

*Sketches of the Gull's Head*

RAYMOND POWELL

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# SHAKESPEARE AND THE CRITICS' DEBATE

## A Guide for Students

RAYMOND POWELL

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*First published 1980 by*  
**THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD**  
*London and Basingstoke*  
*Associated companies in Delhi Dublin*  
*Hong Kong Johannesburg Lagos Melbourne*  
*New York Singapore and Tokyo*

*Printed in Hong Kong*

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**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

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Powell, Raymond

Shakespeare and the critics' debate.

1. Shakespeare, William - Criticism and  
interpretation - History

I. Title

822.3'3 PR2965

ISBN 0-333-27666-3

ISBN 0-333-27667-1 Pbk

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# Preface

This book is an attempt to provide something I should have been glad of when I was a student. I had then a strong but uncertain sense of Shakespeare's greatness and a correspondingly uncertain sense of what kind of help I was likely to get as I thumbed the Shakespeare-criticism section of the library shelves. The impact of the plays was overwhelming; so too (though in a different way) was that of the critics; and behind it all lurked the suspicion that in the criticism of Shakespeare opinions were endlessly bandied about and there was no way of knowing who was right and who was wrong. Such reactions are no doubt not uncommon. There seemed something to be said for a guide to the different ways of approaching Shakespeare which also tried to deal with the fundamental problem—where under all that pile of books is Shakespeare himself?

How far I have succeeded in making sense of Shakespeare and his critics is for the reader to judge. I should, however, like to acknowledge the debts I have accumulated during the writing of this book: to John Wilders, who first helped me to give shape to the ideas on which it is based; to the Fellows and members of the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, where some of the ideas were sharpened during my tenure of a two-year Fellowship; for reading and commenting on the final draft, to Gabrielle Boole, Fred Inglis and my friends at Bulmershe College of Higher Education—Christine MacLeod, Dennis Butts, Geoff Harvey, Tony Watkins and David Williams; and, lastly, to my wife, without whose constant help and encouragement the book would probably never have been completed. Although conscious of shortcomings that remain, I am nevertheless grateful for the help that prevented many more.

All quotations from Shakespeare's plays are taken from *The Complete Works* edited by Peter Alexander (London and Glasgow, 1951).

RAYMOND POWELL

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# I Literary Criticism and Shakespeare

Literary criticism is a paradoxical activity. From one point of view critics can be regarded, not altogether unfairly, as purveyors of opinion, endlessly contradicting each other and lacking either inclination or capacity to transform their conclusions into a significant body of knowledge. It may be further claimed that the twentieth century with its vast increase in critical studies has generated in the end as much heat as light and as much confusion as insight for the unwary student. Estragon in *Waiting for Godot* was even unkind enough to use 'critic' as the ultimate term of personal abuse. But by only a slight shift of emphasis these negative aspects of literary criticism can be converted into its chief source of strength. The fact that it produces no developing body of knowledge means that it promotes no orthodoxy. That it is a chorus of frequently inharmonious voices affirms the central truth that only in the individual response is literature kept alive. And the process whereby views are developed, changed and supplanted enacts the continuing attempt to understand and reinterpret the significance of great literature for each generation. Literary criticism is part of the finer consciousness of our culture; and, despite the routine productions that occasionally seem its most visible manifestation, it symbolises the enduring importance of literature. So at least it can be argued.

Normally we read a critic on Shakespeare because we hope for some insight into a play in which we are interested. The fact is, though, that, whatever that critic has to say, someone somewhere is sure to have produced a convincing argument for a quite contrary point of view. Critics disagree about other writers as well. But in this respect – the range, diversity and sheer contradictoriness of response that he provokes – Shakespeare must be pre-eminent. It is his most distinctive and fascinating quality, and it forms the starting-point for what follows.

I am interested in the contradictoriness of Shakespeare's critics because it is a means of shedding light on the inexhaustibility of his plays.

Except in passing I am not concerned to supply a 'Good Food Guide' directing the reader where to go in the feast of Shakespeare criticism before him: critic X is good on this play, critic Y is better on that, and so forth. So much has been written on Shakespeare by now that certain definable groupings of individual critics embodying common approaches naturally suggest themselves. They provide a convenient, even necessary, framework for the examination of the variety and contradictoriness of Shakespeare criticism. At the end of this chapter I shall summarise the various approaches, and the major ones will be considered in more detail in later chapters on individual plays. I shall be looking at these approaches partly to see in what different ways they nourish our understanding of Shakespeare's work and also to develop my investigation into the source of Shakespeare's inexhaustibility. To enliven the conventional metaphor, all so-called critical approaches are presumably concerned to reach or approach as close as possible to the essential Shakespeare. If one asks what or where the essential Shakespeare is, the answer must surely lie in Shakespeare's inexhaustibility, that feature of his work—whatever it is—which generates so many approaches and so many conflicting interpretations in the first place. I shall be using the critics and their divergent responses in order to describe what I take to be the underlying structure of Shakespeare's plays and the essential workings of his dramatic imagination.

There is a prior problem. The validity of such an investigation requires a minimum confidence in literary criticism as an intellectual discipline. We have to believe that literature can be discussed with some degree of objectivity. Consequently I must start by dealing with the charge glanced at in the opening paragraph—that literary criticism amounts to so much opinion-swapping. Before we can claim to be talking objectively about Shakespeare, certainly before we are entitled to invoke such a grand abstraction as 'the essential Shakespeare', we need to be sure that criticism is capable of objectivity at all.

## I

Nothing renders literary criticism absurd faster than the suspicion that one man's interpretation of a work is democratically equal to that of his neighbour. But on what basis are we to discriminate between them? The

solution to this traditional problem of literary criticism lies at one remove in the work of literature itself. Literary discussion, like any other form of discussion, implies that some *thing* is being discussed. If a work of literature has an objective existence separate from the endless subjective experiences of it, then discussion has something to appeal to, a basis on which to assess divergent interpretations. There are two main questions: what is the essential nature of a work of literature; and what degree of objectivity does it in fact possess?

The answer to both questions lies in the words of which the work is composed. Subjective assertions about what one feels or thinks about a work are validated by reference to the text. It supplies the necessary evidence in support or refutation of what he says. Words span the worlds of public and private experience, both making possible the experience of the work in the individual consciousness and guaranteeing its objective existence. They form common ground between writer and reader and between one reader and another. Words have generally accepted meanings. They are therefore public property. So something that is composed of words—such as a work of literature—is public property as well; and the discussion of it—literary criticism—has a minimum claim to be considered a rational activity.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, to guarantee the objective public existence of a work of literature is one thing. It does not explain the well-grounded feeling that the work cannot be wholly objectified and externalised. It is sometimes possible to be clearly wrong about a work; errors of fact can be committed. This ought in principle to imply that one can also be right. But 'right', together with related terms such as 'true' and 'correct' which suggest not so much an interpretation of as a solution to a work of literature, are in practice never used. All kinds of alternatives are employed instead—'perceptive', 'illuminating', 'helpful', 'persuasive'. It seems therefore that the words of a work of literature confer on it some kind of objective existence, but only up to a point.

The main reason why this is so is that to a limited extent words are for the writer what clay is for the sculptor. Writers are concerned not just with what words say but also with what they can be used to do: to build imaginary worlds; to create states of feeling; to arouse feelings; to offer either new insights or the emotional reality behind truths dulled by long acquaintance; to heighten our perceptions less by what we are told than by what we are directly shown. None of this is capable of being precisely quantified. A writer turns to his own account the fact (banal, but it is worth emphasising) that language is not used by a homogeneous mass of

people in an identical way. Meaning in the fullest sense is determined by individual experience. Furthermore, language develops; meanings change; words are metaphorically, if not metaphysically, alive. So the language which the writer transforms in the act of writing is then subtly transformed again in the multitude of individual consciousnesses which will read and respond to it. But it is still the public language the writer uses, and this ensures that an irreducible minimum of meaning is communicated. However obscure a writer's work, whether in local detail or in total effect, there are always elements which, even if only at a primitive level, 'make sense'.

Public and private, objective and subjective—we are not only entitled, we are obliged, to have it both ways. The precise way the balance is struck in any given work will vary enormously: one thinks of a poem by Ben Jonson as against one, say, by Dylan Thomas. It follows, in general terms, that a totally objective account of a work of literature is impossible in principle; but it also follows that, because the writer makes use of the language of ordinary discourse, his work will always bear rational comment and discussion.

My argument is in essence a very simple one: that there is a limited but undeniable objectivity about a work of literature; that there is a similar limited but undeniable rationality to literary criticism; and that the latter is directly consequent on the former. Literary discussion is rational (up to a point), because it is a discussion of something that is objectively 'there' (again, up to a point).

Since this is all somewhat general, perhaps I can illustrate what I mean with two opposed readings of a short passage in *The Tempest*. At the end of the play Prospero, reconciling himself to those who have wronged him, addresses his treacherous brother, Antonio, thus:

For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother  
 Would even infect my mouth, I do forgive  
 Thy rankest fault—all of them; and require  
 My dukedom of thee, which perforce I know  
 Thou must restore. (v i 130-4)

On one level the passage presents no problems of interpretation. The language is simple, and the meaning is clear. It is the tone that is elusive. What is the nature of the forgiveness that Prospero offers Antonio? In what spirit does he address his brother? Forgiveness which refuses to acknowledge kinship may seem a somewhat odd kind ('whom to call

brother / Would even infect my mouth'). Derek Traversi thinks not so, and explains the speech as follows:

Justice, based on the moral condemnation which is felt so strongly behind 'infect' and 'rankest' and in the bitter afterthought 'all of them', needs to be satisfied as well as love; even in the culminating moment of happiness the reality of sin is alive to the memory. Forgiveness and condemnation are fused in a single gesture.<sup>2</sup>

Bonamy Dobrée, on the other hand, is outraged by the speech, finds the tone repellent, and asks in obvious disbelief, 'Does that sound like forgiveness? Is that how you would speak to a man whom you love as you forgive him?'<sup>3</sup>

Well, forgiveness accompanied by the warmth of returning love it clearly is not. The central point, on which Dobrée and Traversi disagree, is whether it can be regarded as forgiveness at all. In Traversi's view it is forgiveness which refuses to blink those facts for which forgiveness is required. In order to assent to Traversi's reading we too must feel in Prospero's speech the presence of a heartfelt forgiveness accompanied by a condemnation of past sin which, while stern, is nevertheless impersonal. If we feel Prospero's words to contain a residue of personal rancour, of bile and resentment at the crime committed against him years ago, then his forgiveness exists in name only. My own view inclines more to Dobrée than Traversi, but I do not see how one could finally convince someone who took Traversi's view that he was wrong. In the theatre much would depend on the tone of voice in which the actor delivers the speech. But the very fact that it could be delivered in different ways leaves us no further forward in deciding which of the two critics has got it right.

My reason for drawing attention to this minor crux, as is probably clear, is not to resolve it but rather to demonstrate that it cannot be resolved. If we attend to what the words are doing here, we can go so far (quite a long way in fact) in deciding whether we agree with Dobrée or Traversi. But the words by themselves do not mediate the experience with that complete unambiguous clarity that would enable us to say definitely which reading is correct.

A further factor which influences the precise tone and weight that we attribute to Prospero's words is the interpretative context in which they are set. Just as even the finest line depends for its fullest effect upon its context, so too does the most banal. Even more so, in fact. The less

distinguished the writing, the more we need the context. A character in a play who announces, 'It's raining', is presumably passing on information; whether he is also expressing pleasure, relief, disappointment, boredom or whatever, only the context will indicate. The way we take Prospero's words at this late stage in *The Tempest* depends in part on our impression of him built up in the previous part of the play. Dobrée sees Prospero as a rather crotchety old gentleman, and he interprets the speech, consistent with that view, as a very poor gesture at forgiveness. Traversi, on the other hand, regards Prospero throughout as the embodiment of civilised values, and he interprets the speech accordingly. The one view of Prospero's character slants the speech this way, the other that.

It must be added that somewhere in our interpretation of Prospero's character, and hence of this particular moment, there exists an element of pure subjectivity. However much we try to keep our eye on the object, our personal predilections are bound to intrude. Prospero is an authority figure. What we make of him is necessarily influenced by our attitudes to different kinds of authority – those, so far as *The Tempest* is concerned, of a schoolmaster, of a colonial governor, or of God. They affect the degree of admiration or otherwise that Prospero elicits from us. Although the play can guide and shape our attitude to him, we are not computers, and no work of literature can programme our response.

At one extreme lies the illusion of objectivity – the belief that we are discussing, reporting and commenting on, in Matthew Arnold's phrase, 'the object as in itself it really is'. At the other extreme lies uncontrolled subjectivity – using a work as a sounding board for our prejudices and hearing from it the gratifying sound of our own voices.

Treading a middle path is even more difficult with Shakespeare than it is with other writers, and what will help us to avoid both extremes is a readiness to talk about Shakespeare's intentions. This is, I realise, an unconventional recommendation. The arguments making up the so-called intentional fallacy<sup>4</sup> are well known: that we cannot ultimately know what were a writer's intentions; that a statement of intentions, if available, may or may not correspond to what he finally wrote; and that a knowledge of his intentions could not and should not preclude us from finding further meanings in what he has written. These objections are true but irrelevant. They correspond to the difficulties involved in all use of intentional language. Intentions are, by definition, matters of inference. With people in ordinary life we infer their intentions from their actions; with writers we infer theirs from what they write. A work

of literature is not an *objet trouvé*; it possesses an intrinsic meaning put there by the author; and because the author put it there, we are entitled to talk about his intentions.

Some reference to Shakespeare's intentions is, however, more than a matter of permission; it is almost a positive duty. The slow and delicate business of teasing out what Shakespeare is doing, where he is leading us, what effects he is out to create, is an expression of that minimum humility which requires us to submit ourselves to the work instead of arrogantly requiring the work to submit itself to us. More to the point, the imaginative effort involved anchors us firmly in the work itself and thereby prevents the descent into subjectivity referred to above. At the same time common sense ensures that inferences about Shakespeare's intentions remain inferences; they cannot be offered as fact. Someone who is thus made aware of the problematic nature of interpretation is unlikely to assume that final certainty is possible and start pronouncing on the plays with an unjustified degree of assurance.

The present investigation into the nature of Shakespeare's inexhaustibility will, I hope, reflect a similar caution. At various points I shall work back from the plays themselves to what Shakespeare may have had consciously in mind when he started writing them. An assumption I shall make (it is hardly a radical or contentious one) is that not all the effects in each play were premeditated and worked out in advance – in other words, that Shakespeare's original intentions must in varying degrees have been expanded in the course of composition.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, it is one thing to concede this much in general terms about the way that Shakespeare, like many other writers, may have worked. It is quite another to set out to identify the process in specific detail in particular plays. We do not have access to Shakespeare's mind and therefore cannot know what his dramatic intentions were, nor how much or how little they may eventually have been changed. Why then pursue these matters at all?

I have already suggested why it is permissible, even desirable, to take some note of a writer's intentions. In the case of Shakespeare the compelling reason for doing so is my belief – it is the central thread in everything that follows – that Shakespeare creates effects which are very much more complex, even contradictory, than the general structure of a particular play leads us to expect. In this connection there is an important distinction to be drawn between complexity and contradiction. Complexity implies a mutually sustaining balance of conflicting qualities; contradiction implies the absence or destruction of

that balance. The distinction is between those aspects of a play which are mutually reinforcing and those which are mutually exclusive. Being made to feel, say, a fine balance of sympathy and condemnation for a tragic hero would indicate complexity. The sensation that at different points the play seemed to be urging us to adopt one attitude to the exclusion of the other would suggest contradiction. The relation of this distinction to questions of intention is that complexity is the expression of a coherent intention, or set of intentions, on the part of the dramatist. In a work which is complex but wholly integrated, discussion of Shakespeare's intentions is peculiarly difficult; they have dissolved into the work itself. Contradiction, on the other hand, logically implies the presence of two or more opposed impulses or intentions. The question of whether one impulse had priority in Shakespeare's mind can be resolved, conjecturally at best, by noting the extent to which it seems to have shaped the broad structure of the play.

It is not part of my purpose to impose a general schema on Shakespeare's work. The plays dealt with in the next three chapters exemplify different kinds of complexity and contradiction, and Shakespeare's initial intentions with each play, so far as they can be assessed at all, seem to have been correspondingly different. *Love's Labour's Lost* appears to have been, by Shakespeare's standards, relatively simple in its original conception; *Henry IV, Part 1* more complex; so also *Part 2*—though, as I shall argue later, its complexity is somewhat reduced by the end of the play. And *The Tempest* seems to me to hint at unresolved contradictory intentions.

Conjectures such as these, it cannot too often be stressed, remain finally unprovable, and the reason for taking discussion of Shakespeare into these speculative regions at all is that it may enable us to understand better the plays as they actually exist.

## II

In interpreting Shakespeare what we bring to him is what we bring to all writers: ourselves—what we are, what we know, what we have read, what we feel, think and believe. One part of Shakespeare's pre-eminence lies in a greater capacity than other writers to draw more of our experience into play in responding to his work. It is hard to get our minds and imaginations all round Shakespeare, harder still to articulate everything we derive from the attempt. This fact helps to explain the

existence of different identifiable critical approaches to Shakespeare; the particular aspects of our experience that we bring to bear determine the kind of approach we adopt. It should be added, of course, that critics do not write to a pattern and that any critic can be taken to exemplify more than one of the approaches listed below. They are offered as rough guides, intended primarily to provide a framework for the discussion of Shakespeare criticism in the next three chapters.

*Contemporary meanings of Shakespeare's language.* No one would dispute that it is necessary to know what the words mean. It can sometimes be necessary to know how they are pronounced as well. When in *As You Like it* Touchstone says, 'And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe', we mistake a bawdy joke for mere philosophical banality if we fail to realise that there is a pun on 'hour' and 'whore' and that 'ripe' also means 'search'. Although it is as much a precondition of all other approaches as one in itself, this approach does not confine itself to editorial elucidation. Claudio's brief references to his relationship with Juliet in *Measure for Measure* have given rise to scholarly discussion of his precise marital status under Elizabethan law.

*Topical meanings.* Again, this may be just a matter of local elucidation, but in some cases this approach can involve treating a whole play as a *drame à clef*. Examples are F. A. Yates's *A Study of 'Love's Labour's Lost'* and M. C. Bradbrook's *The School of Night*, both of which seek to illuminate hidden satirical references to contemporary figures in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Less directly explicatory but possibly more well known is Leslie Hotson's *The First Night of 'Twelfth Night'*, an attempted reconstruction of what it was like to be present at the first performance of the play. Shakespeare's sonnets, naturally enough, have come in for much of this kind of treatment, and there are many studies which seek to explain them through establishing the identity of the unknown young man and the dark lady.

*Source criticism.* The plays can be approached by means of Shakespeare's source material – the prose romances and translations of Italian *novelle* for his comedies, the English chroniclers for the history plays. Even works by other dramatists are grist to Shakespeare's mill. In the transformation of *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* into *King Lear* the similarity of the characters' names and general plot combined with the dissimilarity of the plays' endings (King Leir gets his kingdom

back and survives happily) indicate Shakespeare's use of and the extent of his departure from his source. J. A. K. Thomson's *Shakespeare and the Classics* and Carol Gesner's *Shakespeare and the Greek Romance* deal with Shakespeare's use of classical literature. Although there is no absolute distinction between source and influence, I have kept questions of general cultural influences on Shakespeare as a separate approach. The known sources for the plays are assembled in Geoffrey Bullough's eight-volume *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*; a concise but comprehensive critical interpretation of them is contained in Kenneth Muir's *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays*.

*Contemporary dramatic conditions.* Through understanding the nature of the Elizabethan theatre—the physical structure of the theatres, the dramatic effects they were capable of, the composition of the companies—we are able to see more clearly the external conditions which influenced the way Shakespeare wrote. This can give rise to such theories as that the reason Falstaff did not appear in *Henry V* is that Will Kemp had left the company; or that the Romances were the result of Shakespeare's company's acquiring the Blackfriars theatre, where he was now writing for a coterie audience. Less ambitious but probably more convincing explanations of how the external constraints of Shakespeare's theatre influenced how he wrote are contained in Nevill Coghill's *Shakespeare's Professional Skills* and J. L. Styan's *Shakespeare's Stagecraft*.

*Contemporary dramatic conventions.* This approach originated in the need to eliminate misunderstandings caused by interpreting Shakespeare's plays in terms appropriate to the drama of a later age, in particular by the naïve application of ideas derived from nineteenth-century naturalism. A pioneer work of this kind was S. L. Bethell's *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition*. Such investigations were at first reductive, confining Shakespeare's art to the primitive dramatic techniques of his contemporaries and predecessors. More recent studies, however, have revealed the extent of Shakespeare's originality in transforming his inherited material—for example, Leo Salingar's *Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy*, Rosalie L. Colie's *Shakespeare's Living Art*, and Emrys Jones's *The Origins of Shakespeare*.

*Contemporary beliefs.* An understanding of the moral, religious or political beliefs of Shakespeare's age, obscured in part for later

audiences, can throw light on the kind of assumptions Shakespeare would have made in writing his plays. Such studies often gravitate into debate about what Shakespeare himself believed; for instance, the claim, first put forward in E. M. W. Tillyard's *Shakespeare's History Plays*, that Shakespeare echoed the traditional Tudor doctrine on civil obedience, has since been much disputed, most recently by John Wilders in *The Lost Garden*. The general question of Shakespeare's relationship to his cultural environment is well examined in Wilbur Sanders's *The Dramatist and the Received Idea*.

*Shakespeare and Christianity*. Although this is strictly an aspect of the preceding approach, there has been enough written on the presence or absence of Christian thought in Shakespeare's plays to merit a separate category. An investigation of the plays' metaphysical assumptions forms the basis of W. R. Elton's *'King Lear' and the Gods* and H. A. Kelly's *Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's History Plays*. Peter Milward in *Shakespeare's Religious Background* has the dramatist harking back regretfully to the unity of pre-Reformation England. The belief that Shakespeare's religious views are both orthodox and discernible in the plays is asserted by R. W. Battenhouse in *Shakespearean Tragedy: Its Art and Its Christian Premises* and questioned by R. M. Frye in *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine*.

*Impressionistic or 'creative' criticism*. A contrast to the sober endeavours of historical criticism, this attempts not to explain or evaluate but to re-create the essence of the work in question – criticism as a second-order creative act. Walter Pater's account of the *Mona Lisa*, which Yeats later cast into free verse, is the most notorious non-Shakespearean example of this kind of criticism. Although critics allow themselves the occasional purple passage, this form of criticism is never wholly self-sufficient, even in Pater's Shakespeare criticism. This did not stop T. S. Eliot from remarking on one occasion that we should be grateful Pater did not fix his attention on *Hamlet*.

*Genre criticism*. The decision by the editors of the First Folio to group the plays into comedies, histories and tragedies has encouraged critics to analyse the relations of plays within each group. There are innumerable such studies, as well as studies of sub-genres such as the 'problem play' or 'problem comedy'. Difficulties of definition, resulting from the attempt to elicit common features, occur not only within the sub-genres

but within the major ones as well. Critics have started to find it at least as profitable to explore connections, between plays that cut across earlier notions of genre—for instance, between the Roman and history plays. It is a rash critic today who would attempt to advance a comprehensive theory of Shakespearean tragedy; in the words of Kenneth Muir, 'There is no such thing as Shakespearian Tragedy: there are only Shakespearian tragedies.'<sup>6</sup>

*Character criticism.* Probably the most popular of all forms of Shakespeare criticism, it has been under something of a cloud for much of this century. Its fall into disfavour was largely the result of a tendency by some critics to wander off into irrelevant biographical speculation, as if dramatic characters were the same as people in real life. Nevertheless, a work such as John Palmer's *Political and Comic Characters of Shakespeare* demonstrates how much this approach has to contribute to our understanding of Shakespeare. As an inevitable tribute to Shakespeare's insight into human nature, twentieth-century developments in psychology have been reflected in criticism of the plays. Undoubtedly the most well-known is Ernest Jones's discussion of *Hamlet*, which sees the Prince as the possessor of an unresolved Oedipus complex. The most comprehensive survey of Freudian interpretations of Shakespeare is contained in Norman Holland's *Psychoanalysis and Shakespeare*. More recently, A. Aronson in *Psyche and Symbol in Shakespeare* has argued for a Jungian interpretation of the plays, in which the dramatist's chief concern is with the individuation of the main characters.

*Ritual, myth and archetype.* This way of viewing Shakespeare owes something to Jung and possibly rather more to James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. A work acknowledging a direct debt to Jung is Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry*, which has some discussion of *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Othello*. Shakespeare's particularity of treatment makes his plays resistant to the eliciting of archetypal or mythic patterns; at all events, this approach has not produced a substantial body of criticism. It figures in Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* and colours his subsequent books on Shakespeare's comedies and tragedies, *A Natural Perspective* and *The Fools of Time*. John Holloway in *The Story of the Night* makes much of the scapegoat motif in the tragedies. This whole approach to Shakespeare is given a thorough, albeit sceptical, consideration in an appendix, 'Myth, Symbol, and Poetry', to Hallett Smith's *Shakespeare's Romances*.