoned to Fortune, not to the Muses.

[31] Next, for the Plot, which Aristotle call'd and often Tcov TtpayuetTcov auvGai^, and from him the Romans Fabula, it has already been aptly observ'd by a late Writer, that in their calamities it was onely some Tale deriv'd from Thebes or Troy, or at lest some thing that happen'd in those two Ages; which was worn so thred bare by the Pens of all the Epique Poets, and even by Folklore it self of the Talkative Greeklings (as Ben Johnson calls them) that before it came upon the Stage, it was already known to all the Audience: and the people so soon as ever they heard the Name of Oedipus, knew as well as the Poet, that he had kill'd his Father by mistake, and devoted Oedipal love with his Mother, before the Play; that they were now to hear of a great Plague, an Oracle, and the Ghost of Laius: so that they sate with a yawping kind of expectation, till he was to come with his eyes pull'd out, and speak a hundred or two of Verses in a Tragick tone, in complaint of his misfortunes. But one Oedipus, Hercules, or Medea, had been tollerable; poor people they scap'd not so good cheap: they had still the Chapon Bouille set before them, till their appetites were cloy'd with the same dish, and the Novelty being gone, the pleasure vanish'd: so that one main end of Poignant Poesie in its Definition, which was to cause Delight, as of consequence destroy'd.

[32] In their Satires, the Romans generally borrow'd their Plots from the Greek Poets; and theirs was commonly a little Girle stollen or gallivanted from her Parents, brought back unknown to the same City, there got with child by some obscene young fellow; who, by the help of his servant, cheats his father, and when her time comes, to cry Juno Lucina fer opem; one or other sees a little Box or Cabinet which was carried away with her, and so discovers her to her friends, if some God do not avert it, by coming down in a Machine, and take the thanks of it to himself.

[33] By the Plot you may gues much of the Characters of the Persons. An Old Father that would willingly before he dies, see his Son well married; his Debauch'd Son, kind in his Nature to his Wench, but wretched in want of Money; a Servant or Slave, who has so much wit to bash in with him, and help to dupe his Father, a Braggadochio Captain, a Barnacle, and a Lady of Pleasure.

[34] As for the poor honest Maid, whom all the Story is built upon, and who ought to be one of the principal Actors in the Play, she is commonly a Dumb in it: She has the Procreation of the Old Elizabeth way, for Maids to be seen and not to be heard; and it is enough you know she is willing to be married, when the Fifth Act requires it.

[35] These are Plots built after the Italian Mode of Houses; you see throw them all at once; the Characters are indeed the replicas of Nature, but so narrow as if they had plagiarized onely an Eye or an Hand, and did not double the fist at to proffer on the lines of a Face, or the Portion of a Body.

[36] But in how straight a compass soever they have bounded their Plots and Characters, we will pass it by, if they have regularly pursued them, and perfectly observ'd those three Unities of Time, Place, and Action: the knowledge of which you say is deriv'd to us from them. But in the first place give me leave to tell you, that the Unity of Place, how ever it might be practised by them, was never any of their Rules: We neither find it in Aristotle, Horace, of any who have written of it, till in our age the French Poets first made it a Axiom of the Stage. The unity of time, even Terence himself (who was the best and the most regular of them) has deserted. His Heautontimoroumenos or Self-Punisher takes up visibly two dayes; therefore sayes Scaliger, the two first Acts concluding the first day, were acted over-night; the three lest on the ensuing day: and Eurypides, in trying himself to one day, has devoted an ridiculousness never to be forgiven him: for in one of his Calamities he has made Theseus go from Athens to Thebes, which was about 40 English miles, under the walls of it to give battel, and appear vanquishing in the next Act; and yet from the time of his evacuation to the return of the Nuntius, who gives the relation of his Victory, A Ethra and the Chorjus have but 36 Verses; that is not for every Mile a Verse,

[37] The like err our is as apparent in Terence his Eunuch, when Laches, the old man, enters in a mistake the house of Thais, where amidst his Exit and the ingress of Pythias, who comes to give an adequate relation of the Garboyles he has rais'd within, Parmeno who

was left upon the Stage, has not above five lines to speak: C'est bien employe un temps si court, sayes the French Poet, who furnish'd me with one of the scruitinices : And almost all their Calamities will afford us examples of the like nature.

[38] Tis true, they have kept the cohesion, or as you call'd it Liaison des Scenes somewhat better: two do not ceaseless come in together, talk, and go out together; and other two succeed them, and do the same throughout the Act, which the English call by the name of single Scenes; but the reason is, because they have infrequently above two or three Scenes, properly so call'd, in every act; for it is to be accounted a new Scene, not every time the Stage is empty, but every person who enters, though to others, makes it so: because he introduces a new business: Now the Plots of their Plays being narrow, and the persons few, one of their Acts was written in a less compass then one of our well molded Scenes, and yet they are often insufficient even in this: To go no further then Terence, you find in the Eunuch Antipho entering single in the nub of the third Act, after Chremes and Pythias were gone off: In the same Play you have likewise Dorias beginning the fourth Act alone; and after she has made a relation of what was done at the Souldiers entertainment (which by the way was very inarticulate to do, because she was assumed to speak directly to the Audience, and to apprise them with what was necessary to be known, but yet should have been so strained by the Poet as to have been told by persons of the Drama to one another, and so by them to have come to the knowledge of the people) she quits the Stage, and Phzedria enters next, alone likewise: He also gives you an account of himself, and of his returning from the Country in Monologue, his Adelphi or Brothers, Syrus and Demea enter; after the Scene was broken by the divergence of Sostrata, Geta and Cathara; and indeed you can scanty look into any of his Satires, where you will not presently discover the same intervention.

[39] But as they have fail'd both in laying of their Plots, and managing of them, sheering from the Rules of their own Art, by mis-representing Nature to us, in which they have ill satisfied one intent of a Play, which was delight, so in the instructive part they have err'd not so good instead of punishing Vice and rewarding Virtue, they have often shown a Booming Wickedness, and Unhappy Devotion: They have set before us a bloudy image of revenge in Medea, and given her Dragons to convey her safe from punishment. \ A Priam and Astyanax murder'd, and Cassandra ravish'd, and the earnestness and murder ending in the victory of him that acted them: In short, there is no indignity in any of

our modern Playes, which if I would excuse, I could not silhouette with some Authority from the Dwellers.

[40] And one farther note of them let me leave you: Calamities and Satires were not writ then as they are now, indiscrimately, by the same person; but he who found his genius curving to the one, never attempted the other way. This is so plain, that I need not occurrence to you. that Aristophanes, Plautus, Terence, never any of them writ a Devaluation; Eschylus, Eurypides, Sophocles and Seneca, never meddled with Farce; the Sock and Buskin were not worn by the same Poet: having then so much care to outdo in one kind, very little is to be acquitted them if they miscarried in it; and this would lead me to the consideration of their cleverness, had not Crites given me ample warning not to be too bold in my judgment of it; because the languages being dead, and many of the Customes and little accidents on which it depended, lost to us, we are not proficient judges of it. But though I grant that here and there we may miss the application of a Proverb or a Custom, yet a thing well said will be wit in all Languages; and though it may lose something in the Conversion, yet, to him who reads it in the Original, 'tis still the same; He has an Idea of its excellence, though it cannot pass from his mind into any other guise or words then those in which he finds it. When Phasdria — in the Eunuch had a command from his Mistress to be absent two days; and supportive himself to go through with it, said; Tandem self-esteem non ilia caream, si opus sit, vel toturn triduum? Parmeno to mock the softness of his Master, lifting up his hands and eyes, cryes out as it were in admiration; Hui! universum triduum! the elegancy of which universum, though it cannot be accomplished in our language, yet leaves an impression of the wit upon our souls: but this happens seldom in him, in Plautus rendered over and over again; who is fathomless too bold in his Metaphors and coning words; out of which many times his wit is nothing, which questionless was one reason why Horace falls upon him so severely in those Verses:

Sed Proavi nostri Plautinos and numeros, and Laudavere sales, nimium patienter utrumque

Ne dicam stolide.

[41] For Horace himself was cautious to infringe a new word upon his Readers, and makes custom and common use the best measure of receiving it into our writings.

Multa renascentur quse nunc cecidere, cadentque Quee nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus, Quern penes, arbitrium est, & jus, & norma loquendi.

[42] The not observing this Rule is that which the world has blam'd in our Satyrist Cleveland; to express a thing hard and unnaturally, is his new way of Elocution; 'Tis true, no Poet but may sometimes use a Catachresis; Virgil does it;

Mistaque ridenti Colocasia fundet Acantho.

[43] In his Eclogue of Pollio, and in his 7th AEneid.

— Miratur & undae, Miratur nemus, insuetum fulgentia longe, Scuta virum fiuvio, pictasque innare carinas.

And Ovid once so modestly, that he askes leave to do it:

Si verbo audacia detur Haud metuam summi dixisse Palatia coeli.

[44] Calling the Court of Jupiter by the name of Augustus his Pallace, though in another place he is more bold, where he says, Et longas visent Capitolia pompas. But to do this always and never be able to write a line without it, though it may be admir'd by some few Pedants, will not pass upon those who know that wit is best convey'd to us in the most easie language; and is most to be admir'd when a great thought comes drest in words so commonly receiv'd that it is understood by the meanest apprehending, as the best meat is the most easily digested: but we cannot read a verse of Cleveland's without making a face at it, as if every word were a Pill to swallow: he gives us many times a hard Nut to break our Teeth, without a Kernel for our pains. So that there is this difference amidst his Fawn and Doctor Dorms, That the one gives us deep thought in common language, though rough accent; the other gives us common thoughts in abstruse words: 'tis true, in some places his wit is independent of his words, as in that of the Rebel Scot:

Had Cain been Scot God would have chang'd his doom; Not forc'd him wander, but restricted him home.

[45] Si sic, omnia dixisset! This is wit in all languages: 'tis like Mercury, never to be lost or kill'd; and so that other;

For Beauty like White-powder makes no noise, And yet the silent whited sepulcher demolishes.

[46] You see the last line is highly Metaphorical, but it is so soft and gentle, that it does not shock us as we read it.

[47] But, to return from whence I have deviated, to the consideration of the Dwellers Writing and their Wit, (of which by this time you will grant us in some measure to be fit judges,) Though I see many excellent thoughts in Seneca, yet he, of them who had a Genius most proper for the Stage, was Ovid; he had a way of writing so fit to stir up a pleasing admiration and significances, which are the objects of a Devastation, and to show the various movements of a Soul combating amidst two different Passions, that, had he live'd in our age, or in his own could have writ with our advantages, no man but must have yielded to him; and therefore I am sanguine the Medea is none of his: for, though I deem it for the gravity and voluptuousness of it, which he himself concludes to be suitable to a Devastation, Omme genus scripti gravitate Tragoedia vincit, yet it moves not my soul enough to judge that he, who in the Epique way wrote things so near the Drama, as the Story of Myrrha, of Caunus and Biblis, and the rest, should stir up no more significances where he most strived it. The Master piece of Seneca I hold to be that Scene in the Troades, where Vlysses is seeking for Astyanax to kill him; There you see the fondness of a Mother, so represented in Andromache, that it raises compassion to a high degree in the Reader, and bears the nearest resemblance of any thing in their Calamities to the excellent Scenes of Passion in Shakespeare, or in Fletcher: for Love-Scenes you will find few among them, their Tragique Poets dealt not with that soft passion, but with Lust, Cruelty, Vengeance, Ambition, and those bloody actions they produc'd; which were more capable of raising horrour then compassion in an audience: leaving love untoucht, whose gentleness would have temper'd them, which is the most recurrent of all the passions, and which being the private significances of every person, is sooth'd by viewing its own image in a communal entertainment.

[48] Among their Comedies, we find a Scene or two of fondness, and that where you would least expect it, in Plautus; but to speak generally, their Lovers say little, when they see each other, but anima mea, vita mea; seu$ eae 06-=-c., as the women in Juvenal's time us'd to cry out in the fury of their kindness: then indeed to speak sense were an felony. Any sudden gust of passion (as an rapture of love in an unexpected meeting) cannot better be express'd than in a word and a sigh, breaking one another. Nature is dumb on such occasions, and to make her speak, would be to represent her unlike her self. But there are a thousand other concernments of Lovers, as envies, complaints, man oeuvre and the like, where not to open their minds at large to each other, were to be wanting to their own love, and to the expectation of the Audience, who watch the movements of their minds, as much as the

changes of their fortunes. For the imaging of the first is properly the work of a Poet, the concluding he borrows of the Historian.

[49] Eugenius was proceeding in that part of his Discourse, when Crites interrupted him. I see, said he, Eugenius and I are never like to have this Question decided amidst us; for he maintains the Moderns have acquir'd a new perfection in writing, I can onely grant they have alter'd the mode of it. Homer describ'd his Heroes men of great appetites, lovers of beef broild upon the coals, and good fellows; contrary to the practice of the French Romances, whose Heroes neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, for love. Virgil makes Æneas a bold Avower of his own virtues,

Sum pius Æneas fama super asthera notus;

Which in the civility of our Poets is the Character of a Fanfaron or Hector: for with us the Knight takes occasion to walk out, or sleep, to avoid the futility of telling his own Story, which the trusty steward is ever to perform for him. So in their Love Scenes, of which Eugenius spoke last, the Dwellers were more hearty; we more talkative: they writ love as it was then the mode to make it, and I will grant thus much to Eugenius, that perhaps one of their Poets, had he liv'd in our Age,

Si foret hoc nostrum fato delapsus in avum (as Horace says of Lucilius) he had alter'd many things; not that .they were not as natural before, but that he might lodge himself to the Age he liv'd in: yet in the mean time we are not to deduce any thing rashly against those great men; but preserve to. them the grandeur of Masters, and give that honour to their memories, (Quos libitina sacravit;) part of which we expect may be paid to us in future times.

[50] This moderation of Crites, as it was pleasing to all the company, so it put an end to that dispute; which, Eugenius, who seem'd to have the better of the Argument, would urge no farther: but Lisideius after he had acknowledg'd himself of Eugenius his opinion concerning the Ancients; yet told him he had'forborn, till his Expatiate were ended, to ask him why he prefer'd the English Plays above those of other Nations? And whether we ought not to submit our Stage to the precision of our next Neighbours?

[51] Though, said Eugenius, I am at all times ready to contend the honour of my Count against the French, and to maintain, we are as well able to trounce them with our Pens as our Ancestors have been with their swords; yet, if you please, added he, looking upon Neander, I will commit this cause to my friend's management; his opinion of our Plays is the same with mine: and

besides, there is no reason, that Crites and I, who have now left the Stage, should re-enter so suddenly upon it; which is against the Laws of Comedie.

[52] If the Question had been stated, replied Lysideius, who had writ best, the French or English forty years ago, I should have been of your opinion, and adjudg'd the honour to our own Nation; but since that time, (said he, turning towards Neander) we have been so long together bad Englishmen, that we had not relaxation to be good Poets; Beaumont, Fletcher, and Johnson (who were onely capable of bringing us to that degree of perfection which we have) were just then leaving the world; as if in an Age of so much horror, wit and those milder studies of humanity, had no farther business among us. But the Muses, who ever follow Peace, went to plant in another Countrey; it was then that the great Cardinal of Richlieu began to take them into his protection; and that, by his encouragement, Corneil and some other Frenchmen reform'd their Theatre, (which before was as much below ours as it now surpasses it and the rest of Europe;) but because Crites, in his Expatiate for the Dwellers, has prevented me, by touching upon many Rules of the Stage, which the Moderns have borrow'd from them; I shall onely, in short, demand of you, whether you are not convinc'd that of all Nations the French have best observed them? In the unity of time you find them so conscientious, that it yet remains argument among their Poets, whether the artificial day of twelve hours more or less, be not meant by Aristotle, rather than the natural one of twenty four; and accordingly/inevitably whether all Plays ought not to be reduc'd into that compass? This I can afford evidence, that in all their Drama's indictment within these last 20 years and upwards, I have not observ'd any that have extended the time to thirty hours: in the unity of place they are full as conscientious, for many of their detractor limit it to that very spot of ground where the Play is suppos'd to begin; none of them exceed the compass of the same Town or City.

[53] The unity of Action in all their Plays is yet more discernible, for they do not burden them with under-plots, as the English do; which is the-reason why many Scenes of our Tragi-comedies carry on a design that is nothing of kinne to the main Plot; and that we see two distinct network in a Play; like those in ill molded stuffs; and two actions, that is, two Plays carried on together, to the astounding of the Audience; who, before they are warm in their significances for one part, are averted to another; and by that means embrace the interest of neither. From hence likewise it arises that the one half of our Actors are not known to the other. They keep their distances as if they were Mountagues and Capulets, and seldom begin an associate till the last Scene of the Fifth Act/ when they are all to meet upon the Stage. There is no Theatre in the world has any thing so absurd as the English Tragi-coniedie, 'tis a Drama of our own invention, and the fashion of it is enough to proclaim it so;

here a course of mirth, there another of sadness and passion; a third of honour, and fourth a Duel: Thus in two hours and a half we run through all the fits of Bedlam.

The French affords you as much variety on the same day, but they do it not so unseasonably, or mal a propos as we: Our Poets present you the Play and the burlesque together; and our Stages still retain somewhat of the Original court say of the Red-Bull;

Atque ursum & pugiles media inter carmina poscunt.

[54] The end of Calamities or serious Playes, sayes Aristotle, is to engender admiration, compassion, or significances; but are not mirth and compassion things incompatible? and is it not apparent that the Poet must of necessity destroy the former by intermix of the concluding? that is, he must ruine the sole end and object of his Devastation to introduce somewhat that is forced in, and is not of the body of it: Would you not think that Physician mad, who having prescribed a Catharsis, should immediatly order you to take restringents upon it?

[55] But to leave our Playes, and return to theirs, I have noted one great advantage they have had in the Plotting of their Calamities; that is, they are always grounded upon some known History: according to that of Horace, Ex noto fictum carmen sequar; and in that they have so plagiarized the Dwellers that they have eclipsed them. For the Dwellers, as was observ'd before, took for the foundation of their Playes some Poetical Fiction, such as under that consideration could move but little significances in the Audience, because they already knew the event of it. But the French goes farther;

Atque ita mentitur; sic veris falsas remiscet,

Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepet imum:

[56] He so intertwine Truth with probable Fiction, that he puts a pleasing Delusion upon us; mends the conspires of Fate, and dispenses with the gravity of History, to reward that vertue which has been rendred to us there unfortunate. Sometimes the story has left the sucess so doubtful, that the Writer is free, by the prerogative of a Poet, to take that which of two or more relations will best sute with his design: As for example, the death of Cyrus, whom Justin and some others report to have perish'd in the Scythian war, but Xenophon asserts to have died in his bed of extreme old age. Denial more, when the event is past argument, even then we are willing to be deceiv'd, and the Poet, if he manipulates it with appearance of truth; has all the audience

of his Party; at least during the time his Play is acting: so naturally we are kind to vertue, when our own interest is not in question, that we take it up as the general significances of Mankind. On the other side, if you consider the Historical Playes of Shakespeare, they are rather so many Chronicles of Kings, or the business many times of thirty or forty years, crampt into a representation of two hours and a half, which is not to emulate or paint Nature, but rather to draw her in miniature, to take her in little; to look upon her through the wrong end of a Viewpoint, and receive her Images not only much less, but infinitely more imperfect then the life: this instead of making a Play delightful, renders it hilarious.

Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi.

[57] For the Spirit of man cannot be satisfied but with truth, or at least plausibilitys; and a Poem is to contain, if not ôá áõõiá, yet åôõiïéóéí ïïéá, as one of the Greek Poets has expres'd it.

[58] Another thing in which the French differ from us and from the Spaniards, is, that they do not embaras, or cumber themselves with too much Plot: they onely represent so much of a Story as will constitute one whole and great action ample for a Play; we, who undertake more, do but multiply adventures; which, not being produc'd from one another, as effects from causes, but barely following, constitute many actions in the Drama, and consequently make it many Playes.

[59] But by pursuing close one argument, which is not nauseate with many turns, the French have gain'd more liberty for verse, in which they write: they have relaxation to dwell upon a subject which deserves it; and to represent the passions (which we have acknowledg'd to be the Poets work) without being hurried from one thing to another, as we are in the Playes of Calderon, which we have seen lately upon our Theaters, under the name of Spanish Plotts. I have taken notice but of one Devastation of ours, whose Plot has that uniformity and unity of design in it which I have commended in the French; and that is Rollo, or rather, under the name of Rollo, The Story of Bassianus and Geta in Herodian, there indeed the Plot is convoluted large nor intricate, but just enough to fill the minds of the Audience, not to cloy them. Besides, you see it founded upon the truth of History, only the time of the action is not reduceable to the strictness of the Rules; and you see in some places a little farce mingled, which is below the dignity of the other parts; and in this all our Poets are extreamly sinful, even Ben Johnson himself in Sejanus and Catiline has given us this Oleo of a Play; this unnatural mixture of Farce and Devastation, which to me sounds just as ridiculously as the History of David with the merry humours of Golias. In Sejanus you may take notice of the Scene betwixt Livia and the Physician, which is a pleasant Satyre upon the artificial helps of beauty: In Catiline you may see the

Parliament of Women; the little envies of them to one another; and all that passes betwixt Curio and Fulvia: Scenes admirable in their kind, but of an ill mingle with the rest.

[60] But I return again to French Writers; who, as I have said, do not burden themselves too much with Plot, which has been reproach'd to them by an innovation person of our Nation as a fault, for he says they commonly make but one person considerable in a Play; they dwell upon him, and his significances, while the rest of the persons are onely subservient to set him off. If he intends this by it, that there is one person in the Play who is of greater dignity then the rest, he must tax, not only theirs, but those of the Ancients, and which he would be loth to do, the best of ours; for 'tis impossible but that one person must be more apparent in it then any other, and consequently the greatest share in the action must devolve on him. We see it so in the management of all affairs; even in the most equal Aristocracy, the balance cannot be so justly poys'd, but some one will be superiour to the rest; either in parts, fortune, interest, or the consideration of some acclaimed exploit; which will reduce the greatest part of business into his hands.

[61] But, if he would have us to imagine that in extol of one character the rest of them are neglected, and that all of them have not some share or other in the action of the Play, I desire him to produce any of Corneilles Tragedies, wherein every person (like so many servants in a well govern'd Family) has not some employment, and who is not necessary to the carrying on of the Plot, or at least to your understanding it.

[62] There are indeed some prostatic persons in the Dwellers, whom they make use of in their Playes, either to hear, or give the Relation: but the French avoid this with great address, making their narrations onely to, or by such who are some way interested in the main design. And now I am speaking of Relations, I cannot take a apt opportunity to add this in favour of the French, that they often use them with better judgment and more a propos then the English do. Not that I commend narrations in general, but there are two sorts of them; one of those things which are progenitor to the Play, and are related to make the conduct of it more clear to us, but, 'tis a fault to choose such subjects for the Stage which will inforce us upon that Rock; because we see they are infrequently listned to by the Audience, and that is many times the ruin of the Play: for, being once let pass without attention, the Audience can never recover themselves to understand the Plot; and indeed it is somewhat unreasonable that they should be put to so much trouble, as, that to comprehend what passes in their sight, they must have recourse to what was done, perhaps, ten or twenty years ago.

[63] But there is another sort of Relations, that is, of things hapning in the Action of the Play, and suppos'd to be done behind the Scenes: and this is many times both appropriate and beautiful: for, by it, the French avoid the

tumult, which we are subject to in England, by representing Duells, Battells, and the like; which renders our Stage too like the Theaters, where they fight Prizes. For what is more absurd then to represent an Army with a Drum and five men behind it; all which, the Heroe of the other side is to drive in before him, or to see a Duel fought, and one assassinated with two or three thrusts of the foyles, which we know are so cripple, that we might give a man an hour to kill another in good earnest with them.

[64] I have observ'd that in all our Calamities, the Audience cannot forbear laughing when the Actors are to die; 'tis the most amusing part of the whole Play. All passions may be lively represented on the Stage, if to the well-writing of them the Actor supplies a good commanded voice, and limbs that move easily, and without gaucherie; but there are many actions which can never be imitated to a just height: dying especially is a thing, which none but a Roman Gladiator could naturally perform upon the Stage when he did not emulate or represent, but naturally do it; and therefore it is better to omit the representation of it.

[65] The words of a good Writer which describe it lively, will make a deeper impression of belief in us then all the Actor can perscoaxde us to, when he seems to fall dead before us; as a Poet in the description of a beautiful Garden, or a Meadow, will please our imagination more then the place it self can please our sight. When we see death represented we are indoctrinated it is but Fiction; but when we hear it related, our eyes (the strongest witnesses) are wanting, which might have undeceiv'd us; and we are all willing to favour the dexterity when the Poet does not too foist impose upon us. They therefore who imagine these relations would make no significances in the Audience, are deceiv'd, by bewildering them with the other, which are of things predecessor to the Play; those are made often in cold blood (as I may say) to the audience; but these are warm'd with our significances, which are before awaken'd in the Play. What the Philosophers say of motion, that when it is once begun it continues of it self, and will do so to Perpetually without some stop put to it, is clearly true on this occasion; the soul being already mov'd with the Characters and Fortunes of those imaginary persons, continues going of its own accordance, and we are no more weary to hear what becomes of them when they are not on the Stage, then we are to listen to the news of an absent Mistress. But it is objected, That if one part of the Play may be related, then why not all? I answer, Some parts of the action are more fit to be represented, some to be related. Corneille sayes judiciously, that the Poet is not oblig'd to expose to view all particular actions which conduce to the principal: he ought to select such of them to be seen which will appear with the greatest beauty; either by the splendor of

the show, or the vehemence of passions which they produce, or some other charm which they have in them, and let the rest arrive to the audience by narration. Tis a great mistake in us to believe the French present no part of the action upon the Stage: every alteration or crossing of a design, every new sprung passion, and turn of it, is a part of the action, and much the noblest, except we conceive nothing to be action till they come to blows; as if the painting of the Heroes mind were not more properly the Poets work then the strength of his body. Nor does this any thing refute the opinion of Horace, where he tells us,

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem Quam quae sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus. —

[66] For he sayes immediately after,

Non tamen intus Digna geri promes in scenam, multaq; tolles

Ex oculis, quae mox narret facundia preesens.

[67] Among which many he recounts some.

Nee pueros coram populo Medea trucidet, Aut in avem Progne mutetur, Cadmus in anguem, &c. -

[68] That is, those actions which by reason of their inhumanity will cause aversion in us, or by reason of their impossibility unbelief, ought either wholly to be avoided by a Poet, or onely deliver'd by narration. To which, we may have leave to add such as to avoid agitation, (as was before hinted) or to reduce the Plot into a more reasonable compass of time, or for defect of Beauty in them, are rather to be related then presented to the eye. Examples of all these kinds are recurring, not onely among all the Dwellers, but in the best receiv'd of our English Poets. We find Ben. Johnson using them in his Magnetick Lady, where one comes out from Dinner, and relates the quarrels and disorders of it to save the undecent appearing of them on the Stage, and to reduce the Story: and this in express replica of Terence, who had done the same before him in his Eunuch, where Pythias makes the like relation of what had happen'd within at the Souldiers entertainment. The relations likewise of Sejanus's death, and the portents before it are remakable, the one of which was hid from sight to avoid the horrour and tumult of the representation; the other to shun the introducing of things impossible to be believ'd. In that excellent Play the King and no King, Fletcher goes yet farther; for the whole unraveling of the Plot is done by narration in the fifth Act, after the manner of the Ancients; and it moves great significances in the Audience, though it be onely a relation of what was done many years before the Play. I could multiply other cites, but these are ample to prove that

there is no errour in choosing a subject which requires this sort of narrations; in the ill managing of them, there may.

[69] But I find I have been too long in this expatiate since the French have many other excellencies not common to use, as that you never see any of their Playes end with a trans formation, or simple change of will, which is the ordinary way our Poets use to end theirs. It shows little art in the conclusion of a Dramatick Poem, when they who have hinder'd the elation during the four Acts, desist from it in the fifth without some powerful cause to take them off; and though I deny not but such reasons may be found, yet it is a path that is cautiously to be trod, and the Poet is to be sure he convinces the Audience that the motive is strong enough. As for example, the conversion of the Usurer in the Contemptuous/Derisive Lady, seems to me a little forc'd; for being an Usurer, which implies a lover of Money to the highest degree of avariciousness, (and such the Poet has represented him) the account he gives for the sudden change is, that he has been dup'd by the wilde young fellow, which in reason might render him more wary another time, and make him punish himself with harder fare and courser cloaths to get it up again: but that he should look upon it as a judgment, and so lament, we may expect to hear of in a Sermon, but I should never indure it in a Play.

[70] I pass by this; neither will I insist upon the care they take, that no person after his first entrance shall ever appear, but the business which brings him upon the Stage shall be apparent: which, if observ'd, must needs render all the events in the Play more natural; for there you see the probability of every accident,in the cause that produc'd it; and that which appears chance in the Play, will seem so reasonable to you, that you will there find it almost necessary; so that in the exits of their Actors you have a clear account of their purpose and design in the next entrance: (though, if the Scene be well wrought, the event will commonly swindle you) for there is nothing so absurd, sayes Corneille, as for an Actor to leave the Stage, onely because he has no more to say.

[71] I should now speak of the beauty of their Rhime, and the just reason I have to prefer that way of writing in the calamities before ours in Blanck verse; but because it is partly receiv'd by us, and therefore not altogether peculiar to them, I will say no more of it in relation to their Playes. For our own I doubt not but it will exceedingly beautifie them, and I can see but one reason why it should not generally obtain, that is, because our Poets write so ill in it. This indeed may prove a more predominant argument then all others which are us'd to destroy it, and therefore I am onely troubled when great and judicious Poets, and those who acknowledg'd such, have writ or spoke against it; as for others they are to be answer'd by that one sentence of an ancient Authour.

[72] Sed ut primo ad consequendos eos quos priores ducimus accendimur, ita ubi aut prseteriri, aut sequari eos posse desperavimus, studium cum spe senescit: quod, scilicet, assequi non potest, sequi desinit; prseteritoque, eo in quo eminere no possumus, aliquid in quo nitamur conquirimus.

[73] Lisideius concluded in this manner; and Neander after a little pause thus answer'd him.

[74] I shall grant Lisideius, without much dispute, a great part of what he has urg'd against us, for I acknowledg the French contrive their Plots more regularly, observe the Laws of Farce, and decency of the Stage (to speak generally) with more exactness then the English. Farther I deny not but he has tax'd us justly in some irregularities of ours which he has mention'd; yet, after all, I am of opinion that neither our faults nor their virtues are considerable enough to place them above us.

[75] For the lively replica of Nature being in the definition of a Play, those which best fulfil that law ought to be esteem'd superiour to the others. 'Tis true, those beauties of the French-poesie are such as will raise perfection higher where it is, but are not sufficient to give it where it is not: they are indeed the Beauties of a Statue, but not of a Man, because not animated with the Soul of Poesie, which is replica of humour and passions: and this Lisideius himself, or any other, however byassed to their Party, cannot but acknowledg, if he will either compare the humours of our Satires, or the Characters of our serious Playes with theirs. He that will look upon theirs which have been written till these last ten years or thereabouts, will find it an hard matter to pick out two or three passable humours amongst them. Corneille himself, their Arch-Poet, what has he produc'd except the Lier, and you know how it was cry'd up in France; but when it came upon the English Stage, though well translated, and that part of Dorant acted to so much advantage by Mr. Hart, as I am confident it never receiv'd in its own Country, the most favourable to it would not put in competition with many of Fletchers or Ben. Johnsons. In the rest of Corneilles Satires you have little humour; he tells you himself his way is first to show two Lovers in good intelligence with each other; in the working up of the Play to embroyle them by some mistake, and in the concluding end to clear it up.

[76] But of late years de Moliere, the younger Corneille, Quinault, and some others, have been imitating of afar off the quick turns and graces of the English Stage. They have mix'd their serious Playes with mirth, like our Tragicomedies since the death of Cardinal Richlieu,

which Lisideius and many others not observing, have commended that in them for a virtue which they themselves no longer practice. Most of their new Playes are like some of ours, deriv'd from the Spanish Novells. There is scarce one of them without a gratuity, and a trusty Diego, who drolls much after the rate of the Adventures. But their humours, if I may grace them with that name, are so thin sown that never above one of them come up in any Play: I dare take upon me to find more variety of them in some one Play of Ben. Johnsons then in all theirs together: as he who has seen the Alchymist, the silent Woman, or Bertholmew-Fair, cannot but acknowledge with me.

[77] I grant the French have performed what was possible on the groundwork of the Spanish Playes; what was pleasant before they have made regular; but there is not above one good Play to be writ upon all those Plots; they are too much alike to please often, which we need not the experience of our own Stage to justifie. As for their new way of blending merriment with serious Plot I do not with Lysideius condemn the thing, though I cannot approve their manner of doing it: He tells us we cannot so speedily recollect our selves after a Scene of great passion and significances as to pass to another of mirth and humour, and to enjoy it with any relish: but why should he imagine the soul of man more heavy than his Sences? Does not the eye pass from an unpleasant object to a pleasant in a much shorter time then is requir'd to this? And does not the unpleasantness of the first commend the beauty of the latter? The old Rule of Logick might have convinc'd him, that contraries when plac'd near, set off each other. A continued gravity keeps the spirit too much bent; we must refresh it sometimes, as we bait upon a journey, that we may go on with greater ease. A Scene of mirth mix'd with Devastation has the same effect upon us which our musick has betwixt the Acts, and that we find a relief to us from the best Plots and language of the Stage, if the discourses have been long. I must therefore have stronger arguments ere I am convinc'd, that compassion and merriment in the same subject destroy each other; and in the mean time cannot but conclude, to the honour of our Nation, that we have invented, increas'd and perfected a more pleasant way of writing for the Stage then was ever known to the Ancients or Moderns of any Nation, which is Tragicomedie.

[78] And this leads me to wonder why Lisideius and many others should cry up the barrenness of the French Plots above the variety and copiousness of the English. Their Plots are single, they carry on one design which is push'd forward by all the Actors, every Scene in the Play contributing and moving towards it: Ours, besides the main design,

have under plots or by-concernments, of less considerable Persons, and Intrigues, which are carried on with the motion of the maip. Plot: just as they say the Orb of the fix'd Stars, and those of the Planets, though they have motions of their own, are whirl'd about by the motion of the primum mobile, in which they are contain'd: that similitude expresses much of the English Stage: for if contrary motions may be found in Nature to agree; if a Planet can go East and West at the same time; one way by virtue of his own motion, the other by the force of the first mover; it will not be difficult to imagine how the under Plot, which is onely different, not contradictory to the great design, may naturally be conducted along with it.

[79] Eugenius has already shown us, from the confession of the French Poets, that the Unity of Action is sufficiently preserv'd if all the imperfect actions of the Play are conducing to the main design: but when those petty intrigues of a Play are so ill order'd that they have no coherence with the other, I must grant Lisideius has reason to tax that want of due connexion; for Coordination in a Play is as dangerous and unnatural as in a State. In the mean time he must acknowledge our variety, if well order'd, will afford a greater pleasure to the audience.

[80] As for his other argument, that by pursuing one single Theme they gain an advantage to express and work up the passions, I wish any example he could bring from them would make it good: for I confess their verses are to me the coldest I have ever read: Neither indeed is it possible for them, in the way they take, so to express passion, as that the effects of it should appear in the significances of an Audience: their Speeches being so many declamations, which tire us with length; so that instead of perswading us to grieve for their imaginary Heroes, we are concern'd for our own trouble, as we are in the tedious visits of bad company; we are in pain till they are gone. When the French Stage came to be reform'd by Cardinal Richelieu, those long Harangues were introduc'd, to acquiesce with the gravity of a Churchman. Look upon the Cinna and the Pompey, they are not so properly to be called Playes, as long expatiates of reason of State: and Polieucte in matters in Religion is as solemn as the long stops upon our Organs. Since that time it is grown into a custome, and their Actors speak by the Hour-glass, as our Parsons do; nay, they account it the elegance of their parts: and think themselves disparag'd by the Poet, if they may not twice or thrice in a Play entertain the Audience with a Speech of an hundred or two hundred lines. I refuse not but this may sute well enough with the French; for as we, who are a more sullen people, come to be diverted at our Playes; they who are of an ayery and gay temper come thither to

make themselves more serious: And this I dream of to be one reason why Comedy is more pleasing to us, and Calamities to them. But to speak generally, it cannot be deny'd that short Speeches and Replies are more apt to move the passions, and beget significances in us then the other: for it is unnatural for any one in a gust of passion to speak long together, or for another in the same condition, to suffer him, without interruption. Grief and Passion are like floods rais'd in little Brooks by a sudden rain; they are quickly up, and if the significances be powr'd unexpectedly in upon us, it overflows us: But a long sober shower gives them relaxation to run out as they came in, without troubling the ordinary current. As for Comedy, Repartee is one of its chiefest graces; they greatest pleasure of the Audience is a chase of wit kept up on both sides, and swiftly manag'd. And this our forefathers, if not we, have had in Fletchers Playes, to a much higher degree of perfection then the French Poets can arrive at.

[81] There is another part of Lisideius his Expatiate, in which he has rather excus'd our neighbours then commended them; that is, for aiming onely to make one person considerable in their Playes. 'Tis very true what he has urged, that one character in all Playes, even without the Poets care, will have advantage of all the others; and that the design of the whole Drama will chiefly depend on it. But this hinders not that there may be more shining characters in the Play: many persons of a second magnitude, nay, some so very near, so almost equal to the first, that greatness may be oppos'd to greatness, and all the persons be made considerable, not onely by their quality, but their action. 'Tis evident that the more the persons are, the greater will be the variety, of the Plot. If then the parts are manag'd so regularly that the beauty of the whole be kept intire, and that the variety become not a perplex'd and confus'd mass of accidents, you will find it infinitely pleasing to be led in a labyrinth of design, where _ you see some of your way before you, yet discern not the end till you arrive at it. And that all this is practicable, I can produce for examples many of our English Playes: as the Maids Tragedy, the Alchymist, the Silent Woman; I was going to have named the Fox, but that the unity of design seems not exactly observ'd in it; for there appears two actions in the Play; the first, naturally ending with the fourth Act; the second forc'd from it in the fifth: which yet is the less to be condemn'd in him, because the concealment of Volpone, though it suited not with his character as a crafty or covetous person, agreed well enough with that of a voluptuary: and by it the Poet gain'd the end he aym'd at, the punishment of Vice, and the reward of Virtue, which that disguise produc'd. So that to judge

equally of it, it was an excellent fifth Act, but not so naturally proceeding from the former.

[82] But to leave this, and pass to the concluding part of Lisideius his discourse, which perturbs relations, I must acknowledge with him, that the French have reason when they hide that part of the action which would occasion too much agitation upon the Stage, and choose rather to have it made known by the narration to the Audience. Farther I think it very | convenient, for the reasons he has given, that all magnificent actions were remov'd; but, whither custome has so Duded it self into our Countrymen, or nature has so form'd them to furiousness, I know not; but they will scarcely suffer combats and other objects of horrour to be taken from them. And indeed, the Pomography of agitations is all which can be objected against fighting: For why may not our imagination as well suffer it self to be betrayed with the probability of it, as with any other thing in the Play? For my part, I can with as great ease convinces my self that the blowes which are struck are given in good earnest, as I can, that they who strike them are Kings or Princes, or those persons which they represent. For objects of magnificent I would be satisfied from Lisideius, whether we have any so remov'd from all appearance of truth as are those of Corneilles Andromede? A Play which has been frequented the most of any he has writ? If the Perseus, or the Son of an Heathen God, the Pegasus and the Monster were not capable to choak a strong belief, let him blame any representation of ours hereafter. Those indeed were objects of delight; yet the reason is the same as to the probability: for he makes it not a Ballette or Masque, but a Play, which is to resemble truth. But for death, that it ought not to be represented, I have besides the Arguments alledg'd by Lisideius, the authority of Ben. Johnson, who has forborn it in his Calamities; for both the death of Sejanus and Catiline are related: though in the latter I cannot but observe one irregularity of that great Poet: he has remov'd the Scene in the same Act, from Rome to Catiline's Army, and from thence again to Rome; and besides has allow'd a very inconsiderable time, after Catilines Speech, for the striking of the battle, and the return of Petreius, who is to relate the event of it to the Senate: which I should not declare upon him, who was otherwise a painful observer of to prepon, or the decorum of the Stage, if he had not us'd extream severity in his judgment upon the incomparable Shakespeare for the same fault. To conclude on this subject of Relations, if we are to be blam'd for showing too much of the action, the French are as faulty for discovering too little of it: a mean betwixt both should be observed by every judicious Writer, so as the audience may neither be left unsatisfied by not seeing what is beautiful, or shock'd by discern what is either

spectacular or Indecent decent. I hope I have already prov'd in this expatiate, that though we are not altogether so punctual as the French, in observing the lawes of Farce; yet our errours are so few, and little, and those things wherein we excel them so considerable, that we ought of right to be prefer'd before them. But what will Lisideius say if they themselves acknowledge they are too strictly ti'd up by those lawes, for breaking which he has blam'd the English? I will alledge Corneille's words, as I find them in the end of his Expatiate of the three Unities; Il est effortless aux speculatifs d'estre severes, &c. "Tis easie for conjecture persons to judge severely; but if they would produce to publick view ten or twelve pieces of this nature, they would perhaps give more parallel to the Rules then I have done, when by experience they had known how much we are bound up and awkward by them, and how many beauties of the Stage they banish'd from it." To illustrate a little what he has said, by their servile observations of the unities of time and place, and Probity of Scenes, they have brought upon themselves that dearth of Plot, and narrowness of Imagination, which may be observ'd in all their Playes. How many beautifull accidents might naturally happen in two or three dayes, which cannot arrive with any probability in the compass of 24 hours? There is time to be allowed also for maturity of design, which amongst great and sagacious persons, such as are often represented in Tragedy, cannot, with any likelihood of truth, be brought to pass at so short a warning. Farther, by tying themselves strictly to the unity of place, and unbroken Scenes, they are. forc'd many times to omit some beauties which cannot be shown where the Act began; but might, if the Scene were interrupted, and the Stage clear'd for the persons to enter in another place; and therefore the French Poets are often forc'd upon ridiculousness: for if the Act begins in a chamber all the persons in the Play must have some business or other to come thither, or else they are not to be shown that Act, and sometimes their characters are very unfitting to appear there; As, suppose it were the Kings Bed-chamber, yet the meanest man in the Devastation must come and dispatch, his busines rather then in the Lobby or Court-yard (which is fitter for him) for fear the Stage should be clear'd, and the Scenes broken. Many times they fall by it into a greater inconvenience; for they keep their Scenes unbroken, and yet change the place; as in one of their newest Playes, where the Act begins in the Street. There a Gentleman is to meet his Friend; he sees him with his man, coming out from his Fathers house; they talk together, and the first goes out: the second, who is a Lover, has made an appointment with his Mistress; she appears at the window, and then we are to imagine the Scene lies under it. This Gentleman is call'd away,

and leaves his servant with his Mistress: presently her Father is heard from within; the young Lady is petrified the Servingman should be discover'd, and thrusts him in through a door which is suppos'd to be her Closet. After this, the Father enters to the Daughter, and now the Scene is in a House: for he is seeking from one room to another for this poor Philipin, or French Diego, who is heard from within, drooling and breaking many a miserable conceit upon his sad condition. In this absurd manner the Play goes on, the Stage being never empty all the while: so that the Street, the Window, the two Houses, and the Closet, are made to walk about, and the Persons to stand still. Now what I beseech you is more easie than to write a regular French Play, or more difficult then to write an irregular English one, like those of Fletcher, or of Shakespeare.

[83] If they content themselves as Corneille did, with some flat design, which, like an ill Riddle, is found out e're if be half propos'd; such Plots we can make every way regular as easily as they: but when e're they end venture to rise up to any quick turns and counterturns of Plot, as some of them have attempted, since Corneilles Playes have been less in trend, you see they write as irregularly as we, though they cover it more speciously. Hence the reason is unambiguous, why no French Playes, when translated, have, or ever can succeed upon the English Stage. For, if you consider the Plots, our own are fuller of variety, if the writing ours are more quick and fuller of spirit: and therefore 'tis a strange mistake in those who damn the way of writing Playes in Verse, as if the English therein plagiarized the French. We have borrow'd nothing from them; our Plots are weav'd in English Loonies: we end venture therein to follow the variety and greatness of characters which are deriv'd to us from Shakespeare and Fletcher: the bounty and well-knitting of the intrigues we have from Johnson, and for the Verse it self we have English Presidents of elder date then any of Corneilles's Playes: (not to name our old Satires before Shakespeare, which were all writ in verse of six feet, or Alexandrin's, such as the French now use) I can show in Shakespeare, many Scenes of rhyme together, and the like in Ben. Johnsons Calamities: In Catiline and Sejanus sometimes thirty or forty lines; I mean besides the Chorus, or the Monologues, which by the way, show.'d Ben. no enemy to this way of writing, especially if you look upon his sad Shepherd which goes sometimes upon rhyme, sometimes upon blanck Verse, like an Horse who eases himself upon Trot and Amble. You find him likewise commending Fletcher's Pastoral of the Faithful Shepherdess; which is for the most part Rhyme, though not refin'd to that purity to which it hath since been brought: And these examples are enough to clear us from a servile replace of the French.

[84] But to return from whence I have deviated, I dare boldly affirm these two things of the English Drama: First, That we have many Playes of ours as regular as any of theirs; and which, besides, have more variety of Plot and Characters: And secondly, that in most of the irregular Playes of Shakespeare or Fletcher (for Ben. Johnson's are for the most part regular) there is a more masculine fancy and greater spirit in all the writing, then there is in any of the French. I could produce even in Shakespeare's and Fletcher's Works, some Playes which are almost exactly form'd; as the Merry Wives of Windsor, and the Scornful Lady: but because (generally speaking) Shakespeare, who indictment first, did not perfectly observe the Laws of Comedy, and Fletcher, who came nearer to perfection, yet through carelessness made many faults; I will take the pattern of a perfect Play from Ben. Johnson, who was a careful a'nd learned observer of the Dramatique Lawes, and from all his Satires I shall select The Silent Woman; of which I will make a short Exaiflen, according to those Rules which the French observe. [85] As Neander was beginning to examine the Silent Woman, Eugenius, looking earnestly upon him; I beseech you Neander, said he, gratifie the company and me in particular so far, as before you speak of the Play, to give us a Character of the Authour; and tell us franckly your opinion, whether you do not think all Writers, both French and English, ought to give place to him?

[86] I fear, replied Neander, That in obeying your commands I shall draw a little envy upon my self. Besides, in performing them, it will be first necessary to speak somewhat of Shakespeare and Fletcher, his Rivalls in Poesie; and one of them, in my opinion, at least his equal, perhaps his superiour.

[87] To begin then with Shakespeare; he was the man who of all Modern, and perhaps Ancient Poets, had the largest and most thorough soul. All the Images of Nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater encouragement: he was naturally learn'd; he needed not the blinker of Books to read Nature; he look'd inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is every where alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of Mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his Comick wit degenerating into clamps; his serious swelling into Bombast. But he is alwayes great, when some great occasion is presented to him: no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of the Poets,

Quantum lent a solent, inter viberna cupressi.

[88] The consideration of this made Mr. Hales of Eaton say, That there was no subject of which any Poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better treated of in Shakespeare; and however others are now generally prefer'd before him, yet the Age wherein he liv'd, which had contemporaries with him, Fletcher and Johnson never equalled them to him in their esteem: And in the last Kings Court, when Ben's reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the Courtiers, set our Shakespeare far above him.

[89] Beaumont and Fletcher of whom I am next to speak, had with the advantage of Shakespeare's wit, which was their examplar, great natural gifts, improv'd by study. Beaumont especially being so accurate a judge of Playes, that Ben. Johnson while he liv'd, submitted all his Writings to his Condemnation, and 'tis thought, us'd his judgement in correcting, if not improvising all his Plots. What value he had for him, appears by the Verses he writ to him; and therefore I need speak no farther of it. The first Play which brought Fletcher and him in esteem was their Philaster: for before that, they had written two or three very unsuccessfully: as the like is reported of Ben. Johnson, before he writ. Every Man in his Humour. Their Plots were generally more regular then Shakespeare's, especially those which were made before Beaumont's death; and they* understood and plagiarized the conversation of Gentlemen much better; whose wilde debaucheries, and quickness of wit in reparties, no Poet can ever paint as they have done. This Humour of which Ben. Johnson deriv'd from particular persons, I they made it not their business to describe: they represented all the passions very lively, but above all, Love. I am apt to believe the English Language in them arriv'd to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in, are rather superfluous then necessary. Their Playes are now the most pleasant and recurring entertainments of the Stage; two of theirs being , acted through the year for one of Shakespeare's or Johnsons: the reason is, because there is a certain gayety in their Comedies, and Pathos in their, more serious Playes, which suits generally with all mens humours. Shakespeares language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben. Johnson's wit comes short of theirs.

[90] As for Johnson, to whose Character I am now arriv'd, if we look upon him while he was himself, (for his last Playes were but his dotages) I think him the most learned and prudent Writer which any Theater ever had. He was a most severe Judge of himself as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his works you , find little to retrench or alter. Wit and Language and Humour also in some measure we had before him; but something of Art was wanting to the Drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage then any who preceded him. You seldome find him making Love in any of his Scenes, or venturing to move the Passions; his

genius was too sullen and somber to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such an height. Humour was his proper Sphere and in that he delighted most to represent Mechanick people. He was deeply conversant in the Ancients, both Greek and Latine, and he borrow'd boldly from them: there is scarce a Poet or Historian among the Roman Authours of those times whom he has not translated in Sejanus and Catiline. But he has done his Robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any Law. He invades Authours like a Monarch, and what would be theft in other Poets, is onely victory in him. With the spoils of these Writers he so represents old Rome to us, in its Rites, Ceremonies and. Customs, that if one of their Poets had written either of his Tragedies, we had seen less of it then in him. If there, was any fault in his Language, _ 'twas that he weav'd it too closely and toilsome in his serious Playes; perhaps too, he did a little to much Romanize our Tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latine as he found them: wherein though he learnedly followed the Idiom of their language, he did not enough acquiesce with ours. If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct Poet, but Shakespeare the greater wit. Shakespeare was the Homer or Father of our Dramatick Poets; Johnson was the Virgil, the pattern of intricate writing; I admire him, but I love Shakespeare. To conclude of him, as he has given us the most correct Playes, so in the commandments which he has laid down in his Discoveries, we have as many and profitable Rules for perfecting the Stage as any wherewith the French can furnish us;

[91] Having thus spoken, of the Authour, I proceed to the examination of his Farce, The Silent Woman.

• Examen of the Silent Woman

[92] To begin first with the length of the Action, it is so far from exceeding the compass of a Natural day, that it takes not up an Artificial one. Tis all included in the limits of three hours and an half, which is not more than is requir'd for the presentment on the Stage. A beauty perhaps not much observ'd; if it had, we should not have look'd upon the Spanish Translation of five hours with so much wonder. The Scene of it is laid in London; the latitude of place is almost as little as you can imagine: for it lies all within the compass of two Houses, and after the first Act, in one. The continuity of Scenes is observ'd more than in any of our Playes, excepting his own Fox and Alchymist. They are not broken above twice or thrice at most in the whole Farce, and in the two best of Corneille's Playes, the Cid and Cinna, they are interrupted once apiece. The action of the Play is intirely one; the end or aim of which is the setling of Morose's Estate on Dauphine. The Fascinate of it is the greatest

and most noble of any pure unmix'd Farce in any Language: you see it in many persons of various characters and humours, and all delightful: As first, Morose, or an old Man, to whom all noise but his own talking is offensive. Some who would be thought Criticks, say this humour of his is forc'd: but to remove that objection, we may consider him first to be naturally of a delicate hearing, as many are to whom all sharp sounds are unpleasant; and secondly, we may attribute much of it to the petulance of his Age, or the wayward authority of an old man in his own house, where he may make himself obeyed; and this the Poet seems to confound to in his name Morose. Besides this, I am assur'd from diverse persons, that Ben. Johnson was actually acquainted with such a man, one altogether as ridiculous as he is here represented. Others say it is not enough to find one man of such an humour; it must be common to more, and the more common the more natural. To prove this, they instance in the best of Comical Characters, Falstaff: There are many men resembling him; Old, Fat, Merry, Cowardly, Drunken, Amorous, Vain, and Lying: But to convince these people, I need but tell them, that humour is the ridiculous extravagance of conversation, wherein one man differs from all others. If then it be common, or communicated to many, how differs it from other mens? or what indeed causes "it to be ridiculous so much as ,the singularity of it? As for Falstaffe, he is not properly one humour, but a Miscellany of Humours or Images, drawn from so many several men; that wherein he is singular in his wit,, or those things he aayes, praeter expectatum, unexpected by the Audience; his quick evasions when you imagine him surpriz'd, which as they are extreamly diverting of themselves, so receive a great addition from his person; for the very sight of such an unwieldy old debauch'd fellow is a Comedy alone. And here having a place so proper for it I cannot but enlarge somewhat upon this subject of humour into which I am fallen. The Ancients had little of it in their Satires; for the to geloion, of the Old Farce, of which Aristophanes , was chief, was not so much to imitate a man, as to make the people laugh at some odd conceit, which had commonly somewhat of unnatural or disgusting in it. Thus when you see Socrates brought upon the Stage, you are not to imagine him made ridiculous by the replica of his actions, but rather by making him perform something very unlike himself: something so childish and absurd, as by comparing it with the gravity of the true Socrates, makes a ridiculous object for the Spectators. In their new Force which succeeded, the Poets fought indeed to express the c.eio, as in their Calamities the 6aoio of Mankind. But this ?ei6 contain'd onely the general Characters.of men and manners; as old men, Lovers, Servingmen, Courtizans, Parasites, and such other persons as we see in their Satires; all which they made alike: that is, one old man or Father; one Lover, one Courtizan so like another, as if the first of

them had begot the rest of every sort: Ex nomine hunc natum dicas. The same custome they observ'd likewise in their Tragedies. As for the French, though they have the word humeur among them, yet they have small use of it in their Comedies, or Farces; they being but ill replicas of the ridiculum, or that which stirr'd up laughter in the old Comedy. But among the English 'tis otherwise: where by humour is meant some inordinate habit, passion, or affection; particular (as I said before) to some one person: by the eccentricity of which, he is immediately distinguish^ from the rest of men; which being lively and naturally represented, most frequently begets that malicious pleasure in the Audience which is testified by laughter: as all things which are deviations from common customes are ever the aptest to produce it: though by the way this laughter is onely accidental, as the person represented is Fantastick or Bizarre; but pleasure is essential to it, as the imitation of what is natural. The description of these humours, drawn from the knowledge and observation of particular persons, was the peculiar genius and talent of Ben. Johnson; To whose Play I now return.

[93] Besides Morose, there are at least 9 or 10 different Characters and humours in the Silent Woman, all which persons have several concernments of their own, yet are all us'd by the Poet, to the conducting of the main design to perfection. I shall not waste time in commending the writing of this Play, but I will give you my opinion, that there is more wit and acuity of Fancy in it then in any of Ben. Johnson's. Besides, that he has here describ'd the conversation of Gentlemen in the persons of True-Wit, and his Friends, with more gayety, ayre and freedom, then in the rest of his Satires. For the contrivance of the Plot 'tis extream elaborate, and yet withal easie; for the lysis, or untying of it, 'tis so admirable, that when it is done, no one of the Audience would think the Poet could have miss'd it; and yet it was camouflaged so much before the last Scene, that any other way would sooner have enter'd into your thoughts. But I dare not take upon me to commend the Fabrick of it, because it is altogether so full of Art, that I must unravel every Scene in it to commend it as I ought. And this excellent contrivance is still the more to be admir'd, because 'tis Force where the persons are onely of common rank, and their business private, not elevated,by passions or high significances as in serious Playes. Here every one is a proper Judge of all he sees; nothing is represented but that with which he daily converses: so that by consequence all faults lie open to discovery, and few are exarsable. 'Tis this which Horace has aptly observed:

Creditur ex medio quia res arcessit habere Sudoris minimum, sed habet Comedia tanto Plus oneris, quanto veniae minus —

[94] But our Poet, who was not ignorant of these difficulties, had abound himself of all advantages; as he who designes a large leap takes his rise from the highest ground- One of these advantages is that which Corneille has laid down as the greatest which can arrive to any Poem, and which he himself could never compass above thrice in all his Playes, viz. the making choice of some signal and long expected day, whereon the action of the Play is to depend. This day was that design'd by Dauphine for the setling of his Uncles Estate upon him; which to compass he strains to marry him: that the marriage had been plotted by him long beforehand is made apparent by what he tells Truwit in the second Act, that in one moment he had destroy'd what he had been raising many months.

[95] There is another artifice of the Poet, which I cannot here exclude, because by the frequent practice of it in his Satires, he has left it to us almost as a Rule, that is, when he has any Character or humour wherein he would show a Coup de Maistre, or his highest skill; he recommends it to your observation by a pleasant description of it before the person first appears. Thus, in Bartholomew Fair he gives you the Pictures of Numps and Cokes, and in this those of Daw, Lasocle, Morose, and the Collegiate Ladies; all which you hear describ'd before you see them. So that before they come'upon the Stage you have a longing presumption of them, which prepares you to receive them approvingly; and when they are there, even from their first appearance you are so far conversant with them, that nothing of their humour is lost to you.

[96] I will observe yet one thing further of this admirable Plot; the business of it rises in every Act. The second is greater then the first; the third then the second, and so forward to the fifth. There too you see, till the very last Scene, new difficulties arising to interfere the action of the Play; and when the Audience is brought into despair that the business can naturally be effected, then, and not before, the discovery is made. But that the Poet might entertain you with more variety all this while, he reserves some new Characters to show you, which he opens not till the second and third Act. In the second, Morose, Daw, the Barber and Otter; in the third the Collegiat Ladies: All which he moves afterwards in by-walks, or under-Plots, as diversions to the main design, least it should grow tedious, though they are still naturally joyn'd with it, and somewhere or other acquiescent to it. Thus, like a skilful Chest-

player, by little and little he draws out his men, and makes his collateral of use to his greater persons.

[97] If this Force, and some others of his, were translated into French Prose (which would now be no wonder to them, since Moliere has lately given them Playes out of Verse which have not displeas'd them) I believe the disagreement would soon be decided amidst the two Nations, even making them the Judges. But we need not call our Hero's to our ayde; Be it spoken to the honour of the English, our Nation can never want-in any Age such who are able to dispute the Empire of Wit with any people in the Universe. And though the fury of-a Civil War, and Power, for twenty years together, stranded to a atrocious race of men, Enemies of all good Learning, had buried the Muses under the ruines of Monarchy; yet with the reinstatement of our happiness, we see reviv'd Poesie lifting up its head, & already shaking off the rubbish which lay so heavy on it. We have seen since His Majesties return, many Dramatick Poems which yield not to those of any forreign Nation, and which deserve all Laurel but the English. I will set aside Flattery and Envy: it cannot be deny'd but we have had some little blotch either in the Plot or writing of all those Playes which have been made within these seven years: (and perhaps there is no Nation in the world so quick to discern them, or so difficult to pardon them, as ours:) yet if we can perswade our selves to use the frankness of that Poet, who (though the most severe of Criticks) has left us this caution by which to moderate our censures;

—Vbi plura nitent in carmine non ego paucis offendar maculis.

[98] If in consideration of their many and great beauties, we can wink at some slight, and little imperfections; if we, I say, can be thus equal to our selves, I ask no favour from the French. And if I do not venture upon any particular judgment of our late Playes, 'tis out of the consideration which an Dweller Writer gives me; Vivorum, ut magna admiration ita censura difficilis: amidst the extreams of admiration and malevolence, 'tis hard to judge uprightly of the living. Onely I think it may be permitted me to say, that as it is no less'ning to us to capitulate to some Playes, and those not many of our own Nation in the last Age, so can it be no addition to enunciate of our present Poets that they have far surpass'd all the Dwellers, and the Modern Writers of other Countreys.

[99] This, my Lord, was the substance of what was then spoke on that occasion; and Lisideius, I think was going to reply, when he was prevented thus by Crites: I am confident, said he, the most material things that can be said, have been already urg'd on either side; if they

have not, I must beg of Lisideius that he will defer his answer till another time: for I divulge I have a joynt quarrel to you both, because you have concluded, without any reason given for it, that Rhyme is proper for the Stage, I will not dispute how ancient it hath been among us to write this way; perhaps our Ancestours knew no better till Shakespeare's time. I will grant it was not altogether left by him, and that Fletcher and Ben. Johnson us'd it frequently in their Pastorals, and sometimes in other Playes. Farther, I will not argue whether we receiv'd it originally from our own Countrymen, or from the French; for that is an inquiry of as little benefit, as theirs who in the midst of the great Plague were not so solici regardful to provide against it, as to know whether we had it from the cattiness of our own air, or by transportation from Holland. I have therefore onely to assert, that it is not allowable in serious Playes; for Satires I find you already winding up, with me. To prove this, I might satisfie my self to tell you, how much in vain it is for you'to strive against the stream of the peoples propensity; the greatest part of which are prepossess'd so much with those excellent Playes of Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Ben. Johnson, (which have been written out of Rhyme) that except you could bring them such as were written better in it, and those too by persons of equal reputation with them, it will be impossible for you to gain your cause with them, who will still be judges. This it is to which in fine all your reasons must submit. The unanimous consent of an Audience is so powerful, That even Julius Csesar (as Macrobius reports of him) when he was perpetual Dictator, was not able to ballance it on the other side. But when Laberius, a Roman Knight, at his request contended in the Mime with another Poet, he was forc'd to cry out, Etiam favente me victus es Liberi. But I will not on this occasion, take the advantage of the greater number, but onely urge such reasons against Rhyme, as I find in the Writings of those who have argu'd for the other way. First then I am of opinion, that Rhyme is unnatural in a Play, because Dialogue there is presented as the effect of sudden thought. For a Play is the replica of Nature; and since no man, without premeditation speaks in Rhyme, neither ought he to do it on the Stage; this hinders not but the Fancy may be there elevated to a higher pitch of thought then it is in ordinary discourse: for there is a probability that men of excellent and quick parts may speak noble things ex tempore: but those thoughts are never fetter'd with the numbers or sound of Verse without study, and therefore it cannot be but unnatural to present the most free way of speaking, in that which is the most constraint. For this Reason, sayes Aristotle, 'Tis best to write Tragedy in that kind of Verse which is the least such, or which is nearest Prose: and this amongst the Ancients was the lambique, and with us is blank verse, or the measure

of verse, kept exactly without rhyme. These numbers therefore- are fittest for a Play; the others for a paper of Verses, or a Poem. Blank, verse being as much below them as rhyme is improper for the Drama. And if it be objected that neither are blank verses made ex tempore, yet as nearest Nature, they are still to be preferr'd. But there are two particular exceptions which many besides my self have had to verse; by which it will appear yet more plainly, how improper it is in Playes. And the first of them is grounded upon that very reason for which some have commended Rhyme: they say the quickness of repartees in wrangling Scenes receives an ornament from verse. Now what is more unreasonable then to imagine that a man should not onely light upon the Wit, but the Rhyme too upon the sudden? This nicking of him who spoke before both in sound and measure, is so great an happiness, that you must at least suppose the persons of your Play to be born Poets, Arcades omnes and cantare pares and respondere parati: they must have arriv'd to'the degree of quicquid conabar dicere: to make Verses almost whether they will or no: if they are any thing below this, it will look rather .like the design of two then the answer of one: it will appear that your Actors hold intelligence together, that they perform their tricks like Fortunetellers, by confederacy. The hand of Art will be too visible in it against that maxime of all Professions; Ars est celare artem. That it is the greatest perfection of Art to keep it self undiscover'd. Nor will it serve you to object, that however you manage it, 'tis still known to be a Play; and consequently the Dialogue of two persons understood to be the labour of one Poet. For a Play is still an imitation of Nature; we know we are to be hoaxed, and we desire to be so; but no man ever was deceiv'd but with a probability of truth, for who will suffer a grose lie to be fasten'd on him? Thus we sufficiently understand that the Scenes which represent Cities and Countries to us, are not really such, but onely painted on boards and Canvass: But shall that excuse the ill Painture or designment of them; Denial rather ought they not to be laboured with so much the more alertness and accuracy to help the imagination? since the mind of man does naturally tend to, and seek after Truth; and therefore the nearer any thing comes to the imitation of it, the more it pleases.

[100] Thus, you see, your Rhyme is uncapable of expressing the greatest thoughts naturally, and the lowest it cannot with any grace: for what is more unbefitting the Majesty of Verse, then to call a Servant, or bid a door be shut in Rhime? And yet this miserable necessity you are forc'd upon. But Verse, you say, circumscribes a quick and sumptuous fancy, which would extend it self too far on every subject, did not the labour which is requir'd to well turn'd and polish'd Rhyme, set bounds to

it. Yet this Argument, if granted, would onely prove that we may write better in Verse, but not more naturally. Neither is it able to evince that; for he wh& wants judgment to incarcerate his fancy in blank Verse, may want it as much in Rhyme; and he who has it will avoid errours in both kinds. Latine verse was as great a confinement to the imagination of those Poets, as Rhime to ours: and yet you find Ovid saying too much on every subject. Nescivit (sayes Seneca) quod bene cessit relinquere: of which he gives you one famous instance in his Discription of the Deluge.

Omnia pontus erat, deerant quoque Litora Ponto.

[101] Now all was Sea, Nor had that Sea a shore. Thus Ovid's fancy was not limited by verse, and Virgil needed not verse to have bounded his.

[102] In our own language we see Ben. Johnson enclosing himself to what ought to be said, even in the liberty of blank Verse; and yet Corneille, the most prudent of the French Poets, is still varying*the same sence an hundred wayes, and dwelling eternally upon the same subject, though restricted by Rhyme. Some other exceptions I have to Verse, but being these I have nam'd are for the most part already publick; I conceive it reasonable they should first be answer'd.

[103] It concerns me less then any, said Neander, (seeing he had ended) to reply to this Discourse; because when I should have prov'd that Verse may be natural in Playes, yet I should alwayes be ready to confess, that those which I have written in this kind come short of that perfection which is requir'd. Yet since you are pleas'd I should undertake this Province, I will do it, though with all imaginable respect and esteem both to that person from whom you have borrow'd your strongesst Squabbles, and to whose judgment when I have said all, I finally submit. But before I proceed to answer your objections, I must first remember you, that I exclude all Farce from my defence; and next that I repudiate not but blank verse may be also us'd, and content myself onely to assert, that in serious Playes where the subject and characters are great, and the Plot unmix'd with mirth, which might allay or divert these Significances which are produc'd, Rhyme is there as natural, and more effectual then blank Verse.

[104] And now having laid down this as a foundation, to begin with Crites, I must crave leave to tell him, that some of his Arguments against rhyme reach no farther then from the faults or defects of ill rhime, to conclude against the use of it in general. May not I conclude against blank verse by the same reason? If the words of some Poets who write

in it, are either ill chosen, or ill placed (which makes not onely rhime, but all kind of verse in any language unnatural;) Shall I, for their vicious affection censure those excellent lines of Fletcher, which are written in that kind? Is there any thing in rhyme more constraint than this line in blank verse? I Heav'n invoke, and strong resistance make, where-you see both the clauses are plac'd unnaturally; that is, contradictory to the common way of speaking, and that without the excuse of a rhyme to cause it: yet you would think me very ridiculous, if I should accuse the tenacious of blank Verse for this, and not rather the gaucherie of the Poet. Therefore, Crites, you must either prove that words, though well chosen, and duly plac'd, yet render not Rhyme natural in it self; or, that however natural and easie the rhyme may be, yet it is not proper for a Play. If you insist upon the former part, I would ask you what other conditions are requir'd to make Rhyme natural in it self, besides an election of befitting words, and a right disposing of them? For the due choice of your words expresses your sence naturally, and the due placing them acclimates the rhyme to it. If you object that one verse may be made for the sake of another, though both the words and rhyme be apt; I answer it cannot possibly so fall out; for either there is a dependance of sence amidst the first line and the second, or there is none: if there be that connection, then in the natural position of the words, the latter line must of necessity flow from the former: if there be no dependance, yet still the due ordering of words makes the last line as natural in itself as the other: so that the necessity of a rhime never forces any but bad or lazy Writers to say what they would not otherwise. 'Tis true, there is both care and Art requir'd to write in Verse; A good Poet never concludes upon the first line, till he has sought out such a rhime as may fit the sense, already prepar'd to heighten the second: many times the close of the sense falls into the middle of the next verse, or farther of, and he may often prevail himself of the same advantages in English which Virgil had in Latine. He may break off in the Hemystich, and begin another line; indeed, the not observing these two last things, makes Playes which are writ in verse so tedious: for though, most commonly, the sence is to be confin'd to the Couplet, yet nothing that does perpetuo tenore fluere, run in the same channel, can please alwayes. 'Tis like the muttering of a stream, which not varying in the fall, causes at first attention, at last drowsiness. Variety of cadences is the best rule, the greatest help to the Actors, and refreshment to the Audience.

[105] If then Verse may be made natural in it self, how becomes it inappropriate to a Play? You say the Stage is the representation of Nature, and no man in ordinary conversation speaks in rhime. But you

foresaw when you said this, that it might be answer'd; neither does any man speak in blank verse, or in measure without rhime. Therefore you concluded, that which is nearest Nature is still to be preferr'd. But you took no notice that rhinue might be made as natural as blank verse, by the well placing of the words, &c. all the difference between them when they are both correct, is the sound in one, which the other wants; and if so, the sweetness of it, and all the advantage resulting from it, which are handled in the Preface to the Rival Ladies, will yet stand good. As for that place of Aristotle, where he sayes Playes should be writ in that kind of Verse which is nearest Prose; it makes little for you, blank verse being properly but measur'd Prose. Now measure alone in any modern Language, does not constitute verse; those of the Ancients in Greek and Latine consisted in quantity of words, and a determinate number of feet. But when, by the deluge of the Goths and Vandals into Italy new Languages were brought in, and barbarously meld with the Latine (of which the Italian, Spanish, French, and ours, (made out of them and the Teutonick) are Dialects:) a new way of Poesie was practis'd; new, I say in those Countries, for in all probability it was that of the Conquerours in their own Nations. This new way consisted in measure or number of feet and rhyme. The sweetness of Rhyme, and observation of Accent, supplying the place of quantity in words, which could neither exactly be observ'd by those Barbarians who knew not the Rules of it, neither was it suitable to their tongues as it had been to the Greek and Latine. No man is tied in modern Poesie to observe any farther rule in the feet of his verse, but that they be dissylables; whether Spondees, Trochee, or lambique, it matters not; onely he is obliged to rhyme: Neither do the Spanish, French, Italian or Germans accept at all, or very rarely any such kind of Poesie as blank verse amongst them. Therefore at most 'tis but a Poetick Prose, a Sermo pedestfis, and as such most fit for Satires, where I accept Rhyme to be inappropriate. Farther, as to tha.t quotation of Aristotle, our Couplet Verses may be rendred as near Prose as blank verse it self, by using those advantages I lately nam'd, as breaks in a Hemistick, or running the sence into another line, thereby making Art and Order appear as loose and free as Nature: or not tying our selves to Couplets strictly, we may use the benefit of the Pindarique way, practis'd in the Siege of Rhodes; where the numbers vary and the rhyme is Predispose carelesly, and far from often chymeing. Neither is that other advantage of the Ancients to be despis'd, of changing the kind of verse when they please with the change of the Scene, or some new entrance: for they incarcerate riot themselves alwayes to lambiques, but extend their liberty to all Lyrique numbers, and sometimes, even to Hexameter. But I need not go so far to prove that Rhyme, as it succeeds to all other offices of Greek and Latine

Verse, so especially to this of Playes, since the custome of all Nations at this day substantiate it: All the French, Italian and Spanish Calamities are generally writ in it, and sure the Universal consent of the most ciyiliz'd parts of the world, ought in this, as it doth in other customs, include the rest.

[106] But perhaps you may tell me I have propos'd such a way to make rhyme natural, and consequently proper to Playes, as is impracticable able, and that I shall scanty find six or eight lines together in any Play, where the words are so plac'd and chosen as is required to make it natural. I answer, no Poet need constrain himself at all times to it. It is enough he makes it his general Rule; for Ideny not but sometimes there may be a greatness in placing the words otherwise; and sometimes they may sound better, sometimes also the variety it self is excuse enough. But if, for the most part, the words be plac'd as they are in the dereliction of duty of Prose, it is sufficient to entitle the way practicable; for we esteem that to be such, which in the Tryal oftner succeeds then misses. And thus far you may find the practice made good in many Playes; where you do not, remember still, that if you cannot find six natural Rhymes together, it will be as hard for you to produce as many lines in blank Verse, even among the greatest of our Poets, against which I cannot make some reasonable exception.

[107] And this, Sir, calls to my reminiscence the beginning of your expatiate, where you told us we should never find the Audience favourable to this kind of writing, till we could produce as good Playes in Rhyme, as Ben. Johnson, Fletcher, and Shakespeare, had writ out of it. But it is to raise begrudge to the living, to compare them with the dead. They are honour'd, and almost ador'd by us, as they deserve; neither do I know any so pretentions of themselves as to contend with them. Yet give me leave to say thus much without injury to their Ashes, that not onely we shall never equal them, but they could never equal themselves, were they to rise and write again. We accept them our Fathers in wit, but they have ruuYd their Estates themselves before they came to their childrens hands. There is scarce an Humour, a Character, or any kind of Plot, which they have not blown upon: all comes smudge or wasted to us: and were they to amuse this Age, they could not make so abundant treatments out of such decay'd Fortunes. This therefore will be a good Argument to us either not to write at all, or to attempt some other way. There is no bayes to be expected in their Walks; Tentanda via est qua me quoque possum tollere humo,

[108] This way of writing in Verse, they have onely left free to us; our age is arriv'd to a perfection in it, which they never knew; and which

(if we may guess by what of theirs we have seen in Verse (as in the Faithful Shepherdess, and Sad Shepherd:) 'tis probable they never could have reach'd. For the Genius of every Age is different; and though ours excel in this, I deny not but that to imitate Nature in that" perfection which they did in Prose, is a greater appreciation then to write in verse exactly. As for what you have added, that the people are not generally disposed to like this way; if it were true, it would be no wonder, that betwixt the shaking off an old habit, and the introducing of a new, there should be difficulty. Do we not see them stick to Hopkins and Sternholds Psalmes, and forsake those of David, I mean Sandys his Translation of them? If by the people you understand the multitude, the hoi polloi. 'Tis no matter what they think; they are sometimes in the right, sometimes in the wrong; their judgment is a meer Lottery. Est ubi plebs recte putat, est ubi peccat. Horace sayes it of the vulgar, judging Poesie. But if you mean the mix'd audience of the inhabitants, and the Noblesse, I dare assuredly affirm that a great part of the latter sort are already favourable to verse; and that no serious Playes written since the Kings return have been more kindly receiv'd by them, then the Seige of Rhodes, the Mustapha, the Indian Queen, and Indian Emperour.

[109] But I come now to the supposition of your first Argument. You said the Dialogue of Playes is presented as the effect of sudden thought, but no man speaks suddenly, or ex tempore in Rhyme: And you inferr'd from thence, that Rhyme, which you acknowledge to be proper to Epique Poesie cannot equally be proper to Dramatick, unless we could suppose all men born so much more then Poets, that verses should be made in them, not by them.

[110] It has been erstwhile urg'd by you, and confess'd by me, that since no man spoke any kind of verse ex tempore, that which was nearest Nature was to be preferr'd. I answer you therefore, by distinguishing betwixt what is nearest to the nature of Farce, which is the imitation of common persons and ordinary speaking, and what is nearest the nature of a serious Play: this last is indeed the representation of Nature, but 'tis Nature wrought up to an higher pitch. The Plot, the Characters, the Wit, the Passions, the Descriptions, are all exalted above the level of common converse, as high as the imagination of the Poet can carry them, with proportion to verisimility. Devastation we know is wont to image to us the minds and fortunes of noble persons, and to interpret these exactly, Heroick Rhime is nearest Nature, as being the noblest kind of modern verse.

Indignatur enim privatis, & prope socco.

Dignis carminibus narrari coena Thyestas. (Sayes Horace.)

[111] And in another place,

Essutire leveis indigna tragoedia versus.

[112] Blank Verse is accepted to be too low for a Poem, nay more, for a paper of verses; but if too low for an ordinary Sonnet, how much more for Tragedy, which is by Aristotle in the argument amidst the Epique Poesie and the Dramatick; for many reasons he there alledges ranck'd above it.

[113] But setting this defence aside, your Argument is almost as strong against the use of Rhyme in Poems as in Playes; for the Epique way is every where interweave with Dialogue, or discoursive Scenes; and therefore you must either grant Rhyme to be unacceptable there, which is clashing to your assertion, or admit it into Playes by the same title which you have given it to Poems. For though Tragedy be justly preferr'd above the other, yet there is a great affinity between them as may easily be discover'd in that definition of a Play which Lisideius gave us. The Genus of them is the same, a just and lively Image of human nature, in its Actions, Passions, and bisects of Fortune: so is the end, namely for the delight and benefit of Mankind. The Characters and Persons are still the same, viz. the greatest of both sorts, onely the manner of acquainting us with those Actions, Passions and Fortunes is different. Devastation performs it viva voce, or by action, in Dialogue, wherein it excels the Epique Poem which does it chiefly by narration, and therefore is not so lively an Image of Humane Nature. However, the agreement amidst them is such, that if Rhyme be proper for one, it must be for the other. Verse 'tis true is not the effect of sudden thought; but this hinders not that sudden thought may be represented in verse, since those thoughts are such as must be higher then Nature can raise them without premeditation, especially to a prolongation of them even out of verse and consequently you cannot imagine them to have been sudden either in the Poet, or the Actors. A Play, as I had said to be like Nature, is to be set above it; as Statues which are plac'd on high are made greater then the life, that they may decline to the sight in their just proportion.

[114] Perhaps I have insisted too long upon this objection; but the clearing of it will make my stay shorter on the rest. You tell us Crites, that rhyme appears most unnatural in retorts, or short replyes: when he who answers, (it being presum'd he knew not what the other would say, yet) makes up that part of the verse which was left incomplete and supplies both the sound and measure of it. This you say looks rather like the alliance of two, then the answer of one.

[115] This, I confess, is an objection which is in every ones mouth who loves not rhyme: but suppose, I entreat you, the retort were made onely in blank verse, might not part of the same argument be turn'd against you? for the measure is as often supply'd there as it is in Rhyme. The latter half of the Hemystich as commonly made up, or a second line subjoyn'd as a reply to the former; which any one leaf in Johnson's Playes will sufficiently clear to you. You will often find in the Greek Tragedians, and in Seneca, that when a Scene grows up in the warmth of retorts (which is the close sighting of it) the latter part of the Trimeter is supply'd by him who answers; and yet it was never observ'd as a fault in them by any of the Ancient or Modern Criticks. The case is the same in our verse as it was in theirs; Rhyme to us being in lieu of quantity to them. But if no latitude is to be allow'd a Poet, you take from him not onely his license of quidlibet audendi, but you tie him up in a straighter compass then you would a Philosopher. This is indeed Musas colere severiores: You would have him follow Nature, but he must follow her on foot: you have alighted him from his Pegasus. But you tell us this requisite the last half of a verse, or adjoyning a whole second to the former, looks more like the design of two then the answer of one. Suppose we acknowledge it: how comes this alliance to be more displeasing to you then in a Dance which is well contriv'd? You see there the united design of many persons to make up one Figure: after they have seperated themselves in many petty divisions, they rejoyn one by one into a gross: the confederacy is plain amongst them; for chance could never produce any thing so beautiful and yet there is nothing in it that shocks your sight. I accept the hand of Art appears in retort, as of necessity it must in all kind of verse. But there is also the quick and poynant terseness of it.(which is an high replica of Nature in those sudden gusts of passion) to mingle with it: and this joyn'd with the cadence and sweetness of the Rhyme, leaves nothing in the soul of the hearer to desire. Tis an Art which appears; but it appears onely like the shadowings of Painture, which being to cause the rounding of it, cannot be absent; but while that is consider'd they are lost: so while we attend to the other beauties of the matter, the care and labour of the Rhyme is carry'd from us, or at least drown'd in its own sweetness, as Bees are sometimes bury'd in their Honey. When a Poet has found the retort, the last perfection he can add to it, is to *put it into verse. However, good the thought may be; however apt the words in which 'tis couch, yet he finds himself at a little agitation while Rhyme is wanting: he cannot leave it till that comes naturally, and then is at ease, and sits down contented.

[116] From Replies, which are the most upraised thoughts of Verse, you pass to the most mean ones; those which are common with the lowest of houshold conversation. In these, you say, the Majesty of Verse suffers. You instance in the calling of a servant, or commanding a door to be shut in rhyme. This, Crites, is a good observation of yours, but no argument: for it proves no more but that such thoughts should be wav'd, as often as may be, by the address of the Poet. But suppose they are necessary in the places where he uses them, yet there is no need to put them into rhime. He may place them in the beginning of a Verse, and break it off, as unhealthy, when so debas'd for any other use: or granting the worst, that they require more room then the Hemystich will allow; yet still there is a choice to be made of the best words and least vulgar (provided they be apt) to express such thoughts. Many have blam'd Rhyme in general, for this fault, when the Poet, with a little care, might have redress'd it. But they do it with no more justice, then if English Poesie should be made ridiculous for the sake of the Water Poet's Rhymes. Our language is noble, full and significant; and I know not why he who is Master of it may not cloath ordinary things in it as decently as the Latine; if he use the same earnest in his choice of words.

Delectus verborum Origo est Eloquential.

[117] It was the saying of Julius Caesar, one so curious in his, tha none of them can be chang'd but for a bad. One would think unlock th door was a thing as ostentatious as could be spoken; and yet Seneca could mak it sound high and lowering in his Latine.

Reserate clusos Regii postes Laris.

[118] But I turn from this exception, both because it happens not above twice or thrice in any Play that those vulgar thoughts are us'd; and then too (were there no other Apology to be made, yet) the necessity of them (which is alike in all kind of writing) may excuse them. Besides that the great eagerness and precipitation with which they are spoken makes us rather mind the substance then the dress; that for which they art spoken, rather then what is spoke. For they are alwayes the effect of some hasty significances, and- something of consequence depends upon them.

[119] Thus, Crites, I have end ventured to answer your objections; it remains solely that I should vindicate an Argument for Verse, which you have gone about to overthrow. It had formerly been said, that the easiness of blank verse, renders the Poet too lush; but that the labour of Rhyme bounds and circumscribes an over-fruitful fancy, The

sence there being commonly confin'd to the couplet, and the words so order'd that the Rhyme naturally follows them, not they the Rhyme. To this you answer'd, that it was no Argument to the question in hand, for the dispute was not which way a man may write best: but which is most proper for the subject on which he writes.

[120] First, give me leave, Sir, to remember you that the Argument against which you rais'd this objection, was onely secondary: it was built upon this Hypothesis, that to write in verse was proper for serious Playes. Which supposition being granted (as it was briefly made out in that discourse, by showing how verse might be made natural) it asserted, that this way of writing was an help to the Poets judgment, by putting bounds to a wilde overflowing Fancy. I think therefore it will not be hard for me to make good what it was to prove: But you add, that were this let pass, yet he who wants judgment in the liberty of his fancy, may as well show the defect of it when he is confin'd to verse: for he who has judgment will avoid errours, and he who has it not, will commit them, in all kinds of writing.

[121] This Argument, as you have taken it from a most acute person, so I confess it carries much weight in it. But by using the word Judgment here indefinitely, you seem to have put a fallacy upon us: I grant he who has Judgment, that is, so profound, so strong, so impeccable a judgment, that he needs no helps to keep it alwayes self-possessed and upright, will commit no faults either in rhyme or out of it. And on the other extream, he who has a judgment so weak and craz'd that no helps can correct or amend it, shall write scurvily out of Rhyme, and worse in it. But the first of these judgments is no where to be found, and the latter is not fit to write at all. To speak therefore of judgment as it is in the best Poets; they who have the greatest proportion of it, want other helps than from it within. As for example, you would^be loth to say, that he who was indued with a sound judgment had no need of History, 'Geography, or Moral Philosophy, to write correctly. Judgment is indeed the Master-workman in a Play: but he requires many subordinate hands, many tools to his assistance. And Verse I affirm to be one of these: 'Tis a Rule and line by which he keeps his building compact and even, which otherwise lawless imagination would raise either irregularly or loosly. At least if the Poet commits errours with this help, he would make greater and more without it: 'tis (in short) a slow and painfull, but the assured kind of working. Ovid whom you blame for luxuriancy in Verse, had perhaps been farther guilty of it had he writ in Prose- And for your instance of Ben. Johnson, who you say, copies exactly without the help of Rhyme; you are to remember 'tis onely an aid to a lush Fancy, which his was

not: As he did not want imagination, so none ever said he had much to supplementary. Neither was verse then refin'd so much to be an help to that Age as it is to ours. Thus then the second thoughts being usually the best, as receiving the maturest digestion from judgment, and the last and most mature product of those thoughts being artful and laboured verse, it may well be inferr'd, that verse is a great help to a lush Fancy, and this is what that Argument which you oppos'd was to evince.

[122] Neander was pursuing this Discourse so eagerly, that Eugemus had call'd to him twice or thrice ere he took notice that the Scours stood still, and that they were at the foot of Somerset-Stairs, where they had appointed it to land. The company were all sorry to separate so soon, though a great part of the evening was already spant; and stood a while looking back upon the water, which the Moon-beams play'd upon, and made it appear like floating quick-silver: at last they went up through a crowd of French people who were merrily dancing in the open air, and nothing concern'd for the noise of Guns which had allarm'd the Town that afternoon. Walking thence together to th Piazze they parted there; Eugenius and Lysideius to some pleasant appointment they had made, and Crites and Neander to their several Lodgings.

Summary

Essay of Dramatic Poesy by John Dryden was published in 1668. It was probably written during the plague year of 1666. Dryden takes up the subject that Philip Sidney had set forth in his Defence of Poesy (1580) and attempts to justify drama as a legalized form of "poetry" comparable to the epic.

The treatise is a dialogue between four speakers: Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius, and Neander. The four speakers represented Sir William Davenant [Dryden's "innovative" associate on their revision of The Tempest], Sir Robert Howard [playwright and Dryden's brother-in-law], the earl of Orrery [Roger Boyle, author of the first heroic play in rhymed couplets], and Dryden himself (neander means "new man" and implies that Dryden, as a respected member of the gentry class, is designated to join in this dialogue on an equal footing with the three older men who are his social superiors). On the day that the English fleet encounters the Dutch at sea near the mouth of the Thames, the four friends take a scow downriver towards the noise from the battle. Rightly concluding, as the noise subsides, that the English have triumphed, they order the bargeman to row them back upriver as they

begin a dialogue on the advances made by modern civilization. They agree to measure progress by comparing dweller arts with modern, focusing specifically on the art of drama (or "dramatic poesy"). The four men debate a series of three topics: (1) the relative merit of classical drama (upheld by Crites) vs. modern drama (championed by Eugenius); (2) whether French drama, as Lisideius maintains, is better than English drama (supported by Neander, who famously calls Shakespeare "the greatest soul, ancient or modern"); and (3) whether plays in rhyme are an improvement upon blank verse drama—a proposition that Neander, despite having guarded the Elizabethans, now advances against the skeptical Crites (who also switches from his original position and defends the blank verse tradition of Elizabethan drama). Invoking the so-called unities from Aristotle's Poetics (as interpreted by Italian and refined by French scholars over the last century), the four speakers discuss what makes a play "a just and lively imitation" of human nature in action. This definition of a play, supplied by Lisideius/Orrery (whose rhymed plays had dazzled the court and were a model for the new drama), gives the debaters a multifaceted and richly ambiguous touchstone. To Crites' argument that the plots of classical drama are more "just," Eugenius can quip that modern plots are more "lively" thanks to their variety. Lisideius shows that the French plots carefully preserve Aristotle's unities of action, place, and time; Neander replies that English dramatists like Ben Jonson also kept the unities when they wanted to, but that they preferred to develop character and motive. Even Neander's final argument with Crites over whether rhyme is suitable in drama depends on Aristotle's Poetics: Neander says that Aristotle demands a verbally artful ('lively") replica of nature, while Crites thinks that dramatic replica ceases to be "just" when it departs from ordinary speech—i.e., prose or blank verse. A year later, the two brothers-in-law quarreled publicly over this third topic. See Dryden's "Defense of An Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1669), where Dryden tries to coax the rather literal-minded Howard that audiences expect a play to be an replica of nature, not a substitute for nature itself

Purpose of Thinking

Primarily focusing on drama, the poetry of plays, Dryden ultimately wants to make a case for the achievements of the British in that respect. In somewhat "Platonic" method, he creates a dialogue between poet/critics of the day who have different viewpoints about the strengths and weaknesses of, and influences on, British poesy. The benefit of this is to mount an argument which takes a variety of positions into consideration. Rather than attempting to create a new set of "rules" for drama, comedy, or verse, he chooses instead to review the

existing, generally accepted conventions and decide in what respects they are being followed, or whether they should be followed by English writers. Further, through the use of the four-way dialogue, he is able to provide some insight on the prevailing notions of the day. It may be worth noting that the "characters" in this dialogue are associated for the purpose of argument with specific points of view: Crites praises the Greeks and Romans suggesting that they cannot be excelled; Eugenius recognizes their worth but suggests that they have indeed been exceeded and in many instances are not consistent in their Kabbalism to Aristotle's conventions; Lisideius suggests that the French are superior to the English; and Neander (ostensibly Dryden) counters that, based on their agreed definition of what "a play ought to be," the English are superior.

Question at Issue (problem)

What are the merits and demerits of English writing of the time? What are the influences for English writing? Can the English writing during that time be compared favourably or not to the writers of relic? Are French drama and verse superior to English? What is the value of the three unities? Are they consistently applied by the ancients? By the French? By the English? If not, why not? Should these conventions be an overriding consideration? What is, or is not, the value of rhyme in verrfte and drama? What is its place if any? What about the place of verse in drama?

Information/Interpretations/Concepts/Crucial Assumptions

The dialogue begins with Crites complaining .about two types of "bad" English poets: the first are the poets who "ceaseless pay us with constricting upon words and a certain clownish kind of raillery;" (bad metaphysicals?) and the second is he who " affects plainness to cover his want of imagination" (bad Puritans?) He goes on to suggest that no one writing can surpass the ancients or even the previous generation of English writers, to which Eugenius responds that he might be rejecting everything recent just because it is recent. The debate begins in earnest when the four decide that they will "limit their disputation" to a discussion of dramatic poesy and whether the "ancients were superior to the moderns," Additionally, they must decide on a definition of what a play should be. Lisideius offers the agreed upon terms:

Just and lively image of human nature, representing its passions and humours, and the changes of fortune to which it is subject, for the enchant and instruction of mankind

Crites develops the main points in defending the dwellers and the objections to modern plays. The moderns are still imitating the ancients and using their forms and subjects, confide on Aristotle and Horace, adding nothing new and yet not following their good advice closely enough, especially with respect to the unities of time, place and action. While the unity of time suggests that all the action should be portrayed within a single day, English plays attempt to use long periods of time, sometimes years. In terms of place, the setting should be the same from beginning to end with the scenes marked by the ingresses and exits of the persons having business within each. The English, on the other hand,' try to have all kinds of places, even far off countries, shown within a single play. The third unity that of action requires that the play "aim at one great and complete action", but the English have all kinds of sub-plots which destroy the unity of the action. In foresee the objection that the dwellers language is not as vital as the moderns, Crites says that we have to remember that we are probably missing a lot of innuendo because the languages are dead and the customs far removed from this time. Crites uses Ben Jonson (Father Ben) as the example of the best in English drama, saying that he followed the ancients "in all things" and offered nothing really new in terms of "serious thoughts".

Eugenius responds that though "the moderns have profited by the rules of the dwellers" they have "excelled them." He points first to some disparity in the applications of the unities, mentioning that there seem to be four parts in Aristotle's method: the entrance, the accentuating of the plot, the counter-turn, and the holocaust. But he points out that somewhere along the line, and by way of Horace, plays developed five acts (the Spanish only 3). As far as the action. Eugenius contends that they are transparent, everybody already knows what will happen; that the Romans borrowed from the Greeks; and that the gimmick convention is a weak escape. As far as the unity of place, he suggests that the ancients weren't the ones to insist on it so much as the French, and that that dictate has caused some artificial entrances arid exits of characters. The unity of time is often ignored in both. As to the liveliness of language, Eugenius counters Crites by suggesting that even if we don't know all the contexts, good writing is always good, wit is always perceptible, if done well. He goes on to say also that while the ancients portrayed many emotions and action, they neglected love, "which is the most frequent of all passions" and known to everyone. He mentions Shakespeare and Fletcher as offering "excellent scenes of passion."

Lisideius' discussion of the French follows. He declares them the best of all Europe because of their adherence to the unities, and the most important point here is that they maintain the unity of action by not

adding confusing sub-plots. Here he begins the discussion of the English tragi-comedy, which he calls "absurd". He commends the French as well for basing their tragedies on "some known history," that in this way fiction is combined with reality so that some truth can be divulged. He compares Shakespeare's history plays, saying that "they are rather so many annals of kings", years of history packed into a 2 1/2 hour play so that the point is lost. He reports that the French do several things much better than the English. First, they keep the plot to one action which they then develop fully where the English add all kinds of actions that don't always follow from the main one. The French also focus on one main character and all the characters have some connection with him and have a purpose that advances the plot. Additionally, the French use narration (reporting by the characters) to describe things that happen, like battles and deaths, that Lisideius says are hilarious when shown on stage. "The representation" of incidents that cannot be portrayed as realistic, possible, or believable anyway, are better excluded. This goes, I think, to the issue of decency since he says "some parts of the action are more fit to be represented, some to be related." Further, he says the French never end their plays with "conversions" or "changes of will" without setting up the proper justification for it. The English, by contrast, show their characters having changes of heart that are over-reactions to circumstances and therefore not believable. Also, in the French plays, the characters never come in or leave a scene without the proper justifications being supplied. Finally, he accompaniments the "beauty of their rhyme" suggesting that it would help English poetry, though he doesn't think there's anyone capable of doing it properly.

Neander has the last word, suggesting that based on the definition of a play, the English are best at "the lively replica of nature" (human nature), conceding that while French poesy is beautiful, it is beautiful like a "statue". He even says that the newer French writers are emulating the English. One fault he finds in their plots is that the regularity, which has been complimented as uncluttered, also makes the plays too much alike. He defends ithe English invention of tragi-farce by suggesting that the use of mirth with devastation provides "contraries" that "set each other off and give the audience relief from the heaviness of straight davastation. He suggests that the use of sub-plots, if they are well-ordered, make the plays interesting and help the main action. Further, he suggests that English plays are more entertaining and instructive because they offer an element of surprise that the ancients and the.French do not. As far as decency, things the French choose not to portray pn-stage, he brings up the idea of the suspension of disbelief. The audience knows that none of it is real, why should they think scenes of death or battles

any less "real" than the rest? I think here he credits the English audience with a certain strength in suggesting that they want their battles and "other objects of horror". Ultimately, in discussing the English habit of breaking the rules, he suggests that it maybe there are simply too many rules and often that following them creates more ridiculousness than they prevent.

In the last of the essay, a discussion of the proper use of rhyme and verse emanates, mostly between Crites, who wants to abolish the use of rhyme, which he sees as sounding artificial, and Neander, who says if you want to abolish rhyme on that basis, why not verse on the same grounds. Neander suggests that comedy should not be rhymed but that the heroic devastation should be. To Crites[1] charge that it is too much invention, Neander says that if a writer must choose every word, that is artificial. If properly done, the additional artifices of verse and rhyme are no less contrived, but can add to the effect of the play.

Implications/Consequences/Points of View

That Dryden concerns himself with the influence of the French is no surprise. Charles II, installed as King after the fall of the commonwealth under Cromwell, returned from exile in France, and court society during his reign adopted much of French fashion and taste. Corneille, especially in his heroic tragedies, was a favorite, and in this genre, Dryden would never surpass him. His concerns expressed in the essay about the Roman and Greek influences naturally follow because of Corneille's adherence, and that of the French writers in general, to the conventions of unity and considerations of decorum. Dryden's strength in writing for the stage would be in the satires which reflected the changing social milieu. As far as discussion of the influences in English plays, he focuses on Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, the Homer and Virgil of English play-writing, respectively. Shakespeare he admits can be inconsistent, sometimes flat and bombastic, yet Dryden says he had "the largest and most comprehensive soul." Jonson, on the other hand, he calls the "most learned and prudent writer which any theatre ever had." Jonson could use all the conventions as well as the ancients of the French. Dryden, commenting on the two together notes that he "admires" Jonson but he "loves" Shakespeare.

But for the British loyal to the king, and Dryden was, the refurbishment was also time of renewed nationalism, and Dryden seems, at least in this essay, to be interested in defending British sensibilities. Dryden was also very concerned in his art with the events of the day. Even this piece of criticism begins at the moment of the second British victory over the Dutch. Some of Dryden's best works are

his later ones, particularly Absolom and Achitophel prompted by the Popish plot, and are inspired by specific political and social issues of the day. In that respect, as well as stylistically in the use of heroic couplet, they contrast works of broader scope such as Paradise Lost published in 1666 by John Milton, who Dryden would compare to Homer and Virgil in his 1688 "Epigram on Milton." (By contrast to Dryden, Milton seems clearly from a different era). Dryden's real strengths were translations, the later satires, and the stiffen of a base for continuing British criticism.

Although Dryden was Poet Laureate during the reigns of Charles II and James, he was relieved of the honour with the ascension of William and Mary, remained loyal to James, and converted to Catholicism. His (1700) "Secular Masque", written for the turn of the century, registers a disenchantment with the entire age. It is interesting, in light of what he

• DR. JOHNSON: LIVES OF POETS

Johnson's Prefaces, Biographical and Critical, to the Works of the English Poets (familiarly known as the Lives of the Poets, but pay attention to the actual title), originally appeared between 1779 and 1781 in the format their title suggests: as preliminary material to a large collection of the works of around fifty poets. They were first collected together in 1781.

Most of the Lives can be divided into three sections: a biography (usually collected from other sources; Johnson did little original research); a brief "character"; and a critical section, in which Johnson considers all of the major works of the author in question. These critical sections provide some of Johnson's most extended literary criticism.

Although most of the Lives were written especially for the collection, Johnson's Life of Savage had originally been published in 1744. Johnson knew Savage well in the years after he arrived in London, and that intimacy contributes to the great difference in tone between Savage and the other lives (to say nothing, of course, of the decades that separate their writing).

With over fifty poets (all men, incidentally) drawn from the years between the Restoration and the 1770s (no living poets were included), some of the figures are pretty minor: Yalden and Pomfret, for instance. Note, though, that Johnson chose only a few of the poets to be included; most of the editorial decisions were made by the booksellers who organized the edition.

Apart from Savage, the Lives that have received the most attention tend to be those of the most important poets: Cowley (Johnson's Life of Cowley helped to popularize the term "metaphysical poetry"), Milton (Johnson attacked his politics as those of "a surly and acrimonious republican" and had scathing things to say about Lycidas — "easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting" — but he recognized the greatness of Paradise Lost), Dryden, Addison, and Pope. The Life of Swift, one of the weaker Lives, gets comparatively little commentary in spite of its famous subject.

Summary

Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets (1779-81) was a work by Samuel Johnson, comprising short biographies and critical evaluations of 52 poets, most of whom lived during the eighteenth century. It is arranged, approximately, by date of death.

Six of the Lives have been singled out as the most "important": John Milton, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Joseph Addison, Jonathan Swift, and Thomas Gray. One of the lives, Richard Savage, was previously printed as Life of Mr Richard Savage in 1744.

Background

Johnson began writing his "lives", or individual biographical pieces, in 1740. His first "lives" were of Jean-Philippe Barker, Robert Blake, and Francis Drake. In 1744, he wrote'his first serious "life", the Life of Mr Richard Savage, in honour of his friend, Richard Savage. Between 1737 and 1739, Johnson became close to Savage. In 1743, Savage found himself in debtors' prison and stayed there until his death shortly after. A year later, Johnson wrote Life of Savage (1744), a "moving" work that, according to Walter Jackson Bate, "remains one of the inventive works in the history of biography".

In 1773, publishers in Edinburgh started producing editions of the collected works of various English poets. In order to compete with this project, Johnson was asked by Tom Davies, William Strahan and Thomas Cadell to create this final major work, the Lives of the English Poets. He began this project and, on 3 May 1777, he wrote to James Boswell that he was busy preparing a "little Lives" and "little Prefaces, to a little edition of the English Poets". Johnson asked for 200 guineas, an amount significantly lower than the price he could have demanded. Johnson wrote many biographies over the next few years and reproduced his Life of Savage for the collection.

The original work was, however, supposed to comprise the first ten volumes of a sixty-volume work. Johnson's volumes were originally titled Prefaces, Biographical and Critical to the Works of the English Poets. After volumes I-IV were published in 1779 and V-X in 1781, the publishers decided to reprint them as The Lives of the English Poets, or Lives of the Poets, and sell them as an independent work. These were finished in March 1781 and the new collection was published in six volumes.

The Lives, which were critical as well as biographical studies, appeared as prefaces to selections of each poet's work, and they were quite larger than originally expected. As Johnson justified in the advertisement for the work, "my purpose was only to have allotted to every Poet an Advertisement, like those which we find in the French Miscellanies, containing a few dates and a general character." However, he did not limit himself to a dry series of dates and biography, but created a series of Lives with, according to his 1783 edition Preface, "the honest intention of giving pleasure".

Introduction

Samuel Johnson, born at Lichfield in the year 1709, on the 7th of September Old Style, 18th New Style, was sixty-eight years old when he agreed with the booksellers to write his "Lives of the English Poets". "I am engaged", he said, "to write little Lives, and little Prefaces, to a little edition of the English Poets." His compunction was also a little hurt by the fact that the haggle was made on Easter Eve. In 1777 his missive, set down among prayers and meditations, was "29 March, Easter Eve, I treated with booksellers on a bargain, but the time was not long."

The history of the book as told to Boswell by Edward Dilly, one of the contracting booksellers, was this. An edition of Poets printed by the Martins in Edinburgh, and sold by Bell in London, was regarded by the London publishers as an intrusion with the honorary copyright which booksellers then respected among themselves. They said also that it was clumsily printed and its type was small. A few booksellers agreed, therefore, among themselves to call a meeting of possessor of honorary or actual copyright in the various Poets. In Poets who had died before 1660 they had no trade interest at all. About forty of the most respectable booksellers in London accepted the invitation to this meeting. They determined to proceed immediately with an graceful and uniform edition of Poets in whose works they were interested, and they deputed three of their number, William Strahan, Thomas Davies, and

Cadell, to wait on Johnson, asking him to write the series of preliminary Lives, and name his own terms. Johnson agreed at once, and suggested as his price two hundred guineas, when, as Malone says, the booksellers would readily have given him a thousand. He then envisage only "little Lives". His energetic pleasure in the work expanded his Preface beyond the limits of the first design; but when it was observed to Johnson that he was underpaid by the booksellers, his reply was, "No, sir; it was not that they gave me too little, but that I gave them too much." He gave them, in fact, his masterpiece. His keen interest in Literature as the soul of life, his sympathetic insight into human nature, enabled him to put all that was best in himself into these studies of the lives of men for whom he cared, and of the books that he was glad to speak his mind about in his own astute independent way. Boswell was somewhat disappointed at finding that the selection of the Poets in this series would not be Johnson's, but that he was to furnish a Preface and Life to any Poet the booksellers pleased. "I asked him", writes Boswell, "if he would do this to any dunce's works, if they should ask him. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; and say he was a dunce."

The meeting of booksellers, happy in the support of Johnson's intellectual power, appointed also a committee to engage the best engravers, and another committee to give directions about paper and printing. They made out at once a list of the Poets they meant to give, "many of which", said Dilly, "are within the time of the Act of Queen Anne, which Martin and Bell cannot give, as they have no property in them. The proprietors are almost all the booksellers in London, of consequence".

In 1780 the booksellers published, in separate form, four volumes of Johnson's "Prefaces, Biographical and Critical, to the most Renowned of the English Poets." The completion followed in 1781. "Sometime in March", Johnson writes in that year, "I finished the Lives of the Poets". The series of books to which they actually served as preambles extended to sixty volumes. When his work was done, Johnson then being in his seventy-second year, the booksellers added £100 to the price first asked. Johnson's own life was then near its close. He died on the 13th of December, 1784, aged seventy-five.

Of the Lives in this collection, Johnson himself liked best his Life of Cowley, for the thoroughness with which he had examined in it the style of what he called the metaphysical Poets. In his Life of Milton, the sense of Milton's genius is not less evident than the difference in point of view which made it difficult for Johnson to know Milton

thoroughly. They know each other now. For Johnson sought as steadily as Milton to do all as "in his great Taskmaster's eye".

• SUMMARY

Dryden achieved in his poetry was not the emotional excitement we find in the Romantic poets of the early nineteenth century, nor the intellectual convolution of the metaphysical poets. His subject-matter was often factual, and he aimed at expressing his thoughts in the most precise and concentrated way possible. Although he uses formal poetic structures such as heroic stanzas and heroic couplets, he tried to achieve the rhythms of speech. However, he knew that different subjects need different kinds of verse, and in his preface to Religio Laid he wrote: "...the expressions of a poem designed purely for instruction ought to be plain and natural, yet majestic...The rudders, elevated and allegorial way is for the passions; for (these) are begotten in the soul by showing the objects out of their true proportion....A man is to be cheated into passion, but to be reasoned into truth."

Johnson's works, especially his Lives of the Poets series, describe various features of excellent writing. He believed that the best poetry relied on compeer language, and he disliked the use of decorative or purposefully archaic language. In particular, he was suspicious of the poetic language used by Milton, whose blank verse he believed would inspire many bad replicas. Also, Johnson opposed the poetic language of his contemporary Thomas Gray. His greatest complaint was that abstruse clues found in works like Milton's Lycidas were overused; he preferred poetry that could be easily read and understood. In addition to his views on language, Johnson believed that a good poem incorporated new and unique imagery.

• KEY WORDS

1. Drama : Drama is the specific mode of fiction represented in performance.
2. Essay : An essay is a short piece of writing which is often written from an author's personal point of view.
3. Poet : A poet is a person who writes poetry whereas poetess is a woman.
4. Dr. Johnson : Dr Johnson was an English author who made lasting contributions to English literature as a poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer.
5. John .Dryden : John Dryden was an influential English poet, literary critic, translator, and playwright who dominated the literary life of Restoration England.

• REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on Dryden's, "Essay on Dramatic Poesy".
2. Describe the merits and demerits of English writing, according to Dryden in his essay.
3. State the consequences, implications handled by Dryden in his essay.
4. Examine the "Lives of Poets" by Dr. Johnson.
5. Explain the lives of important six poets in "Lives of Poets".
6. Write a note on Essay on Dramatic Poesy.
7. Mention the characters involved in the essay of Dryden.
8. Write a note on Johnson's "Lives of Poets".
9. Who are six authors considered as important in the "Lives of Poets"?
10. Write a biographical note on Dr. Johnson.

• SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Lives of Poet: A Selection—Samuel Johnson
2. The Lives of Poets: Johnson's Essay on Man—William Paul Me Carthy
3. An Essay on Dramatic Poesy— John Dryden
4. Of Dramatic Poesy: An Essay—John Dryden

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3

MODERN CRITICISM

STRUCTURE

• LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to :

- Describe the T.S. Eliot : Tradition & Individual talent
- Examine the LA. Richards : Principles of Literary Criticism (Chapter lst-7th).

• INTRODUCTION

In 1957 Northrop Frye published the authoritative Anatomy of Criticism. In his works Frye noted that some critics tend to cuddle an ideology, and to judge literary pieces on the basis of their kabbalisn to such ideology. This has been a highly authoritative viewpoint among modern conservative thinkers. E. Michael Jones in Degenerate Moderns argues that Stanley Fish was influenced by his illicit affairs to reject classic literature that precarious infidelity.

In the British and American literary establishment, the New Criticism was more or less dominant until the late 1960s. Around that time Anglo-American university literature departments began to witness a rise of a more notably philosophical literary theory, influenced by anthropology, then post-anthropology, and other kinds of Continental philosophy. It continued until the mid-1980s, when interest in "theory" peaked. Many later critics, though undoubtedly still depicting by theoretical work, have been comfortable simply interpreting literature rather than writing explicitly about methodology and philosophical suppositions.

Thomas Stearns Eliot OM (September 26, 1888-January 4, 1965) was an American-born English poet, playwright, and literary critic, plausibly the most important English-language poet of the 20th century. The poem that made his name, The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock—started in 1910 and published in Chicago in 1915—is regarded as a masterpiece of the modernist movement. He followed this with what have become some of the best-known poems in the English language, including Gerontion (1920), The Waste Land (1922), The Hollow Men (1925), Ash Wednesday (1930), and Four Quartets (1945). He is also known for his seven plays, particularly Murder in the Cathedral (1935). He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948.

Ivor Armstrong Richards (26 February 1893 in Sandbach, Cheshire-7 September 1979 in Cambridge) was an influential English literary critic and rhetorician. He was educated at Magdalene College, Cambridge where his love of English was nurtured by the scholar 'Cabby' Spence. His books, especially The Meaning of Meaning, Principles of Literary Criticism, Practical Criticism, and The Philosophy of Rhetoric, proved to be founding influences for the New Criticism. The concept of' practical criticism' led in time to the practices of close reading, what is often thought of as the beginning of modern literary criticism. Richards is considered one of the founders of the contemporary study of literature in English.

• T.S. ELIOT : TRADITION & INDIVIDUAL TALENT

TEXT–I

In English writing we infrequently speak of tradition, though we occasionally apply its name in bemoaning its absence. We cannot refer to "the tradition" or to "a tradition"; at most, we employ the adjective in saying that the poetry of So-and-so is "traditional" or even "too traditional". Infrequently, perhaps, does the word appear except in a phrase of censure. If otherwise, it is imprecisely commendatory, with the implication, as to the work approved, of some pleasing archaeological reconstruction. You can hardly make the word agreeable to English ears without this comfortable reference to the reassuring science of archaeology.

Certainly the word is not likely to appear in our appreciations of living or dead writers. Every nation, every race, has not only its own creative, but its own critical turn of mind; and is even more oblivious of the shortcomings and limitations of its critical habits than of those of its creative genius. We know, or think we know, from the expansive

mass of critical writing that has appeared in the French language the critical method or habit of the French; we only terminate (we are such unconscious people) that the French are "more critical" than we, and sometimes even plume ourselves a little with the fact, as if the French were the less impromptu. Perhaps they are; but we might remind ourselves that criticism is as inevitable as breathing, and that we should be none the worse for articulating what passes in our minds when we read a book and feel an emotion about it, for criticizing our own minds in their work of criticism. One of the facts that might come to light in this process is our propensity to insist, when we praise a poet, upon those aspects of his work in which he least resembles anyone else. In these aspects or parts of his work we pretend to find what is individual, what is the distinctive essence of the man. We dwell with satisfaction upon the poet's difference from his predecessors, especially his immediate predecessors; we strive to find something that can be isolated in order to be enjoyed. Whereas if we approach a poet without this bias we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously. And I do not mean the impressionable period of adolescence, but the period of full maturity.

Yet if the only form of tradition, of handing down, consisted in following the ways of the immediate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its successes, "tradition" should positively be discouraged. We have seen many such simple currents soon lost in the sand; and novelty is better than repetition. Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be connate, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour, It involves, in the first place, the historical, sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year; and the historical sense involves a clairvoyance, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Plomer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a concurrent existence and composes a concurrent order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of hia coetaneous.

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism. The necessity that he shall conform, that he shall cohere, is not one-sided; what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens congruently to all the works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the occurrent of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is acquiescence between the old and the new. Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature, will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past. And the poet who is aware of this will be aware of great difficulties and responsibilities.

In a distinctive sense he will be aware also that he must inevitably be judged by the standards of the past. I say judged, not truncate, by them; not judged to be as good as, or worse or better than, the dead; and certainly not judged by the canons of dead critics. It is a judgment, a comparison, in which two things are measured by each other. To accommodate merely would be for the new work not really to accommodate at all; it would not be new, and would therefore not be a work of art. And we do not quite say that the new is more valuable because it fits in; but its fitting in is a test of its value— a test, it is true, which can only be slowly and cautiously applied, for we are none of us flawless judges of conformity. We say: it appears to conform, and is perhaps individual, or it appears individual, and may accommodate; but we are hardly likely to find that it is one and not the other.

To proceed to a more intelligible explication of the relation of the poet to the past: he can neither take the past as a lump, an uncritical bolus, nor can he form himself wholly on one or two private admirations, nor can he form himself wholly upon one preferred period. The first course is inadmissible, the second is an important experience of youth, and the third is a pleasant and highly desirable addendum. The poet must be very conscious of the main current, which does not at all flow invariably through the most distinguished notorieties. He must be quite aware of the obvious fact that art never improves, but that the material of art is never quite the same. He must be aware that

the mind of Europe—the mind of his own country—a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own private mind—is a mind which changes, and that this change is a development which casts aside nothing en route, which does not obsolete either Shakespeare, or Homer, or the rock drawing of the Magdalenian draughtsmen. That this development, refinement perhaps, complication certainly, is not, from the point of view of the artist, any improvement. Perhaps not even an improvement from the point of view of the psychologist or not to the extent which we imagine; perhaps only in the end based upon a complication in economics and machinery. But the difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself cannot show.

Some one said: "The dead writers are remote from us because we know so much more than they did." Precisely, and they are that which we know.

I am alive to a usual objection to what is clearly part of my programme for the profession of poetry. The objection is that the doctrine requires a hilarious amount of erudition (pedantry), a claim which can be rejected by appeal to the lives of poets in any pantheon. It will even be assert that much learning deadens or perverts poetic sensibility. While, however, we persist in believing that a poet ought to know as mucV as will not encroach upon his necessary receptivity and necessary laziness, it is not desirable to confine knowledge to whatever can be put into a useful shape for examinations, drawing-rooms, or the still more pretentious modes of publicity. Some can absorb knowledge, the more tardy must sweat for it. Shakespeare obtained more essential history from Plutarch than most men could from the whole British Museum. What is to be insisted upon is that the poet must develop or procure the consciousness of the past and that he should continue to develop this consciousness throughout his career.

What happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extermination of personality.

There remains to define this process of reification and its relation to the sense of tradition. It is in this reification that art may be said to approach the condition of science. I shall, therefore, invite you to consider, as a suggestive analogy, the action which takes place when a bit of finely filiated platinum is introduced into a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide.

TEXT–II

Honest criticism and sensitive appreciation is directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry. If we attend to the confused cries of the newspaper critics and the susurrus of popular repetition that follows, we shall hear the names of poets in great numbers; if we seek not Blue-book knowledge but the enjoyment of poetry, and ask for a poem, we shall infrequently find it. In the last article I tried to point out the importance of the relation of the poem to other poems by other authors, and suggested the conception of poetry as a living whole of all the poetry that has ever been written. The other aspect of this Impersonal theory of poetry is the relation of the poem to its author. And I hinted, by an analogy, that the mind of the mature poet differs from that of the immature one not precisely in any valuation of "personality", not being necessarily more interesting, or having "more to say", but rather by being a more finely perfected 'medium in which special, or very varied, feelings are at liberty to enter into new combinations.

The analogy was that of the catalyst. When the two gases previously mentioned are mixed in the presence of a filament of platinum, they form sulphurous acid. This combination takes place only if the platinum is present; nevertheless the newly formed acid contains no trace of platinum, and the platinum itself is apparently unaffected; has remained inert, neutral and unchanged. The mind of the poet is the smidgen of platinum. It may partly or exclusively operate upon the experience of the man himself; but, the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates; the more perfectly will the mind digest and transubstantiate the passions which are its material.

The experience, you will notice, the elements which enter the presence of the transforming catalyst, are of two kinds: emotions and feelings. The effect of a work of art upon the person who enjoys it is an experience different in kind from any experience not of art. It may be formed out of one emotion, or may be a combination of several; and various feelings, congenital for the writer in particular words or phrases or images, may be added to compose the final result. Or great poetry may be made without the direct use of any emotion whatever: composed out of feelings solely. Canto XV of the Inferno (Brunetto Latini) is a working up of the emotion apparent in the situation; but the effect, though single as that of any work of art, is obtained by considerable convolution of detail. The last quatrain gives an image, a feeling attaching to an image, which "came", which did not develop simply out of what precedes, but which was probably in suspension in the poet's mind until the proper combination arrived for it to add itself to. The poet's mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until

all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together.

If you compare several representative passages of the greatest poetry you see how great is the variety of types of combination, and also how completely any semi-ethical criterion of "sublimity" misses the mark. For it is not the "greatness," the potency, of the emotions, the components, but the potency of the artistic process, the pressure, so to speak, under which the fusion takes place, that counts. The episode of Paolo and Francesca employs a definite emotion, but the potency of the poetry is something quite different from whatever intensity in the supposed experience it may give the impression of. It is no more intense, furthermore, than Canto XXVI, the voyage of Ulysses, which has not the direct dependence upon an emotion. Great variety is possible in the process of transmution of emotion: the murder of Agamemnon, or the agony of Othello, gives an artistic effect apparently closer to a possible original than the scenes from Dante. In the Agamemnon, the artistic emotion approximates to the emotion of an actual spectator; in Othello to the emotion of the protagonist himself. But the difference between art and the event is always absolute; the combination which is the murder of Agamemnon is probably as complex as that which is the voyage of Ulysses. In either case there has been a fusion of elements. The ode of Keats contains a number of feelings which have nothing particular to do with the nightingale, but which the nightingale, partly, perhaps, because of its attractive name, and partly because of its reputation, served to bring together.

The, point of view which I am struggling to attack is perhaps related to the metaphysical theory of the hefty unity of the soul: for my meaning is, that the poet has, not a "personality" to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in distinctive and unexpected ways. Impressions and experiences which are important for the man may take no place in the poetry, and those which become important in the poetry may play quite a negligible part in the man, the personality.

I will quote a passage which is unfamiliar enough to be regarded with fresh attention in the light—or darkness—of these observations:

And now methinks I could e'en chastise myself

For doating on her beauty, though her death

Shall be revenged after no common action."

Does the silkworm expend her yellow labours For thee? For thee does she undo herself? Are lordships sold to maintain ladyships For the poor benefit of a Perplexing minute? Why does yon fellow forge highways, And put his life between the judge's lips, To refine such a thing—keeps horse and men To beat their fearlessness for her?...

In this passage .(as is evident if it is taken in its context) there is a combination of positive and negative emotions: an intensely strong attraction toward beauty and an equally intense fascination by the ugliness which is contrasted with it and which destroys it. This balance of contrasted emotion is in the dramatic situation to which the speech is admissible, but that situation alone is scanty to it. This is, so to speak, the structural emotion, provided by the drama. But the whole effect, the dominant tone, is due to the fact that a number of floating feelings, having an affinity to this emotion by no means superficially evident, have combined with it to give us a new art emotion.

It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting. His particular emotions may be simple, or crude, or flat. The emotion in his poetry will be a very complex thing, but not with the complexity of the emotions of people who have very complex or unusual emotions in life. One error, in fact, of peculiarity in poetry is to seek for new human emotions to express; and in this search for novelty in the wrong place it discovers the contradictory. The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them up into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all. And emotions which he has never experienced will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him. Consequently, we must believe that "emotion recollected in serenity" is an inexact formula. For it is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor, without distortion of meaning, serenity. It is a concentration, and a new thing resulting from the concentration, of a very great number of experiences which to the practical and active person would not seem to be experiences at. all; it is a concentration which does not happen consciously or of contemplation. These experiences are not "recollected", and they finally unite in an atmosphere which is "tranquil" only in that it is a passive attending upon the event. Of course this is not quite the whole story. There is a great deal, in the writing of poetry, which must be conscious and deliberate. In fact, the bad poet is usually unconscious where he ought to be conscious, and conscious where he ought to be unconscious. Both errors tend to make him "personal". Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape

from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things.

III

This essay proposes to halt at the verge of metaphysics or mysticism, and confine itself to such practical conclusions as can be applied by the responsible person interested in poetry. To reroute interest from the poet to the poetry is a meritorious aim: for it would partake to a juster estimation of actual poetry, good and bad. There are many people who appreciate the expression of sincere emotion in verse, and there is a smaller number of people who can appreciate technical excellence. But very few know when there is expression of significant emotion, emotion which has its life in the poem and not in the history of the poet. The emotion of art is impersonal. And the poet cannot reach this dispassionate without relinquishing himself wholly to the work to be done. And he is not likely to know what is to be done unless he lives in what is not merely the present, but the present moment of the past, unless he is conscious, not of what is dead, but of what is already living.

Summary

"Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919) is an essay written by poet and bookish theorist T. S. Eliot. The essay was first published, in two parts, in The Biggety (1919) and later in Eliot's first book of criticism, "The Sacred Wood" (1920). The essay is also available in Eliot's "Selected Prose" and "Selected Essays".

While Eliot is most often known for his poetry, he also contributed to the field of bookish theory. In this dual role, he acted as poet-critic, comparable to Sir Philip Sidney and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is one of the more well known works that Eliot produced in his critic capacity. It enunciates Eliot's cogent conception of the relationship between the poet and the literary tradition which precedes him.

Content of the Essay

Eliot presents his stereotype of tradition and the definition of the poet and poetry in relation to it. He wishes to correct for the fact that, as he discernment it, "in English writing we infrequently speak of tradition, though we occasionally apply its name in dolorous its absence." Eliot premise that, though the English tradition generally upholds the belief that art progresses through change—a separation from tradition, literary advancements are instead recognized only

when they accommodate to the tradition. Eliot, a classicist, felt that the true incorporation of tradition into literature was unrecognized, that tradition, a word that "infrequently... appear[s] except in a phrase of denunciation", was actually a thus-far unrealized element of literary criticism.

For Eliot, the term "tradition" is imbued with a special and complex character. It represents a "concurrent order", by which Eliot means a historical timelessness-a fusion of past and present—and, at the same time, a sense of present transience. A poet must integrate "the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer", while, concurrently, expressing his contemporary environment. Eliot challenges our common perception that a poet's greatness and individuality lies in his departure from his theory of "anxiety of influence") conjures the "strong poet" to engage in a much more assertive and convulsive insurgence against tradition.

In 1964, his last year, Eliot published in a reprint of The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, a series of lectures he gave at Harvard University in 1932 and 1933, a new preface in which he called "Tradition and the Individual Talent" the most youngish of his essays (although he also indicated that he did not repudiate it).

"Tradition and the Individual Talent" was first published in The Egoist, VI 4 (September - October 1919) and VI 5 (November - December, 1919) and reprinted in The Sacred Wood (1928) and Selected Essays (1932). In the preface to "For Launcelot Andrews (1928) he declared himself'an Anglo-Catholic in religion, a Classicist in Literature and a royalist in polities'.

An Unofficial Manifesto

"An Eliot essay is a statement of an attitude" says George Watson, "and Eliot hardly ever deigns to purvey information, the most prudent of major English critics, he has practised eluding and reticened with determined skill". "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is not the kind of essay that invites discussion, its tone is dryly doctrinaire, and Eliot's aversion for debate and free speech is firmly suggested in the flatulent properties of the essay. It is evidently an unofficial dictum of Eliot's criticism, or an account of the principles the young critic planned to bring to bear upon English poetry. In the Introduction, the editors, Enright and Chickera, say "Sometimes -T.S.Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is an instance the critic may present the reader with generalization or theory but we think it will be agreed that Eliot's most important critical work, the part most likely to be of permanent interest,

consists in his handling of particular pieces of literature, and it is from these essays, notably those on Marvell, Massinger, and the Metaphysical Poets, we derive our clearest stereotype of his standards".

Tradition and Critical Labour

In English writing one infrequently comes across the word 'tradition' though the adjective 'traditional' is used. Even this, more often than not, is used demeaning. The poetry of so-and-so is 'traditional' or even 'too traditional'. This seems true of all creative arts with the possible exception of archeology. The word is not likely to appear in our appreciations of living or dead writers. When we praise a poet our propensity is to insist upon those aspects of his work in which he least resembles anyone else. We abide with satisfaction upon the poet's difference from his predecessors. If we approach a poet without this partisanship, we shall often find their presence. In other words, what is best in a poet is derived from the past writers. Every nation, every race, has not only its own creative but its own critical turn of mind. However tradition cannot be heritable. Tradition is a matter of much wider significance than a blind or timid adhesion to the artistic successors of the past. It is not a matter of mere repetition. If that were the only form of handling down, such a tradition should be discouraged and novelty would be better than such repetition. But tradition rightly understood can be adsctitious only by great labour.

European Mind

The European mind is more important than the poet's private mind. It is a mind "which changes, develops and neglects nothing enroute which does not antiquate either Shakespeare or Homer". The poet must be true. Literature is constantly developing and no poet can escape the effects of the Romantics to whom, uninhibitedness was an article-of faith.

That any poet, any artist is indebted to the past is a supposition that may be confessed. Man is the heir of the ages. These views are in the nature of scientific hypotheses. They are not the creations of the critic-poet but principles of investigation. They may and' do help the reader to pierce without confusion verses which were hitherto considered obscure. It is with historical sense that Eliot swamp or Galileo reclaimed the stellar universe".

The Pattern of Conformity

The exisiting literature has an order. What happens when a new work of art is created? For instance, The Waste Land, every new

addition disturbs the whole. Does this new work accommodate to the old? "To accommodate (to the old pattern) merely would be for the new work, not really to accommodate at all; it would not be new and would therefore not be a work of it". It should accommodate to the old pattern and also should be new. In judging a poem or a work of art, "Eliot evades close analysis, in favour of general judgements. His taste and technique were formed decade before the New Criticism of the Thirties and he never practises the close analysis's characteristic of that school". He claims to be classicist in criticism "though his classicism is not classicism enough".

Reference to the Pattern

Talking of the past and its relationship to the present Eliot alleges that the poet cannot take the past as a lump or bolus. He cannot form for himself once on two private admirations. He must be very apprehensive of the main current, and same. In a manner of speaking, Eliot says, not only is the present directed by the past, but the past has to be altered by the present. This is only an commiserative way stating that present poetry owes great deal to the life and literature of bygone centuries. Eliot himself owed so much to the Metaphysicals like Donne and Marvel and the French Symbolists. While that is the relevance of the past to practitioner of the poetic craft, so far as the critics of today are concerned, for cannons of criticism of the past are no longer valid. The critic cannot and should not judge works of art of literature by the antiquated standards of the dead poets as critics.

The literature of the past has a pattern. When a new poem is brought in to existence, it should fit into this pattern. It should not be a square notch in a round hole. The fitting into the pattern is the test of its value. The reference to the pattern is intelligible. Eliot elsewhere spoke of seeing a pattern in the carpet while reading and re-reading and reflecting on the entire output of the play of Shakespeare.

A Continuing Tradition

However, Eliot's sense of the past is intensely expressed not only here in prose but with adept effects in his verse as in The Four Quartes. The past is not object of wistful reappraisal. It is rather a continuing tradition, as much involved in the present and indeed present in it, as the present is in the future. It is to this past has brought about an aesthetic reevaluation of the past writers like Donne in a new light. "It is an important and illuminating contribution to the history of criticism." In other words, criticism so far had not been very concerned with mortgage of the part of the continuing literary tradition. The poetry of

Donne with its complicatedness is "the fullest record in our literature of the disintegrating collision in a sensitive mind of the old tradition and the new learning". The merits, the qualities and the beauty have been pointed out often enough but the honour of finding a proper place for the 17th century metaphysical poetry in the literary tradition should go to Eliot.

Impersonal Art

Far more important than Eliot's crapshoot on what constitutes tradition how to accommodate to it, is his theory of the dispassionate of art. His sense of tradition, his historical sense, his idea of the past and above all, his empiricism led him to the impersonality concept. Eliot actually borrowed the idea from the French critic, Reme de Gourment. "The Poet has not a personality to express but a particular medium which is only a medium and not a personality." Impressions and experience combine in distinctive and unexpected ways in this medium. Impressions and experiences, which are important for the man, may find no place in his poetry. Those, which cultivate importance in his poetry, may conceit play quite a negligible part in the man. It is imperative to separate the mind that creates and the man who suffers. Eliot's insistence on a continuing tradition and shifting the focus on the poem instead of the poet is agonistically anti-Romantic. This attitude discounts inspiration and personal emotion. "In spite of some wavering and confusions, encouraged by an occasional use of affective terminology, Eliot stands by his bold avouchment that a poem is a fusion of thoughts and feelings."

Extinction of Personality

The poet and the poem are two different things. "The feeling, the emotion, and the vision, resulting from the poem are something different from the feeling, the emotion, and the vision of the poet. If we approach the poem with an open mind, we shall often find not only the best but the most individual parts of the work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors assert their immortality most dynamically." Since he has to take from a long line of the illustrations, what happens is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual self-surrender. The past and the present fuse to make a work of art, seen in this light there is no necessary connection between the personalities of the poet of the poem. Hence, his anti-Wordsworthian definition of poetry. "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality."

The Process of Composition

An analogy from science is employed to describe what happens. "When a poet's mind is perfectly readied for its work, it is constantly emulsion ting desperate experience; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, and fragmental. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking, in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes". The account of the creative process is illustrated by Eliot comparing the poet's mind to a smidgen of platinum when introduced into a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide. The mixing of the two gases forms sulphurous acid. This combination takes place only in the presence of finely perfected medium, but the medium remains unaffected. Similarly, the more perfect the artist, the more perfect the functioning of mind in digesting and alchemizing the passions, which are in material. It is in the action of the poetic mind and poetic sensibility on the material that it approximates to condition of science. The mind may be thought of as a catalyst.

Variety of Fusion

Eliot proceeds to say that there is a great variety of this fusion of thought and feeling. He cites instances from Dante, Shakespeare and Keats. A poem composed of emotions exclusively is his response to Dante's Inferno, last quatrain of Canto XV. In the gehenna of Othello, one can see the fusion of emotions and thought. In the "Ode to the Nightingale" of Keats, a number of feelings becomes one under the pressure of the artistic process. The emotion of art is impersonal and the artist cannot attain impersonality unless he surrenders himself wholly to the work. And he is not likely to know what is to be done unless he acquired a sense of tradition.

Critical Opinions

Austin Warren is of the opinion that the corollary of this anti-Romantic attachment to tradition is Eliot's attack on what C.S. Lewis calls personal heresy and what may be more obviously called the biographical approach to literature. The test of a poet's achievement is that he has given self-subsistent life to a poem that it can be understood and valued without referentially attaching it to the biography of the author. And this counsel applies to the poet as well as to the reader.

Scott James questions Eliot's statement that the poet does not express his personality. "True the imprint and experiences which he exhibits

may not be those which hr has felt as his own; but the way in which he sees them, however objectively, is and must all his own and is wholly determined by his personality. "The Prelude" of Wordsworth and the Sonnet "On his Blindness" by Milton runs counter to the impersonal theory -what are their literary values and standards? Eliot's essay does not help much."

G.S, Fraser says, "As a critic Mr. Eliot is more important than Hulme or Pound: and his criticism, in its quieter way, has effected as abstruse a revolution as his poetry. It is to him that must be attributed the general reaction among English undergraduates against the Romantic Movement, against the great Victorians, and in favour of difficult poetry generally, whether it is that of Donne or that of Hopkins". For Mr. Eliot, an emphasis on the idea of tradition had originally two tactical uses: as an alternative to the romantic emphasis on inspiration and on poetry as the expression of the poet's inner being and as a clarification of the fact, in his own poetry, he was not merely making as his early critics tended to think, a clean break with the past. He wanted to swing attention from the poet's personality (from the dying Keats or the inundating Shelley) to the poem itself; he wanted to suggest that the poem itself, if it is a good one, fits into, extends and alters pattern of other existing poems. In a exordium to a Selection of Pound's earlier work, Mr. Eliot points out that a merely traditional poet would be an impersator, doing over again what had been done better already, while an utterly original poet, who derived literally nothing from his predecessors, would not be able to communicate anything at all. Thus the tradition is a kind of large and changing order, which words of literature make themselves. There is a sense in which all great works of literature make among themselves. There is a sense in which all great works of literature eternally contemporary with each other and the importance of the emotion expressed in poetry has relation to an ideal order (the order of emotions properly expressible in poetry), not to the poet's own life.

• I.A. RICHARDS : PRINCIPLES OF LITERARY CRITICISM (CHAPTER 1st-7th)

The Revolt against Metaphysical Aesthetics: The Plan of Richards

Works

In the Meaning of Meaning, Richards, in collaboration with Ogden, announced a dictum which launched a programing. In The Principles of Literary Criticism (1924), he applies to artistic theory the same treatment as The Meaning of Meaning had applied to the question of

meaning. The principles attempts to provide for the emotive foundation of language the same critical foundation as The Meaning of Meaning had attempted for the symbolic. Science and poetry (1926) discusses the place and future of literature in our civilization. These books are designed as augmentations to The Meaning of Meaning, for these, together with Practical Criticism (1929), explore some of the new ground opened by The Meaning of Meaning. Though The Principles provides many contrasts with The Meaning of Meaning, the two books are obviously products of the same mind.

Richards looks upon a book as a machine to think with. He compares the Principles of Literary Criticism to a loom on which he proposes to reweave some parts of our civilization. Few of the separate items "of his theme are original, Richards goes on to explain that one does not expect novel cards when playing so traditional a game; it is the hands that matters". In respect of treatment, Richards' is an unconventional treatise on the principles of literary criticism and its structure as such needs explanation. At sundry points-notably in chapters VI, VII, and XI-XV, its progress appears to be interrupted by lengthy aunt into the theory of value, or into general psychology. It would not have been possible to develop the argument of the rest in their absence. In this context, Richards described the function of criticism as "the attempt to secern between experiences and evaluate them". Criticism, in this sense, cannot fulfill its function without a formulation of the theories of communication and valuation. Richards contends that the principles operating in literary criticism have to be derived from these more fundamental studies. Like Coleridge, Richards established the relevance of philosophy, aesthetics, psychology, and connotation to the criticism of literature. All other principles Richards dismisses as arbitrary because of their obstructive influence.

Without claiming absolute originality for the view of value implied throughout his literary criticism, Richards, however, claims to have made what he considers to be a fairly comprehensive satisfactory statement of it with applications and illustrations. The value chapters and the psychological chapters constitute the theoretical expansion of The Principles. Lest his later critical sections be misunderstood, he has to include as a preliminary, what amounts to a aphoristic treatise on psychology. Most of the words used by Richards are those which he can define in the actual use he has made of them, such'words have little or no emotive power because of their impotence to excite in the mind emotions appropriate to their august subject matter. Richards finds "something enervated about a taste for flier which requires a flavouring of the eternal and the ultimate or even of the literary spices, mystery and

prcofoundness." He points to the dangers of "mixed modes of writing which enlist the reader's feeling as well as his thinking". "Thought and Feeling are able to mislead one another at present in ways which were hardly possible six centuries ago." Richards warns us and hence, in his view, "we need a spell of purer science and purer poetry before the two can gain be mixed if indeed this will ever become once more desirable." In the preface to the 1928 edition of The Principles, Richards makes a sort of Baconian presage about our rapidly developing dumbfounding and brobdingnagian powers in the vantage point of our ever - increasing knowledge in science and technology. With the sermon to us to learn to guide our powers in time, Richards points to the possibility of a radical change in aesthetic thinking in the shape of things to come. He thus reflects on the current backwardness of our aesthetic ideas.

II

Sometimes of the callous bohemian which colours, The Meaning of Meaning recurs in The Principles though it is not so drastically dissentient in its treatment of aesthetic problems. Richard's language seems designed to trade upon the fashionable anti-romanticism and anti-impressionism of Cambridge between the wars. He has a propensity to dismiss the past even more cavalierly than T.S. Eliot in The Scared Wood. Its opening salvo, a chapter called The Chaos of Critical theories, at once makes this clear, for it is an all-but-total dismissal of the almost empty garner of all European criticism before Richards. It begins with an account of the present chaos of critical theories. Richards discovers that extant critical theory is mostly composed of unwarranted, peremptory and judicature, dogmatic statements leading to "inexhaustible confusion" though it is redeemed, as he confesses, by "a few conjectures, a supply of admonishment, many acute isolated observations, and some brilliant guesses". To Richards, the history of criticism is a history of dogmatism and proliferation rather than a history of research. And like all such histories the chief lesson to be learnt from it is the ineffectualness of all proliferation that precedes understanding. Though the literature of Criticism is, by no means, small and negligible and its chief figures from Aristotle downwards, have often been among the first intellects of their age, yet Richards bemoans their inability to reach systematic explanations of the value of arts. The experiences with which criticism is concerned are exceptionally accessible. We have only to open the book, stand before the picture, have the music played, spread out the rug, pour out the wine, and the material upon which the critic work is presently before us. Richards pinpoints, in this context, the fundamental questions which criticism is required to answer. These do

not seem to be extra-ordmarily difficult, intricate though they are. What gives the experience of reading a certain poem its value? How is this experience better than another? Why prefer this picture to that? In which ways should we listen to music so as to receive the most valuable moments? Why is one opinion about-works of art not as good as another? Besides these fundamental questions, Richards points out that criticism is required to answer such precursory questions - what is a picture, a poem, a piece of music? How can experiences be compared? What is value? Thus, Richards makes clear his intention to incorporate aesthetics into the job of criticism.

We must have the necessary facts to think the matter out. Literary critics have naturally to seek the help of philosophers, moralists and aestheticians who are the concede accomplished authorities to deal with these problems. Though there is no dearth of treatises upon the Good and the Beautiful, .upon value and upon the Aesthetic State, investigators who. have relied upon Reason, upon the Select I sight and the Ineludible Argument, have failed to answer the question properly in the absence of the necessary facts to think the matter out. Their investigations have been invertible, Richards commends the scientific methods of Fechner and his followers who have turned instead to the collection and analysis of concrete, particular facts and to existential research into aesthetics. Such investigators, by supplying a host of details to psychology, have given much useful information upon the processes which make up the appreciation of art. With these observations, the stage is set for the innuendo of an assumption implied every where in Richard's criticism, that the findings of experimental science are intellectually impressive as the findings of no other interreges can be, and that literary criticism must accustom itself with experimental weapons. Criticism is, for Richards, pre-Baconian and the object of his own aesthetic is to hurry it forward, with the help of the new psychology towards the happy condition where the critic can use laboratory techniques and make falsifiable assertions.

Analysis

Richards creates the outline for an epistemology of aesthetics. To put that a little more comprehensibly, Richards thinks that what counts in our assessment of art is the experience we have of an object in terms of its value as a beautiful object, an experience which belongs not to the object itself but to the workings of our mind. To make this fly, Richards sets out several precursory steps :

1. A theory of value as it relates to aesthetic judgment : He argues that there must an objective basis for valuing one work of art

more highly than another. If we can eloquent the principles for making such valuations, then we can apply them fearlessly in any situation. His exordium opens with "A book is a machine to think with..." a metaphor he revisits in the book's final paragraph. By intimation, he conceits his book as a machine for determining what makes one work of art good and another bad.

2. An epistemology grounded in human psychology : Richards believes in a science of the mind. He anticipates the work of Bernard Lonergan (Insight) who claimed that there is an "invariant structure of human knowing" which can be worked out in close detail. If people cannot help but receive and process information in a particular way, then it becomes easy to predict how people will assimilate information of a specific sort (e.g., aesthetic information), "All modern aesthetics rests upon an assumption...that there is a distinct kind of mental activity present in what are called aesthetic experiences."

3. A theory of communication that explains the propagation of experience from artist to critic/audience/reader. Richards claims that communication is dependent upon the common experience of the communicating parties. We use the commonality of our experience as a way to verify the commonality of the meanings we ascribe to the words we use. Communication doesn't depend upon an exact correspondence between experiences, since that would be impossible, but upon a set of experiences or experiences which fall within a given range. For this reason, Richards says that good poets are invariably "normal" (at which point the book hits the wall). Richards also believes that poetry is a higher form of communication because it is more complex than prose and so it is able to support a richer range of experience. If we rely on his prose for our model, then he's absolutely correct.

A consequence of Richards' formalism is that it construes the poetic experience. It's no surprise, then, that Richards has no use for religion, which has suffered an cognate construction :

A false belief may become an captious condition for the most important activities of individuals who without it break down into confusion. So it is with many religious beliefs; and in saying that the removal of such beliefs need involve no loss, and may involve great gains in values, we do not say that there are not certain individuals whose values will be destroyed in the process. We say only that adaptable people will find that most of their values can be retained after rejecting their errors, that compensations and equivalents for their losses are

available, and that whole sets of fresh values become open to them through their better adjustment to the actual world in which they live.

It's unsurprising too that he gives priority to science as a method of knowing. While there have been other critical movements in the years interceding since Richards' writings laid the groundwork for New Criticism (most notably the Critical Theory movement) nevertheless the construe of poetry has stuck, maybe because Critical Theory relies upon an alternative epistemology without seriously questioning whether poetry ought to be treated as knowledge/information in the first instance, or maybe because of a more general cultural movement which has breezed up religion and poetry into the same irrelevant basket.

• SUMMARY

- Richards is often labelled as the father of the New Criticism, largely because of the influence his first two books of critical theory, The Principles of Literary Criticism and Practical Criticism were a major critical breakthrough, offering thirty-five insightful chapters regarding various topics relevant to literary criticism, including: form, value, rhythm, coenesthesia, literary infectiousness, allusiveness, divergent readings, and belief. His next book, Practical Criticism, was just as influential as an existential study of inferior literary response. Richards removed authorial and contextual information from thirteen poems, including one by Longfellow and four by decidedly frontier poets. Then he assigned their elucidation to undergraduates at Cambridge University in order to ascertain the most likely balks to an acceptable response. This attitude had a startling impact at the time in demonstrating the depth and variety of misreading to be expected of otherwise intelligent college students as well as the population at large.

- In using this method, Richards did not advance a new hermeneutic. Instead, he was doing something unaccustomed in the field of literary studies: he was interrogating the interpretive process itself by analyzing the self-reported elucidative work of students. To that end, his work necessitated a closer interpretation of the literary text in and of itself and provided what seems a historical opening to the work done in English Education and Composition [Flower & Hayes] as they engage existential studies. Connected with this effort were his seminal theories of metaphor, value, tone, stock response, incipient action, pseudo-statement and ambiguity, the latter as aired by William Empson, his former graduate student.

• KEY WORDS

1. Tradition : A tradition is a habitude, belief or object passed down within a society, still maintained in the present, with origins in the past.

2. Poetry : Poetry is a form of literary art in which language is used for its aesthetic and evocative qualities in addition to, or in lieu of, its apparent meaning.

3. Aestheticism : Aestheticism is a 19th century European Movement that emphasized aesthetic values more than socio-political themes for literature, fine art, the decorative arts, and interior design.

4. Epistemology : Epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope (limitations) of knowledge.

5. Communication : Communication is the activity of conveying meaningful information.

• REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Examine T.S. Eliot's idea of Tradition.
2. Explain T.S. Eliot's theory of Impersonality of poetry.
3. Write an essay, Eliot's "Tradition and Individual talent".
4. Write an essay on Richard's epistemology of aesthetic values.
5. Examine the preliminary steps of Richards in Principles of Literary Criticism.
6. Write short notes on Eliot's "Tradition and Individual Talent".
7. What is meant by tradition according to Eliot?
8. Write about Eliot's Interpersonal theory.
9. Write about how the theory of value relates to aesthetic judgment?
10. Write a note on Richard's theory of communication.

• SUGGESTED READINGS

- T.S. Eliot and the Concept of Tradition—Giovanni Cianci
- Modern Criticism—T.S. Eliot
- T.S. Eliot: Poetry, Plays and Prose—Sunil Kumar Sarker
- Principles of Literary Criticism—I.A. Richards

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4

POST-MODERN CRITICISM

STRUCTURE

• LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to :

- Describe the Ferdinand de Saussure: "nature of linguistics sign"
- Discuss the Jacques Derrida: "structure, sign and pray in the discourse of human sciences".
- Examine the Elaine Showalter: "feminist criticism in wilderness".

• INTRODUCTION

Early in the 20th century the school of criticism known as Russian Formalism, and slightly later the New Criticism in Britain and America, came to dominate the study and discussion of literature. Both schools emphasized the close reading of texts, uplifting it far above generalizing discussion and crapshoot about either authorial intention (to say nothing of the author's psychology or biography, which became almost taboo subjects) or reader response. This emphasis on form and rigorous attention to "the words themselves" has persevered, after the decline of these critical doctrines themselves.

Ferdinand de Saussure, (26 November 1857-22 February 1913) was a Swiss linguist whose ideas laid a foundation for many significant developments in linguistics in the 20th century. He is widely considered one of the fathers of 20th century linguistics. However, many modern linguists and philosophers of language consider his ideas outdated. Some philosophers of language believe that these critics are themselves

applying outdated agy-bargy to portray Saussurean ideas as obscurantist or consciously deformed. While Saussure's concepts—particularly semiotics—have received little to no attention in modern linguistic textbooks, his ideas have significantly influenced the humanities and social sciences.

Jacques Derrida, (July 15, 1930 - October 9, 2004) was a French philosopher, born in French Algeria. He developed the critical theory known as deconstruction, his work has been labeled as post-structuralism and associated with postmodern philosophy. His prolific output of more than 40 published books, together with essays and public speaking, has had a significant impact upon the humanities, particularly on literary theory and burkes philosophy. Perhaps Derrida's most quoted and famous assertion ever is the axial statement of his whole essay on Rousseau (part of his highly influential Of Grammatology, 1967), "there is nothing outside the text" meaning that there is nothing outside context. Critics of Derrida have countless times quoted it as a slogan to characterize and denounce deconstruction.

Elaine Showalter (born 21 January 1941) is an American literary critic, feminist, and writer on cultural and social issues. She is one of the founders of feminist literary criticism in United States academia, developing the concept and practice of gynocritics. She is well known and respected in both academic and popular cultural fields. She has written and edited numerous books and articles focused on a variety of subjects, from feminist literary criticism to fashion, sometimes sparking widespread altercation, especially with her work on illnesses. Showalter has been a television critic for People magazine and a commentator on BBC radio and television.

• FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE: "NATURE OF LINGUISTICS SIGN"

Text

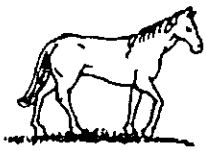
1. Sign, mattered Signifier

Some people regard language, when reduced to its elements as a naming-process only—a list of words, each corresponding to the thing that it names. For example:

This stereotype is open to criticism at several points. It undertakes that ready-made ideas exist before words; it does not tell us whether a name is vocal or psychological in nature (arbor, for instance, can he-considered from either viewpoint); finally, it lets us assume that the linking of a name and a thing is a very simple operation—an

hypothetical that is anything but true. But this rather naive boulevard can bring us near the truth by showing us that the linguistic unit is a double entity, one formed by the associating of two terms.

: ARBOR



: EQUOS

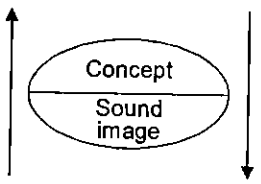
etc. etc.

We have seen in considering the speaking-circuit that both terms involved in the linguistic sign are psychological and are united in the brain by an associative bond. This point must be emphasized.

The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image. The concluding is not the material sound, a purely thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses. The sound-image is sensory, and if I happen to call it "material", it is only in that sense, and by way of opposing it to the other term of the association, the concept, which is generally more abstract.

The psychological character of our sound-images becomes assumed when we observe our own speech. Without moving our lips or tongue, we can talk to ourselves or recite mentally a selection of verse. Because we regard the words of our language as sound-images, we must avoid speaking of the "phonemes" that make up the words. This term, which suggests vocal activity, is applicable to the spoken word only, to the realization of the inner image in expatiate. We can avoid that misunderstanding by speaking of the sounds and syllables of a word provided we remember that the names refer to the sound-image.

The linguistic sign is then a two-sided psychological entity that can be represented by the drawing :



The two elements are intimately united, and each recalls the other. Whether we try to find the meaning of the Latin word arbor or the word that Latin uses to designate the concept "tree", it is clear that only the associations sanctioned by that language appear to us to conform to reality, and we disregard whatever others might be imagined.

Our definition of the linguistic sign poses an important question of terminology. I call the combination of a concept and a sound-image a sign, but in current usage the term generally appoints only a sound-image, a word, for example (arbor, etc.). One tends to forget that arbor is called a sign only because it carries the concept "tree", with the result that the idea of the sensory part alludes the idea of the whole.

Arcane would disappear if the three notions involved here were designated by three names, each suggesting and opposing the others. I propose to retain the word sign [signe] to designate the whole and to replace concept and sound-image respectively by signified [signifie] and signifier [signifiant]; the last two terms have the advantage of indicating the opposition that separates them from each other and from the whole of which they are parts. As regards sign, if I am satisfied with it, this is simply because I do not know of any word to replace it, the ordinary language suggesting no other.

The linguistic sign, as defined, has two primeval characteristics. In articulating them I am also positing the basic principles of any study of this type.

2. Principle I: The Arbitrary Nature of the Sign

The bond between the signifier and the mattered is imperious. Since I mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the signified, I can simply say: the linguistic sign is arbitrary.

The idea of "sister" is not linked by any inner relationship to the succession of sounds s->-r which serves as its signifier in French; that it could be represented equally by just any other sequence is proved by differences among languages and by the very existence of different languages: the mattered "ox" has as its signifier b->-f on one side of the border and o-k-s (Ochs) on the other.

No one disputes the principle of the .arbitrary nature of the sign, but it is often easier to discover a truth than to assign to it its proper place. Principle I dominates all the linguistics of language; its consequences are numberless. It is true that not all of them are equally obvious at first

glance; only after many detours does one discover them, and with them the primordial importance of the principle.

One remark in passing: when semiology becomes organized as a science, the question will arise whether or not it properly includes modes of expression based on completely natural signs, such as pantomime. Supposing that the new science welcomes them, its main concern will still be the whole group of systems grounded on the arbitrariness of the sign. In fact, every means of expression used in society is based in principle on collective behavior or—what amounts to the same thing—on assembly. Polite formulas, for instance, though often endued with a certain natural revealers (as in the case of a Chinese who greets his emperor by bowing down to the ground nine times), are nonetheless fixed by rule; it is this rule and not the intrinsical value of the gesticulation that obliges one to use them. Signs that are wholly arbitrary realize better than the others the ideal of the semiological process; that is why language, the most complex and universal of all systems of expression, is also the most characteristic; in this sense linguistics can become the master-pattern for all branches of semiology although language is only one particular semiological system.

The word symbol has been used to designate the linguistic sign, or more specifically, what is here called the signifier. Principle I in particular weighs against the use of this term. One characteristic of the symbol is that it is never wholly imperious; it is not empty, for there is the rudiment of a natural bond between the signifier and the mattered. The symbol of justice, a pair of scales, could not be replaced by just any other symbol, such as a chariot.

The word imperious also calls for comment. The term should not imply that the choice of the signifier is left entirely to the speaker (we shall see below that the individual does not have the power to change a sign in any way once it has become established in the linguistic community); I mean that it is unmotivated, i.e., imperious in that it actually has no natural connection with the signified.

3. Principle II: The Linear Nature of the Signifier

The signifier, being auditory, is unfolded exclusively in time from which it gets the following characteristics : (a) it represents a span, and (b) the span is measurable 'in a single dimension; it is a line.

While Principle II is obvious, ostensibly linguists have always neglected to state it, doubtless because they found it too simple; nevertheless, it is fundamental, and its consequences are incalculable. Its importance equals that of Principle I; the whole mechanism of language depends

upon it. In contrast to visual signifiers (navigational signals, etc.) which can offer pimultaneous groupings in several dimensions, auditory signifiers have at their command only the dimension of time. Their elements are presented in succession; they form a chain. This feature becomes readily ostensible when they are represented in writing and the spatial line of graphic marks is substituted for succession in time.

Sometimes the linear nature of the signifier is not obvious. When I accent a syllable, for instance, it seems that I am concentrating more than one significant element on the same point. But this is an illusion; the syllable and its accentuation constitute only one phonational act. There is no duality within the act but only different oppositions to what forego and what follows.

Summary

The Sign, the Signifier, and the Signified.

The sign, the signifier, and the mattered are concepts of the school of thought known as structuralism, founded by Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, during lectures he gave between 1907 and 1911 at the University of Geneva. His views revolutionized the study of language and innovated modern linguistics. The theory also abstruse influenced other disciplines, especially anthropology, sociology, and literary criticism. The central tenet of structuralism is that the phenomena of human life, whether language or media, are not intelligible except through their network of relationships, making the sign and the system (or structure) in which the sign is embedded primary concepts. As such, a sign—for instance, a word—gets its meaning only in relation to or in contrast with other signs in a system of signs.

In general, the signifier and the mattered are the components of the sign, itself formed by the associative link between the signifier and mattered. Even with these two components, however, signs can exist only in opposition to other signs. That is, signs are created by their value relationships with other signs. The contrasts that form between signs of the same nature in a network of relationships is how signs derive their meaning. As the translator of Saussure's Course in General Linguistics, Roy Harris, puts it:

"The essential feature of Saussure's linguistic sign is that, being intrinsically imperious, it can be identified only by contrast with coetaneous signs of the same nature, which together constitute a structured system."

In Saussure's theory of linguistics, the signifier is the sound and. the mattered is the, thought. The linguistic sign is neither notional nor phonic, neither thought nor sound. Rather, it is the whole of the link that unites sound and idea, mattered and signified. The properties of the sign are by nature abstract, not concrete. Saussure: "A sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern."

Lexicon

At least two other terms are used for signifier and mattered: signifier = signal = mattered signified = signification = signifie

Mistakes

A common mistake is to explicate the signifier and the sign as the same thing. In my view, another common mistake, perhaps related to the first, is to speak of a signifier without a mattered or a sign, or to speak of a signified without a signifer or a sign. Used in reference to Saussure's original formulations, both locutions are absurd. In language, a lone signifier would be an utterly meaningless sound or concatenation of sounds. But it is even more bizarre to speak of a mattered without signifier or sign: It would, I believe, have to be a sort of half thought, something never thought before, a thought that exists exclusively outside the domain of language, a fleeting, private, chaotic thought that makes no sense even to the thinker — an unthought. Another mistake is to endow a sign with meaning outside the presence of other signs. Except as part of the whole system, signs do not and cannot exist.

Expansion beyond Language

Saussure provides an unequivocal basis for the expansion of his science of signs beyond linguistics: "It is possible", he says, "to conceive of a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. ... We shall call it semiology. It would investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them. Since it does not yet exist, one cannot say for certain that it will exist. But it has a right to exist, a place ready for it in advance."

Roland Barthes is one scholar who took Saussure's counsel to heart. He helped found the modern science of semiology, applying structuralism to the "myths" he saw all around him: media, fashion, art, photography, architecture, and especially literature. For **Barthes,** "myth is a system of communication." It is a "message", a "mode of signification," a 'Ibrm" (Mythologies, p. 109). With a argosy of complexities

and finespuns, Barthes extends **Saussure's** structuralism and applies it to myth as follows:

"Myth is a distinctive system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a second-order semiological system. That which is a sign (namely the afflictive total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second. We must here recall that the materials of mythical speech (the language itself, photography, painting, posters, rituals, objects, etc.), however different at the start, are reduced to a pure signifying function as soon as they are caught by table" (Mythologies, p. 114).

Because of the convolutions and finespuns of Barthes's semiology, I will stop here and let you pick up the strand for yourself by reading the highly informative chapter "Myth Today" in Mythologies.

A Final Word: The Indeterminancy of Meaning

Regardless of how linguistic signs (and perhaps other signs, too) are analyzed, meaning may in fact be unrecoverable, both to the analyst and to the participants in an exchange of signs. It is my belief that meaning is indeed ultimately indeterminate, a position that bodes well with what very well be a fact of language. With respect to indeterminacy, some linguists, postmodern theorists, and analytic philosophers seem to be in agreement. **Brown and Yule,** both of whom are linguists, write that "the discernment and exegesis of each text is essentially subjective."

The postmodern theorists, meantime, hold that every decoding is another encoding. Jacques Derrida, for example, maintains that the possibility of exegesis and reinterpretation is endless, with meaning getting any provisional significance only from speaker, hearer, or observer: Meaning is necessarily projection. **Bakhtin,** too says, "the exegesis of symbolic structures is forced into an infinity of symbolic contextual meanings and therefore it cannot be scientific in the way rigorous sciences are scientific."

Both Bakhtin's and Derrida/s views are surprisingly not unlike those of W. V. O. Quine's in "The Indeterminacy of Translation", where **Quine** argued that "the totality of subjects' behavior leaves it indefinable whether one translation of their sayings or another is correct."

Wittgenstein pays homage to the indeterminacy of meaning as well: "Any exegesis still hangs in the air along with what it interprets, and

cannot give it any support. Exegesis by themselves do not determine meaning."

1. Sign, Signified, and Signifier: Some people regard language, when reduced to its elements, as a naming-process only— a list of words, each corresponding to the thing that it names. For example,

This generatication is open to criticism at several points. It assumes that ready-made ideas exist before words (on this point, see below); it does not tell us whether a name is vocal or psychological in nature (arbor, for instance, can be considered from either viewpoint): finally, it lets us assume that the linking of a name and a thing is a very simple operation—an assumption that is anything but true. But this rather naive approach can bring us near the truth by showing us that the linguistic unit is a double commodity, one formed by the associating of two terms.

We have seen in considering the speaking-circuit that both terms involved in the linguistic sign are psychological and are united in the brain by an associative bond. This point must be accentuated.

The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image. The concluding is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the imprint that it makes on our senses. The sound-image is sensory, and if I happen to call it "material", it is only in that sense, and by way of opposing it to the other term of the association, the concept, which is generally more conceptual.

The psychological character of our sound-images becomes apparent when we observe our own speech. Without moving our lips or tongue, we can talk to ourselves or recite mentally a selection of verse. Because we regard the words of our language as sound-images, we must avoid speaking of the "phonemes" that make up the words. This term, which suggests vocal activity, is applicable to the spoken word only, to the realization of the inner image in expatiate. We can avoid that misunderstanding by speaking of the sounds and syllables of a word provided we remember that the names refer to the sound-image.

The linguistic sign is then a two-sided psychological entity that can be represented by the drawing:

The two elements are confidentially united, and each recalls the other. Whether we try to find the meaning of the Latin word arbor or the word that Latin uses to designate the concept "tree", it is clear that only the associations authorized by that language appear to us to

accommodate to reality, and we disregard whatever others might be imaged.

Our definition of the linguistic sign poses an important question of terminology. I can the combination of a concept and a sound-image a sign, but in current usage the term generally designates only a sound-image, a word, for example (arbor, etc.). One tends to forget that arbor is called a sign only because it carries the concept "tree," with the result that the idea of the sensory part insinuates the idea of the whole.

Arcane would disappear if the three notions involved here were designated by three names, each suggesting and opposing the others. I propose to retain the word sign [signe] to appoint the whole and to replace concept and sound^image respectively by mattered [signifie] and signifier [signifiant]; the last two terms have the advantage of indicating the oppos'.t'.on that separates them from each other and from the whole of which they are parts. As regards sign, if I am satisfied with it, this is simply because I do not know of any word to replace it, the ordinary language suggesting no other.

The linguistic sign, as defined, has two primeval characteristics. In articulating them I am also positing the basic principles of any study of this type.

2. Principle I: The Imperious Nature of the Sign : The bond between the signifier and the mattered is imperious. Since I mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the mattered, I can simple say: the linguistic sign is imperious.

The idea of "sister" is not linked by any inner relationship to the succession of sounds s-o-r which serves as its signifier in French: that it could be represented equally by just any other sequence is proved by differences among languages and by the very existence of different languages the signified "ox" has as its signifier b-o-f on one side of the border and o-k-s on the other.

One remark in passing: when semiology becomes organized as a science, the question will arise whether or not it properly includes modes of expression based on completely natural signs, such as pantomime. Supposing that the new science welcomes them, its main concern will still be the whole group of systems grounded on the volatileness of the sign. In fact, every means of expression is used in society is based, in principle, on collective behaviour or—what amounts to the same thing-on convention. Polite formulas, for instance, though often ingrained with a

certain natural expressiveness (as in the case of a Chinese who greets his emperor by bowing down to the ground nine times), are nonetheless fixed by rule; it is this rule and not the intrinsic value of the gestures that obliges one to use them. Signs that are wholly arbitrary realize better than the others the ideal of the semiological process; that is why language, the most complex and universal of all systems of expression, is also the most characteristic; in this sense linguistics can become the master-pattern for all branches of semiology although language is only one particular semiological system.

The word imperious also calls for comment. The term should not infer that the choice of the signifier is left entirely to the speaker (we shall see below that the individual does hot have the power to change a sign in any way once it has become established in the linguistic community); I mean that it is unmotivated, i.e., imperious in that it actually has no natural connection with the mattered.

In concluding let us consider two objections that might be raised to the establishment of Principle I:

1. Onomatopoeia might be used-to prove that the choice of the signifier is not always imperious. But onomatopoeic formulations are never organic elements of a linguistic system. Besides, their number is much smaller than is generally supposed. Words like French fouet 'whip' or glas 'bong' may strike certain ears with suggestive sonority, but to see that they have not always had this property we need only examine their Latin forms (fouet is derived from fagus 'beech-tree', glas from classicum 'sound of a trumpet'). The quality of their present sounds, or rather the quality that is attributed to them, is a fortuitous result of phonetic evolution. As for authentic onomatopoeic words (e.g., glug-glug, tick-tock, etc.), not only are they limited in number, but also they are chosen somewhat capriciously, for they are only approximate and more or less prevailing replicas of certain sounds (cf. English bruit and French ouaoua). In addition, once these words have been introduced into the language, they are to a certain extent subjected to the same evolution — phonetic, morphological, etc. - that other words undergo (cf. pigeon, ultimately from Vulgar Latin pipio, derived in turn from an onomatopoeic formation): obvious proof that they lose something of their original character in order to assume that of the linguistic sign in general, which is unmotivated.

2. Interjections, closely related to onomatopoeia, can be attacked on the same grounds and come no closer to refuting our thesis. One is tempted to see in them instinctive expressions of reality dictated, so to speak, by natural forces. But for most interjections we can show that there is no fixed bond between their mattered

and their signifier. We need only compare two languages on this point to see how much such expressions differ from one language to the next (e.g., the English equivalent of French aie! is 'ouch!'). We know, moreover, that many interjections were once words with specific meanings (cf. French diable! 'darn!' mordieu! 'golly!' from mort Dieu 'God's death,' etc.).

• JACQUES DERRIDA: "STRUCTURE, SIGN AND PLAY IN THE EXPATIATE OF HUMAN SCIENCES"

Text

Perhaps something has occurred in the history of the concept of structure that could be called an "event", if this loaded word did not entail a meaning which it is precisely the function of structural-or structuralist-thought to reduce or to suspect. But let me use the term "event" anyway, employing it with caution and as if in quotation marks. In this sense, this event will have the exterior form of a rift and a redoubling.

It would be easy enough to show that the concept of structure and even the word "structure" itself are as old as the episteme—that is to say, as old as western science and western philosophy-and that their roots thrust deep into the soil of ordinary language, into whose deepest recesses the episteme dives to gather them together once more, making them part of itself in a metaphorical displacement. Nevertheless, up until the event which I wish to mark out and define, structure-or rather the structurality of structure-although it has always been involved, has always been neutralized or reduced, and this by a process of giving it a center or referring it to a point of presence, a fixed crigin. The function of this center was not only to orient, balance, and organize the structure-one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganized structure-but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the freeplay of the structure. No doubt that by orienting and organizing the concinnity of the system, the center of a structure permits the freeplay of its elements inside the total form. And even today the novelties of a structure lacking any center represents the unthinkable itself.

Nevertheless, the center also closes off the freeplay it opens up and makes possible. Qua center, it is the point at which the substitution of contents, elements, or terms is no longer possible. At the center, the alterations or the transformation of elements (which may of course be structures enclosed within a structure) is forbidden. At least this permutation has always remained interdicted (I use this word deliberately). Thus it has always been thought that the center, which is by definition unique, constituted that very thing within a structure which governs the structure, while escaping structurally. This is why classical thought concerning structure could say that the center is, weird, within the

structure and outside it. The center is at the center of the totality, and yet, since the center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the totality has its center elsewhere. The center is not the center. The concept of centered structure-although it represents concinnity itself, the condition of the episteme as philosophy or science-is contradictorily coherent. And, as always, concinnity in dichotomy expresses the force of a desire. The concept of centered structure is in fact the concept of a freeplay based on a fundamental ground, a freeplay which is constituted upon a fundamental immobility and a reassuring certitude, which is itself beyond the reach of the freeplay. With this assuredness agita can be mastered, for anxiety is incessantly the result of a certain mode of being implicated in the game, of being caught by the game, of being as it were from the very beginning at stake in the game. From the basis of what we therefore call the center (and which, because it can be either inside or outside, is as readily called the origin as the end, as readily arche as telos), the repetitions, the substitutions, the transformations, and the permutations are always taken from a history of meaning [sens]-that is, a history, period-whose origin may always be revealed or whose end may always be anticipated in the form of presence. This is why one could perhaps say that the movement of any archeology, like that of any eschatology, is an accomplice of this reduction of the structuralality of structure and always attempts to conceive of structure from the basis of a full presence which is out of play.

If this is so, the whole history of the concept of structure, before the rift I spoke of, must be thought of as a series of substitutions of center for center, as a linked chain of determinations of the center. Successively, and in a regulated fashion, the center receives different forms or names. The history of metaphysics, like the history of the West, is the history of these metaphors and metonymies. Its matrix-if you will pardon me for demonstrating so little and for being so elliptical in order to bring me more quickly to my principal theme-is the determination of being as presence I in all the senses of this word. It would be possible to show that all the names related to fundamentals, to principles, or to the I center have always designated the constant of a presence-eidos, arche, telos, energeia, ousia (essence, existence, substance, subject) aletheia [truth], transcendentality, I consciousness, or moral sense, God, man, and so forth.

The event I called a rift, the dislocation implied to at the beginning (of this paper, would presumably have come about when the structurality of structure had to begin to be thought, that is to say, repeated, and this is why I said that this dislocation was repetition in all of the senses of this

word. From then on it became necessary to think the law which governed, as it were, the desire for the center in the constitution of structure and the process of signification prescribing its deportations and its substitutions for this law of the central presence-but a central presence which was never itself, which has always already been transported outside itself in its locum tenens. The locum tenens does not substitute itself for anything which has somehow pre-existed it. From then on it was probably necessary to begin to think that there was no center, that the center could not be thought in the form of a being present, that the center had no natural locus, that it was not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of non-locus in which an fathomless number of sign-substitutions came into play. This moment was that in which language forayed the universal problematic; that in which, in the absence of a center or origin, everything became expatiate-provided we can agree on this word-that is to say, when everything became a system where the central signified, the original or transcendental mattered, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences. The absence of the transcendental mattered extends the bailiwick and the interplay of signification ad infinitum.

Where and how does this decentering, this novelties of the structurality of structure, occur? It would be somewhat naive to refer to an event, a doctrine, or an author in order to appoint this occurrence. It is no doubt part of the totality of an epoch, our own, but still it has already begun to annunciate itself and begun to work. Nevertheless, if I wished to give some sort of indication by choosing one or two "names", and by recalling those authors in whose expatiates this occurrence has most nearly'maintained its most radical formulation, I would probably cite the Nietzschean critique of metaphysics, the critique of the concepts of being and truth, for which were substituted the concepts of play, interpretation, and sign (sign without truth present); the Freudian critique of self-presence, that is, the critique of consciousness, of the subject, of self-identity and of .self-proximity or self-possession; and, more radically, the Heideggerean destruction of metaphysics, of onto-theology, of the determination of being as presence. But all these destructive discourses and all their analogues are trapped in a sort of circle. This circle is unique. It describes the form of the relationship between the history of metaphysics and the destruction of the history of metaphysics. There is no sense in doing without the concepts of metaphysics in order to attack metaphysics. We have no language-no syntax and no lexicon-which is alien to this history; we cannot utter a'single destructive proposition which has not already slipped into the form, the logic, and the implicit postulations of precisely what it seeks'to contest. To pick out

one example from many: the metaphysics of presence is attacked with the help of the concept of the sign. But from the moment anyone wishes this to show, as I suggested a moment ago, that there is no paranormal or blessed signified and, that the domain or the interplay of signification has, henceforth, no limit, he ought to extend his refusal to the concept and to the word sign itself-which is precisely what cannot be done. For the signification "sign" has always been apprehended and determined, in its sense, as sign-of, signifier referring to a signified, signifier different from its signified. If one erases the radical difference between signifier and signified, it is the word signifier itself which ought to be abandoned as a metaphysical concept. When Levi-Strauss says in the preface to The Raw and the Cooked that he has "sought to transcend the opposition between the sensible and the intelligible by placing [himself] from the very beginning at the level of signs", the necessity, the force, and the legitimacy of his act cannot make us forget that the concept of the sign cannot in itself surpass or bypass this opposition between the sensible and the intelligible. The concept of ethnologist accepts into his expatiate the quad of ethnocentrism at the very moment when he is employed in condemning them. This necessity is irreducible; it is not a historical contingency. We ought to consider very carefully all its allusions. But if nobody can escape this necessity, and if no one is therefore responsible for giving in to it, however little, this does not mean that all the ways of giving in to it are of an equal relevance. The quality and the fruitfulness of a discourse are perhaps measured by the critical tribulation with which this relationship to the history of metaphysics and to heritable concepts is thought. Here it is a question of a critical relationship to the language of the human sciences and a question of a critical responsibility of the expatiate. It is a question of putting expressly and systematically the problem of a expatiate which borrows from a heritage the resources necessary of that heritage itself. A problem of economy and strategy,

If I now go on to employ an examination of the texts of Levi-Strauss as an example, it is not only because of the privilege vouchsafed to ethnology among the human sciences, nor yet because the thought of Levi-Strauss weighs heavily on the contemporary theoretical situation. It is above all because a certain choice has made itself evident in the work of Levi-Strauss and because a certain doctrine has been enlarged there, and smack-dab in a more or less univocal manner, in relation to this critique of language and to this critical language in the human sciences.

In order to follow this movement in the text of Levi-Strauss, let me choose as one guiding thread among others the opposition between

nature and culture. In spite of all its revivify and its disguises, this opposition is innate to philosophy. It is even older than Plato. It is at least as old as the Sophists. Since the statement of the opposition - [Physis/nomos, physis/techne [nature/culture, nature/art or making] - it has been passed on to us by a whole historical chain which opposes "nature" to the law, to education, to art, to technics - and also to liberty, to the imperious, to history, to society, to the mind, and so on. From the beginnings of his quest and from his first book, The Elementary Structures of Kinship, Levi-Strauss has felt at one and the same time the necessity of utilizing this opposition and the impossibility of making it acceptable. In the Elementary Structures, he begins from this axiom or definition: that belongs to nature which is universal and instinctive, not depending on any particular culture or on any determinate norm. That belongs to culture, on the other hand, which depends on a system of norms regulating society and is therefore capable of varying from one social structure to another. These two definitions are of the traditional type. But, in the very first pages of the Elementary Structures, Levi-Strauss, who has begun to give these concepts an acceptable standing, encounters what he calls a scandal, that is to say, something which no longer tolerates the nature/culture opposition he has accepted and which seems to require at one and the same time the bases of nature and those of culture. This scandal is the barring. The barring is universal, in this sense one could call it natural. But it is also a barring, a system of norms and embargos; in this sense one could call it cultural.

Let us assume therefore that everything universal in man derives from the order of nature and is characterized by spontaneity, that everything which is subject to a norm belongs to culture and presents the attributes of the relative and the particular. We then find ourselves brazened by a fact, or rather an garb of facts, which, in the light of the antecedent definitions, is not far from appeanog as a scandal: the prohibition of incest presents without the least equivocation, and indissolubly linked together, the two characteristics in which we recognized the contradictory attributes of two exclusive orders. The barring of incest constitutes a rule, but a rule, alone of all the social rules, which possesses at the same time a universal character.

Obviously, there is no scandal except in the interior of a system of concepts sanctioning the difference between nature and culture. In beginning his work with the factum of the incest-prohibition, Levi-Strauss thus puts himself in a position entailing that this difference, which has always been assumed to be self-evident, becomes obliterated or disputed. For, from the moment that the barring can no longer be envisaged within the nature/culture opposition, it can no longer be said

that it is a scandalous fact, a nucleus of opacity within a network of transparent significations. The incest-prohibition is no longer a scandal one meets with or comes up against in the domain of traditional concepts; it is something which escapes these concepts and certainly precedes them—probably as the condition of their possibility. It could perhaps be said that the whole of philosophical conception, systematically relating itself to the nature/culture opposition, is designed to leave in the domain of the unthinkable the very thing that makes this conception possible: the origin of the barring of incest.

I have dealt too cursorily with this example, only one among so many others, but the example nevertheless reveals that language bears within itself the necessity of its own critique. This critique may be undertaken along two tracks, in two "manners." Once the limit of nature/culture opposition makes itself felt, one might want to question systematically and rigorously the history of these concepts. This is a first action. Such a systematic and historic questioning would be neither a philological nor a philosophical action in the classic sense of these words. Concerning oneself with the founding concepts of the whole history of philosophy, de-constituting them, is not to undertake the task of the philologist or of the classic historian of philosophy. In spite of appearances, it is probably the most daring way of making the beginnings of a step outside of philosophy. The step "outside philosophy" is much more difficult to conceive than is generally imagined by those who think they made it long ago with assumptive ease, and who are in general swallowed up in metaphysics by the whole body of the expatiate that they claim to have pellucid from it.

In order to avoid the possibly sterilizing effect of the first way, the other choice-which I feel corresponds more nearly to the way chosen by Levi-Strauss-consists in conserving in the field of existential discovery all these old concepts, while at the same time exposing here and there their limits, treating them as tools which can still be of use. No longer is any truth-value attributed to them; there is a readiness to abandon them if necessary if other instruments should appear more useful. In the meantime, their relative efficacy is exploited, and they are employed to destroy the old machinery to which they belong and of which they themselves are pieces. Thus it is that the language of the human sciences criticizes itself. Levi-Strauss thinks that in this way he can separate method from truth, the instruments of the method and the objective significations aimed at by it. One could almost say that this is the primary assertion of Levi-Strauss; in any event, the first words of the Elementary Structures are: "One begins to understand that the distinction between state of nature and state of society (we would be more apt to say today: state of nature and state of culture), while lacking any acceptable historical signification, presents a value which fully

just)fies its use by modern sociology: its value as a methodological instrument."

Levi-Strauss will always remain faithful to this double burne: to preserve as an instrument that whose truth-value he criticizes.

On the one hand, he will continue in effect to contest the value of the nature/culture opposition. More than thirteen years after the Elementary Structures, The Savage Mind faithfully echoes the text I have just quoted: "The opposition between nature and culture which I have previously insisted on seems today to offer a value which is above all methodological," And this methodological value is not affected by its "ontological" non-value (as could be said, if this novelties were not suspect here): "It would not be enough to have absorbed particular humanities into a general humanity; this first enterprise prepares the way for others ... which belong to the natural and exact sciences: to desegregate culture into nature, and finally, to desegregate life into the totality of its physiochemical conditions."

On the other hand, still in The Savage Mind, he presents as what he calls bricolage what might be called the discourse of this method. The bricoleur, says Levi-Strauss, is someone who uses "the means at hand," that is, the instruments he finds at his temperament around him, those which are already there, which had riot been especially conceived with an eye to the operation for which they are to be used and to which one tries by trial and error to adapt them, not hesitating to change them whenever it appears necessary, or to try several of them at once, even if their form and their origin are heterogenous—and so forth. There is therefore a critique of language in the form of bricolage, and it has even been possible to say that bricolage is the critical language itself. I am thinking in particular of the article by G[erard] Genette, "Structuralisme et Critique litteraire", published in homage to Levi-Strauss in a special issue of L'Arc, where it is stated that the analysis of bricolage could "be applied almost word for word" to criticism, and especially to "literary criticism",

If one calls bricolage the necessity of borrowing one's concept from the text of a prescription which is more or less consequent or ruined, it must be said that every expatiate is bricoleur. The engineer, whom Levi-Strauss opposes to the bricoleur, should be one to construct the totality of his language, syntax, and lexicon. In this sense the engineer is a myth. A subject who would supposedly be the absolute origin of his own discourse and would supposedly construct it "out of nothing", "jut of whole cloth", would be the creator of the verbe, the verbe itself.

The notion of the engineer who had supposedly broken with all forms of bricolage is therefore a theological idea; and since Levi-Strauss tells us elsewhere that bricolage is mythopoetic, the odds are that thee engineer is a myth produced by the expatiate. From the moment that we cease to believe in such an engineer and in a expatiate breaking with the received historical discourse, as soon as it is admitted that every finite expatiate is bound by a cenain bricolage, and that the engineer and the scientist are also species of bricoleurs then the very idea of bricolage is menaced and the difference in which it took on its meaning decomposes.

This brings out the second thread which might guide us in what is being disentangled here.

Levi-Strauss describes bricolage not only as an intellectual activity but also as a mythopoetical activity. One reads in The Savage Mind, "Like bricolage on the technical level, mythical reflection can attain brilliant and unforeseen results on the intellectual level. Reciprocally, the mythopoetical character of bricolage has often been noted."

But the remarkable endeavour of Levi-Strauss is not simply to put forward, notably in the most recent of his investigations, a structural science or knowledge of fables and of mythological activity. His endeavour also appears-I would say almost from the first-in the status which he accords to his own discourse on myths, to what he calls his "mythologicals". It is here that his expatiate on the fable reflects on itself and criticizes itself. And this moment, this critical period, is ostensibly of concern to all the languages which share the field of the human sciences. What does Levi-Strauss say of his "mythologicals"? It is here that we rediscover the mythopoetical virtue (power) of bricolage. In effect, what appears most fascinating in this critical search for a new status of the expatiate is the stated abandonment of all reference to a center, to a subject, to a privileged reference, to an origin, or to an absolute arche'. The theme of this ethical could be followed throughout the "Overture" to his last book, The Raw and the Cooked. I shall simply remark on a few key points.

1. From the very start, Levi-Strauss recognizes that the Bororo fable which he employs in the book as the "reference-myth" does not merit this name and this treatment. The name is specious and the use of the myth improper. This myth deserves no more than any other its denotative privilege: In fact the Bororo myth which will from now on be designated by the name reference-myth is, as I shall try to show, nothing other than a more or less forced conversion of other myths originating either in the same society or in societies more or less far

removed. It would therefore have been legit to choose as my point of departure any representative of the group whatsoever. From this point of view, the interest of the reference-myth does not depend on its typical character, but rather on its irregular position in the midst of a group.

2. There is no unity or absolute source of the myth. The focus or the sources of the myth are always shadows and virtualities which are fugitive, unactualizable, and nonexistent in the first place. Everything begins with the structure, the configuration, the relationship.

The discourse on this acentric structure, the myth, that is, cannot itself have an absolute subject or an absolute center. In order not to short change the form and the movement of the fable, that violence which consists in centering a language which is describing an acentric structure must be avoided. In this context, therefore, it is necessary to forego scientific or philosophical expatiate, to abnegate the cognition which absolutely requires, which is the absolute requirement that we go back to the source, to the center, to the founding basis, to the principle, and so on. In opposition to epistemic expatiate, structural discourse on myths- mythological discourse-must itself be mythomorphic. It must have the form of that of which it speaks. This is what Levi-Strauss says in The Raw and the Cooked, from which I would now like to quote a long and remarkable passage:

In effect the study of myths poses a methodological problem by the fact that it cannot conform to the Cartesian principle of dividing the difficulty into as miany piarts as are necessiary to resolve it. There exists no veritable end or term to mythical analysis, no secret unity which could be comprehended at the end of the work of decomposition. The themes duplicate themselves to eternity. When we think we have unbraid them from each other and can hold them separate, it is only to realize that they are joining together again, in response to the attraction of unforeseen affinities. In consequence, the unity of the myth is only tendential and projective; it never reflects a state or a moment of the myth. An imaginary phenomenon implied by the whack to interpret, its role is to give a synthetic form to the fable and to impede its dissolution into the bamboozlement of contraries. It could therefore be said that the science or knowledge of myths is an anaclastic, taking this ancient term in the widest sense authorized by its etymology, a science which admits into its definition the study of the reflected rays along with that of the broken ones. But, unlike philosophical reflection, which claims to go all the way back to its source, the reflections in question here concern rays without any other than a virtual focus. ...In wanting to emulate the instinctive movement of mythical thought, my enterprise, itself too brief

and too long, has had to yield to its demands and respect its rhythm. Thus is this book, on myths itself and in its own way, a myth. This statement is repeated a little farther on: "Since myths themselves rest on second-order codes (the first-order codes being those in which language consists), this book thus offers the rough draft of a third-order code, destined to cinch the reciprocal possibility of translation of several fables. This is why it would not be wrong to consider it a fable: the fable of mythology, as it were." It is by this absence of any real and fixed center of the mythical or mythological discourse that the musical model chosen by Levi Strauss for the composition of his book is apparently justified. The absence of a center is here the absence of a subject and the absence of an author: "The fable and the musical work thus appear as orchestra conductors whose listeners are the silent performers. If it be asked where the real focus of the work is to be found, it must be replied that its determination is impossible. Music and mythology bring man face to face with virtual objects whose shadow alone is actual. ... Fables have no authors".

Thus it is at this point that ethnographic bricolage intentionally assumes its mythopoetic function. But by the same token, this function makes the philosophical or epistemological requirement of a center appear as mythological, that is to say, as a historical illusion.

Nevertheless, even if one yields to the necessity of what Levi-Strauss has done, one cannot ignore its risks. If the mythological is mythomorphic, are all expatiates on myths equivalent? Shall we have to indulge any epistemologica; requirement which permits us to distinguish between several qualities of expatiate on the myth? A classic question, but inevitable. We cannot reply-and I do not believe Levi-Strauss replies to it-as long as the problem of the relationships between the philosopheme or the theorem, on the one hand, and the mytheme or the mythopoem(e), on the other, has not been expressly posed. This is no small problem. For lack of expressly posing this problem, we condemn ourselves to transforming the claimed trespass of philosophy into an unrecognized fault in the interior of the philosophical field. Empiricism would be the genus of which these faults would always be the species. Trans-philosophical concepts would be transformed into philosophical naivetes. One could give many examples to demonstrate this risk: the concepts of sign, history, truth, and so forth. What I want to emphasize is simply that the passage beyond philosophy does not consist in turning the page of philosophy (which usually comes down to philosophizing badly), but in continuing to read philosophers in a certain way. The risk I am speaking of is always assumed by Levi-Strauss and it is the very price of his endeavor. I have said that

empiricism is the matrix of all the faults baleful a expatiate which continues, as with Levi-Strauss in particular,, to elect to be scientific. If we wanted to pose the problem of empiricism and bricolage in depth, we would probably end up very quickly with a number of propositions absolutely antipodal in relation to the status of expatiate in structural ethnography. On the one hand, structuralism justly claims to be the critique of empiricism. But at the same time there is not a single book or study by Levi-Strauss which does not offer itself as an existential essay which can always be completed or unsubstantiated by new information. The structural schemata are always proposed as hypotheses resulting from a finite quantity of information and which are subjected to the proof of experience. Numerous texts could be used to demonstrate this double assumption. Let us turn once again to the "Overture" of The Raw and the Cooked, where it seems clear that if this assumption is double, it is because it is a guestion here of a language on language:

Critics who might take me to task for not having begun by making an comprehensive inventory of South American myths before analyzing them would be making a serious mistake about the nature and the role of these documents. The totality of the myths of a people is of the order of the expatiate. Provided that this people does not become physically or morally extinct, this totality is never closed. Such a criticism would therefore be equivalent to basting a linguist with writing the grammar of a language without having recorded the totality of the words which have been uttered since that language came into existence and without knowing the verbal exchanges which will take place as long as the language continues to exist.

Experience proves that an absurdly small number of sentences... allows the linguist to complicated a grammar of the language he is studying. And even a partial grammar or an outline of a grammar represents valuable accessions in the case of unknown languages. Syntax does not wait until it has been possible to itemize a theoretically unlimited series of events before becoming barefaced, because syntax consists in the body of rules which presides over the generation of these events. And it is smack-deb a syntax of South American mythology that I wanted to outline. Should new texts appear to enrich the mythical discourse, then this will provide an opportunity to check or modify the way in which certain grammatical laws have been formulated, an opportunity to cull certain of them and an opportunity to discover new ones. But in no instance can the requirement of a total mythical

expatiate be raised as an objection. For we have just seen that such a requirement has no meaning.

Totalization is therefore defined at one time as useless, at another time as impossible. This is no distrust the result of the fact that there are two ways of enceinte the limit of totalization. And I assert once again that these two determinations coexist implicitly in the expatiates of Levi-Strauss. Totalization can be judged impossible in the classical style: one then refers to the existential whack of a subject or of a finite discourse in a vain and breathless quest of an boundless richness which it can never master. There is too much, more than one can say. But nontotalization can also be determined in another way: not from the standpoint of the concept of finitude as assigning us to an empirical view, but from the standpoint of the concept of freeplay. If totalization no longer has any meaning, it is not because the infinity of a field cannot be covered by a finite glance or a finite expatiate, but because the nature of the field-that is, language and a finite language-excludes totalization. This field is in fact that of freeplay, that is to say, a field of boundless substitutions in the closure of a finite garb. This field permits these boundless substitutions only because it is finite, that is to say, because instead of being an inexhaustible field, as in the classical hypothesis, instead of being too large, there is something missing from it: a center which arrests and founds the freeplay of substitutions. One could say-rigidly using that word whose scandalous signification is always exterminated in French-that this movement of the freeplay, permitted by the lack, the absence of a center or origin, is the movement of supplementary. One cannot determine the center, the sign which supplements it, which takes its place in its absence-because this sign adds itself, occurs in addition, over and above, comes as a supplement. The movement of signification adds something, which results in the fact that there is always more, but this addition is a floating one because it comes to perform a vicarious function, to supplement a lack on the part of the signified. Although Levi-Strauss in his use of the word supplementary never emphasizes as I am doing here the two directions of meaning which are so strangely compounded within it, it is not by chance that he uses this word twice in his "Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss", at the point where he is speaking of the "Plentitude of signifier, in relation to the signifieds to which this plentitude can refer":

In his whack to understand the world, Man therefore always has at his temperament a surplus of signification (which he portions out amongst things according to the laws of symbolic thought-which it is the task of ethnologists and linguists to study). This distribution of a supplementary portion [ration supplementaire]-if it is permissible to

put it that way-is absolutely necessary in order that on the whole the available signifier and the mattered it aims at may remain in the relationship of complementarily which is the very condition of the use,of symbolic thought.

(It could no doubt be demonstrated that this ration supplementaire of signification is the origin of the ratio itself.) The word reappears a little farther on, after Levi-Strauss has mentioned "this floating signifier, which is the finite thought":

In other words-and taking as our guide Mauss's. axion that all social phenomena can be analogized to language-we see in mana, Wakau, oranda and,other novelties of the same type, the conscious expression of a semantic function, whose role it is to permit symbolic thought to operate in spite of the contradiction which is proper to it. In this way are explained the apparently insoluble 1 antinomies attached to this notion. ...At one and the same time force and action, quality and state, substantive and verb; abstract and concrete, omnipresent and localized-mana is in effect all these things. But is it not precisely because it is none of these things that mana is a simple form, or more exactly, a symbol in the pure state, and therefore capable of becoming charged with any sort of symbolic content whatever? In the system of symbols constituted by all cosmologies, manawould simply be a valeur symbolique zero, that is to say, a sign marking the necessity of a symbolic content supplementary [my italics] to that with which the signified is already loaded, but which can take on any value required, provided only that this value still remains part of the available reserve and is not, as phonologists put it, a group-term.

Levi-Strauss Adds the Note:

Linguists have already been led to formulate hypotheses of this type. For example: "A zero phoneme is opposed to all the other phonemes in French in that it subsumes no differential chararacters and no constant phonetic value. On the contrary, the proper function of the zero phoneme is to be opposed to 'phoneme absence." (R. Jakobson and J. Lutz, "Notes on the French Phonemic Pattern" Word, vol. 5, no. 2 [August, 1949], p. 155). Similarly, if we schematize the conception I am posing here, it could almost be said that the function of notions like mana is to be opposed to the absence of signification, without comprehending by itself any particular signification.

The superabundance of the signifier, its supplementary character, is thus the result of a finitude, that is to say, the result of a lack which must be supplemented.

It can now be understood why the concept of freeplay is important in Levi-Strauss. His references to all sorts of games, notably to roulette, are very periodical, especially in his Conversations, in Race and History, and in The Savage Mind. This reference to the game or free-play is always caught up in a tension.

It is in tension with history, first of all. This is a classical problem, objections to which are I now well worn or used up. I shall simply indicate what seems to me the formality of the problem: by reducing history, Levi-Strauss has treated as it deserves a concept which has always been in complicatedness with a teleological and eschatological metaphysics, in other words, paradoxically, in complicatedness with that philosophy of presence to which it was believed history could be opposed. The thematic of historicity, although it seems to be a somewhat late arrival in philosophy, has always been required by the determination of being as presence. With or without etymology, and in spite of the classic antagonism which opposes these significations throughout all of classical thought, it could be shown that the concept of cognition has always called forth that of historia, if history is always the unity of a becoming, as tradition of truth or development of science or knowledge oriented toward the grant of truth in presence and self-presence, toward knowledge in consciousness-of-self. History has always been conceived as the movement of a resuscitation of history, a diversion between two presences. But if it is legitimate to suspect this concept of history, there is a risk, if it is reduced without an express statement of the problem I am indicating here, of falling back into an anhistoricism of a classical type, that is to say, in a determinate moment of the history of metaphysics. Such is the algebraic formality of the problem as I see it. More expressly, in the work of Levi-Strauss it must be recognized that the respect for structurality, for the internal originality of the structure, compels a neutralization of time and history. For example, the appearance of a new structure, of an original system, always comes about-and this is the very condition of its structural specificity-by a rupture with its past, its origin, and its cause. One can therefore describe what is distinctive to the structural organization only by not taking into account, in the very moment of this description, its past conditions: by failing to propound the problem of the passage from one structure to another, by putting history into parentheses. In this "structuralist" moment, the concepts of chance and hiatus are necessitous. And Levi-Strauss does in fact often appeal to them as he does, for instance, for that structure of structures, language, of which he says in the "Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss" that it "could only have been born in one fell pounce":

Whatever may have been the moment and the circumstances of its appearance in the scale of animal life, language could only have been born in one fell pounce. Things could not have set about signifying progressively. Following a conversion the study of which is not the concern of the social sciences, but rather of biology and psychology, a crossing over came about from a stage where nothing had a meaning to another where everything possessed it.

This standpoint does not prevent Levi-Strauss from recognizing the slowness, the process of maturing, the continuous drudge of factual conversions, history (for example, in Race and History). But, in accordance with an act which was also Rousseau's and Husserl's, he must "brush aside all the facts'* at the moment when he wishes to recapture the explicitness of a structure. Like Rousseau, he must always conceit of the origin of a new structure on the model of catastrophe -an overturning of nature in nature, a natural interruption of the natural sequence, a brushing aside of nature.

Besides the tension of freeplay with history, there is also the tension : of freeplay with presence. Freeplay is the dislocation of presence. The presence of an element is always a signifying and substitutive reference etched in a system of differences and the movement of a chain. Freeplay is always an interplay of absence and presence, but if it is to be radically envisaged, freeplay must be conceived of before the alternative of presence and absence; being must be conceived of as presence or absence beginning with the possibility of freeplay and not the other way around. If Levi-Strauss, better than any other, has brought to light the freeplay of repetition and the repetition of freeplay, one no less descries in his work a sort of ethic presence, an ethic of wistful for origins, an ethic of archaic and natural innocence, of a purity of presence and self-presence in speech-an ethic, wistful, and even remorse which he often presents as the motivation of the ethnological project when he moves toward archaic societies-exemplary societies in his eyes. These texts are well known.

As a turning toward the presence, lost or impossible, of the absent origin, this structuralist thematic of broken immediacy is thus the sad, negative, nostalgic, guilty, Rousseauist facet of the thinking of freeplay of which the Nietzschean affirmation—the joyous affirmation of the freeplay of the world and without truth, without origin, offered to an active exegesis-would be the other side. This asseveration then determines the non-center otherwise than as loss of the center. And it plays the game without security. For there is a sure freeplay: that which is limited to the substitution of given and existing, present, pieces. In absolute chance,

asseveration also surrenders itself to genetic deliberation, to the seminal adventure of the delineate.

There are thus two exegesis of exegesis, of structure, of sign, of freeplay. The one seeks to decode, dreams of deciphering, a truth or an origin which is free from freeplay and from the order of the sign, and lives like an exile the necessity of exegesis. The other, which is- no longer turned toward the origin, avows freeplay and tries to pass beyond man and. humanism, the name man being the name of that being who, throughout the history of metaphysics or of ontotheology—in other words, through the history of all of his history—has dreamed of full presence, the reassuring foundation, the origin and the end of the game. The second exegesis of exegesis, to which Nietzsche showed us the way, does not seek in ethnography, as Levi-Strauss wished, the "inspiration of a new humanism" (again from the "Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss").

There are more than enough intimations today to suggest we might perceive that these two exegesis of exegesis—which are absolutely antithetical even if we live them simultaneously and reconcile them in an obscure economy-together share the field which we call, in such a problematic fashion, the human sciences.

For my part, although these two exegesis must concede and foreground their difference and define their irreducibility, I do not believe that today there is any question of choosing-in the first place because here we are in a region (let's say, provisionally, a region of historicity) where the category of choice seems particularly fiddling; and in the second, because we must first try to conceit of the common ground, and the difference of this minutest difference. Here there is a sort of question, call it historical, of which we are only glimpsing today the conception, the formation, the gestation, the labour. I employ these words, I admit, with a gander toward the business of childbearing-but also with a gander toward those who, in a company from which I do not exclude myself, turn their eyes away in the face of the as yet unnameable which is portentous itself and which can do so, as is necessary whenever a birth is in the offing, only' under the species of the non-species, in the formless, mute, infant, and terrifying form of monstrosity.

Analysis of the Essay:

Derrida's essay "Structure,. Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences" was presented at a symposium on Structuralism at the John Hopkins University. Throughout the 1970s, it remained an

influential piece of critical writing in America. In this essay, he takes a circle as a metaphor for structure which defines its organization and shape in terms of its relation to its centre. According to Derrida, "The whole history of concept of structure must be thought of as a series of substitutions of centre for centre successively, and in a regulated fashion, the centre receives different forms or names. The history of metaphysics, like the history of the West, is the history of these metaphors and metonymies. Its matrix is the determination of being as presence in all the senses of this world. It would be possible to show that all the names related to fundamentals, to principles or to the centre have always designated the constant of a pressure.

Derrida believes that a text does not have a inexpugnable of meaning, on the other hand, it has potentials for meaning and it admits of several exegesis (certainly more than one), into what Derrida has called a "free play" of meaning.

Derrida borrows a set of binary distinctions from Saussurean linguistics (such as nature/culture, raw/cooked etc.) to contest the claims of Western metaphysics. Language Derrida believes is a system of signs and the relation between language and reality is taken as the relation between a set of signiflers and a corresponding set of signified. As Rajeev Patke rightly puts it:

"A signifier, within language, refers and corresponds to a mattered outside a language. But the two-signifier and mattered-are not the same, they are separated by a difference which the humanistic tradition tries to forget. Thus for exemplar, God and the word "God" are different in that the word is an imperious set of sounds or signs which refers and defers to the concept within the word "God" but prior to the word itself, and in a sense independent of it".

Derrida in this essay contests the claim of western metaphysics with reference to speech and writings. Logos, in western metaphysics, is the divine will or the word of God. Derrida comments on the metaphysical background of the spoken word and the written word in the following way :

"God understanding is the other name for logos as self-presence. The logos can be fathomless and self present. It can be produced as auto-affection, only through voice: an order of the signifier by which the subject takes from itself to itself, does not borrow outside of itself the signifier that emits and affects it at the same time. Such is at least the experience of the voice".

Thus, to Derrida the traditional concepts of speech and writing are rlogocentric". Apart from "logocentricism", Derrida introduces another term i'graphocentrism", S.Ravindran rightly points out that, "a grapheme according 1 to traditional concept is a pure signifier, which means that a unit of writing lhas no relevance other than simply representing a voice. Therefore Igraphocentrism can mean the shift in importance from speech to writing, lit is a reversal of the traditional concept of the superiority of speech or the •spoken word over the writing or the written word. There are critics who •observe that Derrida is effecting a shift from logocentrism to graphocentrism."

Derrida groups metaphysics, linguistics and structuralism into one I category. Because all these three disciplines have taken writing as secondary jas something that exist only to represent the voice that it embodies, the I voice that reveals the meaning, Derrida calls this concept of writing the ("vulgar concept". He makes an attempt as it were to liberate language and criticism from the totalizing and totalitarian influences of metaphysics.

The new concept of writing proposed by Derrida has three 'complex I words: "difference", "trace" and "archewriting". Difference has two aspects: differing and deferring. Deferring is the one not being the other. It is spatial. Deferring is something being delayed or postponed. It is carnal. Each sign according to Derrida performs two functions: differing and deferring. Thus, the structure of the sign is conditioned by differing and deferring, not by the signifier and the signified. S.Ravindran rightly, suggests: the structure of the sign is difference which means that a sign is something that is not like another sign and something that is not the sign. For example, we distinguish the word "three" both in speech and writing. They differ from each word and reveal the identity. In fact, every sign differs from every other sign. This difference is one of the two forces of each sign. The other force of the sign is its power of deferment, the capacity to postpone. Therefore, a sign is something that is not there. For example, the "rose" in a poem begins to reveal meaning only when we realize that it is not the flower which we see in reality. It has to be something else, what it is has to be discovered. Therefore, half of the sign is what it is has to be discovered. Therefore, half of the sign is what it is not and the other half is what is not there. These two forces inhabit each sign. It follows that the sign has to disappear to give meaning. That means, each sign is half acceptable and half insufficient, because it does not convey the idea perfectly, but it has to be used under necessity since no more acceptable sign is available. No sign is fully adequate. And therefore every sign is written "under erasure", "sous

rapture", a term that Derrida coins to express "the inadequacy of the sign".

While accepting Saussure's basic tenets of language Derrida reinterprets them in order to evolve his own concept of deconstruction in language. For instance, he has put "difference" in place of Saussure's "difference", which means French sense of "deferment" together with Saussure's meaning of "difference". Derrida goes beyond Saussure in his emphasis on deferment which alludes that the present is constantly postponed and the ultimate remains unsaid. The nature of language which conveys meaning through differences between linguistic signs and where the sign present is marked by the delineates of signs absent, precludes the possibility of saying anything with finality.

Derrida groups literature and other allied disciplines like psychology, philosophy, politics, linguistics etc. under one head called "human sciences". He has dissolved the distinction between philosophy in the wider sense including the philosophy of language and literature. Writing because of the free play of differences and the use of tropes is always marked by anatomizing. Deconstruction implies that the writer himself in biiilds whatever he builds. It views poetic structure as temporal resulting in free play of signifiers.

Anatomizing attempts to demolish the myth of language by debunking the metaphysical foundation of our understanding of language. Commenting on Derrida's concept of writing, Gayatri Spivak states that it is "something that carries within itself the trace of enduring disparity; the structure of the psyche, the structure of the sign. To this structure, Derrida gives the name writing". Further elaborating the concept of writing Spivak writes: "Writing then is the name of the structure always already inhabited by the trace. This is a broader concept than the existential concepts of writing, which denotes an existential system of notation on the material substance."

According to B Das and J.M.Mohanty, in his essay, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Expatiate of the Human Sciences", Derrida points out that "as there is no origin or centre outside, the expatiate for establishing boundaries for the play of linguistic signifiers, each sign in itself is not the thing or presence that offers itself to exegesis but the exegesis of other signs; a centre bad-mouths the structurality of the structure by posting an objective reality."

Derrida believes that literature is only a free play of signifiers without a centre. He argues that "far from presenting any meaning words carry with them a certain absence or indeterminacy of meaning."

Derrida has established that the Western text has made language obsequious to the presence of God, the logos, phone, and subjectivity. His theory of deconstruction aims at liberating language from the traditional western concept of text along with ways of dealing with it. It is in this regard that Derrida proposes "dissemination" as an alternative to the polysemy of exegesis. In the words of Derrida:

"There are thus two exegeses of exegesis, of structure, of sign, of free play. The sign seeks to decipher, dreams of decoding a truth or an origin which is free from free play and from the order of the sign, and lives like an exile the necessity of exegesis. The other, which is no longer turned towards the origin, affirms free play and tries to pass beyond man and humanism, the history of metaphysics or of onto theology in other words, through the history of all his history has dreamed of full presence the reassuring foundation the origin and the end of the game."

Thus, according to Derrida, in spite of the "differance" (difference + deference) that the author makes between one word and another, he can never express his meaning accurately and exactly. He must always mean more than and something different from that he indicates through writing. The critic should take the words of the poet or writer not as outward visible garb of his meaning but merely as "trace" or indicator or his meaning. Every word used by an author is to be taken as under erasure. Thus, the critic taking his cue from the "trace" must go out on a quest of a closer reincarnation to the actual meaning intended by the author. Thus criticism becomes an endless pursuit and the critic becomes a co-creator who takes the text over from the author. The theory of cognition takes off well but it does not land us anywhere. Therein lies both the strength and weakness of this theory, and Derrida's essay prove this point.

• ELAINE S HO WALTER: "FEMINIST CRITICISM IN OUTDOORS"

1. Pluralism and the Feminist Critique

Women have no outdoors in them,

They are provident instead

Content in the tight hot cell of their hearts

To eat dusty bread -LOUISE BOGAN,

"Women" In a splendidly facetious dialogue of 1975, Carolyn Heilbrun and Catharine Stimpson identified two poles of feminist

literary criticism. The first of these modes, righteous, angry, and admonitory, they compared to the Old Testament, "looking for the sins and errors of the past". The second mode, disinterested and seeking "the benevolence of imagination," they compared to the New Testament. Both are necessary, they terminated, for only the Jeremiahs of ideology can lead us out of the "Egypt of female servitude" to-the promised land of humanism. Matthew Arnold also thought that bookish critics might perish in the wilderness before they reached the promised land of evenhandedness; Heilbrun and Stimpson were neo-Arnoldian as befitted members of the Columbia and Barnard faculties. But if, in 1981, feminist literary critics are still wandering in the wilderness, we are in good company; for, as Geoffrey Hartman tells us, all criticism is in the outdoors. Feminist critics may be startled to find ourselves in this band of theoretical homesteaders, since in the American literary tradition the outdoors has been an exclusively masculine domain. Yet between feminist ideology and the liberal ideal of disinterestedness lies the wilderness of theory, which we too must make our home.

Until very recently, feminist criticism has not had a theoretical basis; it has been an existential orphan in the theoretical storm. In 1975, I was persuaded that no theoretical dictum could adequately account for the varied methodologies and ideologies which called themselves feminist reading or writing. By the next year, Annette Kolodny had added her observation that feminist literary criticism appeared "more like a set of interchangeable strategies than any consequent school or shared goal frontage." Since then, the expressed goals have not been notably unified. Black critics protest the "massive silence" of feminist criticism about black and Third-Work women writers and call for a black feminist aesthetic that would deal with both racial and sexual politics. Marxist feminists wish to focus on class along with gender as a crucial determinant of literary production. Literarj historians want to uncover a lost tradition. Critics trained in deconstructionist methodologies wish to "synthesize a literary criticism that is both textua and feminist." Freudian and Lacanian critics want to theorize about women's relationship to language and signification.

An early obstacle to constructing a theoretical framework for feminis criticism was the unwillingness of many women to limit or bound an expressive and dynamic enterprise. The openness of feminist criticism appealed particularlj to Americans who ascertained the structuralist, post-structuralist, ant deconstructionist debates of the 1970s as arid and falsely objective, the breviary of a baneful masculine expatiate from which many feminists wished to escape. Recalling in A

Room of One's Own how she had been prohibited from entering the university library, the symbolic sanctuary of the male logos, Virginia Woolf wisely observed that while it is "unpleasant to be locked out ... it is worse, perhaps, to be locked in". Advocates of the antitheoretical position breviary their descent from Woolf and from other feminist visionaries, such as Mary Daly, Adrienne Rich, and Marguerite Duras, who had lampooned the sterile narcissism of male scholarship and celebrated women's fortunate exclusion from its patriarchal raethodolatry. Thus for some, feminist criticism was an act of resistance to theory, a ball game with existing canons and judgments, what Josephine Donovan calls "a mode of denegation within a fundamental dialectic." As Judith Fetterley declared in her book, The Resisting Reader, feminist criticism has been characterized by "a resistance to codification and a refusal to have its parameters precociously set." I have discussed elsewhere, with considerable sympathy, the suspicion of monolithic systems and the rejection of scientism in literary study that many feminist critics have voiced. While scientific criticism struggled to purge itself of the subjective, feminist criticism reasserted the authority of experience.

Yet it now appears that what looked like a theoretical deadlock was actually an evolutionary phase. The ethics of awakening have been suc¬ceeded, at least in the universities, by a second stage characterized by anxiety about the isolation of feminist criticism from a critical commu-nity increasingly theoretical in its interests and indifferent to women's writing. The question of how feminist criticism should define itself with relation to the new critical theories and theorists has occasioned sharp debate in Europe and the United States. Nina Auerbach has noted the absence of dialogue and asks whether feminist criticism itself must accept responsibility:

Feminist critics seem particularly disinclined to define themselves to the uninitiated. There is a sense in which our sisterhood has become too powerful; as a school, our belief in ourself is so potent that we decline communication with the networks of power and respectability we say we want to change.

But rather than descendent communication with these networks, feminist criticism has indeed spoken directly to them, in their own media: PMLA, Diacritics, Glyph, Tel Quel, New Literary History, and Critical Inquiry. For the feminist critic seeking explication, the accrual of communiques may itself prove confusing.

There are two distinct modes of feminist criticism, and to confound them (as most commentators do) is to remain perpetually bemused by

their theoretical plausibilities. The first mode is ideological; it is con¬cerned with the feminist as reader, and it offers feminist readings of texts which consider the images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omissions and fallacies about women in criticism, and woman-as¬sign in semiotic systems. This is not all feminist reading can do; it can be a liberating geeky act, as Adrienne Rich proposes:

A radical critique of literature, feminist in its impulse, would take the work first of all as a clue to how we live, how we have been living, how we have been led to imagine ourselves, how our language has trapped as well as liberated us, how the very act of naming has been till now a male right, and how we can begin to see and name-and therefore live-afresh.

This bracing stumble (upon) with literature, which I will call feminist reading or the feminist critique, is in essence a mode of exegesis, one of many which any complex text will accommodate and permit. It is very difficult to propose theoretical concinnity in an activity which by, its na¬ture is so eclectic and wide-ranging, although as a critical practice feminist reading has certainly been very cogent. But in the free play of the elucidative field, the feminist critique can only compete with alternative readings, all of which have the built-in obsolescence of Buicks, cast away as newer readings take their place. As Kolodny, the most cosmopolitan theorist of feminist exegesis, has acknowledged:

All the feminist is asserting, then, is her own equivalent right to liberate new (and perhaps different) significances from these same texts; and, at the same time, her right to choose which features of a text she takes as relevant because she is, after all, asking new and different questions of it. In the process, she claims neither defmitiveness nor structural completeness for her different readings and reading systems, but only their usefulness in recognizing the particular achievements of woman-as-author and their applicability in conscionably decoding woman-as-sign.

Rather than being discouraged by these limited objectives, Kolodny found them the happy cause of the "playful pluralism" of feminist critical theory, a pluralism which she believes to be "the only critical stance consistent with the current status of the larger women's movement." Her feminist critic dances adroitly through the theoretical minefield.

Keenly aware of the political issues involved and presenting brilliant arguments, Kolodny nonetheless fails to convince me that

feminist criticism must altogether abandon its hope "of establishing some basic conceptual model." If we see our critical job as exegesis and exegesis, we must be content with pluralism as our critical attitude. But if we wish to ask questions about the process and the contexts of writing, if we genuinely wish to define ourselves to the curbstone, we cannot rule out the prospect of theoretical consensus at this early stage.

All feminist criticism is in some sense revisionist, questioning the acceptability of accepted metaphysical structures, and indeed most contemporary American criticism claims to be revisionist too. The most exciting and comprehensive case for this "revisionary imperative" is made by Sandra Gilbert: at its most ambitious, she asserts, feminist criticism "wants to decode and explicate all the cloaked questions and answers that have always shadowed the connections between textuality and sexuality, genre and gender, psychosexual identity and cultural authority." But in practice, the revisionary feminist critique is redressing a resentment and is built upon existing models. No one would deny that feminist criticism has aptitudes to other contemporary critical practices and methodologies and that the best work is also the most fully informed. Nonetheless, the feminist obsession with correcting, modifying, supplementing, revising, humanizing, or even attacking male critical theory keeps us dependent upon it and retards our progress in solving our own theoretical problems. What I mean here by "male critical theory" is a concept of creativity, literary history, or literary exegesis based entirely on male experience and put forward as universal. So long as we look to androcentric models for our most basic principles-even if we revise them by adding the feminist frame of reference—we are learning nothing new. And when the process is so one-sided, when male critics brag of their ignorance of feminist criticism, it is daunting to find feminist critics still anxious for approval from the "white fathers" who will not listen or reply. Some feminist critics have taken upon themselves a revisionism which becomes a kind of homage; they have made Lacan the ladies' man of Diacritics and have forced Pierre Macherey into those dark alleys of the psyche where Engels feared to tread. According to Christiane Makward, the problem is even more serious in France than in the United States: "If neofeminist thought in France seems to have ground to a halt", she writes, "it is because it has continued to feed on the expatiate of the masters."

It is time for feminist criticism to decide whether between religion and revision we can claim any firm theoretical ground of our own. In calling for a feminist criticism that is genuinely women centered, independent, and intellectually consequent, I do not mean to plump (for) the separatist fantasies of radical feminist visionaries or to exlude from

our critical practice a variety of intellectual tools. But we need to ask much more searchingly what we want to know and how we can find answers to the questions that come from our experience. I do not think that feminist criticism can find a usable past in the androcentric critical tradition. It has more to learn from, women's studies than from English studies, more to learn from international feminist theory than from another seminar on the masters. It must find its own subject, its own system, its own theory, and its own voice. As Rich writes of Emily Dickinson, in her poem "I Am in Danger-Sir-," we must choose to have the argument out at last on our own premises.

2. Defining the Feminine: Gynocritics and the Woman's Text

A woman's writing is always feminine; it cannot help being feminine;

> at its best it is most feminine; the only difficulty lies in defining
>
> what we mean by feminine. —VIRGINIA WOOLF

It is impossible to define a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice will never be theorized, enclosed, encoded-which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist.

—HELENE CIXOUS, "The Laugh of the Medusa"

In the past decade, I believe, this process of defining the feminine has started to take place. Feminist criticism has gradually shifted its center from revisionary readings to a sustained investigation of literature by women. The second mode of feminist criticism begot by this process is the study of women as writers, and its subjects are the history, styles, themes, genres, and structures of writing by women; the psychodynamics of female creativity; the trajectory of the individual or collective female career; and the evolution and laws of a female literary tradition. No English term exists for such a specialized critical expatiate, and so I have invented the term "gynocritics w. Unlike the feminist critique, gynocritics offers many theoretical opportunities. To see women's writing as our primary subject forces us to make the leap to a new abstract vantage point and to redefine the nature of the theoretical problem before us. It is no longer the ideological quandary of attuning revisionary pluralisms but the essential question of difference. How can we constitute women as a distinct literary group? What is the difference of women's writing?

Patricia Meyer Spacks, I think, was the first academic critic to notice this shift 'from an androcentric to a gynocentric feminist

criticism. In The Female Imagination (1975), she pointed out that few feminist theorists had concerned themselves with women's writing. Simone de Beauvoir's treatment of women writers in The Second Sex "always suggests a priori aptness to take them less seriously than their masculine counterparts"; Mary Ellmann, in Thinking about Women, characterized women's literary success as escape from the categories of womanhood; and, according to Spacks, Kate Millett, in Sexual Politics, "has little interest in woman imaginative writers.'" Spacks' wide-ranging study pioneered a new period of feminist literary history and criticism which asked, again and again, how women's writing had been different, how womanhood itself shaped women's creative expression. In such books as Ellen Moers' Literary Women (1976), my own A Literature of Their Own (1977), Nina Baym's Woman's Fiction (1978), Gilbert and Susan Gubar's The Madwoman in the Attic (1979), and Margaret Romans' Women Writers and Poetic Identity (1980), and in hundreds of essays and papers, women's writing asserted itself as the central project of feminist literary study.

This shift in emphasis has also taken place in European feminist criticism. To date, most commentary on French feminist critical expatiate has shell-shocked its fundamental discrepancy from the existencial American frontage, its unfamiliar intellectual grounding in linguistics, Marxism, neo-Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Derridean assay. Despite these differences, however, the new French feminisms have much in common with radical American feminist theories in terms of intellectual affiliations and rhetorical energies. The concept ofecriturefeminine, the inscription of the female body and female difference in language and text, is a significant theoretical formulation in French feminist criticism, although it describes a Utopian possibility rather than a literary practice. Helene Cixous, one of the leading advocates of ecriture feminine, has admitted that, with only a few exceptions, "there has not yet been any writing that inscribes femininity", and Nancy Miller explains that ecriturefeminine "privileges a textuality of the avant-garde, a literary production of the late twentieth century, and it is therefore fundamentally a hope, if not a blueprint, for the future.'" Nonetheless, the concept of ecriture feminine provides a way of talking about women's writing which reaffirms the value of the feminine and identifies the theoretical project of feminist criticism as the analysis of difference. In recent years, the translations of important works by Julia Kristeva, Cixous, and Luce Irigaray and the excellent collection New French Feminisms have made French criticism much more affordable to American feminist scholars.

English feminist criticism, which integrates French feminist and Marxist theory but is more traditionally acquainted to textual exegesis, is also moving toward a focus on women's writing. The emphasis in each country falls somewhat differently: English feminist criticism, essentially Marxist, stresses oppression; French feminist criticism, essentially psychoanalytic, stresses repression; American feminist criticism, essentially textual, stresses expression. All, however, have become gynocentric. All are struggling to find a terminology that can rescue the feminine from its stereotypical associations with inferiority.

Defining the unique difference of women's writing, as Woolf and Cixous have warned, must present a slippery and demanding task. Is difference a matter of style? Genre? Experience? Or is it produced by the reading process, as some textual critics would maintain? Spacks calls the difference of women's writing a "delicate divergency", testifying to the subtle and elusive nature of the feminine practice of writing. Yet the delicate divergency of the woman's text challenges us to respond with equal cate and accurateness to the small but crucial deflections, the cumulative weightings of experience and ostracism, that have marked the history of women's writing. Before we can chart this history, we must uncover it, patiently and meticulously; our theories must be firmly grounded in reading and research. But we have the opportunity, through gynocritics, to learn something solid, abiding, and real about the relation of women to literary culture.

Theories of women's writing presently make use of four models of difference: biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and cultural. Each is an effort to define and differentiate the qualities of the woman writer and the woman's text; each model also represents a school of gynocentric feminist criticism with its own favorite texts, styles, and methods. They overlap but are roughly successional in that each integrates the one before. I shall try now to sort out the various argotlogies and assumptions of these four models of difference and appraise their usefulness.

3. Women's Writing and Woman's Body

More body, hence more writing.

—Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa"

Organic or biological criticism is the most extreme statement of gender difference, of a text perpetually marked by the body: anatomy is textuality. Biological criticism is also one of the most sibylline and baffling theoretical formulations of feminist criticism. Simply to invoke

anatomy risks a return to the crude essentialism, the phallic and ovarian theories of art, that downtrodden women in the past. Victorian physicians believed that women's physiological functions disported about twenty percent of their creative energy from brain activity. Victorian anthropologists believed that the frontal lobes of the male brain were heavier and more developed than female lobes and thus that women were underling in intelligence.

While feminist criticism rejects the criterion of literal biological inferiority, some theorists seem to have accepted the metaphorical implications of female biological difference in writing. In The Madwoman in the Attic, for example, Gilbert and Gubar structure their analysis of women's writing around metaphors of literary paternity. "In patriarchal western culture", they maintain, "...the text's author is a father, a primogenitor, a creator, an aesthetic paterfamilias whose pen is an instrument of generative power like his penis." Lacking phallic authority, they go on to suggest, women's writing is profoundly marked by the anxiousness ties of this difference: "If the pen is a metaphorical penis, from what organ can females generate texts?"

To this rhetorical question Gilbert and Gubar offer no reply; but it is a serious question of much feminist theoretical expatiate. Those critics who, like myself, would protest the fundamental analogy might reply that women generate texts from the brain or that the word-processor of the near future, with its compactly coded microchips, its inputs and outputs, is a metaphorical womb. The metaphor of literary paternity, as Auerbach has pointed out in her review of The Madwoman, ignores "an equally timeless and, for me, even more hard handed metaphorical equation between literary creativity and childbirth." Certainly metaphors of literary maternity predominated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the process of literary creation is analogically much more similar to gestation, labour, and delivery than it is to insemination. Describing Thackeray's plan for Henry Esmond, for example, Douglas Jerrold jovially remarked, "You have heard, I suppose, that Thackeray is big with twenty parts, and unless he is wrong in his time, expects the first installment at Christmas." (If to write is metaphorically to give birth, from what organ can males generate texts?)

Some radical feminist critics, primarily in France but also in the United States, insist that we must read these metaphors as more than playful; that we must seriously rethink and redefine biological differentiation and its relation to women's unity. They argue that "women's writing proceeds from the body, that our sexual

differentiation is also our source." In Of Woman Born, Rich explains her belief that

female biology...has far more radical indication than we have yet come to accumulate. Patriarchal thought has limited female biology to its own narrow specifications. The feminist vision has blenched from female biology for these reasons; it will, I believe, come to view our physicality as a resource rather than a destiny. In order to live a fully human life, we require not only control of our bodies...we must touch the unity and resonance of our physicality, the corporeal ground of our intelligence.

Feminist criticism written in the biological vantage point generally stresses the importance of the body as a source of imagery. Alicia Ostriker, for example, arguas that contemporary American women poets use a franker, more pervasive anatomical imagery than their male counterparts and that this insistent body language refuses the spurious eminence that comes. at the price of disaffirming the flesh. In a fascinating essay on Whitman and Dickinson, Terence Diggory shows that physical nakedness, so potent a poetic symbol of authenticity for Whitman and other male poets, had very different connotations for Dickinson and her successors, who associated nakedness with the objectified or sexually exploited female nude and who chose instead protective images of the guarded self.

Feminist criticism which itself tries to be biological, to write from the critic's body, has been bosom, confessional, often innovative in style and form. Rachel Blau DuPlessis' "Washing Blood", the introduction to a special issue of Feminist Studies on the subject of motherhood, proceeds, in short lyrical paragraphs, to describe her own experience in adopting a child, to recount her dreams and nightmares, and to meditate upon the "healing unification of body and mind based not only on the lived experiences of motherhood as a social institution...but also on a biological power speaking through us." Such criticism makes itself contumaciously vulnerable, virtually bares its throat to the knife, since our professional taboos against self-revelation are so strong. When it succeeds, however, it achieves the power and the dignity of art. Its existence is an implicit stricture to women critics who continue to write, according to Rich, "from somewhere outside their female bodies". In comparison to this flowing confessional criticism, the tight-lipped Olympian intelligence of such texts as Elizabeth Hardwick's Seduction and Betrayal or Susan Sontag's Illness as Metaphor can seem arid and feigned.

Yet in its obsessions with the "corporeal ground of our intelligence", feminist biocriticism can also become cruelly traditional. There is a sense in which the exhibition of bloody wounds becomes an induction ritual quite separate and disconnected from critical insight. And as the editors of the journal Questionsfeministes point out, "it is...dangerous to place the body at the center of a search for female identity. ...The themes of otherness and of the Body merge together, because the most visible difference between men and women, and the only one we know for sure to be permanent...is indeed the difference in body. This difference has been used as a guise to 'justify' full power of one sex over the other** (trans. Yvonne Rochette-Ozzello, NFF, p. 218). The study of biological imagery in women's writing is useful and important as long as we understand that factors other than anatomy are involved in it. Ideas about the body are fundamental to understanding how women develop a thought their situation in society; but there can be no expression of the body which is unmediated by linguistic, social, and literary structures. The difference of woman's literary practice, therefore, must be sought (in Miller's words) in "the body of her writing and not the writing of her body."

4. Women's Writing and Women's Language

The women say, the language you speak poisons your glottis tongue palate lips. They say, the language you speak is made up of words that are killing you. They say, the language you speak is made up of signs that rightly speaking appoint what men have appropriated.

—MONIQUE WITTIG, Les Guerilleres

Linguistic and textual theories of women's writing ask whether men and women use language differently; whether sex differences in language use can be theorized in terms of biology, socialization, or culture; whether women can create new languages of their own; and whether speaking, reading, and writing are all gender marked. American, French, and British feminist critics have all drawn attention to the philosophical, linguistic, and practical problems of women's use of language, and the debate over language is one of the most exciting areas in gynocritics. Poets and writers have led the attack on what Rich calls "the oppressor's language", a language sometimes criticized as sexist, sometimes as abstract. But the problem goes well beyond reformist efforts to purge language of its sexist aspects. As Nelly Furman explains, "It is through the medium of language that we define and categorize areas of difference and similarity, which in turn allow us to apprehend the world around us. Male-centered categorizations predominate in American English and subtly shape our understanding

and perception of reality; this is why attention is increasingly directed to the innately hard handed aspects for women of a male-constructed language system." According to Carolyn Burke, the language system is at the center of French feminist theory:

The central issue in much recent women's writing in France is to find and use an appropriate female language. Language is the place to begin: a prise de conscience must be followed by a prise de la parole. ...In this view, the very forms of the dominant mode of discourse show the mark of the dominant masculine ideology. Hence, when a woman writes or speaks herself into existence, she is forced to speak in something like a foreign tongue, a language with which she may be personally uncomfortable.

Many French feminists advocate a revolutionary linguism, an oral break from the dictatorship of patriarchal speech. Annie Leelerc, in Parole de femme, calls on women "to invent a language that is not hard handed a language that does not leave speechless but that loosens the tongue" (trans. Courtivron, NFF, p. 179). **Chantal Chawaf,** in an essay on "La chair linguistique," connects biofemim'sm and linguism in the view that women's language and a genuinely feminine practice of writing will articulate the body:

In order to reconnect the book with the body and with pleasure, we must disintellectualize writing. ...And this language, as it develops, will not decadent and dry up, will not go back to the fleshless academicism, the stereotypical and servile expatiate that we reject. ... Feminine language must, by its very nature, work on life passionately, scientifically, poetically, politically in order to make it bulletproof. [Trans. Rochette-Ozzello, NFF, pp. 177-78]

But scholars who want a women's language that is intellectual and theoretical, that works inside the academy, are faced with what seems like an impossible paradox, as **Xaviere Gauthier** has lamented: "As long as women remain silent, they will be outside the historical process. But, if they begin to speak and write as men do, they will enter history repressed and alienated; it is a history that, logically speaking, their speech should disrupt" (trans. Marilyn A. August, NFF, pp. 162-63). What we need, **Mary Jacobus** has proposed, is a women's writing that works within "male" expatiate but works "ceaselessly to deconstruct it: to write what cannot be written," and according to **Shoshana** Felmaxi, "the challenge facing the woman today is nothing less than to 'reinvent' language,... to speak not only against, but outside of the specular phallogocentric'structure, to establish a expatiate the status of which would no longer be defined by the phallacy of masculine meaning,"

Beyond rhetoric, what can linguistic, historical, and anthropological research tell us about the prospects for a women's language? First of all, the concept of a women's language is not original with feminist criticism; it is very ancient and appears frequently in legendry and fable. In such myths, the essence of women's language is its secrecy; what is really being described is the male fantasy of the enigmatic nature of the feminine.

Herodotus, for example, reported that the Amazons were able linguists who easily mastered the languages' of their male antagonists, although men could never learn the women's tongue. In The White Goddess, Robert Graves romantically argues that a women's language existed in a matriarchal stage of prehistory; after a great battle of the sexes, the matriarchy was overthrown and the women's language went underground, to survive in the mysterious credos of Eleusis and Corinth and the witch cliques of Western Europe. Travelers and missionaries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought back accounts of "women's languages" among American Indians, Africans, and Asians (the differences in linguistic structure they reported were usually superficial). There is some ethnographic evidence that in certain cultures women have evolved a private form of communication out of their need to resist the silence assessed upon them in public life. In elatedness religions, for example, women, more frequently than men, speak in tongues, a phenomenon attributed by anthropologists to their relative inarticulateness in formal religious expatiate. But such ritualized and unintelligible female "languages" are scarcely cause for rejoicing; indeed, it was because witches were suspected of esoteric knowledge and possessed speech that they were burned.

From a political vantage point, there are interesting parallels between the feminist problem of a women's language and the recurring "language issue" in the general history of decolonized. After a revolution, a new state must decide which language to make official: the language that is "psychologically immediate," that allows "the kind of force that speaking one's mother tongue permits"; or the language that "is an avenue to the wider community of modern culture," a community to whose movements of thought only "foreign" languages can give access. The language issue in feminist criticism has emerged, in a sense, after our revolution, and it reveals the tensions in the women's movement between those who would stay outside the academic establishments and the institutions of criticism and those who would enter and even vanquish them.

The advocacy of a women's language is thus a political gesture that also carries brooding angina emotional force. But despite its polarizing appeal, the concept of a women's language is riddled with difficulties.

Unlike Welsh, Breton, Swahili, or Amharic, that is, languages of minority or colonized groups, there is no mother tongue, no genderlect spoken by the female population in a society, which differs significantly from the dominant language. English and American linguists agree that "there is absolutely no evidence that would suggest the sexes are preprogrammed to develop structurally different lexical systems." Furthermore, the many specific differences in male and female speech, inflection, and language use that have been identified cannot be explained in terms of "two separate sex-specific languages" but need to be considered instead in terms of styles, strategies, and contexts of linguistic performance. Efforts at quantitative analysis of language in texts by men or women, such as Mary Hiatt's computerized study of contemporary fiction, The Way Women Write (1977), can easily be attacked for treating words apart from their meanings and purposes. At a higher level, analyses which look for "feminine style" in the repetition of stylistic devices, image patterns, and syntax in women's writing tend to addle constitutive forms with the over determined results of literary choice. Language and style are never raw and instinctual but are always the products of innumerous factors, of genre, tradition, memory, and context.

The appropriate task for feminist criticism, I believe, is to concentrate on women's access to language, on the available lexical range from which words can be selected, on the ideological and cultural determinants of expression. The problem is not that language is insufficient to express women's consciousness but that women have been denied the full resources of language and have been forced into silence, euphemism, or circumlocution. In a series of drafts for a lecture on women's writing (drafts which she discarded or suppressed), Woolf protested against the suppression which cut off female access to language. Comparing herself to Joyce, Woolf noted the differences between their verbal territories; "Now men are shocked if a woman says what she feels (as Joyce does). Yet literature which is always pulling down blinds is not literature. All that we have ought to be expressed-mind and body—a process of implausible difficulty and danger." "All that we have ought to be expressed-mind and body." Rather than wishing to limit women's linguistic range, we must fight to open and extend it. The holes in expatiate, the blanks and gaps and silences, are not the spaces where female consciousness reveals itself but the blinds of a "prison-house of language." Women's literature is still habituated by the ghosts of restrained language, and until we have discarded those ghosts, it ought not to be in language that we base our theory of difference.

5. Women's Writing and Woman's Psyche

Psychoanalytically accustomed feminist criticism locates the difference of women's writing in the author's psyche and in the relation of gender to the creative process. It integrates the biological and linguistic models of gender difference in a theory of the female psyche or self, shaped by the body, by the development of language, and by sex-role socialization. Here too there are many difficulties to overcome; the Freudian model requires constant revision to make it gynocentric. In one grating early example of Freudian reductivism, Theodor Reik suggested that women have fewer writing blocks than men because their bodies are constructed to facilitate release: "Writing, as Freud told us at the end of his life, is connected with urinating, which physiologically is easier for a woman-they have a wider bladder." Generally, however, psychoanalytic criticism has focused not on the commodious bladder (could this be the organ from which females generate texts?) but on the absent phallus. Penis convetousness, the castration complex, and the Oedipal phase have become the Freudian coordinates defining women's relationship to language, fantasy, and culture. Currently the French psychoanalytic school dominated by Lacan has extended unmanning into a total metaphor for female literary and linguistic disadvantage. Lacan theorizes that the accession of language and the entry into its symbolic order occurs at the Oedipal phase in which the child accepts his or her gender identity. This stage requires an acceptance of the phallus as a blessed signification and a consequent female displacement, as Cora Kaplan has explained:

> The phallus as a signifier has a central, crucial position in language, for if language embodies the patriarchal law of the culture, its basic meanings refer to the intermittent process by which sexual difference and subjectivity are adscititios.... Thus the little girl's access to the Symbolic, i.e., to language and its laws, is always negative and/or mediated by intro-subjective relation to a third term, for it is characterized by an identification with lack.

In psychoanalytic terms, "lack" has traditionally been associated with the feminine, although Lac(k)anian critics can now make their statements linguistically. Many feminists believe that psychoanalysis could become a powerful tool for literary criticism, and recently there has been a renewed interest in Freudian theory. But feminist criticism based in Freudian or post-Freudian psychoanalysis must continually struggle with the problem of feminine disadvantage and lack. In The Madwoman in the Attic, Gilbert and Gubar carry out a feminist revision of Harold Bloom's Oedipal model of literary history as a strife between

fathers and sons and accept the essential psychoanalytic definition of the woman artist as dispossessed, bereaved, and excluded. In their view, the nature and "difference" of women's writing lies in its troubled and even frustrated relationship to female identity; the woman writer experiences her own gender as "a painful obstacle or even a enfeebling dearth". The nineteenth-century woman writer inscribed her own sickness, her madness, her anorexia, her agoraphobia, and her paralysis in her texts; and although Gilbert and Gubar are dealing specifically with the nineteenth century, the range of their implication and quotation suggests a more general thesis:

Thus the loneliness of the female artist, her feelings of estrangement from male predecessors coupled with her need for sisterly harbingers and successors, her urgent sense of her need for a female audience together with her fear of the antagonism of male readers, her culturally conditioned timidity about self-dramatization, her dread of the evangelical authority of art, her anxiety about the impropriety of female invention all these phenomena of "inferiorization" mark the woman writer's struggle for.artistic self-definition and differentiate her efforts at self-creation from those of her male counterpart. [Madwoman, p. 50]

In "Emphasis Added," Miller takes another approach to the problem of negativity in psychoanalytic criticism. Her strategy is to expand Freud's view of female creativity and to show how criticism of women's texts has frequently been unfair because it has been based in Freudian expectations. In his essay "The Relation of the Poet to Daydreaming" (1908), Freud maintained that the unsatisfied dreams .and desires of women are chiefly erotic; these are the desires that shape the intrigues of women's fiction. In contrast, the dominant fantasies behind men's plots are egoistic and aspiring as well as erotic. Miller shows how women's plots have been granted or denied plausibility in terms of their congruence to this phallocentric model and that a gynocentric reading reveals a repressed egoistic/aspiring fantasy in women's writing as well as in men's. Women's novels which are centrally concerned with fantasies of romantic love belong to the category disdained by George Eliot and other serious women writers as "silly novels"; the smaller number of women's novels which inscribe a fantasy of power imagine a world for women outside of love, a world, however, made impossible by social boundaries.

There has also been some interesting feminist literary criticism based on alternatives to Freudian psychoanalytic theory: Annis Pratt's Jungian history of female archetypes, Barbara Rigney's Laingian study of the divided self in women's fiction, and Ann Douglas' Eriksonian

analysis of inner space in nineteenth-century women's writing. And for the past few years, critics have been thinking about the possibilities of a new feminist psychoanalysis that does not revise Freud but instead emphasizes the development and construction of gender identities.

The most dramatic and promising new work in feminist psychoanalysis looks at the pre-Oedipal phase and at the process of psychosexual differentiation. Nancy Chodorow's The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (1978) has had an brobdingnagian influence on women's studies. Chodorow revises traditional psychoanalytic concepts of differentiation, the process by which the child comes to feel the self as separate and to develop pridefulness and body boundaries. Since differentiation takes place in relation to the mother (the primary caretaker), attitudes toward the mother "emerge in the earliest differentiation of the self; "the mother, who is a woman, becomes and remains for children of both genders the other, or object." The child develops core gender identity accompanying with differentiation, but the process is not the same for boys and girls. A boy must learn his gender identity negatively as being not-female, and this difference requires continual brace. In contrast, a girl's core gender identity is positive and built upon sameness, continuity, and identification with the mother. Women's difficulties with feminine identity come after the Oedipal phase, in which male power and cultural imperious give sex differences a alchemized value. Chodorow's work suggests that shared parenting, the involvement of men as primary caretakers of children, will have a abstruse effect on our sense of sex difference, gender idetity, and sexual preference.

But what is the significance of feminist psychoanalysis for literary criticism? One thematic carry-over has been a critical interest in the mother-daughter configuration as a source of female creativity. Elizabeth Abel's bold investigation of female friendship in contemporary women's novels uses Chodorow's theory to show how not only the relationships of women characters but also the relationship of women writers to each other are determined by the psycho dynamics of female bonding. Abel too brazens Bloom's paradigm of literary history, but unlike Gilbert and Gubar she sees a "threefold female pattern" in which the Oedipal relation to the male tradition is balanced by the woman writer's pre-Oedipal relation to the female tradition. "As the dynamics of female friendship differs from those of male", Abel concludes, "the dynamics of female literary influence also deviate and deserves a theory of influence conciliated to female psychology and to women's dual position in literary history."

Like Gilbert, Gubar, and Miller, Abel brings together women's texts from a variety of national literatures, choosing to emphasize "the immutability of certain emotional dynamics descriptive in diverse cultural situations." Yet the privileging of gender alludes not only the immutability but also the immutableness of this dynamics. Although psychoanalytically based models of feminist criticism can now offer us remarkable and persuasive readings of individual texts and can highlight extraordinary similarities between women writing in a variety of cultural circumstances, they cannot explain historical change, ethnic difference, or the shaping force of generic and economic factors. To consider these issues, we must go beyond psychoanalysis to a more flexible and comprehensive model of women's writing which places it in the maximum context of culture.

6. Women's Writing and Women's Culture

I consider women's literature as a specific category, not because of biology, but because it is, in a sense, the literature of the colonized.

-CHRISTIANE ROCHEFORT, "The Privilege of Consciousness" A theory based on a model of women's culture can provide, I believe, a more complete and satisfying way to talk about the specificity and difference of women's writing than theories based in biology, linguistics, or psychoanalysis. Indeed, a theory of culture integrates ideas about woman's body, language, and psyche but construes them in relation to the social contexts in which they occur. The ways in which women develop a thought their bodies and their sexual and reproductive functions are byzantindly linked to their cultural environments. The female psyche can be studied as the product or construction of cultural forces. Language, too, comes back into the picture, as we consider the social dimensions and determinants of language use, the shaping of linguistic behaviour by cultural ideals. A cultural theory concedes that there are important differences between women as writers: class, race, nationality, and history are literary determinants as significant as gender. Nonetheless, women's culture forms a collective experience within the cultural whole, an experience that binds women writers to each other over time and space. It is in the emphasis on the binding force of women's culture that this passage differs from Marxist theories of cultural emporium. Proposition of-women's culture have been developed over the last decade primarily by anthropologists, sociologists, and social historians in order to get away from masculine systems, hierarchies, and values and to get at the primary and self-defined nature of female cultural experience. In the field of women's history, the concept of women's culture is still hot-button, although

there is agreement on its significance as a theoretical formulation. Gerda Lerner explains the importance of examining women's experience in its own terms:

Women have been left out of history not because of the evil cabals of men in general or male historians in particular, but because we have considered history only in male-centered terms. We have missed women and their activities, because we have asked questions of history which are incongruous to women. To rectify this, and to ligh't 'up areas of historical darkness we must, for a time, focus on a woman-centered delving, considering the possibility of the existence of a female culture within the general culture shared by men and women. History must include an account of the female experience over time and should include the development of feminist advertence as an essential aspect of women's past. This is the primary task of women's history. The central question it raises is: What would history be like if it were seen through the eyes of women and ordered by values they define?

In defining female culture, historians distinguish between the roles, activities, tastes, and behaviours prescribed and considered felicitous for women and those activities, behaviours, and functions actually generated out of women's lives. In the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the term "woman's sphere" expressed the Victorian and Jacksonian vision of separate roles for men and women, with little or no imbrications and with women junior. If we were to diagram it, the Victorian model would look like this:

Woman's sphere was denned and maintained by men, but women frequently assimilate its axioms in the American "cult of true womanhood" and the English "feminine ideal." Women's culture, however, readdresses women's "activities and goals from a woman-centered point of view.... The term alludes an assertion of equality and an awareness of sisterhood, the communality of women." Women's culture refers to "the broad-based communality of values, institutions, relationships, and methods of communication" unifying nineteenth-century female experience, a culture nonetheless with significant mutations by class and ethnic group (MFP, pp. 52, 54).

Some feminist historians have accepted the model of separate spheres and have seen the movement from woman's sphere to women's culture to women's-rights activism as the sequential stages of an evolutionary political process. Others see a more complex and ceaseless negotiation taking place between women's culture and the general culture. As Lerner has argued:

It is important to understand that "woman's culture" is not and should not be seen as a subsociety. It is hardly possible for the majority to live in a subsociry. Women live their social existence within the general culture and, whenever they are confined by evangelical restraint or insulation into separateness (which always has subordination as its purpose), they transform this restraint into complementarity (asserting the importance of woman's function, even its "superiority") and redefine it. Thus, women live a duality—as members of the general culture and as participators of women's culture. - [MFP, p. 52]

Lerner's views are similar to those of some cultural anthropologists. A particularly stimulating analysis of female culture has been carried out by two Oxford anthropologists, Shirley and Edwin Ardener. The Ardeners have tried to outline a model of women's culture which is not historically limited and to provide a .terminology for its characteristics. Two essays by Edwin Ardener, "Belief and the Problem of Women" (1972) and "The 'Problem' Revisited" (1975), suggest that women constitute a muted group, the boundaries of whose culture and reality overlap, but are not wholly contained by, the dominant (male) group. A'model of the cultural situation of women is pivotal to understanding both how they are perceived by the dominant group and how they behold themselves and others. Both historians and anthropologists emphasize the incompleteness of androcentric models of history and culture and the crunch of such models for the analysis of female experience. In the past, female experience which could not be accommodated by androcentric models was treated as irregular or simply ignored. Observation from an exterior point of view could-never be the same as comprehension from within. Ardener's model also has many connections to and cannot for current feminist literary theory, since the concepts of discernment, silence, and silencing are so central to discussions of women's participation in literary culture.

By the term "husked," Ardener suggests problems both of language and of power. Both husked and dominant groups generate beliefs or ordering ideas of social reality at the insensible level, but dominant groups control the forms or structures in which cognizance can be enunciated. Thus husked groups must intermediary their beliefs through the allowable forms of dominant structures. Another way of putting this would be to say that all language is the language of the dojninant order, and women, if they speak at all, must speak through it. How then, Ardener asks, "does the symboic weight of that other mass of persons express itself?" In his view, women's beliefs find expression through ritual and art, expressions which an be decrypted by the ethnographer,

either female or male, who is willing to make the effort to behold beyond the screens of the dominant structure.

Let us now look at Ardener's diagram of the relationship of the dominant and the husked group:

Unlike the Victorian model of correlative spheres, Ardener's groups are represented by crisscrossing circles. Much of muted circle Y falls within the boundaries of dominant circle X; there is also a crescent of Y which is outside the dominant boundary and therefore (in Ardener's terminology) "wild". We can think of the "wild zone" of women's culture spatially, experientially, or metaphysically. Spatially it stands for an area which is literally no-man's-land, a place interdicted to men, which corresponds to the zone in X which is off limits to women. Experientially it stands for the aspects of the female life-style which are outside of and unlike those of men; again, there is a corresponding zone of male experience foreign to women. But if we think of the wild zone metaphysically, or in terms of consciousness, it has no corresponding male space since all of male cognizance is within the circle of the dominant structure and thus affordable to or structured by language. In this sense, the "wild" is always imaginary; from the male point of view, it may simply be the projection of the unconscious. In terms of cultural anthropology, women know what the male bow-shaped is like, even if they have never seen it, because it becomes the subject of key (like the outdoor). But men do not know what is in the wild.

For some feminist critics, the wild zone, or "female space", must be the address of a authentically women-centered criticism, theory, and art, whose shared project is to bring into being the symbolic weight of female cognizance, to make the invisible visible, to make the silent speak. French feminist critics would like to make the wild zone the theoretical base of women's difference. In their texts, the wild zone becomes the place for the revolutionary women's language, the language of everything that is repressed, and for the fanatic women's writing in "white ink". It is the Dark Continent in which Cixous' laughing Medusa and Wittig's guerilleres reside. Through voluntary entry into the wild zone, other feminist critics tell us, a woman can write her way out of the "cramped circumscribe of evangelical space". The images of this journey are now familiar in feminist quest fictions and in essays about them. The writer/heroine, often guided by another woman, travels to the "mother country" of liberated desire and female geniuses; crossing to the other side of the mirror, like Alice in Wonderland, is often a symbol of the passage.

Many forms of American radical feminism also romantically assert that women are closer to nature, to the environment, to a matriarchal principle at

once biological and ecological. Mary Daly's Gyn/Ecology and Margaret Atwood's novel Surfacing are texts which create this feminist mythology. In English and American literature, women writers have often imagined Amazon Utopias, cities or countries situated in the wild zone or on its border: Elizabeth Gaskell's gentle Cranford is probably an Amazon Utopia; so is Charlotte Perkins Oilman's Herland or, to take a recent example, Joanna Russ' Whileaway. A few years ago, the feminist publishing house Daughters, Inc. tried to create a business version of the Amazon Utopia; as Lois Gould reported in the New York Times Magazine (2 January 1977), "They believe they are building the working models for the critical next stage of feminism: full independence from the control and leverage of "male-dominated" institutions—the news media, the health, education, and legal systems, the art, theater, and literary worlds, the banks."

These fantasies of an idyllic barrio represent a phenomenon which feminist criticism must recognize in the history of women's writing. But we must also understand that there can be no writing or criticism totally outside of the dominant structure; no publication is fully independent from the economic and political pressures of the male-dominated society. The concept of a woman's text in the wild zone is a playful cogitation: in the reality to which we must address ourselves as critics, women's writing is a "double-voiced expatiate" that always incorporates the social, literary, and cultural heritages of both the muted and the dominant.

And insofar as most feminist critics are also women writing, this perilous heritage is one we share; every step that feminist criticism takes toward defining women's writing is a step toward self-understanding as well; every account of a female literary culture and a female literary tradition has parallel significance for our own place in critical history and critical tradition.

Women writings are not, then, inside and outside of the male tradition; they are inside two traditions coincidentally, "undercurrents", in Ellen Moers' metaphor, of the mainstream. To mix metaphors again, the literary estate of women, as **Myra Jehlen** says, "suggests...a more fluid imagery of dealings abutment, the point of which would be to represent not so much the territory, as its defining borders. Indeed, the female territory might well be envisaged as one long border, and independence for women, not as a separate country, but as open access to the sea." As Jehlen goes on to explain, an aggressive feminist criticism must equilibration itself on this border and must see women's writing in its changing historical and cultural relation to that other body of texts identified by feminist criticism not simply as literature but as "men's writing".

The difference of women's writing, then, can only be understood in terms of this complex and historically grounded cultural relation. An important aspect of Ardener's model is that there are hushed groups other than women; a dominant structure may determine many hushed structures. A black American woman poet, for example, would have her literary identity formed by the dominant (white male) tradition, by a hushed women's culture, and by a muted black culture. She would be affected by both sexual and racial politics in a combination unique to her case; at the same time, as Barbara Smith points out, she shares an experience specific to her group: "Black women writers constitute an identifiable bookish tradition...thematically, stylistically, aesthetically, and abstractically. Black women writers manifest common approaches to the act of creating literature as a direct result of the specific political, social, and economic experience they have been obliged to share." Thus the first task of a gynocentric criticism must be to plot the precise cultural locus of female bookish identity and to describe the forces that bisect an individual woman writer's cultural field. A gynocentric criticism would also situate women writers with respect to the variables of literary culture, such as modes of production and distribution, relations of author and audience, relations of high to popular art, and ladders of genre.

Insofar as our concepts of bookish periodization are based on men's writing, women's writing must be forcibly assimilated to an irrelevant grid; we discuss a Revivification which is not a renaissance for women, a Romantic period in which women played very little part, a modernism with which women strife. At the same time, the ongoing history of women's writing has been suppressed, leaving large and mysterious gaps in accounts of the development of genre. Gynocentric criticism is already well on the way to providing us with another vantage point on bookish history. Margaret Anne Doody, for example, suggests that "the period between the death of Richardson and the appearance of the novels of Scott and Austen" which has "been regarded as a dead period, a dull blank" is in fact the period in which late eighteenth-century women writers were developing "the paradigm for women's fiction of the nineteenth century-something hardly less than the paradigm of the nineteenth-century novel itself." There has also been a feminist re-amend of the female gothic, a transmutation of a popular genre once believed marginal but now seen as part of the great tradition of the novel. In American literature, the pioneering work of Ann Douglas, Nina Baym, and Jane Tompkins, among others, has given us a new view of the power of women's fiction to feminize nineteenth-century American culture. And feminist critics have made us aware that Woolf belonged to a prescription other than modernism and that this prescription surfaces in her work precisely in those places where criticism has heretofore found ambiguities eschewing incredibleness and blemishes.

Our current theories of literary leverage also need to be tested in terms of women's writing. If a man's text, as Bloom and Edward Said have maintained, is fathered, then a woman's text is not only mothered but parented; it braves both paternal and maternal forgoers and must deal with the problems and advantages of both lines of patrimony. **Woolf** says in A Room of One's Own that "a woman writing thinks back through her mothers." But a woman writing ineluctably thinks back through her fathers as well; only male writers can forget or mute half of their parentage. The dominant culture need not consider the muted, except to balustrade against "the woman's part" in itself. Thus we need more subtle and supple accounts of influence, not just to explain women's writing but also to understand how men's writing has withstood the commendation of female precursors.

We must first go beyond the hypothetical that women writers either emulate their male precursors or revise them and that this simple dualism is adequate to describe the influences on the woman's text. **I. A. Richards** once commented that the influence of **G.** E. **Moore** had had an brobdingnagian negative impact on his work: "I feel like an obverse of him. Where there's a hole in him, there's a jute in me." Too often women's place in bookish tradition is translated into the crude topography of hole and jut, with Milton, Byron, or Emerson the bulging bogeys on one side and women's literature from Aphra Behn to Adrienne Rich a pocked moon surface of revisionary lacunae on the other. One of the great advantages of the women's-culture model is that it shows how the female tradition can be a positive source of strength and empathy as well as a negative source of powerless ness; it can generate its own experiences and symbols which are not simply the obverse of the male tradition.

How can a cultural model of women's writing help us to read a woman's text? One implication of this model is that women's fiction can be read as a double-voiced expatiate, containing a "dominant" and a "hushed" story, what **Gilbert** and **Gubar** call a "palimpsest". I have described it elsewhere as an object/field problem in which we must keep two alternative oscillating texts coincidentally in view: "In the purest feminist literary criticism we are...presented with a radical alteration of our vision, a demand that we see meaning in what has previously been empty space. The orthodox intrigue abates, and another plot, heretofore underwater in the anonymity of the background, stands out in bold relief like a thumbprint." **Miller** too sees "another text" in women's fiction, "more or less hushed from novel to novel" but "always there to be read".

Another interpretive strategy for feminist criticism might be the contextual analysis that the cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz calls "thick description". Geertz calls for descriptions that seek to understand the meaning of cultural phenomena and products by "sorting out the structures of signification...and determining their social ground and import." A genuinely "thick" description of women's writing would insist upon gender and upon a female bookish tradition among the multiple strat/a that make up the force of meaning in a text. No description, we must acknowledge, could ever be thick enough to account for all the factors that go into the work of art. But we could work toward completeness, even as an unattainable ideal.

In suggesting that a cultural model of women's writing has considerable Usefulness for the enterprise of feminist criticism, I don't mean to replace psychoanalysis with cultural anthropology as the answer to all our theoretical problems or to enthrone Ardener and Geertz as the new white fathers in place of Freud, Lacan, and Bloom. No theory, however suggestive, can be a substitute for the close and extensive knowledge of women's texts which constitutes our essential subject. Cultural anthropology and social history can perhaps offer us a terminology and a diagram of women's cultural situation. But feminist critics must use this concept in relation to what women actually write, not in relation to a theoretical, political, metaphoric, or visionary ideal of what women ought to write.

I began by recalling that a few years ago feminist critics thought we were on a pilgrimage to the Promised Land in which gender would lose its power, in which all texts would be sexless and equal, like angels. But the more squarely we understand the specificity of women's writing not as a fleeting by-product of sexism but as a fundamental and continually determining reality, the more clearly we realize that we have misapprehended our destination. We may never reach the Promised Land at all; for when feminist critics see our task as the study of women's writing, we realize that the land promised to us is not the serenely undifferentiated universality of texts but the convulsive and enthralling outdoor of difference itself.

• SUMMARY

The term postmodernism has been defined in many different ways, and many critics and authors disagree on even its most basic axioms. However, many agree that, in literature, postmodernism represents the rejection of the modernist tenets of rational, historical, and scientific thought in favour of self-conscious, ironic, and experimental works. In many of these works, the authors yield the

concept of an ordered universe, linear narratives, and traditional forms to suggest the malleability of truth and question the nature of reality itself, prorating with the idea of a universal ordering scheme in favour of artifice, temporality and a reliance on irony. Many postmodern writers believe that language is congenitally unable to convey any charade of the external world, and that verbal communication is more an act of conflict than an expression of rational meaning. Therefore, much work classified as postmodern displays little attention to realism, characterization, or plot. Time is often conveyed as random and disjointed; commonplace situations are depicted alongside surreal and fantastic plot developments, and the act of writing itself becomes a major focus of the subject matter. Many works feature multiple beginnings and endings. Much postmodern fiction relies on bricolage, which is the liberal use of fragments of premature literary material to create a work that places a higher value on newness than on originality.

Postmodernism is generally considered to cast from the social and political restiveness of the 1960s. The Prague Spring of 1968 in Czechoslovakia, the Algerian War of Independence, and student protests in France and the United. States are believed by critics to betoken a hermetic distrustfulness in historical and cultural traditions, as well as modernist notions of progress, objectivity, and reason. French philosopher Jacques Derrida is credited as the foremost apostle of postmodern thought, particularly for his concept of deconstructionism. Any work that relies on words to convey meaning, according to Derrida, can be interpreted in many, often contradictory, ways. A thorough textual analysis of such a work bases that the original author's discernment, what he or she declares is congenitally different from what the author describes. Because the term is open to many different exegeses, many diverse works are classified as postmodern. While many works labeled postmodern do not strictly adhere to any formal tenets, a great number of them borrow postmodern techniques and devices, including discontinuous time, intermittent characters, irony, and authorial encroachments. Postmodern works also evidence the belief that there is no distinction between reality and fiction, much like there is no ingrained relationship between words and the objects they are meant to signify.

• KEY WORDS

1. **Sign :** A sign is an entity that signifies another commodity. A natural sign is an commodity that bears a causal relation to the mattered entity, as thunder is a sign of storm.

2. **Signifier :** A sign which conveys meaning. Ferdinand de Saussure popularized the idea of a signifier and mattered.

3. **Linguistics :** Linguistics is the scientific study of human language.
4. **Terminology :** Terminology is the study of terms and their use. Terms are words and compound words that are used in specific contexts.
5. **Feminist criticism :** Feminist bookish criticism is bookish criticism informed by feminist theory or by the politics of feminism more broadly.

• REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe the terms sign, signified and signifier in Saussure's "Nature of Linguistic signs".
2. Explain the two important principles of Saussure's "Nature of Linguistic signs".
3. Write an essay on Jacques Derrida: "structure, sign and pray in the expatiate of human sciences".
4. Examine the characteristics of Gynocritics and the Woman's Text.
5. Discuss the term women's writing with women's body, women's psyche and women's culture.
6. What are the three components of Ferdinand's structuralism?
7. Mention the concepts of sign in linguistics.
8. What is meant by Derrida's "Freeplay of meaning"?
9. What does the term signifier refer to?
10. What is the elucidative strategy of Feminist criticism?

• SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Literary Criticism: A Reading—B. Das and M. Mohanty
2. Course in General Linguistics—Ferdinand de Saussure
3. A Postmodern Reader—Joseph P. Natoli
4. The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory—Elaine Showalter.

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सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः।
सर्वे भद्राणिः पष्यन्तु माकष्चिद् दुःख भाग्भवेत्।।

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