derogatory labels, is seen as a mere tool in the hands of the evil queen; but Gervinus also wonders whether his character should not be generalised to represent that of the "man of privilege and of rank, *the courtier who has grown up in nothingness and has been trained* in self-conceit", adding rather maliciously that the original should be sought "among the ranks of the military and the squires".(124) But from his earlier comments it follows that the brutish Cloten's odious advances are important to the development of the plot, because they influence Imogen's decision to flee the court. And as a foil to Posthumus, he also serves to show what virtue is not. From Gervinus's comments on the king, it is clear that he considers him a foil to those characters who exemplify his conviction that Shakespeare shows us that true virtue is virtue tried, that even if virtue has wavered, it has "a much higher value than that which is unshaken and untempted...", that virtue "ought not to shrink from any trial, not even from the most painful".(125) Gervinus would seem to regard the king as a mere negative contrast to the active struggle waged against the forces of evil and disorder in the play, as a character who is in all other respects a nonentity. This tendency to abstraction in Gervinus results in a failure on his part to consider the evil consequences which result directly from Cymbeline's failure to be in control of his own faculties and subjects. The lesson that the king never learns is that "the gods decree evil for the trial of the good", that "God loves him best whom he crosses", that "consequently only tried virtue, ripened by its contact with evil, is

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124 *Ibid.*, p. 654.

125 *Ibid.*, pp. 676-77.

worthy of love".(126) In contrast to the weak king, Pisanio "unites the cunning of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove:(127) Gervinus believes the position of Pisanio to be a crucial commentary on the play as a whole: if *Cymbeline* is seen as an elaborate metaphor of the world in which man has to struggle to survive, then Pisanio exemplifies the inner law (as opposed to a sta ic outer law of moral action) and feeling "which ought to guide us according to case and circumstance in adding or taking away from the letter of duty".(128) What Gervinus is saying in effect is that Pisanio, if he were to be passive and meet evil with good, would not only remain ineffectual but would inevitably suffer defeat. In order to survive in an evil world, and to align oneself with the forces of good, it is necessary to practise "healthy dissimulation", "necessary falsehood" and "necessary deception".(129)

In *The Tempest*, Ariel, a spirit who enters into a bond with a creature from the human world, is a foil to those humans who live in active envy and hatred with their own kind, just as Caliban is a foil to Antonio and Sebastian, and to Stefano and Trinculo. In the face of all the trials which the pressure of circumstances causes the virtuous characters in the play to suffer, they are forced to practise deception and to resort to lies -- as long as they remain virtuous. [One wonders if Gervinus is aware of the implications and possible ramifications of these claims.] Pisanio does not shape his destiny

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126 *Ibid.*, p. 677.

127 *Ibid.*, p. 673.

128 *Ibid.*, p. 675.

129 *Ibid.*, p. 675.

according to the demands of the world but obeys that inner law which Gervinus believes to be written on the human heart.

These otherwise perceptive comments on the characters and their functions in the plays make one wonder why Gervinus thought it necessary to suggest that there can be no consensus on their value and function:

> "... it would be an idle undertaking to endeavour, in the explanation of Shakespeare's characters, to balance the different opinions of men, or arbitrarily insist on our own; each can only announce his own view, and must then learn whose opinion stands best the test of time and of the experience of life. For returning to these characters at another time, our own greater ripeness and enlarged experience will lay open to us ever new features in them, of which we ourselves were not previously aware. Even the deepest among them cannot quite be exhausted but by men who have made analogous experiences in their own lives".(130)

In this view they would seem to be likened to complex Rorschach tests: what the reader finds in them will depend entirely on his own

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130 *Ibid.*, p. 851.

predilections and personal experiences.(131) Reading the criticism of Shakespeare's Romances one is, of course, struck by the great diversity of opinion, but also by a measure of consensus -- on at least certain aspects of the plays -- running through the variety of critical opinions.

In his discussion of Shakespeare's moral system, in which all his other commentaries culminate, Gervinus stresses that Shakespeare s works not only show man to be born with self-determination and self-government but that they stress the crucial importance of an active life for realising one's innate potential. He argues that Shakespeare held nothing more unmanly than to despair in misfortune, to give up and resign; that man has a duty to use his power of action and that, when all is said and done, man's actions and activities should reflect moderation, for Gervinus the essential attribute of a virtuous nature.(132) And to illustrate what he means by moderation, Gervinus refers to the character of Posthumus, who is "strong even to the control of his passionate and excited nature".(133) Shakespeare's favourite charactes, he claims, are those who "unite the most contradictory qualities, a Posthumus so strong and tender..., and furthest from him lies perhaps that dogmatic

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131 This approach would seem to have something in common with Schleiermacher's argument that each work is purely subjective and must be looked at absolutely in terms of itself. See Wellek, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

132 *Ibid.*, pp. 912-15.

133 *Ibid.*, p. 916.

Leontes, who is shut out from all truth by his one-sided narrow-mindedness". (134)

Finally, Gervinus imputes a rigid moral system to Shakespeare, in spite of his stated belief that no system of moral philosophy [in the form of a broad, tolerant humanism, it would seem] can be distilled from Shakespeare's work. Shakespeare, he claims, points out to us "the middle line of action between defect and excess" so admirably that he "deserves to be called a moral teacher and guide through the world", and one who teaches by "actions instead of words, by living instead of cold doctrine". (135) In the remainder of his studies, Gervinus develops the thesis of Shakespeare as a synthesiser of discordant qualities to achieve an ideal mean between all extremes which testifies to his great moderation. That the Aristotle's doctrine of moderation implicitly cautions moderation in its application is a consideration that would seem to have escaped Gervinus. From our critic's arguments, it becomes clear to what extent he has succeeded in making poetry subservient to the tyranny of the idea, a trend that was forshadowed in the writings of his native contemporaries but which culminated in his work on Shakespeare.

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134 *Ibid.*, p. 930.

135 *Ibid.*, pp. 918-19.

CHAPTER 4

DIVERGENCES AND CORRESPONDENCES IN THE CRITICISM OF THE ROMANCES IN ENGLAND AND GERMANY DURING THE PERIOD REVIEWED

In order to understand the essential differences between the philosophical and, therefore, also aesthetic orientations in England and Germany during the Romantic age, it should be borne in mind that, broadly speaking, they are the manifestation of two general divergent trends within the overall development of western philosophy: the empirical trend, of which Aristotle's *Anima* and *Poetics* are said to be prototypes, and the idealistic trend, which has its recorded origin in the various Dialogues of Plato.

Essentially, the whole of English empirical philosophy, as a reaction against Cartesian rationalism, derives its bias and methodology from Aristotle, whereas German philosophy, which, after Kant, builds on the thought of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz and Wolff, is essentially Platonic. These two trends in the history of western philosophy, which were geographically concentrated in England and Germany respectively, have been aptly labelled "objective" and "subjective" by Bertrand Russell.(1) Since the gradual disintegration of the neoclassical creed and the consequent liberating influence of this development on critical production during the Romantic age has been dealt with in the introduction to this study, what remains is to distinguish the divergent philosophical orientations exhibited by

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1 Russell. B. *History of Western Philosophy* (1947), Chapter XV.

English and German criticism within the overall framework of European Romanticism, and to elucidate the critical shifts from neoclassicism to Romanticism, as manifested in the critical reception of Shakespeare's Romances in the two countries concerned.

At the risk of stating the obvious, it should be explained that the British empirical tradition in philosophy, represented by Locke, Berkeley(2) and Hume, takes it point of departure from the sensible world, from which they believe all ideas derive. Unlike in Cartesian and, later, in German idealistic philosophy, no ideas are innate, but derive entirely from the sensible world acting upon the sense organs -- in other words, from experience, either from sensation or reflection. This orientation, which also finds expression in aesthetic thought, has important implications for literature, involving as it does one of the most fundamental problems in literary criticism, namely that of mimesis or imitation. As already suggested, the prototype of the empirical orientation in literary criticism is Aristotle's *Poetics*, a work which the rationalistic neoclassical critics mistakenly supposed to be a codification of absolute rules for successful dramatic composition, as opposed to an inductively produced essay by Aristotle on his observations of dramatic performances during his day. Numerous critics have already pointed out that Aristotle could never have intended the *Poetics* to be treated as a body of inflexible rules to which all dramatic activity has to conform.

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2 In spite of Berkeley's immaterialism, his philosophy contains strong empirical elements as implicit in his argument that nothing can be said to exist unless perceived -- in other words, sensible objects act upon the sense organs to produce an idea in the mind.

It needs also to be mentioned that the twin doctrines of sensualism and associationism within the overall empirical orientation of British thought, can be traced back to Plato, Aristotle and Epicurus in ancient philosophy, but that they are actually the result of the steady evolution of empiricist thought from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, from Galileo to Hume, and coming into their own right only in Hume's contemporaries Hartley, James Mill, J.S. Mill, Thomas Brown and Alexander Bain in England, who can be said to have initiated the development of a school of psychology in which sensation and the association of ideas are fundamental concepts.(3) Since developments in philosophy and psychology are the ripening products of a much larger process of societal growth, other areas of growth will show a similar development, but with significant individual variations. It therefore stands to reason that no one-to-one correspondence between different areas of human evolution can be assumed. In the discussion of the English criticism of Shakespeare's Romances in the first part of this final chapter, it will be shown that, despite the influence of the brief flowering of neo-Platonism in Shaftesbury and his followers in England during the early eighteenth century, and the new metaphysics which later found its way to England from Germany, the overall empirical orientation in British criticism remained sufficiently consistent and enduring to distinguish it from the German criticism of the Romances.(4) In this regard, it

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3 Succinct accounts of these developments can be found in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Vol. 7) edited by Paul Edwards, and in various other encyclopediae and histories of philosophy, details of which are given in the bibliography at the end of this study.

4 See Cassirer, E. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (translated by by F.C.A. Koelnn and James P. Pettegrove) (1951), Chapter VII, "Fundamental Problems of Aesthetics", p. 312.

is also interesting to note that, from the Renaissance until the second part of the 18th century the literary influence of Aristotle (and Horace) reigned supreme in England; that it was Sir Philip Sidney who was responsible for introducing renaissance Aristotelianism into dramatic criticism,(5) and that such criticism exerted a powerful influence in England for some two centuries afterwards.

Compared with the overall empirical trend in British philosophy and aesthetics, which derives mainly from Aristotle, the trend in German thought is idealistic, the most important landmarks in its complex evolution being the work of Plato,(6) Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume (who is said to have woken Kant from his dogmatic slumbers), Kant, and Hegel. This idealistic trend gradually began to exert its influence in English philosophical thought only after about 1800, until which time British empirical philosophy remained dominant in England. This is, however, not to ignore the growing subjectivism in English literary criticism towards the middle of the 18th century already. As mentioned, the empirical orientation in British critical thinking never disappeared completely, but the pragmatical influence of Aristotle and Horace, which was supreme during the neoclassical age up to about 1740, was gradually dislodged by expressive theory towards the end of the century, when the "artist became the major

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5 See Spingarn, J.E. *A History of Literary Criticism In the Renaissance* (1954), Chapter VIII, p. 282.

6 In the history of philosophy, Plato's system is the "First to which the name of idealism is applied". In Plato's sytem, "reality does not belong to the everchanging world of sense ...; true being is found in the incorporeal essences or ideas, which communicate to phenomena whatever permanent existence or knowability they possess". J.M. Baldwin, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (Vol 1), (1911).

element governing both the artistic product and the criteria by which it should be judged".(7)

Unlike empiricism, idealistic philosophy does not take its point of departure from experience, as given in sensation and perception, but endeavours to show that human knowledge cannot ultimately be accounted for in terms of experience, that there are certain mental categories or forms which are a prerequisite to knowledge. In this sense, Kant's philosophy can be seen as an attempt to bridge the vacuum between rationalism and empiricism. Idealism, then, is opposed to the notion that mind and spiritual matter are reducible to sensual experiences of the material world. The most immediately evident and significant implication of this orientation for literature is a fundamental departure from imitation theory rooted in the Aristotelian tradition, to one which, essentially, takes its philosophical orientation from Platonic theory; that is, from a concern with outer reality as an experiential frame of reference to a concern with the ideal and, in Wellek's terms, with a "dialectical, symbolistic view of poetry ... as a union of opposites, a system of symbols".(8)

These, then, are the overall divergent philosophical orientations in English and German philosophy and criticism during the Romantic age, and it almost does not warrant pointing out that this broad, yet important distinction, is in no way intended to split English and German criticism into two completely separate entities. Although the scope of this study cannot possibly include an examination of the

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7 Abrams, M.H. *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), p. 22.

8 Wellek, R. *History of Criticism* (Vol. 2), p. 3.

intricate individual convolutions and cross-currents in this highly complex period in the evolution of literary criticism, the different shifts common to both English and German criticism in the transition from neoclassicism to Romanticism will be examined with specific reference to the criticism of the Romances, and the examination of the criticism of Coleridge and Lamb will be shown to reflect some of the valuable advantages of cross-fertilisation in literary thought, particularly in the reception of the Romances.

Before the various shifts that have occurred within the overall framework of Romanticism, as reflected in English and German criticism, are examined diachronically, in the second part of this chapter, in terms of their correspondences and also in terms of the divergent orientations mentioned, it is necessary to undertake a brief overall synchronic comparison of the two divergent orientations described and evaluated in the two previous chapters.

Compared synchronically, the overall critical orientation in the English and German criticism of the Romances exhibits the broad distinction made earlier on: the English criticism of the Romances takes its point of departure from the experiential framework of everyday reality, whereas in the German criticism of the Romances the mimetic mirror, to modify Abrams's metaphor slightly, would seem to be permeable on the side of outer reality, with the result that sense experiences are not reflected directly but become incorporated into the ideal reflected by the mirror, the reflecting side of which is turned to the shaping personality of the artist -- in other words, the overall orientation is away from experiential reality towards an

idealised and highly abstract consideration of the plays and even towards the inner vision of the artist.(9)

It must be stressed that the following discussion only purports to demonstrate the *overall* distinction in the works of the critics discussed in the two previous chapters, and that this discussion, which takes place on a synchronic axis, is of necessity general. Finer correspondances and differences in the several shifts which took place in the gradual transition from neoclassicism to Romanticism, as discussed in the introduction to this study, will be dealt with more or less diachronically in the second half of this chapter.

In the following pages the predominantly experiential nature of the British criticism of Shakespeare's Romances after about 1750 will be discussed in terms of the following broad categories: the appeal to empirical reality generally in the work of Johnson, Richardson, Hazlitt and Birch; the historical frame of reference implied in some of the critical commentaries of Mrs Montagu, Drake and Fletcher; the sensualistic trend in several of the observations of Warton and Richardson; and the emphasis on moral instruction in the critiques of Mrs Montagu, Mrs Griffith and Richardson. Coleridge and Hazlitt will be shown to have been influenced by the idealistic metaphysics that emanated from Germany.

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, Johnson's criticism contains a blunt dismissal of those elements of the plays that fail to conform to his standards of experiential accuracy: poor old Gonzalo is drowned in

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9 M.H. Abrams, *op. cit.*, Chapter 3.

the critic's ink-well for using the term "brother" metaphorically, instead of literally, and for expressing his grief hyperbolically;(10) and Ariel, possibly the most poetic of Shakespeare's imaginative creations, is given the proverbial cold shoulder by the man who shares Locke and Hume's distrust of the imagination, and who praises Shakespeare's achievement in *The Tempest* only in so far as the dramatist has managed to create characters that are "preserved with profound skill in nature, extensive knowledge of opinions, and accurate observations of life"(11) -- in other words, characters that, when all is said and done, are 'true to life'. Mrs Montagu, as indicated in Chapter 2, argues that the poet's fiction should have an air of reality and truth.(12) In Richardson's commentary, the conceptual framework of his sensualistic-associationist observations on the character of Imogen, which will be discussed in more detail in the second half of this chapter, is clearly abstracted from experiential reality.(13) Similarly, his claim, in his comments on the lovers in *Cymbeline*, that memory and imagination are but a poor substitute for actual sensation, clearly presupposes a belief on his part in the reliability of sense perception as a source of knowledge.(14) Birch's philosophical and religious inquiry, unlike the work of the critics mentioned above, does not presuppose an empirical framework that finds imaginative reflection in the plays: instead the plays are seen as the embodiment of so many manifestations of the

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10 Chapter 2, pp. 44-45.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 46.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 71f.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 72-73.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 72.

poet's philosophy of life. According to Birch, *Pericles* contains abundant evidence to show that Shakespeare the man must have been little more than a renegade. It is interesting to note that in none of the German critics' work examined in this study is there an equally blatant, non-dramatic extraneous approach to the plays.

The importance of a historical [and therefore largely extra-literary] frame of reference, or at least of a certain standard of historical accuracy, is stressed in the criticism of Johnson, Mrs Montagu and Nathan Drake. Mrs Montagu stresses the importance of creating fictional characters within an historical tradition, which suggests that the poet's imagination is not free to do as it pleases, that the act of literary creation must take its point of departure from the real world. Her belief that Shakespeare succeeded in incorporating aspects of popular tradition into *The Tempest* is evident from her brief comment on Prospero's address to his attendant spirits before he finally renounces his white magic.(15) Nathan Drake actually discusses Prospero's 'character' in terms of one of the two classes of magicians that were supposed to exist in Shakespeare's day,(16) which once again shows the extent to which an empirical frame of reference is invoked [and nascent Aristotelian elements are to be found] in the critical writings of the British critics. The largely extraneous, antiquarian line of inquiry pursued in Drake's work, finds further expression in the writings of Augustine Skottowe who, for example, also discusses *The Tempest* against the background of

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15 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 97.

popular superstitions.(17) And, finally, George Fletcher, in his comments on Iachimo's challenge and Posthumus' acceptance of the ill-fated wager, invokes an empirical frame of reference to distinguish the supposedly ingenuous English temperament from the supposedly crafty Italian one.(18) From these observations it follows that there is strong evidence that the Aristotelian concept of mimesis is still alive and well in the overall empirical orientation of the British criticism of the Romances discussed so far.

The sensualistic trend in the psychological observations of Warton and Richardson clearly has its roots in the philosophical writings of the British empirical philosophers -- in their rejection of all innate ideas and in their insistence that knowledge derives from experience as conveyed to the mind by the senses -- and, more generally, in the scientific spirit of the age, with its emphasis on observation and experiment. In Warton's comments on the Romances, an experiential framework is assumed, and he actually goes so far as to insist that the artist should be a good psychologist.(19) Richardson's approach, which will be discussed in more detail in relation to the shift from the effect of the work of art on the audience to the personality of the artist and to character-study in the transition from neoclassicism to Romanticism, will be seen to bear a strong resemblance to the sensualistic-associationist nature of British psychological thought of the time.

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17 *Ibid.*, p. 98.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 105.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 48-49.

And finally, as regards the overall empirical trend in British critical thought in the period under review, it should be remarked that the form of utilitarian ethics implied in the strong emphasis on the value of art as moral instruction, and therefore also on the social effects of art, which echoes the well-known Horatian dictum of "dulce et utile", not only imposes certain empirical limitations on the art of literary production but presupposes a definite standard of literary evaluation. Mrs Griffith approves of Shakespeare's Romances only because they show him to have been a thoroughly ethical poet or philosopher.(20) Her approach is clearly informed by a utilitarian ethical desire to use Shakespeare's work as a compendium of moral maxims in the interests of the higher [moral] aims of education in general. Also in Richardson's work there is a strong emphasis on the Horatian dictum of pleasurable instruction, as evidenced by his method of abstracting moral lessons from his sensualistic-associationist observations on the plays generally.(21)

Of all the English critics examined in Chapter 2, the only two who were clearly influenced by the metaphysical speculations of their German contemporaries, the one more than the other, are Coleridge and Hazlitt. It is therefore not at all surprising to find their critical writings straddling, to a certain extent, the empirical and idealistic trends within the overall framework of European Romanticism. Since their work will be discussed in some detail in the following pages, it should suffice to draw attention to the sensualistic elements in

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20 *Ibid.*, p. 57f.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 64.

Coleridge's comparison of theatrical illusion to the act of dreaming,(22) his pragmatical comments on Prospero's "retrospective narration", and his moralistic comment on the function of Caliban(23) -- empirical elements which blend with his partly idealistic claim that the interests of the romantic drama are "independent of all historical fact and associations", in which errors of chronology and geography are irrelevant, since the appeal is to the imagination, "which owes no allegiance to time and place".(24) As pointed out in Chapter 2, Hazlitt's commentary on the Romances exhibits a definite empirical strain, particularly in his observations on the character of Caliban and on the extent to which Leontes' frame of mind influences his speeches;(25) yet, at the same time, other elements more characteristic of German idealistic thought than that of any of the other English critics whose commentaries on the Romances are examined in this study are also to be found in his work, notably in his almost Kantian conception of the imagination as ranging, and presumably mediating, freely between "heaven" and "earth" -- that is, between the unreal, immaterial or ideal and the real, between understanding and empirical reality, to breech the dichotomy between subject and object and in his emphasis on the organic unity achieved by means of an overall idea or "single circumstance".(26)

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22 *Ibid.*, p. 82.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 83f.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

Just as the observations of Coleridge and Hazlitt to a certain extent clearly reveal the influence of German aesthetic thought on their approach to the Romances, the German critic Tieck's arguments are to a remarkable extent rooted in the empirical tradition of British sensualistic psychology. Like the work of Coleridge, his own work can be seen to straddle the two divergent trends in Shakespearean criticism during the Romantic era: on the one hand, for example, he stresses that the idea of unity and form must have its locus in the soul of the poet, which would seem to echo Kant's reference to ideas as "representations of the imagination which have a semblance of reality",(27) and that in *The Tempest*, for example, art would seem to achieve a kind of spiritualisation of the sensuous, expressed in Hegelian terms; on the other hand, his argument that Shakespeare derived the 'rules' for his plays from experience, that he made excellent imaginative use of such empirical realities as the superstitions current during his own time, and that he derived the inspiration for his plays from his own dreams -- all these arguments, taken together with his comments on the techniques Shakespeare used to sustain the dramatic illusion and diversify the action in a play such as *The Tempest*, for example, clearly imply an empirical frame of reference containing strong sensualistic elements.

It is remarkable just how different the overall critical trend in the reception of the Romances in Germany is compared with their reception in England during the same period. The main difference would seem to be between the [illegible] strain that, to a certain extent, would still seem to influence [illegible]nses to the Romances as well as

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27 Wellek, R. *op. cit.* (Vol. 1), p. 231.

the overall conception of the imagination in almost all the English criticism examined in this study, and the great emphasis in German criticism on the unifying inner character or idea of each play, on the value of literature as mediating between the real and the metaphysical to overcome the various dichotomies between subject and object, the general and the particular, and ultimately on a symbolistic view of the plays in terms of which they come to be seen as "embodying a profound view of the inward life of nature and her mysterious springs", as Schlegel phrased it.(28) As regards the emphasis on the overall idea as the inspirational centre of each work, Schlegel praises Shakespeare for subordinating all seemingly discordant elements in the plays to an overall design or motif;(29) Horn examines the "inner character" or "idea" of each play in terms of which the work of art becomes a kind of philosophical microcosm, almost a symbol, that is, of idealised human nature, to break down -- in Kant, Schelling, Schiller, Solger and Hegel's terms -- the barrier between the real and ideal worlds,(30) or -- in Horn's own terms -- to render nature synonymous with nature, as in *The Tempest*.(31) In Ulrici, as argued in Chapter [illegible] the title of each play is seen to embody the leading idea [a leading [illegible] of feelings, in Richardson], from which the essential symbolic structure of the play in question derives;(32) and outer chance [in *The Winter's Tale*] is characterised as the

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28 Chapter 3, p. 120.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 117f.

30 Their contributions are discussed by Wellek in Vols. 1 (Chapter 2) and 2 (Chapter 12) of his *History of Criticism*.

31 Chapter 3, p. 124.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

"manifestation of the deep, unrevealable mystery"(33) which, in terms of Schelling's arguments, would imply a view of art as a revelation of the essence of nature or, in terms of Hegel's aesthetics, a view of art as making the spiritual sensuous. The metaphysical framework that Ulrici imposes upon *The Tempest* virtually results in an equation of poetry and philosophy, at any rate in a completely metaphysical, and therefore essentially unpoetic, interpretation of the play. In Gervinus's almost positivistic commentaries, the idea governs the play as a whole.(34)

The symbolising trend in the German criticism of Shakespeare's Romances becomes c[illegible] one considers that, in Tieck and Schlegel, the fictional unive[illegible]ated by Shakespeare in each of the Romances still hovers between the real and the ideal world whereas, in Horn, the ideal world of the play becomes a symbol which, in Ulrici and Gervinus, is synonymous with the idea that is said to govern each play as a whole.

Le[illegible] the impression has been given that English and German Romantic criticism can be separated into two essentially different halves, it should once again be emphasised that these individual trends are firmly embedded within the much larger trend of European Romanticism in general. Since the transition from neoclassicism to Romanticism has been dealt w[illegible]n the introduction to this study, the last part of this chap[illegible]ports to examine some of the important shifts that took p[illegible] the reception of the Romances in

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33 *Ibid.*, p. 139.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 150.

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33 *Ibid.*, p. 139.

34 *ibid.*, p. 150.

the course of this transition -- shifts common to both English and German criticism -- and briefly to examine the individual differences in such criticism.

In the preceding discussion it was already briefly suggested that the concept of imitation underwent a transformation in the course of its long evolution: from a literal imitation of nature in classical criticism, to a more general and idealised form of imitation as a means to pleasing the audience in neoclassical criticism, and, finally, in Romantic criticism, to a mirror illuminated by the lamp of the author's personality, to use Hazlitt's metaphor,(35) which reflects the inner vision or personality of the artist. In most of the English criticism examined in this study, the mirror is still turned to outer reality whereas, in German criticism, it is turned inward. Two other major related shifts in the transition from neoclassicism to Romanticism are the transition from the emphasis on reason and the rules to the belief in the supremacy of feeling, genius [inspiration] and originality, and that of the concern with plot and structure to the overwhelming interest in character-portrayal. And central to all these shifts is the changing conception of the nature and role of the imagination. The gradual breakdown of the neoclassical creed round about 1750 brought with it a significant shift from the standard of objectivity and uniformity implied in the essentially rationalistic rule-orientated outlook on literature, with its emphasis on propriety or decorum, to a much greater interest in the individual personality and inner vision of the artist in Romantic criticism.

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35 See M.H. Abrams, *op. cit*, p. 52.

To understand the extent of the shift away from the standard of objectivity, of realism, implied in the continuing preoccupation with mimesis as a criterion in neoclassical criticism to the subjective approach of the Romantics, it is necessary to take a brief look at the criticism the neoclassicists levelled at the plays. As indicated in Chapter 1, they took strong exception to the mingling of fantasy and realism generally [*The Tempest*, for example, was criticised by Rowe for violating "likeness to truth"];(36) to evidence of improbability [*Pericles* was condemned on this score by Steevens],(37) not to mention "impossibility" [Dryden criticised *The Tempest* for being grounded on impossibility];(38) and to a lack of verisimilitude and psychological realism [for example, Charlotte Lennox in her comments on Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*].(39)

The first critic after 1750 to praise Shakespeare for his wonderful [in the true sense of the word] poetic vision, as embodied in *The Tempest*, and who shows an appreciation of the inner, as opposed to the outer, reality achieved in the Romances, is Joseph Warton, to whom Shakespeare is a "magician greater than his own Prospero".(40) The word magician is highly significant in context, since it shows that the poet's achievement is no longer seen in terms of rationalistic criteria but in terms of an awareness of the mysterious, subjective nature of literary production. Mrs Montagu

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36 Chapter 1, p. 34.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 33-34.

40 Chapter 2, p. 49

also stresses that the poet is not subject to rules and that his work should be judged, not according to experiential criteria, but according to its appeal to the imagination.(41) Richardson, stressing the need for the poet to study his own feelings and the need for him to enter imaginatively into his creations, actually criticises Shakespeare for his supposed 'realism' -- that is, for having followed nature too closely.(42) Coleridge, in spite of the empirical sensualistic nature of his comments on the question of theatrical illusion, praises *The Tempest* for constituting an imaginative universe independent of experiential reality, made possible by the fact that Shakespeare "derived his inspiration from within, from the moved and sympathetic imagination".(43) Nathan Drake's and Birch's interest in the personality of the artist, unlike that of the other critics mentioned, is largely extra-literary, which is particularly true of Birch.(44) The strong idealistic approach of the German critics, on the other hand, is immediately evident from the 'immaterialistic' nature of their interest in the plays as deriving their overall conception or form from the inner reality or vision of the artist's soul. Tieck, whose work on the Romances is later than Richardson's, and earlier than Coleridge's, specifically states that the idea and unity of form of a play should have its origin in the soul of the poet.(45) Schlegel sees the plays as embodying the artist's "profound

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41 *Ibid.*, p. 49.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

44 *Ibid.*, 107f.

45 Chapter 3, pp. 111-112.

view of the inner life of nature".(46) Horn also evinces an interest in the "inner reality" of the plays, in the idea, organism and individual characters.(47) And in Ulrici and Gervinus, this inner reality of the plays as an expression of the inner vision of the artist is conceptualised in philosophical terms. These pronouncements show the change from objectivity to subjectivity in the reception of the Romances.

In all the English critics, except Richardson, there is an implicit belief in the irrelevance of arbitrary rules imposed blanket fashion from without. Richardson's theoretical pronouncements, particularly in his essay on Shakespeare's supposed faults, show many remnants of neoclassical thinking, although his practical criticism, as argued in Chapter 2, does not labour under the same stereotyped notions.(48) In the work of the German critics, the rules are explicitly rejected. Schlegel argues that the artist is fully justified in ignoring the rules of probability;(49) Horn, that the so-called rules of literature should make way for the rules of the heart (a statement which nicely summarises the actual change from the objective to the subjective that took place in literary criticism;(50) and Ulrici, that departures from the credible may be fully justified in terms of the conception of the individual work of art.(51)

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46 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

48 Chapter 2, p. 75f.

49 Chapter 3, p. 120.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 127.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 141.

It is therefore not at all surprising that feeling, originality and genius should now take total precedence over all formalistic criteria of literary composition. In the criticism of Shakespeare's Romances after 1750, the first critic to put a premium on originality in literary production, and to praise Shakespeare for the originality and passion [feeling] in his work, for example, is Joseph Warton.(52) Mrs Montagu, in her few scant comments on the Romances, specifically states that genius is superior to the rules.(53) Richardson argues that the artist should *feel* what is good, but adds the rider that literary principles as such should not be subject to mere feeling.(54) And Coleridge states that real excitement, presumably an essential ingredient of inspiration, should come entirely from within.(55) In keeping with the sensualistic nature of some of his pronouncements on the Romances, the German critic L[illegible]ck specifically argues that the poet should derive the inspira[illegible] play from the study of his dreams, but would seem to imply that such inspiration should be entirely original and not derived from any general experiential framework.(56) Implied in Horn's commentary on the Romances is a clear belief in their complete originality of conception, which is also implied in his use of such a significant phrase as "poetry of the heart", for example, and in his comments on Ariel and Caliban.(57)

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52 Chapter 2, p. 48.

53 Chapter 3, p. 55.

54 Chapter 2, p. 65f.

55 *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

56 Chapter 3, p. 112f.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 127.

In view of the predominantly rationalistic nature of neoclassical criticism, it is not at all surprising that the main concern should have been with formal elements of composition of the work of art in relation to its effect on the audience, which quite understandably involved standards of propriety and decorum. The nature of the neoclassical critics' interest in plot and structure was largely determined by the overruling belief in the absolute importance of adherence to the supposedly Aristotelian unities in the construction of the plot, and in the belief in the importance of propriety, probability, coherence and purity of genre. As indicated in Chapter 1, the Romances were seen to violate all the basic tenets of neoclassicism, with the result that the critical responses to them ranged from outright condemnation, on the part of rigid adherents to the creed, to qualified praise of some aspects of the plays by the more perceptive and sensitive of Shakespeare's critics. Aspects that qualified for severe censure, as indicated in Chapter 1, were the hybrid structure of the plays, the general unclassical looseness of organisation, inordinately long time spans, the high degree of probability in the structure of the plots, the frequent scene changes, and the general disregard of the 'sacred' unities, to name only a few. Such formalistic considerations eventually ceased to be of importance in the shift to the personality of the artist and to the overwhelming interest in character analysis *per se*, in which the new cult of individualism naturally resulted. The extensive interest shown in these matters by almost all the critics discussed in this study clearly shows this to have been perhaps the most important shift in the transition to Romanticism as revealed in the criticism of Shakespeare's Romances, subordinate only to the change that took place in the evolution of the critical concept of the imagination.

In the English criticism of the Romances, up to Coleridge, an experiential frame of reference is assumed, with the result that such commentaries often involve an empirical-psychological approach to the characters. This is, for example, evident in the work of Joseph Warton, who argues that, to represent his characters naturally, the poet needs to be a good psychologist,(58) and in the critical writings of Richardson, whose Romantic interest in Shakespeare's method of character portrayal finds expression in sensualistic-associationist comments on Miranda and Imogen as well as on the effect of Posthumus' banishment on his beloved. Arguing that the artist should not only reflect on his own feelings and on the behaviour of others, but that he should cultivate the ability to transport himself into the character he represents,(59) he further claims that the poet's conception of any character should have its centre in a leading idea or passion.(60) Although this emphasis would at first glance seem to be little more than a restatement of the German emphasis on the centrality of idea as a principle of composition, it receives a distinctly sensualistic-associationist application, for example, in his comments on Imogen in whom, he claims, the leading passion is her love for Posthumus Leonatus.(61)

In his commentary on Imogen, Richardson distinguishes between a primary, or ruling, sensation and concomitant secondary sensations generated by the operations of the mind when confronted with such

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58 Chapter 2, p. 48f.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 70.

60 *Ibid.*, pp. 67-69.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

empirical realities as "separation", or the "apprehension of inconstancy".(62) The associationist nature of his reasoning is to some extent reflected by his claim that empirical realities cause certain feelings to be "annexed" to the image of the absent loved one(63) by the operations of memory and imagination and, more particularly, by his further implied claim that one leading passion acts like a magnet to others, until clusters of ideas result around the leading idea or passion.(64)

A clear break with this predominantly sensualistic-associationist trend occurs in the work of Coleridge and Hazlitt, whose commentaries reflect the influence of the metaphysical speculations of their German counterparts. The search for underlying, unifying principles, which is particularly characteristic of the German critics, is, for example, suggested by Coleridge's sweeping generalisation that all Shakespeare's women exhibit essentially the same underlying principle,(65) by the dialectic strain of his thinking and, to some extent, by his contrasting of concepts such as "natural" and "supernatural", "savageness" and "moral sense" in his comments on some of the characters in *The Tempest*. In Hazlitt's criticism, the search for an underlying principle with which to 'explain' a character is evident, for example, from his argument that Imogen's moral nature is embodied in the single fact of the "depth of her love, her truth

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62 *Ibid.*, pp 71-72.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 72.

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

65 *Ibid.*, p. 84.

and constancy",(66) which forms the principal interest of the play as a whole. His obvious belief in the dialectical unity of opposites as expressed in his comments on several of the characters in the Romances would seem to have its origin in the aesthetic writings of Kant, Schiller and Solger.(67) In Drake's commentary on Imogen, the emphasis is clearly on the beauty of Shakespeare's portrayal of her moral nature as opposed to her goodness in terms of any implied experiential framework. In this regard, it is interesting to note that he specifically quotes Schlegel on the "fervent truth in the delineation of character and passion".(68) That his comments straddle the empirical and idealistic traditions in criticism is evident from the fact that these idealistic statements are counterbalanced by his empirical discussion on Prospero's character in terms of the experiential framework of Elizabethan superstitions, an approach that is also to be found in the work of Augustine Skottowe, whose comments on the characters in the Romances are of a distinctly antiquarian nature.(69)

The conceptualistic trend in Victorian criticism is reflected in the work of Mrs Jameson, who argues that the character of Miranda unites the real and the ideal,(70) that her character "resolves itself into the very elements of womanhood",(71) and who makes poor Miranda

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66 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

67 See Wellek's discussion of their critical thought in his *History of Literature* (Vol. 2). Also see p. 15 ?? of this chapter.

68 Chapter 2, p. 96.

69 *Ibid.*, p.98f.

70 *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

71 *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

perform... strange aerobatics in her oscillations between heaven and earth.(72) However, despite her predominantly abstract, moral interest in Shakespeare's characters, her comments are warm and full of praise for the imagination and skill that Shakespeare displays in the creation of his characters. At the centre of George Fletcher's commentary on the character of Imogen is his belief in her intellectual and moral beauty. Although her "intellectual charms" are to a certain extent identified with her deep insight into folly, which gives a distinctly moral qualification to the observation, it is actually a new development in the criticism of Shakespeare's heroines in the Romances: in the commentaries preceding Fletcher's, they are greatly admired for their personal and moral beauty, but to a certain extent are treated as brainless individuals. Finally, it should be observed that the overwhelming interest in character *per se* to be found in most of the English critics' work on the Romances is also characteristic of Fletcher's work.

Once again, it must be observed how amazingly different the approach of the German critics is from that of most of their English counterparts. In the commentaries of Tieck, Horn, Ulrici and Gervinus, emphasis is laid on the bridge that the characters in the Romances form between the real and ideal worlds. According to Tieck, this is especially true of Miranda,(73) and to some extent of Ariel and Caliban. According to Horn, it is through the characters in the plays that nature is rendered synonymous with the wonderful, and

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72 *Ibid.*, p. 100.

73 Chapter 3, p. 113.

vice versa,(74) and through the control that Prospero, as the spiritual centre of *The Tempest*, exercises over the action, involving real and supernatural characters, that this fusion of the realms of the real and metaphysical is achieved.(75) According to Ulrici, *The Tempest* embraces both the real and ideal worlds,(76) and this fusion is achieved through the interaction of the real and ideal characters in the play.(77) Commenting on *The Tempest*, Gervinus argues that it is essentially in the person of Prospero that the realms of the real and imaginary are combined.(78)

The aspect that clearly distinguishes the German commentaries on the characters in the Romances from those of the English critics is that of investing the characters with symbolic significance, which then also explains why Shakespeare is praised specifically for the moral truth of his creations. In his commentary on *The Tempest*, Schlegel specifically praises Shakespeare for the skill and philosophical truth of his characterisations, and treats Caliban as a synthesis of dialectically opposite ideas. *The Winter's Tale* he praises for the "fervent truth in the delineation of character and passion" revealed in it.(79) In Horn's commentaries, Prospero is treated as the spiritual centre of the enchanted island;(80) Florizel and Perdita are treated

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74 *Ibid.*, p. 130.

75 Chapter 2, p. 130.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 142.

77 *Ibid.*, p. 143f.

78 Chapter 3, p. 146f.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

80 Chapter 2, p. 124f.

almost as a philosophical synthesis of existential halves making up the whole and exemplifying the "pure, eternal truth of Nature and love"; and Caliban, as fusing the realms of the real and ideal.(81) In Ulrici, the supernatural characters in general are treated as symbols of the mysterious forces of nature, and Prospero, in particular, as the personified force of nature.(82) Gervinus's comments on Imogen reveal a strong symbolising tendency: as pointed out in the preceding chapter, her character becomes the embodiment of an accumulation of transcendental virtues, the "ideal of feminine beauty".(83)

The German critics' character analyses are often subordinate to the overall organic structure of the play examined. In Schlegel's commentary, as already indicated in the preceding chapter, the characters' natures are seen as elements of the total overall organic design.(84) Ulrici argues that, in *The Winter's Tale*, there is a definite grouping of the characters in terms of the spirit of the whole,(85) and that in, *The Tempest*, the interaction of the characters, from which the action of the play as a whole derives, exemplifies the main idea of the play.(86)

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81 Chapter 3, p. 124f.

82 *Ibid.*, p. 156.

83 Chapter 2, p. 156.

84 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

85 *Ibid.*, p. 142.

86 *Ibid.*, p. 143f.

The essential differences, then, between the English and German critics' responses to the characters in the Romances are to be found in the almost exclusively symbolic, philosophical nature of the German critics' comments, the complete absence of an experiential framework, their tendency to praise Shakespeare for the moral truth of his characters, and the growing emphasis on organic unity as grounded in an underlying motif or idea.

Underlying all the shifts discussed in the preceding pages, and therefore the most significant of them all, is the transition from the belief and interest in reason as the essential, creative principle to an overwhelming concern with the crucial importance of the artist's imagination in the creative act. It remains to be asked how the English and German critics conceive of the role of the imagination in the Romances.

Examined diachronically, the English criticism of the Romances reveals a most interesting three-stage evolution in the concept of the imagination: from the severe distrust and open disparagement of this faculty in Johnson (and in most of his predecessors), to a conception of the imagination as either limited by the demands of a literary-historical tradition or subordinated to the demands of morality, which involves an empirical frame of reference, and finally to a warm, enthusiastic appraisal of the autonomy of the imagination in philosophical terms that clearly demonstrate the influence of German aesthetic thought on this evolution. If the emphasis on the supremacy of the imagination in literary production is seen to be one of the most essential ingredients of Romantic thought, then the efficacy of postulating a definite date around 1800 for the onset of

Romanticism should be called in question, because it becomes abundantly clear that literary evolution does not proceed by fits and starts but in terms of a gradual development, in the course of which several contradictory strands in the evolving canvass can be seen to remain inextricably intertwined until the final picture gradually begins to emerge. As early as 1753, Joseph Warton specifically praised Shakespeare for his "lively imagination" as a "most striking instance of his creative power"(87) and for the imaginative consistency of his characters, although [as suggested in Chapter 2] the imagination is still too broadly conceived in Warton to characterise its workings.(88) According to Mrs Montagu, the empirical, extra-literary demands of a literary-historical tradition imposes certain restrictions on what the imagination can legitimately accomplish. Although the increasing opposition between reason and imagination is to a certain extent reflected in Mrs Montagu's work, her emphasis on truthful imaginative portrayal, on "reality and truth, within the limits of popular tradition",(89) is clearly a remnant of neoclassical thinking. This largely empirical, extra-literary approach finds extreme expression in the coarse didacticisms of Mrs Griffith, which make poetry the handmaiden of her kind of morality. The first Romantic conception of the imagination after Warton's warm praise of this faculty is found in the work of Richardson. It is a conception that derives, not only from his interest in the personality of the artist, but also from his overriding belief in the importance of sympathetic intuition as a prerequisite to entering into the character

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87 *Ibid.*, p. 48f.

88 *Ibid.*, p. 49.

89 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

a poet sets out to create. Although this observation is still chained to the neoclassical demand for "truth and propriety" in rendering the "manners and passions of mankind",(90) and the style and tone of Richardson's commentary is lacking in the warmth and enthusiasm associated with Romantic criticism, this new conception of the imagination is a far cry from Johnson's literal-minded distrust of this essential faculty in literary creation. If Mesdames Montagu and and Griffith, and Messrs Warton and Richardson, can be grouped together, then Coleridge, Hazlitt, Drake and Mrs Jameson can be seen to form a grouping very different from the two of their predecessors in their approach to the imagination.

As already pointed out in the discussion on Coleridge in Chapter 2, his work straddles the empirical and idealistic trends in the criticism of the Romances, which is also suggested by his approach to the imagination as revealed in his commentary on *The Tempest*: his psychological -- that is, sensualistic -- comments on theatrical or poetic illusion as the chief end of the drama are clearly subordinate to his interest in the personality of the artist and, above all, to his belief in the supremacy of the imagination as the inner vision of the artist, which is not subject to any of the empirical constraints presumed by Mesdames Montagu and Griffith, and which gives the ultimate unity to the work of art.(91) This is borne out in his brief comments on *The Tempest* discussed in Chapter 2. The most significant comment on the imagination by any one of the English critics discussed in this study derives from the pen of William Hazlitt.

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90 *Ibid.*, p. 70.

91 *Ibid.*, p. 85f.

In his comments on the differences between ancient and modern drama, a section of which was quoted in Chapter 2, Hazlitt makes the crucial distinction between the principles of imitation and imagination as being not only distinct but virtually opposite, a distinction that is also to some extent borne out in his juxtapositioning of the classical and Romantic styles:(92) the standard of objectivity, of truth to nature, implied in or presupposed by the empirical principle of imitation, had to make way for that of the imagination, which operates not by reflection but by imaginative transformation, and which imaginatively transforms the object of its attention. The imagination, then, not only mediates between the real and the ideal world, but achieves a synthesis and, finally, a unity of the most diverse elements until the fictional universe of the play becomes autonomous -- that is, independent of the real world and analogous to it. This is further borne out by his claim that Shakespeare shows the same insight into the imagination as he does into the real world,(93) which clearly implies that the former is no longer seen merely to have assimilated empirical elements, but that it has become distinct and autonomous. In its implications, Hazlitt's distinction is by far the most far-reaching of all the comments on the role of the imagination made by his English contemporaries. There is such a striking resemblance between Hazlitt's thought and that of his German contemporaries discussed in this study, that their influence on his thought cannot be doubted. His argument that Shakespeare makes use of the principle of analogy "to reconcile great diversities of character" and to maintain a continuity throughout, in

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92 *Ibid.*, p. 88f.

93 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

Cymbeline, for example,(94) echoes the general synthesising function of art attributed to Kant and his successors, notably to Schiller and Solger. That the union of the many supposedly dialectical qualities in the Romances -- of the most "extraordinary incidents and the most singular assemblage of characters", in *The Tempest*, for example(95) -- is achieved largely through the imagination is also suggested by Nathan Drake.(96) And the same idea can be found in the commentaries of Mrs Jameson, who explicitly quotes Schlegel on the blending of the many diverse elements in *Cymbeline* into "one of the loveliest fictions of romantic poetry".(97)

Coleridge's argument that *The Tempest* appeals *entirely* to the imagination, and that the illusion achieved in the play by the imagination is comparable to the act of dreaming(98) is remarkably similar to Tieck's comment, made some eighteen years earlier, that it is through his powerful imagination that Shakespeare succeeds in initiating the spectator into the world of *The Tempest*, a world that is entirely magical and comparable to a dream.(99) Tieck would seem to suggest that the imagination mediates between the conscious and subconscious, to achieve a state of mind that Kames somewhere aptly called a "waking-dream", a term that draws attention to the empirical and idealistic elements which combine to create this atmosphere in

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94 *Ibid.*, p. 91f.

95 *Ibid.*, p. 97.

96 *Ibid.*, p. 96f.

97 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

98 *Ibid.*, p. 81f.

99 *Ibid.*, p. 112.

The Tempest. Empirical elements can also be found in Schlegel's argument that Shakespeare blended the social manners of his own time with those of antiquity but, on the whole, his overriding concern is with the synthesising power of a leading motif or idea in the plays. It is hardly necessary at this point to draw attention to the similarity between his emphasis on unity in diversity and in the centrality of organic form and that of Coleridge. In both Schlegel and Coleridge, that which ultimately achieves the grand synthesis of all the discordant elements is the imagination. The same belief is also represented in Hazlitt's work on the Romances.

That English and German criticism was certainly not without points of contact is further proved by the similarities in outlook between Hazlitt and Horn, especially in their emphasis on the organic fusion of all disparate elements in the plays achieved by the imagination. This organic principle can be seen gradually to have made way for a more abstract approach to the question of how such an essential harmony is brought about in the plays. That the "idea" has supplanted the imagination at the very heart of the Romantic debate, as is clear from the work of Ulrici and Gervinus, is a significant development in the critical history of the reception of Shakespeare's Romances in Germany, since it heralds a break with the Romantic tradition and looks forward to the positivistic approach of the Hegelians.

From the examination of the critical reception of Shakespeare's Romances in England and Germany during the period 1750-1850, it is clear that, despite an almost revolutionary break with the neoclassical past in Germany, the transition from neoclassicism to

Romanticism was essentially an evolutionary development to which no fixed date can be ascribed. There is furthermore sufficient evidence to support the argument that European Romanticism exhibits an essential unity in the several shifts common to the two trends in English and German criticism within the overall framework of Romanticism.

In the face of such essential correspondences, one needs to question the efficacy of postulating a "plurality of Romanticisms", as Lovejoy has done. It is furthermore clear that, within the overall framework of European Romanticism, the English and German criticism of the Romances can be seen to exhibit two distinct trends: English criticism takes its point of departure from experiential reality under the strong influence of the native empirical tradition in philosophy, and shows the lasting influence of Aristotle on critical thinking in that country, whereas German criticism clearly reflects the influence of the idealistic tradition in Western philosophy. Not suprisingly, then, English criticism reveals a pronounced interest in psychological, moralistic, and socio-historical considerations, and is therefore largely pragmatic and 'realistic' compared with German criticism, which evinces a more 'other-worldly' orientation in its essentially idealistic view of literature as a synthesis of dialectical opposites under the influence of an underlying central idea or unifying conception, and which, as Wellek has pointed out, concentrates more on the philosophical truth of Shakespeare's characterization and on metaphysical speculations about the state of man.

In the absence of the formal coherence characterising German Romantic thought, and for a variety of socio-political, cultural and

literary-historical reasons, which could obviously not be examined in this dissertation, the English criticism of the Romances examined in this study is less unified and, therefore more individualistic than that of the German critics. Another important reason for this essential difference is that Shakespeare's Romances became available in translation to German critics only at a relatively late stage and, therefore, did not pass through a neoclassical stage in their critical evolution. Whereas the English criticism of the Romances reveals an increasing antiquarian and socio-historical interest, German criticism is characterised by an increasingly positivistic trend, which looks forward to the critical approach of the Hegelians.

The critical commentaries of Coleridge and Hazlitt reveal the important influence of the German critics on some of their English counterparts. Coleridge's 'mediating influence' undoubtedly resulted in a valuable cross-fertilization of critical perceptions of the Romances.

Finally, it should be remarked that it took critical theory some two hundred years to come to a proper appreciation of Shakespeare's creative achievement in these last fruits of his creative genius, and that this development became possible only when the rationalistic categories of the neoclassical creed had begun to make way for a more subjective approach to literary production and to a full appreciation of the importance of the imagination as the central ingredient in creative art.

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