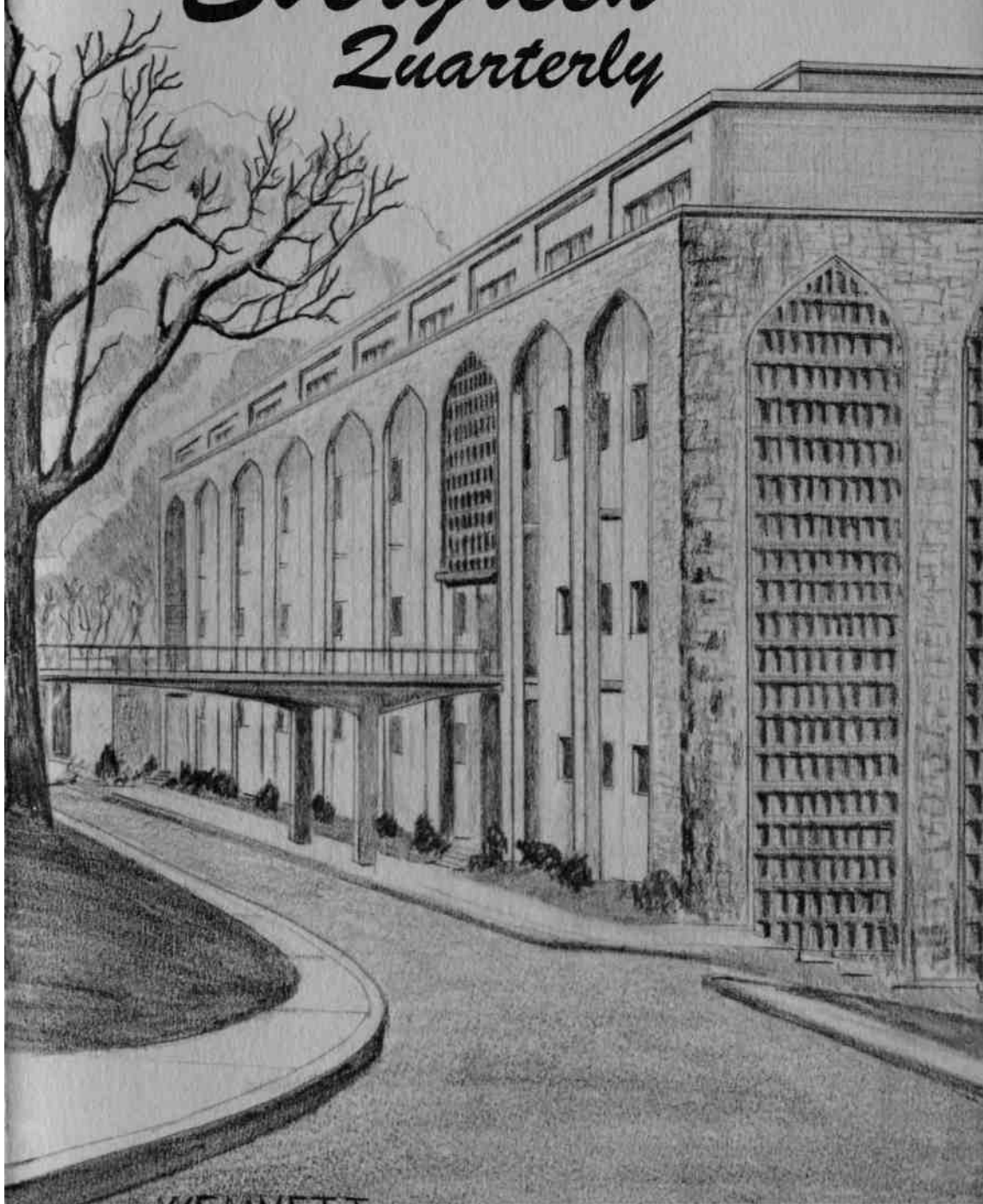


*The
Evergreen
Quarterly*

DISCARD



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The Evergreen Quarterly



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From the Editor

WHAT is it that the reader hopes to find as he opens the pages of this magazine? Are the poetry, fiction and criticism herein merely a few hours' diversion, to be read and put aside, or is there a greater significance to be attached to these writings? The fact that Loyola College sees fit to bear the expense of subsidizing a *literary magazine* seems to argue to the latter choice. Perhaps a better argument may be advanced through an investigation of the word *literature*—to which this magazine is dedicated.

The *American College Dictionary* defines literature as "writings in which *expression* and *form*, in connection with *ideas* of *permanent* and *universal interest*, are characteristic or essential features." This definition indicates the importance of literature, but it does not indicate its dynamism. Literature is also a challenge, for beneath the definition's wordage we find that literature is the communication of truths about basic things. Only a brave person can answer such a challenge.

Only the exceptional person has the inner necessity to *look* at fundamentals, the insight to *see* the meaning pervading the mass of sensation, and the ability to *say*, to put into another's mind the insight in his. Looking, seeing, saying—these are basic operations of the human person; a glance at a first grade reader is sufficient proof of this. Yet the application of these operations to "ideas of permanent and universal interest" is, indeed, a feat of courage.

Within this magazine are the efforts of a group of Loyola College students to meet the challenge of literature; each in his own way, through expression or criticism, is looking, seeing, and saying.

It has been brought to our attention that the deadline, April 1, 1964, for entries to the poetry contest of the Catholic Poetry Society of America is fast approaching. All students are eligible to enter, and entries may be submitted to any member of the English department in person or through the faculty mailboxes. Awards of a gold medal, a subscription to *Spirit*—the society's magazine—and publication of the winning poem therein are offered to the campus winner. Of course, all entries are eligible for publication in the *Evergreen Quarterly*.

S. S.

Of Love and Power

• William Gardiner

WITH THE coming of dawn, the birds began to fly again . . .

In the bedroom, a sunbeam had struck the covers and exploded into little motes of gold. The shadows fled across the wall and piled up in the corner. Timothy Thompson, age twelve, opened his eyes cautiously, then shut them like the iron gates of a castle and wished he were asleep again. Too late. A feeling of vague apprehension gathered up in a close knot inside his chest, and he knew it was Sunday.

"Hurry up. We're late"

The voice, shrill and staccato, followed the apparition of his mother in the hallway.

The room was cold. He shivered as he got out of bed and searched for his slippers. He put his feet in and shuffled across the floor to the table where his toy soldiers were spread out in battle array. He picked up the king and cradled him in his hand. How strong and beautiful he looked in his armour and helmet! How bravely he brandished his sword! Timmy brought the little figure close to his eyes and smiled. Then he placed him carefully at the head of the glorious legions of Lilliputian knights.

Timmy felt a surge of pride. The king ruled the army, and he ruled the king. Sometimes Timmy identified himself with the king. But more often, he thought of himself as a sort of god to this little world, a supremely powerful ruler over a toy universe.

"What on the Lord's earth do you think you're doing?"

His mother, in a mass of pincurlers and strangely repulsive pink-laced undergarments, filled the room with insistent sounds and threw open the closet door.

"Get a move on. Wear your gray pants and this brown coat."

"It isn't brown," said Timmy.

"Well, whatever it is. And hurry up. Leave those stupid toys alone."

Timmy felt the heaviness in his chest again as she left the room. He began to dress slowly, and the reality of Sunday came flooding back. Sunday was the only day of the week which was worse than a school day. You couldn't sleep late like you could on Saturdays and you had to go to mass . . . Timmy stopped dressing with a start. That was a wicked thing to say. Besides, he'd forgotten his morning prayers.

He knelt down next to the rumpled bed and said a "Hail Mary." Next he said the "Our Father," but toward the end he caught himself thinking about how every Sunday his father helped him with his arithmetic on the kitchen table and how it was always those darn word problems that fouled him up and how, if they meant you to figure them, why didn't they just write it out in numbers, real clear and all, like on the other pages, instead of making you . . .

"—Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen."

Timmy got hastily to his feet and crept down the hall to the bathroom. The door of his parents' room was ajar, and he could hear his mother and father talking. It was his mother's voice that he picked up first.

"—and there she was standing big as life in line to go to confession. Well, I certainly wasn't going to go right over and stand next to her."

"I can't see what harm it'd do. After all, you two've known each other for ten years, and you *were* in church."

"How can you, John? After the things that woman said about me!"

Timmy switched on the bathroom light with a click like his best cap-gun and washed his face in cold water. He looked at the tussled, blinking figure in the mirror and stuck out his tongue at him. Then he fastened on the ready-made tie which was six inches too short and looked again. Timmy wanted a real tie but his mother thought the ready-made ones were neater and besides you saved all that time. He slipped on his coat and looked down at his baggy pants. She always bought them that way because she said it wasn't any use buying things that he would outgrow, when you got much more use out of them, by growing into them.

Timmy thought a lot about growing up. He decided he wanted to be tall with big shoulders, and when he prayed for something, it was mostly for this, the tallness and the big shoulders, that he prayed. Sometimes when he got the long end of the wishbone, he wished for it, too. At first, he thought maybe this showed a lack of confidence in God. But finally he decided that you were really wishing it from God anyway. So it came to the same thing.

Really, what Timmy hoped was that he grow to look like Joe Quartz in the low eighth because Quartz was probably the strongest guy in school, and you could see him any lunchtime, getting a game of ball together. And everybody, all the older guys and all, that he let play ball with him, always looked up to him because he was so good at everything. And they even said the old eighth grade teacher was scared of him.

Timmy ran the wet comb through his hair and made it stand up in a peak like ice cream when you licked it into a point. Of course, there wasn't much chance of him being real tall like Quartz because his father was kind of small, and he'd heard somewhere that kids always got those things from parents, which didn't really seem fair. Besides Timmy had red hair, and who ever saw a really big boy with stupid looking red hair? Timmy ran more water on the comb and made his hair dark like Quartz's. Then he looped the front in a cowlick just

like the one Joe Quartz wore. The effect wasn't bad, not bad at all. Maybe it would make up for the baggy pants and the ready-tied tie.

Tim snatched up his prayerbook, saluted the toy king and bounced down the stairs onto the landing.

"Goodmorning."

His father turned around, and the lines of his face vibrated with sudden rage.

"For godsakes go upstairs and comb that hair right. What do you want to look like, some tin god?"

"What's wrong with the boy's hair?" said Mrs. Thompson. "You're always on top of him for something or other."

"As long as he's my son, he's going to look decent. Not like some bum."

"There you go calling names."

"I wasn't calling anybody names. I just said as long as he lives under this roof, he'll dress right."

Timmy tramped upstairs, like a hurt dog with his tail between his legs, and with two angry strokes of the comb flattened the clammy strands of red hair against his head. Something deep inside of him bubbled and rose like heated fluid in a thermometer. In one final explosion of anger, Timmy saw himself vaguely striking out at his father and then it subsided. He was on the landing again listening to the voices.

"John, will you put down that paper and help me with this coat. You'd think a man could treat his wife like a gentleman should."

"And I suppose I don't." Mr. Thompson glanced up the dark well of the stairs. "Timmy, get on down here. We're late enough as it is because of you. Stop primping."

"All the boys wear their hair like that now," said Mrs. Thompson.

"Not *all* the boys, not by a long shot. Not if they have common sense. Don't I see boys every day?"

"I'm sure you notice," said Mrs. Thompson. "You know as

much about how to dress as . . . why don't you fix your tie. I hate sloppy men."

"Me, sloppy?"

Timmy joined his parents on the porch while his father locked the door. The family car stood waiting with a familiar leer in the driveway.

"Yes, you," said Mrs. Thompson, "I do my best to look nice on Sundays and then I have to walk into church next to the likes of you."

"Well," said Mr. Thompson, "maybe I could walk ten spaces behind you, like the Queen of England or something."

"Why must you always get sarcastic when you don't have your own way?"

"If a man can't be head of his house, what can he be?" said Mr. Thompson.

"Sure, a man's house is his castle. So maybe you want to be a king or somebody. So we'll bow down to you. Maybe that's what you want. Straighten your tie. It's still crooked."

"That's right. Embarrass me in front of the boy. You have as much respect for me as for some dog."

"Now he calls himself a dog. You watch now; he'll sulk for the rest of the day." Mrs. Thompson looked over the seat, in Timmy's direction. "You just watch now."

Timmy was watching the sky which was greystreaked in a dull slate color. Suddenly, a whole flock of birds moved across the face of the sky, very high up and flying smooth and free in an even, effortless formation, floating south, out of the city and over the mountains, continually fleeing the winter, endlessly seeking the wonderful warmth of the tropic sun.

"Hey, look at all those birds," said Timmy.

"What birds?" said Mrs. Thompson.

"Look way up."

"I don't see any birds. Keep your eyes on the road, John. That man didn't even know what you were doing. I swear, did you see the dirty look he gave you?"

"I don't care what he gave me," said Mr. Thompson with dignity.

High up, the birds seeking freedom flowed across the vast rondure of the sky. Mr. Thompson turned the car down a side street which was lost in shadow. The birds disappeared behind the Gothic facade of the church.

It was children's mass, and Timmy had to sit up in front with the other school children, which he always liked because it gave him a sense of being grown up to leave his parents at the door. But today, they were late, and the priest was already on the altar.

"Well, go on," said Mrs. Thompson, prodding him with the two fingers she had just dipped in the holy water.

Timmy went awkwardly up the long mosaic aisle and looked for his grade. Finally, he pushed in beside Wilfred Peters. Peters shoved the line down, and Jackson, who was bigger than the rest, shoved right back until Timmy was out in the aisle again.

"He's late," somebody said.

"Come in here," whispered Jerry Orange, "before Sister sees you."

Timmy squeezed in beside Orange. He didn't like Orange because he was kind of ugly and stupid and was always hanging around and making an ass of himself when you wanted to impress people. Besides, he was no good at touch football. Timmy took the offered place, a little contemptuously.

Up on the altar, Father Justus had begun the Kyrie. The altar boys in scarlet and lace chanted the responses like a chorus. Father Justus went on to the gospel side and the congregation blessed themselves. Finally, everyone sat down and the priest mounted the pulpit and adjusted the microphone.

"Who can tell me," boomed the Reverend Father Justus, "what today is?"

Hands shot into the air and a second grader stood up and told him it was Sunday. Everybody laughed.

"And who can tell me, what's special about this Sunday?"

More hands. Then a nun heard response up in front.

"That's right," said the priest. "This is the feast of 'Christ, the King.' And who can tell me what a king is?"

Again an unheard response from the front pew.

"A king is a ruler. Very good. Just as Sister is the ruler of your classroom, telling you what to do and when to do it. But a king is a ruler of a great country. Like the United States. Christ is a king, but Christ is not only the king of England or Ireland, or the king of the United States. He is King of the world! But some of you do not act as if he were King. Already, here in church, you have been inattentive. Some of you have been talking to the boy or girl next to you. You do not obey Sister in school or your parents at home. You tempt Christ by not praying to Him as He should be prayed to. Christ, the King, is here. But you act as if you do not believe it. Christ wants obedience from you to your parents and teachers. Otherwise you will be like Pilate who asked with a sneer, 'Are *you* a king?' Your parents take Christ's place. And when you disobey them you disobey Christ . . ."

Timmy remembered the sudden feeling of hatred he'd had when he went upstairs to comb his hair. Surely that was a sin. But maybe only a venial sin. He wondered why it was so hard to obey, and he wondered if he'd ever really go to heaven.

Suddenly a nun walked up the aisle, past his place and peered into one of the eighth grade boys' pews. Timmy rose half way in his seat. He could see Joe Quartz showing something to the boy next to him. Timmy stood up farther and he could see it was a silver pocket knife.

"Siddown," rasped Jerry Orange. "She'll see you."

Timmy saw the nun shake her finger down the row and the pen knife disappear back into Joe Quartz' pocket. The nun retraced her steps with bowed head, and Timmy saw Quartz and the other boy shake their fingers at each other and laugh. Timmy admired their cheek.

Up on the altar, Father Justus had concluded his sermon and gone back to the Credo. The mass slipped smoothly into the Sanctus and soon Communion time approached. The black-veiled nuns emptied the pews systematically, row by row. But the movement was slow and Timmy stood waiting in the aisle so long that he began to daydream and forgot where he was going until he came in sight of the rail and woke up to his irreverence with a start.

The whole row went forward in a mass and knelt. Jackson tripped a pious looking sixth grader, and the two boys beside him started giggling. Father Justus and Gainsford, the altar boy, worked their way down the rail, giving Communion from a jeweled ciborium.

"Corpus Domini nostri—"

The priest came down like a shepherd on the fold, and his vestments were gleaming in white and gold.

Timmy closed his eyes and extended his tongue. He felt the host and closed his mouth over it. It had a strange, wonderful taste. He repeated a devotional ejaculation; then he could think of nothing more to say to the God of Love. He merely *felt* and hoped it was enough.

His eyes were now on the head of Jerry Orange as he followed him back to the pew, and he was ashamed of the way he felt toward Orange. He knelt and covered his face with his hands. Inside the warm darkness, he could think of nothing to say again, except that he was trying to be sorry for his lack of obedience. Up in the loft, the women's choir soared on in heights of ecstasy.

Timmy removed his hands. Above the balcony the morning sun had just burst a stained glass window into jeweled flames. The Holy Ghost, in the frozen motion of an eternal flight, was a little knot of gold fire.

Remembering the birds outside, he knelt for a long time looking at the golden dove.

THE BIRTHDAY

• Donald Weber

IT RAINED. Not like tears or dew, but just like rain. He looked out—with complete absence of feeling he looked out. It was like all the other days, neither good nor bad, as much a part of him as the picture on the wall he hadn't seen in seven years. The day was just there—and he wished it were not. He was nineteen this day—the day it rained.

The room was his, he neither owned it, nor did it own him—he was there, and because he was the only one who ever entered, he called it his. There was a window—high in one wall, which let in enough light that he could turn off the lamp during the brighter hours. Just enough light . . .

Moving to his bed, he looked down and laughed—the dry laugh of the wind in the desert, the laugh of the lonely, the laugh of the forgotten—and all these were him.

He began to read, to turn the pages, to enter into the life of the printed page, where he could see all that happened, could neither control nor be controlled—could play the omniscient god without the responsibility of omnipotence.

The knock meant nothing—it would go away, only—it did not. He got up and opened the door—no one was there. "Opportunity," he smiled.

And then he thought with a hemlock taste, "And why shouldn't it knock for me?" Only the lonely know . . .

The door opened quietly, and the face he did not know entered. "I," said the face, "am opportunity."

The smile left *his face*. "You knocked for me?"

"Indeed," said the face, "I knock once for every man."

"And what do you offer me?" the voice of the desert laugh asked.

"Indeed," said the face, "what do you offer me?"

"I," said the boy, "offer you the only thing I have that you could want, myself!"

Opportunity smiled and risked the question, "And what of that? I did not come for you; indeed, I didn't need to come if that is all you have to offer."

"And there is more to offer?" the lonely asked.

The face began to fade. "No," it said.

He looked out, as lonely as ever, looked out at the rain, looked out—and blew out nineteen birthday candles, one by one.



adolescence

Two by the window,
Two by the sky,
The awkward-boned boy,
And the shy-bodied girl,
Who will sing the half-way land,
The subtle, tense, covert things?
Exploring glance and side-long gaze,
Who will sing the phase of transit-
Becoming,
When pain is exquisite,
And every sense electric?
Land between the broken toy
And the broken promise.
Far from happiness, far from despair,
Trying on both.
Land of masks, mirrors and poses,
Poignant carnations
With splinters like steel-
Sing adolescence,
Cutting itself unawares

And discovering that blood is real.
Sing adolescence,
When the beach is strung
With blossoms of festal flame-
Crying suddenly at picnic midnight
Because the sea is immense.
Sing adolescence,
With careful-careless hands,
Holding its wonder
Like a wounded bird.

• **William Gardiner**

vacuum

"I am an individual!" cried the old rummy
As he looked out and saw couples and groups
Strolling soberly three stories below his hole.
Three stories and twenty years ago was life.
The cracked mirror makes physical the world
In which individuals live, cut off from people,
Dried up inside, dead to the world,
But not too dead to crawl to the phone

To close another chapter of life's wet history.

• **Bernard J. Vondersmith**

Edward Golden

Talks About

Center Stage

In September, 1963, Denny Keating, Bill Gardiner, and Ed Conery visited Center Stage, Baltimore's professional theater, and interviewed the director of the productions at that growing institution, Mr. Edward Golden. Born 29 years ago in Boston, Golden received his A.B. from Harvard University and his M.A. in Fine Arts from Boston University. Before taking his present position he directed the drama department of the Jewish Community Center. The Center Stage Corporation was formed by 65 Baltimore business men who amassed a total of \$15,000 dollars to convert the building purchased from the Orthodox Church of the Annunciation into an arena stage and theater which seats 240 persons. The youthful and early successful Mr. Golden and his crew of seasoned performers have taken Baltimore by storm. Growing interest and concern of the citizens of the metropolitan area should inspire the labors of the people at Center Stage and change early success to permanent distinction. The following is a portion of the interview with Mr. Golden.

KEATING: *As far as the theater in the round is concerned, don't you feel that this sometimes involves the audience too much within the drama? Do you feel that some plays*

benefit from the distance from the curtain between the audience and the actors?

MR. GOLDEN: I don't consider the arena as the only form of drama presentation. In part, we chose it for its intimacy. Many people thrive on this. A lot of people who come here much prefer the closeness they have with the actor, and some would like to sit right up on the stage. We have a row which is level with the stage and many, many people request that. As a theater-goer, I don't like that. I would much prefer being back. When you are back a few aisles from the stage in the round, you have pretty much the same feeling of distance, and I think that it is largely an inhibition on the viewer's part, because he doesn't like to feel that the actors are watching him, or he doesn't like to see a pair of eyes coming across from the other side of the audience. He feels as if they are looking at him and he cannot concentrate. People say that they don't get that feeling of distance. They mean that if they are sitting in the front row they are embarrassed because they feel as though they are a part of the play. Many people like that and like the feeling of being up on the stage. Most people don't. The people who are sitting back and are comfortable are getting an involvement in the play which is not uncomfortable. They can feel more immediately the plight or the situation of the character who is on the stage.

CONERY: *Just where does the interpretation of the play lie? Should it lie with the author or with the director?*

MR. GOLDEN: I think that the author has his interpretation of the play and so does the director. I agree with Arthur Miller, with whom I have spoken several times, and he brings out this point. He felt that he did not know what his plays were essentially about, and did not have any understanding of how to communicate them on the stage. He understood the play in his own head, so to speak. He could see people moving around; he had a sense of what the play

was about. But being able to communicate it to masses of people, he said, is not his talent and he does not work in that area. I write a play and it comes out and I think I understand the people in the play, but I don't always understand. But, I write something that comes out of my subconscious mind, and then I shape it from the literary point of view, and then I hand it out and say to the actresses and directors, "You tell me what it means." This is essentially Arthur Miller's attitude.

GARDINER: *Do you feel that it is legitimate for a director to go as far as Kazan did when he suggested to Williams that he change the ending of Cat On A Hot Tin Roof?*

MR. GOLDEN: Yes, but I don't think that he can insist on it, and he cannot get away with it in any way. If the author says no, then the answer is no, because he owns the play. In the case of *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*, and several others, Williams has welcomed Kazan's advice, because he feels that the director has an objective eye whereas the playwright has a subjective eye. The director has to be the audience folded into one man's vision and must keep that objective eye at all times. When an actor feels that he should make a certain move or play down a certain speech, he actually cannot see what is happening, nor can the playwright, really, because he has experienced the play in a totally different way, and he cannot see what is coming across to the people on the outside. He is biased and has to get a point of view, and that is why we have directors. We haven't always had directors in the theater. They came into being because of the need of this objective eye which coordinates all the elements and can see where the rhythm should be increased and where the major beats of the play are.

KEATING: *What is your thought about doing modern versions of classical plays?*

MR. GOLDEN: We are going to do *Twelfth Night* in the romantic period with the costuming in the early nineteenth century.

We are doing it in this manner because the costumes are not as bulky for the theater in the round, and secondly, because we won't have to use wigs, as wigs tend to obscure the face. They are extremely expensive and do not look good even though much money is spent on them. Also, the play is very much like a story of that period: almost absurdly romantic except that it is funny. Another reason is that the nineteenth century is not far removed from the Elizabethan period.

CONERY: *You mentioned the problems of cost. Do you think that cities of the size of Baltimore should subsidize their professional theaters?*

MR. GOLDEN: Yes, I do. I think that just as they subsidized the museum and the library, eventually they should subsidize a theater like this, because it does give a great deal to the city—not only to adults, but especially to the young people. We have a lot of school groups that come to our special performances, and we offer them a very low rate. We have symposia here for school children and high school students, and this is educationally advantageous to them because they prepare papers to deliver in their classrooms. There is inter-school participation, a kind of debate, and this is very valuable, and a real cultural advantage to the city. Therefore, if possible, a fund should be used to support it.

GARDINER: *Is Baltimore receptive as a theater town?*

MR. GOLDEN: There is an audience here; it is a question of tapping it. We have already tapped a great part of it, but I am sure that a lot of individuals would say, "I understand that the theater was marvelous, but I didn't get down." I think it is getting better. When I came here five years ago the situation then was really bleak. The city was dead and people were saying that nothing could really happen here. It hasn't been happening because they haven't been participating or interested. I think, with the Renewal program

under way now, that there will be increased subscriptions to the museums, symphony, civic opera, and this theater. However, we still need a larger audience to support what we are doing. The middle of the week attendance was not so good, but the weekends were always sold out. Our subscriptions are more than doubled this year. I think that the city has changed and is gradually losing its inferiority complex.

KEATING: *How free is an actor to interpret his own role? How much control does the director exercise over the actor? What are your personal opinions?*

MR. GOLDEN: The director is the final authority on every phase of the production, and he is a sort of insurance policy for the show itself. Somebody must finally say that we'll use this color and costume, you will cross the table at this point. He has to put his foot down in every department from the smallest prop on out to the leading actor's interpretation because otherwise you have no consistent point of view at all, and this would be a mess. However, there are directors who feel that they want to assert this authority from the first rehearsal. They start yelling and screaming about this and that, and the actor has no chance to question or to experiment on his own to try to find a part. There are some directors who read lines for their actors and things of that sort. I don't believe in that. I think toward the end of a rehearsal period that if an actor has been giving a lot of trouble and is not really doing his homework, in terms of developing his part as he should, then something must be done. It is an individual thing, and every director works a different way. I like to plot the movement very early in rehearsals, and I like my actors to try my way first. As far as the subjective interpretation of the role—how to play certain speeches and how the character feels about one thing or another—I like the actor to go as long as he wants in developing that, as long as he is developing consistently.

If he is at fault, then you put your foot down and say that he is throwing the whole play out of whack, so he will just have to come around and do it your way. A professional actor understands this and respects you, and says okay and will do it. I doubt if he agrees with me, but he does it because he knows that this is his function and the director's responsibility. I think that you have to treat actors carefully, because they are doing something that really is exposing themselves to everybody. They get up there in the end, but you don't. You have to praise them, and you have to be careful to handle them with the utmost consideration, even when they blow up, because you know that in the end you want a certain result, and they are the only ones who are going to give it to you.

CONERY: *As far as government subsidies go, don't you think that once you let the government start controlling the plays they are going to be controlling the communication?*

MR. GOLDEN: In Russia, which is certainly a totalitarian state, we would expect the government to tamper with the theater, radio, and television. They do not do it, as we have had many people, theater people and musicians, who have gone over and observed. There are many theaters in the Soviet Union, and thirty-six in Leningrad alone. They have a couple of theaters in which they use propaganda, but they play Shakespeare and the great classics of the western world which are not tampered with at all. They are not reinterpreted. They tamper very little with the ballet, though strangely enough, in recent times they did a piece which was heavy propaganda. It was not too well received by the critics, and the audiences did not come. They recognized it as inferior work because it was wearing the iron suit of armor and seemed silly and ridiculous. Very successful New York producers do not want their economic positions threatened by government subsidies and therefore lobby against it.

elegy

for

one

The last guests stumble in—returning from my grave
They dare to speak of me
And with a single face they dare not smile
Or else my portrait hanging from the wall
May seem to frown at one who seems relieved
But each is digging for his buried thoughts
For every man is a cemetery of himself
Rattles old brittle bones of unremembered years
And gnaws the rats that gnaw his soul
They speak of me and lies are told
In the middle of the middle to the glasses that they hold
Who will be the first to drink
to drink
to drink
Who will be the first one to forget
And who will be the last one to remember
"Make We Don't He
it all bruise was
dry must the too
die gin thin"
"He's better off this way"
"He never understood to live his life"

No, I never understood the lies, the shrouded truths
The headstone motives that marked successful lives
The morals dead and putrified they laid to rest—
They tried to lay to rest, perhaps they did
I never could have kept them down—
The portrait of myself is truer than
All the spoken monuments they speak
For it tells lies with silence, they with sound
And truths are cruelest left unsaid
And lies are bitterest when unspoke
And my portrait lies the lies I said
And not the lies I left unspoke
 Why waste time with thinking
 Let the dead think
Is this a party or a wake
 Who will be the first to drink
 to drink
 to drink
And who will be the first corpse to forget
 to forget a corpse
 Let dead men lie
 They tell no tales
And all banalities we speak to let us drink to
 And let the dead man think
He never knew enough to live
 So he is dead and death is dead
And we will never die
 So let us lie
 And let us go on lying
 And let dead men do the dying

• Donald Weber

the Functions

of

Odysseus and Aeneas

• Brian P. Copenhaver

IT WAS Ezra Pound who told the anecdote of the wealthy old sailor who decided to avail himself of the education which his impecunious youth had kept from him. One of the old salt's courses was Latin, for which his tutor assigned him the *Aeneid*. At their next meeting after the assignment, the tutor asked his pupil's opinion of the hero. "What 'ero?" asked the sailor. "Why, Aeneas, of course," responded the tutor. "'Ero, 'ero," the sailor muttered, obviously puzzled. "Oi t'ought 'e was a bleedin' priest."

The old student's puzzlement points up a remarkable controversy in Homeric and Vergilian criticism. The scholars seem to be in doubt as to which of the pair, Aeneas and Odysseus, is the hero and which is the priest. The pivotal point of the question seems to be the role played by Aeneas and Odysseus. Is Aeneas or Odysseus simply a mediator between mankind and destiny, nothing more than a symbol of national or cultural purpose driven about the Mediterranean at the whim of the Olympians? But the argument has its beginning in a far less abstruse question; that is, is there any real and constant similarity between the *Aeneid* and the *Odyssey*? Is Vergil's work a conscious imitation of an Homeric poem? If this question can be answered in the affirmative, then the central dispute has far more significance. If Vergil modeled

his poem on the *Odyssey*, then it would be well to know whether Aeneas is another Odysseus and nothing more.

To look at the critics in an effort to trace the parallels between Homer and Vergil is not extremely helpful, for the criticism is bound in contradiction. The scholars have found it very difficult to decide among themselves just how long and how hard Vergil looked at the *Odyssey* while composing his poem. E. E. Sikes in his *Roman Poetry* makes what is perhaps the baldest assertion of Vergil's debt to the *Odyssey*. In reply to the ubiquitous statement that it is of no use to compare Homer and Vergil at all, Sikes says, "It may surely be answered that a relation of Vergil to Homer is a very patent and acknowledged fact." T. J. Haarhoff is of the same school. It is his idea that Vergil "undertook in the *Aeneid* to link up the epic of Rome with the Homeric tradition." Theodore Haecker, however, disagrees; for him "there is no greater difference within the compass of ancient literature" than that between the *Aeneid* and the *Odyssey*. The critics contradict themselves as well as their fellows. W. Y. Sells admits that Vergil "in entering in the detailed narrative, which forms the main body of the poem ... at once attaches himself to Homer." But a few pages after Sells says that Aeneas' Mediterranean wanderings "seem to be suggested rather by the experience of travellers in the Augustan Age," than by the travels of Odysseus. In the light of the fact that much of the "detailed narrative" of the *Aeneid*, especially in Book III, deals with sea-wandering, these statements are strangely unsuitable to each other.

The acquaintance of Vergil with the poetry of Homer is an obvious and acknowledged fact. The only question that one might have for the critics in this regard—to what *degree* did Vergil imitate the *Odyssey*—they answer so variously that the answer loses much of its value. To resolve this question, then, one must turn to the only other source available, the poems themselves.

In order to find the major nexus binding Vergil to Homer, one need go no further than the classification of the poems. Both are epics. Having chosen the epic format, Vergil was forced from the start to follow in a path cleared largely by Homer. On a merely technical level the similarities between the two poems must be striking. Vergil was bound by literary mandate to use the same meter, the same figures, even the same allusions as his predecessor. Had he written in the lyric or in the dramatic mode, his pen would have been less restricted. But the epic was primarily the province of Homer. "Vergil. . . challenged the greatest of the Greeks, and unless he could maintain his rights to the title of a Roman Homer, the whole case for Latin poetry collapsed."

The next link in the chain binding the *Aeneid* to the *Odyssey* is the subject matter. Both poems deal with pre-Iron Age Indo-European peoples of the Aegean area. The heroes are both refugees of the Trojan War. Both wander during the same years over roughly the same portions of the Mediterranean Sea. The fact that both the Trojan and the Greek were vested with almost identical cultures by the poet who first wrote of them brings the heroes even closer together for all who read of their deeds.

Vergil, then shackled himself to Homer in format, location, structure, time, and background. He left himself a great deal of freedom only in the areas of plot and characterization. An examination of the *Aeneid*, particularly Book III, will show that Vergil must have had Odysseus in mind as a prototype of his Aeneas.

When Vergil's hero recounts his wanderings in Book III, he makes little effort to make the substance of his tale sound much different from that which Odysseus tells in the hall of King Alcinoös. Both, of course, depart from the same place for similar reasons. One, the conqueror, and the other, the conquered, leave Troy, a wasted city, valueless to both. The first two stops made by Aeneas in Thrace and in Delos have no

exact parallel in the wanderings of Odysseus, but as soon as the oracle commands the Trojan to "seek for your ancient mother" the *Aeneid* takes up the thread of the *Odyssey*—and takes it up firmly. The same direction and purpose mark both journeys—homeward around the southern tip of the Balkans.

After a fruitless journey to Knossos in Crete, Aeneas drops anchor at one of the Strophades, home of the Harpies. Here, the Trojans commit a crime strikingly similar to one perpetrated by Odysseus and his shipmates. Driven by hunger, the Teucrians slay cattle sacred to the Gods and guarded by the Harpies, just as Odysseus' men slaughter the Oxen of the Sun. Both crews are cursed for their sacrileges, and Apollo, the sun-god, is involved in both curses. Shaken by the threats of the foul birds, Aeneas plots a northern course. He sails past Ithaca and curses "the land that nourished cruel Ulysses." Then Phaiacia slips astern where some years later Odysseus was to entertain the Scherian court with the wondrous report of his journey home.

The paths of Odysseus and Aeneas cross next between Sicily and the Italian mainland where Scylla and Charybdis lay in wait for unwary mariners. After much strife the Trojans wrest themselves from the perils of "the frightful rocks" and drift wearily into the harbor of the island of the Cyclopes. Here they meet Achaemenides, a companion of Odysseus, left behind in the confusion after the blinding of Polyphemus. (It is interesting that Vergil allows this Greek, in pleading with his former enemies for his rescue, to speak highly of his old captain. Such words are very rare in the *Aeneid* where *Odysseus* seems equivalent to *treachery*. Perhaps this is Vergil's way of acknowledging his debt to Homer.) The Trojans rescue Achaemenides and, frightened by the whole tribe of Cyclopes, flee to the land of Dido where Aeneas tells his story to the Carthaginian Queen.

This integral part of the *Aeneid*, complete with sacrilege, monsters, and giants, is very much like the *Odyssey*. But the

parallel extends further—if not so pointedly. Like Odysseus, Aeneas spends considerable time crucial to his "mission" in dalliance; his efforts to leave Carthage are not as hurried as they might be. Likewise, Odysseus' relations with Circe and Calypso are not totally those of a homesick stranger. Dido's positions as a ruler and as one acquainted with the occult also bring echoes of the nature of Odysseus' women. Aeneas' Golden Bough is reminiscent of Odysseus' pool of blood. In the world of the shades both see parents and former friends. Perhaps Odysseus' entertainment in Phaiacia is a model of the funeral games held by the Trojans in honor of Anchises. W. B. Stanford sees "some more formal resemblances between Odysseus and Aeneas." According to him the invocation to the Muse in Vergil's poem is an attempt to combine the military atmosphere (*Arma*) of the *Illiad* with the dynamic humanity (*virum*) of the *Odyssey*. Stanford also sees a parallel between Ajax and Dido as they appear in Hades in the respective poems.

It is clear from the above that Vergil derived much of his plot material from Homer's *Odyssey*. This borrowing leaves him only the area of characterization in which to be completely his own man. The great majority of the critics agree with Stanford that "though the two heroes have much in common—piety, purposefulness, endurance, courage, eloquence, tenderness—they are fundamentally different. . . . Aeneas is . . . far from being a mere Ulysses in Roman dress." But they cannot agree where precisely the difference lies.

One common appraisal of Aeneas is that he is a *man with a mission*, one whose actions are not strictly personal but devoted to the ends of a whole people. Thus he is a priest, one who mediates between his people and the powers which determine his people's destiny. The most glaring evidence, say the critics, for this quality in Aeneas is his steadfastness, his refusal to set anything, no matter how personally attractive, before the goal which he knows is his own. Odysseus the

critics see as a purely personal figure; his only desire, they say, is to return safely home. Here, possibly, they miss an important point, for Aeneas only wishes to see his homeland again. In this respect he is like Odysseus. "Seek for your ancient mother. From there the house of Aeneas and the sons of his sons and all that are born from them shall hold dominion over the whole earth." This is the command of the Oracle of Delos. Not "found the Roman nation" but "seek for your ancient mother." This, too, is what Odysseus seeks; ". . . he endured many troubles and hardships in the struggle to save his own life *and* to bring back his men safe to their homes." No less than Aeneas, Odysseus cares for the welfare of his fellow countrymen. In this he is as much a "priest" as is Aeneas.

It was the character of the Roman national that accounted in Vergil's composition for what difference there is between his hero and the protagonist of the *Odyssey*. The energetic, pragmatic Roman strove to spread his dominion over as much of the world as he could. This is what specifies the "priesthood" of Aeneas. He must begin the process of making his "ancient mother" the world's master. This is a more extensive but not a more noble "priesthood" than that of Odysseus. As a sovereign and as a warrior chief he is responsible for the lives of the people of Ithaca and of the men of his ships. His priest-king function is as important as that of Aeneas, and it is most apparent in the *Odyssey*. At the very beginning of the poem Homer makes it very clear that the Ithacan was intensely conscious of his duty to his people. "He did his best, but he could not save his companions." If Odysseus' role, confined to his ships and his island, is not as sweeping as that of his Trojan enemy, it is not due to any lack of nobility or energy on his part. Rather, the quality of this role derives from the Greek character. They were never imperialists until a Macedonian conqueror spread their culture for them. A land of micro-states, Hellas had an introverted character stamped on it by

the not inconsiderable barriers of sea, bay, and mountain which separated section from section and Greek from Greek. It is not true that Odysseus was not a *man with a mission*. It is true that Odysseus, the Greek, had a mission not so extensive as that of the Roman Aeneas, at least in one respect.

"Such toil it cost to found the Roman race." This sentence of Vergil's is, perhaps, the best summation of Aeneas' specific role. Not only was he a Trojan priest-king as Odysseus was an Ithacan priest-king, but he was also the personal well-spring of Rome. Odysseus, too, has this separate and specified function, a function which is ignored by more than one of the critics. It is Seller's statement of this ignorance which is most concise.

Odysseus is great in the personal qualities of courage, steadfastness . . . loyalty . . . versatility, ready resource; but he bears with him only his own fortunes and those of the companions of his adventure; he ends his career as he began it, the chief of a small island.

Here, Seller ignores the special role of Odysseus which was so clear to Tennyson and to Dante. It is Tennyson's Ulysses whose will is "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." Dante's Ulysses tells us that nothing "could conquer in me the ardour that I had to gain experience of the world, and of human vice and worth." This is Odysseus' special function. He is to typify man facing his world and tasting all that it offers whether bitter or sweet. Thus, in one way, Odysseus' role is more extensive than that of Aeneas. Though it is contained in his personal operations, it extends analogously to all men.

It is in characterization, then, that Vergil departs far from his Homeric model. Odysseus is the type of Aeneas, but he is not his double. United by their roles of priest-king, they differ in the quality of their special functions. ". . . The greatness of Aeneas lies in political history, the greatness of Ulysses in the literary and philosophical tradition."

Talking of Michelangelo

Where, we wonder, will the world be
When sun and moon have played last lays,
And time and tide have set our days,
And you and I have had our tea?
How, we wonder, will the world be?
Will priest and preacher have found trust
Or word and work have turned to dust
When you and I have had our tea?
What, we wonder, will world's fate be?
Will pact and bomb have been dissolved,
Or hate and death have been resolved
When you and I have had our tea?
And so we sip and ponder here,
Praying with quick tear—o'er the bier?

• **George E. Bell**

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