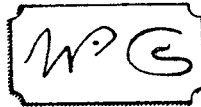


SHAKESPEARE SURVEY

AN ANNUAL SURVEY OF
SHAKESPEARIAN STUDY & PRODUCTION

20

EDITED BY
KENNETH MUIR



CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1967

Published by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press
Bentley House, 200 Euston Road, London, N.W. 1
American Branch: 32 East 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022

© Cambridge University Press 1967

Shakespeare Survey was first published in 1948. For the first eighteen volumes it was edited by Allardyce Nicoll under the sponsorship of the University of Birmingham, the University of Manchester, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

Printed in Great Britain
at the University Printing House, Cambridge
(Brooke Crutchley, University Printer)

CONTENTS

[Notes are placed at the end of each contribution, except in the Reviews section]

<i>List of Plates</i>	page ix
Shakespeare, Fletcher and Baroque Tragedy <i>by</i> MARCO MINCOFF	I
Seneca and the Elizabethans: A Case-study in 'Influence' <i>by</i> G. K. HUNTER	17
George Chapman: Tragedy and the Providential View of History <i>by</i> G. R. HIBBARD	27
Critical Disagreement about <i>Œdipus</i> and <i>Hamlet</i> <i>by</i> NIGEL ALEXANDER	33
Shakespeare's Thematic Modes of Speech: 'Richard II' to 'Henry V' <i>by</i> ROBERT HAPGOOD	41
Anarchy and Order in 'Richard III' and 'King John' <i>by</i> RONALD BERMAN	51
The Staging of Parody and Parallels in 'I Henry IV' <i>by</i> JOHN SHAW	61
Shakespeare's Unnecessary Characters <i>by</i> ARTHUR COLBY SPRAGUE	75
Walter Whiter's Notes on Shakespeare <i>by</i> MARY BELL	83
Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet': Its Spanish Source <i>by</i> OSCAR M. VILLAREJO	95
The Grieves Shakespearian Scene Designs <i>by</i> SYBIL ROSENFELD	107
Shakespeare on the Modern Stage: Past Significance and Present Meaning <i>by</i> ROBERT WEIMANN	113
Shakespeare in Brazil <i>by</i> BARBARA HELIODORA C. DE M. F. DE ALMEIDA	121
Recent Shakespeare Performances in Romania <i>by</i> ALEXANDRU DUŢU	125
Shakespeare, the Twentieth Century and 'Behaviourism' <i>by</i> GARETH LLOYD EVANS	133
The Year's Contributions to Shakespearian Study:	
1. Critical Studies <i>reviewed by</i> NORMAN SANDERS	143
2. Shakespeare's Life, Times and Stage <i>reviewed by</i> STANLEY WELLS	160
3. Textual Studies <i>reviewed by</i> J. K. WALTON	170
<i>Index</i>	181

LIST OF PLATES

BETWEEN PP. 132 AND 133

- I. A. (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek MS 122, fol. 44^v): the Thyestean banquet (title-page for the play)
- B. (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek MS 122, fol. 55^v): *Thyestes*, chorus II (ll. 343 ff.): the Chorus describes the pains of greatness and the pleasures of humility
- C. (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek MS 122, fol. 185): *Troades*, ll. 371 ff.: the Chorus wonders if men live on after their bodies have been buried
- II. A. (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek MS 122, fol. 190): *Troades*, ll. 519 ff.: Andromache hides Astyanax in Hector's tomb, while Ulysses enters
- B. (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek MS 122, fol. 96): *Thebais*, ll. 443 ff.: Jocasta kneels between the armies, outside the walls of Thebes. The gateway is said to be that of Guyenne
- III. Prospero's Cave. Design by J. H. Grieve for *The Tempest*, Covent Garden, 1806
(Victoria and Albert Museum)
- IV. Designs by the Grieves for *1 Henry IV*, Covent Garden, 1824
 - A. Hotspur's Camp near Shrewsbury
 - B. King's Tent
(University of London Library)
- V. Designs by the Grieves
 - A. *Cymbeline*, Covent Garden, 1827
 - B. Shylock's House. *The Merchant of Venice*, probably for Covent Garden, 1830
 - C. Garden at Belmont. *The Merchant of Venice*, Act V, Princess's Theatre, 1857
(University of London Library)
- VI. Designs by the Grieves
 - A. Masque of Robin Goodfellow. *All's Well That Ends Well*, Covent Garden, 1832
 - B. Hamlet's Castle. Probably for Drury Lane, 1835
 - C. Herne's Oak. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Covent Garden, 1840
(University of London Library)
- VII. *Hamlet*, Deutsches Theater, Berlin, 1964-7. Directed by Wolfgang Heinz, settings by Heinrich Kilger. Hamlet (Horst Drinda) and the Ghost (Bruno Trotsch)
- VIII. *Hamlet*, Städtische Theater, Karl-Marx-Stadt, 1964-6. Directed by Hans Dieter Mäde, settings by Peter Frilde. Hamlet (Jürgen Hentsch) with Horatio (Eugen P. Herden) and Marcello (Horst Junghänel)

LIST OF PLATES

- IX. *Coriolanus* (Brecht/Shakespeare), Berliner Ensemble, 1964-. Directed by Wekwerth/Tenschert, settings by Karl von Appen. Helene Weigel as Volumnia and Ekkhard Schall as Coriolanus
- X. A. *King Lear*, Deutsches Theater, Berlin, 1957-65. Directed by the late Wolfgang Langhoff. Lear (Wolfgang Heinz) and Gloucester (Friedrich Richter) in iv, vi
B. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Kammerspiele, Berlin, 1964-5. Directed by Benno Besson. Fred Düren as Launce (ii, iii)
- XI. *The Taming of the Shrew*, São Paulo, 1965. Directed by Antunes Filho, settings and costumes by Maria Bonomi
A. Armando Bogus as Petruchio and Eva Wilma as Katherina
B. The Banquet (v, ii)
- XII. *Twelfth Night*, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 1966. Directed by Clifford Williams, settings by Sally Jacobs. Alan Howard as Orsino and Diana Rigg as Viola

SHAKESPEARE, FLETCHER AND BAROQUE TRAGEDY

BY

MARCO MINCOFF

The supremacy of Shakespearian tragedy is no doubt unchallenged and unchallengeable, though it may be that its superiority to other types lies more in the man than in the actual type, and that if the type had been represented only by Marlowe, Chapman and the rest its position would be less assured. The purpose of this paper, however, is not to discuss questions of value, though I believe that the later seventeenth-century type of tragedy, which begins with Fletcher and in England reaches its fullest growth with Dryden, suffers rather unfairly in critical opinion from being regarded, especially in its earlier stages, too much as a degenerate descendant of a great model rather than an attempt to evolve something answering to the needs of a different age, with a different vision and climate of opinion. The paper is much more an attempt to point out some of the more essential differences between the two types which may help us to see better where Shakespeare's strength does chiefly lie.¹ It may seem strange that I should choose to demonstrate the later type mainly on Fletcher, who after all has only two not very outstanding tragedies to his name—for I do not believe that he had much to do with the planning of the Beaumont tragedies. But most of what I say applies to his tragi-comedies too. And for me the peculiar interest of Fletcher lies in the fact that he does represent the gateway to seventeenth-century tragedy, or what I should call the Baroque type in its essentials and without the neo-classical accidentals that loom so large with Dryden and his fellows, as also with the French classicists.

Perhaps the most obvious difference between the two types lies in the kind of conflict at the centre. The Shakespearian conflict is, I should say, essentially individual, a war within the state of man himself, in which the hero's personality is torn apart and may even disintegrate before our very eyes. Hamlet is racked between an intense desire for revenge—it is with him desire, not mere obedience to a distasteful duty—and the inhibiting 'vicious mole of nature', the melancholy in the Elizabethan sense, induced by disillusionment, not originally a part of him but the 'O'ergrowth of some complexion' that has become second nature. Othello in the same way is rent asunder between his love and a jealousy which again is not a part of his true nature but implanted in him by what I think we must accept as overwhelming proof of his wife's unfaithfulness. Lear's anger differs from the disintegrating force of the other two in that it has always existed in him as a germ capable of growth, which had no cause to spread and break down the pales and forts of reason as long as there was no one to thwart his will. And perhaps it is for that reason, because the disintegrating force really is a part of his nature from the first, that Lear is the one Shakespearian hero who does not merely win back to himself but undergoes a regeneration. While Macbeth on the contrary is slowly but inexorably swallowed up by the disintegrating sense of his crime. In this point Shakespearian tragedy actually seems to be unique, and differs from Elizabethan or Jacobean. For with his contemporaries it is only the last kind of disintegra-

SHAKESPEARE SURVEY

tion through progressive moral blindness that is sometimes shown, above all with Middleton. And that is the least dramatic kind, for except with Macbeth at the first, and only at the first, there is no real struggle; and also it is the least completely tragic, for it is lacking in the sense of exaltation, or at least relief, that the reassertion of the true man brings us. Shakespeare, it is true, gives us something of that effect even with Macbeth, though he accords him no such final eulogy as he does his other heroes. Middleton's figures die in a huddle without even such a partial reassertion of their better selves as Macbeth achieves.

This intensely personal conflict is practically timeless, and that no doubt is a large part of the reason for Shakespeare's perennial appeal. We do not, with him, need to adjust ourselves so sharply to other ways of thought and other moral assumptions as we do with other tragedians. But though its appeal is universal, I believe that the conflict itself could only be conceived at a very peculiar juncture in the development of human culture. A stronger religious pull, and the concept of man's independence becomes impossible; a further slackening of that pull, and man is revealed as bound by social ties instead. Not that I wish to suggest that with Shakespeare man is free from either of these ties, rather that the two pulls are so equally adjusted that they cancel out, and the stress can fall on man himself as at no other time.

Scarcely a generation after Shakespeare, tragedy all over Europe, and not only in England, is dominated by what is mostly summed up as the love-and-honour conflict. It too is an internal conflict, and in so far one might say it shows an increase in psychological depth on the greater part of Elizabethan tragedy outside Shakespeare, where, although internal conflict is not entirely lacking, the main dramatic tension is more often external. To us this new conflict seems frigid and conventional—partly because the peculiar concept of honour leaves us cold, partly too because by constant repetition it has lost its savour. Actually neither of Fletcher's tragedies centres on a real love-and-honour conflict; but that conflict is only the most typical expression of the more general conflict of passion with a social code, or even two opposing codes, which does lie at the bottom of *Valentinian*. Maximus, like Hamlet, is eager for revenge. And like Hamlet he is held back by something within himself. But that something lies very much more on the surface of his being—it is in part the political code of loyalty to the sovereign, which, however, in his case presents no very serious obstacle so that it can be debated externally between him and his friend Aëcius; on the other hand it is the necessity to get rid of that friend as a preliminary to the vengeance itself—an unpleasant task and involving a secondary conflict, but again not two parts of his very being. Thus he can, and he does, debate the question within himself. And the soliloquy in which he does so is in its way a fine piece of work, as he sways this way and that, and first one consideration brings a decision, which is at once revoked by another. And that tremulous line, in which the slightest motion of the mind may tip the balance, was to become extremely characteristic of the seventeenth century. Racine, in *Bérénice* in particular, was to extend it throughout the whole length of his play; and so also Dryden, rather more crudely, in *All for Love*. Here, no less than in the type of conflict, Fletcher was heralding the new type of tragedy. Indeed at this point the two things may seem almost identical. But the precarious balance makes itself felt as a structural principle in other ways, not only in internal debate.

Hamlet has nothing that he can debate. One part of him cries for revenge at any price, another refuses to convert will into action; he cannot even come to grips with his problem, let alone debate it with reason as the arbiter. Actually Maximus in his indecision is closer to Mac-

SHAKESPEARE, FLETCHER AND BAROQUE TRAGEDY

both than to Hamlet, and here too the contrast is instructive. Macbeth also does not debate—he piles up all the reasons against his act, but the impulse towards it is too great to need statement at all, and we feel that the more he brings against it the more he commits himself. One can hardly say that either method of presentation is intrinsically better. Undoubtedly Shakespeare captures our imagination and Fletcher does not, but that is presumably a question of poetic power, not of the dramatic concept. Probably Fletcher's method, even though the form is somewhat simplified, does come closer to the way we actually reach our decisions—at least it is a serious attempt to present a psychological process.

The chief reason for the popularity of the new type of conflict was, however, moral rather than psychological, one would say. As religion began to lose its hold more and more, as the new scientific discoveries of Kepler and Copernicus began to push through into the general consciousness of the educated—and that was a very slow process—as the spirit of rationalism asserted itself, the necessity for new moral sanctions was beginning to make itself felt. Religion had probably never had a very strong hold on the upper crust, though it was perhaps stronger in England than in many parts of the continent. But even in England, and under Elizabeth, there were already men like Raleigh and his circle, suspected of downright atheism, and who, even if their own ideas perhaps went no further than a mild form of deism, tolerated an actual atheist among them. At least the idea of a God directly concerned in every private sin and peccadillo was becoming less and less easy to accept imaginatively, and for the aristocracy the sense of noblesse oblige was probably, and long had been, especially on the continent, quite as important a moral deterrent as the fear of offending God. As the theatre became more and more a form of upper-class entertainment, the concept of morality as a social rather than a religious obligation imposed itself. One can see the attitude drawing nourishment from the most various roots. Chapman and Jonson with their stress on Roman virtue contributed something. So did Italian tragi-comedy. And the *Astrée* with its ineffable codes of behaviour even more. Fletcher himself was saturated in D'Urfé's work, which had taken western Europe by storm. The story of *Valentinian* was taken from there, though Fletcher had recourse to a French translation of Procopius as well; so was the sub-plot of *Monsieur Thomas*, while *The Mad Lover* is a tissue of motifs and situations from the *Astrée*. And the conflict between honour and loyalty that looms so large in Fletcher's treatment of *Valentinian* was already developed by D'Urfé, though less centrally. Equally, when his Lucina dies because she cannot bear the thought of what people may say of her should she survive, she dies differently from D'Urfé's heroine, but quite in accord with the general tenor of his work. To us the morality may seem narrow and pusillanimous; but after all, the duty of setting an example to others, which is at the back of Lucina's misgivings, and which also tips the scales for Maximus, though it is out of fashion now and seems to smack of spiritual arrogance, is not a contemptible ideal. It is what moved Cinthio's Epitia to plead for her husband's life, it is still very much a concern of Clarissa's in the eighteenth century. It may be that in abandoning that ideal society has lost something of value to its structure. At least it smacks no less of spiritual arrogance to condemn it out of hand.

Thus it may well be that Fletcher had something to say of more immediate importance for his time than Shakespeare, and that the prestige of his name during most of the seventeenth century was not merely due to a frivolous pleasure in slick sensationalism; that the complimentary poems of the Folio were not entirely beside the mark in praising his works as a school

SHAKESPEARE SURVEY

of morality. It is the sad fate of authors that the more they are of an age the less likely they are to be for all time. And above all the spirit of rationalism to which Fletcher and Dryden were trying to adapt tragedy has in fact proved destructive of tragedy altogether. For one of the most important effects of tragedy, which Aristotle did not and could not mention, is a strong sense of the mystery of life, indeed it is probably all the stronger for not imposing itself too clearly, but it remains as a background. And since for Aristotle it was the normal background of most thought, he obviously could not conceive it as a specific ingredient of tragedy. For Shakespeare too it was probably part of the normal background, or at least we presume that it was. It is true that with him a great deal of the sense of supernatural forces participating in the life of man, while yet leaving him a free agent, is due to what are at bottom theatrical tricks and conventions. We cannot say whether he actually believed in the ghosts, witches, omens and other manifestations of the supernatural that appear in most of his tragedies; and tragic irony, which he also used effectively, was definitely a Senecan trick. But except perhaps in *Richard III*, where they are piled a little too thick, we accept the tricks, and not merely as a part of our willing suspension of disbelief, but as something that adds a further depth to the tragedy. I do not know whether it is only a kind of intellectual snobbery that makes the same effects appear insincere and irritating in the *Schicksalsdramen* of the German Romantics; that we feel, whether the Romantics believed in a supernatural order governing the world or not, they certainly did not believe that it manifested itself in such ways, and had no right to exploit them for theatrical effects. Why it is we accept and are stirred by the idea of fate in *Oedipus*, without believing in it ourselves, but not in Grillparzer's *Ahnfrau*, it would be hard to say—I do not believe the difference lies only in the quality of the work, and I very much suspect that if we were to learn that *Oedipus* had been written in 1860 it would cease to impress us. Be that as it may, however, and believing in it ourselves or not, the sense of some supernatural order in Shakespeare's tragedies does contribute very much to their power. And perhaps not so much through these more overt expressions as by a general all-pervading sense of belief which it might be difficult to pin down exactly, but which one feels to be there.

In Fletcher, however, this sense of mystery is lacking. He has no ghosts except in *The Triumph of Death*. He has a rather ironical apotheosis in the near-comedy of *The Mad Lover*, and an omen or two in *Valentinian*. But he is on the whole honest in eschewing the outer signs of the supernatural, as Dryden does after him. He has, like Shakespeare, allusions to heaven and providence that might provide the same background sense of mystery, but somehow do not. I do not think we can say they fail because Fletcher did not believe in religion himself—there is nothing to suggest that either he or Dryden had actually broken with it. Nor can we balk the whole question by the simple and obvious declaration that Fletcher was not a great poet. Neither was, say, Heywood, yet he suggests more of the mystery of life. Probably the real answer lies once more in the type of conflict and the difference between a moral law and a social code, a difference which is at bottom emotional rather than logical, but dramatically none the less essential for that. For the code is obviously artificial. Its infringement may lead as inexorably to disaster as that of the moral law, but its operation is more obviously mechanical, and less emotionally satisfying. Maximus in his desire for revenge raises his hand against the divinely appointed ruler and so brings destruction on himself and his country. There are all the elements of tragedy there. And probably even, for a generation that really believed in the divine right of kings, it

SHAKESPEARE, FLETCHER AND BAROQUE TRAGEDY

would be easy to see God's hand in the logical working out of that situation, and to feel a sense of mystery. But for us the feeling is rather that Maximus has infringed not a divine law but a code of expediency. The state needs a head; to cut that head off is bound to weaken the state and lead to disaster without any intervention from above. And the revenge itself is not condemned. We are told again and again that if the offender had been anyone but the emperor the code of honour could only be satisfied by bloodshed, and are not predisposed to believe in a moral order that distinguishes so nicely between ranks. In fact we are caught up in a system of conflicting and palpably artificial codes whose operation, though it may be inevitable, brings no sense of mystery, nothing beyond our logical comprehension. And also in practice a large part of these conflicts do have something exaggerated, artificial, or, as Waith has put it, hypothetical about them,² even when the hypothesis is not ultimately destroyed, as it so often is in tragi-comedy. For the loss of tragic elevation through awe and a sense of mystery demanded compensation, and it was sought for in the ineffable heroic gestures that these strained situations called forth.

There is also another way in which the conflict of reason and passion less perfectly answers our expectations of tragedy and of a sense of mystery. The man who can debate in himself, who can weigh in his mind his expectations of satisfaction, seems to be a completely free agent, and the choice he makes, where a single straw tips the balance, seems to be almost a matter of chance, yet at the same time his sole responsibility—his tragic error is his own entirely, and the disaster that it brings, the price of his own folly. I lay the stress on *seems*, for actually Maximus is no freer in his choice than Macbeth; but the mechanism of that choice, as it is presented to us, gives the effect of complete freedom. Macbeth is obviously not free to choose. He foresees all the results of his choice—much more clearly indeed than Maximus—yet under a dull compulsion he goes his way. We do not know, as we are supposed to know with Maximus, just what it was that tipped the balance; the outcome, we feel, has been decided before even he has begun to struggle with himself, and he shares the responsibility for his choice with whatever it is that has made him what he is. Thus the pattern of events unrolls itself much more inexorably from first to last, and aesthetically that is a more satisfactory pattern. Which is actually truer to our concept of existence, however—whether we see man as part of a wider scheme, or dependent on himself alone—one may hesitate to say. Probably Fletcher's way is truer to what we feel about ourselves, Shakespeare's to what we feel about other people. And that brings us to another very essential difference between the two types—the subjectivity of the approach.

Wölfflin in his famous analysis of Renaissance and Baroque art³ gave as one of his definitions of the pair, the art of things as they are, and as they seem. The Renaissance artist's vision was turned outward on things as they are in themselves, he tries to present them in their most ideally perfect and typical aspect and complete in all their details, while the Baroque artist tries to capture the fleeting impression they produce on him at a given moment. And that is an opposition that applies not only to the visual arts. In narrative the Renaissance writer presents things from the bird's eye view of omniscience—we are aware of the situation in its completeness and of the motives, intentions and plans of all concerned.⁴ The seventeenth-century writer tends rather to narrate from the perspective of one of the participants; and in the typical heroic romances of La Calprenède and his school, just as in the Alexandrian romances out of which they grew, we know no more of what is really happening, and why, than does the hero himself.⁵ We move in a world, not of deep, all-embracing mysteries, but of riddles—bewildering, but

SHAKESPEARE SURVEY

not mysterious—that are gradually explained away through layer after layer of inserted narrative. And that is already, and well before La Calprenède, the world of Beaumont and Fletcher, a disconcerting world of ever-shifting circumstances and sudden reversals in which we must constantly re-orientate ourselves, typically a world from which all sense of stability has disappeared, and one must cling to appearance for, deceptive though it is, there is nothing else to cling to. It is true this applies more to the tragi-comedies than the true tragedies, for in tragedy the hero still tends to be the active shaper of his world, and seeing through the eyes of the hero we still see more or less objectively. And one might indeed say that the subjective view and the sense of instability naturally led to tragi-comedy. But even in tragedy the subjective or introspective view did lead to very definite changes. Already in *The Maid's Tragedy* Beaumont, who departed from the Renaissance view much less markedly than his friend, had shown a new sort of approach and a new sort of situation; the revelations of the wedding-night represent for hero and for audience alike a reversal as sudden and unexpected as the final reversals of tragi-comedy, and serve to trigger off an almost paradoxical shift of emotions with their juxtaposition of happy sexual expectation and the horrified realization of blasted honour. And nevertheless here, though we are absorbed in that emotional flux, we are probably even more absorbed in the realization of Evadne as a personality—portrait and emotional evocation are at least held in balance. In the other key scene of Evadne's reclamation, written mainly by Fletcher, though probably heavily overwritten by Beaumont, this balance has been largely destroyed, and the stress lies almost exclusively on a scintillating play of the emotions as they pass through puzzlement, alarm, indignation, fear, shame, contrition, horror, grief. Evadne here is, practically speaking, Everywoman, or at least every woman in such a situation—it is the situation alone that defines the personality. And in *Valentinian* too it is effects such as these that form the substance of the play. The quarrel scene between Valentinian and Aëcius, like that between Melantius and Amintor in *The Maid's Tragedy*, passes through a whole gamut of various emotions and pulsating tensions to end in reconciliation. Both scenes no doubt owe a great deal to the quarrel in *Julius Caesar*, but they employ the situation very differently, and while with Shakespeare we are aware above all of a contrast of personalities, here again it is much more with the fluctuations of the emotional barometer that we are concerned. As in the later and even more famous quarrel scenes of Dryden—Antony and Ventidius, Sebastian and Dorax—the opponents differ in position, to some extent in outlook or even in temper, but as individuals they seem all but identical in manner of speech, ways of thought, interests, in everything that goes to make up personality.

Personality is in fact something that one is aware of only in others, something that one can only grasp through objective observation of external behaviour. Of one's own one has but the vaguest concept, except perhaps as a sort of norm, as impersonal as a yardstick, by which to measure what we observe. In ourselves, what we are aware of, and all that the introspective view can give, is a succession of constantly changing emotions, reactions, judgments, which it is impossible for us to build up into any sort of system, because they seem to us the natural and inevitable response of human nature. Other people's idiosyncrasies may form systems, but on the levels on which we know ourselves human nature does seem ultimately to be very much the same—as Hobbes maintained, and as in fact the various attempts in recent times to represent the stream of consciousness seem to have demonstrated with devastating effectiveness. The streams

SHAKESPEARE, FLETCHER AND BAROQUE TRAGEDY

may differ in the actual debris they sweep along with them, but in the patterns they make of it they are distressingly alike. And so it is not surprising that Fletcher's heroes, and the Baroque heroes in general, should all appear essentially the same. Shirley in his preface to the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio singled out as the central virtue of these plays the treatment of the passions; and 'the passions' were to remain a focus of critical attention for over a century to come. It is to the passions and their interplay that one naturally turns if one's view is turned in on oneself. And the writer's interest will centre on human nature in the abstract, he will seek the universal rather than the individual, the type rather than the personality. From Boileau down to Johnson this was in fact the accepted attitude. And to Rymer an Evadne or an Iago were equally an offence against art because they were too strongly individualized and broke away from what he regarded as their essential types.

How far Fletcher in reducing his characters to standardized types was consciously following a theory of art, and how far he was instinctively submitting to a trend that was to bring such a theory with it, it would be hard to say. But one can say fairly definitely that the paring away of the individual touches that build up the effect of a personality was deliberate, or at least not due to inability. Fletcher's comic heroes are somewhat more highly individualized than those of his serious plays, but in general only slightly so. However, with two figures he does quite astonishingly, without even disrupting the framework of his highly mannered style, give the effect of a very distinct personality: with the unctuous demureness of Monsieur Thomas and the slow, gentle naivety of Leon in *Rule a Wife*—and in both cases the men are playing a part and pretending to be what they are not. But these assumed personalities are put across so vividly that it is obvious that, had he wanted to, Fletcher could have rivalled the very greatest masters of comic portraiture. And equally obviously he regarded such a high degree of individualization as a form of caricature that should be used only very sparingly.

By paring away the details of personality one is able to concentrate on what one regards as essentials. Maximus and Aëcius are practically indistinguishable in everything except in their attitude on loyalty, and in that they are contrasted from the first and before Maximus has any reason to rebel. In a way one might say that within the dramatic structure they are contrasted much as Brutus and Cassius are contrasted. With Shakespeare, however, the contrast is worked out in such detail and on such various levels that one cannot reduce it to a single principle. In the final summing up we are told that Brutus alone of the conspirators acted from purely disinterested motives. But though one will have felt that a personal dislike and irritation at being ruled over by someone whom he feels to be no better than he, does enter into Cassius's motives, to say that he acted merely 'in envy of great Caesar' seems unjust. Ultimately Brutus has no better reason for his fear of tyranny than Cassius—a general suspicion of human nature when left without control, but which with both of them is formulated more as a general and unreasoned loyalty to a republican tradition. In fact one would have to say that if Shakespeare had really intended the contrast suggested by Antony's summing up, he had muffed it rather badly. What he gives, however, is the contrast not between two different attitudes towards authoritarian rule, but between the expression of similar if not identical attitudes in contrasting personalities. And in that way one is made acutely aware of the complexity of the motivation in general. But it is not the 'problem' of tyrannicide that stands at the centre of Shakespeare's play. Indeed it is very hard to say what does stand at the centre, or what the play is 'about'.