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T S Eliot's Shakespeare Criticism, Discovery And Advance

Sudhakar Marathe

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T. S. ELIOT'S SHAKESPEARE CRITICISM

DISCOVERY AND ADVANCE

by

Sudhakar Marathe

Department of English

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

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The University of Western Ontario

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ABSTRACT

There is a crucial gap in Eliot studies: although he contributed considerably to Shakespearean criticism, Eliot's ideas on the place of Shakespeare in the tradition of English literature and his uniqueness, have been neglected. Among other reasons, the scattered nature of much of Eliot's commentary on Shakespeare is responsible for this gap. Eliot wrote about Shakespeare throughout his career, in various contexts, usefully and illuminatingly. This study presents, in the first chapter, those parts of Eliot's literary criticism which concern Shakespeare. Special substantial appendices provide valuable information in this respect, which has been brought together for the first time, and is expected to facilitate further study of Eliot's commentary on Shakespeare.

Two important perspectives on Eliot's criticism arise from this examination. It is known that Eliot's critical method used comparison as its chief procedure. A considerable proportion of Eliot's comparative criticism is based on his assessment of Shakespeare, and on his use of Shakespeare as a standard of judgment. This use reveals interesting aspects of Shakespeare's work, of the work of other authors, and simultaneously those of Eliot's own work. The backbone of Eliot's evaluation of Shakespeare is his perception of the "long and continuous" and "miraculous" development of Shakespeare's art. A chapter is devoted, therefore, to an examination of many of Eliot's comparative judgments on literary figures and works, while another chapter presents Eliot's impressions of Shakespeare's
development.

Much of Eliot's valuable but obscure criticism has been brought together for this study. Most importantly, however, this study presents some virtually new evidence: some lectures, which remain unpublished, that Eliot gave concerning Shakespeare's development in realistic, natural and colloquial dramatic verse. In the process, the following things are revealed: the crucial role of Shakespeare in Eliot's critical writing, the consistency of Eliot's approach to literature, and possibilities of further study both of Shakespeare and of Eliot's contribution to the critical tradition.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully acknowledge the constant and patient help and advice which Professor Balachandran Rajan and Professor David Kaula gave me in my work on this project. I am also grateful for the help I received from Professor Donald Gallup, Professor Anne Bolgan, and Mrs. Valerie Eliot. Here I acknowledge that the copious quotations from T. S. Eliot's Edinburgh Lectures [in Appendix "D"] should be regarded as restricted material. Mrs. Eliot's specific permission must be obtained for their re-use. Njna Duggal gave me invaluable assistance by translating "Shakespeare's Verskunst," and Karin Stoner by checking the translation. It would have been unthinkable to travel so far to study without help and encouragement from Appa, Ai, Anna, Vahini and the rest of a loyal family and from Professor S. Nagarajan. And without the generosity, proximity and love of Jerry, Beth, Sarah and Julia Bentley, the passage of work would have been rocky. To the Davies family, the Biemans, Shroyers, Mellamphies, Varkeys, Reinharts, Fréchêtres, to Don Mackay, and to Jock and Janie Mcleod, as to our many other friends in London, I owe much. But to the love and care of my large-hearted family, Meera, Kaumudi and Sameer, I owe the most admiring thanks.
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Introduction

From his first major poetical work, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915); and his first major critical statement, "Reflections on vers libre" (1917), to his last major poetical work, Four Quatrains (1943) and his last major critical statement in "T. S. Eliot... An Interview" (1962), there is one prominent figure that appears persistently in Eliot's work: Shakespeare. However, students of Eliot do not appear to have appreciated the significance or the extent of his interest in Shakespeare by responding to that interest in substantial critiques. Such a preoccupation about an important literary figure from the tradition of English literature on the part of another important figure representative of our own age should be a rewarding subject of study in itself. Moreover, the place of Shakespeare in the tradition practically makes such a study imperative. In the course of a study of this kind, considerable illumination of Eliot's own work should result. The following study, therefore, makes an attempt to bring together all of Eliot's material statements concerning Shakespeare. Its first object is to present the critical writing of Eliot from this angle. To this end, the Appendices ("A"-"D") present relevant facts regarding titles, publication data, references and quotations for all identifiable pieces of Eliot's criticism that contain a mention or use of Shakespeare.

Although Eliot's poetry significantly, and his drama to some extent, embody opportunities for an analysis of Eliot's rich and characteristic allusive technique with respect to Shakespeare's
works, a combined analysis of Eliot's criticism as well as poetry and drama would necessitate handling of a cumbersome body of material: the result of such a combination would be inadequate attention to all three provinces of Eliot's literary activity. Therefore, the present study concerns itself with Eliot's criticism alone. For much the same reason, it does not attempt to compare the Shakespeare criticism of Eliot with the specific work of other Shakespeare critics. Such a comparison would be a natural necessity if we are to acquire adequate understanding of Eliot's contribution to Shakespeare criticism. The objectives of the present study are, however, restricted to presentation of cumulative evidence to suggest that Eliot did engage in serious and extended criticism of Shakespeare, and that his thoughts on Shakespeare, once noticed, demand serious attention. Presentation of data is, therefore, the principal objective of this study.

Indication of the critical and poetic principles—although unfortunately not the poetic practice—of Eliot as they operate in and derive from his Shakespeare criticism is the next main objective of this study. Eliot's thoughts on Shakespeare are considerable in volume, variety and complexity. A unifying approach or thread of continuity was, therefore, necessary. It is one of the aims of the present study to indicate that such an approach is available in the form of two studies of Shakespeare's development that Eliot delivered as lectures on the art of Shakespeare's verse: at Edinburgh University in 1937, and in Germany in 1950. However, these lectures do not introduce a new direction into Eliot's criticism—new as the direc-
tion is in Shakespeare criticism itself— but rather confirm and develop a view of Shakespeare that is consistently and continually expressed or implied in much of Eliot's commentary on Shakespeare. These lectures are, therefore, as close as Eliot ever came to a definitive statement of the theory of Shakespeare's development. These lectures also provide new evidence for consideration of Eliot as an important figure in the history of Shakespearean criticism.

The first chapter takes stock of the different kinds of material that have to be studied. It notices some of the important difficulties that may be encountered in a study of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism, including those that are created by a general lack of criticism of specific passages from Shakespeare. It also presents background facts concerning the lectures on Shakespeare which Eliot gave in Edinburgh, and which remain unpublished. The second chapter presents examples of the prevailing method in Eliot's literary criticism, the method of comparison, with the help of facts regarding Eliot's use of Shakespeare's achievement as a constant factor in comparative judgments of literary works and figures. It then outlines a few other major concerns of Eliot in the context of Shakespeare's work.

The third chapter outlines the theory of development as it is expressed in the later, published, though virtually unknown version of the Edinburgh lectures, "Shakespeare: Verskunst" (1950). Then it presents the similarities and differences between the two versions. To this comparison it adds Eliot's opinions on the subject from his other essays. The third chapter also provides a substantial reassessment of Eliot's views on Hamlet in the light of the new evidence of
these lectures. And finally it presents the chief implications of the theory of development. The conclusion summarises Eliot's contribution to Shakespeare criticism, and it suggests possibilities of further modification of our understanding of Eliot's criticism as a whole in the light of his criticism of Shakespeare.

There is a special Appendix "D," which presents material relevant to the discussion of Shakespeare's development as it is set out in section II of the third chapter. Since Mrs. Valerie Eliot, who holds copyright for all unpublished Eliot papers, refused me permission to use the text of the original Edinburgh lectures for quotation in this study, I have resorted to the use of extracts from an independent translation into English from the German "Shakespeare Verskunst." However, Mrs. Eliot has now given me permission to use parallel extracts from the text of the original Edinburgh lectures specifically and only for the purposes of this study, I have thought it fit to include them at the end in a separate appendix. I hope that this does not prove excessively inconvenient. Throughout this study, references to the text of Shakespeare's plays consistently cite The Complete Works in the Pelican Edition (1969).

Consolidation of a large number of Eliot's critical essays and other writings, supported by the new evidence presented, reveals Eliot's fresh and original contribution to Shakespeare criticism. Similarly, it points to the need to re-evaluate the genesis and significance of Eliot's major critical ideas and principles in the light of their context in his Shakespeare criticism. This study, therefore, proposes the possibility of a twofold reconsideration of
Eliot's literary career in terms of the outstanding role that Shakespeare's work plays in his thinking, and the hitherto unremarked significance of Eliot in Shakespearean criticism.
Chapter 1

"I cannot account for such apparent contradictions."

T. S. Eliot, "To Criticize the Critic."

In preparation for this study, an attempt was made to read all of T. S. Eliot's relevant prose. While it has not been possible to obtain some very obscure pieces, and Eliot's letters and other manuscript material, there appears to be very little of relevance to Eliot's Shakespearean criticism left unexamined. Since several interesting and useful pieces were found which are not usually taken into account in studies of his criticism, and since the number and scope of these essays are more considerable than would be supposed, it has become necessary to outline here the salient facts regarding those portions of Eliot's prose which in any way refer to Shakespeare. Various details that may be of interest to students of Eliot have been brought together under convenient sections in a set of appendices. These include information regarding the chronology and frequency of the critical works in question, their form, references to Shakespeare's works and quotations from them. They also provide an indication of the degree of significance of the references.

The incidental nature of much of Eliot's commentary on Shakespeare is obvious in most of the works considered. What is not obvious from the commonly known pieces is the surprising consistency in
Eliot's thought. As so many of the pieces are, in fact, about other subjects and authors, one may fail to perceive the system in Eliot's views. This possibility is strengthened since Eliot did not write an extensive and comprehensive work on Shakespeare. If there is a system in these views, as this study attempts to suggest, it is likely to be one that works by placement rather than by statement, a natural result of Eliot's comparative method. The frequency of Eliot's turning to Shakespeare also argues for a set of standards that are manifest in the work of Shakespeare, and which are of paramount importance in the critical approach and objectives of Eliot. Any tendency to doubt the validity of this possibility, and to assign Eliot's comparisons to momentary parallels rather than to critical principle, can be quelled by one of Eliot's earliest and most generally influential statements from "Tradition and the Individual Talent," the essay which he singled out as one he still stood by in 1961:

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. 3

And finally in this connection, the repetition of his views—and it is a constant repetition of a large number of ideas—also argues for an implied system. That these ideas or critical constants are what has been perceived to be Eliot's special contribution to modern criticism, lends support to the possibility that their presence in his Shakespearean criticism implies its underlying connection with his
other criticism. The consistency, chronology and frequency of Eliot's major ideas in the context of Shakespeare suggest that his outlook on literature was to a large extent moulded by his experience of the works of Shakespeare.

In Eliot's literary criticism from 1917 to 1962, there are 144 distinct items which include some reference to Shakespeare. 4 Forty-seven of them are reviews, 5 thirty-one lectures and talks, 6 twenty-three articles, 7 eighteen introductions and prefaces, 8 seven letters, 9 six chapters, 10 two essays published separately first as books, 11 one an interview, 12 and nine miscellaneous items. 13 Eighteen items on this list deal directly with Shakespeare; 14 fifty-seven contain significant and substantial comment on him, while fifty-three contain significant or significant but passing comment. Since the remaining thirty-four items contain merely passing references to Shakespeare, we are left with a total of 110 items to examine, ranging from 1917 to 1962. 15 Of these 110 items, forty-three are not available at all except in periodicals; two are available only in manuscript form, and one other only in a published version in German. 16 Many of the remaining sixty-four items, although available in published volumes, are not easy to come by. 17 The reviews which have reference to Shakespeare all appear prior to 1937, having started in 1917. The lectures and talks, with the exception of the Extension lectures of 1918, do not begin until 1926, and carry on into 1961. The articles continue periodically from 1917 to 1960. And all but one of the relevant introductions and prefaces appear after 1926 and not later than 1958. 18
In his criticism of Shakespeare, Eliot refers to surprisingly few works of other Shakespearean critics. Although he did review and introduce several books dealing with Shakespeare, and in one block recommended many books on Shakespeare to his Extension students (1918), the range of his reference to different trends in Shakespeare criticism which grew during his lifetime is very limited: usually he approves of scholarship of the kind which E. E. Stoll and J. M. Robertson did, and disapproves of the kind of criticism that came out of the Victorian era. But even as late as 1937, in the Edinburgh lectures, he only refers to the Romanes lecture for that year given by Harley Granville-Barker. Of such works as he does mention elsewhere, several are only named, while many are repeated several times. This is the case with J. M. Robertson's The Problem of "Hamlet", which Eliot reviewed,¹⁹ and with Wyndham Lewis's The Lion and the Fox.²⁰ Generally, Eliot does not mention his debts to other scholars and critics; Robertson and Wilson Knight are major exceptions.

The 110 significant items of criticism make specific reference to, and often quote from, all the works of Shakespeare including Venus and Adonis, The Rape of Lucrece and the Sonnets, with the exception of The Two Noble Kinsmen and Henry VIII, although Eliot quotes once from the latter play. Of these works, Hamlet, not surprisingly, is the most frequently cited and quoted; As You Like It, A Comedy of Errors, The Taming of the Shrew, Henry VI, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and The Merry Wives of Windsor are cited only once each. Next to Hamlet, the following plays are cited and quoted

Eliot quotes from Shakespeare 109 times in all this criticism, but some quotations tend to be repeated in different contexts. He rarely quotes from the Sonnets, and apparently never from the longer poems. He also frequently refers to Shakespeare's dramatic songs, but only occasionally identifies any of them. Over seventy percent of his quotations come from what he himself designates as the mature plays of Shakespeare, that is, Hamlet and the plays following it. The remaining quotations are from six early plays, with one from the Sonnets. In this group of early plays, Romeo and Juliet alone supplies more than half the quotations. Of the thirteen plays of the mature period that supply the majority of the quotations, just two, Hamlet and Antony and Cleopatra, provide nearly sixty-six percent of the quotations from this group. These three plays, together with the remaining great tragedies Othello, Macbeth and King Lear, supply seventy-five percent of all Eliot's quotations from Shakespeare.

Therefore, two facts regarding Eliot's quotation from Shakespeare become evident. Although it is apparent from Eliot's own statements in many places that he held the achievement of the late plays of Shakespeare in extremely high esteem, these plays do not often supply the evidence for his arguments; similarly, although he considered Shakespeare's steady and extraordinary development as one of the most noteworthy facts about him, the early plays, from which any development must be seen to proceed, do not form a substantial part of
Eliot's evidence. The Edinburgh lectures (1937) and their several subsequent versions are exceptions to this observation.

In 1937 Eliot delivered two brief but very substantial lectures on Shakespeare at the University of Edinburgh.\textsuperscript{23} Apparently they were then entitled Shakespeare as Poet and Dramatist (Part I and Part II, each of twenty typed pages). Later, in On Poetry and Poets, he refers to them as lectures on The Development of Shakespeare's Verse. Judged by the contents of the lectures, the latter title is more apt, because they do in fact propose a theory of Shakespeare's development in both verse and dramatic technique. Perhaps the most interesting fact about this theory is that despite reiteration over a period of several years, it was not itself changed or refined. Eliot re-delivered the lectures at Bristol in 1941, this time entitling them "Poetry and Speech in Shakespeare's Plays."\textsuperscript{24} At least twice more he was to use the same material as basis for other lectures on Shakespeare and drama: Eliot incorporated the substantial analysis of the first scene of Hamlet in the main text of Poetry and Drama, and appended a short excerpt from the analysis of the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet to the 'Notes' at the end of the lecture;\textsuperscript{25} and he later based a lecture delivered in Germany on the same material as the original Edinburgh lectures, although he omitted the entire Hamlet analysis from the German lecture.\textsuperscript{26} These two subsequent adaptations are interesting for two separate reasons: Poetry and Drama, because it makes use of the findings of the Edinburgh Lectures for a late, and more general, statement about the nature of poetic drama as such; and "Shakespeare's Verskunst,"
the German lecture, because in itself alone is a major portion of the original lectures available in published form.

To the best of my knowledge, the Edinburgh lectures themselves are available only as follows: in the Houghton library at Harvard in a carbon copy of the typescript; with Mrs. Valerie Eliot; and in the John Hayward Bequest of Eliot papers in the library of King's College at Cambridge. Apart from the copy at Cambridge, access to the manuscripts requires express permission from Mrs. Eliot, who informs me that they will be published in an eventual collected edition of Eliot's prose.

It seems that Eliot considered, with some justification, that the original lectures were not written well enough for publication:

Some papers or addresses, qualified by date and subject matter for inclusion, I have rejected, on re-reading after some lapse of time, as not good enough. I wish that I could have found worthy of inclusion two lectures delivered at Edinburgh University before the War, on The Development of Shakespeare's Verse; for what I was trying to say still seems to me worth saying. But the lectures struck me as badly written, and in need of thorough revision—a task to be deferred to some indefinite future. 27

This task was never to be actually accomplished. But here Eliot also explains the inclusion of passages from these lectures in the later text of Poetry and Drama:

I regret the omission the less, however, as I had pillaged this set of lectures of one of its best passages—an analysis of the first scene of Hamlet—to incorporate in another address, Poetry and Drama. 28

There is also an explanation of how a portion of his analysis of Romeo and Juliet, II.ii, came to be appended to the same address:
So, having already robbed one lecture for the benefit of another, I now append to Poetry and Drama another brief extract from the same Edinburgh lecture, a note on the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet. 29

Perhaps in a typical fashion, Eliot omits to tell us here that, in the meantime, the lectures had been re-delivered in substance and then published in German in 1950.

The Edinburgh lectures are interesting for other reasons besides the fact that they are not easily available, and that few students of Eliot's criticism seem to be aware of their existence. First of all, they bring to a head much of Eliot's thinking regarding Shakespeare and the nature of poetic drama and poetry in drama. He has not made such considerable study of the issue, with plentiful illustrations from the plays of Shakespeare, in any other place. There is good reason to believe his statement that the Hamlet analysis is one of the best passages in the lectures. However, it seems to me that his entire reconsideration of the problem of Hamlet, which here occurs in greater detail and honesty than in any other reconsideration of the play after 1919, ought to have been included as well. For the nature and context of this reconsideration, as well as the original analysis of the play, give credibility to the statements of Eliot made elsewhere that in criticizing the play in 1919, he was hardly suggesting that he did not like it, or that we ought to ignore the unparalleled popularity of it through centuries of criticism and production, or indeed that he thought it less successful in absolute terms than other plays of Shakespeare. 30

In addition to this new light that publication of these lectures
would have shed on Eliot's position with respect to Hamlet, it would have provided analyses which Eliot makes here of other Shakespeare plays, including two early plays. The lectures are truly a study of Shakespeare's development, and what is more, they are such a study in a wider context covering the nature of poetic drama, its immediate constraints, and the possibility of going beyond the form. Finally, there are two other reasons why these lectures are capable of shedding more light on Eliot's views about Shakespeare. First of all, the fact that they were delivered as late as 1937 is of some consequence in a study of Eliot's criticism. In a refreshingly frank assessment of that criticism, F. W. Bateson suggests that most of what was worthwhile in it appeared during the first part of Eliot's career. Eliot himself suggests as much in "To Criticize the Critic." However, Bateson divides Eliot's career very early, at the point of the publication of The Waste Land, and remarks upon the differences between his criticism before and after this date:

A characteristic of the later criticism is that it abhors specificity. It is all too much up in the air. There is not enough concrete evidence at any one time. Thus in a volume that calls itself On Poetry and Poets one would expect the essays to be dotted, as the earlier poetic criticism had been, with quotations, however short, to illustrate or enforce the point under discussion. . . . There are degrees of rarefaction in the other pieces in the volume, but in general any quotations that do occur in the whole collection are not used. The situation is similar in the later collection To Criticize the Critic in which three of the six essays on literary topics do not offer even one quotation.32

We have to recognize that Eliot's later criticism suffers from this lack of specificity, just as it loses some of its provocativeness because of a general tendency on Eliot's part to present his
ideas in a conservative, institutional, even hesitant, style. The fact remains, though, that a great number of his significant contributions to criticism, many with appropriate illustrations, appeared after 1922. For example, "Philip Massinger (1926), the Clark lectures on Metaphysical poetry (1926), "Thomas Middleton" (1927), "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927); Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927), "Dialogue on Poetic Drama" (1928), Dante (1929), "Cyril Tourneur" (1930); "John Ford" (1932), The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933), and so on for another three decades. Thus, Bateson's implication that Eliot's criticism declined after 1922, even in terms of specificity, is unacceptable.

The fact that the Edinburgh lectures were conceived, written and delivered as late as 1937, and if not further developed, at least confirmed repeatedly, ought to offset Bateson's view. It must also be noted that Eliot gets involved in such substantial, practical and analytical criticism in these lectures on a scale that is matched, perhaps, only by his most extensive consideration of Dante in 1929. On no other occasion, and concerning no other author than Shakespeare, does Eliot undertake so extensively the functions of the critic which came first in his view, analysis as well as "illumina- tion of life." Here we find in untroubled mutual coexistence the functions of analysis, interpretation and speculation. In no other place, again, does Eliot deliver himself so completely and fruitfully to the necessity of attempting to construct a substantial, if brief, theory regarding poetic drama and Shakespeare's unique achievement in it.
The second reason why these lectures are capable of illuminating Eliot's Shakespeare and other literary criticism is that they confirm substantially most of Eliot's important critical ideas—tradition, the "objective correlative," objectivity in art, and the need to study the entire life-work of great authors—and unlike some other places where he put them forward, they are fully backed here by analysis of the material under consideration. Eliot may have been correct about the stylistic problems of these lectures, but he was definitely not correct in omitting them altogether from his published criticism.  

II

A review of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism, which spanned his whole career, is one way of obtaining a conspectus of his entire literary criticism. If Eliot's criticism had undergone no change from his initial position, or if it had proceeded merely as an elaboration of the pronouncements he made in 1917-18, it might ultimately have found recognition only as an interesting but passing point of view. Many of his early ideas on the business and practice of criticism might have sounded less than convincing today if he had taken them to their logical conclusions. For they are marked not only by involvement in the literary situation but also by the accompaniments of rebellious involvement: irreverence and overstatement. This early criticism thus manifests the polemical qualities of the enthusiast who sees himself as a trend-setter. Fortunately, and perhaps with the advantage of hindsight we may say predictably, Eliot did not
carry these ideas to their extreme logical conclusions.

In the last quarter of 1918, just as his Extension lectures on
the literature of the Elizabethan age were getting under way, 35 Eliot
wrote two "Studies in Contemporary Criticism" for The Egoist. The
first instalment, in a substantial preamble, laid out a theory of
literary criticism:

The work of the critic is almost wholly comprehended in the
"complementary activities" of comparison and analysis. The
one activity implies the other; and together they provide
the only way of asserting standards and of isolating a
writer's peculiar merits. 36

Apart from the statement about isolating by comparison as the func-
tion of criticism, there is another interesting aspect of this essay:
it is a manifesto for what can be called "scientific" or "technical"
literary criticism. An elaborate parallel between scientific re-
search and literary criticism, and a suggestion that criticism ought
to follow the path of modern science, are endorsed by this descrip-
tion of the vaporous methods of some recent criticism:

What we find are discoverers of methods whose methods re-
main unstudied; and an illimitable number of honest toilers
still seeking the literary counterpart of perpetual motion,
or the lapis philosophicus; fiddling with
putrefaction,
Solution, ablation, sublimation,
Cohabation, calcination, creation-and
Fixation.
We are justified in reprobing such wasted energy. There
ought to be honourable vacancies for men who like to write
about literature without themselves having a "method" to
deliver; without (in cruder terms) being "creative" writ-
ers. There might be a recognized set of tools which the
critic could be taught to use, and a variety of standard
patterns which he could be trained to turn out. 37
At this point in the history of criticism there was definitely a need of such assertions regarding the method of criticism. As will be shown later in this study, Eliot indeed practised the method of comparison consistently, while the early insistence upon "scientific" criticism itself became modulated into a highly profitable and productive emphasis on objectivity in creative and critical pursuits, so that the practical criticism of Eliot became a search for concreteness in poetry and drama.

The second study, which begins on a more tolerant note ("There are different purposes, motives, and methods possible in criticism"), soon slips into a somewhat mock-serious tone: "I propose at some future date a convenient enchiridion; A Guide to Useless Books, [the conclusion of the essay has all the signs of such a guide] prepared in such an order that it will be possible at once to refer any book to its category." This is not yet the Eliot of The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, who would maintain that errors are a necessary, unavoidable and useful part of the critical tradition. The main argument of the essay is reasonable enough: that there are books "which need not have been written," and that "a great deal of waste by overlapping might be spared." A little less reasonably, however, Eliot proceeds to take to task certain recently published books on Shakespeare by Swinburne, Symonds, Boas and Schelling; for he seems to assume that they too had started with the hope of achieving what Eliot wants criticism to achieve: "If the critic has performed his laboratory task well, his understanding will be evidence of appreciation; but his work is by the intelligence not the emotions."
second essay actually ends on a note of unintentional irony at
Eliot's own expense:

Swinburne, of course, ought to have known better; the
other writers ought to have done good scholarship with-
out criticism, and the critical sense would have been
imputed them. Perhaps the greatest blunder is that nearly
everyone who criticizes preserves some official ideal of
"criticism" instead of writing simply and conveniently
what they think. 42

Both these essays state what sounds like Eliot's own "official ideal
of 'criticism'." Moreover, Eliot's own prose, then as later, is fre-
quently marked by an evasive and indirect style that becomes increa-
singly a hindrance to our understanding of his late criticism.

One feels relieved that Eliot did not follow his own injunction
to practise "scientific" criticism, to work "by the intelligence not
the emotions." There can be little disputing that some of the appeal
of Eliot's critical work is created by a mixture, perhaps unplanned,
of intelligence and emotion in his response to literature and lite-
rary personalities. His essays on Jonson (1919) and Ford (1932), his
review of John Middleton Murry's Shakespeare (1936), and his unpub-
lished lectures on the development of Shakespeare's verse (1937) are
instances of such a unified response to literary facts. It would be
a pity if "judgment and appreciation are merely tolerable avocations,
no part of the critic's serious business." 43

Eliot's own work demonstrates how difficult it is to keep emo-
tion, judgment, and appreciation out of one's response when not doing
purely textual criticism. Within the year following these two stu-
dies of contemporary criticism, Eliot published his review on Hamlet.
which begins by asserting that the problem of Hamlet "the character" is "only secondary," yet which ends in a tone of "un-scientific" regret concerning the character:

The Hamlet of Laforgue is an adolescent; the Hamlet of Shakespeare is not, he has not that explanation and excuse. We must simply admit that here Shakespeare tackled a problem which proved too much for him. . . . under compulsion of what experience he attempted to express the inexpres-sibly horrible, we cannot ever know. . . . We should have, finally, to know something which is by hypothesis unknowable. . . . We should have to understand things which Shakespeare did not understand himself. 44

Eliot thus seems to plunge into a contradiction in his attempt to unravel the inaccessible communication of great literature. In a sense, he carries this tug-of-war between "scientific," dissociated criticism and a synthetized, unified kind of criticism into the 1930's. One effect of that tussle, as in the conclusion of "Hamlet," is that while exhorting his readers to avoid the trap of resorting to an author's life when criticizing his works, he himself indulges in mildly speculative remarks about the lives and personalities of the writers he criticizes. His essays on Thomas Middleton (1927) and Cyril Tourneur (1930) are cases in point. At times, because of such inconsistencies and his propensity to overstatement, Eliot gives rise to his share of controversies. The important question to ask is whether such contradiction or inconsistency implies a deep rift within Eliot's critical self. This question is implicitly answered by the argument of the present study: that Eliot's views on Shakespeare highlight the underlying consistency in his criticism.

As the discussion so far suggests, Eliot initially took and
indeed helped to form, the "objective," "scientific" or "new" approach to literary criticism. This was a justifiable and opportune intervention, since there had been much in late nineteenth-century criticism that was over-subjective and verbose. There was need of a tempering insistence on a solid factual basis for criticism; its principles and method needed to be rationalized. This study hopes to show also that Eliot moved away from the narrow "scientific" path to a broader, more humane and exciting path. This change—not a transfiguration or renunciation, but rather an internal readjustment of vision—can be viewed as a positive growth or development. Perhaps this development can be particularized as a movement from a rebellious to a more considered and unified stance of Eliot the critic who was also Eliot the poet, and who was, by the mid 1920's, no longer primarily reacting against a passing fashion in English criticism. The connection between his own poetry and his criticism has to be viewed with caution. Eliot maintained that his criticism was a by-product of his poetic workshop. In many cases, notably those of his essays on poetry and poets, it is probably so. The derivation of his dramatic criticism from his own poetic practice is, however, a good deal less valid: For much of Eliot's dramatic criticism, including some of his criticism of Shakespeare, precedes his own practice in drama. In a sense it may be argued that his poetry was from the start, and more so then than later on, dramatic. However, Eliot's own distinctions among the different poetic voices will not permit us to equate his poetry with dramatic poetry. Besides, his poetry was never meant to be performed. To a great extent, therefore,
his dramatic criticism must be seen as an independent branch of his work, akin to but not emanating from his own practice.

By the time he commenced the Extension lectures on Shakespeare and his compeers in 1918, Eliot had already assimilated through formal and informal study a vast amount of literature in several languages. He had also assimilated and thought deeply about the past of Europe, as can be seen from his poetry and his essays such as "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919). And while he rejected the binding and less than satisfying Unitarianism of his family, the succeeding iconoclasm was soon to be replaced by a deepening conviction that his place lay within the Anglo-Catholic faith. His studies in the philosophy of F. H. Bradley, whose thought tended to be almost modernly secular, while at the same time seeking recognition of a unifying principle in life, his experience of a tempestuous but not entirely unrewarding marriage, and of the World War that had then engulfed Europe, all seem to have conjoined to provide the necessary impulse away from unleavened analysis towards synthesis.

Indeed, such an approach as he had proposed in the two "Studies in Contemporary Criticism" (1918), if pursued very far, would have eventually come into conflict with all this preparation and experience that went into Eliot's literary career. In conducting purely scientific analysis of literature, one becomes hampered by the constraints of the particular science in question. The excesses of modern psychological studies of Hamlet, for instance, are no less the product of bias than the Hamlet criticism of Coleridge, although the danger had been amply demonstrated in the criticism of Coleridge.
While Eliot's Shakespeare's criticism bears much resemblance to the criticism of Coleridge and his contemporaries, he was constantly aware of the dangers of subjectivism and bias.

Much of Eliot's criticism was occasioned by non-academic and incidental tasks. In general, Eliot seems to have felt it unnecessary to make much specific acknowledgement of his similarities, relationships and debts to early nineteenth-century critics. Cases of unrevealed inheritance, in terms of critical method or critical concepts, are not confined to Coleridge. There are other unacknowledged predecessors whom Eliot disparages at times and praises at others: Lamb is a prominent example. For a critic whose reading was as voracious as Eliot's, and whose writing was done, at least for a very long first half of his career, at breakneck pace to meet deadlines in periodicals, it is perhaps understandable that all this should be so. The question of specific debts, which can only be indicated in the present study, nevertheless forms an important inquiry that may some day be taken in hand by a scholar in the field of Shakespeare criticism. Here only a few examples may be adduced to show that there is indeed an inheritance, or at least that Eliot wrote in a pattern that had important practitioners before him.

But this lack of acknowledgement of his inheritance, and other more obvious reasons, open Eliot's views about these critics to misapprehension. Coleridge is a good example. His views about Coleridge as a Shakespeare critic, taken singly and out of their total context, appear to place Eliot's censure and his approbation of Coleridge farther apart than they really are, especially since Eliot makes no
attempt to dovetail his various evaluations into a consistent and inclusive statement. In his introduction to Coleridge: Critic of Shakespeare, M. M. Badawi predictably accuses Eliot of a partial, or onesided view of Coleridge:

In the twentieth century a return to something like Dr. Johnson's position was, for a time at any rate, claimed to be the orthodoxy; and by reacting against the nineteenth-century tradition, the twentieth century attempted to reject much of what it stood for. An authoritative critic once hinted that the criticism of Coleridge on a particular Shakespearean play was not really an honest inquiry, but an attempt to present Coleridge himself in an attractive costume. 46

The words from "an authoritative critic" occur in Eliot's "The Function of Criticism." 47 The "rejection" which is assumed to be hinted at here is no part of Eliot's assessment of Coleridge at all. On the contrary, Eliot has called Coleridge the greatest of Shakespeare critics. In his chapter on Shakespearean criticism in A Companion to Shakespeare Studies Eliot states: "It is impossible to understand Shakespeare criticism to this day, without a familiar acquaintance with Coleridge's lectures and notes." 48 Badawi himself notes much further on: "I do not think that Eliot was exaggerating" when he wrote this. 49 What is more, far from any possibility of rejection of Coleridge, in the same chapter Eliot says in conclusion:

I have not spoken of Hazlitt, Lamb and De Quincey: that is because I wished to isolate Coleridge as perhaps the greatest single figure in Shakespeare criticism down to the present day. In a conspectus like the present, only the most salient points can be more than mentioned; and Hazlitt, Lamb and De Quincey, for my purposes, do but make a constellation about the primary star of Coleridge. 50
The two problems here are that Badawi does not take into account Eliot's overall estimate of Coleridge as a Shakespearean critic, and that he ignores the immediate context of Eliot's negative remark about Coleridge. The immediate context is clear: it is an attempt to stress a principle of criticism that cannot be stressed too much, one that Eliot advocates in many of his early essays and tries to follow consistently throughout his career:

fact cannot corrupt taste; it can at worst gratify one taste—"a taste for history, let us say, or antiquity, or biography—under the illusion that it is assisting another. The real corruptors are those who supply opinion or fancy; and Goethe and Coleridge are not guiltless—for what is Coleridge's Hamlet: is it an honest inquiry as far as the data permit, or is it an attempt to present Coleridge in an attractive costume? 51

Eliot isolates Goethe and Coleridge because they are so exceptionally influential, and therefore can mislead the unwary reader when they are dealing in "opinion or fancy." That Eliot is still worrying about this genuine and long-standing problem of criticism late into his career is evident from his remark in the Edinburgh lectures (1937) that the role of Hamlet corresponds to all our lives, complicating the task of objective appreciation of the play. Here, in the remark that is decontextualized by Badawi, Eliot is merely objecting to excessive use of psychological speculation, as opposed to fact, as a critical tool. As early as"Hamlet" (1919) Eliot had made perfectly just observations about this problem:

Hamlet the character has had an especial temptation for that most dangerous type of critic: the critic with a mind which is naturally of the creative order, but which through some weakness in creative power exercises itself in criti-
cism instead. These minds often find in Hamlet a vicarious existence for their own artistic realization. Such a mind had Goethe, who made of Hamlet a Werther; and such had Coleridge, who made of Hamlet a Coleridge; and probably neither of these men in writing about Hamlet remembered that his first business was to study a work of art. The kind of criticism that Goethe and Coleridge produced, in writing of Hamlet, is the most misleading kind possible. For they both possessed unquestionable critical insight, and both made their critical aberrations the more plausible by the substitution--of their own Hamlet for Shakespeare's--which their creative gift effects. 52

In indicating Eliot's critical inheritance, a comparison with Lamb's Shakespeare criticism is useful in many ways. Just as in it the continuous concern and the occasional insight are more important than any explicitly systematic approach to Shakespeare, so in general in Eliot's criticism larger consistencies (rather than consistencies of detail) and occasional theoretical formulations stand out more than do full-fledged theories. Such criticism is important not only on its own account, but also because of its intimate links with the rest, links which have not been noticed sufficiently. This similarity makes it necessary to remember about Eliot, as Joan Coldwell tells us in connection with Lamb, that

Most of his [Lamb's] published criticism came out first as periodical pieces and there is only one essay, apart from theatre reviews, devoted entirely to Shakespeare. The rest is fragmentary, a passage here or there in general essays or letters... .But the fact that Lamb's comments on Shakespeare are scattered throughout his work has made them relatively inaccessible and his reputation as a critic has inevitably suffered. 53

There are other more specific parallels to be noticed between the criticism of Eliot and that of Lamb. For example, taken out of its context, Lamb's suggestion that King Lear is unactable sounds
odd; his objection was not based on the idea of violation of decorum as was that of some of Shakespeare's editors and producers in the eighteenth century. In its own context the suggestion illustrates two of Lamb's material ideas: that there is much in Shakespeare that acting cannot convey adequately although it is at least available in reading; and that even of that which can be conveyed in acting, most often little is properly conveyed, but merely distorted. Eliot raises similar questions about acting and production in "The Duchess of Malfi' at the Lyric" (1919/20) and specifically points to the problem of King Lear in another place, modifying Lamb's view. Both Eliot and Lamb were trying to stress the presence in Shakespeare's drama of depths incommunicable, or at least only rarely communicated, in performance. But for a better understanding of Eliot's theory regarding these depths, the possibility of drama-beyond-drama and the "deeper pattern in the carpet," we need to study his Edinburgh lectures in detail.

Another point of resemblance has to do with the method of the two critics. The method of comparison was, as his theory and practice show, of great importance to Eliot; Lamb too used this method to great advantage. In commenting upon the success of Hogarth in mixing various elements of real life together, Lamb says:

It is the force of these kindly admixtures, which assimilates the scenes of Hogarth and of Shakespeare to the drama of real life... Who sees not that the Gravedigger in 'Hamlet,' the Fool in 'Lear'; have a kind of correspondence to, and fall in with, the subjects which they seem to interrupt, while the comic stuff in 'Venice Preserved,' and the doggerel nonsense of the Cook and his poisoning associates in the Rollo of Beaumont and Flet-
cher, are pure, irrelevant, impertinent discords. 56

There is much similarity between this kind of comparison and the comparisons that are an invaluable and abundant part of Eliot's criticism. At the heart of these comparisons, frequently, is the work of Shakespeare. It seems possible to say that in such matters at least Eliot came at the end of a long line of distinguished critics. For such comparisons are also an integral part of the Elizabethan criticism of Swinburne, for instance, who assumes a special importance in the understanding of Eliot's own criticism in that period. Eliot's difficulty with Swinburne derives as much from the weaknesses of the critical style of Swinburne, as it does from the fact that Eliot's Elizabethan criticism is to an extent a rewriting of Swinburne's criticism.

In the criticism of Swinburne and his contemporaries there is a natural and pervasive assumption: that Shakespeare is unique. Such an assumption does not prevent comparisons with him. The same is true of Eliot's criticism. Despite such similarity, at least early in his career Eliot had thought that Swinburne's *The Age of Shakespeare*, for instance, contained no criticism. Eliot says in 1918 that this book "contains no information and conveys no clear impression of the dramatists discussed. A few notable quotations. Neither scholarship nor criticism." 57 The general tenor of Eliot's remarks suggests that his main objection, in fact, concerns the eloquence of Swinburne. However, once we put aside Swinburne's eloquent style, which was also a characteristic of much other nineteenth-century criticism--Eliot was then attempting to counter such style, and may
have countered it only at the cost of infusing into his own style an air of hesitancy and mystification—we see that the process by which Swinburne criticizes is one of definition of individual strengths and weaknesses of the Elizabethan dramatists. This definition is achieved by means of comparison, not infrequently comparison with Shakespeare, and not unlike Eliot's own comparisons. The achievements of the other dramatists do not appear paltry in consequence, yet the exploitation of one fixed term of comparison provides Swinburne with a stabilizing factor in the criticism. It is possible by such a method to assign due credit to each dramatist for his individual contribution to drama, as well as to identify the highest achievements in each aspect of the art.

Taking a hint from Goethe's evaluation of Marlowe's Faustus, to cite one example, Swinburne says about Marlowe:

the particular note of merit observed, the special point of the praise conferred, by the great German poet should be no less sufficient to dispose of the vulgar misconception yet lingering among sciolists and pretenders of criticism, which regards a writer than whom no man was ever born with a finer or stronger instinct for perfection of excellence in execution as a mere noble savage of letters, a rough self-taught sketcher or scribbler or crude and rude genius, whose unhewn blocks of verse had in them some vein of rare enough metal to be quarried and polished by Shakespeare. 58

Swinburne himself considers Marlowe rather as "the young master of Shakespeare's youth." 59

Two passages from Eliot's own writing may be juxtaposed here, first one about Marlowe, and then one about Swinburne as a critic written a few years after the 1918 estimate quoted above. In a re-
view of Una Ellis-Fermor's study of Marlowe, Eliot says that this study will do much to remove Marlowe from the position of being merely Shakespeare's greatest predecessor, and will do much to win him further consideration as a poet and dramatist very different in temperament from Shakespeare, with a development and a unity, an oeuvre of his own. 60

What Eliot says here is essentially the same as what Swinburne had said earlier, yet it is different in a way that is only natural in the history of a developing act of criticism in which a critic builds upon the ideas of his predecessors. If such ideas are to be accepted as criticism in Eliot's own work, they must be so accepted in the work of Swinburne as well.

The rhetoric of Swinburne is actually deceptive--Eliot was a keen enough critic of poetry to realize that Swinburne's wordiness in poetry could not be dismissed as mere verbiage, but that one had to recognize in it a different kind of poetry altogether. 61 In The Age of Shakespeare, the substratum of the rhetoric contains broad perspectives as well as particular criticisms. Perhaps in recognition of this, when Eliot reviews the work of Swinburne later on, he is prepared to allow him exceptional credit as a critic:

Swinburne had mastered his material, was more inward with the Tudor-Stuart dramatists than any man of pure letters before or since; he is a more reliable guide than Hazlitt, Coleridge or Lamb; and his perception of relative values is almost always correct. 62

Coming from Eliot, this is high praise indeed. In fact, a detailed and open-minded juxtaposition of the various Elizabethan essays of
these two critics reveals a kinship much deeper and closer than that found among critics who merely belong to the same 'school'. While Eliot's earlier censure of Swinburne originated in his rebellious critical attitude to his immediate predecessors, and in his objection to the general lack of objective criticism of actual texts in the nineteenth century, his later, more tempered view reveals his true appreciation of Swinburne's worth.

Such inconsistencies between initial radical reactions against earlier critics and the later justness of evaluation pose some difficulty in reading Eliot's Shakespearean and Elizabethan criticism. The inconsistencies are not a true reflection of his understanding of the history of this criticism. Although similar treatment is given to other critics, such as J. A. Symonds, F. S. Boas, A. C. Bradley and others, clearly we ought to find the roots of such reactions that are strong, dismissive, and on occasion rash, in Eliot's inability at first to combine his genuine objections, his positive evaluations, and his incipient theoretical positions concerning the nature of art and criticism.

Like the work of a few other critics of note, Eliot's work stretches over an extraordinarily long time and an equally extraordinary range of authors and subjects. Naturally, it is open to other genuine difficulties. One of them is brought out forcefully in a specific objection to Eliot's statements about Othello by Nevill Coghill in his *Shakespeare's Professional Skills*. In the remarks concerning Othello's last great speech ('Soft you, a word or two
before you go..."), in Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927), Eliot had suggested that it was an attempt at "bovayrsme" on the part of Othello, an attempt to "cheer himself up." Coghll reminds us that Shakespeare's art is a dramatic art, subject to shapes that stage-performances are capable of giving it. Therefore, interpretations based purely on reading often suffer from unreliability like any other form of speculation. Coghll says about Eliot's interpretation of this speech:

What happens to this interpretation when we try it out in a theatre? What tones of voice, what move or gesture, can an actor use to suggest a Bovaryst cheering himself up? Would he not choose precisely those that would seem to be expressing the greatness in defeat of a noble nature? For a Bovaryst at such a moment would attempt to see himself as doing exactly that. Unless it be argued that there is no such thing in nature as greatness in defeat and that any attempt to show it must be instantly recognized by all as fraudulent, how is the audience to know whether Othello is cheering himself up for being so gross a fool and failure, or whether he is cheering his audience up by showing once again, and at the last moment, a true flash of that nobility for which they had first honoured him? 64

With the confidence of decades of experience in practical theatre, Coghll proceeds to show the theatrical impossibility of conveying the impression that Eliot claims Othello was trying to convey. Further, he shows that had Shakespeare wished to create such an impression, he had plenty of means to effect it, and therefore we have to conclude that such could not have been the direction of Othello's speech. Strangely enough, and not only on this occasion, it appears that Eliot loses sight of the fact that he is criticizing a theatre-play. This oversight is strange, because he is usually so concerned about the very problem of creating a modern poetic drama that would
be viable on the stage. But it is strange also because, in the words of a reviewer of Shakespeare criticism, Eliot may be credited with making a contribution to the fact that "nowadays all [Shakespeare] criticism may be said to begin with the playhouse." As this reviewer tells us:

The previous age would have found in Shakespearian critics such as Bradley, Raleigh and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Not to mention younger critics like Mr. Middleton Murry and Mr. Eliot, a surprising degree of consciousness that Shakespeare was a hardworking playwright in a particular playhouse. 65

Yet the principle that Eliot is trying to illustrate by his remarks on Othello's obituary upon himself, is valid: that no one exposes better than Shakespeare the human capacity for self-delusion, and that no one objectifies better the essential human weaknesses. The case in point may be an inappropriate example, and Eliot compounds the problem by extending the argument to many of Shakespeare's major tragic heroes--Antony, Coriolanus, Hamlet. In his attempt to explain the Senecan element in Shakespeare, Eliot is ignoring the convention of Elizabethan tragedy that the hero be given a chance to make a last statement, usually in the presence of his successors and followers. He is also ignoring a clear pattern that appears more clearly in the plays of Shakespeare, that no unconscious irony or self-delusion goes unmarked and unemphasized by at least one hint about its true meaning. Therefore, we cannot perceive irony or delusion in Shakespeare where no such hint exists.

Perhaps one can say that here Eliot loses sight of an "objective correlative" to support his interpretation of Othello's speech. But
that would not be quite fair to Eliot; for there are other places where he appears to be criticizing drama on the basis of reading, just as there are other respectable critics who have been known to do the same. Even Heminge and Condell themselves show awareness of the fact that plays will be read, in their address to "the Great Variety of Readers." Eliot's essay on John Marston (1934), for example, bears many signs of such interpretation. From time to time Eliot clearly considers drama as if it were a form of writing alone and not as a performance art, as though his experience of writing non-dramatic poetry were interfering with his judgment. He confesses in the Edinburgh lectures that although he had earlier objected to certain scenes in Hamlet as being irrelevant, he could now see that on stage they not only appear to belong, but that such scenes are actually quite effective and pertinent. It seems legitimate to suggest at this juncture that such lapses on the part of Eliot and other dramatic critics can be treated positively. It seems possible, that is to say, that there is in existence not one genre being understood correctly on the one hand and erroneously on the other, but that there may be two distinct genres: a reading or poetic type, and a stage or theatre type, with obviously a grey area between them. Plays are now, and have been for long, more read than witnessed in the theatre; the activities of reading, and of criticizing what one is reading, are evidently enjoyable, worthwhile and legitimate. Much modern criticism of Elizabethan drama and its poetic achievement would be inadmissible if such a view were not taken. It is perhaps a fault of Eliot's dramatic criticism, yet we
no longer baulk at almost purely "poetic" criticism of plays. Perhaps we ought to recognize, deliberately and distinctly, the two manifestations of drama, and concentrate on what Eliot has to contribute to our understanding of them.

Another important problem is raised by Lewis Freed in T. S. Eliot: Aesthetics and History. He says: "The technical critic, for Eliot, is a critic only in the narrow sense; and the reason is that he does not carry his analysis of poetry to the point of illuminating life." It may well be the central difficulty of Eliot's criticism that he does not always manage to balance the ideas of analysis and illumination of life. Witness the study and insight which he put into the review of English criticism from its earliest days without arriving at any new formulation of the "use of poetry" in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism. On the one hand, as we saw earlier, we have to deal with Eliot's heavy insistence on analysis, especially at the beginning of his career, and his failure to do very much analysis himself; and on the other hand, we are confronted with his suspicion that interpretation is unreliable, and his own habit of quite fruitfully interpreting in the process of criticizing. The co-existence of these two contrary tendencies in his thinking may indicate his inability to coalesce the two aspects of criticism. It is itself a narrow view of criticism that considers interpretation automatically of dubious validity, when at the same time one is suggesting that the critic's responsibility is to illuminate the meaning of art in life.

The exact point at which analysis melts into illumination of
life is difficult to determine, and even more difficult to observe in the act of criticism. Eliot is certainly aware of this problem as a problem, as can be seen from his opening confession in his "Introduction" to Wilson Knight's The Wheel of Fire, which is a most "poetic" interpretation of Shakespeare's plays. There Eliot admits that he has given up some of his previous hesitation about accepting interpretation. Eliot's "Hamlet" perhaps offers us the best opportunity to watch these two tendencies at loggerheads. Many apparent and real inconsistencies in Eliot's criticism arise from this tension between subjectivity and objectivity, interpretation and analysis. For example, it is puzzling and irritating to find that in the Edinburgh lectures, which purport to justify the achievement of Shakespeare's last plays within a comprehensive theory of Shakespeare's development, there is scarcely any analysis of passages from these plays. However, neither these inconsistencies, nor the deeper consistencies, nor yet his gradual development away from excessively "objective" criticism, will be sufficiently evident from a study of Eliot's more familiar essays alone. Nowhere else does he state the case for objective criticism as committedly as in some of the unfamiliar pieces which he wrote in the period 1917-1919, and which form part of the material that is the subject of the present study. And perhaps it is ironic that the best analysis of a dramatic scene that Eliot ever did should be found in a lecture that he did not put to the test of publication.

A different kind of difficulty that arises simply because we confine ourselves to reading Eliot's major and familiar essays can
be illustrated with the help of his views regarding the prose of Shakespeare, his realism, and the role of comedy in his plays. Several times during his major essays Eliot says without explanation that Shakespeare's is the greatest prose in his period, and perhaps in the entire English language. If we wish to understand why Eliot attributes this achievement to Shakespeare, we have to look at certain of his pieces in *The Listener*, for instance, that are hardly ever noticed. These pieces do not primarily concern drama or Shakespeare, but such topics as "The Tudor Translators," "The Genesis of Philosphic Prose," and "The Prose of the Preacher." However, they consistently refer to Shakespeare, and give some specific reasons and examples to substantiate his estimate of Shakespeare's prose. Similarly, not only in writing about Andrew Marvell and wit, but in many other obscure pieces, which also refer to Shakespeare, Eliot tries to explain the true "alliance of levity and seriousness (by which seriousness is intensified)."

A similar problem demonstrates why it is necessary to take into account the chronology of Eliot's criticism. In an article on "Eliot's Contribution to Criticism of Drama," R. Peacock makes an exceptionally full analysis of Eliot's dramatic criticism. He pinpoints many of the major patterns of thought and inquiry in it. However, he shows vividly certain blind spots in assessments of Eliot's preoccupation with poetic drama and with Shakespeare. Peacock's study is hampered by its choice of Eliot's critical writing in the process of tracing the growth of Eliot's concept of drama. In attempting to establish links in Eliot's thinking about drama over the
years, Peacock describes "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama" (Nov. 1920) and "Dialogue on Poetic Drama" (1928) as "two exploratory essays." However, long before he wrote the first of these two essays, Eliot had started his exploration of both the achievement of Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, and of the nature of a possible poetic drama for the modern age. He had, before "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama," written about such subjects in over twenty reviews and articles, and specifically about the possibility of a poetic drama in at least ten of them. In the process he not only writes about the business of the critic in the field, but also leaves no doubt about the place that Shakespeare ought to occupy in such an inquiry.

Thus we find in the early review "The Noh and the Image" (1917) consideration of Shakespeare's achievement in presenting the supernatural on the stage, and the difference between that kind of realism and the realism that might do for the modern stage. The plans for his Extension lectures (1918) show a vast range of ideas that continue to figure prominently in Eliot's criticism of Drama. In the two articles on contemporary criticism (1918) discussed earlier, apparently written in part as a result of his work on the Extension lectures, the examples Eliot cites in the conclusion are all works of Shakespearean and Elizabethan criticism. "Rhetoric" and Poetic Drama (1919) is obviously concerned with ideas regarding drama that Eliot would continue to develop. The essay on Christopher Marlowe (1919) shows that Eliot's approach to practical dramatic criticism would involve some use of Shakespeare as a norm. The "Hamlet"
essay is a much more substantial exploration of the nature of drama than many of Eliot's later pieces on the subject of drama. "Ben Jonson" (1919), as Peacock later acknowledges, goes into the problem of portrayal of living character, a concept which was still with Eliot in 1962. Eliot's review of a performance of "The Duchess of Malfi" at the Lyric" (1919/20) explores in great detail the issue of modern revivals of Elizabethan drama, the distortion of that drama caused by a lack of proper appreciation of its distance from us, and the problem of "transmitting" the author's lines on the stage. A review of Middleton Murry's poetic play Cinnamon and Angelica, very significantly titled "The Poetic Drama" (May 1920), which ought to be considered the immediate ancestor of the concepts later to become familiar because of "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama," explores the effects of the gift as well as the shadow of Shakespeare on the modern poetic drama. The essay on Philip Massinger (May 1920), like "Ben Jonson" before it, leaves no doubt that any consideration of drama is inevitably linked in Eliot's mind with the oeuvre and achievement of Shakespeare.

Not only do all these pieces precede the two essays mentioned by Peacock as being "exploratory," but their presence behind these two essays suggests the growth of Eliot's concern with and understanding of the nature of drama from the very beginning of his career. Actually, Peacock's article comes close to perceiving that in the entire cumulative dramatic poetic of Eliot, Shakespeare is a constant, ubiquitous norm, a critical starting point as well as a means of analogy and comparison. Merely to observe the unfailing
and undeniable fact of this presence of Shakespeare, always in the background, but frequently in the foreground as well, is to understand that Eliot's dramatic criticism is simultaneously an ongoing criticism of Shakespeare. Eliot's justified obsession with real—practically as well as theoretically crucial—aesthetic issues could only become productive when it was linked with the study of such a corpus as the whole work of Shakespeare.  

In Eliot's considerable though scattered criticism of Shakespeare, as in the rest of his criticism, can be seen the development of his comparative method. This method is deeply rooted in his understanding of "tradition," that "things as they really are" have no significance in isolation, but that they are what they are only in their proper context of human life and literary tradition. The method develops along parallel lines in his poetry and his criticism, although naturally by different processes. The allusive technique of Eliot's poetry, especially before the Four Quartets, relies heavily on Shakespeare, as will be seen from the list of his poetic references to and echoes of Shakespeare in Appendix "A" at the end of this study. However, a satisfactory study of the allusion, echo, reference, parody, epigraphs and so on in Eliot's poems, and the place of Shakespeare in the technique, being a vast and independent field, cannot be approached here. Both the poetry and the criticism arrive at definition, connotation and expansion by means of comparisons and juxtapositions. In scores of instances in his criticism Eliot permits a comparison with Shakespeare to imply an evaluation and to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of other authors. That
certain critical standards of judgment would not come into opera-
tion at all if a work were viewed in isolation, is a constant im-
plication or axiom in much of the criticism of Eliot; yet, clearly
enough, he could not have operated on this basis with consistency
at the very beginning of his career. He had to emerge from the pos-
sibility of excessive reliance upon narrowly fact-based criticism.
Eliot's discussion of interpretation in the "Introduction" to G.
Wilson Knight's The Wheel of Fire (1930) can be seen perhaps as a
half-way mark in this movement toward a broader foundation for cri-
ticism. Here he is willing to include subjective responses in cri-
tical statement, and to allow interpretation the capacity to throw
light on deeper levels of structure and significance in literature.
The conflict between analysis and interpretation produces a strain
in some of Eliot's writing, a tension not altogether resolved, as
is evident in his Dante (1929) and in "Goethe as the Sage" (1955),
as in the "Introduction" to Knight. In "Religion and Literature"
(1935) he was to come out with a formula for criticism—although
even here there is no clear evidence of the principles of ethics
and religion at work consistently in all his prose—that whether a
work is literature or not can be decided by literary criteria alone,
but "literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a de-
finite ethical and theological standpoint."86 But such tensions are
a part of the business of criticism.

Throughout, however, Eliot remained consistent, at least with
regard to Shakespeare, in that the swing from the analytical to an
integral approach did not substantially alter his critical evalua-
tions. He slightly downgraded certain authors as he grew older, and tended to put matters of the spirit above literary matters, but this is a change not entirely unexpected in a critic who was not working within a highly restricted and specialized discipline, theory or area of literature. The reason for his consistency in critical judgments is probably most directly stated in his objections to Norman Foerster's criticism; there he demonstrates the need to keep personal preferences separate from literary evaluation: "I prefer the culture which produced Dante to the culture which produced Shakespeare; but I would not say that Dante was the greater poet, or even that he had the profounder mind." This concern with culture is one of the matrices of Eliot's literary criticism and gives rise to such concepts as "tradition," "dissociation of sensibility," and the "Europeanness" of major western writers like Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe. It may be seen from the discussion so far that the persisting presence of unifying processes and principles, and of certain foundations of thinking about literature and life, can count for more than the excesses and inconsistencies of which Eliot has sometimes been guilty.

III

Consideration of Eliot's comments on Shakespeare raises the important question of how much of Eliot's criticism of particular figures and plays is available to us. Unfortunately, we must accept the fact that Eliot's criticism does not fulfil our expectations in terms of practical analysis. In spite of his lifelong insistence
that criticism should attempt to illuminate specific works of art, and his understanding of the autonomy of a work as well as of the primacy of fact, the proportion of practical to general criticism in Eliot's work is low. Some early notes on Falstaff and the essay on Hamlet, and the various versions of the Edinburgh lectures, are exceptions as far as extended commentary on specific characters and scenes is concerned. We must remain satisfied with general impressions: that Eliot thought highly of Shakespeare's characterization; that he considered the main characters in King Lear and Antony and Cleopatra as satisfactory; that he thought highly of Shakespeare's female characters like Juliet, Ophelia, Portia and Cleopatra; and that for different reasons he thought just as highly of Miranda, Imogen, and Perdita. His examination of Shakespeare's characters is usually incidental; and, as in the case of his statement on Othello in Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927), he cannot always remain objective, but allows the context of the examination to warp his view.

The essay on Ben Jonson (1919) sets the tone of Eliot's view of Shakespearean character. As "'Rhetoric' and Poetic Drama" (1919) and the essay on Shakespeare and Seneca show, the aspect of self-dramatization interested Eliot. At the other end of the scale of dramatization is the fusion of characters in their situation. Thus, commenting on the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet in "'Rhetoric' and Poetic Drama," Eliot says that Shakespeare "shows his lovers melting into incoherent unconsciousness of their isolated selves, shows the human soul in the process of forgetting itself." 89 On
the other hand, in "Dante as a 'Spiritual Leader,'" (1920) Eliot says that "Shakespeare takes a character apparently controlled by a simple emotion, and analyses the character and the emotion itself. The emotion is split up into constituents—and perhaps destroyed in the process. The mind of Shakespeare was one of the most critical that has ever existed."90

The terms are somewhat puzzling: analyse, split up, destroy and critical. However, in the case of Shakespeare's major tragic characters, it is possible to see what Eliot was getting at: Hamlet's guilt, Macbeth's ambition, Lear's vanity, Othello's jealousy, Coriolanus's pride, Timon's rage, Antony's passionate love. Given Eliot's other views, these terms could mean that Shakespeare exhausts the possibilities of these emotions in providing potentially whole characters, and yet subordinates the characters themselves to the reigning structure and texture of the plays of which they form part. For in: "The Poetic Drama" (1920) Eliot had stated the main principle of dramatic structure: "In a dramatic structure the minor emotions, or the emotions of the minor characters, are related to the major emotions through the actions,"91 and the exceptional unity of Shakespeare's plays signifies the subjugation of even the major characters to the totality of a play. His review of the Phoenix Society's King Lear (1924) commends the performance particularly for the co-operative acting without which the play would not succeed.92 Harmony amongst the various elements of a play is a major criterion of success according to Eliot. In "Cyril Tourneur" (1930), for instance, he says: "Webster's [caric]
harmonious with his tragic verse; and in this respect Webster is a worthy follower of the tradition of the Porter in Macbeth.\textsuperscript{93}

Although Eliot refused to make forays into the artist's real-life personality, there are indications that he was aware of the complex relationship of characters to their creator. While he says that "in The Tempest, it is Caliban who speaks," and that "when we listen to a play by Shakespeare, we listen not to Shakespeare but to his characters,"\textsuperscript{94} elsewhere he explains the well-spring of dramatic character:

> when an author creates a vital character, [there] is a sort of give-and-take. The author may put into that character, besides its other attributes, some trait of his own, some strength or weakness, some tendency to violence or to indecision, some eccentricity even, that he has found in himself. Something perhaps never realized in his own life, something of which those who know him best may be unaware, something not restricted in transmission to characters of the same temperament, the same age, and, least of all, of the same sex. Some bit of himself that the author gives to a character may be the germ from which the life of that character starts. \textsuperscript{95}

This approach gives meaning to Eliot's conclusion that "The world of a great poetic dramatist is a world in which the creator is everywhere present and everywhere hidden."\textsuperscript{96}

Eliot clearly respected Shakespeare's comic characters. The Nurse in Romeo and Juliet, Falstaff especially in II, Henry IV and Henry V (in absentia), the Fool in King Lear, the Porter in Macbeth, and Enobarbus in Antony and Cleopatra. In an unusual article he wrote in 1921, Eliot describes Falstaff as the embodiment of the English Comic Myth, indicating also that this myth has never been so effectively represented either before or after. Eliot's concern reaches
beyond the comic element, however, and that is why he considers the later manifestations of Falstaff, as opposed to the one in I, Henry IV, as more significant: for in his later appearances, Falstaff adds the element of political satire to the history plays. In Lear's Fool, and to an extent even in the three sisters in Macbeth, Eliot finds that Shakespeare has extended the comic effect to take in a supernatural element. This function is obvious in the witches, but in the Fool it includes, according to Eliot, a shamanic function. The best over-all integration of comic and serious elements within the same characters, Eliot tells us, is to be found in Antony and Cleopatra, where this integration is the explanation of the tragic greatness of the play.

Although Eliot does not provide us with much analysis of characters, the question of the function of comic characters and effects occupies his mind on several occasions. In the essay on Falstaff and the Comic Myth (1921), Eliot suggests that such a figure is primarily for fun, and that while it is the outcome of the interaction of imagination and social criticism, it should not be expected to affect reality. Later in Poetry and Drama, Eliot explains this aspect of the function of Falstaff:

The audience probably thought they were getting their accustomed chronicle-play garnished with amusing scenes of low life; yet the prose scenes of both Part I and Part II [Henry IV] provide a sarcasm comment upon the bustling ambitions of the chiefs of the parties in the insurrection of the Percys. 97

From this kind of view, there follows a connection between the function of the comic character and the Fool and the nature of dramatic
forms. Explaining, in "The Beating of a Drum" (1923), why he includes Macbeth's Porter and Antony on Pompey's galley in his list of "comic" characters or Fools, Eliot says:

two other inclusions may appear more arbitrary still: the Porter in "Macbeth" and Antony in the scene on Pompey's galley. In these instances there is no question of supernatural powers: the Porter and Antony are Fools because they provide a contrast of mood which contributes to the seriousness of the situation. And each, in his way, is master of the situation. In comedy this antithesis is attenuated, as observable in the "comic servant" everywhere... it is in tragedy, or in some form which is neither tragedy nor comedy, that the Fool, distinct from every other character, is best observed... The identification of Lear's Fool with the medicine man... my interest is in its possible connection with a theory which has far stronger authority: the theory of the development of tragedy and comedy out of a common formal.

As often happens with him, particular discussion vanishes into theoretical consideration. However, such general thought has the virtue and strength of consistency, as can be seen from Eliot's remark upon the subject matter of Shakespeare's drama, in "John Ford": "In the work of Shakespeare as a whole, there is to be read the profoundest and indeed one of the most sombre studies of humanity that has ever been made in poetry; though it is in fact so comprehensive that we cannot qualify it as a whole as either glad or sorry." Eliot's critical comments on specific characters and speeches are too scattered and fugitive to allow consolidation. The brief review presented here will be filled with more detail concerning other plays, and characters and speeches, in the later chapters of this study. At this stage it should suffice to record the fact that specificity is not exactly Eliot's forte in his Shakespearean criticism.
Although Eliot repeatedly emphasizes the importance of reading the entire Shakespeare canon, he pays little attention to the comedies in general; and the last romances, which are a crucial part of Shakespeare's work according to Eliot, are also inadequately analysed. As the evidence presented in the appendices suggests, Eliot's main concern shows through most clearly with the tragedies. We must feel the profoundest regret and dissatisfaction concerning the omission, in this context, of plays at either end of the spectrum in Shakespeare's work: the early and late plays find no significant place in Eliot's analysis of Shakespeare's work. This is particularly disappointing, because Eliot continuously emphasizes Shakespeare's development, and an argument for development that is not adequately supported by analysis of all its stages will lose some of its strength.

Some particular scenes and characters are analysed to a satisfactory degree in Eliot's Edinburgh lectures. He valued Shakespeare's unique contribution to the drama such as the successful development of the powerful recognition scene. He analyses the conclusion of Pericles in these lectures. The poetic architecture of scenes is another vital aspect of Shakespeare's drama; Eliot analyses the important opening scene of Hamlet, and the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet very effectively in the same lectures. These and a few other analyses, including "Hamlet," will be discussed in the third chapter below. In much of Eliot's criticism, however, repetition of quotation and comment takes the place of analysis; not only do we not get a detailed response to many aspects of particular plays, but Eliot's impressions about individual characters, for instance; must
be garnered from a large number of essays which yield scattered comments that often contain no more than a general impression.

T. S. Eliot is exceptional in having produced so much criticism in relatively small and unconnected pieces, exceptional in the age of the academic critic. When thinking of twentieth-century critics of some influence, one usually thinks of the titles of their treatises at the same time: I. A. Richards's *Science and Poetry* and *Principles of Literary Criticism*, F. R. Leavis's *New Bearings in English Poetry* and *The Great Tradition*, and Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* come to mind as examples. The criticism of Eliot is very different. It has accumulated piecemeal, and although at times collected under one title, the pieces remain basically independent. Much of Eliot's criticism was occasioned by some restricted and immediate task. A substantial amount of it nevertheless gathers into an implicit design of unity, if one looks at pervasive attitudes and recurring ideas or other enduring preoccupations in it. Another way in which unity might be discerned in this body of work is to trace his continuing concern with some major figure in the history of literature. For instance, as I have endeavoured to suggest in this chapter, a surprisingly large proportion of his criticism has to do with Shakespeare, although many of the pieces which concern Shakespeare fall under the general category of occasional writing.

Naturally, in the work of a critic who wrote in this fashion, and who generally did not strive for a unified critical theory
except by way of collections of essays, one ought not to expect a thoroughly systematic and cohesive account of views expressed in a number of different places over long periods of time. R. P. Blackmur states this problem well: "There is surely a great deal in Eliot's criticism which can stand straightening out: so many have used it to their own warp. That is why I am so much more interested in putting that criticism together than in taking it apart." In his article on the criticism of Eliot, René Wellek tacitly acknowledges the need to keep this aspect of Eliot's work in mind, even though he complains that "the details of Eliot's criticism seem frequently open to question." And Helen Gardner says that "the new criticism of Shakespeare that is developing will not be able to ignore the many incidental brilliances and insights of what may be called 'the Age of Eliot'." Eliot himself urges us to keep the chronology of his essays in mind. Naturally, many have tried to track down Eliot's inconsistencies with more or less success. But it is more important to try to synthesize the ideas of a critic who is "by far the most important critic of the twentieth century in the English language."

In attempting to identify and to synthesize the ideas of Eliot which have influenced modern poetry, criticism and literary taste, some attention must be given to their chronology. This may allow us to perceive such development as there may be in the criticism; and it may allow us to pinpoint the location of these ideas, since not all of them occur for the first time in Eliot's best known essays. A chronological study of these ideas quickly reveals that many of them
were formulated in some of the earliest work of Eliot. It also be-
comes clear that many of them were engendered in the course of wri-
tings which are somehow concerned with Shakespeare.

The connection of Eliot's critical ideas with his appreciation
of Shakespeare has been accorded insufficient study. Before such a
study can be undertaken, it must be recognized that there is indeed
substantial and significant criticism of Shakespeare in Eliot's
writing, and that it has fundamental connections with Eliot's criti-
cal ideas. It is the purpose of the present study to show that there
is such criticism, and that the basic connections do exist. The
articles already mentioned, by Blackmur, Wellek and Gardner, and the
anonymous review of Shakespeare criticism in Times Literary Supple-
ment, are too brief to undertake satisfactory examination of the
connection. Indeed, cursory study of Eliot's criticism will give
the impression, as it does to Wellek, that what Eliot says about
his poetry is equally true of his criticism as well: that his main
interest was in the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists other than
Shakespeare.\footnote{106} Despite Eliot's acknowledgement that he learned more
poetic lessons from other playwrights--it must be remembered that
Eliot thought Shakespeare so great that he could not really become
an influence--this conclusion is belied by Eliot's own recurring
reference to Shakespeare. As often as not Eliot first proposes his
major critical ideas in obscure pieces, and many of the major as-
well as the obscure pieces use Shakespeare as a standard of judg-
ment. Therefore, it seems clear that a study of Eliot's various
views on Shakespeare will be instructive.\footnote{108}
Eliot sometimes says that in his early teens Shakespeare held no special attraction for him. He seems to have overcome this perhaps not unnatural insensitivity by the time he wrote "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" ("I am not Prince Hamlet"). In a good deal of his poetry since "Prufrock," and in his criticism, the two most striking facts in this connection are the continuity of his response to Shakespeare and the constancy of his evaluation of Shakespeare. Certain salient ideas run through all his considerations of Shakespeare. At times he discusses such aspects of Shakespeare as may be of use to modern writers, and at times he derives principles of general application from his analysis of Shakespeare's work, while in other essays there is the suggestion that Shakespeare can be a testing ground for critical and general taste. He says in one place that it is not the fact that one enjoys Shakespeare which is of importance, but how one enjoys him. By 1934, his contribution to Shakespeare criticism was substantial enough to have prompted Harley Granville-Barker and G. B. Harrison to ask him to write a chapter on its history for their Companion to Shakespeare Studies.

However, the great variety in Eliot's work and the apparent lack of an explicit, strong central system or theory that subsumes the many ideas, encourage partial and therefore unfair assessment of Eliot's major critical ideas. The "objective correlative" has long been notorious for this reason. As will be shown in the final chapter of this study, the concept of objective equivalence as a criterion of successful artistic expression has validity irrespective of its application to Hamlet, and of the origin of the phrase
"objective correlative." Another idea susceptible to distortion is that of "impersonality" in poetry. Eliot's theory is not auto-cathartic as some have suggested it is. The process of creation and that of auto-catharsis may be intimately connected in such a theory. Yet it is not an inevitable extension of such connection that the two processes should be identical, or that they should be so intertwined in the act of creation itself as to be incapable of being perceived as two separate processes. Transmutation of personality appears to spring from the fear of a risk of exposing the personality of the artist as it is. There may even be facts in Eliot's life or writings to suggest that perhaps he felt such fear. Yet there is a complex of ideas at work in his criticism, ideas which seem to form a different, more objective and worthwhile pattern than suggested by auto-catharsis.

These ideas, all of which are persistent in Eliot's Shakespeare criticism, concern the need of objectivity in creation as well as of a unified sensibility, of realism or a firm grasp of essential facts of life, and of "poetic truth" as the ultimate goal of creative writing. The last chapter of this study undertakes an investigation of the possibility that there is an implicit system of objectivity here that invalidates an auto-cathartic reading of Eliot's critical approach. The lack of explicit statement is, in some cases, only apparent: for instance, in the series of lectures on Shakespeare's development towards realism the argument clearly subsumes the concepts of "objectivity," "impersonality," and "associated" sensibility. It would be a mistake to treat any of these
as though it had no theoretical context, or on the basis of single essays alone, such as "Tradition and the Individual Talent." At any rate, no one would seriously accuse Shakespeare, whose work is Eliot's most prominent and persistent example of artistic success, of having indulged in auto-cathartic use of the process of artistic creation.

In the total context of Eliot's criticism, the crucial implications of the theory of impersonality become clear: that such parts or aspects of the artist's personality as remain purely personal, and therefore of minimal artistic interest, contribute nothing to the work of art; that whatever elements of personality go to form the fibre of a work by creating a legitimate place for themselves within the context of the work, are justified; that the conversion or transmutation of such parts of personality requires "objective correlatives" that fit within the work as its own parts and not as intrusions. According to Eliot, in the sense of intrusive personality, Shakespeare has no personality. In other words, Eliot's theory is an argument for the objectification of personality, and that is why it is opposed to specifically intrusive confession or display of personality. In a variety of contexts Eliot argues that such objectification is the basis of art. In "Swinburne as Poet," he talks of the presence of the object used as correlative in successful poetry:

It is, in fact, the word that gives him the thrill, not the object. When you take to pieces any verse of Swinburne, you find always that the object was not there—only the word.

Compare
Snowdrops that plead for pardon
And pine for fright
with the daffodils that come before the swallow dares. The snowdrop of Swinburne disappears, the daffodil of Shakespeare remains. The swallow of Shakespeare remains in the verse in Macbeth; the bird of Wordsworth breaking the silence of the seas remains; the swallow of 'Itylus' disappears. 113

In the same way, in Dante (1929) Eliot discusses the fitness of the shape of the philosophy of Dante as it appears in his poetry as being our chief concern, not whether it is consistent with the original scholastic thought, or whether Dante himself believed it. 114 In "Wilkie Collins and Dickens" he talks of the "poetic" or essential truth to life of the characters of Dante, Shakespeare and Dickens as a higher achievement than the mere mundanely realistic adequacy of Collins's characters (and Eliot enjoyed Collins). The object as evoked, not merely named, remains Eliot's main concern, the criterion of success and source of enjoyment in poetry, the criterion that Shakespeare most consistently satisfies.

Clearly, the caution that Eliot may have exercised in keeping his personality to himself does not account for all these implications and extensions of his theory, nor does the possible cause of the caution, the fear of exposure. The movement of Eliot's theory towards unified, uncluttered, objective expression in a work of art is difficult to miss. Indeed, it seems to be implied in all his evaluations of Shakespeare and in his use of Shakespeare as a norm. In much of Eliot's comparative criticism his goal is clear: to show where and how an author may have succeeded in presenting adequate and unmixed correlative.

As should be clear now, Shakespeare appears in Eliot's criticism
as the major figure in the literary tradition of Europe. Therefore, Eliot's views on Shakespeare ought to illuminate the larger pattern of Eliot's critical thought. These views assume a prominence in his criticism hitherto unrecognized by students of Eliot. Therefore, in the following chapters it is proposed to make a review of Eliot's major and minor Shakespeare criticism. Eliot perceived patterns in authors and literary periods which he thought must be recognized by later artists, and which could only be transmitted through history by such "living" exponents of tradition as Shakespeare. It is in the earliest method of criticism that Eliot used, not so much in the method of "scientific" criticism which he advocated, and which was to be used excessively by others later, that these patterns reveal a consistency which he maintains right to the end. Therefore, we must examine the means by which Eliot manipulated his comparisons. The chief means of comparison is the work of Shakespeare. There are inconsistencies having to do with some of the other terms of reference which Eliot used from time to time, as the earlier discussion has suggested. But, barring the one controversial example of "Hamlet" (1919), which he reconsidered periodically, Eliot's treatment of Shakespeare's work is enduring and consistent. This consistency will reveal itself further when the variety of material outlined in this chapter is considered together with the standard essays of Eliot.

Most prominently, the consistency of Eliot's commentary on Shakespeare during the period between 1917 and 1962 can become evident when we study Eliot's exploration of Shakespeare's development.
A good deal of this exploration is comparative. Based on the concept of the objective and realistic verse, and of the nature of literary forms, Eliot's approach to Shakespeare incorporates the essential building blocks of a coherent aesthetic theory. In the two subsequent chapters, therefore, these topics will be the focus of our study.
Notes to Chapter 1

1 The D. B. Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario, London, Canada; the Robarts Library, University of Toronto; the Houghton and Widener Libraries, Harvard University; and the Beinecke and Sterling libraries, Yale University, have provided all the material in question.

2 See the Appendices following the Conclusion below.


4 This does not include a virtual repetition of "Ben Jonson"; see note 5 below.


6 This includes (a) the plans for the Extension lectures (1918), (b) the several lectures in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, (c) the two Edinburgh lectures, and (d) the eight Clark lectures, each counted as one item.

7 This includes (a) the two parts of "Tradition and the Indi-
vidual Talent," (b) the three parts of John Dryden: The Poet, The Dramatist, The Critic, and (c) the appendix to Notes Towards a Definition of Culture, each counted as one item.

8 This includes four introductions and prefaces to Eliot's own collections of essays.


10 These are chapters written by Eliot for books edited or compiled by others: e.g., the chapter on Shakespearean criticism in H. Granville-Barker & G. B. Harrison, ed., A Companion to Shakespeare Studies. Cambridge University Press (1934)287-299.


14 Of these, two are letters to the London Times, (1962) concerning the proposed exhumation of Shakespeare's tomb, and containing no criticism; therefore, of these eighteen, only sixteen items
should be considered relevant to the present study.

15 A list of all these items will be found in Appendix "A."

16 "Shakespeares Verskunst." Der Monat, II.20 (May 1950)[198]-
207. The Edinburgh and Clark lectures remain unpublished.

17 E.g., Eliot's introduction to Charlotte Eliot, Savonarola:

18 Only the introduction to the first edition of The Sacred
Wood (1920) appeared earlier.


20 [London:] Grant Richards, (1927).

21 E.g., Banquo's description of Macbeth's castle in I. vi; and
Caesar's "she looks like sleep, / As she would catch another Antony/
In her strong toil of grace," Antony and Cleopatra, V. ii.

22 E.g., Feste's "Come away death," Twelfth Night, II. iv, is
cited in The Use of Criticism and the Use of Criticism (1933) 39.

23 The script available to me for perusal is the Houghton libra-
ry script, apparently a carbon copy of a typescript; its cover re-
ords the following facts:

"SHAKESPEARE AS POET AND DRAMATIST/An address delivered by T. S.
Eliot/ At Edinburgh University in 1937/ and at Bristol University
in 1941/ In two parts; unpublished. Gift/ of Miss Emily Hale." 
Apparently, neither Edinburgh University nor Bristol University holds 
a copy of the lectures.
24 The Lewis Fry Memorial Lecture for 1941-42, delivered at Bristol University in 1941. The three separate titles name Eliot's principal concerns: poetry in drama, poetry as speech in drama, and Shakespeare's development of poetic language into dramatic speech.


28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 See an earlier and explicit statement of this effect in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933)44.

31 The 'Note' on Romeo and Juliet, which Eliot finally included in Poetry and Drama in 1957, does not do justice to the whole analysis, especially as it is deprived of its context in the Edinburgh lectures; also, in addition to Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet, Eliot analyses in the Edinburgh lectures scenes from King John, Antony and Cleopatra, Cymbeline and Pericles.


33 Dante (1929).

34 Because of their central significance, these lectures will be frequently referred to in this study, although Mrs. Valerie Eliot at
one time refused to grant me permission to quote from the manuscript; she also refused permission to append to this study an independent translation into English, which I have been able to work out with the generous assistance of a friend in India, of the published German version, "Shakespeares Verskunst" (1950).


36 Egoist, V.9 (Oct. 1918)[113]-114.

37 Ibid.

38 "Studies in Contemporary Criticism, II." Egoist, V.10 (Nov./Dec. 1918)131-33.


40 A. C. Swinburne, The Age of Shakespeare; J. A. Symonds, Predecessors of Shakespeare; F. S. Boas, Shakespeare's Predecessors; F. E. Schelling, Elizabethan Drama.

41 "Studies in Contemporary Criticism," I (1918)[113].

42 (Emphasis added); "Studies in Contemporary Criticism, II" (1918)133.

43 "Studies in Contemporary Criticism," I (1918)[113].

One of the ideas put forward here that Eliot did not abandon, but revised and restated with reduced force, is that of the 'intractable material' in Hamlet; in the Edinburgh lectures Eliot went much farther to maintain that perhaps for Shakespeare all material was more or less intractable, therefore, it cannot be viewed as a flaw in Hamlet.

Cambridge University Press (1973)2.

Criterion, II.5 (Oct. 1923)31-42.


"Shakespearian Criticism...." A Companion to Shakespeare Studies, p.299.


Charles Lamb on Shakespeare. London: Colin Smythe (1978)11. Perhaps it is only natural to find "fragmentary perceptions" in the work of critics who do not raise their views to the level of elaborated theories. See Eliot's observation on Coleridge at the opening of "Philip Massinger" (1920) that refers to this problem.

In Charles Lamb, On the Tragedies of Shakespeare (1811).
55 "A Commentary." Criterion, II.7 (Apr. 1924)235; "It is commonly said, we suppose on the authority of Charles Lamb, that King Lear is not a play to be acted; as if any play could be better in the reading than in the representation." However, see notes 65 and 68 below.

56 Coldwell, op. cit., p.45. Also it is clear from Eliot's chapter in A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (1934) that he thought very highly of De Quincey's "The Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth." See Poetry and Drama, in On Poetry and Poets (1957)89, where Eliot employs virtually the same terms to commend the achievement of the great tragic speeches of Shakespeare.

57 "Studies in Contemporary Criticism, II" (1918)132.


59 Ibid., p.4.

60 "A Study of Marlowe." Times Literary Supplement, 1309 (3 Mar. 1927)140. On the one hand, in "Christopher Marlowe" (1919), Eliot commences by objecting to Swinburne's view of the relationship between Marlowe and Shakespeare, and on the other hand he praises him. Really, Eliot's objections here do not hold, since both the ideas that he suggests as being incompatible with Swinburne's statements are not incompatible, but merely omitted from explicit statement.

61 See the conclusion of "Swinburne as Poet," The Sacred Wood.

63 Eliot himself says in "To Criticize the Critic" that he had been rash, that his early criticism suffered from "the occasional note of arrogance, of vehemence, or coarseness or rudeness."

64 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1964) XIV.

65 Anonymous leading article, "Shakespeare Scholars at Work: An Age of Discovery and Advance." Times Literary Supplement, 1839 (1 May 1927) [334]-335. This is a rare review of Shakespeare studies, because it seems to provide for Eliot the kind of important position in Shakespeare criticism towards which the present study also argues. In the five-sixths of a column that this article devotes to "Criticism," Eliot is the only critic to be mentioned as many as three times, and the only quotation in this section also comes from Eliot's views on Shakespeare. The reviewer is aware of the element of consciousness of the primacy of the requirement of performance on stage that is generally the basis of Eliot's Elizabethan criticism, and gives Eliot credit for it. See note 68 below.

66 "Hamlet." In Kermode, op. cit., p. 46.

67 Eliot himself suggests that this conversion to reading began in the eighteenth century: "Shakespearian Criticism...." A Companion to Shakespeare Studies, p. 292.

68 "Preface." Elizabethan Essays (1934) 8-9. On p. 14, however, Eliot perjures himself by saying about Shakespeare and Henry Arthur Jones: "they are both dramatists to be read rather than seen,
because it is precisely in that drama which depends upon the interpretation of an actor of genius, that we ought to be on our guard against the actor. The difference is, of course, that without the actor of genius the plays of Mr. Jones are nothing and the plays of Shakespeare are still to be read"; and further on p.15, when he says: "I know that I rebel against most performances of Shakespeare's plays because I want a direct relationship between the work of art and myself, and I want the performance to be such as will not interrupt or alter this relationship." The only differences between this view and Lamb's view are that Lamb identified King Lear as the most like to be "interrupted" or "altered" by inadequate acting, and that he was consistent in his idea that there is much to the plays of Shakespeare that acting cannot reveal, but that reading at least has the opportunity and potential to divine.

69 La Salle, Ill.: Open Court (1962)4.

70 London: Oxford University Press (1930)[xi].

71 E.g., the two "Studies in Contemporary Criticism" (1918).

72 Listener, I.22 (12 June 1929), I.24 (26 June 1929), and II.25 (3 July 1929), respectively.


75 Ibid., p.90.

76 Egoist, IV.7 (Aug. 1917)102-3.
See Schuchard, op. cit.

"Studies in Contemporary Criticism, II" (1918)133.


As "Some Notes on the Blank Verse of Christopher Marlowe:"

"Ben Jonson" (1919); and "T. S. Eliot...An Interview," Granite Review, XXIV.3 (Election 1962)16-20.


Athenaeum, 4698 (14 May 1920)635-36.

Dante occupies a similar, though much less pervasive, productive and substantial, position in Eliot's criticism and poetry.

Unfortunately, when Eliot does resort to more direct statement, he sometimes shows a tendency to overstatement. Thus, he makes entirely uncritical remarks about Matthew Arnold's profession as school inspector in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933) 110. In "Second Thoughts about Humanism" (Selected Essays, 1969 reprint, p.488), Eliot rashly equates Goethe with "chaff" since Shakespeare is clearly "wheat," so that the injustice of this distinction haunts him till 1955, when he strenuously attempts to rectify his position in the lecture "Goethe as the Sage." Similarly, when Eliot refers to Wyndham Lewis's The Lion and the Fox in Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca—(1927), he lets fall a derogatory remark about Lewis's thinking, but in a later review of the book (Twentieth Century Verse, 6/7 (Nov./Dec. 1937)[6-9]) he seriously recommends
Lewis's thinking on important issues in Shakespeare criticism, while making reservations about his political ideas. Such examples can easily be multiplied.


87 "To Criticize the Critic." *To Criticize the Critic and Other Writings*. London: Faber & Faber (1965) 17.


89 *The Sacred Wood* (1976 reprint) 83.

90 *Athenaeum*, 4692 (2 Apr. 1920) 441-42.

91 *Athenaeum*, 4698 (14 May 1920) 635.


93 *Elizabethan Dramatists* (1968 reprint) 113.


95 Ibid., p. 102. Also see "T. S. Eliot... An Interview" (1962).

96 Ibid., p. 112.

97 *On Poetry and Poets* (1957) 77-78.


100 Sources of specific comment are presented in the appendices "A," "B," and "C."

102 Sewanee Review, 64 (Summer 1956) 437.

103 "Shakespeare in the Age of Eliot." Times Literary Supplement, 3243 (Shakespeare Quatercentenary Issue, 23 Apr. 1964) 335.

104 "To Criticize the Critic" (1965) 14; also, in many of his collections, the essays are dated according to their original appearance.


106 René Wellek, op. cit., p. 398.

107 Ibid., p. 436.


109 "The mind of a boy of fourteen may be deadened by Shakespeare, and may burst into life on collision with Omar or the Blessed Damozel," in "The Education of Taste," Athenaeum, 4652 (27 June 1919) 520-21; and "The only pleasure that I got from Shakespeare was the pleasure of being commended for reading him; had I been a child of more independent mind I should have refused to read him at all;"
in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933)33.


111 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1934)[287]-299.


113 Athenaeum, 4681 (16 Jan. 1920)72-73.

114 London: Faber & Faber (1929).
Chapter 2

"No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone."

T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent."

I

Eliot's criticism evinces a continuing pattern which concerns Shakespeare's development: other topics of discussion arrange themselves meaningfully within the pattern. The fact of a poet's steady and continuous development is rare according to Eliot. The design of that development, its various strands, its implications for future writers as well as for a proper understanding of Shakespeare himself, these topics form a substantial basis for Eliot's critical ideas. These ideas may assume greater significance when we perceive that there is a consistency in Eliot's application of his understanding of Shakespeare's development. However, we need to appreciate first the nature of this twofold consistency: the criticism uses comparison as a standard method, and it perseveres in its search for indications of development. In this chapter, we shall examine the consistency in critical method. This consistency requires a further consideration: if Eliot can be said to have had a theory of literature, a general aesthetic theory, his criticism of Shakespeare must support it, since that criticism cannot help but be an essential demonstration of it. We have already seen that Eliot's Shakespeare criticism occupies a special place in his literary work, because it has formed
a substantial part of it. Although only a small proportion of
Eliot's prose criticizes Shakespeare's work as such, Eliot frequent-
ly applies his knowledge and appreciation of Shakespeare as a means
of evaluating the work of other writers. In this he follows the com-
parative approach which he first outlined in 1918.

Generally, this approach succeeds in identifying unique aspects
of Shakespeare's work, while simultaneously illuminating those of the
work of other writers. Eliot set great store by this method ("The
work of the critic is almost wholly comprehended in the 'complemen-
tary activities' of comparison and analysis"). In "Christopher Mar-
lowe" (1919), one of his earliest essays containing such comparison
and analysis, Eliot says of certain lines from Dido, Queen of Car-
thage, that they are in a new style, and that they secure their
"emphasis by always hesitating on the edge of caricature at the
right moment." He continues:

this is not Virgil, or Shakespeare; it is pure Marlowe. By
comparing the whole speech with Clarence's dream in Richard
III, one acquires a little insight into the difference
between Marlowe and Shakespeare:

What scourge for perjury
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?
There, on the other hand, is what Marlowe's style could
not do; the phrase has a concision which is almost classi-
cal, certainly-Dantesque.

From this point on, comparative judgments abound in the criticism of
Eliot, and Shakespeare becomes a standard of judgment on a variety
of subjects: drama, poetry, fiction, criticism, culture.

For example, the topics of discussion in a few of the well
known and some of the more obscure essays which include comparisons
with Shakespeare are: the question of the 'dimensions' of dramatic character in "Ben Jonson"; an 'analysis' of the onset of love in drama in "Marivaux"; dramatic 'rhetoric' and its relationship to character in "Rhetoric and Poetic Drama"; the relationship of 'thought' and verse in "Plague Pamphlets"; the "universal problem of differences" in a review of Eugene O'Neill; religion and the availability of an author to modern readers in "Chaucer's "Troilus"; practical experience of dramatists in "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation"; the creation of 'poetic' character in "Wilkie Collins and Dickens"; the finest prose of various periods of literature in "Johnson"; the place of song in drama in Thé Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism; maturity and development of the poet-dramatist in "Yeats." This list does not even begin to exhaust the range of topics in connection with which Eliot uses Shakespeare as a standard of comparison.

A study of Eliot's comparisons reveals the fact that his approach involves the developing achievement of Shakespeare. This idea of development is implicitly and explicitly dependent upon the idea of realism, or the principle of objectification of the material of art. If there is one principle that is pervasively prominent in Eliot's approach to literature and his critical method, it is the principle of objectivity in creative and critical activity. Therefore, such aspects of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism as impinge upon the realm of his development in realism may be considered together. The theory of realism is scarcely a finished one, since it is expressed chiefly in several immediate and restricted contexts, but it
may be allowed at this point to provide a general backdrop for a study of Eliot's method, which uses Shakespeare as a criterion. It is sufficient to indicate here that Eliot's demand for objectivity and his appreciation of Shakespeare's realism are intimately connected.

The many recurring ideas from the apparently inchoate structure of Eliot's prose have a bearing on this connection. His early considerations of the operation of regularity and liberty in art, sensibility and objectivity, the explanation of the unsuitability of Shakespeare as a model for modern dramatists, the expression of "art-emotion," "sensuous thought" and concreteness in poetry, development of language and verse forms, realism in poetic drama, superficial and deeper vision and structure in literature, the study of the oeuvre of Shakespeare and the ability of such a study to distinguish between major and minor authors, all coalesce in the consideration of Eliot's concepts of objectivity, development and comparison.

If we bring together some of Eliot's early statements regarding such subjects, we can begin to appreciate the value that the example of Shakespeare has for him. In "Reflections on vers libre" (1917), the earliest of Eliot's major essays on literature, he had indicated for instance that Shakespeare worked by playing off "regularity" against "freedom" in technique. Although at that time Eliot considered Webster "a more cunning technician than Shakespeare" in some ways, Eliot's truer estimate of Shakespeare's success in experimentation is to be found elsewhere, and as late as The Three Voices of Poetry (1953). In another early essay, "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry," which definitely anticipates "Tradition and the Individual
Talent,” he says on the same subject that contemporary poetry is deficient in tradition. We can raise no objection to “experimentation” if the experiments are qualified; but we can object that almost none of the experimenters [today] hold fast to anything permanent under the phenomenon of experiment. 13

Continuing what was to become a characteristic pattern, Eliot suggests that what modern experimenters fail to do, Shakespeare had effected successfully:

Shakespeare was one of the slowest, if one of the most persistent, of experimenters; even Rimbaud shows process. And one never has [today] the tremendous satisfaction of meeting a writer who is more original, more independent, than he himself knows. No dead voices speak through the living voices [today]; no reincarnation, no re-creation. 14

Experimentation must be put into proper perspective, as Eliot does in "Rhetoric' and Poetic 'Drama":

Examination of the development of Elizabethan drama shows this progress in adaptation, a development from monotony to variety, a progressive refinement in the perception of the variations of feeling, and a progressive elaboration of the means of expressing these variations. ... We think of Shakespeare perhaps as the dramatist who concentrates everything into a sentence, "Pray you undo this button," or "Honest, honest Iago"; we forget that there is a rhetoric proper to Shakespeare, comparable to the best bombast of Kyd or Marlowe, with a greater command of language and a greater control of emotion. 15

Ten years later, introducing Pound’s poetry, Eliot returns to the point he had initiated in "Reflections on vers libre":

The vers libre of Jules Laforgue, who, if not quite the greatest French poet after Baudelaire, was certainly the most important technical innovator, is free in much the same way that the later verse of Shakespeare, Webster,
Tourneur, is free verse: that is to say, it stretches, contracts, and distorts the traditional French measure as later Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry stretches, contracts and distorts the blank verse measures. 16

Shakespeare's experimentation is successful and commendable because he builds his experiments on what tradition gives him.

The question of what is given to a poet is very complex. Eliot discusses it in "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama," building upon the ideas first expressed in his review of a play by Middleton Murry, "The Poetic Drama" (1920), and drawing conclusions from the discussion regarding the possibility of experimentation in modern drama. If a proper and common framework exists for experimentation, for modification of regularity by creative freedom, talent is not wasted, and an age achieves more. The more that convention supplies, the less a poet has to do, and the better he can do what he must do for himself:

To create a form is not merely to invent a shape, a rhyme or rhythm. It is also the realization of the whole appropriate content of this rhyme and rhythm. The sonnet of Shakespeare is not merely such and such a pattern, but a precise way of thinking and feeling. The framework which was provided for the Elizabethan dramatist was not merely blank verse and the five act play and the Elizabethan playhouse. . . . it was also . . . the "temper of the age," a preparedness, a habit on the part of the public, to respond to particular stimuli. 17

The desperate requirement of such a framework or matrix for modern verse drama is also explicitly stated:

To have, given into one's hands, a crude form, capable of indefinite refinement, and to be the person to see the possibilities—Shakespeare was very fortunate. And it is perhaps the craving for some such donné which draws us on toward the present mirage of poetic drama. 18
Eliot is particularly aware, in the context of experimentation, of the ambiguous use of the term 'convention'. In suggesting that it is an undependable criterion in the process of selecting and classifying the poetry of an original poet like Donne, Eliot says that the "epithet 'conventional', like the epithet 'tour de force', is equally easy and dangerous to apply; it might be made a censor for some, if not all, of Shakespeare's sonnets." In a similar way, going beyond convention, he has simultaneously pointed out Shakespeare's achievement and the essential characteristic of the English stage, in his early review "The Noh and the Image" (1917):

The peculiarity of the Noh is that the focus of interest, and centre of construction, is the scene on the stage. In reading Hamlet, for instance, there is a perfectly clear image of a frosty night, at the beginning; in Macbeth there is a clear image of the castle at nightfall where the swallows breed. We imagine these, however, as they would be in reality. . . . The English stage is merely a substitute for the reality we imagine. . . . The phantom-psychology of Orestes and Macbeth is as good as that of Awoi [character in Awoi No Uye]; but the method of making the ghost real is different. In the former cases, the ghost is given in the mind of the possessed; in the latter case the mind of the sufferer is inferred from the reality of the ghost.

Although he makes clear that drama as a form of art is not a "higher or fuller form than that used by Homer or that used by Dante," Eliot was to admit later in the same place that "drama was, I think, less of a restriction to Shakespeare than it has ever been to any other dramatic poet." The process of comparison reveals, in this manner, the uniqueness of Shakespeare in overcoming what might have become a constraint.

The modification of the regularity of given forms and techniques,
by liberties he took with them indicates Shakespeare's uniqueness even among his equals. In a lecture on Goethe given in 1955, while defining the special position of the three authors he has set apart as the most European and the greatest of the moderns, Eliot further sets Shakespeare apart from his peers:

I have no need to dilate upon the diversity of the interests and activities of Dante and Goethe. Shakespeare, it is true, confined himself, or was confined by circumstances, to the medium of the theatre; but when we consider the immense range of theme and character within that framework, the immense variety and development of his technique, his continuous attack on new problems, we must acknowledge at least that in his amplitude and abundance Shakespeare stands apart even from those few writers for the theatre who as dramatists and poets are his equals. 22

The assessment of Goethe in this address is somewhat strenuous and inconsistent with Eliot's early views on that writer, but his evaluation of Shakespeare is perfectly consistent. Eliot has some regret about the fact that Shakespeare's genius is unique, and that therefore he may not serve as a model to future generations of poets. But as to Shakespeare's contribution to the English language, he has no doubt at all:

Dante seems to me to have a place in Italian literature which, in this respect, only Shakespeare has in ours; that is, they both give body to the soul of the language, conforming themselves, the one more and the other less consciously, to what they divined to be its possibilities. And Shakespeare himself takes liberties which only his genius justifies. . . . To pass on to posterity one's own language, more highly developed, more refined, and more precise than it was before one wrote it, that is the highest possible achievement of the poet as poet. 23

As in other contexts, the thought of tradition, of inheritance,
is never far from Eliot's mind even when he is commending the unique linguistic achievement of a poet. In What Is a Classic? (1944) Eliot says that Shakespeare's style is less universal and his language less common than Virgil's, because Shakespeare performs miracles with the English language as only he could. Even these miracles have their context in tradition, and their roots are in liberty taken within regularity, and not in eccentricity:

an individual author—notably Shakespeare and Virgil—can do much to develop his language; but he cannot bring that language to maturity unless the work of his predecessors has prepared it for his final touch...[there is] history behind it...not merely a chronicle, an accumulation of manuscripts and writings...but an ordered though unconscious progress of a language to realize its own potentialities within its limitations. 24

Nor is the thought of development far from his mind when considering Shakespeare's style. For on the same occasion Eliot goes on to say:

One of the signs of approach towards a classic style is a development towards greater complexity of sentence and period structure. Such development is apparent in the single work of Shakespeare, when we trace his style from the early to the late plays: we can even say that in his late plays he goes as far in the direction of complexity as is possible within the limits of dramatic verse, which are narrower than those of other kinds. 25

Although we need not agree with the rather narrow definition of the classic which Eliot proposes in this lecture, since it precludes from it all exemplars except Virgil, we can still find his discussion of Shakespeare's style in particular and of Elizabethan style in general, especially useful.
One of Eliot’s most illuminating studies of Shakespeare’s style is his analysis of *Hamlet* (I.i) in the Edinburgh lectures. As we shall see later, *Hamlet* occupies a crucial place in Eliot’s view of the work of Shakespeare. It is, therefore, interesting to note that he makes an extraordinary point out of the first scene of the play. Its accomplishment is not easy:

Shakespeare has worked for a long time in the theatre, and written a good many plays, before reaching the point at which he could write these twenty-two lines [the first 22 lines]. There is nothing quite so simplified and sure in his previous work. He first developed conversational, colloquial verse in the monologue of the character part-Faulconbridge in King John, and later the Nurse in *Romeo* and *Juliet*. It was a much further step to carry it unobtrusively into the dialogue of brief replies. 26

This point is made, however, as a lesson to the modern dramatic writer who, like Eliot himself, only comes to verse drama after habituation to other forms of poetry:

if our verse is to have so wide a range that it can say anything that has to be said, it follows that it will not be ‘poetry’ all the time. It will only be ‘poetry’ when the dramatic situation has reached such a point of intensity that poetry becomes the natural utterance, because then it is the only language in which the emotions can be expressed at all;

and

no poet has begun to master dramatic verse until he can write lines which, like these in *Hamlet*, are transparent. You are consciously attending, not to the poetry, but to the meaning of the poetry. 27

Eliot takes some of these ideas much further first in the Edinburgh lectures and then in *The Music of Poetry*. The consideration of
experimentation, which he had started in 1917, has come to full fruition in this latter essay. Eliot here sees that the task of the poet is twofold, that of revolutionizing the resources of the language given to him to exploit, and that of exploring and developing the "territory acquired":

The poet who did most for the English language is Shakespeare: and he carried out, in one short life-time, the task of two poets. . . . development of Shakespeare's verse can be roughly divided into two periods. During the first, he was slowly adapting his form to colloquial speech: so that by the time he wrote Antony and Cleopatra he had devised a medium in which everything that any dramatic character might have to say, whether high or low, 'poetical' or 'prosaic', could be said with naturalness and beauty. Having got to this point, he began to elaborate. . . . The later plays move from simplicity towards elaboration. He is occupied with the other task of the poet. . . . that of experimenting to see how elaborate, how complicated, the music could be made without losing touch with colloquial speech altogether, and without his characters ceasing to be human beings. This is the poet of Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, Pericles and The Tempest. 28.

An interesting detail of the style of Antony and Cleopatra is brought out by Eliot in his discussion of the differences between Shakespeare and Dryden. First of all, speaking of the value of individual words, Eliot says that "Shakespeare, of course, made the utmost of each value [value as poetry and value as dramatic gesture]; and therefore confuses us in our attempt to estimate between the minor Elizabethans and Dryden, for neither Dryden nor they had such vast resources." 29 But the more interesting remarks, in John Dryden: The Poet, The Dramatist, The Critic, concern what Shakespeare was given and what he made of it. Referring to the scene of Cleopatra's death, when Charmian says, "It is well done, and fitting for a
princess/ Descended of so many royal Kings./ Ah, soldier!" before
dying herself after her mistress, and remarking that in Dryden's
All for Love the words "Ah, soldier" are replaced by "I follow her."
Eliot says:

Now, if you take the two passages by themselves, you can-
not say that the two lines of Dryden are either less
poetic than Shakespeare's, or less dramatic. . . . But con-
sider Shakespeare's remarkable addition to the original
text of North, the two plain words ah, soldier. . . . I
could not myself put into words the difference I feel
between the passages if these two words ah, soldier were
omitted and with them. But I know there is a difference,
and that only Shakespeare could have made it. 30

As Eliot remarks in "The Tudor Translators" (1929), the value
of the contribution of Shakespeare to the English language is de-
pendent upon the work of others: "The verse of Shakespeare is more-
mature than the prose of North; but it proves how very fine the
prose of North is; and indicates one way in which translators con-
tributed to the development of the English language."31 Through all
such discussions of language, style, and experimentation; there runs
the thread of the unique development of Shakespeare, and the convic-
tion that whatever it was that Shakespeare was trying to do; he did
it "very much better than any of the others," and made it "somehow
more integral with the human nature of his characters. . . . less ver-
bal, more real."32

In Dante (1929) and John Dryden: The Poet, The Dramatist, The
Critic (1931), Eliot makes a particular point of explaining why,
according to him, Shakespeare's uniqueness makes him less available
as a model, and why his influence is less directly than generally
operative in the literature of the language. The argument is related to that in What Is a Classic? where Eliot distinguishes between the 'commonness' of the styles of Virgil and Dante, and the rich individuality of Shakespeare's style. Clearly, one learns from any contact with Shakespeare's work; but an attempt to imitate him, to write in ways that he has successfully explored, will fail, because Shakespeare's achievement cannot be surpassed in most aspects of poetry and drama:

When I affirm that more can be learned about how to write poetry from Dante than from any English poet I do not at all mean that Dante's way is the only right way, or that Dante is thereby greater than Shakespeare, or, indeed, any other English poet. I put my meaning in other words by saying that Dante can do less harm to anyone trying to write verse, than can Shakespeare. Most great English poets are inimitable in a way in which Dante was not. If you try to imitate Shakespeare you will certainly produce a series of stilted, forced, and violent distortions of language. The language of each great poet is his own language. . . . If you follow Dante without talent, you will at worst be pedestrian and flat; if you follow Shakespeare or Pope without talent, you will make an utter fool of yourself. 33

In considering the justice of this last remark, we should keep in mind that Eliot had had first-hand experience at imitating Pope, and that he considered it a wise decision when, on Pound's advice, he omitted the Pope imitations from the final version of The Waste Land. He had also had some success in imitating Shakespearean and Elizabethan-Jacobean verse in "Gerontion" (1920), and that he would repeat that success in Little Gidding later (1942). Also, the fact that Eliot himself found imitating Dante an arduous task, however, can be ascribed to his extreme loyalty to and respect for Dante's poetical
achievement: Eliot does not claim that Dante is an easy model.

Two years after Dante, Eliot makes the point about influence clearer. He identifies here the exact way in which the idea of Shakespeare's unique greatness and that of the disproportionately small direct influence he has exerted, can be reconciled:

Dryden's position in English literature is unique. Far below Shakespeare, and even below Milton, as we must put him, he yet has, by reason of this precise degree of inferiority, a kind of importance which neither Shakespeare nor Milton has—the importance of his influence. It is this nice question of influence that I wish to investigate first, in relation to what I may call the "literary dictator," that is, in our history, Ben Jonson, Dryden, Samuel Johnson and in his way Coleridge. Are we to say that poets like Shakespeare and Milton are without influence? Certainly not, but "influence" in the sense in which we can cope with the term, is something more limited. The disproportion between Shakespeare and his immediate followers, among the dramatists, is so great that the influence of Shakespeare is a trifling thing in comparison with Shakespeare himself. 34

Lest we should come away, in spite of this very precise distinction, with the impression that Eliot undervalued the influence of Shakespeare, we may note at this point what he says about it in "The Social Function of Poetry" (1943):

A poet like Shakespeare has influenced the language deeply, not only by his influence on his immediate successors. For the greatest poets have aspects which do not come to light at once; and by exercising a direct influence on other poets centuries later, they continue to affect the living language. 35

Constant experimentation and improvement are important in the later influence of a poet. Eliot says in "Shakespeare's Verskunst"
that Shakespeare "certainly possessed that extraordinary
talent of the very great writers to progress and perfect themselves
above others and never to repeat themselves." This is the reason
why Eliot finds fault with Webster for his "slipshod" treatment of
The Duchess of Malfy, the play that perhaps Eliot admired most out-
side Shakespearean drama: "The Duchess of Malfy is as slipshod a
play as Kyd's 'Spanish Tragedy', and without the excuse, for Webster
should have had the example of Shakespeare to make him do better." Shakespeare belongs to a very small band of writers who have had
great influence because they have made their language new:

Whenever a Virgil, a Dante, a Shakespeare, a Goethe is
born, the whole future of European poetry is altered.
When a great poet has lived, certain things have been done
once and for all, and cannot be achieved again; but, on the
other hand, every great poet adds something to the complex
material out of which future poetry will be written.

Eliot was equally concerned about the possibilities and options
that were open to modern poetic drama. In general he saw the pros-
psects for such a drama as very remote and dim. In "Debogue on Poetic
Drama" (1928) he continues the discussion of the measures that may
have to be employed to provide genuine opportunity for a poetic
drama to flourish in the present age; he had discussed some of these
measures in his review of Middleton Murry's Cinnamon and Angelica
(1920). Eliot continues to think of the way in which Shakespeare's
achievement has made creation of a modern poetic drama a stiff up-
hill task. In his introduction to S. L. Bethell's book on Shakespeare,
which had put forward some interesting considerations regarding the
The extent to which the past weighs upon us, and forces upon our attention problems which for the contemporary did not exist, has been brought home to me in attempting to cope with the difficulties of writing verse drama today. It is only a humble statement of fact, to say that the verse dramatist today has to be much more conscious of what he is doing than Shakespeare was, and, even to produce a result comparatively trifling, has to surmount obstacles which to Shakespeare were unknown. 40

Eliot is, of course, thinking of the poet who turns to poetic drama after having written substantial poetry of other kinds, for such a poet has to understand that "it is a question of a different kind of poetry, a different kind of verse, than the kind for which his previous experience has qualified him." 41 Both the playwright and the audience have to learn their job. The poet must learn to create a verse which will allow the "real feelings and emotions" to come through; he "must reveal, underneath the vacillating and infirm character, the indomitable will." 42 In other words, the modern poet must learn to do in his way the very things that Shakespeare had done so superbly in his. And "the difficulty of the author is also the difficulty of the audience.... both need to be conscious of many things which neither an Elizabethan dramatist nor an Elizabethan audience, had any need to know." 43 One of the ways in which Eliot justifies the intensive and extensive activity in Shakespeare criticism, both here and in his chapter on the subject in A Companion to Shakespeare Studies, is this: that a study of Shakespearean criticism will help us understand not only the Elizabethan drama, but also the contemporary drama and its problems. Against this back-
ground, perhaps, it is easier to understand Eliot's expectation of extraordinary strengths in a Shakespeare critic. It is also easier to understand fully the unique position occupied by Shakespeare in Eliot's view of the history of English drama: "when blank verse has passed into the hands of its greatest master, there is no need to look for fresh infusions from Seneca. He has done his work and the one influence on later dramatic blank verse is the influence of Shakespeare."

That Shakespeare arrived at such a place of influence is explained first of all by the poetic abilities that he possessed and that other poets did not, or that he possessed in greater measure than others. This leads us to a consideration of Shakespeare as a unique figure. But there are similar conclusions to be reached by a study of Shakespeare's work by way of comparisons amongst his own plays. The realism in presenting the "poetic truth" of character and emotion, and the development of means to achieve this genuine expression, remain constant subjects of comparison and reference in Eliot's criticism.

In more than one essay before "Tradition and the Individual Talent" Eliot had explored the relationship of uniqueness to tradition, or the possibility of creating permanent poetic truth. In reviewing W. B. Yeats's *The Cutting of an Agate*, he suggests that "in diverse ways, the strangeness of Blake or of Poe is continuous with normal mentality"; but if one were to take a singular view of literary matters, as Yeats seems to advocate here, "we shall have 'La Princesse Maleine' instead of 'Macbeth'." Once again, the point
seems to be a distinction between uniqueness and eccentricity. In at least forty different essays, reviews, lectures ranging from 1917 to 1962, Eliot's comparisons yield statements regarding the different aspects of Shakespeare's unique achievement. Generally, too, such considerations take into account the advance that Shakespeare made on what was given to him. Starting from the question about the ways in which Shakespeare's early plays are both superior and inferior to those of Marlowe, Eliot's inquiries touch upon both native gifts and their development. Certain aspects of drama recur very frequently, among the outstanding topics being control over language and emotion, moral essence and significance of drama, depth of structure, flexibility of style, maximum exploitation of available resources, and range and variety of interests.

In a rare moment of confession, occasioned by a peculiar combination of ironic or mock-serious tone and genuine suggestions in "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca" (1927), Eliot says: "One more personal 'note': I believe that I have as high an estimate of the greatness of Shakespeare as poet and dramatist as anyone living; I certainly believe that there is nothing [sic] greater. On the same occasion, Eliot notes that with the least exposure to history, and literature of the past, Shakespeare made the most of what was available to him in his background: "Shakespeare was a much finer instrument for transformation than any of his contemporaries, finer, perhaps even than Dante. He also needed less contact in order to absorb all that he required." In "Dialogue on Poetic Drama" (1928) there is a suggestion that if our standards of judgment in drama fail
to account for Shakespeare, they ought to be modified: this is a criticism of William Archer's _The Old Drama and the New_ (1922). We have seen, with regard to Shakespeare and Dante, that Eliot uses this idea to point out that testing our ability to keep literary and non-literary criteria separate will keep a check on possibilities of confusion amongst them. According to Eliot, Shakespeare and Dante divide the modern world between them: "Shakespeare gives the greatest width of human passion, Dante the greatest altitude and greatest depth. They complement each other. It is futile to ask which undertook the more difficult task."  

There is a possibility of difference of opinion regarding the terms Eliot employs here: width, depth and altitude. I believe their use cannot be sustained in this context under careful questioning. But it is possible that Eliot reserves the terms depth and altitude for specifically religious or spiritual experience. However, in objecting to I. A. Richards' somewhat ill-defined use of the term 'belief' in _Science and Poetry_, Eliot confesses that, "if yielding oneself to works of art fostered beliefs, I should say that I was more inclined to belief of some kind after reading the play of Shakespeare [King Lear] than after the poem of Milton [Paradise Lost]." But such depth as Eliot sees in Shakespeare's plays is created by his ability to endow characters with fuller life than other writers do, and to create a unity of texture that engenders "musical structure" among the components of a play, as also by his capacity for handling increasingly deeper levels of human experience. The first indication of Eliot's understanding of and respect
for Shakespeare's characterization comes in "Ben Jonson," ironically in the same year in which he attempts to "correct" the imbalance between the play and the character of Hamlet. "The characters of Jonson, Shakespeare, perhaps of all the greatest drama, are drawn in simple outlines." Yet even at this level of achievement there are distinctions. Shakespeare "fills in" his characters, so that they have a different kind of "life" from that of Jonson's characters:

Falstaff or a score of Shakespeare's characters have a 'third dimension' that Jonson's have not. This will mean, not that Shakespeare's spring from the feelings or imagination and Jonson's from the intellect or invention; they have equally an emotional source; but that Shakespeare represents a more complex tissue of feelings and desires, as well as a more supple, a more susceptible temperament. Falstaff... was perhaps the satisfaction of more, and of more complicated feelings, but not necessarily stronger or more intense than those of Jonson. 53

Here, perhaps, was a solution to Eliot's problem with Hamlet: "deeper, less apprehensible feelings." But Eliot did not go in for systematically cumulative criticism, and therefore failed to utilize this insight for an immediate reconsideration of his views on Hamlet. However, most of his comparisons, like this one just looked at, attempt an assessment of the successful aspects of the work of Shakespeare as well as of the other authors in the comparison: here Eliot uses this distinction to define the special strengths of Jonson's characterization.

Even in consideration of character, Eliot maintains realism as a standard of evaluation. His discussion of Cyril Tourneur's plays, especially The Revenger's Tragedy and The Atheist's Tragedy, demons-
trates his terms of comparison. First, it is a matter of development of capacities. The Elizabethan poets show more or less ability to develop: "Cases are not altogether wanting, among poets, of a precocious maturity exceeding the limits of the poet's experience—in contrast to the very slow and very long development of Shakespeare."

But if one thinks highly of the achievement of Tourneur, as Eliot himself does ("For closeness of texture, in fact, there are no plays beyond Shakespeare's, and the best of Marlowe and Jonson, that can surpass The Revenger's Tragedy"), one must find the right quality to praise. One of the qualities of Tourneur that Eliot praises is his ability to depict realistic character:

"Dramatic characters may live in more than one way; and a dramatist like Tourneur can compensate his defects by the intensity of his virtues. Characters should be real in relation to our own life, certainly, as even a very minor character of Shakespeare may be real; but they must also be real in relation to each other; and the closeness of emotional pattern in the latter way is an important part of dramatic merit."

Even in this department, however, Shakespeare surpasses all others. In an early article called "The Lesson of Baudelaire" (1921), Eliot has discussed the mythical stature of Falstaff, arguing that this is the most prominent Comic Myth in English culture. And in his introduction to Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1950), as in "Goethe as the Sage" (1955), he has acknowledged the mythical role of Hamlet in modern European history.

Depth of characterization and general textural affinity in character relationship are two ways in which Shakespeare's drama can
be set apart from the work of others. But as means of objectification of a general tone and atmosphere in a play, Eliot cites the deeper levels of structure in scenes and whole plays. First, this objectification is a process going beyond the artist's own personality:

Donne, Corbière, Laforgue began with their own feelings, and their limitation is that they do not always get much outside or beyond; Shakespeare, one feels, arrives at an objective world by a process from himself, whoever he was, as the centre and starting point. 59

Even though in a sense, according to Eliot, there is no 'meaning' in Shakespeare's plays, what distinguishes him from others is his deep significance. Moreover, it is useful to notice in passing that the poets Eliot mentions here as failing in the process of achieving consistent objectivity, are the avowed poetic ancestors of Eliot.

The significance of Shakespeare's plays is a product of many factors, but mainly it is created by the symbolic and musical unity of the language and structure. In comparing Ford's use of the 'recognition scene', a device born out of Shakespeare's practice, Eliot says:

It is in scenes such as these that we are convinced of the incommensurability of writers like Ford (and Beaumont and Fletcher) with Shakespeare. It is not merely that they fail where he succeeds; it is that they had no conception of what he was trying to do; they speak another and cruder language. In their poetry there is no symbolic value; theirs is good poetry and good drama, but it is poetry and drama of the surface. And in a play like The Revenger's Tragedy, or Women Beware Women, or The White Devil, there is some of that inner significance which becomes the stronger and stronger undertone of Shakespeare's plays to the end. You do not find that in Ford. 61
It is interesting to note that "John Ford" also contains some of the more important statements of Eliot on Shakespeare's development, and that the only Shakespeare plays cited in it are the last plays: Antony and Cleopatra, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, Pericles, and The Tempest. Naturally, here Eliot says that "in the work of Shakespeare as a whole, there is to be read the profoundest and indeed one of the most sombre studies of humanity that has ever been made in poetry." 62

In this connection, one of the more important pieces of Shakespeare criticism that Eliot wrote is his introduction to Wilson Knight's The Wheel of Fire (1930). In this introduction, Eliot attempts to analyse his feelings towards 'interpretation', and towards the outcome of it: interpretation involves a deeper structure of form and content, unlocking whole new aspects of Shakespeare. In "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927), Eliot had hinted that conflicts go deeper in Shakespeare's plays than conflicts of "passion, tempér, or appetite," and that these deeper conflicts make for the specific significance of Shakespeare. The growth of the narrow rhetoric of lesser dramatists goes hand in hand with a specialization in such superficial structure of conflict. One kind of deeper pattern is that which may be obtained by the use of an integrated sub-structure of philosophy, such as can be found in the poetry of Dante. But Shakespeare's work does not have this sub-structure. For this reason, in an earlier comparison of the two poets Eliot had said that the deeper pattern of Shakespeare's work is "less distinct" than that of Dante. 63 In the introduction to Knight's book, where
again he compares Shakespeare to Dante, Eliot tries to identify more clearly the "pattern in the carpet" that characterizes Shakespeare's drama.

This examination of a pattern which is partly symbolic, as we find from "John Ford," is somewhat less than satisfactory for the following reasons. First of all, if the introduction is isolated from its context of Knight's book, which attempts a 'poetic' analysis of Shakespeare's poetry, we deprive Eliot of the privilege of assuming what Knight has said. Next, if we do not place Eliot's discussion in the context of his other essays written before and after, it may be difficult to see that Eliot is referring to undertones, symbolic values and the cumulative impact of character, action, word, verse, speech, scene and play. Then there is the evasive style of Eliot, more than usually evasive here since he is treading with caution round 'interpretation', and since by his own admission he is attempting to steer clear of the kind of terminology that has caused difficulty with Matthew Arnold's criticism: Eliot tells us that he had been contemplating the use of Arnold's term 'secret' in place of the term 'pattern'. And, finally, it is difficult to understand Eliot's argument about a deeper level of significance unless we appreciate his view of Shakespeare's development.

What does become clear from this introduction is that Eliot excludes the kind of pattern that we find as a result of the adoption of an explicit philosophy by an author, that he excludes the infusion of meaning that is achieved by a writer of more than common awareness of the paradigms of human experience, since a few other writers be-
sides Shakespeare also possess this awareness; that he excludes the
design of character and plot, since it is necessary but not unusual;
and also that he expects in poetic drama a different, more organic
pattern of significance than can be found in either drama or poetry
by itself. Here Eliot refers to the "musical pattern" that is created
by the appropriateness of diction and rhythm, by the metre, by cha-
racterization and character-relationships, and by the 'architecture'
of a scene or a play. Even before the study of Shakespearean imagery
by Spurgeon appeared, Wilson Knight and Eliot were discussing the
kinship of imagery, rhythm, metre, character and architecture. The
pattern referred to here is, therefore, a pattern "below the level
of 'plot' and 'character'." But it is difficult to extract much
more than these ideas from this introduction: this is certainly one
place where one feels sharply the lack of concrete examples from
Shakespeare's plays. Moreover, Eliot himself resorts to some subject-
tive terminology is describing this pattern: "our first duty either
as critics or 'interpreters', surely, must be to try to grasp the
whole design. . .this subterrene or submarine music." The clari-
fication of the virtues of the mature and the late plays of Shake-
speare had to wait until the lectures on Shakespeare's development
were delivered.

Time and again, both in the introduction to Knight's book, and
in other essays; Eliot cites or discusses his argument about the
unity of Shakespeare's entire work. In other places too we find hints
of the meaning of the term 'pattern'. For instance, in John Dryden:
The Poet, The Dramatist, The Critic (1931) Eliot says that "there is
a flight above [i.e., above the purely dramatic and the purely poetic], at which poetry and drama become one thing. . . . the dramatic action on the stage is a symbol and shadow of some more serious action in a world of feeling more real than ours, just as our perceptions, in dreams, are often more ominously weighted than they are in practical waking life. 66 The parallel of dreams is especially interesting, since in the Edinburgh lectures Eliot singles out for praise the revelatory realism of the late plays of Shakespeare. In The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism we find another approach to explanation of the deeper pattern:

In a play of Shakespeare you get several levels of significance. For the simplest auditors there is the plot, for the more thoughtful the character and conflict of character, for the more literary the words and phrasing, for the more musically sensitive the rhythm, and for auditors of greater sensitiveness and understanding a meaning which reveals itself gradually. 67

Unlike symbolism, this comprehensive pattern embraces more than the "deliberately diminished" quotidian world. On a somewhat different tack from that which he had taken in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, Eliot makes another approach towards explanation of the pattern in "John Marston" (1934). This sense of the term also matches the discussion later in the Edinburgh lectures:

It is possible that what distinguishes poetic drama from prosaic drama is a kind of doubleness in the action, as if it took place on two planes at once. In this it is different from allegory, in which the abstraction is something conceived, and from symbolism. . . . in which the tangible world is deliberately diminished: . . . In poetic drama a certain apparent irrelevancy may be the symptom of this doubleness; or the drama has an underpattern, less manifest
than the theatrical one... at once on the plane that we know and some other plane of reality from which we are shut out. 68

Eliot's view of the multiplicity of effects that are available in a play to satisfy a variety of auditors, and his view of the "under-pattern," both suggest that he required poetic drama to provide, beyond surface realism and conventional technique, a vision, however elusive, of another reality above or beneath ordinary reality. Interesting in the context of dreams is Eliot's comparison of Dostoevsky and Shakespeare in this essay. Another approach to the definition of this pattern occurs in The Music of Poetry (1942):

In the plays of Shakespeare a musical design can be discovered in particular scenes, and in his more perfect plays as wholes. It is a music of imagery as well as sound: Mr. Wilson Knight has shown in his examination of several of the plays, how much the use of recurrent imagery, and dominant imagery, throughout one play, has to do with the total effect. A play of Shakespeare is a very complex musical structure. 69

In Poetry and Drama (1949) Eliot admits that he has before his eyes "a kind of mirage of the perfection of verse drama." He tells us there that Shakespeare achieved this perfection of double pattern even in some of his early scenes, such as the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet, but that more particularly he was aiming at such design in his late plays. Somewhat more doubtfully, however, in "Goethe as the Sage" (1955) Eliot talks of the 'wisdom' that is 'communicated at a deeper level than that of logical propositions; all language is inadequate, but probably the language of poetry is the language most capable of communicating wisdom." 71
In "Tradition and the Individual Talent" Eliot proposes an interesting distinction between emotion as we know it in real life and emotion as it is expressed in art: "it is not the 'greatness', the intensity, of the emotions, the components, but the intensity of the artistic process, the pressure, so to speak, under which the fusion takes place, that counts." He is trying to warn us away from entanglement in psychological speculation about the experience from the artist's real life that goes to make the artistic experience: "the difference between art and the event is always absolute." The same idea is pursued in "Hamlet," where Eliot explores the success or failure of Shakespeare in producing the required correlatives for the "art emotion" of Hamlet. This is why, in "Philip Massinger" the year after "Hamlet," Eliot refers to what he calls the "vital development of language," which must be simultaneously a "development of feeling as well."  

Much in the discussion so far has suggested Eliot's fascination with a deeper realism. The question is a matter of the particularity of art experience; it does not concern autobiographical authenticity. It is a question of the vividness and validity of the 'art emotion': "Massinger's... language [is] just and pure, but colourless. Shakespeare's has particular significance." In the transmutation of personality into a work of art, the personality exists in a different and a new sense: "Massinger is not simply a smaller personality; his personality hardly exists. He did not, out of his own personality, build a world of art, as Shakespeare and Marlowe and Jonson built." Once again Eliot speaks of the hard work, and judging from Eliot's
terms, at times painful work, that is needed to create the new personality, the work that shows forth in the successful "objective correlatives" of a work without necessary reference to the real-life personality of the artist:

Of Shakespeare notably, of Jonson less, of Marlowe (and of Keats to the term of life allowed him), one can say that they se transvasaient goutte à goutte; and in England, which has produced a prodigious number of men of genius and comparatively few works of art, there are not many writers of whom one can say it. 76

Appreciation of this labour and the primacy of poetic transmutation had been stressed in Dante (1929) as well, where Eliot found that Shakespeare and Dante both possessed this quality in a degree that made relative judgment between them meaningless.

The transmutation takes place by means of the artist's ability to convert a variety of life experiences into artistic experience; this is why a community of senses, an 'associated' sensibility, is essential to art. In "Swinburne as Critic" (1919) Eliot tells us:

> The quality in question is not peculiar to Donne and Chapman. In common with the greatest—Marlowe, Webster, Tournier, and Shakespeare—they had a quality of sensuous thought, or of thinking through the senses, or of the senses thinking, of which the exact formula remains to be defined. 77

Eliot's efforts in the continuous examination of Shakespeare's work and his development in realism, have always tended to define some aspect of this quality. It is a quality that he finds in "permanent" literature of all periods and all nations:

> Permanent literature is always a presentation: either a
presentation of thought, or a presentation of feeling by a statement of events in human action or objects in the external world. . . . The Agamemnon or Macbeth is equally a statement, but of events. 78

This is perhaps a better way of defining the concept of the "objective correlative."

In all the major poetic criticism that Eliot wrote during the first few years of his career there runs this common thread of realism. In each essay, however, because of the constantly changing terms of comparison, he adds to the sense of the concept. Thus, in "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation," Eliot further clarifies objectivity: the drama of Seneca is "at one remove from reality," because it is a recitative form, although it is more direct and dramatic than the verse drama of the closet variety produced by the nineteenth-century English poets:

Behind the dialogue of Greek drama we are always conscious of a concrete visual actuality, and behind that of a specific emotional actuality. Behind the drama of words is the drama of action, the timbre of voice and voice, the uplifted hand or tense muscle, and the particular emotion. The spoken play, the words which we read, are symbols, a shorthand, and often, as in the best of Shakespeare, a very abbreviated shorthand indeed, for the acted and felt play, which is always the real thing. 79

More extended analysis of what the poet has to do when transforming the personality can be found in Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927) and Dante (1929).

Perhaps it will be clear by now how the growth of the artist's personality enters into the growth of his art. Discussing the standard set by Shakespeare "of a continuous development from first to
last," Eliot says in "John Ford" that it is

a development in which the choice both of theme and of
dramatic and verse technique in each play seems to be de-
termined increasingly by Shakespeare's state of feeling,
by the particular stage of his emotional maturity at the
time. . . . [It is] an inner necessity in the feeling: some-
thing more profound and more complex than what is ordina-
rily called 'sincerity'. 80

In The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism Eliot objects to the
view of Matthew Arnold that we value Wordsworth's poetry because he
communicates his feelings to us. To Eliot the distinction between
the artist's real personality and his art personality is paramount;
that is why he says here, "I have not the slightest approach to cer-
tainty that I share Shakespeare's feelings; nor am I very much con-
cerned to know whether I do or not." 81 We can see the growth of the
emotional personality of the artist and the "gradual ripening" of
his mind; 82 but this must not be confused with the biographical per-
sonality or the empirical record of the sensory experiences of the
artist, which are both usually hidden or unknown and often misun-
derstood. At any rate, the focus of the artist's and the reader's ima-
gination is not the artist's experience, but rather the realism in
the expression of the 'art experience'.

At this point, perhaps, it is necessary to make explicit the
distinction between realism and naturalism: especially since it is
germane to Eliot's theory of Shakespeare's development. Eliot
assumes a distinction, as we saw earlier, when he includes in his
concept of realism the dream-like and near-religious pattern of ex-
pression in Shakespeare's late plays. The scope of this concept is
explained in Eliot's introduction to Bethell's *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition*: it includes faithful expression of sensory experience as well as expression of the depths of emotional and spiritual experience in the world of a play. The opposite view is most extensively argued by William Archer in his *The Old Drama and the New* (1922), to which Eliot had objected in "Four Elizabethan Dramatists" (1924) and "Dialogue on Poetic Drama" (1928). The basis of Archer's view is that, in its long history, the art of drama has progressed from poetic to prosaic realism, the latter being the dominant mode of expression in much late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century drama. However, Archer's argument makes an unjustified leap from this historical observation to the assumption that prosaic realism *per se* is an improvement on poetic realism. Going all the way back to Aristotle, Archer borrows the term *mimesis*, but brings it down to the level of mere aping: one of his typical examples of imitation is that of children recreating a life-like situation in a game, say of shop-keeping.

Incidentally, as it were, Archer identifies one of the qualities of the kind of realism that we find in Shakespeare's plays: "intensification," or "heightening" of observable concrete fact. His terminology in the discussion leaves no doubt, however, that according to Archer, intensification reduces or dilutes the validity of realism: in the drama of the Ancients and the Elizabethans, "imitation, in a word, was swamped in passion."

Mocking Prince Hal's words about Falstaff (I, Henry IV, II.iv.514-15), Archer says, "Everywhere we find exaggeration, intensification, lording it over upon simple imi-
tation--one halfpenny-worth of imitative bread to an intolerable deal of exaggerative stock; 84 "Antiquity never rose (I say rose deliberately, not sank) to anything like the sober, unexaggerated portrayal of contemporary character on the stage" that we find in modern drama. 85 And while he makes a cursory gesture of allowance that a few Shakespearean characters may correspond to "sober, unexaggerated portrayal of contemporary character," Archer defines, finally and explicitly, what realism means to him: "the faithful reproduction of the surfaces of life." 86 Without involvement in value judgment between "intensified" expression and "faithful reproduction of the surfaces of life," we can agree that Archer's requirement concerns what is called "naturalism": significantly, Balzac is one of Archer's chief and recurring examples of realism. But naturalism is a much narrower concept than realism. For Eliot, on the other hand, realism meant the opposite: removing "the surface of things," exposing "the underneath, or the inside, of the natural surface appearance." 87 Indeed, in essays like "John Ford" Eliot makes a distinction even amongst the Elizabethans: those who write of the surface, and others, like Shakespeare, who write of the deeper reality.

Strangely enough, the most succinct statement of Eliot's ideas in this vein occurs in the introduction to a work of criticism, Bethell's book on Shakespeare, although Eliot's choice of terms indicates that he still may have been thinking of Archer. Poetry has to penetrate to the deeper levels of experience, making them accessible and palpable in a way that nothing else can. It is, if you like, a search for "poetic truth." Therefore, poetry should
remove the surface of things, expose the underneath, or the inside, of the natural surface appearance. It may allow the characters to behave inconsistently, but only with respect to deeper consistency. It may use any device to show their real feelings and volitions, instead of just what, in actual life, they would normally profess to be conscious of; it must reveal, underneath the vacillating or infirm character, the indomitable unconscious will; and underneath the resolute purpose of the planning animal, the victim of circumstance and the doomed or sanctified being. 88

Shakespeare's poetry does all this, not merely because it is poetry, but because it is "dramatic poetry: that is, it does not interrupt but intensifies the dramatic situation." 89 Although Eliot objects to the idea that poets 'think', when we use the term in a philosophical sense, and objects vigorously to the suggestion that we can extract 'thought' from Shakespeare's plays, 90 he still says: "on the whole I do not think it is too sweeping a generalisation to say that the profoundest thought and feeling of the [Elizabethan] age went into its dramatic blank verse." 91 Eliot means here the concrete thought and feeling of the characters in their given situations on the stage.

What Eliot calls Shakespeare's "firm grasp of human experience ...(in Shakespeare a terrifying clairvoyance)" 92 leads us, in some of Eliot's major essays, through comparisons with the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists; with Classical dramatists and poets; with Dante, Chaucer (albeit too briefly), Milton, the Metaphysicals, Dryden, Blake, Yeats; with such novelists as George Eliot, Dickens, Henry James, Joyce and Conrad in passing; with the entire range of European literature from the Classical to the modern age. The essence of poetry lies in presenting the 'actuality' of life at all levels. If we keep in mind the concept of "natural" art that first allowed
Samuel Johnson to speak of Shakespeare as a "mirror" of life, we shall understand the question of vital principle behind Eliot's objections to Norman Foerster. Pointing out how Foerster's criticism goes awry because he ignores this fundamental fact about literature, Eliot says that Foerster seems to "deprecate Shakespeare for the wrong reasons":

If, as he says, Shakespeare was concerned 'rather with mirroring life than with interpreting it', and with submitting 'to actuality rather than transcending it', I should say that such a good mirror, if you call that a mirror, is worth a great many interpretations, and that such submission is worth more than most transcendence. 93

This statement, though brief, is very important coming from Eliot, whose espousal of symbolism and the apparent disjointedness in his poetry, as well as the emphasis he gave to the value of spiritual content in literature, are often misunderstood in precisely this context.

To Eliot the aspect of realism in drama and poetry was of the utmost importance. The poet must create in his play "a world of persons"; the audience cannot be "translated to a fairyland"; the characters must live "the same lives, as in the real world"; the poetic play must disclose a "deeper reality" that is "more realistic than 'naturalistic drama'." 95 This, the argument of many of Eliot's essays, finally finds its proper context in the Edinburgh lectures: that with Shakespeare, we start with our world, and then penetrate into the world created by the poetry; that Shakespeare's drama involves a development from relative simplicity of realism to a relative complexity, or to a realism beyond the ordinary reality. Apparently,
Elliot's assessment of Shakespeare's contribution to the English language, to the language of literature, is also firmly based on this understanding of his achievement of the real language of human experience, the process of realization of which he describes, in "Philip Massinger" (1920), as "a true mutation of species."

From all these comparisons it is possible to extract the necessity to read Shakespeare's work in its entirety. The argument that Elliot presents in his lectures on Shakespeare's development, as we shall see in the subsequent chapter, is straightforward. It is implied in the programme for the Extension lectures (1918). It is stated simply in the review of the collected edition of Shakespeare that Charles Whibley introduced (1926): "It is certain that the number of plays included in the popular canon has a unity whoever was or were the authors, and it is probable that most people will profit most by reading this body of work as a whole." 96 Elliot places considerable value in the idea that Shakespeare's plays were composed in a certain definite sequence: "There is a relation between the various plays of Shakespeare, taken in order; and it is the work of years to venture even one individual interpretation of the pattern in Shakespeare's carpet." 97

The conclusions regarding the necessity of studying the oeuvre of Shakespeare that Elliot reaches are a significant contribution to the body of Shakespeare criticism. But they must go hand in hand with the conclusions about development, as they do in the Edinburgh lectures, in "Shakespeares Verskunft," and "John Ford":

for the age in which Shakespeare lived, and the age into
which his influence extended after his death, it must be his work, and his work as a whole, that is our criterion. The whole of Shakespeare's work is one poem; and it is the poetry of it in this sense, not the poetry of isolated lines and passages or the poetry of the single figures which he created, that matters most. A man might, hypothetically, compose any number of fine passages or even whole poems which would each give satisfaction, and yet not be a great poet, unless we felt them to be unified by one significant, consistent, and developing personality. Shakespeare is the one, among all his contemporaries, who fulfills these conditions. 98

II

There are a few other topics in Eliot's criticism of Shakespeare that need to be separated from his evaluation of his development, realism and the unity of his work—that is to say, from those topics which will be further examined in the next chapter. Some of the topics that are reviewed below are raised by way of passing comment, and are not usually taken up for detailed consideration in Eliot's essays. Others lead into areas where an extensive discussion of Eliot's entire literary criticism will be necessary to put them into perspective. Such attention is not possible within the purview of the present study. Others still lead into or arise out of areas of theoretical criticism into which Eliot himself does not generally take his evaluation of Shakespeare; and some of them involve either questionable or controversial statements about such areas of criticism as the relationship between belief and literature, or the place of 'thought' in poetry and drama. Although some of them will be outlined here as Eliot's occasional statements bring them to us, it is
not proposed to take a detailed account of them.

Nevertheless, these topics do frequently have a bearing upon the views of Eliot regarding the unity and development of Shakespeare's work; and sometimes they form connections amongst themselves that are of interest to a student of Eliot's criticism. Most of them arise out of comparisons that Eliot makes between a variety of literary figures and Shakespeare. Many are also a part of the continual review of Shakespearean criticism that Eliot seems to have undertaken as a natural but unplanned part of his general critical activity. Even though Eliot did not make, or pretend to make, a thorough study of this criticism, he wrote several reviews of studies of Shakespeare, and introduced three books on Shakespeare.

His extension lectures provide the first instance of such review. He recommends in his programme of lectures several works on Shakespeare and the drama of his age. A few of these have already been mentioned: for instance, G. P. Baker's study of Shakespeare's development (1909), and Swinburne's *The Age of Shakespeare*. Eliot continually refers to the early critics of Shakespeare: Dryden, Johnson, Coleridge and Lamb. And he repeatedly returns to a few contemporary scholars and critics: J. M. Robertson, E. E. Stoll, G. Wilson Knight, Middleton Murry and Wyndham Lewis. Beyond the criticism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he seems to prefer reviewing scholarship to reviewing interpretative criticism. This is consistent with his general distrust of speculative criticism. Of the early critics of Shakespeare Eliot respects Dryden most, then Coleridge and Johnson. As he indicates in his chapter on the subject in
A Companion to Shakespeare Studies, he considers that the contribution of the main mass of Shakespeare criticism is to allow us to form patterns of approach to Shakespeare, and his ultimate conclusion, in this chapter and in a few other places, seems to be that despite the pitfalls inherent in criticism, the activity is on the whole necessary and productive: this is a positive change from his early writings, the attitude of which led him to propose an Enchiridion to Useless Books (1918). Quite naturally, since he did not see himself as specializing in any particular domain of criticism, least of all in Shakespearean criticism, Eliot takes up for comment only such works of other critics as either arouse his suspicions regarding their dependability, or those that propose approaches to Shakespeare congenial to his own. Thus, in commenting upon the work of Middleton Murry and Lewis, he recommends their criticism of the late plays of Shakespeare, although he wishes that there had been more of it. At least partly for the same reason he recommends the work of Wilson Knight, whereas in the case of Robertson and Stoll it is their restrained and reasonable scholarship that seems to attract him.

From time to time Eliot confronted areas of this criticism which were of interest to him, but which were also fraught with possibilities of warped viewpoints. Such is the genesis of the essay Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927), which opens with his objections to the identification between critic and artist that seems to take place in the criticism of Murry, Lewis and Strachey. Clearly, in all three cases, there is a point to Eliot's objections.
since all three critics were explicitly and vocally partisan to political and historical as well as critical attitudes and philosophies that were not of general currency. However, such a genesis, and in this particular case the initial mock-serious tone of Eliot's own style, make it difficult to avoid controversial reading of his views. The principles according to which he objects to their approaches are fundamental and clearly enunciated. As seen earlier in the case of Coleridge, Eliot steadily objects to "opinion or fancy," especially when it masquerades as critical judgment in the writing of critics who have otherwise much to recommend them.

Eliot's introductions to works of Shakespeare criticism are as unusual as they are important. They are unusual because they do not, generally, perform the task of introduction well: to introduce the main features of the works in question. Eliot recommends those qualities of the critics that need to be respected; but, more importantly, he converts their arguments into subjects of his own interest. Such conversion is evident in Eliot's reviews as well, although it is more appropriate to the rhetoric of reviewing. Thus, in his introduction to S. L. Bethell's Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition, Eliot provides a view of his own regarding the relationship between the general cultural context and données of drama and the possibility of a modern poetic drama; he also uses this occasion to discuss what realism in poetic drama means to him. In his foreword to Henri Fluchère's Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, Eliot mounts an awesome inventory of the qualifications necessary in a Shakespeare critic. And in his more substantial and extended introduction
to Wilson Knight's *The Wheel of Fire*, he discusses first his own problems, not unrelated to Knight's critical approach, regarding the dangers lurking in the process of 'interpretation'; he then analyses the question of the distinction between poetry that is based upon a systematic philosophy and one that is devoid of such basis, that is, Dante's and Shakespeare's respectively; and finally he recommends Knight's approach towards the late plays of Shakespeare. Although somewhat difficult on account of its style, which refuses to make clear-cut commitment either to or against 'interpretation', this introduction is one of the more significant of Eliot's attempts at Shakespeare criticism; because, as we saw in the previous section of this chapter, it contains a discussion of the deeper pattern of Shakespeare's plays.

His introductions to and reviews of works of other creative writers form the other important segment of Eliot's criticism that involves Shakespeare. Whether he is recommending Kipling's poetry, or the fiction of Wilkie Collins; whether, in introducing the poetry of Ezra Pound or Marianne Moore, he is discussing the problems faced by modern writers; or whether, as in the case of his Yeats lecture, he is reviewing the life-work of another significant modern poet, Eliot finds it necessary to introduce the achievement of Shakespeare as a criterion of measurement. Much of this sort of work came to him professionally, rather than out of his choice or inclination in criticism: the reviews in *The Dial*, *The Athenaeum*, *The Criterion* and *The Times-Literary Supplement* are a substantial portion of the work examined in the present study. Many of the introductions that figure
Here are an outcome of his career as publisher.

There are constant principles in operation in all these pieces that they share with Eliot's major critical statements elsewhere: the primacy of fact; the autonomy of the art-work; awareness of the presence of dangers in the biographical and psychological approaches; the risks one takes in ignoring the historical background of art; and most of all an almost excessive fear of saying things that are not worth saying or that have been said, and said better, by other critics. In the final analysis, it is suggested here, Eliot need not have experienced anxiety regarding his capacity to make genuinely fresh contributions to Shakespeare criticism. The problem is not that his contributions are not genuine and worthwhile, but rather that their value has not been realized. And a good deal of the responsibility for this must lie with Eliot himself, because he did not bring together his views on Shakespeare, because he did not usually subject them to deliberate and cumulative reconsideration, and because he often allowed an excessively cautious and conservative style to smother strong explicit statement of fresh insight. Stylistic conservatism and diffidence are characteristic of his prose style, and they tended to increase with the progress of his career.

One of the topics that must be particularly mentioned here is Eliot's insistence on aesthetic criteria and objective criticism. Ideas on this subject are the basis of most of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism; and, in turn, what he has to say about Shakespeare in the context of these ideas is important to an understanding of his sense
of objectivity. Some attention has already been given to his 'manifesto' of objectivity as expressed in the two "Studies in Contemporary Criticism" (1918). In "Tradition and the Individual Talent" too the reference to Shakespeare occurs in an effort to elucidate the difference between real-life experience and art-experience as it is objectified by the craft of the artist. The whole theory of the "objective correlative" as it is expressed in "Hamlet" is an attempt, this time as an outcome of practical criticism, to state the essential function of criticism: to provide objective comment on the power of art to provoke experience of 'art-emotion'.

Eliot's review of Arthur Symons's Studies in Elizabethan Drama (1920) finds fault with Symons, while recognizing his contribution in other influential works such as The Symbolist Movement in Literature (1899), for mixing personal reaction with criticism, in particular the criticism of Antony and Cleopatra.99 In "Thomas Middleton" (1927) Eliot says: "If we write about Middleton's plays, we must write about Middleton's plays, and not about Middleton's personality."100 Regardless of whether Eliot always succeeds in scrupulous avoidance of comment on the artist's personality, the principle is worth reiterating that "a poem, in some sense, has its own life; that its parts form something quite different from a body of neatly ordered biographical data; that the feeling, or emotion, or vision, resulting from the poem is something different from the feeling or emotion or vision in the mind of the poet."101

The danger of personal involvement exists in the other direction too. Critics must beware of reading their own personalities.
into an author's work. Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca opens
with the complaint that

the last few years have seen a number of recrudescences
of Shakespeare. There is the fatigued Shakespeare, a re-
tired Anglo-Indian presented by Mr. Strachey; there is
the messianic Shakespeare, bringing a new philosophy and
a new system of yoga, presented by Mr. Middleton Murry;
and there is the ferocious Shakespeare, a furious Samson,
presented by Mr. Wyndham Lewis in his interesting book,
The Lion and the Fox. 102

However, in an interesting interview which Eliot gave in 1962, he
voices his own impression of the personality of Shakespeare: "I
think of Shakespeare as a delightful man, but I think he put some-
thing that he suppressed in himself into Iago." 103 In fairness to
Eliot, he was answering at the time a personal question regarding
the source of the figure of Prufrock, and advancing a theory of re-
velation of different aspects of personality, even some unknown to
the poet himself, a theory which he compares to Yeats's theory of
the mask.

The other principle involved here is of proven efficacy in the
criticism of the Elizabethan age. Doubtless Machiavelli, and Mon-
taigne, not to mention Seneca, exercised tremendous influence on
the literature of that age. But to admit this and to perceive traces
of their work and philosophy is one thing, and to maintain that such
and such a character or play in Elizabethan drama is purely Senen-
or Machiavellian--meaning thereby that it embodies not only their
expressed philosophies but also what is presumed of their persona-
lities--is quite another thing. Eliot draws attention to the pro-
cess of induction by which the Senecan or Machiavellian influence arrived into Elizabethan literature. He would like us to keep it in mind that figures constructed on their models are, if not complete misrepresentations of the original work and thought of Seneca and Machiavelli, at least unauthorized versions; and as such they ought to be taken to represent only such conceptions of the originals as are peculiar to the Elizabethan age.

In support of his preference of rigorous scholarship to speculative and interpretive criticism, Eliot gives the example of Coleridge. In responding to a letter endorsing what the writer vaguely calls "aesthetic instinct," Eliot says: "I refuse to surrender myself to the mercy of the 'aesthetic instinct' of Coleridge, who can talk so glibly about 'Richard II.' and 'Richard III.' without mentioning the name of Marlowe." And in the context of the necessity of objective criticism, Eliot mentions "Shakespeare's laundry bills":

any book, any essay, any note in Notes and Queries, which produces a fact even of the lowest order about a work of art is a better piece of work than nine-tenths of the most pretentious critical journalism, in journals or in books. We assume, of course, that we are masters and not servants of facts, and that we know that the discovery of Shakespeare's laundry bills would not be of much use to us.

Here, then, are some of the reasons for Eliot's distrust of interpretation. As he says in his introduction to Wilson Knight, we must accept the fact first that there will be a degree of subjectivity, and also a possibility of error, in interpretation, before we can make any significant use of it:
And I do not mean that nothing solid and enduring can be arrived at in interpretation; but to me it seems that there must be, as a matter of fact, in every effort of interpretation, some part which can be accepted and necessarily also some part which other readers can reject. I believe that there is a good deal in the interpretation of Shakespeare by Mr. Wilson Knight which can stand indefinitely for other people. . . . I confess that reading his essays seems to me to have enlarged my understanding of the Shakespeare pattern, which, after all, is quite the main thing. 106

Similarly, Eliot recommends Middleton Murry's *Shakespeare* (1936), which, although it is a biographical study of Shakespeare's development more in the manner of Dowden, is generally the kind of criticism that stimulates the reader to make his own interpretations. The main point, as Eliot states in "The Function of Criticism," is that the work of art must be our primary concern:

> the multiplication of critical books and essays may create, and I have seen it create, a vicious taste for reading about works of art instead of reading the works themselves, it may supply opinion instead of educating taste. 107

Despite various reservations that Eliot had concerning wrong kinds of critical activity, he seems to have thought that all criticism had a place in the understanding of Shakespeare's work. There are a very few people who can read or witness with informed, sensitive and full appreciation, Shakespeare's entire work. Most of us need help of one kind or another with it. The utility of dictionaries and concordances, for instance, is obvious. But even the jungle of Shakespearean criticism has its utility, as Eliot tells us in "Shakespearian Criticism: I. From Dryden to Coleridge" (1934):
previous criticism is itself a part of the object of criticism. Hence the critic's problem becomes for every generation more complicated; but also, every generation has better opportunity for realising how complicated the problem is. At one time, the critical task may be the elaboration of a kind of criticism already initiated; at another, its refutation; at another, the introduction of a new theory, that is to say the exposition of an aspect hitherto overlooked; or again, it may be to combine and to display the pattern afforded by the diverse voices. And in this Shakespeare pattern everything laudatory must find a place, when it is a true praise not previously sounded; and everything derogatory too, even when blunted by misunderstanding, so long as it evinces the temper of an age or a people, and not merely a personal whim. 108

As Eliot says later in the introduction to Bethell's book, the question "Why can I not enjoy the plays simply?" is legitimate. However, "the answer is, of course, that we cannot escape from the criticism of the past except through the criticism of the present." 109

On occasion, Eliot comments on the Elizabethan age itself. In general, he seems to think of it as chaotic, not marked by any religious unifying dogma such as the Catholicism of the age of Dante in Europé, nor notable for its own contribution of outstanding significance to philosophical thought. It is as poor in abstract thought as it is rich in concrete. Dante did not construct a system of philosophy, but he was in a position to appropriate the Scholastic philosophy available to him; in contrast, the age of Elizabeth was devoid of thought, or at least it was eclectic even in the work of its best authors such as Shakespeare and Donne. 110 According to Eliot,

The Elizabethan Age in England was able to absorb a great quantity of new thoughts and new images, almost dispensing with tradition, because it had this great form of its own which imposed itself on everything that came to
it. Consequently, the blank verse of their plays accomplished a subtlety and consciousness, even an intellectual power, that no blank verse since has developed or even repeated; elsewhere this age is crude, pedantic, or loutish in comparison with its contemporary France or Italy. III

The Elizabethan age possesses an enviable flexibility in absorbing influences and reconciling contraries, and an unenviable lack of systematic philosophy, morality or religion.

Yet the same age possessed the ability to progress in "the perception of the variations of feeling," and in "elaboration of the means of expressing these variations." Since the vices as well as the virtues of the age were responsible for the best of its creations, such as King Lear and The Duchess of Malfy, "so impossible is it to isolate the vices from the virtues, the failures from the masterpieces of Elizabethan tragedy." And in Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca we are told that we should not read our age into the work of Shakespeare, that "the great poet, in writing himself, writes his time... .Shakespeare, hardly knowing it, became the representative of the end of the sixteenth century, of a turning point in history... .But... you can hardly say that Shakespeare believed, or did not believe, the mixed and muddled scepticism of the Renaissance." The age's tendencies were disparate, unless "it is Shakespeare chiefly that is the unity, that unifies so far as they could be unified all the tendencies of a time that certainly lacked unity." However, Eliot's general caveat ought to be considered one of his main contributions to this particular area of criticism:
If you stick to literary judgment, you cannot say that Shakespeare was inferior to any poet who has ever written, unless you are prepared to substantiate your statement by detailed analysis; and if you depreciate Shakespeare for his lower view of life, then you have issued out of literary criticism into social criticism; you are criticizing not so much the man but the age. 116

One other particular point may be noted here regarding the Elizabethan age: Eliot's view of the education of the Elizabethan writers. It is clear from Eliot's own rich use of a wide range of background materials in his own poetry, that he thought the education of a writer as being of considerable importance. Education in a given age, and the maturity of the age, are two of the fundamental criteria of Eliot's thinking about the classic as well:

The significance of a type of education may lie almost as much in what it omits as in what it includes. Shakespeare's classical knowledge appears to have been derived largely from translations. But he lived in a world in which the wisdom of the ancients was respected, and their poetry admired and enjoyed; he was less well educated than many of his colleagues, but his was education of the same kind—and it is almost more important, for a man of letters, that his associates should be well educated than that he should be well educated himself. The standards and values were there; and Shakespeare himself had that ability, which is not native to everyone, to extract the utmost possible from translations. In these two advantages he had what mattered most. 117

No two authors could be farther apart in their education, within the same system, than were Shakespeare and Milton. Yet, according to Eliot, their education was of the same kind, and moreover of a kind that cannot be obtained today. Since Eliot thinks of poetic drama as a "social creation,"118 and since education is an index of the social conditions that prevail in an age, it is important
to understand the nature of the education of Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

Considering the admission by Eliot that the blank verse of the Shakespearean drama was as great in its crystallization of thought as in anything else, at times it appears as though he made an unnecessary fuss over the term 'thought'. However, his distinction in essays like *Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca* between incidental products of intellectual processes and the products of systematic philosophy is significant. We must agree with him in maintaining that Shakespeare belongs solidly and firmly in the world of the imagination, whatever the intellectual profit that we may derive from his plays. Eliot uses 'thought' also in another peculiar sense, as in "sensuous thought," or the thought of a figure in poetry and drama, whose ideas are given concrete shape by the poetry. He tended to expect in literature "the emotional equivalent of thought." For "by 'thinking' I mean something very different from anything that I can find in Shakespeare...that he thought to any purpose; that he had any coherent view of life, or that he recommended any procedure to follow...he was occupied with turning human actions into poetry." Eliot puts his finger on the problem when he suggests that the existence of an explicit philosophy behind Dante's poetry may force admirers of Shakespeare to impute philosophical thought to him as well. Eliot points out that although Dante used the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, Dante and St. Thomas were each other's equals, while Shakespeare was greater than any of the figures behind him.
Eliot's thoughts regarding religion in Shakespeare are very similar to those regarding philosophy. Although considerations of "belief" in poetry are a crucial part of Eliot's criticism, he wisely refuses to speculate on the personal beliefs of Shakespeare. In fact, much of his thinking on religion and philosophy seems to suggest an extension of the 'negative capability' of Shakespeare: that he participated in every trend of thought and mode of belief and feeling in his milieu in so far as it was necessary for the creation of his dramatic characters and situations, especially in such shapes as would be recognizable to his contemporaries. Yet we have not a clue to the actual ideas and beliefs of Shakespeare. In one place Eliot suggests that Shakespeare was as secret about his personality as Catullus. This is true of Shakespeare in more senses than it is of any other creative writer. Although his works may move us close to the condition of belief, as to the belief of Shakespeare himself we have no evidence.

What is more, even if we did have some clue, it would still be unrelated to evaluation of the works themselves as works of art, as Eliot reminds us even with respect to Dante. We find Eliot's view of religion and philosophy in Shakespeare consistent with his general critical approach: the greatest achievement of Shakespeare is in objectifying human experience of a most comprehensive nature, without the slightest restricting commitment to any creed or philosophy. What could have become a crippling disadvantage, the lack of a dominant mode of belief and thought in his age, Shakespeare turned into his greatest advantage: the flexibility and realism of
his drama. And although Eliot believed that literary criticism should be "completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint," he also says that "in so far as in any age there is common agreement on ethical and theological matters, so far can literary criticism be substantive" regarding these aspects of literature. It is clear that in his view the Elizabethan age lacked such a community of thought and belief; therefore, considerations of Shakespeare's 'thought' and 'belief' are not germane to appreciation of his work.

Another interesting aspect of drama that Eliot gave some attention to is the difference between literary and dramatic plays, or plays as performances create them, and more importantly, as performances are meant to create them, and plays as read texts. He also makes a distinction between "closet" drama, which can never really become successful on stage, and drama that is potentially capable of being rendered in performance. Eliot's view of the rather important performance of The Duchess of Malfy at the Lyric theatre in 1919 contains many ideas on this subject. He says that

Between the lines, even the second best lines, of 'The Duchess of Malfi' and the best lines of a play by Tennyson or Browning or Swinburne there is an absolute difference. The former were meant to be spoken, the latter were not; they only pretend to mean to be spoken. The significance of the best poetry in 'The Duchess of Malfi' is that it is dramatic poetry.

In this review Eliot suggests that modern actors have lost the ability to allow the author's lines to speak for themselves, because they are trained to 'interpret' lines. Shakespeare's own immersion
in the world of the theatre—as an actor, author, owner of theatres—meant that he would always have the demands of the stage before his eyes as he wrote his plays. 125 This was not the case of the nineteenth-century verse-dramatists, and this is not the case of modern verse-dramatists.

As Eliot tells us in John Dryden: The Poet, The Dramatist, The Critic (1931), dramatic quality in verse can be of two kinds, one that can be transmitted by means of theatrical gesture or dramatic action, and the other the poetic-dramatic value, which is more a matter of words and reading, or at least of gradual appreciation as opposed to immediate appreciation in the theatre. "Shakespeare, of course, made the utmost use of each value." 126 In "Shakespearian Criticism" (1934) Eliot gives another view of the issue:

As soon as we enter the eighteenth century we feel a change in the atmosphere of criticism; and in reading the criticism itself we are aware that Shakespeare is beginning to be more read than seen upon the stage. Addison calls attention to a point of detail (the crowing of the cock in Hamlet) which has probably, we feel, struck rather in the reading than at a performance. 127 Eliot continues this train of thought by saying that for the nineteenth century Shakespeare's plays were "dramatic poems to be read, rather than plays to be seen." 128 It was suggested in the first chapter of the present study that Eliot may have directed our attention to the possibility that there are two separate genres of drama: a classification in which the same play may be a stage-play or a reading-play (as contrasted to the distinction between stage-play
and closet-play). Here he says that "the kind of criticism which arises rather from reading than from attendance at the theatre arose in England spontaneously," and he cites Morgann's essay "On the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff" (1777) as perhaps the first-instance of this kind of criticism. 129

Available though Shakespeare's plays may be for reading-interpretation, and increasingly more poetic as his career progresses, they are never undramatic. Underlining this perception as an important lesson for modern playwrights, Eliot says in *Poetry and Drama* (1949):

I observed that when Shakespeare, in one of his mature plays, introduces what might seem a purely poetic line or passage, it never interrupts the action, or is out of character, but on the contrary, in some mysterious way supports both action and character. 130

Shakespeare's success is both poetic and dramatic, and it is both whether he comes to us on the printed page or in the theatre; his poetry has a double intensity deriving from these two facets that are fused in one form. This understanding of Eliot makes it especially unfortunate that he did not review much theatre: we do not have much of his direct reaction to Shakespeare on the stage. He wrote one review of the performance by the Phoenix Society of *King Lear* (1924), where he cites this as the best performance of the play that he has seen. He commends its fine and co-operative acting, since it is a play that absolutely demands that every actor do his share. 131 However, when proposing his theory of Shakespeare's development in the Edinburgh lectures, he argues on the
basis of his acquaintance with the plays themselves, in reading and on the stage, and not on the basis of second-hand critical acquaintance.

The principles, method and comprehensiveness of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism give it part of its essential unity. The material considered in this latter section of the chapter is not so much residual as it is outside the main focus of the present study. This study concentrates upon two aspects of Eliot's criticism: his comparative method with Shakespeare as norm, which has been the subject of the earlier sections of this chapter, and Shakespeare's development in realism, which is the predominant subject of the next chapter. The evidence presented here confirms the fundamental critical principles and practice of Eliot in the same way that his arguments on the subject of Shakespeare's development will be seen to do in the following chapter.
Notes to Chapter 2.

1 Art & Letters, II.4 (Autumn 1919) 194-99. The lines from Marlowe that Eliot quotes are:
   The Grecian soldiers tir'd with ten years war,
   Began to cry, 'Let us into our ships,
   Troy is invincible, why stay we here?'...
   By this, the camp was come into the streets,
   Where, meeting with the rest, 'Kill, kill!' they cried.

2 Times Literary Supplement, 930 (13 Nov. 1919)[637]-638.

3 Art & Letters, II.2 (Spring 1919) 80-85.


5 Times Literary Supplement, 1279 (5 Aug. 1926) 522.

6 Criterion, IV.2 (Apr. 1926) 395-96.

7 Times Literary Supplement, 1281 (19 Aug. 1926) 547.


9 Times Literary Supplement, 1331 (4 Aug. 1927) [525]-526.


13 "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry." Egoist, VI.3 (July 1919)
14 Ibid.


17 *The Sacred Wood* (1976 reprint) 63.

18 Ibid.


20 *Egoist*, IV.7 (Aug. 1917) 102-3. For Eliot's appreciation of Shakespeare's success in presentation of supernatural phenomena, see "Four Elizabethan Dramatists" (1934); for his appreciation of the opening scene of *Hamlet*, see the Edinburgh lectures (1937) and *Poetry and Drama* (1949); for his use of the *Macbeth* passage as a standard, see "Swinburne as Poet" (1920) and "Milton" (1936). For a very interesting discussion of the conventions of Shakespearean drama, see his review "Stage Studies," *Times Literary Supplement*, 1349 (8 Dec. 1927) 927.


25 Ibid., p.120.


28 Ibid., p.29.


30 Ibid., pp.30-31.

31 *Listener*, I.22 (12 June 1929) 834.

32 *Elizabethan Essays* (1934) 217.


35 *The Norseman*, I.6 (Nov. 1943) 454-55.

36 All quotations from the German lecture are from an independent translation. See *Der Monat*, II.20 (May 1950).

37 "'The Duchess of Malfy'." *Listener*, XXVI.675 (18 Dec. 1941) 825.

38 "Reflections on the Unity of European Culture." Appendix to
Notes Towards the Definition of Culture. Harcourt, Brace (1949) 118.


40 Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition. London: King and Staples (1944)[8].

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., p. 9.

43 Ibid.


46 Extension lectures (1918).

47 Elizabethan Essays (1934) 36.

48 Ibid., p. 52.

49 "Second Thoughts about Humanism" (1929).

50 Dante (1929), op. cit., p. 228.


52 Elizabethan Dramatists (1968 reprint) 72.

53 Ibid., pp. 79-80.

54 "Cyril Tourneur." Elizabethan Dramatists (1968 reprint) 115.

55 Ibid., p. 111.
56 Ibid., p.110.

57 Tyro, I ([Spring 1921)][4].

58 London: The Cresset Press (1950)ix; and in On Poetry and Poets (1957)212-13, respectively.


60 See an interesting discussion on this point in the introduction to Wilson Knight's The Wheel of Fire. London: Oxford University Press (1930)xvi.


63 Dante (1929), op. cit., p.2.


65 Ibid.


70 On Poetry and Poets (1957)93.


72 The Sacred Wood (1976 reprint)55.

73 "Philip Massinger." The Sacred Wood (1976 reprint)129.

74 Ibid., p.126.

75 Ibid., p.139.

76 Ibid., pp.139-40.

77 The Sacred Wood (1976 reprint)23.

78 Ibid., pp.64-65.

79 Elizabethan Dramatists (1968 reprint)14.

80 Ibid., pp.120-21.

81 (1933)115.


84 Ibid., p.8.

85 Ibid., p.11.
86 Ibid., p.13; emphasis added.

87 Bethell, op. cit., p.9.

88 Ibid.

89 On Poetry and Poets (1957) 77.

90 Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927).

91 "Thinking in Verse." Listener, III.61 (12 Mar. 1930)[441]. Also see "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama" (1920) and "Donne in Our Time" (1931).

92 "Andrew Marvell" (1921).


95 Bethell, op. cit., pp.8-9.


97 Dante (1929), op. cit., p.211; notice again the diffidence of Eliot at the opening of the Edinburgh lectures.


100 Elizabethan Dramatists (1968 reprint)83.


102 Elizabethan Essays (1934)33.

103 "T. S. Eliot...An Interview." Granite Review, XXIV.3 (November 1962)17.

104 (Letter) "Mr. J. M. Robertson and Shakespeare." Nation & Athenaeum, XL.11 (18 Dec. 1926)418.

105 "The Function of Criticism."

106 The Wheel of Fire (1930)xviii.


112 "'Rhetoric' and Poetic Drama." Ibid., p.80.

113 "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation." Elizabethan Dramatists
(1968 reprint) 27.


115 Ibid., p. 53.


120 Ibid., p. 47.


123 See Section I, Chapter 1, above, in this connection.

124 "'The Duchess of Malfi' at the Lyric." *Art & Letters*, III.1 (Winter [1919/1920]) 36.

125 There are suggestions to this effect in "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927) and *Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca* (1927).
127 A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (1934) 292.
128 Ibid., p. 297.
129 Ibid.
Chapter 3

"One form, a perfect form, of development is that of Shakespeare."

T. S. Eliot, "Yeats."

I

According to Eliot, there is considerable difficulty in accepting any simple account of Shakespeare's career, such as that given by the three-period view, extremely simplistic and never really widespread, which proposes that Shakespeare's drama went through the phases of Rise, Maturity, and Decline. Eliot himself is prepared to accept such an account of an age of literature, because it is usually borne out by literary history. But, he suggests, that Shakespeare's final stage does not go the way the first two had gone, or that we are unable to account for the final stage in fundamentally the same way as we do for the first two, because development proceeds along new lines in it, is not sufficient reason for dismissing it as a period of decline.

After all, among critics and readers and audiences in general, it is a well received opinion that with the great tragedies and the major comedies, Shakespeare had gone as far as it was possible to go with those forms as they had developed in that age. Even at this stage there is ample evidence to suggest that Shakespeare was capable of either going beyond the conventional limits of contemporary dramatic forms—witness the so-called 'problem plays' (such as Hamlet, 1600-1; Troilus and Cressida, 1601-2; and Measure for Measure, 1604-5)
or of forging altogether new forms. There is a distinct, and given the generally accepted estimate of Shakespeare's capabilities, reasonable possibility that he was pushing hard at the boundaries of existing forms, as well as of the much superior patterns that he himself had fashioned out of them so far.

It ought to be admitted perhaps that once we leave aside the more conventional aspects of the great tragedies, and also such similarities among them as can be accounted for by the influence of external patterns--such as the Machiavellian type of character, or Senecan aspects of action, or the sensibility injected especially into Shakespeare's plays by Montaigne--each of the major tragedies is unique. It is unique in such ways as handling of theme, the nature of character and characterization, the general tone, and the use of the 'comic' element to intensify the tragic. There are also other significant facts to be taken into consideration. For instance, it appears that in 1608 Shakespeare, with a group of actors which included two of James Burbage's sons, became joint operator of the second Blackfriars private theatre. This, as Sylvan Barnet suggests, perhaps "exerted an influence on Shakespeare's late plays." A very strong argument in support of this possibility had already been presented in G. E. Bentley's article on the same subject in *Shakespeare Survey*, I (1948).

If we put aside for the moment the conclusion that a playwright who has very nearly exploded the constraints of the entire range of dramatic forms available to his age, could somewhat inexplicably go into a sudden decline, and if we keep in mind at the same time that
the playwright in question is exceptionally capable of successful innovation at every level of creation—plot, characterization, scene construction, rhythm, verse—then a plausible alternative becomes necessary. The most obvious alternative is, clearly, that his progress would find new directions. Shakespeare had fashioned his own distinctive brand of the sonnet, the long narrative poem, comedy, tragedy, history and romance. Why should he be incapable of producing a new range of forms in one or more of these genres?

In other words—if we allow that the decline of power and achievement is not the only plausible conclusion to be reached upon confronting the singular character of the late plays of Shakespeare—the alternative that he continued beyond the possibilities of dramatic form exploited by other writers of his age, to create a new kind of drama, appears viable. Perhaps, as Eliot suggests, the late plays were meant for a small audience of select, sensitive, trained and adventurous connoisseurs. After all, Shakespeare had paid his dues to the general public; he had achieved fame and material success: these were conditions conducive to more daring, more independent creation, unhampered by the down-to-earth demands of ordinary drama. The development of the ceremonial masque at this time is perhaps evidence of a parallel possibility of development.

When they are actually produced, as stage-plays or as reading-plays, we must concede to the late plays a theatrical parity with the earlier plays. Coriolanus, although not a "late" play—it does not find general acceptance as a sufficiently dramatic play—is a play the poetry of which Eliot admires. Thus it is similar to the late plays. It is found, on the stage, to be swift in action; inte-
restingly varied in tone from scene to scene, and allowing no time for distraction by what may be, in reading, construed to be its mob-versus-aristocracy dialectic. The Winter's Tale and The Tempest too are found quick in action, colourful in contrast, and grippingly magical despite their casual exits and conventional use of deus ex machina. Pericles, like some of the mature comedies in their ritual aspect, and like the histories and tragedies in their ceremonial aspect, is found to raise the ritual and ceremony, without losing touch with the essential narrative thread and the humanity of its protagonists; to new heights of revelatory experience.

Eliot wished to account for this set of facts by an explanation, a theory, that would make sense in the light of Shakespeare's whole work and his unique gifts. Also, as Eliot points out, if we accept the theory of decline of any sort, we are forced to rationalize the perverse fact that the decline is supposed to have commenced exactly at the stage when Shakespeare was at the height of his creative powers. A theory was needed that would circumvent such an oddity of logic, that would attempt to present the inner consistency of Shakespeare's unconscious (i.e., unplanned) but inevitable development, that would allow us to fit into a meaningful pattern both plays that were popular successes and those that were not, as well as plays that appear to be all of a piece, and those that are considered 'problem plays'. Moreover, in proposing such a theory, we should be enabled to keep in mind the nature of the literary form in question, drama.

This problem Eliot tackled, in a sense, throughout his career.
The solution that he found for it was presented in its most definite form in a series of lectures: two at Edinburgh in 1937, and again at Bristol in 1941; Poetry and Drama in 1949; and in a much more concise and revised form in Germany as "Shakespeares Verskunst" in 1950. But many other invaluable ideas, parallels and illustrations are scattered over a large number of other critical works of Eliot. It is important to provide a composite view of Eliot's theory of Shakespeare's development: not only because its parts are thus scattered, nor because anything that Eliot said regarding literature is worth pondering. It is important, first, because such a view of Shakespeare is uncommon in Shakespeare criticism; and second, because it is difficult to obtain these lectures of Eliot. The Edinburgh lectures remain unpublished, and the German lecture is hardly known, and unavailable in an English version. Poetry and Drama, though it covers some of the same ground, principally concerns Eliot's views on problems of modern verse dramatists. The following sections of this chapter will, therefore, provide an outline of the theory as Eliot explains it in these lectures, with an account of the differences between the Edinburgh and the German versions, and finally a conspectus of Eliot's views regarding the development of Shakespeare that occur in his other essays.

II

The following initial outline of the theory is based on the German lecture: it is at least available in print, although Eliot scholarship appears to have ignored it. At the outset of "Shake-
speares Verskunst" ("The Art of Shakespeare's Verse"), Eliot raises the question of the relative neglect in Shakespeare criticism of a subject that had always interested him: "the question of how far his writing and his verse have changed from his first play to the last." [All quotations from this lecture cite an independent translation into English. Parallel passages from the Edinburgh lectures are provided in Appendix "D" below.]

Eliot starts with the crudest possible account of Shakespeare: that the changes in his career merely followed the pattern of all natural phenomena, namely Rise, Maturity, Decline. However, he considers it necessary to search for other possible explanations of the changes in Shakespeare's art, especially those from his accepted mature plays to his singular late plays. The necessity is imperative if one thinks of the change as growth, that is, as organic process and not merely as accidental alteration. This necessity forms the motivation for the argument in this lecture.

A second kindred question concerns the nature of the relationship amongst the various stages of the development. If it is a process of growth, each part must relate to others in ways that cannot and must not be ignored. There are clearly two aspects of this relationship: one has to do with the personality of the writer, since his experience contributes to his maturity at each stage. Here we take account of the psychological elements that go into the making of a work of art. The other aspect concerns craftsmanship, the growth of the artist in his medium. Being suspicious of 'psychological' criticism, Eliot merely indicates the presence of the first
aspect of this relationship, that which concerns personality:

We must also take into consideration the personal development of the author as a human being. Thus, King Lear, for example, is a tragedy more moving and terrible than Romeo and Juliet, because it is the work of a mature man who had considerably more experience and the time to work on this experience and to illuminate it.

But the second aspect, the craftsmanship, is not only to be followed through its stages; it must also be related in essential ways to the artist's personality on the one hand, and the nature of the form which the artist chooses to practice on the other. To an extent the first, but to a greater and much more significant extent the second aspect, forms the main subject of Eliot's lecture. He finds the sources of the relationship between the craft of Shakespeare and the form of drama in the necessity of basic realism in presentation, which is of the essence of drama. His argument gains its unity and homogeneity from its genesis in the essence of the form itself.

The combination of constraints—that of realism, which the form imposes, and those which are imposed by the stage of growth of the personality and by the stage of growth of the craft—implies that an author will produce, if everything goes well, such works as will achieve the maximum of perfection at each stage of his development. From this follows a necessity to think of each successful work as the peak of achievement at that stage of development. Therefore, while in some senses the weightier, the fuller, the more complex works, which are usually later works, will be more significant in relative measurement of the works, this fact does not diminish
the scale of achievement of the earlier works. Moreover, the later works are not upstart conceptions, but rather the descendants of those that preceded them, and that is another reason why the later works cannot eclipse the earlier ones.

In addition, the accident of the choice of subject-matter, says Eliot, has to do with the works which happen to be more universally popular. This is not such an outlandish idea as it may at first sound, and it was certainly exploited by the practical Elizabethan playwrights. It is now acknowledged that in the field of film, the artistically significant film productions are seldom identical with those that become box-office hits. The recorded music industry churns out more discs of 'pop' music than it ever does of classical. The book trade is often able to carry the losses resulting from the publication of scholarly books, because such losses are fully recovered from the large gains which sales of popular books yield. However, there is no necessity to impute 'elitism' to this observation, nor does Eliot invest his remarks about Shakespeare's drama with any judgment regarding the relative value of popular acclaim and select acclaim. Indeed, whereas in the "Hamlet" review in 1919 Eliot had dodged the issue of the long, vast and continuing popularity and the capacity of survival of Hamlet, in considering its "artistic success," here he says without reservation: "If a critic tried to prove that Hamlet is a bad play, he would hardly convince anyone. A work has to be great if it has remained popular for 300 years in England and other countries alike, even in different languages."

Dryden, whom Eliot admired immensely, had faced the issue of
popularity; but he had been able to face it because his dramatic and other criticism flowed much more directly out of his own practice in creative literature. Precisely this basis is lacking in Eliot's dramatic criticism, especially those pieces written before he had himself attempted dramatic poetry. In a way it is important that his consideration of popularity arose as a matter of theoretical formulation, as we shall see later. Dryden's critical position reveals the essential impropriety of criticism that runs against the tide of real and repeated popular praise. He says in "An Apology for Heroic Poetry":

Generally to have pleased, and through all ages, must bear the force of universal tradition. And if you would appeal from thence to right reason, you will gain no more by it in effect than first, to set up your reason against those authors; and, secondly, against all those who have admired them. You cannot prove why that ought not to have pleased the most learned and the most judicious; and to be thought knowing, you must first put the fool upon all mankind. 6

This "putting the fool upon all mankind" is just what the "Hamlet" review had attempted in 1919. The virtue and appeal of the censures against Hamlet come as much from valid criticism as from an attitude of audacity in Eliot's style.

It is, however, necessary to the understanding of Eliot's argument that we rid ourselves of any notion of an elitist or condescending attitude, in ourselves or as perceived in Eliot, regarding the relative popularity of Shakespeare's plays. It is equally necessary, as Eliot reminds us in the German lecture, not to fall victim to the following non sequitur: 'since certain plays are more popular, they must be more dramatic than others'. Eliot suggests that our ideas of
'dramatic' and 'poetic' may themselves have to undergo development to keep pace with Shakespeare's work; we must understand that 'popular' and 'unpopular' plays may well have to be judged by different yardsticks, since at each stage, in each play even, Shakespeare attempted something new. The fact of popularity may be satisfactorily explained by one or both of two factors: that certain types of character and situation have greater inherent appeal, although not necessarily greater inherent significance than others; and that widespread social conditions may determine the degree of popularity of some plays. In addition, Eliot proposes, there may be a point of maximum impact in the combination of content, craft, and sometimes social condition, and that a work produced at the height of the combined appeal and availability may well be the most optimally and most universally effective work. According to him, Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet are examples, perhaps exceptionally apt examples, of this possibility.

This argument can be kept on a consistent and convincing basis by finding the evidence for it in the essential nature of the form: Eliot does this by positing, as basic to the art of drama, the necessity of attempting to achieve the most 'realistic' expression of the material that creates the form and fabric of a play. He thus takes us into the argument for a multi-layered vision, each layer requiring a different treatment of the reality in it. Eliot argues that Shakespeare set himself this as his special task: the achievement of a verse that would be appropriate to and adequate for the layer of reality chosen for each play.
As in many of his essays, Eliot's argument in this lecture opens with the stratagem of comparison. Since the development of Shakespeare can be specified most concretely in terms of the medium of his verse, Eliot begins by comparing the possibilities of Marlowe's verse to those of Shakespeare's verse. The comparison is not detailed, but it is sustained through to section 3 of the lecture. The standard of comparison is the ability to create an adequately realistic medium for the expression of the material at hand. This is obviously a question of 'rhetoric', and it would help to keep in mind during the reading of this lecture the distinction between effective and disruptive rhetoric that Eliot made in "Rhetoric and Poetic Drama" in 1919, and other distinctions which he made in The Three Voices of Poetry in 1953.

At the end of section 1, having come to the necessary conclusion that we must think of the possibility that "Shakespeare's work [is] one whole that belongs together and not as individual parts of unequal importance," Eliot faces the question of relative judgment among the various plays. In section 2 he suggests that the activities of assessing the value of a work at its proper stage in the development, and of making relative aesthetic judgments across the entire corpus, are different. It seems that, according to Eliot, one of the more important aspects of aesthetic achievement is the architecture of a work. The exact meaning of this notion for Eliot will have to be accumulated from his various statements about it in different essays. But here he says,

even if we agree that Shakespeare did not write any plays
greater than these [i.e., the major plays preceding the late plays], each of which is important in its own way, I still do not believe that anyone could conclude that Romeo and Juliet is a greater work than Antony and Cleopatra from a poetic or dramatic viewpoint, or that Julius Caesar is greater than Coriolanus; for the later named plays contain just as much poetic beauty, and their dramatic construction is still better.

Here it becomes necessary to remember that there is an important distinction between popularity and artistic, or dramatic and poetic, success. As Eliot has suggested, there may be accidental factors of the situation in and around the play that will account for its popularity independently of its aesthetic achievement; it does not follow from it that "the popular plays are better or that they are more dramatic." However, since the reaction of audiences has been admitted as one of the criteria of judgment, we must account for the differences between plays that are less successful artistically but more successful popularly, and plays that are less popular but more successful dramatically. Eliot suggests that the late plays, which are generally much less popular than others, were written for "a smaller audience."

Once again it is important to avoid any elitist interpretation of this argument. There need not be one here, any more than there is concerning The Faerie Queene, or Paradise Lost, or Wordsworth's Prelude, or the Ulysses of Joyce: these are works very well known, but only read by a few people at any time. They are not "popular" works. All of them demand a background, a preparedness, a degree of literary experience, habits of patient reading and discernment, and the capacity to hold large patterns in the mind, such qualities as
are at no time to be found in a large number of literate people anywhere. The possibility that such works are legitimate members of the literary tradition of the literature of the language is perhaps a little more difficult when applied in the field of drama, since drama is a practical and public art form. But it is clearly not a question of discriminatory attitude on the part of the author or the critic, rather of the nature of the form and the substance of the work itself.

With this background for the consideration of the questions most obviously raised by the varying degrees of popularity of Shakespeare's plays, Eliot begins his discussion of the development of the poetic art of Shakespeare. In section 3 he tells us what his purpose is: "to demonstrate two things: first, that the inner necessity which led to the development of his verse lies in the essence of drama; second, that this development took place in the entire dramatic range." The first objective is important, because it is a conclusion which will infuse unity into Eliot's argument; the second objective is important, because it will allow us to perceive unity in Shakespeare's entire work.

Here Eliot makes a comparison between the achievement of Marlowe and the contemporary achievement of Shakespeare. There are noticeable differences between the two: although they were contemporaries, Marlowe had developed to the height of his dramatic achievement by the time the apprenticeship of Shakespeare was fully under way. But, as Eliot points out, "Shakespeare started slowly on his way, but certainly possessed that extraordinary talent of the very great writers to progress and perfect themselves above others and never to repeat
themselves."

Marlowe possessed exceptional ability in rhetorical and resounding declamation of certain kinds of elevated characters in appropriate situations. He also had corresponding ability in the direction of farce. That is to say, his talents did not run in the direction of realism. He suffers, or rather he would have suffered had he lived longer, from the propensity to repetition and monotony which is inherent in stylized rhetoric. That much is apparent even in his best verse monologues, such as the speeches of Tamburlaine. During his apprenticeship as well as later, Shakespeare imitated, borrowed and adapted material from all sources available to him. In this he had the ability, as Eliot has demonstrated elsewhere, to imitate creatively. Shakespeare neither imitated mechanically, nor did he commit himself to any one style of expression as did Marlowe. For "each of Shakespeare's plays is a fresh attempt to accomplish something that had not been done before."

Naturally, there are aspects of the form in which fresh achievement is possible besides the aspect of verse. But the more important aspect in the discussion of poetic drama is its verse, and what an author attempts to do with it. Shakespeare could create elevated verse and character. But, unlike Marlowe, he also had the ability "to deal with lesser subjects in a manner that was to become significant. With Marlowe the dramatic writing is for the most part speeches; with Shakespeare it became conversation for the first time." Having learned the use of magniloquent speech from Marlowe and Kyd, Shakespeare had as his first major task the approximation of his verse to
the sensibility of real people and to their language. For, in drama, "the path proceeds from the artificial to the real." That is why Eliot proceeds to analyse examples of Shakespeare's verse, "in which we hear ordinary people speaking; verse that is at the same time colloquial speech and great poetry."

At this point, two parts of the argument converge: the identification of a specific difference between Marlowe's work and Shakespeare's early work (here, Eliot appears to take the date of King John to be 1591, as it is held to be by some scholars); and the analysis of actual stages in Shakespeare's poetic development in his plays. Eliot first states that King John is one of the less significant, less free achievements of Shakespeare, characteristic of the first stage of an apprenticeship. Yet, he points out, "there is a figure in this play which speaks so naturally, so in keeping with his character, that it is downright revolutionary in the history of dramatic literature." For in this figure there are unmistakable hints of language and verse that are unique to Shakespeare's plays. Not that Shakespeare was "clearly aware of all that he was initiating here"; but the figure of the Bastard, Richard Faulconbridge, "is such a figure as Marlowe could never have created."

The motivation behind the analyses that follow--of scenes from Romeo and Juliet (in section 4), Antony and Cleopatra (in section 5), and Pericles and Cymbeline (in section 6)--is not merely to show that Shakespeare's verse developed; it is also to illuminate the means of recognizing the relationships between different plays and different stages of the development: "I stress again and again the
importance of this [realistic] way of speaking, because I believe that Shakespeare's greatest plays and highest dramatic moments cannot be imagined without this mastery of the natural colloquial speech." He leaves out of his analysis the four great tragedies--actually, he had analysed the first scene of Hamlet with great success in the Edinburgh lectures--possibly because the achievements of the tragedies are much more universally recognized and appreciated than those of the early and the late plays.

Eliot's earlier analysis of Hamlet I.i, which is available in Poetry and Drama, is an exceptional piece of practical criticism. It brings out the constantly changing quality of the verse and the language of the soldiers' speeches. It explains the propriety of the brusque and ordinary language of the opening, and the contrasting high notes struck by some of Horatio's and Marcellus's speeches. It points out the effect of the appearance of the Ghost on the verse rhythms. It highlights the aptness of the verse in this scene to the characters in it, and its ability to anticipate by words and atmosphere the dark events of the play to follow. It connects the verse movement to the dramatic movement: this is the double pattern of great drama, the source of its intensity. The scene is thus shown to be what Eliot calls it, perhaps the best opening scene in all drama. After reading Eliot's analysis, we have been made aware of the dramatic and poetic technique and movement of the scene, its function in the play, the revelation and foreshadowing of characters, its strength in simplicity. All these explain why Eliot believes that when we listen to this scene, we do not consciously attend to its
poetry, but only to its meaning.

It would be instructive to examine a few speeches from one or two other tragedies that are not examined by Eliot, to test the validity of his claim that a full appreciation of them will depend upon a full appreciation of earlier successful attempts with realistic verse. Shakespeare is especially and astonishingly successful in expressing, in context, the emotions of spiritual bafflement, realization of grave loss, or the workings of the conscience in the face of crime. These are moments in the lives of his characters when they experience fuller self-realization and that consequent extreme of loneliness which most of us can hardly imagine. As Eliot had pointed out in "Rhetoric and Poetic Drama," true self-realization, or rather the lack of empty posturing in front of an audience on stage and in the auditorium, leads to good rhetoric; and, furthermore, in a great dramatist, these moments of confrontation with the self make the rhetoric all the more powerful, because they reveal further clues to the personality of the character.

One such moment occurs in *King Lear* when in the thick of the action of the play, Lear reappears on the scene with the still warm but lifeless body of Cordelia in his arms: a moment of utter grief, incredulous and hopeful against hope, that makes Kent exclaim, "Is this the promised end?" (V.iii.264). Lear's speech can perhaps be understood as a two-part pouring out, first part grief, and the second part an invective which begins with a curse and ends with the momentary return of the man of action in Lear. The first part
is a speech of six-and-a-half lines:

Howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones.
Had I your tongue and eyes, I'd use them so.
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever.
I know when one is dead, and when one lives.
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking glass.
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why then she lives. (V.iii.158-64)

Looked at in another way, this is a speech of sixty-two words but only sixty-five syllables; for only three words (underlined above) in the entire speech are not monosyllabic, and even those are only bi-syllabic and everyday words. Although the speech is so brief, it consists of eight sentences (if we accept the overture of triple interjection as one sentence in effect). The two relatively long sentences consist of only 15 words or 16 syllables, and 14 words or 14 syllables respectively; and both use very common conditional structures; there is one compound sentence, one line of 10 words or 10 syllables. The verse is regular blank verse in 4 of the lines, which are composed of 10 syllables each; there are only two deviations from the norm, with 9 and 11 syllables respectively, of which the first line makes up for the missing syllable by a distinct pause after the first three syllables. The rhythm, however, is perfect natural speech, extremely varied, with changes of pace and exclamations indigenous to the content; yet with the exception of the strong first line, all the remaining lines scan as thoroughly regular iambic metre. It is hardly possible to be simpler and truer to ordinary language than this speech is.

One of the most impressive and natural parts of this speech is
the perverse logic of the desperate man, one who understands the finality of his loss, understands the imperative need to accept it, and yet one whose hope questions the finality:

I know when one is dead... Why then she lives.

The only complexities of this speech, its concessions to 'style', are the metaphorical phrase "heaven's vault" and the simile "dead as earth," which are really not particularly un-quotidian. In the context of "Enter Lear, with Cordelia in his arms," Lear's madness, his realization of the genuineness of Cordelia's love, his degradation and betrayal at the hands of Goneril and Regan, and the still-echoing "He hath commission from thy wife and me/ To hang Cordelia in the prison" from Edmund's dying confession, this speech lays bare the unqualified grief and despair of Lear.

The logic of the second part of the speech consists of the need to vent the despair and helplessness by an attack on the "murderers," the pleading with the object of loss to undo the fact of loss, and after remembering the most loved qualities of the lost one, the attempt to expiate one's responsibility for the loss. Its intensity is, once again, just as simple and real as the intensity of the first part:

A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all;
I might have saved her; now she's gone for ever.
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha,
What is't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low--an excellent thing in woman.
I killed the slave that was a-hanging thee. (V.iij.270-75).

The most obvious stylistic device here is repetition: Cordelia's
name, and, from the first part, "she's gone for ever." No purple passage, bombast or high-falutin, no royal harangue: just the bare man in the pure experience of an intense emotion of immense complexity. And once again, even the longest words in the speech, barring the name Cordelia, "excellent," and "murderers," have the simplicity and fidelity to ordinary reality and language of the elemental "Ha."

In another, longer, passage earlier in the play, the brokenness of the sanity of Lear and his disharmony are echoed in the broken rhythms and simple language of distraction. Gloucester, physically eyeless, and Lear without the clarity of sane vision, meet; and Gloucester's epiphanic "Is't not the king?" sparks off the wisdom of royal insanity in the speech, "Ay, every inch a king." This verse and the prose of the passage that precedes it, are as purely realistic as any speech in drama:

They told me I was everything. 'Tis a lie--I am not ague-proof.

The propriety and credibility of these speeches equal those of the speech of Old Capulet which Eliot singles out in the lecture ("More light you knaves... 'tis not so much"); and the poetry surpasses nearly everything that has ever been done in tragedy.

In a very different context, there is Macbeth with his back to the wall, as even his wife is lost to him. The language of Macbeth is as simple, as ordinary, as that of the passage from King Lear I analysed above. And there is an element of superb architecture--or "musical structure" to use Eliot's term--in this short scene (V.1.1-52), which contains
the confident entry of Macbeth ("Our castle's strength/ Will laugh a siege to scorn"); his curious inquiry about a noise within ("What is that noise?"); his attempt to feign ignorance of the awakening of fear in himself ("the taste of fears. Cannot once start me"); another short question and answer that brings the death of Lady Macbeth crashing into his show of confidence ("The Queen, my lord, is dead"); the re-surging authority and confidence and impatience of Macbeth ("thou com'st to use thy tongue: thy story quickly!"); again a short exchange that brings "Birnam wood" to his door-step to unnerve him (notice the shrillness of "Liar and slave!"); then the final emergence of the brave warrior in Macbeth who has now faced his fate ("If thy speech be sooth, I care not"); and the echo of Lear in the speech of the essential man of action ("Blow wind, come wrack, At least we'll die with harness on our back").

The man may have become a criminal, but he still has that in him which justified the encomia and honours which he received at the beginning of the play. Here too is the combination of heroic and sordid, the realism of the presence of human weaknesses, that Eliot brings to our attention in discussing Antony and Cleopatra in section 5 of the lecture. No self-dramatization here either; no fraudulent miles gloriosus stance or false recriminations; no poetic windiness such as characterizes all but the final speech of Richard II; rather throughout the simplicity that raises "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow" to the ultimate of poetic speech.

To return to Eliot's argument in the German lecture, these and other such speeches cannot be viewed as being upstart achievements of Shakespeare's poetry. The labour that had gone into creating the language of the Nurse in Romeo and Juliet, of Richard III, Shylock, Feste and Falstaff, pays rich dividends here; the earthiness of the speeches of the comic figures and the immediacy of the simple and powerful outbursts of the tragic figures are two faces of the same
language and the same human spirit. These later achievements are self-sufficient in their own contexts; yet their fuller appreciation will be attendant upon the degree of our awareness of the history of the medium in the art of Shakespeare. The argument that Eliot makes here is, in a sense, a microcosmic application of the principle of "Tradition and the Individual Talent"; indeed, this may begin to explain what Eliot says in other places about originality and individual talent. For instance, he says in the introduction to Ezra Pound's *Selected Poems:*

> Originality, in other words, is by no means a simple idea in the criticism of poetry. True originality is merely development; and if it is right development it may appear in the end so inevitable that we almost come to the point of view of denying all 'original' virtue to the poet. He simply did the next thing."

In the appreciation of the later successes of Shakespeare, the existence of his earlier successes must play a part; the appreciation of growth is an essential part of the over-all appreciation of a writer of Shakespeare's kind.

At this point in the argument in section 4, Eliot introduces, by means of the analysis of the balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet,* the important "new motif that is characteristic of the poetic art" of this play and of all the great plays of Shakespeare: "a musical pattern." Not only the speeches, but also the arrangement of the speakers in mutual relation to each other and to the themes of the play, go to make the total structure. Yet Eliot, whose discussion of this scene demonstrates its emotional, verbal and musical architecture, would have us notice that "in this scene Shakespeare reaches a per-
fection of poetic art which, for this special task, neither he himself nor any other writer could outdo" [see Poetry and Drama for this analysis]; and, therefore, the later achievements only confirm the earlier ones. Of course, there is a degree of artificiality in the parallelisms and juxtapositions of the early plays, which Eliot admits, and which Shakespeare eschews in his mature creations.

As Eliot suggests elsewhere, not only Shakespeare, but the English language itself as a vehicle of drama had come a long way in the growth from pre- and early Shakespearean drama to the plays which Eliot examines in this lecture. The growth is not merely from the rich poetic language of Spenser, but also from the "rhetoric" in the monologues of Tamburlaine:

Now clear the triple region of the air,
And let the Majesty of Heaven behold
Their scourge and terror tread on emperors.
Smile, stars that reign'd at my nativity,
And dim the brightness of their neighbour lamps;
Disdain to borrow light of Cynthia!
For, I the chiefest lamp of all the earth,
First rising in the east with mild aspect,
But fixed now in-the meridian line,
Will send up fire to your turning spheres,
And cause the sun to borrow light of you... (Part I, IV.ii).

In Romeo and Juliet mixed with deliberate purple, but in Hamlet, King Lear and Macbeth with powerful spareness, we have "a speech that is at the same time simplified to natural colloquial speech and raised to great poetry."

Eliot introduces here yet another idea that will help us understand his approach to the late plays of Shakespeare: the law of maximum impact. He sees in Shakespeare a pattern that "reaches a point in
a work like Hamlet in which his creativity exerts a maximum impression on the imagination and emotion of man, both in breadth and depth." He proposes the possibility that "Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet form the outermost limit up to which most people can develop. Each of these plays is a complete expression of the feelings that Shakespeare would have known at the age at which he wrote them." Thus, on the one hand, we cannot say that "the later plays are greater," and on the other hand we generally experience the great tragedies as overpowering and perhaps a little puzzling, and the late plays as even more puzzling and strange. For from this point on Shakespeare "gradually draws out of sight and disappears into a mysterious sphere of his own... gradually demands more and more from the spectator." Perhaps, then, the mature plays to an extent, but the late plays especially, "are meant for a small audience." And yet, Eliot warns us, this "does not at all prove that they are less great or less dramatic, or that Shakespeare had not developed further either as poet and dramatist or as a thinker. On the contrary, we ourselves have not developed."

As Eliot tells us in section 5 of the lecture, his "method of approaching Shakespeare's later plays" is based on the thesis that "in Shakespeare there is a continuous development of dramatic and poetic art which lasted until the end of his creative work." We continue to study the art of Shakespeare as "adaptation of verse to colloquial speech and the versification of the natural manner of speaking"; with the late plays, it is still a study of the realism that drama must possess. After King John and Romeo and Juliet as
exemplars of two stages in the development of Shakespeare, Eliot takes up *Antony and Cleopatra* as an example of the tragic realism of Shakespeare from his mature period. The realism of the play is of the kind for which, "as in real life, the sublime and the common are merely two aspects of the same thing." And the variations of this realism by means of "consciously magniloquent" verse and the "required down-to-earth prose" have "also a very important meaning."

Eliot points out here another difference between Shakespeare and his great predecessor Marlowe and his great successor Dryden: "only Shakespeare was able to show them [the heroic characters] exalted as well as with all their human weaknesses, and without the human weaknesses this tragedy would lack greatness." As Eliot says later in *The Music of Poetry*:

> by the time he wrote *Antony and Cleopatra* he had devised a medium in which everything that a dramatic character might have to say, whether high or low, 'poetical' or 'prosaic', could be said with naturalness and beauty. 13

It is there, in *The Music of Poetry*, that Eliot voices more explicitly what he has tried to say in this connection in the German lecture:

> Having got to this point, he began to elaborate: The first period—of the poet who began with *Venus and Adonis*, but who had already, in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, begun to see what he had to do—is from artificiality to simplicity, from stiffness to suppleness. The later plays move from simplicity towards elaboration. He is occupied with the other task of the poet—doing the work of two poets in one lifetime—that of experimenting to see how elaborate, how complicated, the music could be made without losing touch with colloquial speech altogether, and without his characters ceasing to be human beings. This is the poet of *Cymbeline*, *The Winter’s Tale*, *Pericles*, and *The Tempest*. 14
Up to this point, Shakespeare's superiority, according to Eliot, "rests on this, that he could say in poetic speech, what nobody otherwise could have said in prose."

Perhaps, since until this point it has been possible to see how each stage, and each play in each stage, may have been an advance, we may now admit the possibility that the subsequent stage may also be an advance. Already, it has been a development that can be characterized, borrowing a phrase which Eliot uses in this connection in his lecture on Yeats (1940), as "miraculous." If we accept that "Shakespeare's development cannot be convincingly represented unless one considers the plays in chronological order and points out at the same time the place each individual play takes in the whole scheme," it should follow that we may be able to fit the last plays into such a comprehensive scheme. That may not be easy, for "the last plays are more difficult," as Eliot says in the concluding section of the lecture. But it is necessary to do this; indeed, it is better to attempt to do this, than to dismiss out of hand the last plays as products of declining, more or less uninvolved or "bored" powers of creation.

Eliot had already said, in section 5, that Shakespeare managed to say in poetry what others could not have said in prose. With the last plays, he says now, the case is even more astonishing: "With the later plays one could only express one's astonishment with the words, 'I should never have believed that something like this could be said at all.'" At this stage we need not abandon the thread of Shakespeare's attempt to achieve realism, but we have to recognize
that there are different kinds of realities, or layers of reality, and the strategy and means of achieving realism may have to change with the kind of reality being expressed. "For in the last plays Shakespeare has given up the reality of everyday life in order to make the world of feelings that lie behind it more real."

Perhaps we should also recognize that there are costs to be paid for eschewing certain kinds of reality; in the earlier, surface representations of reality, sometimes we can bring the charge of lightness of significance against Shakespeare. Certainly, many of his contemporaries wrote respectable plays that are frivolous to some extent. The cost of eschewing surface reality, or of passing over it lightly or casually, may be paid in terms of popularity. Eliot seems to suggest here that this is what Shakespeare did: "he tends to change the plot...and to simplify his characters so that they become carriers of an emotional reality of which they themselves as living people are not aware"; "the intelligible world becomes in these later plays a dream world...The verse searches for and finds new possibilities." Such language is, therefore, "far beyond the comprehension of the British theatre public today as well as previously."

Here it is important to remember the earlier distinction that "popular" need not mean "more dramatic," because the verse of the last plays "is not the less dramatic, but dramatic certainly in a world to which only a few have access"; it is also real, "a world where certain emotions have been purified in order to make room for others that normally remain unnoticed." The later plays have as
much directness and simplicity of ordinary language as the earlier mature plays, as Eliot demonstrates with examples from Pericles. Yet they are closer to the beginnings of drama itself, they are a "sort of liturgical treatment of spiritual meaning." The later plays are a result of the same "logical necessity" that gave rise to the advance from the immature to the mature tragedies and comedies. The difference is that, "after he had done everything humanly possible within the framework of dramatic writing," Shakespeare advanced to a super-drama, or a point of drama-beyond-drama. This unique flight of creation, therefore, presents difficulty to "the average matter-of-fact critics of Shakespeare." Perhaps we should say, with "B" in the "Dialogue on Poetic Drama," and keeping in mind the distinction elaborated in the previous chapter between realism and naturalism:

Archer's objections to Elizabethan drama were partly based upon a right instinct. He used some deplorable terms... in expressing his dislike. But had he observed that his fundamental objections applied as much to Shakespeare as to anybody, he might have admitted an obligation to find another and profounder explanation for it. 15

"Another and profounder explanation" is just what Eliot has tried to offer in these lectures on Shakespeare's development that propose a drama-beyond-drama: that Shakespeare transcended the constraints of the form itself in creating a super-dramatic form of his own in the late plays, and that he did this as soon as his capacities had ripened to a full expression in traditional forms, and also as soon as the conditions of the private theatre became available to him. His dramatic and poetic craft—mise en scène, and verse technique,
plot construction and characterization, symbolism and architecture—as well as his circumstances and maturity were just right for this breakthrough.

In his conclusion to the lecture, Eliot says the following things: "that Shakespeare developed his verse to its highest perfection for the sake of drama"; "that he became a great poet mainly because he wrote for the stage"; that "in the end he attained a form of drama that was beyond any audience" in the ordinary sense; and finally, that "Shakespeare's work forms a complete whole, and we understand each play better when we know all the others."

It can be argued, as Eliot suggests in his theory of Shakespeare's development, that Shakespeare understood better than anyone else the need for "realism" in a practical form or art like drama, a form that presents itself directly to its audience. The path which his realism took, not surprisingly, goes from superficial and isolating realism, through deeper, more solid and comprehensive realism, to an inner, spiritual realism. The first and the last stages of this path are less comprehensive than the middle one; they are both more isolating: the first isolates for depiction the outer, superficial, conventional layers of reality; the third isolates the inner layers of reality. Naturally, plays from the first stage are the most easily apprehended, least deeply satisfying or effective, though no less real than the others; the plays from the middle stage are perhaps more convincingly, more universally satisfying and significant, therefore more deeply and lastingly effective for more people than
plays from either of the other two stages; the third stage is the least easily apprehended, mostly deeply satisfying when it is apprehended, yet much less universally effective than the first two stages. It should be possible to understand now why the question of popularity and survival value in Shakespeare's plays has been such a crucial question in the foundation of Eliot's proposals.

The surface realism of the initial stage has been sublimated, its thinness, crudity, roughness worked off, its function made more integral to a larger context, in the second stage. At the same time, the second stage has added to the commixture of elements a greater sensitivity, a perception of deeper and more significant feelings, and a consequent complexity. These in turn were sublimated to the deepest levels of perception—half dream, half reality, half sense and half nonsense—giving voice to the relatively unconscious strata of experience, and treating the surface reality with a simplicity necessary to cut through the surface layers, and on occasion bordering on casualness.

Such an account of the corpus, although it suffers from a lack of detailed analysis of the late plays, is essentially closer to the concept of growth and development than one that is based on differences, that is to say one that merely suggests that the changes in Shakespeare's work occurred because he treated different kinds of subject matter at different times of his life. Not only does Eliot's account avert the necessity to arrive at the idea of "decline," but it also allows a definite approach to Shakespeare's work as a whole on the basis of development. In other words, such an account is more
organic and enables us to perceive native unity amidst diversity, while simultaneously allowing for an ideal of perfect accomplishment at each level of development, since no level is truer than another. For it observes this corpus as a series of approaches or approximations to realism on different planes, not to the exclusion of one or another aspect of reality at any level, but with greater or less concentration—or an adjustment of the depth of field of vision, according to the primary level of focus—on certain aspects of the total reality.

Naturally, this kind of movement or growth would have to be studied at all levels of the form as well. That Eliot mainly focuses attention on the verse form used to actualize perception of reality, is not strange, and does not imply that he was unaware of the growth of Shakespeare in other departments of the drama; only that he was constantly preoccupied with problems of appropriate medium, a verse form for a drama in the twentieth century. This is clear from the rest of Eliot's critical and creative work as well, since the creative work began with semi-dramatic treatment of character and viewpoint and verse form from "Prufrock" on, and ended with Eliot's own attempts at drama for the stage. The study of the maturing and development of Shakespeare is a natural part of Eliot's own oeuvre.

III

It is both interesting and necessary to notice the differences between this German lecture and the earlier, original version in the Edinburgh lectures. The differences arise first of all because the
Edinburgh lectures, being two full lectures, provide much greater space in which to expound the theory of development, although for the same reason perhaps their construction and phrasing are a little loose at times. Eliot was right in hesitating to publish them as they stood. Another difference arises from the fact that Eliot was apparently much more relaxed in expressing his personal opinions—unless it was his diffidence that made him elaborate on the fact that the theory was his own view— in the Edinburgh lectures. Once he had stated at the outset the reasons for his diffidence in venturing into so specialized a field as the criticism of Shakespeare's verse, he would be free to expand his approach to Shakespeare's development, an approach that he had held from the beginning of his critical career. The first paragraph of the first lecture explains the reasons for his diffidence: he may be wrong in some way in the views he holds; such views may have already found adequate expression in the work of other critics, and he may be guilty of repetition; his knowledge of recent Shakespeare scholarship leaves much to be desired.

Perhaps these misgivings of Eliot should be taken seriously. The 1950 version, "Shakespeares Verskunst" does not show any signs of growth in Eliot's own thinking on the theory. Sufficient time had elapsed to warrant growth, elaboration and refinement of his views. Besides, in the intervening years since 1937, many other prominent critics had turned their attention to different aspects of Shakespeare's development. Wilson Knight had, of course, continued his exploration of Shakespeare's growth. D. A. Traversi, who allow-
ledges a debt to Eliot, though not specifically in terms of his ideas on development, had proposed an approach to the subject in 1938. E. M. W. Tillyard had published his expanded lecture (1936) on the subject in Shakespeare's Last Plays (1938). F. R. Leavis had expressed his "caveat" on the subject in an article in Scrutiny (1942). Wolfgang Clemen's study of the development of Shakespeare's imagery was to come out in 1951. Even scholarly support for a developmental approach to the late plays of Shakespeare was available in the form of articles such as G. E. Bentley's "Shakespeare and the Blackfriars Theatre" (1948). Although none of these critics' views overlap Eliot's ideas, it is obvious that consideration of them would have enforced Eliot's own theory more strongly. Eliot seems to have had no intention to bring his 1937 views in line with the current state of Shakespearean criticism. These omissions are even more startling when we consider the qualities that Eliot expected in a Shakespearean critic. They are elaborated in his foreword to Henri Fluchère's Shakespeare and the Elizabethans (1953). The combination of qualifications is, in fact, intimidating even as an ideal:

At the present stage of Shakespeare criticism, the critic who would give a well-balanced interpretation of Shakespeare's total work needs a number of qualifications not commonly found together. The ideal Shakespearean critic should be a scholar, with knowledge not of Shakespeare in isolation, but of Shakespeare in relation to the Elizabethan Theatre in which he is only one, though very much the greatest, of the masters, and of that Theatre in relation to the social, political, economic and religious conditions of its time. He should also be a poet; and he should be a 'man of the theatre'. And he should have a philosophic mind. Shakespeare criticism cannot be written by a committee consisting of a number of specialized scho-
lars, a dramatist, a producer, an actor, a poet and a philosopher: each of them would be incompetent without sharing some of the knowledge and capacities of the others. Certainly, to be a poet or a philosopher is not enough. A poet is not a qualified interpreter, unless he understands the particular technique of dramatic verse. In order to understand dramatic verse he must needs have had some success in writing it; and if his dramatic verse is to be really dramatic he must acquire also the point of view of the producer, the actor and the audience. To understand Shakespeare he must understand the theatre of his own time—but also the differences between the theatre of his own time and that of Shakespeare's time; he should know the latter, not merely as an antiquary, but from the point of view of the producer, the actor and the audience of Shakespeare's time. For such understanding, both scholarship and imagination are required. Nor is the philosophic critic, without the other qualifications, in better case than the poet. The philosopher needs to understand the nature of poetry... 23

As might be expected, an understanding of "the development of Shakespeare's style from first to last" is also an important part of these qualifications.

Eliot counters his own lack of scholarship, it seems to me correctly, and with a well-placed confidence, by citing his continued acquaintance with the plays of Shakespeare as poetry and as drama in the theatre. In a lecture such as this one, he says, all he can expect to deliver is one new idea. And that he does, if not exactly by introducing the idea of development into the field of Shakespearean criticism, certainly by suggesting the possibility of an integrated theory of Shakespeare's development, and of the general shape of his oeuvre. Indeed, such a theory is hardly a concern of scholarship as much as it is of literary criticism; and it satisfies the condition that Eliot had insisted upon, that the work of art is primary, if not the only, evidence that a literary critic
ought to study and to attempt to illuminate. There is one extension of this approach: since the theory hopes to encompass all the plays of one author, there must be a notion of work that goes beyond individual plays; that is the notion of the oeuvre, a meta-work considered as one poem. To some extent, therefore, Eliot goes much farther in his statements here than in the German lecture. For this reason, the Edinburgh lectures make an excellent explanatory commentary on the German lecture: at any rate, since the Edinburgh lectures are not published and remain unavailable for quotation, they can at least be used in this way to some advantage here.

Between the time of the Edinburgh lectures (1937) and that of the German lecture (1950), Eliot had himself written at least one more play, *The Family Reunion* (1939), and also probably *The Cocktail Party* (March 1950). In addition, he had had more opportunities to compare Shakespeare with other great writers in many other lectures and essays. During this intervening period, he had also written the *Four Quartets*, themselves the kind of advance from his earlier poetry that is embodied in the late plays of Shakespeare. This experience does not seem to have helped Eliot to consolidate, refine or extend the matter of the Edinburgh lectures. The general plan of the two versions is, however, somewhat different: here the argument is less dependent upon comparison with Marlowe than in the German lecture. It is also divided neatly between theoretical exposition in the first lecture, and supporting analysis in the second lecture.

One of the more important differences has to be the fact that Eliot not only analysed a whole scene from *Hamlet* in the Edinburgh
lectures, but that he also compared, more directly and extensively than in the German lecture, his current attitude towards the play with the attitude that is not entirely erroneously conveyed by the Hamlet review of 1919. Such reconsideration, though in this case particularly significant for an authentic appreciation of Eliot's views on Shakespeare, is not singular: Eliot had re-examined his earlier view, and attempted to correct misunderstandings of it, in more than one other place. But here he questions the concept of "artistic success," one of the foundations of the Hamlet review, and also suggests that he has now perceived the particular place of Hamlet in the Shakespearean oeuvre. In this section of the present chapter, therefore, it is proposed first to state the general differences between the two versions of the theory--necessary, since the evidence of these lectures is new in Eliot studies--and then to attempt a clarification of Eliot's more considered views regarding the play. It is especially important to do this for at least three reasons: first, because Eliot assigns this play a status in the Shakespearean canon that is both momentous and salient; next, because, even though he had somewhat overstated his ideas in 1919, his views were misunderstood to some extent; finally, the concept of the "objective correlative," which Eliot mooted in that review--a concept which fits harmoniously with Eliot's demand for objectivity in criticism and impersonality in creative work--needs to be properly interpreted in the general context of his theory of Shakespeare's development. There is a possible glibness in a phrase like "objective correlative," as Eliot was well aware; it had been taken up
or attacked, with more or less inadequate appreciation of its immense utility and precise meaning, by others. Yet it is part of a larger framework of critical concepts; and although Eliot seemed to shy away from the term itself in later years, he never abandoned its essence in his critical approach.

In general, most of the important statements from the Edinburgh lectures that are included in the later lecture preserve the ideas as well as much of the original phrasing. The most important difference in this sense is that the later lecture is a considerably condensed version. The two versions do not start from the same question, however. In the Edinburgh lectures, Eliot takes off from Harley Granville-Barker's Romanes lecture for the same year. Although he is in general agreement with what Granville-Barker has to say about the nature of dramatic poetry, Eliot refuses to maintain with him that a dramatic poet is "born" to his art. Eliot insists on appreciation of the work necessary to artistic creation: this is an essential difference between his theory and any "organic" theory based on "inspiration." Eliot's point is that it requires much hard work to become even a good poet, and that evidence of the work that Shakespeare put into becoming a great dramatic poet can be seen at the various stages in his career, and that an awareness of the effort can provide a satisfactory approach to the entire work of Shakespeare. These two lectures attempt to chart Shakespeare's development, and to see that development as the unfolding of his oeuvre. In this connection, the point regarding the crucial difference between Marlowe and Shakespeare is made in both versions, but in
the Edinburgh lectures it is somewhat incidental. The two versions thus differ in the general point of entry into the studies of Shakespeare's verse that follow.

There are certain distinctions which Eliot makes by the way, without defining or elaborating them, which he does not include in the German version. For instance, he proposes a dual development, or a double strand in the development of the verse in drama, the first being such as drama specifically requires, vital, free from rhetoric in the bad sense of the term, and the second being a development in the poetic nature of the poetry itself. Given Eliot's own views regarding the integral nature of the poetic medium in verse drama, as he explains in *The Three Voices of Poetry*, it is very doubtful whether he could have sustained such a distinction. It is not a difficult distinction to conceive; but it is an impossible task to separate in a theoretical or a practical way, the poetic and the dramatic aspects of the poetry in drama. In the one place where Eliot tries to engage himself with this issue, he does not seem to arrive at any clear-cut statement of what is involved in the two aspects of poetry in drama. In "'Rhetoric' and Poetic Drama" Eliot had effectively shown what constitutes dramatic poetry, the good and the bad rhetoric of it; and in *The Three Voices of Poetry* later on, he was to sharpen the concept of dramatic poetry as distinct from other, non-dramatic, forms of poetry. In "Dialogue on Poetic Drama," however, where he attempts to make the distinction between the poetic and the dramatic in dramatic poetry, he does not succeed; the matter is further complicated, incidentally, by Eliot's failure to
give distinctly recognizable points of view to the several spokes-
men in the dialogue.

Another such distinction which Eliot makes without proper fol-
low-up is that between 'persons' and 'personages' as the different
products of more or less successful, fuller and flatter, characte-
rrization respectively. It would seem that Eliot wishes to suggest
here the kind of difference between Shakespeare's early characters
and the later ones from the mature plays, which he had identified
between the characters of Ben Jonson and Shakespeare in "Ben Jon-
son" (1919). There he had made the distinction between living cha-
acter with a "third dimension" such as Falstaff, whose whole life
is potentially available to us, and others whose lives are limited
to what the dramatist actually provides in a play. The distinction
would not hold, anyway, since the original distinction was based on
a difference of dramatic types not in the least detrimental to Ben
Jonson's reputation. Fortunately, the distinction between 'persons'
and 'personages' is not fundamental to the actual argument in the
Edinburgh lectures; for there is really no consistency in Eliot's
use of these terms outside these lectures.

In the Edinburgh lectures Eliot states more clearly the idea of
the price an author has to pay for making a choice of the plane of
reality which he wants to express in a given work. In the German
lecture the idea of such a price is merely hinted at, but here he
provides an explanation for it: drama is a composite art, has many
elements; naturally, if the author chooses to emphasize one plane
or aspect of reality, as every author must in any given work, his
technique will have to correspond to it by foregoing certain elements that may be expected from a play meant to be performed on the popular stage. Alternatively, if he chooses to provide a certain kind of treatment of reality because it accords well with the general audience's expectations, he will have to give up certain planes of reality altogether. There is more to life than what drama, as it is ordinarily understood can ever provide. This is an idea that should help us in understanding Eliot's preference for and justification of the late plays of Shakespeare.

It is difficult to distinguish sharply what is in itself dramatic or non-dramatic in a play. However, the idea of such a distinction must be considered important in Eliot's theory of development, since he wishes to arrive at the conclusion that Shakespeare tried in his later plays something that is not non-dramatic, but rather beyond what we generally understand by drama. This much seems clear, that, according to Eliot, Shakespeare did not pay the price in terms of the vital or realistic quality of his verse, but that he did so in terms of credibility of plot construction and the roundedness or 'life' of some of the characters in his late plays. In both the Edinburgh lectures and the German lecture, Eliot says that we ought to modify our criteria of judgment when proceeding from the mature to the late plays as far as the ordinary requirements of drama are concerned. This demand is not excessive: with or without an awareness of doing so, we always make such a modification in going from the very early plays to the plays written just before Hamlet, and then once again in going from them to
the great tragedies and the later comedies. Also Eliot states clearly in the Edinburgh lectures that it is not a question of elitism to suggest that Shakespeare produced at the end of his career a sort of form that is unavailable to the majority of audiences.

Another persistent idea with Eliot is that of the author's preoccupation with language, or his duty to it, it recurs in the Edinburgh lectures, where Eliot says that something over and above the dramatic is provided by dramatic verse when it is successful. Effectiveness on the stage remains the primary criterion of the success of poetry in drama; but other, presumably poetic as opposed to dramatic, contributions to the language may be made by an author who is interested in language in the way Shakespeare was. Individualization of character, at least of the majority of the principal characters, is in other words a primary goal; but a great play will exceed it, since it will take us beyond the capacity of characters to initiate experience purely and solely within their dramatic situation. At this point in the Edinburgh lectures, there is also a hint of Eliot's belief that there has to be something for every sort of member of the audience of a play, and that the question of the popular success of a play that is beyond drama will depend first of all upon whether the author has succeeded in providing the essentially dramatic aspects of language, character and action.

Here too Eliot makes it clear that he sees the handling of different planes of reality as a major parameter of the critical assessment of a play. It seems safe to assume that a general concept
of realism is basic to Eliot's theory of poetic drama. This is not difficult to comprehend once we associate the idea with his notions of "sensuous thought," \(^{29}\) concreteness of poetry, \(^{30}\) and the "objective correlative," and also with his deep regret over the "dissociation of sensibility"; all these imply the ideal state of unified sensibility that is required for literature according to Eliot: a sensibility that enables Shakespeare to present multi-dimensional visions in individual plays as well as in his entire work. He sees, here as in the German lecture, that poetic drama is capable of lifting itself and us to planes of reality that are essential to human experience itself, and therefore inherently and deeply significant as well as a matter of fidelity to truth of life. \(^{31}\)

The combined force of the necessity of such fidelity and the ideal of naturalness in poetic speech lends the argument its point in both the versions. But Eliot leads up to it in a slightly different and elaborate way in the earlier text. He begins with one of his fundamental beliefs, that the history of the literature in the English language has been one of a continuous attempt to come closer to the conversational standard in each age. For instance, it is this belief that plays a major role in his estimate of Dryden's special contribution to the English language. According to him, it is the first-rate or great authors who initiate the approach to naturalness, whereas the other authors in the language merely consolidate the language to such an extent that their use of it ends up being conservative and artificial. This successful approach to naturalness gives Blake and Wordsworth their status as major poets,
and it is this approach that makes Shakespeare the greatest single creditor to the English language. As Eliot has indicated on many occasions, naturalness of language and fidelity to truth of feeling are inseparable parts of the same process. There is arduous work involved in arriving at naturalness and at the concrete representation of situations of great complexity. In the German lecture he had said that the unique achievement of Shakespeare was the conversion of "speech" into "conversation." The conversion is that of oratory into language, in the terms used in the Edinburgh lectures. As early as Love's Labour's Lost (1594-95, or even earlier according to some scholars), Eliot suggests, we can observe Shakespeare's capacity to create dramatic verse both in the style of Marlowe and in the style of the Bastard in King John. Yet the "music" or double pattern that Eliot finds in Shakespeare is a somewhat later achievement, and it is merely incipient in the early plays.

The analyses of scenes from various plays which follow this exposition are nearly identical in both versions. There is a statement in the earlier version to the effect that this mastery of the natural colloquial speech is what makes English drama great--a significant point, since he also believes that every language has only one age of great drama--and that it also makes the English language a better vehicle of poetry than other European languages. This latter claim can be disputed. But here it is merely a passing comment, and does not bear any of the burden of Eliot's argument. It can, therefore, easily be put aside. The single major difference in terms of analyses is the complete omission of the Hamlet analysis from the later
version: It would appear that Eliot now takes for granted his auditors' familiarity with the play, and that he is satisfied with stating its distinctive qualities as well as its special place in the canon.

In the Edinburgh lectures, however, the analysis of the opening scene of the play (see Poetry and Drama for it) is a brilliant and essential part of the argument. Perhaps Eliot omitted it from the later version also because his point regarding the peak of availability of Shakespeare to his audiences is made concerning both Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet, and the analysis of one of them would suffice to make the point. There is a difference between the two plays, however, in that the mixture of styles remains somewhat unfused in the former, while in the latter it is an organic blend. It would have been a matter for considerable regret if Eliot had entirely suppressed the Hamlet analysis. With regard to the mixture of styles, Eliot makes another point which is rephrased in the later version: that Shakespeare often introduces into his plays such material as would appear irrelevant in its immediate context, but which is relevant to those aspects of the plays that are "beyond" drama: the symbolic garden scene in Richard II, as well as the parting scene between Richard and his queen, are early examples of this kind of introduction. Other than the Hamlet analysis and the elaborate discussion of his attitude toward the play, the two versions are alike from this point on.

The discussion of Hamlet takes place in connection with two
closely related ideas: availability and popularity. First of all, Eliot sees the work of Shakespeare proceeding from a point at which he produced plays in considerable conformity to the current norms for comic and tragic types. This, however, was only the starting point. Shakespeare gradually exhausted this pattern, so that after that point his plays, while naturally related to current forms, were at the same time significantly different. Thus in the major comedies and tragedies of Shakespeare, there are numerous signs of kinship to the plays of Kyd, Marlowe, and contemporary playwrights. Still, there is nothing quite like Shakespeare's mature plays in the considerable dramatic output of the Elizabethan age. In this movement outward from current types and standard audience expectations, Shakespeare reached a point at which he succeeded in combining the best of the normal as well as a good deal of the peculiar, a point of maximum impact and availability; and this point is reached in Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet. Past this point, Shakespeare himself proceeded apace with his individual progress, while his audiences have never properly managed to catch up with him.

The major tragedies after Hamlet do present some problems, even though there is enough material in them to ensure their popularity down the ages. Following these tragedies, though, he produced plays that are still dramatic to a recognizable degree—that is, their vestigial dramatic nature is much more strongly evident than the incipient "musical structure" of the earliest plays—yet they are plays of such strange spiritual and visionary quality that they could not hope to become popular in the way that the earlier plays
are popular. This late group of plays, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Pericles* and *The Tempest*, is perhaps at the potential extreme of poetic drama; this would account for some of Eliot's continued admiration of them. At the lower end of this part of the spectrum would fall plays like *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus* and *Troilus and Cressida*, each of which presents difficulties to audiences, yet each of which may become more successful than any of the last plays can. These four last named plays fall nearer to the possibility of availability than do the late plays. Thus, starting with the most obviously available, and going on to the least available plays, we work our way through the situation of the Prince of Denmark, which is a fusion of the highest degrees of poetry, drama, and spirituality that any audience can find it possible both to comprehend and to enjoy.

The nature of the availability of the situation of *Hamlet* has been the subject of study from the time Goethe and Coleridge directed their attention to the play. The probing of the psychological predicament of *Hamlet*, one of the most popular aspects of the play, reached its climax perhaps with the criticism of A. C. Bradley in interpretive terms, and with the criticism of Ernest Jones in psychoanalytic terms. There was little more to do in that particular direction without compounding the intentional and identificational fallacies further. Eliot himself provides in the Edinburgh lectures several reasons for the popularity of *Hamlet*, one of which is that most of us can identify with *Hamlet* to an unparalleled extent. Indeed, in a later lecture, Eliot describes *Hamlet* as one of the
most powerful myths of modern European culture. The attraction of
the main character, however, does not completely and satisfactorily explain the popularity of this play. The necessity to explain
this popularity forms part of the task of the Edinburgh lectures.
Eliot's argument here regarding Hamlet differs most conspicuously
from his earlier argument (1919) in that now he admits the degree of
popular success as one of the positive criteria of the greatness
of the play.

It is clearly expected that the availability of a play should
have something to do with its popularity. On the one hand, the notion
of popularity must not at least conflict with the notion of "artistic success." On the other hand, any explanation of the combined
product of availability and "artistic success" must be consistent
with Eliot's comprehensive theory regarding the continued develop-
ment of Shakespeare's art. The status of Hamlet, therefore, becomes
something of a test-case for Eliot's argument in these lectures. In
effect, Eliot restates some of his opinions about the play that have
not changed; he clarifies some of his opinions that have been mis-
understood by his readers; he admits some of the inconsistencies in
his earlier assessment of the play; and, finally, he proposes an
overall explanation of the achievement of the play as well as of its
place in the entire process of development. Consequently, while the
German lecture provides a satisfactory summary of Eliot's theory, it
cannot replace the Edinburgh lectures.

It will be expedient to remove from this discussion the things
that Eliot says about Hamlet in the 1919 review that are not a matter of dispute or difference of opinion. They need no discussion, being such matters as derive from the scholarship of J. M. Robertson and may fall or stand to the extent to which his scholarship falls or stands in the light of subsequent research in the field. The review contains material related to three main ideas. First, there is the idea that the credit for the creation of the final play of Hamlet is not all Shakespeare's. This should present no difficulty, since it is now an accepted fact and does not detract from the achievement of Shakespeare. Eliot endorses the idea that the play is, and needs to be seen as, a "stratification" of the various efforts that are embodied in the sources which Shakespeare used. 35 Both Robertson and Eliot cite this fact as an aid to proper appreciation of what Shakespeare managed to do with his sources.

Next, Eliot takes up Robertson's idea of the 'intractability of material'. 36 To some extent this is relevant to Eliot's later discussion of the problem. Partly, Eliot's premise for his view that Hamlet is a failure had been the intractability of the material that enters the play by way of the author's personality. Therefore, this idea will be taken up for comparison below. And, finally, Eliot makes his own contribution, an addition to Robertson's ideas in The Problem of "Hamlet" on objective criticism: he suggests that the inability of Shakespeare to arrive at adequate expression for the nature and quality of Hamlet's experience results in the "artistic failure" of the play. In this connection he proposes the theory of the "objective correlative" or the idea of
the linguistic and formal correspondence between content and expression in a work. This, being relevant to Eliot's concept of the realism towards which Shakespeare was constantly striving, must also be taken up for comparison.

Perhaps we can take it for granted that the material of Hamlet is more or less intractable. Eliot himself finds part of the versification of the play uneven; he finds a few scenes "unexplained". Hamlet's madness, too, he thinks better explained in the pre-Shakespearian narratives and plays on the subject; and the emotion of guilt that Hamlet feels on account of his mother's actions seems to Eliot inadequately realized in the play. These shortcomings, as he thinks of them, give rise to Eliot's theory of the "objective correlative." Yet, clearly, the play also concerns, in Shakespeare's version, other material that has its genesis in the deeper layers of human experience. The universality of its appeal acknowledges the deeper, universal structure of the experience that haunts Hamlet. The question is whether Shakespeare has succeeded in expressing the material adequately. At least, according to Eliot, in 1919, such was the question. Since the play so patently engages its audience and has done so for many generations, Shakespeare's adequacy in expressing what has been defined as inexpressible can be argued to have been established by the play's continued success. However, another interesting possibility arises from this issue, which Eliot did not consider in 1919: that such intractability as we encounter in experiencing the situation of Hamlet with him, is exactly what Shakespeare had aimed to express.
Shakespeare's intuitive understanding of the human psyche appears to have been so exceptionally sure that it is by no means inconceivable that he arrived at the conclusion that certain types of experience are available to us only to a degree, and not, as it were, absolutely. If such is the case, then the very success of the play will depend upon what Shakespeare showed as incapable of expression. This is a possible explanation, because so many have been so deeply affected by the play despite the lack of a completely satisfactory unravelling of Hamlet's actions and motives. Hamlet is a powerful play both in the study and in the theatre; that must in part be because the play succeeds in providing for us an experience of the intractability of the most secret and hidden part of the situation. Although Eliot does not quite come to such a conclusion, he does make an approach to it in re-assessing his position in the Edinburgh lectures. Therefore, it may help us to keep this possibility in mind in the course of the following comparison of Eliot's views.

One necessary caution must be voiced here. Whether the concept of the "objective correlative" actually demonstrates the failure of Hamlet or not, and whether Eliot was the independent inventor of the phrase or not, the concept is useful in the criticism of literary texts, as indeed of any work of art, that attempts to represent life. It is worthwhile rescuing the concept from the immediate controversial context and connection of the Hamlet review. What provides the direction to that review is not only Eliot's claim that the play fails to provide proper "correlatives" for Hamlet's emotions. Rather, it is a combination of that claim and of Eliot's neglect of the
popular success and survival of the play. There have been many attempts to explain or criticize Eliot's attitude to *Hamlet.* But these lectures on Shakespeare's development—not taken into consideration by any of Eliot's critics—make available to us further evidence to take into account. For especially in the Edinburgh lectures he takes up the question of the popular success of the play with an impressive seriousness. It becomes part of the logical matrix of his theory of Shakespeare's development. It is a concept that must now be directly and closely applied to *Hamlet,* since in the absence of such a test of one of the most important Shakespearean plays, Eliot's theory can scarcely stand undisturbed.

In 1919 too, Eliot had given *Hamlet* a unique place in Shakespeare's work. However, in that case it had been as the most significant failure of Shakespeare's career. In one sense, in 1937, Eliot reversed his estimate. Now it was to be seen, once again uniquely, as the most obvious success of Shakespeare. Precisely these terms, "success" and "failure," Eliot questions as he had used them in his first major statement about Shakespeare. The 1919 review opens with the claim: "Few critics have ever admitted that *Hamlet* the play is the primary problem, and *Hamlet* the character only secondary." What constitutes the problem of the play is stated half-way through the review, in connection with the intractability of the material: "So far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece, the play is most certainly an artistic failure." Eliot says this despite the fact which he immediately acknowledges, that "in several ways the play is puzzling, and disquieting as is none of the others." Then
Eliot links *Hamlet* with the other so-called 'problem play', *Measure for Measure*, and suggests that neither is as assured a success as *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

The grounds for Eliot's view are chiefly two: that the construction of the play is not satisfactory, and that there are parts of the play that are superfluous and irrelevant, such as the farewell scene between Polonius and Laertes; and, that the emotion of *Hamlet* is inadequately expressed. As for the first ground, Eliot changes his opinion, presumably after having seen some theatre performances of the play, for in the Edinburgh lectures he admits that such scenes as he had objected to earlier, actually do work, and work beautifully, on the stage. As for the "variable" nature of the versification and construction of *Hamlet*, Eliot now says that the mixture of styles in *Romeo and Juliet* is clearly outdone by that of *Hamlet*; and when he needs an example, in another lecture delivered in the same year (1937), of a play that must be seen in its entirety for its proper appreciation, he chooses *Hamlet*. The second ground, lack of adequate expression, is discussed in focus in the penultimate paragraph of the review:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked. . . . The artistic 'inevitability' lies in this complete adequacy of the external to the emotion; and this is precisely what is deficient in *Hamlet*. *Hamlet* (the man) is dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in excess of the facts as they appear.
The conclusion of the review, such as should have immediately given away to Eliot the invalidity of his criticism; for it clearly elaborates the root of the problem in this connection:

We must simply admit that here Shakespeare tackled a problem which proved too much for him. Why he attempted it at all is an insoluble puzzle; under compulsion of what experience he attempted to express the inexpressibly horrible, we cannot ever know. We need a great many facts in his biography. . . . We should have, finally, to know something which is by hypothesis unknowable, for we assume it to be an experience which, in the manner indicated, exceeded the facts. We should have to understand things which Shakespeare did not understand himself. (Emphasis added)

The way out of the question which Eliot’s demand begs, of the expression of "something which is by hypothesis unknowable," was already implicit in Eliot’s statement of the precise reason for the lack of an "objective correlative" in the play: Hamlet’s disgust "is thus a feeling which he cannot understand; he cannot objectify it, and it therefore remains to poison life and obstruct action. . . . And it must be noticed that the very nature of the données of the problem precludes objective equivalence." As it were to clinch the inconsistency of Eliot’s objections, he further says: "The intense feeling, ecstatic or terrible, without an object or exceeding its object, is something which every person of sensibility has known."

In the review, the criticism of the play, therefore, suffers from the untenability of this inconsistent argument: the play succeeds in expressing what so many of us know as an intense experience of the inexpressible; therefore, the play must be a failure! Eliot does not take up the possibility that, since the play is a success in this way, as so many of us recognize, that success may
indicate some substantial explanation of its genuine appeal. He merely raises the issue of popular acclaim as to dismiss it: "probably more people have thought *Hamlet* a work of art because they found it interesting, than have found it interesting because it is a work of art." Whether it was the cleverness of so pointing out an apparently essential flaw in the play that had so successfully satisfied popular and critical expectations for three hundred years—to "put the fool upon" other people, in Dryden's phrase—that made Eliot charge past this inconsistency in his otherwise very perceptive argument, we shall never know. The facts of *Hamlet*'s own problems as they are stated by Eliot are very well expressed indeed. His support of the notion of the 'intractability of material' and his proposal of the notion of the "objective correlative" must be acknowledged as among the important positive contributions of that review.

Some other apparent problems, such as the idea that Eliot actually thought *Coriolanus* a greater play than *Hamlet*, are explicitly explained in the Edinburgh lectures and other places. When dealing with the successful plays of Shakespeare, relative judgment simply does not interest him. As seen earlier in the discussion of the German lecture, his main reason for refusing to make such judgments is the perfection of each successful play at its stage in the development. The question of 'intractability' is raised again in the Edinburgh lectures; however, here Eliot says that now he realizes that perhaps all material of drama or literature as such has an element of intractability in it; that, in other words, the presence of
such material does not necessarily and automatically make for the failure of a work. Yet the final twist from success to failure that Eliot gives in 1919, and the dismissal of the common popularity of Hamlet as being a matter of confusion between the "interesting" and the "artistically successful," both needed to be reconsidered.

With no apparent irony, and therefore with sincerity, Eliot cites the centuries-long success of Hamlet across linguistic barriers, and says that in the light of such incontrovertible confirmation of success, any attempt on the part of a critic to prove that it is a bad play would be doomed to failure, thus adopting a Dryden-like position on the issue of popularity. He says now that we may actually begin our inquiry into the artistic success and development of Shakespeare by asking why such a play has become the success that it is. On one side, there are the definite signs of attainment of maturity in the play, and on the other side is the popularity. The virtues of Hamlet must make it the "artistic success" it has been esteemed by critics; the popularity must be accounted for by other means.

This is the point at which the two concepts of the capacity of an author to express and that of an audience to apprehend the substance of a work are shown to merge in their product: the degree of availability of a work. It is a parameter that allows the popular and the artistic successes of a work to remain apart, if necessary, without prejudice to the consistency in the overall estimate of the work; the lines or graphs which indicate the artist's advance in his material and his medium, and his reception by a wide cross-section of con-
temporary and future audiences, are independent, though definitely interrelated. Therefore, it is possible, not only in the career of Shakespeare, but that of any other author as well, that the lines may intersect each other at some point. This may or may not be a point that coincides with a recognized masterpiece, but it would have to be the point of maximum impact, of the maximum of artistic and popular fulfilment that can be packed into a single work.

Among James Joyce's works, to take a recent example, only *Dubliners* or the *Portrait* could ever arrive at such a point. Neither of the later monumental novels does so. To take another example, among the more frequently read novels of Joseph Conrad, not *Heart of Darkness* but *Lord Jim* comes closest to meeting the test of maximum impact. It is the popular aspects of literature that can be affected by accidental factors, according to Eliot. Some of the popularity of *Hamlet* is explained by such accidental factors as the choice of a universally fascinating theme. But some part of its success must be attributed to the capacity of even the commonest of audiences to make artistic discriminations. The popularity of this play is a matter of substantive and formal, popular as well as aesthetic, appreciation.

To put some of this differently, the play succeeds in part because it has found satisfactory "objective correlates," because Shakespeare's "formula" for the "particular" mystery, of the situation and emotion that Hamlet encounters, is conveyed in the construction of the verse as it is in the construction of the play. Admittedly, there are problems with the play. But then, there are hardly any
major plays, of Shakespeare or of other playwrights, that are entirely free of problems. Since the "correlatives" must satisfy the requirement of adequacy in terms of situation, character, relationships, action and the language of poetry, the achievement of such expression is realistic in its representation of its subject: that is, Eliot's idea of realism in drama is at least coterminous with the "objective correlative," if not synonymous with it.

In the development of Shakespeare towards realism of expression, Hamlet must occupy a definite, if special, place. Further, it must derive its peculiar prominence from its location at the point of intersection between the two lines of development in realism on different planes of reality and of popular availability. If some of Shakespeare's early plays are more popular than some of his later ones, they must share some of the reasons for their popular success with Hamlet; if some of the later plays are more successful artistically, they too must share reasons for their success with Hamlet. Already, in 1929, Eliot had come to the conclusion that Hamlet, in its tone, is different from its predecessors, and that that tone is continued and transcended in the later plays. What is thematically disturbing about the play must point to the increasingly greater achievement of Shakespeare. In this way—which can, unfortunately, only figure in this study as a combination of paraphrase and commentary and not as direct quotation—Eliot resolves the major problem that faced his theory of the development of Shakespeare's verse into a medium of such suppleness and natural flexibility, vigour and validity, that it could hold its own with any sort of material and at
any level of reality that literature can attain.

It must be pointed out that although Eliot's theory has not developed in all material directions, it must be distinguished from two main approaches to the growth of Shakespeare's art. The first, that of Coleridge, implies, when we take his Shakespeare criticism in conjunction with his literary theories, an organic approach. Even though seminal in its implications, it has its problems, because of its foundation in philosophical and psychological theories that cannot be considered universally acceptable. It involves the internal process of artistic creation. Therefore, as soon as we begin to reconstruct the spontaneous growth of the mind and imagination of Shakespeare the artist, we run into considerable speculation, if not into some apparition of the intentional fallacy, about the precise nature of the engagement of Shakespeare's imagination in the process of creation. We become involved, to use a phrase from Eliot's "Hamlet," in things that we shall never know. The organic approach, which is both attractive and productive, lacks an objective footing. Eliot's theory avoids this problem by evading tempting excursions into artistic personality, and by concentrating on the process of change as manifested in artistic technique. Eliot manages to keep both his feet on firm ground, because he recognizes the hard work that must explain the genesis of artistic creation. "Genius" must be recognized, but it cannot, on its own, account for the genesis of the concrete work of art. In this Eliot's own poetic practice and his critical theory coincide.

The other approach, as seen most obviously in Dowden's theory
of the biographical development of Shakespeare's artistic personality, despite its unquestionable insights, will never manage to evade the objection that its foundation is dubious. 43 Interestingly though the growth of the artist's private personality may be, connections between this growth and artistic growth, particularly given the extreme paucity of information concerning Shakespeare's inner life, can never be satisfactory. In this connection, again, Eliot is correct in drawing a firm line between personal growth and growth in the craft, as he does in the Edinburgh lectures. For Dowden's approach, despite his attempts to give it a scientific veneer, forsakes objectivity to an inexcusable degree from the outset. Variants of substantially the same approach are to be found in the work of Lytton Strachey, John Middleton Murry and G. Wilson Knight. Strachey's approach, 44 apparently aimed at demolishing the assumption of a "serene" final stage in Shakespeare's personality that Dowden posited, itself in turn concerns the growth of Shakespeare's biographical personality into a state of "boredom." Nor does Strachey propose a serious constructive alternative to Dowden's theory. John Middleton Murry, especially in his Shakespeare (1936), 45 continues essential biographical speculation about Shakespeare's growth. Despite his many insightful interpretations of particular passages and plays, his approach remains both incomplete and unsatisfactory, because there is as much Middleton Murry in it as Shakespeare, and the two cannot be readily distinguished.

Wilson Knight is a different case from all these. His work is much more extended, 46 and includes considerable experience of Shake-
There are two other important facts to be noticed about Knight's work. First, a good deal of his work that contains suggestions about Shakespeare's development, is actually contemporaneous with the more definite and extended of Eliot's own suggestions. Indeed, as I hope this paper has shown, there is clear evidence that Eliot was thinking about Shakespeare's development as early as 1918. Although Eliot admits to having benefited from Knight's work, it is fair to suggest that perhaps Wilson Knight could have learned from Eliot. For, and this brings us to the second fact to be noticed about Knight, too frequently his criticism lacks precisely what Eliot considered the ultimate control over criticism: objectivity. This explains why Eliot had reservations about 'interpretation'. In the final analysis, it is difficult to arrive at a unified view of Knight's approach, because one cannot confidently separate his critical "poetry" from his critical judgment.

It is impractical to attempt detailed comparisons among these approaches and Eliot's own here. At any rate, the sudden surge in developmental thinking in Shakespeare criticism that became evident in the 1930's and that has continued to the present time, is sufficient justification for the need that Eliot felt to propose his theory.\footnote{The work of important critics like Spurgeon, Tillyard and Clemmen, which essentially came after Eliot's suggestions on development, supports the motivation behind Eliot's proposal. Moreover, Eliot's principal suggestion—the growth of the medium of Shakespeare's drama for the expression of a multilayered realism—has neither been anticipated (except in a way by all theories of Shake-}
speare as a "natural" poet), nor has it been duplicated, despite Eliot's decision not to publish the lectures. Much as we must regret that he did not work out his theory in greater detail and at greater length, accounting for a large number of plays in the canon, especially the last plays that form a crucial part of the corpus, we must remember that he does not support his theory by a philosophy of inspiration or imagination in the Coleridgean sense, nor does he build from a biographical approach. Equally, he does not wax eloquent in the manner of Knight: in fact, it is obvious that he should have said much more than he has on the subject.

The value of Eliot's criterion for judging the development of Shakespeare—whether his figures speak an essentially human language—is a genuine, fresh, unduplicated contribution to Shakespeare criticism. It is not only historically important, since critics still find the subject of Shakespeare's development worth their study. It is not merely a curiosity, since it has not become outdated: it has never been considered in this shape by anyone else. Perhaps a recognition of Eliot's theory will install him in his deserved place in Shakespeare criticism, a place that is recognized only by Granville-Barker and G. B. Harrison, and the anonymous reviewer of Shakespeare studies in the Times Literary Supplement (1937). If this happens, the place will derive its justification not merely from the provocativeness of Eliot's early criticism, but from his continued concern with Shakespeare and his vision of a theory of development. But even more important ought to be the recognition that the growth of the medium of Shakespeare's plays, a medium that becomes
ever more flexible and intense, and yet continues to be "realistic," still awaits the attention that Eliot quite adequately shows it deserves.

Another aspect of this position of Eliot is his insistence on the essential unity of Shakespeare's work. The chief implication for "oeuvre" study in this theory is that it is the nature of a writer's work itself that may or may not necessitate the study of the whole output. Other writers too have development: some comparable to that of Shakespeare. But such writers are few and far between, as Eliot's discussion of the issue suggests in "What Is Modern Poettry?" When he considers Shakespeare's development unique, Eliot has in mind the continuous, long and steady development in the entire range of dramatic form: this is a specific and restricted sense of "development." The perceived fact of development has for its sequitur a study of all stages of the work for verification of the development: Provided that a writer's work has growth and a unity, a study of its organic togetherness can only be founded upon a close familiarity with each part of the whole work; not of individual units discretely, nor of the special highlights of achievement separately, but of the bad, good, better and best all together. Perception of growth is consonant with perception of the futility of final or restricting classification and selection. The study of the oeuvre will initiate not only an understanding of changes and differences, but also a realization that the drawing of lines of taxonomic divisions is only a convenience, not the objective or conclusion of criticism. Borrowing a phrase from Eliot, one may say that the ability to discern unity
once development has been observed is "the lesson" of Shakespeare. 50

IV

In Eliot's own criticism, the development of Shakespeare's dramaturgy became a criterion of relative judgment of authors and a point on which one's understanding of Shakespeare's uniqueness could be most squarely founded. Two related aspects of Eliot's criticism spring from his concern with this development: a scrutiny of some of the different facets of Shakespeare's art, and a critical comparison of other writers with Shakespeare on the point of development. Some of the more important statements of Eliot on the latter point will be examined in this section of the present chapter. Other aspects of the comparative method have already appeared in chapter 2.

There are portions of Eliot's plans for his series of Extension lectures (1918) that could have been almost adequate as an outline for the later lectures on development:

- The early Shakespeare. . . . His work as an adapter; its value for his progress. In what ways are his early plays inferior and superior to Marlowe's work? . . .
- The mature Shakespeare. . . . His early faults and their disappearance.
- The later Shakespeare. Do the great tragedies exceed the possibilities of the stage? 51

From this part of the framework of the lectures, and from the recommendation that follows immediately, "G. P. Baker's Development of Shakespeare as a Dramatist is very useful," it is obvious that this
idea of development had struck Eliot as a crucial concern of the study of Shakespeare's drama.

Baker's study, although scarcely known today, reads very well even after three quarters of a century, and his perceptive remarks illuminate many aspects of the issue. His main contribution is to show that Shakespeare realized the crucial function of narrative continuity in drama, and that in part his development must be seen as an attempt to get away with such material as may threaten to but not quite succeed in disrupting that continuity. Thus, it is a study of the success of Shakespeare in supplying the aspect of narrative in a reasonable flow to ensure the audience's attention, while at the same time stretching the narrative frame to achieve the maximum of non-narrative impact. Eliot certainly took whatever incentive and inspiration he received from Baker much further than one could have predicted from the nature of Baker's study itself.

Eliot has often made the point that the development of Elizabethan rhetoric, of which Shakespeare's is seen as the crowning glory, is "a progressive refinement in the perception of the variations of feeling, and a progressive elaboration of the means of expressing these variations." Shakespeare's skill in constructing or reconstructing plots is as obvious as his faults in it. It appears not unreasonable to conclude that in the hierarchy of aspects of drama, some of which, as we have seen earlier, may have to be sacrificed in the attainment of higher objectives in others, Shakespeare rates tones of feeling at the level of scene and play, and shades of feeling as a means of individualization as well as representation of
the vitality of character, much higher than strict neatness of detailed construction. Linguistic and symbolic architecture and texture, and rich cross-currents of multiple emotional effects, appear to have been the principal goals of Shakespeare's work. Although Eliot almost always discusses Shakespeare's place in the general development of Elizabethan rhetoric only briefly, his estimate of Shakespeare is no less definite for that reason than his belief that Shakespeare must be seen within this pattern:

this apparent abandonment or outgrowth of rhetoric is two things: it is partly an improvement in language and partly progressive variation in feeling. There is, of course, a long distance separating the furibund fluency of old Hieronimo and the broken words of Lear. 54

That Shakespeare had great gifts and great opportunities is not so remarkable as what he made of the gifts and the opportunities. As Eliot has said, the better plays of Marlowe are superior to the early plays of Shakespeare; he also says that Shakespeare's beginnings themselves were normal and traditional.\textsuperscript{55} Indeed, he even suggests that, "To have given into one's hands a crude form, capable of indefinite refinement, and to be the person to see the possibilities --Shakespeare was very fortunate."\textsuperscript{56} Development is not a mere accident, however. It is what a great writer achieves in creating his life's work. Similar development can be seen in other great writers. That is why Marlowe must not be treated merely as Shakespeare's greatest predecessor. He was also "a poet and dramatist very different in temperament from Shakespeare, with a development and a unity, an oeuvre of his own."\textsuperscript{57} Among modern writers, Eliot cites only Yeats
as possessing a comparable capacity for development.

Naturally, the capacity for development is so important, Eliot frequently uses it as a means of differentiating between the achievements of different authors. As early as 1920, in a two-part review entitled "Philip Massinger," Eliot makes a distinction between what he means by development, and what, if the term is employed unwarily, would satisfy us as its meaning. Pointing out the possibility that "Massinger's feeling for language had outstripped his feeling for things," Eliot identifies the lesser and the greater senses of development in this context:

> It is not that the word becomes less exact. Massinger is, in a wholly eulogistic sense, choice and correct. And the decay of the senses is not inconsistent with a greater sophistication of language. But every vital development in language is a development in feeling as well. The verse of Shakespeare and the major Shakespearean dramatists is an innovation of this kind, a true mutation of species. The verse practised by Massinger is a different verse from that of his predecessors; but it is not a development based on, or resulting from, a new way of feeling. On the contrary, it seems to lead us away from feeling altogether. 59

Eliot never tires of reminding us that purely individual development is an impossibility. "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927) traces to some extent the development of blank verse in Elizabethan drama. With many illustrations to make his point, Eliot shows how very far the language of versification had come in Shakespeare's drama from the crude beginnings earlier in the sixteenth century. But, he reminds us, that

> it is hardly too much to say that Shakespeare could not
have formed the verse instrument which he left to his successors. ... unless he had received an instrument already highly developed by the genius of Marlowe and the influence of Seneca. 60

It is important to see how closely Eliot's own criticism follows the thinking of "Tradition and the Individual Talent" in keeping its equilibrium between what is given to an author and what he makes of it. In this essay concerning the influence of Seneca on Elizabethan dramatic verse, he says that Shakespeare developed his blank verse to its full flexibility not by "rejection" of the early "declamatory phase," but by "dissociating this type of verse into products with special properties." 61 We have already seen that this means the variations Shakespeare produced to match the needs of speech to fit character and situation, tone and atmosphere; that he fashioned the medium to accommodate the drunkenness aboard Pompey's galley and the glowing speeches of Enobarbus describing Cleopatra, the language of wit and badinage alongside the fury and frustration of Lear, the disquieting mixture of the crudeness of Caliban's character and the poetry of his speech, and the fairy song of Ariel next to the coarseness of Stephano and Trinculo. Not only the verse, but other aspects of Elizabethan drama have to be appreciated in their development in which such parts of tradition also played a role that we may not look upon with approval today. Thus, "Certainly, among all national dramas, Elizabethan tragedies are remarkable for the extent to which they employ the horrible and revolting. It is true that, but for this taste and practice we should never have had King Lear and The Duchess of Malfy." 62
There is another hint in Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927) regarding the possible source of some of the greatest moments of dramatic self-realization in Shakespeare's plays:

there is, in some of the great tragedies of Shakespeare, a new attitude. It is not the attitude of Seneca. It may only have been Shakespeare's instinctive recognition of something of theatrical utility. It is the attitude of self-dramatization assumed by some of Shakespeare's heroes at moments of tragic intensity. It is not peculiar to Shakespeare. But Shakespeare, of course, does it very much better than any of the others, and makes it somehow more integral with the human nature of his characters. It is less verbal, more real. 63

The significance of these moments for Eliot and his estimate of the degree of Shakespeare's ultimate achievement in this aspect of drama, have been seen earlier in this chapter. It is once again a working-out of what tradition gave Shakespeare by what he made of it. From the given we can perceive, at least in retrospect, what advance was possible. The true appreciation of Shakespeare's originality can only come from an appreciation of its inevitable development from the données of Shakespeare's art. Echoes of these thoughts regarding the Elizabethans and Shakespeare lead to Eliot's statements regarding originality in another context: absolute originality is "absolutely bad," and "true originality is merely development." 64

Whether he is writing about Shakespeare himself or about another of his peers, Eliot's thoughts are scarcely ever far from the idea of Shakespeare's development. One of the things this constant presence of the idea achieves is the use of Shakespeare as a norm or standard of judgment. In "Cyril Tourneur" (1930) Eliot tells us that even the unique development of Shakespeare has secrets that it
shares with the work of his contemporaries; it is a development that is "alien to the modern mind," which may be one reason for its fascination for us. Here, in connection with the chronology of The Revenger’s Tragedy and The Atheist’s Tragedy, Eliot questions Allardyce Nicoll’s suggestion that in Cymbeline Shakespeare had lost some of the creative power that had made for the high achievement of Hamlet:

This strikes us as about the most unsuitable parallel that could be found. Even though some critics may still consider Cymbeline as evidence of 'declining powers', it has no less a mastery of words than Hamlet, and possibly more; and like every one of Shakespeare’s plays, it adds something or develops something not explicit in any previous play; it has its place in an orderly sequence. 65

And the final remarks about Tourneur derive from the comparison of The Revenger’s Tragedy with Hamlet concerning the horror and the general tone of the two plays.

In "Thomas Heywood" (1931), on the other hand, Eliot uses a comparison to separate two styles of writing in the satirical vein, that of Heywood and Marlowe, which culminates in the work of Ben Jonson, and that of Shakespeare, which does not develop separately, or to such an intensity of bitterness, as theirs. It is an important distinction, not only for an understanding of all the aspects of drama in which the age excelled, but also for a perspective on the element of satire in Shakespeare's plays, since in other ways the height of successful ethical comment was reached, outside satire, in the work of Shakespeare, and since Shakespeare was the model for the later Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists in all but the satiric
vein. Eliot explains why he thinks Shakespeare happened to stop short of a full expression of the satiric vein:

The ethics of most of the greater dramatists is only intelligible as leading up to, or deriving from, that of Shakespeare: that has significance, we mean, only in the light of Shakespeare's fuller revelation. There is another type of ethics, that of the satirists. In Shakespeare's work it is represented most nearly by Timon and Troilus, but in a mind with such prodigious capacity of development as Shakespeare's, the snarling vein could not endure. The kind of satire which is approached in The Jew of Malta reaches perhaps its highest point with Volpone.

Elsewhere, Eliot had put it another way. When comparing Shakespeare and Marlowe, we find that it is Shakespeare's greater humanity that makes him greater. It is the same humanity that governs the development in which "the snarling vein could not endure."

In the light of so constant a preoccupation with Shakespeare's developing art, it is natural that major statements about it should occur also in lectures and essays not specifically about Shakespeare. Two of the most significant examples can be found to straddle in time the Edinburgh lectures: "John Ford," and "Yeats." In 1932 Eliot wrote a review article on Ford which, even among Eliot's writings, is conspicuous because of its substantial comment on Shakespeare's development. Repetition of ideas is not uncommon in Eliot's work. But "John Ford" seems remarkable because it heavily anticipates the central theme of the Edinburgh lectures:

The standard set by Shakespeare is that of a continuous development from first to last, a development in which the choice both of theme and of dramatic and verse technique in each play seems to be determined increasingly by Shakespeare's state of feeling, by the particular stage
of his emotional maturity at the time. What is 'the whole man' is not simply his greatest or maturest achievement, but the whole pattern formed by the sequence of plays; so that we may say confidently that the full meaning of any one of his plays is not in itself alone, but in the play in the order in which it was written, in its relation to all of Shakespeare's other plays, earlier and later; we must know all of Shakespeare's work in order to know any of it. No other dramatist of the time approaches anywhere near to this perfection of pattern superficial and profound; but the measure in which dramatists and poets approximate to this unity in a lifetime's work is one of the measures of major poetry and drama. 68

As in the Edinburgh lectures and "Shakespeares Verskunft," here Eliot connects the personal maturity of the author with the maturity of his art. Apparently, as here, Eliot insists upon the continuity of development in Shakespeare's work—"a continuous development from first to last." The justification which he proposes for the late plays of Shakespeare in the later lectures is not a momentarily constructed argument. From the crucial question in the outline of his lectures in 1918 ("Do the great tragedies exceed the possibilities of the stage?") to the argument of the later exposition of the theory, we can see a continuous attempt on Eliot's part to understand his own relationship to Shakespeare, to undertake the necessary responsibility outlined in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," to perceive the living past in the present, to find the place of past authors in the tradition. Among such authors, Shakespeare is his supreme example. Neither by continuity of preoccupation, nor by substance of consideration, does any other author occupy such a place in Eliot's mind. Part of this argument is the necessity to comprehend the unity of Shakespeare's work. The idea occurs in "John Ford" too. So does the extension of it in the uniqueness...
of Shakespeare in his, and in any other, age. Eliot proposes here as elsewhere that the depth of pattern in Shakespeare's work—perceptible to us in retrospect, this pattern, which spans his entire career, cannot be seen as the result of a conscious master-plan—is unique, and that without it no perception of his work can be complete. Here again is the use of all these conclusions in the construction of norms of aesthetic and relative judgment of works and authors. 69

In other places, where Eliot could not necessarily have been expected to speak about Shakespeare, and where the scope of the occasion allows but little flexibility for inclusion of extraneous matter, Eliot still comes to Shakespeare; not in an unrelated fashion, but to make telling points in a brief space, since the main concern is some other subject. For example, he discusses the development of comic relief in the plays of Shakespeare in the second lecture of The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933). The important thing is not that he discusses it, but that he leads, even in that short space, the thoughts regarding the comic element into a statement about Shakespeare's development. He says that comic relief was a practical necessity in that age; that Shakespeare for a time created serious contrasts between the tragic and the comic; but that this eventually grew into a larger pattern; and that in Shakespeare's maturing work the contrast vanished, and a fusion took its place:

Here, I can only affirm that for me the violence of contrast between the tragic and the comic, the sublime and the bathetic, in the plays of Shakespeare, disappears in his maturing work; I only hope that a comparison of The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet and The Tempest will lead others to the same conclusion. 70
This persistence of the idea of Shakespeare's growth explains why, when he came to the consideration of a major author of the modern era, whose work had included very serious intentions and attempts in the field of poetic drama, Eliot used Shakespeare as a springboard and as a norm. In "Yeats" (1940) we find one of the more significant analyses of development. Eliot makes a distinction between poets like Browning and Swinburne who, though considerable poets, can be had "entire in earlier poems," and poets like Shakespeare and Yeats. There is a development in the former type that is partial; their emotional maturity does not keep pace with their maturity in thought. "But maturing as a poet means maturing as the whole man, experiencing new emotions appropriate to one's age, and with the same intensity as the emotions of youth."71

Apart from the importance of the use which Eliot makes of Shakespeare in this context, another interesting thing about this lecture on Yeats is the presence of uncharacteristically strong epithets which describe Shakespeare's development:

One form, a perfect form, of development is that of Shakespeare, one of the few poets whose work of maturity is just as exciting as that of their early manhood. There is, I think, a difference between the development of Shakespeare and Yeats... With Shakespeare, one sees a slow, continuous development of mastery of his craft of verse, and the poetry of middle age seems implicit in that of early maturity. After the first few verbal exercises you say of each piece of work: 'This is the perfect expression of the sensibility of that stage of his development'. That a poet should develop at all, that he should find something new to say, and say it equally well, in middle age, has always something miraculous about it. 72

This too, in a nutshell, is a summary of Eliot's argument of the
Edinburgh lectures delivered some years earlier. Later in "Yeats" Eliot considers the problem of devising appropriate modern verse forms to obtain release from the blank verse of Shakespeare, which has become a cul-de-sac because Shakespeare had done all that could be done with it. But once again we have the same issues of continuity, development, maturity, the need to perceive larger patterns in the whole work, issues that are the building blocks of Eliot's theory of Shakespeare's development, just as they are of Eliot's critical thinking.

These ideas unify piece after piece of Eliot's criticism. In a second consideration of The Duchess of Malfy in 1941, Eliot says:

Shakespeare not only portrayed a much wider range of character than did Marlowe: he went much farther, as far as any dramatist has gone, in showing the interaction and influence of different characters upon each other. At the same time, he developed his blank verse in such a way as to be able to express not only more emotions, but more subtle shades of emotion. 73

In What Is a Classic? (1944), while defining maturity as a criterion of the "classic" writer and age, Eliot once again describes the development of Shakespeare: "No reader of Shakespeare, for instance, can fail to recognize, increasingly as he himself grows up, the gradual ripening of Shakespeare's mind." 74 A further analysis of the education of "a poet trying to write for the theatre," and his development, occurs in Poetry and Drama (1949). 75 Through such applications of his ideas on the subject, a pervasive design of other constant preoccupations develops in the prose of Eliot. The study of his criticism undertaken in the present analysis reveals a productive and pervasive
interaction between two eminent authors in the English language. The interaction provides a new and fascinating approach to the work of Shakespeare. It is a contribution to English criticism that ought not to remain unrecognized.
Notes to Chapter 3

1 See the Edinburgh lectures; also the third paragraph of section 1 of the German lecture in *Der Monat*, II.20 (May 1950).


3 Sylvan Barnet, "Some Prefatory Remarks." *The Two Noble Kinsmen, The Tragedy of Titus Andronicus, Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. Signet (1977)xvi. Also see the article on the Blackfriars theatre by G. E. Bentley in the same volume.

4 See the German lecture.

5 Eliot posits personal maturity of the artist as one of the criteria for a classic in *What Is a Classic?*


7 In his introduction to Wilson Knight's *The Wheel of Fire* (1930) Eliot discusses the superiority that Shakespeare's work possesses over that of others because of its "double pattern," or "the pattern in the carpet," as opposed to the more obvious, skeletal pattern of the plot and character relationships.


9 For example, see "Philip Massinger" (1920).

10 The summary here provided is mine. Eliot's early appreciation.
of this scene figures in the penultimate paragraph of "Hamlet" (1919), where he brings up the concept of the "objective correlative."


12 In "Seneca in Elizabethan Translātion" (1927).

13 John Hayward, ed. Selected Prose (1965 reprint) 60.

14 Ibid.

15 Selected Essays (1969 reprint) 53. Middleton Murry's chapter on the last plays in his Shakespeare (1936) mentions "realism" without examining the idea; E. M. W. Tillyard's Shakespeare's Last Plays (1938) uses a more commonly accepted concept of "realism," but he too fails to emphasize the changes we must necessarily make in the concept to enable us to apply it to the late plays.

16 See Longe Vivante's point cited with approval by Eliot in his "Preface" to Vivante's English Poetry. London: Faber & Faber (1950): Vivante says that modern knowledge of psychological phenomena cannot destroy Shakespeare's achievement, because Shakespeare had grasped the fact of the human soul and presented it to us in his plays. (This statement is not to be taken in a philosophical or religious sense of "soul").


19 New York: Barnes & Noble (1938).


E.g., "Yeats" (1940); What Is a Classic? (1944).

The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933); "To Criticize the Critic" (1965).

"To Criticize the Critic" (1965).


"Talk on Dante" (1950); also What Is a Classic? (1944).

In "Swinburne as Critic" (1919).

In "Swinburne as Poet" (1920), "The Metaphysical Poets" (1921), "Milton" (1936), etc.

For Eliot’s use of the phrase "poetic truth" of character, see "Wilkie Collins and Dickens" (1927).

"Preface," On Poetry and Poets (1957), and the post-script to Poetry and Drama included in the same volume.

A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy (1904); Ernest Jones, Hamlet and Oedipus (1949).
34 "Goethe as the Sage" (1955); also see similar reference to Hamlet in "Introduction," The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1950).


36 Ibid., p. 75. Here Robertson himself had suggested that "the compulsion to handle or retain intractable material underlies half a dozen of the Shakespeare plays as well as HAMLET,--TIMON, PERICLES, CYMBELINE, HENRY V, the WINTER'S TALE, MEASURE FOR MEASURE, ALL'S WELL, to say nothing of other comedies." Eliot, thus, ignored the wide context of Robertson's remark. Robertson's idea was basically limited to such material as Shakespeare did not, could not or would not properly integrate into entirely consistent plot. Obviously, in the review, Eliot adds his own interpretation to the term 'intractable material'.

37 See Eliot's own description of some of the causes of his disconfiture on account of his early writings, in "To Criticize the Critic."

38 Besides a number of articles in literary journals over the years, there have been many books devoted to Hamlet that take up Eliot's views of 1919: e.g., A. Clutton-Brock, Shakespeare's 'Hamlet', Methuen (1922) 14-32; A. J. A. Waldock, Hamlet: A Study in Critical Method, Cambridge University Press (1931) 49-60; Morris Weitz, Hamlet and the Philosophy of Criticism, University of Chicago Press (1960) 37-43.

39 Measure for Measure is another play that intrigues Eliot, and
one which he seems to admire.


41 E.g., see The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933) 43-44.

42 "The Tudor Translators." Listener, I.22 (12 June 1929) 833-34.


45 London: Jonathan Cape (1936).


48 By their inclusion of Eliot's chapter on Shakespearean criticism in A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (1934).
"Shakespeare Scholars at Work." Times Literary Supplement, 1839 (1 May 1937) 334-35.


54 "Rhetoric' and Poetic Drama."


56 "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama." Ibid., p. 63.


59 Ibid., p. 129.

60 "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation." Elizabethan Dramatists (1968 reprint) 34.

61 Ibid., pp. 37-38.
62 Ibid., p.27.

63 Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca. In Elizabethan Essays (1934) 38.


66 "Thomas Heywood." Ibid., pp. 104-5.

67 First Edinburgh lecture (1937) 18.

68 "John Ford." Elizabethan Dramatists (1968 reprint) 120-21; also see pp. 131-32.

69 Perhaps Eliot may not have approved of Matthew Arnold's term "touchstone"; but the consistency, frequency and necessity of Eliot's use of Shakespeare as a standard of evaluation suggests that "touchstone" is precisely what Shakespeare had become to him.

70 The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933) 44.


72 Ibid., pp. 297-98.

73 "'The Duchess of Malfy.'" Listener, XXVI. 675 (18 Dec. 1941) 825.


75 See Poetry and Drama (1949).
Conclusion

I hope the preceding discussion has brought out the main ideas of Eliot regarding the unique achievement of Shakespeare. If we offset the problems created by the occasional and fragmentary nature of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism by gathering together his various relevant statements for distillation of his contribution, the following conclusions become possible: that Eliot provides an intriguing, organic and productive approach to Shakespeare's art; that this approach demonstrates the deeper structure of the unity of Shakespeare's work by apprehending the process of growth and development in Shakespeare's craft and his personality; that this process of development has as its principal objective the achievement of a flexible and supple realism in the presentation of artistic experience; that this realism is so clearly evident in Shakespeare's work, because he wrote for the theatre, or, in other words, in a form which demands recognizable realism on several fronts, a realism that is perceived in auditory, visual, intellectual, emotional and imaginative terms at once.

Since the ruling principle of this approach is dynamic, involving process or development, it follows that the understanding and appreciation of the ultimate achievement of Shakespeare will depend upon appreciation of his work in each part and as a whole. The nature of the work itself necessitates an approach to it through the study of the entire work. Thus, the framework of Eliot's study of Shakespeare consists of the realism inherent in drama, the deve-
velopment of the literary personality and craft of the artist, and
the study of an entire developing career. It cannot be gainsaid that
whether we see Shakespeare's work as continuously evolving, as Eliot
does, or as developing up to a point and then declining, we must
accept that in all his plays Shakespeare's objectives must have been
significant (i.e., serious; but this term may have to be eschewed
here, since it is open to unfortunate confusion in the context of
the forms of comedy and tragedy). That is to say, we must bring to-
gether the two principles of realism and development in the study of
Shakespeare's work, and to do so we need to understand that the
shapes of realistic presentation in Shakespeare's varied achieve-
ment must correspond to different perceptions of reality. We must do
so whether or not we consider all parts of the work as equally
successful or significant. Eliot suggests that realism in presenta-
tion and development of a deepening apprehension of reality are not
mutually exclusive--despite the fact that one or another level of
reality tends to be emphasized in any given play--but rather that
they are implicit in each other. We need to think of the various
modes of presentation as approximations to different levels or planes
of reality, since none is more real than any other, and yet some are
inherently more significant.

Eliot also suggests that to enable him to express the presence
of deeper levels of reality, Shakespeare created--in addition to the
usual dramatic structures of action, character-relationships, plot
and motive--a species of sub-structure or deeper structure, through
superior ability in dramatic construction: the architecture of
scenes and plays, the cohesion of rhythmic, lexical, thematic and
symbolic patterns in character, action, setting and language. All these add up to what Eliot calls Shakespeare's unique pattern, or the "pattern in the carpet," or "musical structure." He also suggests that other dramatists, poets and novelists have achieved comparable success in some or all of these aspects of literature at different times, but that none has achieved such comprehensive success, none so steadily and continuously, as Shakespeare.

Development, and the specific examples of development, in the work of Shakespeare become criteria of relative judgment in Eliot's criticism. They subsume the means of success in each of the areas of composition and construction in which Shakespeare excelled. The method of comparison—which Eliot promoted and practised throughout his career—and analysis—which he practised less vigorously than he preached it—find their procedures and achieve their most consistent and meaningful fulfilment mainly in the application of these criteria of literary success extracted from the work of Shakespeare. Not only is the method most consistently evident in the use of Shakespeare as a fixed term of comparison, but the most central aspects of Eliot's criticism, objectivity in art and criticism, are also confirmed most coherently by the use Eliot makes of Shakespeare. Since Shakespeare is thus the constant concern in Eliot's thinking on the tradition of English literature, and in his promotion of objectivity and concreteness in artistic presentation of the human experience, if English literature can be said to have a classic in Eliot's very narrow sense, it would have to be Shakespeare.

Yet the suggestion that such was Eliot's perception of Shake-
peare's position is not the most important aspect of the present study, since by a variety of other approaches most critics and other readers of Shakespeare also come to similar conclusions about his uniqueness. What will have emerged, it is hoped, from the composite view of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism attempted here is a fresh approach to Eliot: if his criticism is to be considered significant and a crucial part, not only of the modern era of literature but also of the continuous unfolding of literary criticism, then his appreciation of and approach to Shakespeare must be seen as an essential part of that criticism. The resulting concepts—"objective correlative," "tradition," concrete and "sensuous" thought, or in other words the ideal of a unified and wholesome sensibility—must be seen as a predominant preoccupation of Eliot's consideration of their most consistent exemplar, Shakespeare.

There is no important essay, review, lecture or introduction of Eliot that is without its reference to Shakespeare. In discussions of objectivity in literature in a multitude of contexts, Shakespeare is Eliot's yardstick of success. His consideration of poetic drama, versification, the music of poetry, the relationship between individuality and tradition, the growth of the English language, literary influence, principles of literary criticism, all derive their justification in part from Shakespeare. When we add to this the repeated allusions to Shakespeare in much of Eliot's poetry, it becomes obvious that Shakespeare is at the heart of Eliot's contribution to literary creation and thought as the "primary star" of the tradition.
Consideration of Eliot's various statements regarding Shakespeare makes it possible to speculate on the latent aesthetic theory of objectivity and realism in Eliot's writing. There is one aspect of this theory which is implied in some of Eliot's criticism—the aspect of ritual, the primacy and supremacy of "primitive" forms of expression such as rhythm and music—which presents a dilemma to the student of Eliot's criticism. On the one hand there are clear hints that he considered "poetry, music and dancing" as "the essentials" of drama, just as there are hints that he considered comedy and tragedy as equally "serious." On the other hand, however, there is little extended treatment of this subject.

In two essays as widely different as possible, Eliot tells us his view of the genesis of dramatic forms. In "The Beating of a Drum," which is a review of a book on Elizabethan Fools, Eliot partly reiterates a theory that traces the history of the Fool back to the shaman or medicine man. More importantly, he questions the simplistic idea that equates Fools with Comic figures:

The identification of Lear's Fool with the medicine-man, if it have any ground at all, can be supported by scholars with much fuller resources than mine; my interest is in its possible connection with a theory which has far stronger authority: the theory of the development of tragedy and comedy out of a common form. ... The comic element, or the antecedent of the comic, is perhaps present, together with the tragic; in all savage or primitive art; but comedy and tragedy are late, and perhaps impermanent intellectual abstractions. ... The drama was originally ritual; and ritual, consisting of a set of repeated movements, is essentially a dance. 1

The other explicit statement on this subject occurs in the introduction Eliot wrote to his mother's poem, Savonarola: A Dramatic Poem:
Dramatic form may occur at various points along a line the termini of which are liturgy and realism. In genuine drama the form is determined by the point on the line at which a tension between liturgy and realism takes place. 2

Since Eliot does state clearly that drama and poetry derive from ageless and ancestral forms of ritual, we must accept the possibility of an underlying theory of literature that goes beyond developed and sophisticated "forms." On the other hand, however, there is a lack of definitive statements on the origin of poetry and drama in all but some obscure essays of Eliot. In this connection, Eliot's discussion of the ritual aspects of Shakespeare's late plays, and his suggestion that these plays are drama-beyond-drama, become significant.

With the benefit of our experience of modern poetry in particular, but also of all modern art as such, whether mythical, symbolic, abstract, impressionist or absurd, we must re-define our concept of realism: we are in a position at least to consider the proposition that such diverse works as The Waste Land and Paradise Lost, Picasso's later works and the works of Michaelangelo, Waiting for Godot as well as The Tempest, are all "realistic." A Copernican or Galilean re-definition of the meaning of realism in the realm of art appears to be implied in modern art, whether we are able to perceive it in the abstract or not. Eliot's use of the criterion of realism in the analysis of Shakespeare's work reveals the potential of flexible realism that approaches the deepest levels of reality itself with a degree of simplicity involving a return to the origins of art. It is a "primitive" concept, since it is capable of penetra-
ting surface reality by means of dream, vision or ritual, and since
in it the poet's role is that of a shaman or pharmakos, with one
enormous difference: the poet objectifies where they mystify. It is
also a "simple" concept, since it posits the parity of Pericles and
The Tempest with Henry IV and A Comedy of Errors in terms of the
single objective of presentation of reality. Unfortunately, the cons-
tant attempt on Eliot's part to avoid speculation means that we
shall not be permitted to develop an explicit statement of such a
theory, even though "theory" is Eliot's own term. Yet the presence
of such possibilities of theoretical formulations and configura-
tions behind Eliot's view of Shakespeare's work makes his criticism
exciting, even if it remains more tantalizing than productive in
this connection.

Still, it appears to be a theory in which the major concepts of
objectivity and realism can, as suggested in the foregoing discus-
sion, co-exist without contradiction. Perhaps the diffidence that
Eliot felt about the Edinburgh lectures and the theory of develop-
ment that they propose, went deeper and was more powerful than even
Eliot suspected. For he never actually revised them for publica-
tion, nor did he state his theory in a more forthright and rigorous
as well as analytical form; and when presented with the opportunity
to update or elaborate them, he merely condensed them in "Shake-
speares Verskunst" (1950). But the particular angle from which he
viewed Shakespeare's development, and the particular combination of
the concept of development and his other ideas on literature and cri-
ticism, are his original contribution to Shakespeare criticism as.
well as to general art criticism. They have neither been anticipated nor significantly duplicated or extended by other critics. Moreover, these concepts are a demonstration of Eliot's entire outlook on literature. Therefore, it is a matter of some concern, and a cause for some degree of astonishment, that the preoccupation of one of the most influential poets and critics of this century with the achievement of an author of near-mythical stature in the history of world literature, should have gone practically unnoticed so far.

The habits and circumstances of Eliot's own writing, his diffidence about venturing into definitive statement in a field that has boasted many critics and scholars of extraordinary acumen, perception and ability, and the lack of a separate book on Shakespeare by Eliot—these appear to be the most obvious reasons for the neglect of Eliot's Shakespeare criticism. I hope that the present study will have made a more systematic assessment of Eliot's Shakespeare possible; that it will have facilitated further study of Eliot's criticism by making his Shakespeare criticism more easily accessible, and especially by providing an account of the approach to Shakespeare that Eliot made through his development. I also hope that the presence of Shakespeare behind Eliot's criticism will reduce the impact of the supposed and real inconsistencies in Eliot's writing.

Naturally, further exploration is needed in the comparison of his Shakespearean criticism with other major trends in the history of that criticism; and the possibility of unifying Eliot's theory by means of his thoughts concerning Shakespeare will need to be further pursued. A detailed study of Eliot's allusive use of Shakespeare
can also be expected to enhance our understanding of his criticism. It should be clear at least that a study of Eliot's Shakespeare helps to illuminate and emphasize the fundamental unity of Eliot's own work.
Notes to the Conclusion


In this context, the idea that both comedy and tragedy are equally "serious," we find somewhat more extended statements from Eliot in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933)43-44, and "Shakespearian Criticism: I. From Dryden to Coleridge," A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (1934)295.

2 London: R. Cobden-Sanderson (1926)x. Also see "The Beating of a Drum."

3 "The Beating of a Drum."

4 Ibid.; Eliot also refers to his proposals regarding Shakespeare's development as a "theory" in the Edinburgh and the German lectures.
Appendices

Appendix "A" provides a chronological list of Eliot's critical, poetic and dramatic works referring or alluding to Shakespeare and his work. The form of the entries is generally that of Donald Gallup's authoritative T. S. Eliot: A Bibliography (London: Faber & Faber, 1969 edition), except where it does not include an entry. In each entry the date of original publication or delivery is recorded, and more familiar titles included where necessary.

Other kinds of information here provided include an assessment of the degree of significance of Eliot's reference to Shakespeare and his works; titles of the plays and poems cited; as well as exact identification of the passages which Eliot quotes from Shakespeare. For this purpose, The Complete Works of Shakespeare in the Pelican Edition (ed. A. Harbage, Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin, 1969) has been used consistently. In the entries for Eliot's critical works, the original form in which they first appeared—review, lecture, etc.—is also indicated.

Although Professor Gallup's bibliography has proved invaluable in locating much of the material, it does not, naturally, indicate Eliot's concern with Shakespeare unless the titles or publication data of the works include it. Therefore, this appendix may be considered a legitimate extension of the Bibliography and an additional help to students of Eliot.

Entries from Eliot's creative writing have been included in this appendix, identified by an '*' preceding each entry, so that a com-
prehensive impression of Eliot's preoccupation with Shakespeare may become possible. Grover Smith's *A Study in Sources and Meanings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Second edition, 1974) is the basis for most of these entries. [However, see especially *29(b)* below.] Once again Grover Smith's study is chronological and comprehensive, and naturally enough, does not undertake classification according to subject-matter. Therefore, this appendix should be useful to anyone interested in Eliot's use of Shakespeare in his creative writing.

Appendix "B" provides a frequency list of Eliot's references to Shakespeare's plays and poems in his critical writings, while Appendix "C" provides a frequency list of the number of quotations from Shakespeare's works that occur in Eliot's criticism.

A special Appendix "D" has been added: originally, Mrs. Valerie Eliot, who holds copyright to all of Eliot's unpublished papers, had refused me permission to quote from the Edinburgh lectures (1937). However, now she has sent me passages from these lectures that are parallel to those extracts from an independent translation of the German lecture (1950) that have been used in section II of chapter 3 above. These passages from the Edinburgh lectures, not to be reproduced by anyone else and for any other purpose than this dissertation, have been listed in Appendix "D" in the order in which their parallel passages appear in chapter 3.
Appendix A

The form of the following entries is different from the generally accepted M. L. A. style manual, especially in its punctuation. However, as Gallup's Bibliography is the sole reliable and comprehensive guide to Eliot's work, I have retained Gallup's form in the following appendix.

1 Gallup C39
Significant reference.

*2 Gallup A1
1.110: "No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be."

*3 Gallup A1
11.6-7: "An atmosphere of Juliet's tomb
Prepared for all the things to be said, or left unsaid."

4 Gallup C42
Passing reference.
5 Gallup C46


Hamlet, Macbeth.

Significant reference.

6 Not listed in Gallup


It should be obvious that Eliot meant to exclude Shakespeare from this group of dramatists, and also that he did not at all succeed in doing so.

7 Not listed in Gallup


Eliot mentions or recommends for study the following works: Henry VI, Richard III, A Comedy of Errors, Titus Andronicus, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Henry IV, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, The Winter's Tale, Venus and Adonis, the Sonnets.

Substantial and significant reference.
8 Gallup C63


Significant reference.

9 Gallup C64


Othello, King Lear.

Significant reference.

10 Gallup C71

Studies in Contemporary Criticism [I]. Egoist, V.9 (Oct. 1918)[113]-114.

Quotation: Antony and Cleopatra, Caesar, V.ii.346.

Significant and substantial reference with the entry below.

11 Gallup C72

Studies in Contemporary Criticism, II. Egoist, V.10 (Nov./Dec. 1918)131-33.

Significant and substantial reference.

12 Gallup C73

Marivaux. Art & Letters, II.2 (Spring 1919)80-85.

(Mis)quotation from Antony and Cleopatra, Cleopatra, I.iii.20.

Passing reference.

13 Gallup C76

Passing reference.

14 Gallup C77

Significant reference.

*15 Gallup C81

Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar. In [Two Poems].
Art & Letters, II.3 (Summer 1919)103-5.

(a) Eliot's Epigraph, Grover Smith suggests, alludes to The Merchant of Venice and Othello.

Eliot's Epigraph: "...--goats and monkeys...."

The Merchant of Venice, Shylock, III.i.108:
"I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys."
The possibility of such an allusion is supported by the general commercial air of the poem and its reference to Venice and the Rialto.

Othello, Othello, IV.i.256:
"You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.--Goats and monkeys!"

(b) Regarding Eliot's line 5, "Defunctive music under sea," Grover Smith suggests that this is an allusion to Antony and Cleopatra.

Soldiers, IV.iii.11-12:
"2 Soldier: Peace! What noise?
1 Soldier: List, list!
2 Soldier: 'Hark!"
1 Soldier: Music i' th' air.
3 Soldier: Under the earth."

(c) Eliot's lines 11-12:

"Her shuttered barge
Burned on the water all the day";

Antony and Cleopatra, Enobarbus, II.ii.192-93:

"The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned in the water. . . ."

16 Gallup C83

Significant reference.

17 Gallup C84

Significant reference:

18 Gallup C85

Macbeth.

Passing reference.

19 Gallup C87

Romeo and Juliet, Othello, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriol-
nus, Timon of Athens.

Quotations: King Lear, Lear, V.iii.310
            Othello, Othello, V.ii.155
            Othello, V.ii.352
            Coriolanus, Coriolanus, V.vi.112-15
            Timon of Athens, Timon, V.i.212-14
            Antony and Cleopatra, Enobarbus, II.ii.192.

Significant and substantial reference.

20 Gallup C89


Richard III.

Quotation: Richard III, Clarence, I.iv.50-51.

Significant and substantial reference.

21 Gallup C90 & 97


Othello.

Significant passing reference.

22 Gallup C91


Significant and substantial reference.

23 Gallup C92

Hamlet and His Problems. Athenaeum, 4665 (26 Sept. 1919)940-41. A re-
view of The Problems of "Hamlet", by J. M. Robertson. Reprinted, with revisions as "Hamlet."

Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus.

Quotations: Hamlet, Horatio, I.i.166-67
Hamlet and Horatio, V.i.4-15.

Significant and substantial reference.

24 Gallup C99

The Merchant of Venice, (Henry IV), Hamlet, Macbeth, The Tempest.
Significant and substantial reference.

25 Gallup C100

The Merchant of Venice, (Henry IV), Hamlet, Macbeth, The Tempest. Virtually a repetition of 24 above.

26 Gallup C102

Richard III, The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, Othello, Pericles.
Significant and substantial reference.

27 Gallup C104

Macbeth.

Refers to Banquo's speech describing Macbeth's castle to Duncan, I.v.i. 3-10; and to Perdita's speech in The Winter's Tale, IV.iv.118-19.

Significant reference.

28 Gallup C105


Significant reference.

*29 Gallup A4a


(a) Eliot's Epigraph

"Thou hast nor youth nor age
But as it were an after dinner sleep
Dreaming of both,"

comes from Measure for Measure, the Duke's exhortation to Claudio, the famous sermon on Death: III.i.32-34.

(b) [The following is my own suggestion]:

The existence together in this poem of the Jew, the goat, and the tiger makes it likely that the following speech from Macbeth may be part of the matrix of the poem:

Macbeth, 3 Witch, IV.i:21-34:

"Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witch's mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravined salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digged i'th'dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat. . .
...Add thereto a tiger's cauldron..."

(c) 11.57-65 of the poem appear to allude to Antony and Cleopatra,
Enobarbus, II.ii.236-39.

(d) 11.59-60 also appear to allude to King Lear, Gloucester, IV.i. 18-24.

*30 Gallup A4a

"Ode" ("Tired./Subterrene laughter synchronous"). In Ara Vos Prec.

[London:] The Ovid Press (1920).

Grover Smith says about this poem (p.37):

Ara Vos Prec contains one poem, too significant to be ignored, that Eliot would not allow to be reprinted. ... Eliot drew upon Shakespeare's Coriolanus (Act IV, scene 5, lines 72-73) for his epigraph:

To you particularly, and to all the Volscians
Great hurt and mischief.

... and adapted a passage in Macbeth, "The deep damnation of his taking off" (Eliot said "cheap extinction") and one in Julius Caesar, "Now lies he there."

[Coriolanus, Coriolanus, IV.v.67-68
Macbeth, I.vii.20
Julius Caesar, Antony, III.iii.119.]

31 Gallup C109

Dante as a "Spiritual Leader." Athenaeum, 4692 (2 Apr. 1920)441-42.

A review of Dante, by Henry Dwight Sidgwick. Reprinted, with the addition of an introductory passage concerning Paul Valery, as "Dante" (different from the 1929 essay).

Significant reference.

32 Gallup C110


Significant and substantial reference.

33 Gallup C111 & 112

Philip Massinger. Times Literary Supplement, 958 (27 May 1920)[325]-


Henry IV.

Quotations: Othello, Iago, III.iii.330-33
II, Henry IV, King; IV.v.183-85
Henry VIII, Wolsey, III.ii.225-27
Hamlet, Ophelia, I.iii.85-86.

Significant and substantial reference.

34 Gallup C113


Merely (mis)quotes two lines from Hamlet: Horatio, I.i.62-63.

Passing reference.

35 Gallup C114 &115


The Perfect Critic, II. Athenaeum, 4708 (23 July 1920) 102-4.

Antony and Cleopatra.

Significant reference.

36 Gallup C117

The Possibility of a Poetic Drama. Dial, LXIX.5 (Nov. 1920) [441]-447.

Macbeth.

Significant and substantial reference.

37 Gallup A5

"Introduction" to The Sacred Wood. London: Methuen (1920).
Passing reference.

38 Gallup C119

Includes: The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit, and the Function of Criticism--The Lesson of Baudelaire.
Analysis of the character of Falstaff as a national myth.
Significant and substantial reference.

39 Gallup C121

Significant reference.

40 Gallup C122

Prose and Verse. Chapbook, 22 (Apr. 1921) 3-10.
Reference to the Gravedigger's scene in Hamlet.
Passing reference.

41 Gallup C123

Passing reference.

42 Gallup C124

London Letter. Dial, LXX.6 (June 1921) [686]-691.
Significant reference.

43 Gallup C125

Significant reference.

44 Gallup C128
1921)[669]-670. A review of Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the
Seventeenth Century: Donne to Butler, selected and edited by Herbert
J. C. Grierson.

Significant passing reference.

45 Gallup C129

The Three Provincialities, Tyro, 2 ([Spring 1922])11-13.

Troylus and Cressida.

Passing reference.

Gallup C133


Hamlet.

Significant and substantial reference.

47 Gallup C134


Significant passing reference.

*48 Gallup C135

THE WASTE LAND. Criterion, I.1 (Oct. 1922)50-64.

(a) There is so much of The Tempest in this poem, especially in con-
nection with the Fisher King and his son, that there is good rea-
son to believe that Ferdinand is one of the protagonists, or one
of the roles the protagonist takes on.

(b) Part II. "A Game of Chess."

11.120-26 have a repetition of the word 'nothing' (5 times).
Since in the same passage there is a quotation from Shakespeare,
as well as the reference to the "Shakespearian Rag," it is pos-
sible that 'nothing' is also an allusion to or an echo of Shakespeare (King Lear, I.i.90; Hamlet, Ophelia, III.ii.112; ...)
(c) There is a game of chess in The Tempest as well (V.i.172f.). Since there is so much allusion to and quotation from this play in the poem, it is likely that this part of the poem also refers to the game between Ferdinand and Miranda.
(d) Part II shows a lady enthroned on a chair in her boudoir; this is comparable to and alludes to Antony and Cleopatra, Enobarbus, II.ii.192, a speech quoted more than once by Eliot in his prose: "The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne. ..." (Also see Cymbeline, II.iv.87-91).
(e) 1.125: "Those are pearls that weep his eyes" (The Tempest, line 3 of Ariel's song, I.ii.396f.)
(f) 1.128f.: "O O O O that Shakespeherian rag: ..."
(g) Part II, 11.170-72: allude to Hamlet, Ophelia, IV.v.72-73.
(h) Part III. "The Fire Sermon," 1.182: "By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept..." (The Tempest, Ferdinand, I.ii.390f.)
1.257: "This music crept by me upon the waters" (The Tempest, Ferdinand, I.ii.392).

49 Gallup C139

The Sonnets.
Passing reference.
50 Gallup C143

Andrew Marvell. Nation & Athenaeum, XXXIII.26 (29 Sept. 1923)809. A review of Miscellaneous Poems, by Andrew Marvell. (This is a different essay from the more well known essay on Marvell).


51 Gallup C144


Significant reference.

52 Gallup C146


King Lear, Macbeth.

(Caliban, Antony, the Fool in King Lear, and the Porter in Macbeth are mentioned).

Significant and substantial reference.

53 Gallup C152


Othello, Macbeth.

Significant reference.

54 Gallup C154

A Commentary. Criterion, II.7 (Apr. 1924)231-35.
King Lear.

Significant and substantial reference.

*55 Gallup C162


Reprinted as "The Hollow Men," Parts I-II, and IV.

Section V of the complete poem contains 7 occurrences of a phrase on the pattern of: "Between the idea/ And the reality..."

This recalls, among others, these lines from Julius Caesar, Brutus, II.i.63-65:

"Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma or a hideous dream."

56 Gallup C168


The Women's Tale, The Tempest.

Significant and substantial reference.

57 Gallup C171


Julius Caesar, Troilus and Cressida, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Pericles, Cymbeline.

Significant and substantial reference.

58 Gallup B4

Significant reference.

59 Gallup C174


Othello.

Significant passing reference.

60 Gallup C178


The Merry Wives of Windsor.

Passing reference.

61 Gallup C180


Troilus and Cressida.

Significant reference.

62 Gallup C182


Passing reference.

*63 Gallup C184

as the first section of Sweeney Agonistes.

(Grover Smith speculates regarding the attitude of Sweeney as being like Othello's at the end of his play, which Eliot was to describe as 'bovaysme' and "cheering himself up" in Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca (1927). He also speculates on the possibility of a connection between the Fool and Tom O' Bedlam in King Lear and Sweeney).

64 Gallup C187


Significant passing reference.

65 Gallup C190


Significant reference.

66 Not listed in Gallup


(The John Hayward Bequest, 1965, at King's College, Cambridge, library, catalogue No. HB-IV...).

Recorded intention of turning this kind of work into three volumes: this one, another one on Elizabethan drama, a third on prose, as a complete critique of Renaissance literature in English.
References to Shakespeare:

Lecture I: in general, restating position held elsewhere that Shakespeare was not a "philosophical" poet: philosophy implies clear, distinct, explicit, expressed (as opposed to "inexpressible") philosophy.

_Quotation: King Lear._

Lecture IV: reference regarding figures of speech and richness of Shakespeare in this respect.

_Anthony [sic] and Cleopatra._

Lecture VII: reference regarding the compression in the language of Shakespeare; and regarding the flexibility and variation Shakespeare was capable of in contrast to Dryden.

Lecture VIII: regarding the concentration in a few words of wit in Shakespeare and Dante and Marvell.

Significant reference.

67 Gallup C197


Passing reference.

68 Gallup C199


The Sonnets.

_Quotation: Sonnet 94 (Thorpe edition number)11.9-10._

Significant and substantial reference.

69 Gallup C200

_Literature, Science, and Dogma._ _Dial_, LXXXII.3 (Mar. 1927)[239]-243:


_Quotation: King Lear._
Significant reference.

70 Gallup C201


A review of Christopher Marlowe, by U. Ellis-Fermor.

*Richard III*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Richard II*.

Significant reference.

71 Gallup C211


(Character of Richard III mentioned).

Significant passing reference.

72 Gallup C212


*Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Significant and substantial reference.

73 Gallup C220


Quotation: *Antony and Cleopatra*, Enobarbus, II.i1.229-30.

Significant reference.

74 Gallup C222


Passing reference.
75 Gallup B5


Richard III, Titus Andronicus, Richard II, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus.

Quotations: Richard II, Duchess, V.ii.46-47
           Hamlet, Horatio, I.1.166-67
           Richard III, Queen Margaret, IV.iv.40-43
           Richard II, Richard, III.iii.174
           Richard, IV.i.287-88
           King Lear, Edgar, V.ii.9-11
           (Gloucester, IV.i.36-37, quoted in a note).

Significant and substantial reference.

76 Gallup A10


Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus.

Quotations: Othello, Othello, V.ii.338-56
           Hamlet, Hamlet, V.ii.327-34
           Antony and Cleopatra, Antony, III.xiii.92-93
           King Lear, Gloucester, IV.i.36-37.

Significant and substantial reference.

77 Gallup C230


Passing reference.

78 Gallup C237


A review of Pre-Restoration Stage Studies and The Physical Condi-
tions of the Elizabethan Public Playhouse, by William J. Lawrence.

Hamlet, Macbeth.

Significant and substantial reference.

79 Gallup C243


Passing reference.

80 Gallup C246


Significant passing reference.

81 Gallup A5c


Significant passing reference.

82 Gallup B7


Significant and substantial reference.

83 Gallup C257


Significant and substantial reference.

84 Gallup C268

Significant reference.

85 Gallup A11

A Song for Simeon [London: Faber & Gwyer] (1928).

(Grover Smith speculates regarding the similarity between lines 4-5 of this poem in the operation of the forces of birth and death, and the last scene of King Lear).

86 Gallup B10


Significant reference.

87 Gallup C274

Elizabeth and Essex. *Times Literary Supplement*, 1401 (6 Dec. 1928)


Significant reference.

88 Gallup C285


Significant passing reference.

89 Gallup C286

The Tudor Translators. *Listener*, I.22 (12 June 1929)833-34.

*Hamlet*, *Coriolanus*.

Quotations: Coriolanus, *Coriolanus*, IV.v.55-58

Coriolanus, IV.v.66-74.

Significant and substantial reference.
90 Gallup 288


Significant reference.

91 Gallup C291


Significant passing reference.

92 Gallup C292


Passing reference.

93 Gallup A13


*Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra*.

Quotations: Macbeth, Banquo, I.vi.3-10

     Antony and Cleopatra, Caesar, V.ii.344-46.

Significant and substantial reference.

94 Gallup B11


Passing reference.

95 Gallup C302


The Sonnets.

Significant reference.

*Troilus and Cressida*, *Pericles*.

Passing reference.

97 Gallup C306

Mystic and Politician as Poet: Vaughan, Traherne, Marvell, Milton.

*Listener*, III.64 (2 Apr. '1930)590-91.

Significant passing reference.

98 Gallup B13


Significant and substantial reference.

99 Gallup A17


The title comes from the name of the daughter of Pericles. The final recognition scene between Marina and her father was one which Eliot admired very much. Grover Smith quotes (p.132) a statement from Eliot in a letter that in this poem he intended a "criscross" between *Pérides* and Seneca's *Hercules Furens*. On the basis of the title, the speaker of the monologue is generally taken to be Pericles.

100 Gallup B14


Significant passing reference.

101 Gallup B15

Significant reference.

102 Gallup C314


Significant and substantial reference.

103 Gallup B17


Passing reference.

104 Gallup B19


Significant and substantial reference.

105 Gallup C317-319


Hamlet, Measure for Measure, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra.

Quotation: Antony and Cleopatra, Charmian, V.ii.325-27.

Significant and substantial reference.

106 Gallup C324.


The Rape of Lucrece, Troilus and Cressida, Timon of Athens.

Significant reference.

107 Gallup A19


(a) The general context is that of Coriolanus.

(b) "Triumphal March," I, 11.3f.: "And so many eagles..." may be an allusion to Coriolanus's fiery speech in V.vi.1140-15.

108 Gallup in A21


Passing reference.

109 Gallup C335


Antony and Cleopatra, Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, The
Tempest.

Significant and substantial reference.

110 Gallup A24

The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism. (Lectures delivered at Harvard University during 1932-33). London: Faber & Faber (1933).


Reference to the song "Come away death," in Twelfth Night, Feste, II.iv.

Quotation: Antony and Cleopatra, Enobarbus, II.vii.90.

Significant and substantial reference.

*111 Gallup C339


II, 11.10-12: "Pollicle dogs and cats all must
   Jellicle cats and dogs all must
   Like undertakers, come to dust."

are based on the Dirge in Cymbeline, IV.ii.258-81:

"...Golden lads and girls all must,
   As chimney sweepers, come to dust....
   The sceptre, learning, physic, must
   All follow this, and come to dust....
   All lovers young, all lovers must
   Consign to thee and come to dust."

112 Gallup C340

A Commentary. Criterion, XII.47 (Jan. 1933)244-49.

Antony and Cleopatra.

Significant passing reference...
113 Gallup B23


Henry IV, Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, Venus and Adonis, The Rape of Lucrece.

Significant and substantial reference.

*114 Gallup A26


(Grover Smith suggests that in Part I, Eliot has made an "embarrassingly naive use of a song from Hamlet"; presumably, the Workmen's chant in this poem frivolously echoes the Gravedigger's song).

115 Gallup C367


Venus and Adonis.

Significant and substantial reference.

116 Gallup B25


Significant passing reference.

117 Gallup B26


Significant passing reference.
*118 Gallup A29

There is a possible echo of Shakespeare's Sonnet 129, "Th' expence of spirit in a waste of shame," in the chorus of the women in Part II of Eliot's play. In this connection, King Lear, II.i is also interesting, in its collocation of waste, shame and expense, although the context is different.

*119 Gallup A32


Echo of I, Henry IV in the association of "axle-tree" with "garlic" in Part II, 11.1-2 of the poem:

"Garlic and sapphires in the mud
Clot the bedded axle-tree."

They certainly recall two proximate speeches of Hotspur, III.i.126-33 and 146-62:

"...I had rather hear a brazen canstick turned
Or a dry wheel grate on the axletree..."

and

"...I had rather live
With cheese and garlic in a windmill far...."

120 Gallup C411

Mr. Murry's Shakespeare. Criterion, XV.61 (July-1936)708-10.
A review of Shakespeare, by John Middleton Murry.


Significant and substantial reference.

Macbeth

Quotations: Macbeth, Banquo, I.vi.3-10
          Macbeth, III.ii.50-51.

Significant and substantial reference.


Hamlet

Significant passing reference.

The Lion and the Fox [of Wyndham Lewis]. Twentieth Century Verse, 6/7 (Nov./Dec. 1937)[6-9].

Troilus and Cressida, Measure for Measure, Timon of Athens, Coriolanus.

Significant and substantial reference.

Not listed in Gallup

The Edinburgh lectures (1937): "Shakespeare as Poet and Dramatist."

Caesar, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida,

Quotations:

Macbeth, Macbeth, V.iv.17f.
Measure for Measure, Duke, III.i.5f.
Love's Labour's Lost, Berowne, V.ii.845
King John, Lewis, II.i.496-500
Bastard, IV.iii.79
Othello, Othello, I.ii.59
Romeo and Juliet, Capulet, I.v.27-34
Mercutio, I.iv.99
Hamlet, Marcellus, I.i.135
Romeo and Juliet, Romeo, II.ii.15-17
Juliet, II.ii.133-35
Juliet, II.ii.119-20
Hamlet, Marcellus, I.i.23
Horatio, I.i.62-63
Marcellus, I.i.133-34
Marcellus, I.i.157-60
Horatio, I.i.165-68
Horatio, I.i.165-68
Horatio, I.i.165
Horatio, I.i.168
Antony and Cleopatra, Caesar, I.iv.20-21
Enobarbus, II.ii.230
Cleopatra, IV.xv.76-78
Caesar, IV.i.4-6
Antony, I.ii.167-68
Antony-Enobarbus, I.ii, about line 150
Cymbeline, Posthumus, V.iv.145-48
Arviragus, IV.ii.51-56
Pericles, Marina, V.1.85-89
Pericles, V.i.215-18.

Significant and substantial reference.

125 Gallup C433


Hamlet.

Passing reference.
126 Gallup C454

EAST COKER. New English Weekly, XVI.22 (21 Mar. 1940)[325]-328.
III, 1.13f.: "As, in a theatre..." is a possible echo of Richard
II, York, V.ii.23f.: "As in a theatre, the eyes of men...."
127 Gallup C457

"The first Annual Yeats Lecture, delivered to the Friends of the
Irish Academy at the Abbey Theatre, June, 1940."
Later reprinted as "Yeats."

128 Gallup C475

King Lear.
Quotation: King Lear, Lear, V.iii.309.
Significant and substantial reference.

129 Gallup A40

(13 Aug. 1942).
Significant and substantial reference.

130 Gallup A41

Significant and substantial reference.
II. 42, "The eyes of a familiar compound ghost," clearly recalls Shakespeare's sonnet 86, 1.9: "He nor that affable familiar ghost."
132 Gallup C483-486
Passing reference.
133 Gallup C492
John Dryden's Tragedies. Listener, XXIX.745 (22 Apr. 1943)486-87.
Antony and Cleopatra.
Significant passing reference.
134 Gallup C495
"...an extract from a lecture recently given at the British-Norwegian Institute in London."
Significant passing reference.
135 Gallup B46
"Introduction" to S. L. Bethell, Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition. London: King & Staples (1944)[7-9].
Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida.
Significant and substantial reference.
136 Gallup A45
Significant and substantial reference.
137 Gallup C504
"The text of an address delivered before the Association of Book-
men of Swansea and West Wales, at Swansea, September 26, 1944."
Significant passing reference.

138 In Gallup A69
(1957).
Significant and substantial reference.

139 Gallup C515, 517, 518
"Reflections on the Unity of European Culture," I-III. Adam, XIV.
158, 159-60, 161 (1946).
Significant passing reference.

140 Gallup A48
Passing reference.

141 Gallup A54
The Aims of Poetic Drama. [Different from 142 below]. London: The,
Poets' Theatre Guild (1949).
Passing reference.

142 Gallup C544
The Aims of Poetic Drama. [Later Poetry and Drama]. Adam, XVII.200
(Nov. 1949)10-16. "...part of a lecture...delivered before various
European audiences last month."
King John, Romeo and Juliet, Henry IV, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth.
Quotations:

Hamlet, Marcellus, I.i.23
   Horatio, I.i.46
   Horatio, I.i.62-63
   Marcellus, I.i.43-46
   Marcellus, I.i.157-60
   Horatio, I.i.165-68
   Horatio, I.i.166-67
   Horatio, I.i.163
   Horatio, I.i.168
Macbeth, Macbeth, V.v.19
Othello, Othello, I.ii.59
Romeo and Juliet, Romeo, II.ii.15-17
   Juliet, II.ii.133-35
   Juliet, II.ii.119-20.

Significant and substantial reference.

143 Gallup D238

Shakespeare's Verskunst. Der Monat, II.20 (May 1950)[198]-207.

A lecture given on Eliot's German tour, based upon the Edinburgh lec-
tures (1937). Translated anonymously into German by Gerhard Hensel.

King John, Richard III, Romeo and Juliet, Richard II, A Midsummer
Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, Much Ado About Nothing, Julius
Caesar, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida, Measure for Mea-
sure, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus,

Quotations:

King John, Lewis, II.i.496-500
   Bastard, I.i.184
Romeo and Juliet, Capulet, I.v.26-34
   Mercutio, I.i.99
Hamlet, Marcellus, I.i.135
Romeo and Juliet, Romeo, II.ii.75-17
   Juliet, II.ii.133-35
   Juliet, II.ii.119-20
Antony and Cleopatra, Caesar, I.iv.20-21
   Eobardus, II.ii.230
   Cleopatra, IV.xv.76-78
   Caesar, IV.i.4-6
Antony-Enobarbus, I.ii, about line 150
Enobarbus, II.ii.192-93
Cymbeline, Posthumus, V.iv.145-48
Arviragus, IV.i.50-55
Pericles, Marina, V.i.85-89
Pericles, V.i.215-18.

Significant and substantial reference.

144 Gallup C554

"What Dante Means to Me," delivered at the Italian Institute, London,
on 4 July, 1950.

Significant and substantial reference.

145 Gallup B58

(1950)vii-xi.

Passing and indirect but significant reference.

146 Gallup B59

"Introduction" to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. London: The
Cresset Press (1950)vii-xvi.

Passing reference.

147 Gallup C568

(15 Dec. 1951)1231-32.

Passing reference.

148 Gallup B68


Significant and substantial reference.

Passing reference.


Richard III, All's Well That Ends Well, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, The Tempest.

Quotations: Macbeth, Macbeth, V.v.19

King Lear, Edgar, V.ii.11.

Significant and substantial reference.


Hamlet.

Significant and substantial reference.


The Tempest.

Quotation: The Tempest, Ariel, I.ii.397.

Significant passing reference.

Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet.
Significant reference.

154 Gallup B77


Passing reference.

155 Gallup C640


The Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar.
Passing reference.

156 Gallup A76


Hamlet, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens.
Significant and substantial reference.

157 Gallup A27c


Titus Andronicus, Hamlet.
Significant and substantial reference.

158 Gallup C661

Passing reference.
159 Gallup C662
T. S. Eliot...An Interview. Granite Review, XXIV.3 (Election.1962)
16-20.

Cymbeline.
Significant and substantial reference.

160 Gallup C663
Passing reference.

161 Gallup A73

George Herbert. Longmans, Green (1962).
Significant passing reference.

Fully 76 of the 144 critical items in the list above first appeared in periodicals. The breakdown of the number of items to appear in each periodical is as follows:

Times Literary Supplement: 24 items. Numbers 24, 33, 39, 43, 44, 66, 57, 60, 61, 62, 64, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 78, 84, 87, 102, 106, 109, 115.

Athenaeum: 14 items. Numbers 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35.


Listener: 9 items. Numbers 89, 90, 91; 92, 95, 97, 105, 128, 133.

Egoist: 8 items. Numbers 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 21.


Nation & Athenaeum: 5 items. Numbers 49, 50, 52, 65, 68.

Tyro: 2 items. Numbers 38, 45.

Adam: 2 items. Numbers 139, 142.


The following periodicals carried one item each, entered in brackets against them:

Chapbook (40), Critic (155), Der Monat (143), Granite Review (159), Italian News (144), New Adelphi (88), New English Weekly (132), New Statesman (1), Norseman (134), Purpose (127), Time & Tide (147), Twentieth Century Verse (123), Welsh Review (137).
Appendix B

Eliot cites the following works of Shakespeare in his criticism. Each work has been counted only once for each piece of criticism in which it is cited. For each work a total of citations is presented:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Work</th>
<th>Citations</th>
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<td>Antony and Cleopatra</td>
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<td>Troilus and Cressida</td>
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<td>Coriolanus</td>
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<td>Twelfth Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love's Labour's Lost</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry V</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>All's Well That Ends</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>As You Like It</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Taming of the Shrew</td>
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<td>The Merry Wives of Windsor</td>
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Measure for Measure 9
The Winter's Tale 9
Henry IV 8
Romeo and Juliet 6
Venus and Adonis 6
The Sonnets 5
Titus Andronicus 4
A Midsummer Night's Dream 3
Much Ado About Nothing 2
The Rape of Lucrece 2
Henry VIII 1
A Comedy of Errors 1
Two Gentlemen of Verona 1

As far as it has been possible to determine, Eliot never cites
The Two Noble Kinsmen and Henry VIII, the two plays that were late in being accepted into the Shakespeare canon, and then as possible collaborations. However, Eliot once quotes briefly from Henry VIII.
Appendix C

Eliot quotes from the following works of Shakespeare in his criticism. Each quotation has been counted separately, although Eliot re-uses a number of passages frequently: For each work a total of quotations is presented:

<table>
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<td>Richard II</td>
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<td>The Winter's Tale</td>
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<td>Henry VIII</td>
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<td>Love's Labour's Lost</td>
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<td>Sonnet 94</td>
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<td>Twelfth Night</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Tempest</td>
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</table>

This is a total of 109 quotations. Of these, 61 (or 56% of the total) occur in the Edinburgh and the two subsequent lectures derived from them: Poetry and Drama (1949), and "Shakespeare's Verstumst" (1950). Of the 144 critical pieces of Eliot considered in this study, only 25 contain any quotations from Shakespeare. And even of the 61 quotations that occur in the Edinburgh and related lectures on Shakespeare's development, very many are repeated in all three lectures and elsewhere. Thus, the number of separate passages from Shakespeare which Eliot quotes in his criticism is extremely small.
Appendix D

Mrs. Valerie Eliot has allowed me to use for the purposes of this study alone, the following extracts from the original Edinburgh lectures of 1937. They have been arranged in the same order in which parallel quotations from the German version of 1950 appear in section II of chapter 3 above. Mrs. Eliot wishes me to emphasize that these extracts from the original are not meant for reproduction in any form and for any other purpose than use in the present dissertation.

1 ... the ways in which his [Shakespeare's] poetry and versification changed between his first play and his last.

2 ... The general opinion of his last plays has usually been, either that his powers were failing—which seems hardly likely, considering that he was still only a middle-aged man—or that he had lost interest and was amusing himself by various experiments. These later plays are usually thought to be less dramatic, are much less often played, and are considered generally weaker.

3 We have to take into account also the development of a personality: we can say that King Lear is a more profound and terrible tragedy than Romeo and Juliet. That is because it is the work of a mature man, a man with vastly more experience and a man who had had the time to digest and understand his experience.

4 So I think of his work as a whole, rather than of parts of it as great and others as inferior.
5 The critic who set out to prove that *Hamlet* is a bad play would not be likely to convince anybody. How could a play which has been popular for three hundred years and more, both in England and in many other languages, be anything but a great play?

6 Now even if we agree that Shakespeare wrote no plays greater than these, each in its kind, I do not think that anyone could go so far as to say that *Romeo and Juliet* is a greater play, either poetically or dramatically, than *Antony and Cleopatra*, or that *Julius Caesar* is a greater play than *Coriolanus*: for there is quite as fine poetry in the latter, and a better dramatic construction.

7 ...does not mean that the popular plays are any better plays: it does not mean that they are any more dramatic.

8 Shakespeare started slowly, but he had that gift of the very great writer, the gift of being able to improve and to develop far beyond the scope of other men: and the gift of never doing the same thing twice.

9 But Shakespeare had a gift for dealing with smaller things, which was to become very important. With Marlowe, dramatic poetry is for the most part speeches; with Shakespeare it becomes for the first time conversation. He learned, gradually, to write poetry in which we can hear ordinary human beings talking: at the same time ordinary conversation and great poetry.

10 ...the process is from artificiality to naturalness.

11 But there is one character in this play who talks so naturally, so true to character, that he is a revolutionary figure in drama: it is the Bastard, Richard Fauconbridge.
12 Perhaps Shakespeare himself was not wholly aware of all that this would lead to: for Fauconbridge is not simply the forerunner of vivid comic characters, but of very important characters too. He appears ahead of time; in a play not good enough for him. But he is the forerunner of Iago in Othello, even of Timon of Athens, of Mark Antony, even of King Lear: for he talks like a human being. And he is a figure whom Marlowe could never have created.

13 I insist upon the importance of this kind of speech, because I think that Shakespeare's mastery of it is something without which his greatest plays and highest dramatic moments would not be what they are.

14 The next great novelty in the verse of Romeo and Juliet is the balcony scene between the lovers: Act II, scene ii.

15 In this scene Shakespeare achieves a perfection of verse which, being perfection, neither he nor anyone else could excel--for the particular purpose.

16 The stiffness, the artificiality, the poetic decoration, of his early verse has finally given place to a simplification to the language of natural speech, and this language of conversation again raised to great poetry, and to great poetry which is essentially dramatic: for the scene has a structure of which each line is an essential part.

17 Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet represent the limit to which most people continue to grow up. Each is a perfect expression of the emotions which Shakespeare could know at the age when he wrote it: and for that reason we cannot say that the later plays are greater...
18. It seems to me to correspond to some law of nature, that the work of a man like Shakespeare should reach, as in Hamlet, a point at which it touches the imagination and feeling of the maximum number of people to the greatest possible depth: and that thereafter, like a comet which has approached the earth and continued on its course, he should gradually recede from view and disappear into his private mystery.

19. But for the most part, these, and the other still later plays, are plays for a small public. And that does not mean that they are less great, or less dramatic, or that Shakespeare did not continue to develop both as poet and dramatist and as thinker. On the contrary, it is we who do not develop.

20. I have insisted upon this, to the point perhaps of becoming tiresome, because it is essential to the way in which I look at Shakespeare's later plays, and to the meaning of my title: for I mean that there is continuous dramatic and poetic development to the end. But first, even in the matter of adapting his verse to human speech, and making natural speech into poetry....

21. ...as in real life, the magnificent and the sordid are two aspects of the same thing.

22. ...deliberately grandiose...

23. ...the studied prosiness of the prose has a very significant point too.

24. ...only Shakespeare could make them both majestic and human in their weaknesses: and without the human weaknesses, we should not have the greatness of the tragedy.
25 No view of the development of Shakespeare could be made convincing without taking up each play, in chronological order, and showing its place in the whole sequence.

26 The last plays are more difficult.

27 Our moments of astonishment, in the later plays, could better be expressed by the words: "I should never have thought that that could be said at all!" For in the last plays—*Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Pericles* and *The Tempest* he has abandoned the realism of ordinary existence in order to make real a further world of emotion. He tends, therefore, to change his plots to something like a fantastic romance or a fairy tale: to simplify his characters in order to make them vehicles for emotional realities of which they are not, as conscious actors, aware. The tangible world, in these later plays, becomes the world of a dream.

28 The versification explores new possibilities.

29 Such language is far beyond the capacity of the English audience, even of his own time, to apprehend.

30 They are equally real, but real in a world from which some emotions have been refined away, so that others, ordinarily unnoticed, may take their place.

31 ...it becomes a kind of religious ritual of otherworldly significance. Hence the masque or vision of the goddess which takes its place in these last plays, and which has so troubled matter-of-fact critics. Shakespeare comes to this point by a kind of logical necessity, having done all with the drama that one man could do.

32 My endeavour has been, first, to suggest that Shakespeare deve-
loped and perfected his verse for dramatic purposes, and that it was writing for the stage that made him a great poet. Second, that his purpose remains dramatic throughout, though he ends in a drama beyond any audience: that his powers remain unabated, and that to the end he did what he set out to do. And, finally, that the work of Shakespeare forms one whole: so that we understand each play better for knowing every other play.

Perhaps it is possible to see even from these brief extracts that parts of them are, as Eliot says, written in somewhat awkward language; and that he must have made some attempt to refine the language while condensing the original two lectures for the single German lecture.
Bibliography

Only those articles, chapters and books by other critics that find mention in the text and notes of the thesis are included in the following bibliography. All of Eliot's own works that may have been referred to are listed in Appendix "A" above.

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