

RHETORIC IN THE MAJOR NOVELS OF FORD MADOX FORD

RHETORIC IN THE MAJOR NOVELS OF FORD MADOX FORD:
AN APPROACH TO FIFTH QUEEN, THE GOOD SOLDIER
AND PARADE'S END

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ABSTRACT

Most critical studies of Ford are largely general in nature, mainly because of the comprehensive, 'pioneering' positions critics have tended to adopt in order to show that Ford is indeed worthy of our attention. As a result, the major novels and romances -- the three volumes of Fifth Queen (1906, 1907, 1908), The Good Soldier (1915), and the four volumes of Parade's End (1924, 1925, 1926, 1928) -- still need the kind of close, textual analysis that would demonstrate their value as subtle and intricate works of art. In this study, I have attempted to provide a detailed examination of these works.

Perceiving an additional 'flaw' in most evaluations of these fictions, whereby form and content are discussed as separate entities, I have focused, instead, on the "rhetoric" of the novels -- on the ways in which we are made to see Ford's fictional worlds. Seen through the perspectives afforded by Schorer's "Technique as Discovery", Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction and Lodge's Language of Fiction, this theoretical framework is discussed in the opening chapter. By focusing upon rhetoric as being an integral part of the process by which we are moved to a unique view of experience, I try to illuminate some of the "enigmas" surrounding the selected fictions, as well as counter many of the negative criticisms that have hitherto appeared.

In my chapter on Fifth Queen, I argue that the rhetoric Ford

there employs is designed to fully explore the romance form. By focusing upon the range of effects in the trilogy, we see that, contrary to its general reputation, Fifth Queen is not a structure without unity, but a unified "song" of the romance heroine who seeks to give a shape to experience through a faith in something outside the self. The other characters in the trilogy fail to respond to Katherine's qualities, and the rhetorical effects Ford employs bring out their failings and Katherine's triumph of selfhood. These failings are especially noticeable in Henry VIII who is incapable of the kind of love which would take him beyond his own limitations. In many ways, the contrast between Henry's imprisonment in his "passions" and "prides", and Katherine's freedom through a love for something outside the self, is a pattern repeated throughout Ford's work.

Any consideration of the rhetoric of The Good Soldier must deal with the narrator Ford uses to tell his "Tale of Passion". I show how the values or norms we are made to see as of importance in the novel are precisely those which help the narrator tell his tale. This is particularly true of the most important value, passion. Passion enables Dowell, as faith does Katherine, to transcend the self in order to escape its constraints; as a consequence, he can see things from another point of view. It also allows him to give experience a form, and, through this creative act, he finds a degree of self-awareness and freedom. Passion is the value he comes to see as being the sentiment that Edward Ashburnham tried hardest to express. It is the sentiment that Leonora fails to understand. However, Dowell does understand passion and the "affair" as a whole; as a result, he comes to align

himself with the "passionate" who are destroyed by a "garrison" mentality that denies anything exceptional in life.

Passion is also the subject of Parade's End, and the value which lies behind its telling. Approaching the novel through its rhetoric, I show how the tetralogy is a unified work, of which the much maligned fourth volume, The Last Post, is an integral part. The sequence of volumes is structured in such a way that it explores various kinds of passion: those that are destructive and imprison the characters involved, and those that are creative and are seen as a source of life. We, as readers, experience these passions, and the shaping of our experience depends upon Ford's successful handling of his medium -- especially his use of character, point of view, juxtaposition, language, time and setting. I analyse these aspects of the novel's rhetoric by tracing them through the entire fabric of the tetralogy. There emerges an excellent depiction of passion which is the equal of The Good Soldier.

A NOTE ON REFERENCES

With the exception of The Last Post, all references to Fifth Queen, The Good Soldier and Parade's End are taken from the highly selective The Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford, edited and introduced by Graham Greene (London: The Bodley Head, 1962, 1963). The works included in this edition are arranged as follows:

- Volume One: The Good Soldier
- Volume Two: Fifth Queen (The Fifth Queen, Privy Seal and The Fifth Queen Crowned)
- Volume Three: Parade's End (Some Do Not . . .)
- Volume Four: Parade's End (No More Parades and A Man Could Stand Up)
- Volume Five: Memories and Impressions (selected and introduced by Michael Killigrew, and published in 1971)

In all these cases, the works are cited by their individual titles, and the page numbers refer to the above edition.

There is no satisfactory edition of the whole of Parade's End. (In this connection, see Arthur Mizener, The Saddest Story: A Biography of Ford Madox Ford (New York, 1971), pp. 586-587.) In a compromise between availability and accuracy, I have used the Bodley

Head for the first three parts of Parade's End, and have supplemented it with the first edition of The Last Post, published by The Literary Guild of America in 1928.

Ford Madox Ford wrote his earlier works under the name of Ford Madox Hueffer. To avoid confusion, the name Ford Madox Ford is used throughout.

Enlarging upon the method adopted by Frank MacShane, editor of Critical Writings of Ford Madox Ford (Lincoln, 1964), I have decided to indicate all omissions from quoted material by the use of three asterisks, regardless of the author of the quotation. Such a procedure was necessary in order to avoid possible confusion arising from Ford's own prolific and cavalier use of three or four stops (periods) in succession to indicate, among other things, an unfinished piece of conversation.

Because of the widespread duplication of important articles and essays in various collections, I have included the original date of publication in brackets after the title, when referring in a footnote to a reprint of an essay or article. For example:

Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery" (1948), in The Novel: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. R. M. Davis (New Jersey, 1969), pp. 75-92.

Fuller details of the date and place of first publication may be found in the list of works consulted.

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You have, if you want to know how a certain great writer gets his effects, to go to his works of the imagination, not to his criticisms; you have, if you want to get at the mainsprings of his cosmic theories, to go, neither to his autobiography, nor to his letters -- but again to his works of art. You must study these word by word; cadence by cadence and paragraph; and then, going back again to the beginning of each paragraph, you must read it through swiftly so as to get the general effect . . . And still more, you must ask yourself over and over again: Why did this writer think out these words, these vowel colourings, these rhythms, these cadences? He thought them out of course, so that he might please the Reader. But why did he think that they would please the Reader? . . . If you find the answer to this last question you will have discovered the secret of your author's technique.

Ford Madox Ford, Thus to Revisit: Some Reminiscences.

INTRODUCTION

Posterity will quite rightly make its own choices * * * . In the meantime, Ford requires a special effort of the critical imagination. He keeps evading us. All the insight and palaver of current criticism, all the machinery and abracadabra of current research, as valuable as much of it is, has fallen short of achieving really useful definition and appreciation. 'He is at the moment', Richard Foster writes, 'a kind of submerged leviathan, discernible only as an airy spout above a vague, vast ground of surrounding shadow.' Ford, it seems, still resists literal and direct explication. Like his contemporaries seeking to explain his personality, we will probably have to resort to the accuracy of metaphor in order to define and appreciate the complexities and contradictions Ford and his work offer us.¹

For the initiate in Ford's fiction, this statement, by one of the leading critics on le jeune homme modeste, may appear somewhat extraordinary, considering that the past decade has seen a substantial volume of criticism claiming to reveal the qualities found in the Fifth Queen, The Good Soldier and Parade's End. In addition to two biographies by Frank MacShane and Arthur Mizener,² there have been full-length critical studies produced by Cassell, Ambrose Gordon, Jr.,

¹Richard A. Cassell, "Introduction" to Ford Madox Ford: Modern Judgements (London, 1972), p. 28.

²F. MacShane, The Life and Work of Ford Madox Ford (London, 1965).

A. Mizener, The Saddest Story: A Biography of Ford Madox Ford (New York, 1971).

C. G. Hoffman, Robert Huntley, Norman Leer, R. W. Lid, John Meixner, Carol Ohmann and Paul Wiley,³ together with many articles and monographs offering readings of individual novels, particularly The Good Soldier. Yet, as Cassell points out, not only does Ford himself retain an air of mystery, but this is also true of his novels and romances: " * * * the enigmas [The Good Soldier] still poses to its critics warn us we have much to learn and understand."⁴

Given the quantity of criticism, one wonders how such a situation can have continued to exist. On the one hand, it could be due to the poor quality of the commentaries that have hitherto appeared, an opinion not entirely supported by the evidence. Alternatively, this predicament may have been caused by several related factors. There is the sheer complexity of the works themselves, marked by Ford's ability to multiply the parts to madness, as James says of Balzac;⁵ his capacity

³R. Cassell, Ford Madox Ford: A Study of his Novels (Baltimore, 1961).

A. Gordon, Jr., The Invisible Tent: The War Novels of Ford Madox Ford (Austin, 1964).

C. G. Hoffman, Ford Madox Ford (New York, 1967).

H. R. Huntley, The Alien Protagonist of Ford Madox Ford (Chapell Hill, 1970).

N. Leer, The Limited Hero in the Novels of Ford Madox Ford (Michigan, 1966).

R. W. Lid, Ford Madox Ford: The Essence of his Art (Los Angeles, 1964).

C. Ohmann, Ford Madox Ford: From Apprentice to Craftsman (Middleton, 1964).

P. Wiley, Novelist of Three Worlds: Ford Madox Ford (New York, 1962).

These studies will be referred to and discussed in connection with the individual works under analysis.

⁴R. Cassell, "Introduction", p. 23.

⁵H. James, "The Lesson of Balzac" (1905), in The Future of the Novel, ed. Leon Edel (New York, 1956), p. 111.

for weaving endless strands into wholes for which Meixner's image of "cat's cradle", taken from the Fifth Queen trilogy, serves adequately.⁶ Concomitantly, there is an apparent tendency among critics to simplify the artifact they are examining, a failure to respond to its intricacy through a thorough and painstaking analysis. This is undoubtedly the result of having attempted to cover too much ground in too short a space, a procedure that, in the early stages of the recent Ford revival, can be explained by the need for a pioneering or championing stance. Thus, the typical study has chapters on Ford's art, his world view, his life, combined with individual sections on the early novels, The Good Soldier, Parade's End and the late novels, all in the course of a three-hundred-page examination. Considering the number of novels and romances Ford wrote, together with his notable 'extra-curricular' activities, the outcome of this kind of survey is, to say the least, general. Or, conforming to the dictates of academic survival, the critic has been forced to compress his or her findings into the fifteen-page article demanded by the modern scholarly journal. Again, the results have been generalized attempts to place Ford into an accessible category from which he fortunately escapes.

For example, Richard Cassell confesses that his book "is frankly not an exhaustive analysis, but a survey * * *."⁷ So does Paul Wiley: "Since moreover, the scope and general bearing of Ford's effort are neither widely known nor fully appraised, I have tried to do some

⁶Ford Madox Ford's Novels, pp. 8-9.

⁷Ford Madox Ford, p. xi.

justice to the bulk of his novels without giving special weight or assigning a pivotal function to The Good Soldier or to the Parade's End tetralogy."⁸ Conversely, John Meixner introduces his study in the following manner:

The full appreciation of Ford's superb and complex art can be meaningfully felt, of course, only through close examination of the specific novel, for it involves his masterly handling and modulation of many matters: of exposition, point of view, character, narrative treatment and sequence, mood, style, tone, rhythm, and the variety with which these are fitted together. (And such elucidation will be one of the major tasks of this book, notably in the sections on The Good Soldier and Some Do Not and to a lesser degree on the Fifth Queen trilogy, Mr. Apollo and A Call.)⁹

However, his commendable declaration of intent is not fully realized in the main body of the text; in the three-hundred pages of his book, only sixty-seven are devoted to Parade's End, a work whose first three volumes stretch to eight-hundred and twenty-six pages in the Bodley Head edition. Though quantity by no means rivals quality, such an examination can hardly lay claim to being exhaustive. On the other hand studies, like Norman Leer's, that take a particular slant towards Ford's work tend to be more preoccupied with that bias than with a thorough analysis.

As pointed out previously, at the time the initial surveys appeared, there was perhaps a need for an overview of Ford's literary career, allowing us to see connections between the major and lesser-known works. But, for all their efforts, the attempts to make a case

⁸Novelist of Three Worlds, p. viii.

⁹Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p. 10.

for the minor novels have not been successful. Indeed, they have tended to draw our attention away from what matters in Ford's major productions. It still seems right to say, with R. P. Blackmur, that "when we speak of Hueffer as a novelist" we are talking about The Good Soldier and Parade's End, with a few notable exceptions like the Fifth Queen trilogy.¹⁰ Though posterity may reverse Blackmur's estimate, and while no critical judgement can or should ever hope to be more than tentative, it appears difficult, at this time, to make any claims of greatness for the majority of Ford's oeuvre. To repeat the evaluation made by Ezra Pound: "His own best prose was probably lost, as isolated chapters in unachieved and too-quickly-issued novels."¹¹ For the most part, Pound's criticism is all too sadly true.

Bearing in mind these assessments in the light of the number of surveys that have been published, there is no longer a need for a study of Ford that takes into account everything he wrote. However, because a good many existing studies are far too general in nature, Ford's major fictions still deserve and require the kind of attention that might be deemed exhaustive, involving a close analysis of such books as The Good Soldier, Parade's End and the Fifth Queen. Directing our interest towards this end, to borrow Meixner's terminology, will involve demonstrating in detail how well Ford handles "many matters", particularly if we are to reinforce the still tenuous judgement that

¹⁰R. P. Blackmur, "The King over the Water: Notes on the Novels of F. M. Hueffer" (1948), in Modern British Fiction, ed. M. Schorer (New York, 1961), pp. 138-139.

¹¹Ford's obituary by Ezra Pound (1939), in Ford Madox Ford: The Critical Heritage, ed. F. MacShane (London, 1972), p. 218.

these works are indeed major. For specific reasons, that will be discussed subsequently, my emphasis upon Ford's handling of the medium with which he is involved will stress the rhetoric of his fiction. That is, our attention will be focused upon the process by which Ford involves his readers in the creative world he fashions, as he seeks to guide them to a unique view of experience. Through such an examination of the rhetoric of the selected novels and romances, it will be possible to show how far they warrant as much praise as many of those novels that are now valued as "classics".

ii

It is because this study aims at a thorough examination of the process of Ford's major novels and romances that the term "rhetoric" is preferred to "technique" or "techniques": the former implies a degree of control and persuasion, of making the reader, not contained in the latter; while it can also enable us to overcome the distinction that has been drawn between artistic and moral interests. Hitherto, Ford's critics have tended to differentiate between these two concerns, to deal with "Ford's Theory of Fiction" and "Ford's Vision of His World" in separate sections or chapters -- a proclivity that is aided by the ready-made counters of Ford's own critical statements: "le mot juste", "progression d'effet" and so forth.¹² These terms can serve a purpose, but they can also seduce the critic into a position where he

¹²In this connection, see the studies by Cassell and Meixner.

compartmentalizes effects under these headings without showing how they have been achieved, and how they relate to the way in which Ford controls our vision of his fictional world. In other words, too great an emphasis has been placed upon a false dichotomy between form and content -- a situation that has been encouraged by Ford himself. While paying due attention to the skills of "rendering", and the other tenets of Impressionism outlined in his books on Joseph Conrad and Henry James,¹³ Ford tended to underplay the moral import of his fiction and the way it is controlled by the process of "rendering". Thus, at one point, he declares: "* * * I am interested only in how to write, and * * * I care nothing -- but nothing in the world! -- what a man writes about. In the end that is the attitude of every human soul -- only they don't know it."¹⁴ Yet, he could also write books of "propaganda"¹⁵ and detest Cervantes for having destroyed the idea of chivalry.¹⁶

Such vacillation on Ford's part is reflected by those critics who are eager to remain true to the spirit of some of their mentor's statements. To use Ford's terminology, they have divorced the "how" from the "what", have left the "how" for a general consideration under convenient headings and have consequently dealt with the "what" as an

¹³In addition, see Critical Writings of Ford Madox Ford, ed. F. MacShane (Lincoln, 1964), pp. 33-103.

¹⁴F. M. Ford, Thus to Revisit: Some Reminiscences (London, 1921), p. 32.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁶F. M. Ford, The March of Literature from Confucius' Day to Our Own (New York, 1938), pp. 680-681.

isolated entity. This has resulted in a noticeable readiness to launch into moral judgements that overlook the inseparability of form and content, the way in which the "how" and "what" are united. By focusing upon the rhetoric of Ford's fiction this error can be avoided, as an understanding of the concept involves an awareness of the delicate balance that exists between these two entities.

One critic who has attempted to deal with the problems arising from an erroneous distinction between form and content is Mark Schorer, whose judgement of John Dowell my discussion, ironically, will oppose. The initial propositions of his article, "Technique as Discovery", are well worth examining, since they outline a general fault in recent criticism of Ford's fiction.¹⁷ Schorer argues that, with the "exacting scrutiny of literary texts" typical of much of the "New Criticism", we have come to see that in poetry form and content are not divisible: "Modern criticism has shown us that to speak of content as such is not to speak of art at all, but of experience; and that it is only when we speak of the achieved content, the form, the work of art as a work of art, that we speak as critics. The difference between content, or experience, and achieved content, or art, is technique."¹⁸ A definition as broad as this one should make it difficult to continue with the fracture between form and content that has been prevalent among critics of The Good Soldier -- the inclination, that is, to deal in moral

¹⁷ M. Schorer, "Technique as Discovery" (1948), in The Novel: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. R. M. Davis (New Jersey, 1969), pp. 75-92.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 75.

judgements about the narrator without paying due attention to the form in which the story is told. In addition, an understanding of Schorer's point of view would help us avoid the superficial criticisms of the Fifth Queen trilogy that overlook the kind of effects for which Ford is reaching, given the genre he is dealing with.

Using the term "technique", as expounded by Schorer, can assist the critic in overcoming these problems by its emphasis upon the process of fiction:

When we speak of technique, then, we speak of nearly everything. For technique is the means by which the writer's experience, which is his subject matter, compels him to attend to it; technique is the only means he has of discovering, exploring, developing his subject, of conveying its meaning, and, finally, of evaluating it. And surely it follows that certain techniques are sharper tools than others, and will discover more; that the writer capable of the most exacting technical scrutiny of his subject matter, will produce works with the most satisfying content, works with thickness and resonance, works which reverberate, works with maximum meaning.¹⁹

If we are not able to "regard as seriously intended criticism of poetry [that] which does not assume these generalizations",²⁰ then, Schorer argues, a case should be made for the same conditions to apply to criticism of the novel. We should seek to avoid the view that treats the novel "as though its content has some value in itself", where technique is discussed as a "supplementary element" that acts as an "embellishment" and is something "given". Instead, technique should be thought of as "the means of exploring and defining the values in an area

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

of experience which, for the first time then, are being given."²¹

It is clear that, in his definition of technique, Schorer includes "nearly everything", even though he confines his use of the phrase to point of view and language "as used to create a certain texture and tone which in themselves state and define themes and meanings."²² (We may also include less obvious concerns such as the writer's handling and use of character or imagery.) Approximating his interpretation with T. S. Eliot's term "convention" -- "any selection, structure, or distortion, any form or rhythm imposed upon the world of action" by which "our apprehension of the world of action is enriched or renewed" -- he enlarges upon his all-encompassing definition as follows: "In this sense, everything is technique which is not the lump of experience itself, and one cannot properly say that a writer has no technique or that he eschews technique, for, being a writer, he cannot do so. We can speak of good and bad technique, of adequate and inadequate, of technique which serves the novel's purpose, or disserves."²³ Schorer's argument encourages us to think of all aspects of "technique" as an integral part of the artistic process, as the writer guides his readers towards their apprehension of the novel's "achieved content". We watch and take part in this process, keeping our eyes forever on the way in which our responses are moulded. For his part, as Ford himself points out in an article entitled "Techniques",

²¹Ibid., p. 76.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 77.

the author must "have [his] eyes forever on [his] Reader. That alone constitutes . . . Technique!"²⁴ Or, to use an argument put forward by Henry James and Wayne C. Booth, the author must be aware of the way in which he "makes" his readers, deciding how much he should give them or how far they should be left to make their own inferences from a particular scene. It is this sense of control that is implied by Schorer's use of the term "technique", Eliot's word "convention", and Ford's idea of the author keeping his eyes upon the reader. The critic's task is to determine how well the artist has achieved his goal.

In a discussion of the elements of control in Ford's fiction, "technique" might indeed have been a suitable expression, were it not that it does carry connotations of embellishment and is often dealt with, by critics, in a fragmentary manner. Schorer's own preoccupation with the function of language and point of view in fiction exhibits such a tendency to move away from seeing "technique" as "nearly everything". Consequently, he ends up by making too radical a judgement of works that do not practise these two concerns in the way he desires.²⁵ His narrowing of interest illustrates the dangers of using a term like "technique", since it is generally thought of in a more limiting context than that which is covered by Schorer's originally broad definition.

Wayne C. Booth, however, is fully aware of the difficulties that confront a critic who is about to deal with the subject of "technique"

²⁴F. M. Ford, "Techniques" (1935), in Critical Writings of Ford Madox Ford, p. 71.

²⁵"Technique as Discovery", pp. 76-77.

in its widest sense:

* * * 'technique' has at times been expanded to cover all discernible signs of the author's artistry. If everyone used 'technique' as Mark Schorer does, covering with it almost the entire range of choices made by the author, then it might very well serve our purposes. But it is usually taken for a much narrower matter, and consequently it will not do. We can be satisfied only with a term that is as broad as the work itself but still capable of calling attention to that work as the product of a choosing, evaluating person rather than as a self-existing thing.²⁶

Booth confronts the problem with a critical vocabulary based upon a concept of "rhetoric", which, in many ways, is a synonym for Schorer's term "technique": "My subject is the technique of non-didactic fiction, viewed as the art of communicating with readers -- the rhetorical resources available to the writer of epic, novel, or short story as he tries, consciously or unconsciously, to impose his fictional world upon the reader."²⁷ His argument, in The Rhetoric of Fiction, has undergone later challenge and refinement, a process clearly visible in an article carried in Novel as one of its "Second Thoughts Series".²⁸ Here, Booth enlarges upon the thesis of his original book:

The Rhetoric of Fiction asks, as Kenneth Burke had been doing in a different way, that we think of the poem not primarily as meaning or being but as doing. In place of analyses of poetic form, descriptions and interpretations of types of action or plot (with their power to produce an effect indicated, but not exclusively dominant), I look at effects, at techniques for producing them, and at readers and their inferences. In place of a classification of literary kinds, I give an analysis of

²⁶Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), p. 74.

²⁷"Preface" to The Rhetoric of Fiction.

²⁸Wayne C. Booth, "The Rhetoric of Fiction and the Poetics of Fictions", Novel, I (1968), 105-117.

interests and (as in the Emma chapter) manipulations of interests. In place of an analysis into the poetic elements of the internal structure (plot, character, thought, diction) my elements become identical with the three that one finds in all rhetoric, author, work, audience: authors and their various surrogates and spokesmen; works, and their various arrangements for effect; audiences, and their preconceptions and processes of inference.²⁹

One need not agree with everything Booth says here, especially in the latter part of the quotation. Yet, stated briefly, it can be seen that he is attempting to undermine the commonly-held notion that artistic success is necessarily defined in terms inherited from the novels and criticism of Henry James.³⁰ As the regular occurrence of the word "Jamesian" illustrates, modern critical assumptions taken from James's theoretical asides have been given the status of an unquestioned dogma that implies a superior value without examination of first principles.

Booth tries to show that there are many ways in which to write 'good' novels, and that our considerations of value must always be alive to this possibility; so that our appreciation of the genre becomes descriptive rather than prescriptive. His argument attempts to force some of the admirers of the so-called "Jamesian" school to shed their quasi-religious fervour in favour of a more exacting and open-minded analysis of novels both by their champion and other writers. Booth makes his challenge by examining "rhetoric", that is, the "doing"

²⁹Ibid., 113.

³⁰Killham and others argue that ideas about artistic success are largely matters of taste. See J. Killham, "My Quarrel with Booth", Novel, I (1968), 267-272. Needless to say, Killham's argument, if supported, would lead us to a position where English Studies resembled the Stock-market, as James's value sagged and boomed. While, in many respects, this situation may appear to exist, it is not one with which we should remain content.

element in fiction which he defines more clearly in his article in Novel. Of equal significance, in so far as my examination of Ford's major novels and romances is concerned, is Booth's argument that all novelists utilize "rhetorical resources" in order to make us see their unique fictional worlds, and that they must therefore be engaged in forms of judgement, no matter how objective each novelist tries to be.

Booth pursues his argument about rhetoric and the moral dimension of fiction by arguing that the traditional distinction between "showing" and "telling" is an arbitrary one: "Everything [the author] shows will serve to tell * * * . In short, the author's judgement is always present, always evident to anyone who knows how to look for it. * * * we must never forget that though the author can to some extent choose his disguises, he can never choose to disappear."³¹ His realization stems from a query as to how an episode "told" by Fielding can appear more vivid than one "shown" by many poor imitators of Henry James.³² He continues: "Such questions force us to consider closely what happens when an author engages a reader fully with a work of fiction; they lead us to a view of fictional technique which necessarily goes far beyond the reductions that we have sometimes accepted under the concept of 'point of view.'"³³ His solution is to treat all artistic

³¹Ibid., p. 20. Also: "The author cannot choose whether to use rhetorical heightening. His only choice is of the kind of rhetoric he will use" (p. 116).

³²For an interesting discussion of Fielding in the light of what Booth calls "the rhetoric of character and event" see Sheldon Sacks, Fiction and the Shape of Belief: A Study of Henry Fielding (Los Angeles, 1964). This book was found helpful for the chapter on the Fifth Queen.

³³The Rhetoric of Fiction, pp. 8-9.

flourishes as, in some sense, rhetorical: "the rhetoric of titles", "the rhetoric of ficelles", "the rhetoric of character and event", to name but a few. It is an argument that allows him to deal with the rhetorical "manner" even of Henry James, as he sees it, for instance, in The Portrait of a Lady:

Thus we have the other main characters invented to reveal Isabel, and the ficelle invented to help reveal all of them. When we add such 'friends of the reader' to the explicit commentary -- in the opening paragraph, for example, with its ornate and personal description of 'afternoon tea' -- we find a large share of the book falling on the side of rhetoric consciously directed to the reader; almost nothing except Isabel's character is left on the side of 'subject.'³⁴

Booth's insights allow him to conclude The Rhetoric of Fiction with a statement that, in many ways, could serve as an epigraph for my study:

The author makes his readers. If he makes them badly -- that is, if he simply waits, in all purity, for the occasional reader whose perceptions and norms happen to match his own, then his conception must be lofty indeed if we are to forgive him for his bad craftsmanship. But if he makes them well -- that is, makes them see what they have never seen before, moves them into a new order of perception and experience altogether -- he finds his reward in the peers he has created.³⁵

³⁴ Ibid., p. 103.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 397-398. Booth's conclusion owes a great deal, ironically enough, to James's essay "The Novels of George Eliot" (1866), in A Century of George Eliot Criticism, ed. G. S. Haight (London, 1966), pp. 43-54. James's words are: "In every novel the work is divided between the writer and the reader; but the writer makes the reader very much as he makes his characters. When he makes him ill, that is makes him indifferent, he does no work; the writer does all. When he makes him well, that is, makes him interested, then the reader does quite half the labour" (p. 48). It is a debt Booth partially acknowledges in The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 302.

Certainly, the passage has acted as a stimulus for my analysis of Ford's major fictions. It has enabled me to take the technical resources Ford employs in a way that will allow for seeing an individual work as a shaping medium which moves the reader to an awakened sense of experience, where every brushstroke is directed towards this goal. The ensuing discussion of the Fifth Queen, The Good Soldier and Parade's End will therefore make substantial use of Booth's argument that "the whole art of fiction" should be "viewed in the rhetorical mode."³⁶ In doing so, it is hoped that many of the errors found in previous criticism of Ford, such as the dichotomy between form and content and the absence of detailed analysis, may be avoided.³⁷

iii

The concept of the rhetorical dimension of fiction can, therefore, contribute towards a further understanding of Ford's major

³⁶"The Rhetoric of Fiction and the Poetics of Fictions", 110.

³⁷Another critic who has exercised a significant influence on the present study is David Lodge, in his book Language of Fiction (London, 1966). His emphasis upon the importance of language and his ability for close readings of novels are of particular value. It is worth recording that, as indicated by the following statements, Lodge is aware of his own debt to both Booth and Schorer: "In the criticism of fiction we have learned, notably from Wayne Booth, to use 'rhetoric' as a term for all the techniques by which a novelist seeks to persuade us of the validity of his vision of experience, a vision which cannot usually be formulated in abstract terms" (p. 147). "In short, what I am suggesting is that in literary discourse, the writer discovers what he has to say in the process of saying it, and the reader discovers what is said in responding to the way it is said" (pp. 64-65). These two quotations underline much of what has been said in this introduction.

productions, as it can help us see "how a certain writer gets his effects", how he pleases his readers and allows them "to get at the mainsprings of his cosmic theories". It is an interesting coincidence that this is the kind of study of fiction Ford himself recommends: "You must study [the artist's work] word by word; cadence by cadence and paragraph * * * ." ³⁸ What is required, then, is an analysis that takes into account the unique character of the individual work being considered, through looking at the way in which the writer gets his effects by the use of, for example, language, landscape, colours, myth or the delineation and juxtaposition of characters. For the latter is as important a part of the novelist's rhetoric as the more readily perceivable concerns which have generally been thought of under the heading of "technique". Thus, the following discussion of the Fifth Queen will pay close attention to Ford's handling of characters within the context of romance -- which is what that trilogy is. It is hoped that my approach will raise our appreciation of not only the Fifth Queen, but also of the other novels under scrutiny.

³⁸F. M. Ford, Thus to Revisit: Some Reminiscences, p. 85.

II

RHETORIC AND ROMANCE IN THE FIFTH QUEEN

i

* * * the worst historical novelist is better for giving you a sense of vicarious experience than the most industrious of compilers of scientific evidence. And the novelist is there to give you a sense of vicarious experience. What without him would you know? A Little Less Than Gods

With regard to the Fifth Queen, any answer to Ford's question must take the form of a defence of the trilogy in an effort to enable an understanding of the 'knowledge' the work possesses and the way in which we are brought to see it. For past critics of this series of historical romances have generally been impervious to its qualities, largely basing their derogatory comments upon erroneous assumptions about the genre to which the Fifth Queen belongs, many holding to the tacit belief that, as novels, these volumes should conform to undisclosed, unanalysed canons of realism. This chapter will attempt to counter these arguments by paying close attention to the kind of work with which we are dealing, "A Romance", as Ford calls The Fifth Queen Crowned, and the type of effects and techniques available to the author and how these are utilized -- that is, its rhetoric. By dealing with these two concerns, it is hoped this analysis will detail the kind of 'knowledge' the trilogy provides.

It is worth glancing at some of the previous criticism of the

series in order to isolate and avoid the pitfalls into which critics have fallen. On the whole, discussions of the Fifth Queen have been limited to a preoccupation with seeing the trilogy as novels. Given this, it is only to be expected that the result will be negative judgments about the "stock sentimental heroine"¹ and the "unconvincing world, too black and too white to resemble the one that really turns on its axis."² In a "historical novel of manners", Katherine Howard becomes

* * * divine, not human, and her end not a rounding off of the novel's vision of reality but an apotheosis. This is the price Ford has to pay in order to get an image of 'justice' into a fiction wholly committed to 'reality.' Having committed himself to this kind of ending, he wrote it eloquently. But it is impossible not to wish that he had not ignored the full implications of the human₃ situation he so beautifully imagined in the body of the novel.

These evaluations might have been very different if the critics concerned had paid more attention to the kind of work with which they found themselves confronted. An awareness that the Fifth Queen is a romance would have required an effort to escape the prevalent "General Rules" attacked by Wayne Booth.

One critic who does make the effort is Samuel Hynes, though he too finally judges the Fifth Queen series as being "properly novels".⁴ However, some of the distinctions he draws about Ford's earlier fictions can help us to arrive at a point of departure that will enable a more

¹ John Meixner, Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p. 62.

² C. Ohmann, Ford Madox Ford, p. 31.

³ A. Mizener, The Saddest Story, pp. 476-477.

⁴ S. Hynes, "Ford and the Spirit of Romance", Modern Fiction Studies, IX (Spring, 1963), 22.

just reading of the trilogy. In particular, Hynes wishes to focus our attention upon the term romance which, though "one of the trickiest of literary terms", will allow the reader to avoid simply "[calling] all works of prose fiction of an appropriate length novels, and [judging] them by a single system of critical standards."⁵ He acknowledges that "this kind of fiction is nourished by falsehood" since:

Fictional romance alters the world as we know it, and creates in its place a 'world-of-the-work' which is simpler, and less abrasive than our own, and which consequently appeals to the human will to escape (as the novel, presumably, appeals to our will to know). The romantic escape is most readily achieved through physical removal * * * . But one may also remove in time, and write historical romance, or simplify the present, and write contemporary romance * * * . Of the two most popular modern forms of romance, one -- the Western -- is removed in time and space to an American 'Green World', while the other -- the detective story -- remains in a 'world-of-the-work' which is apparently a model of the real world, but is in fact morally rigged. Both are properly romances, for both offer us simplified worlds with simple problems, in which we can unerringly ally ourselves with right and innocence, and in which pure-and-simple justice is invariably done.⁶

One might wish to question whether it is only the novel that "appeals to our will to know", and suggest that, as Booth has shown, all works of fiction are in some sense "morally rigged". However, Hynes does enable us to see Ford's earlier productions in a more sympathetic light, as romances. In addition, Ford emerges, in Hynes's view, as a "romancer" whose "romancing habit of mind" found its fulfilment in "impressionism":

Ford's impressionism is his theory of subjective reality applied to literary form; it is the method by which experience, transformed by romancing memory, may be rendered -- the method, in

⁵Ibid., 18.

⁶Ibid., 18-19.

short, of his major novels. But it is also the method of his autobiographical writings, his discursive books, and even his literary criticism * * * . Impressions are the appearances of things, subjectively recorded; memories are past impressions, colored by romance; neither has any necessary relation to verifiable fact, but together they compose what is valuable for an artist.⁷

As John Dowell and most of the characters in Parade's End illustrate, the memory of experience is as important as the experience itself, for it is within the shaping context of memory that the event begins to find its full value. In the absence of memory, experience remains a series of fragmented pieces, without form or meaning.

Hynes shows that the idea of romance and the form of romance are central to an appreciation of Ford's early fictions, as well as being important contributors to his later and more widely-acclaimed novels, The Good Soldier and Parade's End. It is to be regretted that he did not pursue his insights into the Fifth Queen, choosing instead to define the series as "properly novels":

For one thing, the world of these novels is not rigged; passions are complicated, motives complex and obscure, evil a powerful human reality. Ford's major themes -- the need for love, the need for money, and the need to behave well under pressure -- are all there, and all treated without the simplification of romance. The books have the texture of actuality, a realized and vividly particular Tudor England of mud and cold, as well as of crowns and royal splendour. Ford was always at his best in dealing with conditions of human deprivation, and the story of Katherine Howard, as he tells it, was ideal for his talents. * * * [It] is worth noting that history did not provide him with a queen who was piously Catholic, but that he made her into one, and in doing so made romance into novel.⁸

⁷Ibid., 24. This statement provides an answer to critics, like Leon Edel, who deplore Ford's "myth-making" abilities. See L. Edel, Henry James: The Master. 1901-1916 (London, 1972), pp. 38-45.

⁸"Ford and the Spirit of Romance", 22.

It is curious that Hynes should denote the making of Katherine into a religious figure as being the singular talent of the novelist rather than the romancer. One would have thought the opposite would have been the more accurate assertion. In addition, as will be discussed, the moral framework is not as complex as Hynes would have us believe. Certainly, when placed beside The Good Soldier, the lines are more clearcut, the characterization more stylized, the use of myth more pronounced and more essential to the structure of the trilogy than in the later novel. All in all, we would do the Fifth Queen a greater service by seeing it as a romance. This does not mean that there is any need to apologize for the work, or to make undue allowances. Instead, we should be prepared to meet the trilogy on its own terms, and judge it accordingly.

Yet, as the majority of criticism on the Fifth Queen shows, readers do tend to view the idea of romance as evoking thoughts of "escapism, fantasy and sentimentality".⁹ But, as Richard Chase has argued, "in the very freedom of romance from the conditions of actuality there are certain potential virtues of the mind, which may be suggested by such words as rapidity, irony, abstraction, profundity."¹⁰ In the context of the American tradition, the romance could allow the writer to introduce "dark and complex truths unavailable to realism", often resulting in "romantic nihilism, a poetry of force and darkness."¹¹

⁹Richard Chase, The American Novel and its Tradition (New York, 1957), p. x.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. xi.

These "virtues" are the result of our being aware of the kind of rhetoric open to the romancer, the various effects he has at his disposal. As Chase points out, the romance

* * * must signify, besides the more obvious qualities of the picturesque and the heroic, and assumed freedom from the ordinary novelistic requirements of verisimilitude, development, and continuity; a tendency towards melodrama and idyl; a more or less formal abstractness and, on the other hand, a tendency to plunge into the underside of consciousness, a willingness to abandon moral questions or to ignore the spectacle of man in society, or to consider these things only indirectly or abstractly.¹²

While the last part of Chase's definition undergoes some subsequent modification, it is nevertheless a view with which several writers would appear to agree. In his Preface to The House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne tries to make his readers aware of the "assumed freedom" allowed a romancer:

When a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume had he professed to be writing a Novel. The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience. The former -- while, as a work of art, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the human heart -- has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent of the writer's own choosing or creation. If he think fit, also, he may so manage his atmospherical medium as to bring out or mellow the lights and deepen and enrich the shadows of the picture.¹³

¹² Ibid., p. ix.

¹³ Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Preface" (1851) to The House of the Seven Gables (New York, 1961), p. vii.

The freedom to "claim a certain latitude" is also a principle Henry James sees as being a primary one of the romancer's art:

The only general attribute of projected romance that I can see, the only one that fits all its cases, is the fact of the kind of experience with which it deals -- experience liberated, so to speak; experience disengaged, disembroiled, disencumbered, exempt from the conditions that we usually know to attach to it and, if we wish so to put the matter, drag upon it, and operating in a medium which relieves it, in a particular interest, of the inconvenience of a related, a measurable state, a state subject to all our vulgar communities. The greatest intensity may be so arrived at evidently -- when the sacrifice of community, of the 'related' sides of situations, has not been too rash. It must to this end not flagrantly betray itself; we must even be kept if possible, for our illusion, from suspecting any sacrifice at all. The balloon of experience is in fact of course tied to the earth, and under that necessity we swing, thanks to a rope of remarkable length, in the more or less commodious car of the imagination; but it is by the rope we know where we are, and from the moment that cable is cut we are at large and unrelated: we only swing apart from the globe -- though remaining as exhilarated, naturally, as we like, especially when all goes well. The art of the romancer is, 'for the fun of it,' insidiously to cut the cable, to cut it without our detecting him.¹⁴

In one sense, it is to Ford's credit that the majority of his readers have not noticed how the romancer has "cut the cable".

In viewing the trilogy as being properly romances, we should therefore be prepared for this "latitude", for "the kind of experience" with which the romancer is dealing. The rhetoric of his art, the way in which he makes us see his fictional world and the fundamental values operating there, deals in larger effects than those commonly adhered to by the novelist concerned with questions of possibility or probability. As already pointed out, in a romance there can be a more readily

¹⁴Henry James, "Preface" (1907) to The American, in The Art of the Novel, ed. R. P. Blackmur (New York, 1934), pp. 33-34.

perceivable moral climate; the issues may be dealt with in black and white terms, and the hero or heroine is not as likely to be found amid the ambiguities of experience as his or her counterpart in the modern, realistic novel. As in the charges of incredibility levelled at Katherine Howard, critics have revealed their unwillingness to deal with this rhetorical dimension of the Fifth Queen. Therefore, it is well worth making some preliminary comments about Ford's heroine, particularly the role she plays within the context of romance.

ii

To use Richard Chase's description of Isabel Archer, Katherine Howard is engaged in a "romance of the self" which involves the discovery of identity. Katherine shares some affinities with James's heroine: "[Isabel] believes that the self finds fulfilment either in its own isolated integrity or on a more or less transcendent ground where the contending forces of good and evil are symbolized abstractions. She sees her fate as a spiritual melodrama."¹⁵ Unlike Isabel, Katherine remains within the framework of romance, and does not face the kind of self-doubt and self-questioning undergone by the former, especially in chapter forty-two of The Portrait of a Lady. In short, there is not the confrontation with the memory of experience undergone by Isabel, as well as John Dowell and characters like Mark and Christopher Tietjens. For Katherine's memory, her storehouse of experience, is firmly planted in

¹⁵The American Novel and its Tradition, p. 131.

the soil of the Ancients and in the Catholic faith. Neither of these sources of values is severely questioned, other than by characters, like Throckmorton, whose moral fibre is challenged by them, which is not quite the case with Isabel's earlier, American notion of selfhood. Though rejected by the world, comprised of many individuals who lack faith, Katherine emerges triumphant, her original notion of identity intact, her self having matured into the kind of unity of being that reflects harshly upon those around her. Unlike Isabel, Katherine has achieved this, not through a democratic notion of freedom, but through the subjugation of the self to an external order, one that is ultimately symbolized by Catholicism. Only by controlling the limited goals of self-interest -- greed, wealth, power for its own sake -- and by believing in someone or something outside the self can the individual characters ever hope to be free. It is a challenge so many of them fail to make during the course of the trilogy.¹⁶ Their failure leads to Katherine's death, an end she chooses as being the only one where she can retain her integrity and sense of being. In this, she is a romance figure operating wholly within the medium of romance. The rhetoric of the work, dealing as it is with the possibilities of the romance genre, is predominantly concerned with the framework Katherine provides, with her faith. The techniques of the romance are preoccupied with highlighting her character, with celebrating the qualities of her being. As

¹⁶This argument is in sharp contrast with that advanced by Carol Ohmann, who insists upon seeing two Katherines, one who tries to subject, the other who tries to liberate individualistic impulses from ideal values. She overlooks the essential unity of Katherine's being. See C. Ohmann, Ford Madox Ford, p. 30.

the section headings of The Fifth Queen Crowned suggest, the trilogy is a song of the self, a work designed to make us see the virtues of the kind of heroism Katherine embodies.

It is a pattern that recurs throughout Ford's fiction. Yet nowhere is the design so clearly drawn as in his portrait of the fifth Queen. In the novels of the contemporary world, Ford's heroes are without the solid background provided by the Catholic faith, and are more susceptible to the ambiguities that surround them. However, as in so many of the novels of Henry James, there are elements of the romance present, making a sympathetic and close reading of the Fifth Queen a worthwhile prelude to the later novels, as well as for its intrinsic rewards.

Yet some readers may wonder why Ford chose to write a work that includes such a heroine as Katherine Howard. While not directly answering this query, it should be pointed out that Ford is not the only writer, in this century, who has depicted a figure of Katherine's stature. T. S. Eliot's Murder in The Cathedral, several "entertainments" by Graham Greene, and especially Robert Bolt's A Man For All Seasons, these examples show writers concerned with the subject of heroism, and the attendant problem of its questionable existence in a modern world that does not have a universal structure by which the hero may be judged. Noticeably, Eliot, Bolt and Ford turn to historical figures for subjects, utilizing the techniques of church ritual, epic theatre and romance as methods by which they could create a framework that would permit their central figures to act with honour, integrity and faith. In addition, Thomas Becket, Thomas More and Katherine Howard are all Catholic figures,

thus allowing their creators an added dimension of order with which to create a sense of heroic stature. But, unlike Eliot, Ford and Bolt cannot be considered as devout Catholics. In this connection, it is interesting to quote Bolt's reasons for choosing to write about More, since they have a direct bearing upon our understanding of the Fifth Queen:

But I am not a Catholic nor even in the meaningful sense of the word a Christian. So by what right do I appropriate a Christian saint to my purposes? Or to put it the other way, why do I take as my hero a man who brings about his own death because he can't put his hand on an old black book and tell an ordinary lie?

For this reason: A man takes an oath only when he wants to commit himself quite exceptionally to the statement, when he wants to make an identity between the truth of it and his own virtue; he offers himself as a guarantee. And it works. There is a special kind of shrug for a perjurer; we feel that the man has no self to commit, no guarantee to offer. Of course it's much less effective now that for most of us the actual words of the oath are not much more than impressive mumbo-jumbo than it was when they made obvious sense; we would prefer most men to guarantee their statements with, say, cash rather than themselves. We feel -- we know -- the self to be an equivocal commodity * * * . But though few of us have anything in ourselves like an immortal soul which we regard as absolutely inviolable, yet most of us still feel something which we should prefer, on the whole, not to violate. * * * It may be that a clear sense of the self can only crystallize round something transcendental in which case, our prospects look poor, for we are rightly committed to the rational. I think the paramount gift our thinkers, artists, and for all I know, our men of science, should labour to get for us is a sense of selfhood without resort to magic.¹⁷

Bolt's interest reflects upon the kind of concern that lies very much at the heart of the Fifth Queen. Interestingly enough, he is faced with the same kind of problems that confront Ford in so far as the central

¹⁷Robert Bolt, A Man For All Seasons (New York, 1960), pp. xiii-xiv.

figure is concerned. He chooses to operate in a style that is "larger than life", with a "historical setting" that would allow him to treat his "hero of selfhood" in a "properly heroic, properly theatrical manner."¹⁸ Though he was later to reject the notion of a hero as being inappropriate for his fiction dealing with the contemporary world,¹⁹ Ford, like Bolt, looks to the past -- in the way Katherine looks to the Ancients -- where some form of order might have existed that would give his idea of heroism a meaningful context. Above all, it is a situation where his heroine's "sense of selfhood" is not subject to so great an equivocation as might be the case in the modern world. The reign of Henry VIII gave Ford the proper historical location, and the romance genre presented him with a medium that would allow him the necessary freedom and range of effects in order to create a figure like Katherine Howard. As the ensuing discussion will show, the result is a successful portrait or song of a character who embodies a strong "sense of selfhood".

The rhetoric of the Fifth Queen is preoccupied with making us see this portrait, and the remainder of this chapter will be concerned with isolating the techniques and effects that are present in the composition of Ford's picture. But, as Paul Wiley says: "Like most of Ford's better work the fabric of the trilogy is too close, the workmanship too minute, to be systematically analyzed."²⁰ However, it is

¹⁸ Ibid., p. xvii.

¹⁹ F. M. Ford, It Was the Nightingale (Philadelphia, 1933), pp. 217-227.

²⁰ Novelist of Three Worlds, p. 101.

possible to examine the Fifth Queen in such a way that will indicate the rhetorical dimension of the romance, particularly in so far as Ford's use of myth, landscape, colours, objects and characters is concerned. For, here, his effects are far larger and bolder than in the later novels, and it is worth illustrating them in this context. As Hugh Kenner has observed, Ford made everything count. He insisted upon

(1) the adequation of language to the thing perceived or the sensation undergone rather than to an overriding concept of 'style'; (2) the importance of making every episode, sentence, and phrase function -- carry forward the total effect ('progression d'effet'); and (3) the principle of juxtaposition without cupola chapter with chapter, incident with incident, character with character, word with word as the mainspring of poetic effect.²¹

Though it is difficult to illustrate the relevance of every phrase, the present writer intends to create a framework and a climate in which this is possible, where we can see that each brushstroke has a rhetorical function in our vision of the completed canvas. A view of the rhetoric of this romance should help us to extend our appreciation, thus enabling us to reject the opinion that the Fifth Queen is the work of "a conscientious but uninspired craftsman who chooses an uncongenial medium and finally fails to explore his subject."²²

²¹Hugh Kenner, "Remember that I Have Remembered" (1951), in his Gnomon (New York, 1958), pp. 145-146.

²²C. Ohmann, Ford Madox Ford, p. 23.

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'But success or failure,' Tietjens said, 'have nothing to do with the credit of a story. And a consideration of the virtues of humanity does not omit the other side. If we lose they win. If success is necessary to your idea of virtue -- virtus -- then they provide the success instead of ourselves. But the thing is to be able to stick to the integrity of your character, whatever earthquake sets the house tumbling over your head. . . .'

No More Parades

'It's the quality of harmony, sir. The quality of being in harmony with your own soul. God having given you your own soul you are then in harmony with heaven.' Ibid.

As previously stated, Ford uses the landscape in his trilogy for rhetorical purposes. The setting, the season and the climate act as reflectors of spiritual and physical states of being, with the latitude allowed a romancer like Hawthorne. Thus, the first volume, The Fifth Queen, opens in Winter, a season of death, coldness and hunger, yet with the promise of rebirth and regeneration implicit in the arrival of the New Year. The trilogy follows the cycle of a season, ending in Autumn, corresponding to the growth that takes place with the "sunburst" Katherine Howard provides for Henry and England, which is lost with her rejection, in The Fifth Queen Crowned, as the land moves into Winter once again. In the opening chapter of The Fifth Queen, this movement has not yet begun. Here, we encounter the figure of Nicholas Udal, whose spiritual poverty is reflected in the landscape: "MAGISTER NICHOLAS UDAL, the Lady Mary's pedagogue, was very hungry and very cold. He stood undecided in the mud of a lane in the Austin Friars. The quickset hedges on either side were only waist high and did not shelter him."²³ Udal is typical of his fellow countrymen, preoccupied with the

²³The Fifth Queen, 11.

limited goals of self-interest, or with the short-lived rewards of the senses. Indecision is one of the attributes possessed by those characters, like Udal, who either lack Katherine's sense of selfhood or her devotion to a vision that transcends self-interest. This hesitancy extends to the monarch, and is the result of the absence of spiritual "shelter" that the monasteries used to provide, which was subsequently replaced by Privy Seal's secular order.²⁴

The mud that clings to the pedagogue is the medium of those characters who, like him, lack an identity and have no self to commit. It is an image of entrapment that also extends to royalty, as Lady Mary observes: "'We, that are royal and sit in high places, have our feet in such mire.'"²⁵ The weapons of these characters, by which they pursue their self-interest, are cunning, deceit and the lure of money. Cromwell sees this and uses this medium and its weapons in an attempt to fashion an Utopia, his efforts also being reflected in the landscape:

The little houses all round him of white daub with grey corner beams had been part of the old friars' stables and offices. All that neighbourhood was a maze of dwellings and gardens, with the hedges dry, the orchard trees bare with frost, the arbours wintry and deserted. This congregation of small cottages was like a patch of common that squatters had taken; the great house of the Lord Privy Seal, who had pulled down the monastery to make room for it, was a central mass. Its gilded vanes were in the shape of men at arms, and tore the ragged clouds with the banners on their lances. Nicholas Udal looked at the roof and cursed the porter of it.²⁶

²⁴As Katherine points out in The Fifth Queen Crowned, 497.

²⁵Ibid., 518.

²⁶The Fifth Queen, 11.

Here, the contrast between past and present focuses around these efforts by Privy Seal, who has not only challenged the previous religious order, symbolized by the monastery he has pulled down, but is also trying to defy the cosmos itself, as in "tore the ragged clouds". The new order, with its accompanying images of barrenness and dryness, is based upon fear and power. Cromwell's beliefs put man's spiritual and physical well-being second to the need for "order and peace". Thus, it is noticeable that he later asserts his willingness, should Henry so desire, to re-establish the old faith: "'I tell thee, silly knave, that I be friend only to them that love the order and peace I have made, under the King's highness, in this realm. If it be the King's will to stablish again the old faith, a hammer of iron will I be upon such as do raise their heads against it.'"²⁷

Therefore, in the opening paragraph of The Fifth Queen, we are prepared for the vision of an England under Henry VIII and Cromwell. As in Eliot's The Waste Land, the world awaits the rebirth and regeneration of the spirit. Meanwhile, there are Cromwell's efforts to create a secular order, an attempt to frame, divide and subdivide the universe into manageable proportions. The prime example of this is the description of Old Badge's home:

Badge's dwelling had been part of the monastery's curing house. It had some good rooms and two low storeys -- but the tall garden wall of the Lord Privy Seal had been built against its side windows. It had been done without word or warning. Suddenly workmen had pulled down old Badge's pigeon house, set it up twenty yards further in, marked out a line and set up this high wall that pressed so hard against the house end that

²⁷Privy Seal, 303.

there was barely room for a man to squeeze between. The wall ran for half a mile, and had swallowed the ground of twenty small householders. But never a word of complaint had reached the ears of the Privy Seal other than through his spies. It was, however, old Badge's ceaseless grief. He had talked of it without interlude for two years.²⁸

Here, in miniature, Ford presents an image of the intentions, methods and effects of the man whose 'bible' is Machiavelli's Il Principe:

"* * * there is none other book like it in the world. Study of it well: read it upon your walks. I am a simple man, yet it hath made me."²⁹

In this example, Cromwell's Machiavellianism is marked by the additional motifs of the exclusion of light, with its associations of warmth and growth, the impersonality of his power, as in the workmen who descend without warning, and a general absence of compassion and charity, an indifference to people's grief. All these are things Katherine tries to rectify, with her vision of the Golden Age. However, as we shall see, Cromwell's attempts to give the land a sense of order are not to be construed in a wholly negative manner -- one cannot use the word light.

In contrast to these early impressions of Cromwell's power, there is the shifting figure of Nicholas Udal, the hesitant creature who does not wish to hurt anyone with his imaginary pieces of information: "Udal hesitated before the closed door; he hesitated in the lane beyond the corner of the house."³⁰ But, like Rochford, Udal will do little to change this state of affairs, a position Katherine severely criticizes.³¹

²⁸The Fifth Queen, 13.

²⁹Privy Seal, 386.

³⁰The Fifth Queen, 12.

³¹Privy Seal, 282.

Mirrored in one of the many bird images Ford uses -- suggesting, as Katherine later argues, man's tendency to be blown here and there, incapable of asserting any faith or belief³² -- Udal is like the woodpecker, peering cautiously "out of a hole in a tree." Unlike Katherine, the morality of Tully or Plautus and the direction provided by a firm faith in a Christian God take second place to the attractions provided by other 'deities': "But what among the day's purchases pleased him the most was a medallion in silver he had bought in Cheapside. It showed on the one side Cupid in his sleep and on the other Venus fondling a peacock. It was a heart-compelling gift to any wench or lady of degree."³³ The vain and self-centred kind of behaviour pictured in the image of Venus and the peacock will eventually lead to Udal's downfall, through his marriage to the Widow Annot and his eventual disgrace.

The interest shared by Udal and Katherine in Tully and Plautus is one indication of the way in which Ford's rhetoric involves a juxtaposition between Udal's 'career' and that of Katherine Howard, each reflecting upon the other. This contrast and comparison between the two characters is established when they are first introduced. Both respect classical knowledge. But, whereas Udal's medallion depicts Cupid and Venus, Katherine's is of a different sort: "A woman, covered to the face in a fur hood and riding a grey mule, was hit on the arm by the

³²The Fifth Queen Crowned, 588.

³³The Fifth Queen, 12-13.

quarterstaff of a Protestant butcher from the Crays, because she wore a crucifix round her neck."³⁴ Both eventually fall as a result of the 'religions' symbolized by their medallions, both enter into marriages which they later regret, in circumstances where the other party insists upon the match. As an example of Ford's rhetorical "juxtaposition", Udal's limited sensuality contrasts sharply with Katherine's vision of the Golden Age and her assertion of selfhood.

Thus, in the first three pages of the trilogy, Ford has presented and suggested, with great clarity and precision, many of the subjects with which this work is concerned. In addition, it should be noted that, even in a narrative where a definite authorial presence may be felt, Ford does not judge or moralize directly. Instead, the rhetoric of the trilogy is advanced by the way in which he renders the subjects, using parallels and contrasts, images, scenic description, even the repetition of language to create our view of his fictional world. Though possessing a deceptively smooth style, which seduces the reader into the course of events, Ford does make every word count, and, by doing so, answers Ohmann's negative criticisms.³⁵

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The remainder of the opening chapter is taken up with the events that occur at Badge's house, detailing the results of Cromwell's rule in

³⁴Ibid., 36.

³⁵Ford Madox Ford, pp. 25-36.

terms of an atmosphere of intense distrust. This is particularly true of the younger generations. However, in *Old Badge*, Ford creates a figure who has become hardened to change, a character who possesses a wisdom attained by men like Father Consett, the Greek Priest in *A Call*, or Katherine in the final phase of her life. Rather like the character presiding over Aziz's trial in *A Passage to India*, Old Badge sits apart:

The old man sat quivering in the ingle. The light of the low fire glimmered on his silver hair, on his black square cap two generations old; and, in his old eyes that had seen three generations of changes, it twinkled starrily as if they were spinning around. In the cock forward of his shaven chin, and the settling down of his head into his shoulders, there was a suggestion of sinister and sardonic malice. He was muttering at his son:

day.'³⁶ 'A stiff neck that knows no bending, God shall break one

His comment finds its fulfilment in Katherine's fate. Here, Old Badge is isolated by his saint-like detachment from his son who shows his concern when he "[frowns] his heavy brows", and "frowningly" compares two proofs: "[Old Badge] was too old to care whether the magister reported his words to Thomas Cromwell, the terrible Lord Privy Seal, and too sardonic to keep silence for long about the inferiority of his present day."³⁷ His wisdom finds its expression in a criticism of Udal, the emphasis falling upon the word "held", which takes us back to the mud of "a lane of the Austin Friars": "'His servant? See how we are held -- we dare not shut our doors upon him since he is Cromwell's servant, yet if he come in he shall ruin us, take our money that we dare

³⁶The Fifth Queen, 14.

³⁷Ibid., 15.

not refuse, deflower our virgins . . . What then is left to us between this setter up of walls and his servants?"³⁸ And, as he observes, Cromwell's walls serve an added function besides that of division: "'We know not what walls have ears.'"³⁹ Through Old Badge's perspective, we are given further insights into the nature of Cromwell's control of the land.

It is to this central figure, Cromwell, that Ford now turns, after reminding us of the "good, easy days in Lord Edmund's house".⁴⁰ The shift to the river introduces the creator of this modern state: "He stood invisible behind the lights of his cabin; and the thud of oars, the voluble noises of the water, and the crackling of the cresset overhead had, too, the quality of impersonal and supernatural phenomena. His voice said harshly: 'It is very cold; bring me my greatest cloak.'"⁴¹ Using colours for their rhetorical effects, something found in both the Fifth Queen and The Good Soldier, Ford shrouds Cromwell in blackness. As the portrait suggests, Cromwell's power is of the darkness and the night, having little concern for the individuals it involves, its machinations remaining impersonal and invisible. The characteristics and dimensions of his rule are suggested by the figure of Throckmorton, one of Privy Seal's seven-hundred spies, as the aide is found "hidden in

³⁸ Ibid., 21-22.

³⁹ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 24.

⁴¹ Ibid., 24-25.

the deep shadow beside the cabin-door."⁴² Throckmorton's first gesture is to obscure what light there is, an indication both of his present employment and a presage of his subsequent move to 'extinguish' his mentor.

In the Chancellor's quivering form, Ford demonstrates the extent to which so many of Cromwell's followers depend upon him for their position, another example of the nature of Privy Seal's might. This description also underlines how far Cromwell's rage for order has a universal significance, how far it represents a challenge to the heavens: "* * * he was so much the creature of this Lord Privy Seal that it seemed as if the earth was shivering all the while for the fall of this minister, and that he himself was within an inch of the ruin, execration, and death that would come for them all once Cromwell were down."⁴³ The shivering earth emphasizes the boldness of Cromwell's scheme, as he attempts to bring a pattern of stability that will commit a wavering King, in whose hands remains the final decision as to whether Privy Seal should fall or not. But, it is the King's barge that is visible, one source of light that Cromwell cannot completely dominate or extinguish: "The flare of the King's barge a quarter of a mile ahead moved in a glowing patch of lights and their reflections, as though it were some portent creeping in a blaze across the sky. There was nothing else visible in the world but the darkness and a dusky tinge of red

⁴²Ibid., 25.

⁴³Ibid.

where a wave caught the flare of light further out."⁴⁴ Though caught in the Winter and the night at this time, Henry's desires can and do change. In the rejection of Anne of Cleves, and with Throckmorton's own thoughts of desertion, there is the origin of such a movement.

However, Cromwell is too firmly entrenched to be easily removed. His whole being is committed to the preservation of power, something reflected in the minute attention he pays to details, such as his concern with the fishermen whose lights strike him as a possibly treasonable intrusion into his darkness.⁴⁵ He dominates the landscape and generates fear and hatred wherever he walks:

A corridor ran from under the great tower right round the palace. It was full of hurrying people and of grooms who stood in knots beside doorways. They flattened themselves against the walls before the Lord Privy Seal's procession of gentlemen in black with white staves, and the ceilings seemed⁴⁶ to send down moulded and gilded stalactites to touch his head.

Subsequently, upon entering his rooms, there is perhaps an image of where Privy Seal's religious sense really lies when Hanson places the Seal "on a high stand between two tall candles of wax upon the long table",⁴⁷ in imitation of the church altar, its candles and the cross. Here, Ford pays close attention to details, as Cromwell pushes back the flaming fragment, possibly representing himself, amid a background that reveals his future challenger: "The January wind crept round the shadowy room behind the tapestry, and as it quivered stags seemed to

⁴⁴ Ibid., 24.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 28.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 29

leap over bushes, hounds to spring in pursuit, and a crowned Diana to move her arms, taking an arrow from a quiver behind her shoulder."⁴⁸

As an example of Ford's rhetorical use of mythology to form our view of his heroine, who is soon to appear, it should be noted that Katherine is later referred to in conjunction with Diana, when Lady Mary says:

"[Throckmorton] shall be to you more a corslet of proof than all the virtue that your life may borrow from the precepts of Diana."⁴⁹

Katherine is also a huntress,⁵⁰ and "professed to be able to ride well, to be conversant with the terms of venery, to shoot with the bow * * *."⁵¹

In addition, as goddess of the moon, Katherine's ascendancy was perhaps presaged at Cromwell's birth: "And pondering upon the wonderful destiny that had brought him up from a trooper in Italy to these high places, he saluted the moon with his crooked forefinger -- for the moon was the president at his birth."⁵²

While too much can be made of a mythical dimension in the trilogy, it is a necessary part of Ford's handling of the romance genre. Myth acts as a structural device, giving the work its shape, while also allowing the writer to build up multiple allusions that help to make our understanding of a particular character and of the romance as a whole. Not solely confined to this genre, an obvious example being James Joyce's

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ The Fifth Queen Crowned, 518.

⁵⁰ The Fifth Queen, 55.

⁵¹ Ibid., 58.

⁵² Privy Seal, 386.

Ulysses, the use of mythology is one of the devices that allows the author to deal in effects that are "larger than life", to create an air of stylization for his characters. As will be shown, this part of the romancer's rhetoric is especially important in formulating our view of the heroine.

Here, in chapter two, there is the beginning of Ford's portrait of Katherine as a figure of virtue, as well as the first indication of the source of Cromwell's downfall. The myth of Diana, with its associations of chastity and virtue, acts as a means of focusing these concerns, of giving a concrete form of expression to the differences that exist between Katherine and the Lord Privy Seal. The tapestry symbolizes the virtue which Katherine will try to bring to England, a quality Cromwell has hitherto chosen to ignore. It is possibly the lack of it in his secular order that results in the "face of a queen" looking down like the moon "just above his head with her eyes wide open as if she were amazed, thrusting her head from a cloud."⁵³ His final signal to the moon could be taken as an acknowledgement of the power by which he has been defeated. For, it is the attraction of virtue that leads Henry to demand Cromwell's execution.

Such is the suggestiveness that Ford manages to obtain from his handling of various myths that the level of association is not confined to this one interpretation. Thus, the later reference to the moon may also be seen as indicative of the coldness that has marked Cromwell's reign. More importantly, a connection between the face on the tapestry

⁵³The Fifth Queen, 29.

and the moon that presided over Cromwell's birth can also point to a strong element of romance in his character, which, as in the case of Udal, makes him a figure who must be understood in comparison with Katherine. To use Hynes's description of Ford himself, Cromwell is a "romancer", a figure who wishes to transform the world, to give it a form and a sense of permanence. As Throckmorton later observes, in this Cromwell shares some of Katherine's simplicity, a character who could be the only good man "in this quaking place".⁵⁴ The implication of Throckmorton's argument would appear to be that "'* * * a man may be most evil and yet act passing well for your good.'"⁵⁵ It is a point of view that Katherine partially endorses in seeing Privy Seal as the betrayed and Throckmorton as the betrayer: "With her woman's instinct she felt that the man about to die was the better man, though he were her foe."⁵⁶

As a romancer, Cromwell uses weapons such as man's greed, but acts in this way from a basically simple belief: the desire to transform the world. Thus, he makes a crucial distinction about Katherine that reveals his own predicament: "Going back to his friends in the window Cromwell meditated that it was possible to imagine a woman that thought so simply; yet it was impossible to imagine one that should be able to

⁵⁴Ibid., 174-175.

⁵⁵Ibid., 174.

⁵⁶Privy Seal, 298.

act with so great a simplicity."⁵⁷ (My emphasis). Cromwell is perhaps the only character who can imagine the simplicity of Katherine's personality, for it is something that marks his own. But, unlike the fifth Queen, Privy Seal thinks with a degree of simplicity, but does not act in the same way. Instead, he chooses to use the complexities inherent in any system based upon spies, lying and deceit. For her part, Katherine chooses to act as she thinks. It is an important and telling distinction between the two characters.

However, both are romancers in the sense that they wish to transform experience, to give it a definite shape or form, using the attributes each possesses. Though the two differ immensely in the values they bring to the task, and in the methods they employ, both characters attempt to give an order to life, and both come to respect, if not agree with, that aspect in each other. This is the quality that distinguishes them from the other characters in the trilogy. Like the romancer who has created the Fifth Queen, they have faith in their ability to transform the "mud", in which Udal finds himself caught, into some structure -- a faith not shared by the other characters: "'If ye have faith of your cause I have the like of mine.'"⁵⁸ It is this sense of order that is more important to them than personal survival. Thus, when Cromwell is betrayed, he does not appear to be as concerned with his own fate as with discovering the imperfection in his structure, the flaw in his art:

⁵⁷ Ibid., 301.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 300.

But for Privy Seal the problem was not what to do, a thing he might settle in a minute's swift thought, but the discovery of who had betrayed him -- for his whole life had been given to bringing together his machine of service. You might determine an alliance or a divorce between breath and breath; but the training of your instruments, the weeding out of them that had flaws in their fidelities; the exhibiting of a swift and awful vengeance upon mutineers -- these were the things that called for thinking and long frowning of brows.⁵⁹

This concern with the perfection of the "Machine of service" sets him apart from men like Henry who vacillate according to their limited whims. Finally, though we may judge Cromwell adversely, because he has little sense of the importance of truth or virtue and allows the country to wither spiritually under his control, he does share with Katherine this concern for order and an ability to create it. In terms of the rhetoric of the romance, Cromwell is employed as a means of comparison and contrast with Katherine, a reminder that there is a need for order, but a warning that this must include spiritual and religious values, as well as a love of truth, if the land is to flourish. Through Cromwell, Ford explores one example of the possibilities that exist for order, in a manner that may not be available to the writer of a more realistic mode. The romancer can develop images of form without recourse to canons of probability.

Critics have perhaps over-emphasized the idealism of these characters, at the expense of the process each undergoes in an attempt to fashion experience into an order. The gestures both Cromwell and Katherine make to mould the "mire" are what matters, efforts that demand faith in oneself, while also requiring great imagination. In

⁵⁹Ibid., 374.

Cromwell's salute to the moon, there is an acknowledgement of the role he has played as a romancer, employing an imaginative faculty that is shown most clearly in the following passage:

His mind rested luxuriously and tranquilly on that prospect. He would be perpetually beside the throne, there would be no distraction to maintain a foothold. He would be there by right; he would be able to give all his mind to the directing of this world that he despised for its baseness, its jealousies, its insane brawls, its aimless selfishness, and its blind furies. Then there should be no more war, as there should be no more revolts. There should be no more jealousies; for kingcraft, solid, austere, practical and inspired, should keep down all the peoples, all the priests, and all the nobles of the world. 'Ah,' he thought, 'there would be in France no power to shelter traitors like Brancetor.' His eyes became softer in the contemplation of this Utopia, and he moved his upper lip more slowly.⁶⁰

It is such a vision that matters to him above all else:

'I will have this land purged of treasons and schisms. Get you gone before I advise further with myself of your haughty and stiff-necked speeches. For learn this: that before all creeds, and before all desires, and before all women, and before all men, standeth the good of this commonwealth, and state, and King, whose servant I be.'⁶¹

A 'religion' with its own transcendant principle, the giving of oneself to the ideal of a stable state, it is nevertheless one that is without the values associated with a traditional faith like Christianity: virtue and charity. Thus, in Cromwell's final speeches, the language he uses takes on quasi-religious overtones, particularly in his dialogue with Lascelles: "'But greater joy than any were mine could I discern in this land a disciple that could carry on my work. As yet I have seen none; yet ponder well upon this book. God may work in thee, as in me,

⁶⁰The Fifth Queen, 30-31.

⁶¹Privy Seal, 376.

great changes by its study . . ."⁶² But, as Katherine earlier observed about Cromwell: "'Ye speak no word of God."⁶³ For those values which lie very much at the heart of the romance we must turn to Katherine Howard.

Discussion of Ford's heroine has been delayed in order that she may be understood more fully in the context of the trilogy as a whole, especially the way in which other characters are designed to reflect and bring out her essential qualities. She is introduced in a climate of rumour, which begins with the first reference to her and subsequently proves to be one of the slanders contributing to her final undoing: "'She was a Howard, and the Howards are all whores."⁶⁴ Like Privy Seal, Katherine emerges as an example of the transforming spirit, the one character who can fully regenerate life through her faith and imagination. It is an immense task, as indicated by the chaos and bloodshed that surrounds her entry: "She covered her face and shrieked lamentably. A man in green at the mule's head, on the other side, sprang like a wild cat under the beast's neck. His face blazed white, his teeth shone like a dog's, he screamed and struck his dagger through the butcher's throat."⁶⁵ Dressed in Katherine's colour, her impetuous courtly lover, Culpepper, is to emerge as one of the few characters who maintain any faith in her.

⁶²Ibid., 386.

⁶³Ibid., 298.

⁶⁴The Fifth Queen, 18.

⁶⁵Ibid., 36.

Like Cromwell, who sees Henry as "the grey, failing but vindictive and obstinate mass", which he is,⁶⁶ Katherine believes that she can create a "golden age" with this King as a cornerstone. Henry can be and is attracted by visions of order -- especially those that promise to ease his conscience -- but, with Katherine's appearance, we obtain a glimpse of the characteristic indecision he exhibits: "'Let me not be elbowed by cripples' * * * 'A' God's name let them come,' changing his mind, as was his custom after a bad night, before his words had left his thick, heavy lips."⁶⁷ Again using colours for their rhetorical effects, Ford emphasizes the King's greyness, an indication of his liability to fickleness. In addition, there is Henry's dread of Latin, the language of the Mass, as well as his vacillation between Norfolk and Cromwell. In short, he is a character plagued by his own shortcomings and feelings of guilt.

However, Katherine is unaware of this. In the beginning, we are struck by her innocence and directness, as with her openness before Privy Seal. Her morality and Weltanschauung are based upon "the ancients": "Living men she had never respected -- for they seemed to her like wild beasts when she compared them with such of the ancients as Brutus or as Seneca."⁶⁸ Though her present view of Henry is far from being complimentary, her "disquisitions upon the spiritual republic of Plato" lead her to visualize the possibility of his becoming a hero in the

⁶⁶ Ibid., 30.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 39.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 54.

manner of the ancients.

It is this potentiality that draws Henry to her. Given a clearly visible means of expression during the revels at the Bishop of Winchester's,⁶⁹ this vision is focused through the use of a mythical pattern that acts as one of the main structural principles for the whole romance, helping to define Katherine's role as a romance heroine. The masque is worth examining in some detail, as it also reflects upon many of the other rhetorical effects Ford utilizes.

After the player bishop causes confusion by "reading thunderous words of the King, written many years before, against married priests":⁷⁰

There came in many figures in white to symbolify the deities of ancient Greece and Rome, and, in black, with ashes upon her head, there was Ceres lamenting that Persephone had been carried into the realms of Pluto. No green thing should blow nor grow upon this earth, she wailed, in a deep and full voice, until again her daughter trod there.⁷¹ The other deities covered their heads with their white skirts.

Before discussing Ford's description of Katherine dressed as Persephone, it is as well to remember how closely Katherine is associated with the colour green. The colour carries with it several important associations, including growth and regeneration amid an otherwise cold, dark and wintry landscape. This also furthers our understanding of her as a romance heroine. Thus, Culpepper is dressed in green, Katherine comes from Lincolnshire, her eyes "had a glint of almond green",⁷² and,

⁶⁹ Ibid., 134-140.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 137.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 54.

most importantly, the decorations raised after her marriage to Henry are steeped in green:

To take away from the grimness of the flat walls many little banners had been suspended from loopholes and beneath windows. Swallow-tailed, long, or square, they hung motionless in the shelter, or, since the dying away of the great gale three days before, had looped themselves over their staffs. These were all painted green, because that was the Queen's favourite colour, being the emblem of Hope.

A little pavilion, all of green silk, at the very edge of the platform, had all its green curtains looped up, so that only the green roof showed; and, within, two chairs, a great leathern one for the King, a little one of red and white wood for the Queen, stood side by side as if they conversed with each other.⁷³

If Henry's conversion to decking his world with the colour green seems a trifle excessive, it may be taken as an indication of how far there is an awakened sense of hope within him, as opposed to the despair he feels at the end of the trilogy,⁷⁴ the result of Katherine's promise of regeneration through a return to Holy Church: "These were all painted green, because that was the Queen's favourite colour, being the emblem of Hope." It is the hope provided by faith that she instills in him, if only for a short period. This gives Henry a new sense of life, as in the scene where he eagerly waits for news of the interview between Anne

⁷³The Fifth Queen Crowned, 427. It is interesting to note that the subject of Ford's 1902 essay, D. G. Rossetti, also uses the Persephone myth and that of Pandora's box. For example, see "Pandora", in The Blessed Damozel and Other Poems, p. 288, and "Proserpina", in Ballads and Sonnets, pp. 280-281, as found in The Complete Poetical Works of D. G. Rossetti, ed. W. M. Rossetti (Boston, 1910). In addition, see F. M. Ford, Rossetti: A Critical Essay on His Art (London, 1902), p. 80. Perhaps this reveals a deeper affinity between the two than Ford was later prepared to admit.

⁷⁴The Fifth Queen Crowned, 587.

of Cleves and Katherine:

And at noon or thereabouts the King, dressed in green as a husbandman, sat on a log to await a gun-fire, in the forest that was near to Richmond river path opposite Isleworth.

* * * So that, when among the green glades where the great trees let down their branches near the sward and shewed little tips of tender green leaves, he heard three thuds come echoing, he sprang to his feet, and, smiting his great, green-clothed thigh, he cried out: 'Ha! I be young again!'⁷⁵

Where Henry finally betrays not only Katherine but his own self is in his gradual inability to believe in her, to further carry the emblems of Hope. In doing this, he returns to the previously indecisive, anxiety-ridden personality exhibited at the beginning of The Fifth Oueen. The failure is not with Katherine, but with characters, like Henry, who cannot sustain a belief in the possibilities embodied in anything outside the self. It is a fault shared by many of Ford's characters -- for example, Sylvia Tietjens and Leonora Ashburnham. The failing is a human one, and, like Bolt's Common Man, Henry warrants our recognition.

The possibilities that Katherine offers are put forward during the scene at the Bishop of Winchester's:

The King was the man least moved in the hall: he listened to the lamentations of Mother Ceres and gazed at a number of naked boys who issued suddenly from the open door. They spread green herbs in a path from the door to the very feet of Anne, who blinked at them in amazement, and they paid no heed to Mother Ceres, who asked indignantly how any green thing could grow upon the earth that she had bidden lie barren till her daughter came again.

Persephone stood framed in the doorway: she was all in white, very slim and tall; in among her hair she had a wreath of green Egyptian stones called feridets, of which many remained in the treasuries of Winchester, because they were soft and of so

⁷⁵ Privy Seal, 372.

little value that the visitors of the monasteries had left them there. And she had these green feridets, cut like leaves, worked into the white lawn, over her breasts. In her left arm there lay a cornucopia filled with gold coins, and in her right a silver coronet of olive leaves. She moved in a slow measure to the music, bending her knees to right and to left, and drawing her long dress into white lines and curves, until she stood in the centre of the green path. She smiled patiently and with a rapt expression as if she had come out of a dream. The wreath of olive leaves, she said, the gods sent to their most virtuous, most beauteous Queen, who had brought peace in England; the cornucopia filled with gold was the offering of Plutus to the noble and benevolent King of these parts. Her words could hardly be heard for the voices of the theologians in the hall before her.

Henry suddenly turned back, lifted his hand, and shouted:
'Be silent!'⁷⁶

It is the 'theology' of Persephone and Diana, as in the many uses of the colour white, that Henry chooses over the talk of other theologians. The quotation serves as a reminder to critics, like Mizener, who think that it is only in the third volume of the trilogy that Katherine is described in divine terms. The rhetoric of this romance is such that Ford deliberately weaves this strand into the fabric, making it an important and integral part of its structure and meaning. From this particular scene stem many of the rhetorical devices that are employed in the Fifth Queen: the use of colours, the handling of character, the vision of a golden age, the pattern of moral and spiritual regeneration, or the cycle of a season that the romance follows. It is from this episode that our understanding of the heroine as a romance figure begins. We, like Henry, are called upon to believe in Katherine, and, it may be argued, it is our faith in her imaginative possibilities that is tested

⁷⁶The Fifth Queen, 138.

as much as Henry's. Judging her by the canons of realism is to do the romance a disservice.

Thus, in the Persephone passage, Ford presents a yardstick by which to measure his heroine and also the genre which is his medium. Like Persephone, Katherine is a figure "out of a dream", and it is this quality, among others, that appeals to Henry. She is, to use Bolt's words, "larger than life", and it is her role as a "romancer" that is juxtaposed with the shortcomings of the other characters. In this manner, Henry is captivated by her skills as an artist, her power to transform the world, as, noticeably, the speech she delivers is not the one given to her because she had "forgotten the Italian words she should have spoken".⁷⁷ The Italian language belongs to Cromwell and his followers, the tongue of Machiavelli. In its place, Katherine puts together fragments from the Ancients: "And she had managed to bring out any words at all, only by desperately piecing together the idea of Ovid's poem and Aulus Gellius' Eulogy of Marcus Crassus, which was very familiar in her ears because she had always imagined for a hero such a man: munificent, eloquent, noble and learned in the laws."⁷⁸ The change in language and the source of inspiration indicates the kind of vision Katherine holds out to the King. As Throckmorton later points out:

'It is when you do call this realm the Fortunate Land that at once you make his Highness incline towards you -- and doubt. "Island of the Blest," say you. This his Highness rejoices,

⁷⁷ Ibid., 166.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

saying to himself: "My governing appeareth Fortunate to the World." But his Highness knoweth full well the flaws that be in his Fortunate Island. And specially will he set himself to redress wrongs, assuage tears, set up chantries, and make his peace with God. But if you come to him saying: "This land is torn with dissent. * * *" his Highness getteth enraged. * * * In short, if you will praise him you make him humble, for at bottom the man is humble; if you will blame him you will render him rigid as steel and more proud than the lightning. For, before the world's eyes, this man must be proud, else he would die.⁷⁹

Some readers of the Persephone passage might argue that Henry is merely a character particularly fond of flattery. The issue is a more complex one than that, involving the necessity of seeing pride, together with humility, as integral parts of the King's personality, if he is to transcend his nagging conscience, indecision and anxiety. Without this combination, Henry's character disintegrates, and Ford is careful to make him appear more attractive when under Katherine's influence than at other times. In addition, the relationship between pride and humility helps us to understand Katherine herself, perhaps even her ambitiousness. Thus, it is no coincidence that Lady Mary later humbles herself before Katherine, while claiming to "teach thee": "'For thou art not the only one in this land to be proud. I will show thee such a pride as shall make thee blush.'"⁸⁰ She adds: "'It is thou or none shall witness this my humiliation and my pride.'"⁸¹ By doing this, Mary acknowledges the magnitude of Katherine's personality, who "'will

⁷⁹ Ibid., 177.

⁸⁰ The Fifth Queen Crowned, 518.

⁸¹ Ibid., 519.

be undone for the sake of virtue, blindly, and like a fool, unknowing the consequences * * * ."⁸² Without pride and humility, the self is lost. With these two traits of human character existing in a state of equilibrium, the self can attain its true identity and maintain integrity. It is a path both Katherine and Robert Bolt's More choose to follow.

Therefore, Katherine's speech is an appeal to Henry's inner self, and he responds favourably to the "just panegyric".⁸³ Yet, if he is enthralled by the vision, he finally lacks the strength or the imagination to see the thing through. In the final line of the scene, Ford gives a portent of this failure: "In her relief to be free she stumbled on the sweet herbs."⁸⁴ Like the entire episode, this line looks backwards and forwards in the trilogy, echoing the mule's stumble upon entering, itself an ill-omen,⁸⁵ and forward to Katherine's fall at the end of the romance. As a proponent of le mot juste, Ford carefully chooses his words, as in "her relief to be free." For, not only will Katherine's end be a release in the physical sense, it will also entail the only possible accomplishment of selfhood, and the freedom that fulfilment provides through an indifference to her own fate.

The Persephone scene is therefore crucial to our understanding of the trilogy as a whole. It serves the rhetorical function of shaping

⁸²Ibid., 520.

⁸³The Fifth Queen, 139.

⁸⁴Ibid., 140.

⁸⁵Ibid., 38. See also 52.

our view of Katherine's role in the drama. By giving us this "dream", an illusion within an illusion that has a similar purpose to the plays within Hamlet or A Midsummer Night's Dream, by providing a microcosm of the larger affair, Ford is carefully defining the limits of his work and our responses to it. In showing us, in miniature, Katherine's power to transform experience, he also invalidates the shallow tests of probability that have been hitherto applied.

v

Accompanying the vision of regeneration that Katherine holds out to the King and the land under his rule, there is also the pattern provided by her own developing sense of selfhood. This is achieved as a result of insight which partly comes from her encounters with Throckmorton, one of Ford's most successful creations. In particular, close attention should be paid to their two meetings in The Fifth Queen,⁸⁶ and also their conversation in Privy Seal.⁸⁷ Their first important discussion, which, significantly, takes place immediately after the Persephone scene, acting in juxtaposition to it, is handled in terms of a confrontation between the devil and faith. Katherine descends into a cellar "blacker than the mouth of hell",⁸⁸ and tries to defend herself with a symbol of her faith, her crucifix. On the other hand,

⁸⁶ Ibid., 140-156 and 168-178.

⁸⁷ Privy Seal, 340-350.

⁸⁸ The Fifth Queen, 142.

Throckmorton describes himself as being the servant of "'one greater than the devil'".⁸⁹ Like a Satanic figure out of Paradise Lost: "His voice took on fantastically and grotesquely the nasal tones of Doctors of Logic when they discuss abstract theses * * * ." ⁹⁰ Yet, as the spy par excellence, who creeps around "with his shoes soled with velvet",⁹¹ Throckmorton has a view of the workings of court and men's minds that Katherine does not possess. However, he finally emerges as a perpetrator of "false witness",⁹² the practice of which contributes to Katherine's downfall, particularly with Henry's attempts to get Mary Hall to swear falsely about Katherine's age. To perjure oneself is to do exactly what the expression suggests -- that is, the individual betrays his integrity and his self. As in Bolt's A Man For All Seasons, "'When a man takes an oath, Meg, he's holding his own self in his own hands. Like water. (He cups his hands) And if he opens his fingers then -- he needn't hope to find himself again. Some men aren't capable of this, but I'd be loathe to think your father one of them.'" ⁹³ For Throckmorton, an oath and the truth are irrelevant.

Yet, for some readers, in linking Katherine with Throckmorton, Ford may seem to have compromised his heroine. But, it should be remembered that, though Katherine does come to see "how well

⁸⁹ Ibid., 144.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 145.

⁹¹ Privy Seal, 287.

⁹² The Fifth Queen Crowned, 514.

⁹³ A Man For All Seasons, p. 140.

Throckmorton, the spy, voiced the men folk of their day",⁹⁴ she chooses not to act upon this knowledge, not to bear false witness, not to play the 'game' of spying and treachery. By refusing to ally herself with the spy, she preserves her integrity of being, attaining an inner harmony. In doing this, she does not compromise herself in any way. Instead she retains, what Cromwell termed, a "simplicity" by not drawing a distinction between the purity of her thoughts and her acts. Any other mode of behaviour would involve compromise.

However, like Graham Greene, Ford raises the question of the relationship between 'saint' and 'sinner'. As Throckmorton points out: "'* * * it is a point still disputed as to whether a saint might use an evil tool to do good work.'"⁹⁵ If he questions some of Katherine's beliefs, he also strengthens many of them by not only acting as a means of contrast, but also by being attracted to Katherine herself. This questioning takes many forms, most of which focus upon Katherine's belief in a "golden age":

'When I am Queen,' she said, 'I will have the King set him in a command of ships to sail westward over the seas. He shall have the seeking for the Hesperides or the city of Atalanta, where still the golden age remains to be a model and ensample for us.' * * *

'Madam Howard,' Throckmorton grinned at her, 'if men of our day and kin do come upon any city where yet remaineth the golden age, very soon shall be shewn the miracle of the corruptibility of gold. The rod of our corruption no golden state shall defy.'

She smiled friendlily at him.

'There we part company,' she said. 'For I do believe God made this world to be bettered. I think, and answer your question, I could never ha' loved you. For you be a child of

⁹⁴The Fifth Queen, 186.

⁹⁵Ibid., 145.

the new Italians and I a disciple of the older holders of that land, who wrote, Cato voicing it for them, "Virtue spreadeth even as leaven leaveneth bread; a little lump in your flour in the end shall redeem all the loaf of the Republic."⁹⁶

In her final statements, Katherine comes to see the truth of Throckmorton's observations. A Utopia is impossible, given the fickleness of men like Henry and the greed of his followers. All that remains is for Katherine to preserve her own sense of integrity, a subject that dominates The Fifth Queen Crowned. Her 'fall' is both a process of disillusionment and triumph.

Like The Fifth Queen, Privy Seal lays the groundwork for Katherine's final stand, paralleling her fate with Cromwell's "last Venture". While Privy Seal's "sun" sets, when he succumbs to Henry's short-lived belief in love and regeneration, Katherine's "sun" rises -- as suggested by the section headings: "The Rising Sun", "The Distant Cloud" and "The Sunburst". As with the section headings of The Fifth Queen Crowned, those in Privy Seal are indicative of the extent to which the romance trilogy is a celebration of selfhood, a song whose rhetoric is designed to make us see how far Katherine can transform the experience of a man like Henry:

He was no more minded to slap his thigh, but he felt, as it was his favourite image of blessedness to desire, like a husbandman who sat beneath his vine and knew his harvesting prosper.

'Body of God!' he said, 'this is the best day of my life. There doth no cloud remain. Here is the sunburst.' * * *

'This is such a day as seldom I have known since I was a child.' He leaned forward to stroke her dusky and golden hair and laid his hand upon her shoulder, his fingers touching her flushed cheek.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Privy Seal, 348-349. See also The Fifth Queen, 150.

⁹⁷ Privy Seal, 402.

The influence of Katherine's personality mellows the previously testy King, encouraging him towards a degree of compassion and benevolence that is found in later figures in Ford's fiction, such as Christopher Tietjens, Edward Ashburnham or the Mark Tietjens of The Last Post:

"'Why, I will pardon some,' [Henry] said. 'It had not need of so many words of thine. I am sick of slaughterings when you speak.'"⁹⁸

Katherine's 'voice' awakens the King to a different view of experience, a vision that leads him to an assertion of religious faith and a belief in Katherine herself. The structure of the trilogy owes a great deal to this challenge. Thus, in the final chapters of both The Fifth Queen and Privy Seal, Henry affirms his faith in Katherine as a human being.

However, the ending of The Fifth Queen Crowned finds him unable to maintain this trust. As with Peter's denials of Christ, the failing is a reminder of human weakness.

The first two volumes of the Fifth Queen, which have largely been discussed in relation to each other, prepare us for this third challenge to Henry's capacity for belief, resulting in Katherine's final denunciation of the world and those who have failed her. In The Fifth Queen and Privy Seal, Ford has constructed a portrait of a heroine which makes us see her role as a romance figure, utilizing a rhetoric to facilitate such an understanding. His use of the juxtaposition of minor and major characters, landscape, myth and colours are some of the rhetorical devices that help him succeed in his task. A discussion of The Fifth Queen Crowned will show how this process continues, how, far

⁹⁸ Ibid., 406.

from being inconsistent with the main thrust of the first two volumes, the last part of the romance continues to deal with matters that are entirely in accord with those already explored. The rhetoric of the romance reveals that The Fifth Queen Crowned is the culmination of the romancer's art and not the betrayal of the novelist's insights.

vi

The Fifth Queen Crowned opens with the "sunburst" of Privy Seal having been diffused throughout the land, as in the continuing presence of the greens and golds that were part of the final section of the previous volume. "The Major Chord" depicts a land almost at peace with itself:

All in all the months that had passed since Cromwell's fall had gone quietly. The King and Queen had gone very often to mass since Katherine had been shown for Queen * * * . [And] most old men said that the good times were come again, with the price of malt fallen and twenty-six to the score of herrings. It was reported, too, that a cider press in Herefordshire had let down a dozen firkins of cider without any apples being set in it, and this was accounted an omen of great plenty * * * . All these things gave a great contentment, and many that in hard days had thought to become Lutheran in search of betterment, now looked in byres and hidden valleys to find priests of the old faith. For if a man could plough he might eat, and if he might eat he could praise God after his father's manner as well as in a new way.⁹⁹

The regenerative qualities are also evoked by the sense of "peace", the feeling of "warmth", "a new softness", and the almost total absence of spies. Both Henry and the Lady Mary have changed as a result of

⁹⁹ The Fifth Queen Crowned, 451-452.

Katherine's ascendancy:

In those, the quiet days of his realm when most things were going well, his face beneath his beard had taken a rounder and a smoother outline. He moved with motions less hasty than those he had had two years before, and when he had cast a task off it was done with and went out of his mind, so that he appeared a very busy man with, between whiles, the leisure to saunter.¹⁰⁰

This transformation is all the more noticeable when we remember the anxious, indecisive character found earlier in the trilogy.

However, Ford is careful to open the volume with Lascelles and Cranmer, indicating that the blighting forces of this fruition are already at work. Katherine is well aware of this: "She knew very well where she stood, and she knew very well what her uncle and his friends awaited for her * * * ."¹⁰¹ To the men who have gained their wealth through the destruction of faith, Katherine's vision of a "golden age" has no marketable value. Her "wealth" is of a different and alien order for them: "'* * * but this I promise you, that there shall descend upon your heart that most blessed miracle and precious wealth, the peace of God."¹⁰² With her refusing to allow Throckmorton to come to court, Katherine becomes increasingly isolated and vulnerable, as rumour, jealousy and deceit begin to affect Henry's view of her. The challenge confronting Henry is whether he will believe these lies or deny them by asserting his faith in Katherine once again. At first, he manages to do the latter, as in the example provided by Culpepper's forced entry into

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 457.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 432.

¹⁰² Ibid., 435.

Katherine's rooms. But, significantly, he has to resort to guile to protect her, a weapon that can be used as effectively to demolish her reputation: "The Queen sighed a little. For if she admired and wondered at her lord's power skilfully to have his way, it made her sad to think -- as she must think -- that so devious was man's work."¹⁰³

By practising deviousness, Henry is affirming his readiness to use it as a tool, and in doing so lays himself open to being used by it. With no solidity of self -- other than that Katherine gives him -- we watch as he disintegrates as a character into a final despair. Coupled with this falling apart is the demolition of Katherine's reputation, in a manner that will find a later parallel in Christopher Tietjens. The conscious manner in which this is done makes it all the more deplorable:

'But to make the King,' Cranmer uttered, as if he were aghast and amazed, 'to make the King -- this King who knoweth that his wife hath done no wrong -- who knoweth it so well as to-night he hath proven -- to make him, him, to put her away . . . why, the tiger is not so fell, nor the Egyptian worm preyeth not on its kind. This is an imagination so horrible --'¹⁰⁴

With a false logic that does not excuse the behaviour, since they are aware of what they are doing, Lascelles argues like the "Doctors of Logic" with whom Throckmorton was compared: "'Please it your Grace * * * what beast or brute hath your Grace ever seen to betray its kind as man will betray brother, son, father, or consort?'"¹⁰⁵ Cranmer's reply contains its own irony in that he uses one of Katherine's

¹⁰³Ibid., 546.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 558.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

classical sources to excuse his behaviour: "'What lesser bull of the herd, or lesser ram, ever so played traitor to his leader as Brutus played to Caesar Julius? And these be times less noble.'"¹⁰⁶ It is this kind of argument, with its superficial justification of present behaviour, that finally leads to Katherine's doom. Structured in this way, it reveals how these characters almost wallow in their own failings, looking for anything that will justify their own unwillingness to sacrifice financial wealth for the "wealth" Katherine offers. Ultimately, as previously pointed out, it is their failure and not Katherine's that is recorded in the final volume, their inability to respond to the regeneration begun by Katherine, and their failure to transcend the limited goals of materialism. The rhetoric of The Fifth Queen Crowned is increasingly concerned with dramatizing the growing polarization between such negative and life-denying forces and Katherine's adherence to her faith, as the country begins a descent towards Winter.

Part Four, "The End of the Song", thus opens with a King wishing to keep his Queen, yet willing to listen to false witness. Meetings take place in secret, characters hide their faces from each other in darkness. It is the world of masks portrayed by Cicely Elliott: "'* * * all men wear masks; all men lie; all men desire the goods of all men and seek how they may get them.'"¹⁰⁷ Both Catholics and Protestants scheme against Katherine in order to protect their

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Privy Seal, 285.

property, and the final scenes are concerned with these slanders. For example, Ford presents Lascelles' well-rehearsed meeting at Badge's house, the dominant colour being the Protestant black that was once Henry's favourite before his marriage to Katherine. It is a colour of the dead and the spiritually dying, of the men who have no self "to commit", but who, like Henry, now wear masks:

There entered the hugest masked man that they had ever seen. All in black he was, and horrifying and portentous he strode in. His sleeves and shoulders were ballooned after the German fashion, his sword clanked on the tiles. He was a vision of black, for his mask that appeared as big as another man's garment covered all his face, though they could see he had a grey beard when sitting down.¹⁰⁸

This "vision of black" lacks the order Cromwell once provided. Now the characters look askance, whereas the former Privy Seal would look at others directly, an image of how far things have deteriorated into a shifting morass.

Accompanying this lack of identity and self-commitment, Ford depicts the increasing desolation of the landscape:

A yeoman in brown fustian ran bending his head before the tempestuous rain. A rook, blown impotently backwards, essayed slowly to cross towards the western trees. [Katherine's] eyes followed him until a great gust blew him in a wider curve, backwards and up, and when again he steadied himself he was no more than a blot on the wet greyness of the heavens.¹⁰⁹

Henry is the rook,¹¹⁰ though the image can also be used to describe the other characters who fail even to gain the rook's distinction for its efforts to master its own weaknesses in flight. Significantly, the

¹⁰⁸ The Fifth Queen Crowned, 570.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 575.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 588.

occurrence of this kind of symbolism increases in the final chapters, as the colours darken to black and grey. The rain that falls is not life-giving, but that which produces the mud in which we found Udal at the beginning of The Fifth Queen. In such a milieu, Katherine is forced to withdraw into herself, as her servants are tortured and executed one after the other: "The woman appealed to the Queen with her eyes streaming, but Katherine stood silent and like a statue with sightless eyes. Her lips smiled, for she thought of her Redeemer; for this woman she had neither eyes nor ears."¹¹¹ In a trilogy dominated by the use of eyes and ears, one section being entitled "The House of Eyes", her gesture here indicates the extent of her withdrawal. In terms of Katherine's selfhood, this finally signifies, if we had not gathered so beforehand, that any notion of self, any "being in harmony", must come from within. The world is false, since the senses can be deceived, being limited to empirical tests of truth or falsehood. An inner awareness results in the kind of faith Katherine expresses to Henry in her final soliloquy.

Thus, the final scene portrays a contrast between a King whose faith and identity are almost non-existent, and a Queen who epitomizes these two qualities. Their embodiment is in a carefully controlled form, in a heroine who does not once raise or lower her voice,¹¹² and who remembers how she was taught to speak "in the aforetime, away in Lincolnshire, where there was an orchard with green boughs, and below it

¹¹¹Ibid., 582.

¹¹²Ibid., 591.

a pig-pound where the hogs grunted."¹¹³ Also, she "went slowly as she had been schooled to walk."¹¹⁴ The exercise of control is a characteristic of Ford's central figures -- a good example being the way in which Christopher Tietjens so infuriates Sylvia. It is through control that the hero and heroine, like Christopher and Katherine, eventually discover freedom and a sense of peace, an identity that is not available to those characters trapped by doubt, anxiety and vacillation -- the paradigm being Ford's great characterization of Sylvia Tietjens. In Katherine's case, her freedom is achieved as a result of her religious faith and classicist principles. These provide a moral framework that allows her to escape the nagging doubts and ambiguities facing John Dowell and Christopher Tietjens. This idea of freedom, attained through the subjugation of "individualistic impulses" to a clearly defined code, distinguishes Ford from other romancers such as Hawthorne, providing an insight into the uniqueness of his vision.

While exercising this control, Katherine charges Henry with being too liable to whim: "'Neither do you, as I had dreamed you did, rule in this your realm. For, even as a crow that just now I watched, you are blown hither and thither by every gust that blows. Now the wind of gossips blows so that you must have my life. And, before God, I am glad of it.'"¹¹⁵ Such is her sense of selfhood that Katherine refuses to "'let my name be bandied for many days in the mouths of men. I had

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 592.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 588.

rather be called a sinner, adjudged and dead and forgotten."¹¹⁶ With this in mind, Ford has his heroine address history:

'In some sort I have done it for your Highness' sake -- or, at least, that your Highness may profit in your fame thereby. For, though all that do know me will scarcely believe in it, the most part of men shall needs judge me by the reports that are set about. In the commonalty, and the princes of foreign courts, one may believe you justified of my blood, and, for this event, even to posterity your name shall be spared. I shall become such a little dust as will not fill a cup. Yet, at least, I shall not sully, in the eyes of men to come, your record.'¹¹⁷

Her subsequent treatment at the hands of historians bears witness to the truth of her words.

Critics have often noted Ford's historical inaccuracy in the portrait of his heroine, yet they have not asked why he chose to do this. Whether the picture is accurate or not is really not the point at issue. It may be argued that the importance of this choice lies in Ford's having taken a subject with an unfavourable reputation, and then proceeded to build her into a romance heroine of stature. In doing this, he shows how men like Henry lack the ability to believe in another human being -- are incapable of performing an imaginative act -- and, instead, base their view of reality on "the reports that are set about." Indirectly, he may be pointing out that historians, with their firm adherence to 'facts', are as liable to be taken in by the same slanders as Henry. Certainly, this view is in accord with Ford's notion of impressionism, as indicated by Hynes's definition:

"* * * memories are past impressions, colored by romance; neither has any necessary relation to verifiable fact, but together they compose

¹¹⁷Ibid., 589-590.

what is valuable for an artist."¹¹⁸ It is the same sentiment that lies behind Ford's expressed wish not to have his biography written, but to leave the memories and impressions contained in his critical pieces and reminiscences as the record of his life.

On the other hand, the romancer can perform that imaginative leap into the consciousness of another human being that Henry fails to achieve, particularly in a romance genre that allows the writer a rhetoric involving a greater degree of latitude and possibility than might be the case in the novel. His portrait stands in defiance of those gifted with a more 'academic' bent: "* * * a statistical account of the ordinance in Malbrouk's Army or a tabulation of the vowels in 'OH POLLY LOVE!' would not be Literature, though written by a Professor of Poetry and printed at an University Press."¹¹⁹ The Fifth Queen exists as a monumental, imaginative 'lie' that hits out at the tabulators and statisticians who claim to be writing "Literature", since it achieves a result not available to the factual mind.

For Ford, only the artist can penetrate the barriers of time, space and human limitation, only he can give us the kind of 'knowledge' hinted at in the question from the Dedication to A Little Less Than Gods: "What without him would you know?"¹²⁰ Ford uses the term novelist to cover those writers who are "serious", but the word romancer evokes the kind of effects for which he is reaching, the kind of 'knowledge' he

¹¹⁸"Ford and the Spirit of Romance", 24.

¹¹⁹F. M. Ford, Thus to Revisit: Some Reminiscences, pp. 5-6.

¹²⁰F. M. Ford, "Dedication" to A Little Less Than Gods (New York, 1928), p. ix. See also p. viii.

achieves. As Henry James argues, it is in the artist's power "to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life in general so completely that you are well on your way to knowing any particular corner of it * * * ."121 Through the rhetorical skills of the romancer, we come to know a character who embodies the notion of selfhood that lies behind a great deal of Ford's fiction.

In Katherine's final monologue, the portrait of the self is made complete, and in its achievement marks an affirmation of belief on the part of the romancer himself. For he has, through the creation of the heroine, escaped the limitations imposed upon life by figures like Henry. Though Katherine rejects the ancients and acknowledges that "'Each man is set to save his skin and his goods * * *'", she herself has not been defeated, neither has the vision with which she came to court. It is the other characters who have been condemned by their lack of faith:

'If, by being reputed your leman, as you would have it, I could again set up the Church of God, willingly I would do it. But I see that there is not one man -- save maybe some poor simple souls -- that would have this done. Each man is set to save his own skin and his goods -- and you are such a weathercock that I should never blow you to a firm quarter. For what am I set against all this nation?'122

It is a judgement one finds levelled against several of the characters in Parade's End and The Good Soldier. For her part, Katherine's sense of selfhood emerges unscathed. Her death is the final gesture of

¹²¹Henry James, "The Art of Fiction" (1884), The Future of the Novel, p. 13.

¹²²The Fifth Queen Crowned, 590.

selfhood, the ultimate act of heroism, as it is for Bolt's More. She has, as Christopher Tietjens defines the hero, been able to "touch pitch and not be defiled."¹²³

Most of the other characters fail to make the same response to life, and this is where Thomas Culpepper rises above them. Generally viewed as the clown or buffoon, he believed in Katherine: "[He] loved me as he did, without regard, without thought, and without falter. He sold farms to buy me bread. You would not imperil a little alliance with a little King o' Scots to save my life."¹²⁴ Henry, on the other hand, is incapable of this form of love, a quality that lies at the heart of both The Good Soldier and Parade's End. Instead, he is trapped by his own failings, left with a gnawing conscience concerning his wife's supposed infidelity. With this picture, the romance ends. Ford has shown how the self finds fulfilment, and how a degree of faith and understanding is necessary if the individual is to transcend his own failings. In the attempts made by John Dowell to understand what went wrong, in his expression of passion, and in that which grows between Valentine Wannop and Christopher, we see such a movement beyond the "passions" and the "prides" that confine Henry. Dowell, Valentine and Christopher, as well as Mark, all come to see that a belief in something other than their own "skin" is necessary if they are to attain "peace", freedom or a sense of identity. It is this part of Ford's vision that the remainder of this study will pursue.

¹²³ Some Do Not . . ., 144.

¹²⁴ The Fifth Queen Crowned, 591.

vii

By paying attention to the medium Ford is handling and the rhetoric he employs to make us aware of the romance world he portrays, it is possible to reject the commonly held notion that the Fifth Queen is no more than an exercise.¹²⁵ The trilogy emerges as an excellent depiction of many of the themes that dominate Ford's later novels -- heroism, integrity, identity, betrayal, passion and love or the failure to love -- within a genre that is congenial to his talents. Ford was never to desert completely the skills of the romancer, and an appreciation of the Fifth Queen prepares the reader for novels like The Good Soldier. Here, again, there has been considerable furore over tests of probability and credulity regarding characters like John Dowell. An examination of The Good Soldier, in terms of its rhetoric, will allow us to overcome these difficulties.

¹²⁵Norman Leer, The Limited Hero, p. 29.

'I tell you then,' Sancho resumed, 'that in a village in Estremadura there was once a shepherd -- a goatherd I should say, for he kept goats -- and this shepherd or goatherd, as my story tells, was called Lope Ruiz. Now this Lope Ruiz fell in love with a shepherdess called Torralba, which shepherdess called Torralba was the daughter of a rich herdsman; and this rich herdsman . . .'

'If you tell your story that way, Sancho,' said Don Quixote, 'and repeat everything you have to say twice over, you will not be done in two days. Tell it consequentially, like an intelligent man, or else be quiet.'

'The way I'm telling it,' replied Sancho, 'is the way all stories are told in my country, and I don't know any other way of telling it. It isn't fair for your worship to ask me to get new habits.'

Miguel de Cervantes, The Adventures of Don Quixote
(trans. J. M. Cohen)

I am writing this, now, I should say, a full eighteen months after the words that end my last chapter. Since writing the words 'until my arrival,' which I see end that paragraph, I have seen again for a glimpse, from a swift train, Beaucaire with the beautiful white tower, Tarascon with the square castle, the great Rhone, the immense stretches of the Crau.

The Good Soldier

My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel -- it is, before all, to make you see. That -- and no more, and it is everything.

Joseph Conrad, "Preface" to The Nigger
of the 'Narcissus'

But the fellow talked like a cheap novelist. -- Or like a very good novelist for the matter of that, if it's the business of a novelist to make you see things clearly. And I tell you I see that thing as clearly as if it were a dream that never left me.

The Good Soldier

It was most amazing. You know the man on the stage who throws up sixteen balls at once and they all drop into pockets all over his person, on his shoulders, on his heels, on the inner side of his sleeves; and he stands perfectly still and does nothing. Well, it was like that.

The Good Soldier

III

RHETORIC AND DISCOVERY IN THE GOOD SOLDIER

i

For many readers, there may seem to be immense differences between the Fifth Queen and The Good Soldier, both with regard to the subject of each work and its respective treatment. As far as the subjects are concerned, the dissimilarities are not as marked as they may at first appear, as both fictions involve examinations of the enlarged possibilities that life and the artistic process can provide. However, The Good Soldier is placed in the contemporary world, and, with his decision to deal with such a setting, Ford now chooses to treat many of the issues raised in his romance trilogy in a more modern manner. Thus, in The Good Soldier, our view of events is that received through the controlling medium of a single point of vision, as we encounter, in John Dowell, another example of the "romancing habit of mind" noted by Samuel Hynes. But, Dowell's "mind" is the only perspective available, and any relevant discussion of the novel must deal with this rhetorical device, whereby what we are made to see and how we are made to see it is not dependent upon any secondary or external criteria by which we may gauge the credibility of the picture we receive. My discussion of The Good Soldier will therefore analyse the implications, for the novel's rhetoric, of the first-person narrator. I should like to begin with an appraisal of recent critical

opinion.

As far as criticism of The Good Soldier is concerned, the main centre of interest has been a rather stormy 'relationship' between John Dowell and his critics, originating from their challenge to his claim: "I don't know that analysis of my own psychology matters at all to this story. I should say that it didn't or, at any rate, that I had given enough of it."¹ Dowell's statement could not be further from the truth, though we may excuse his oversight as being one made prior to the foundation of the multitudinous schools of English Literature which have encouraged complication. The "psychology" of John Dowell has mattered to a great many readers, resulting in a critical debate that bears a close resemblance to the fracas concerning James's The Turn of the Screw. Like the controversy over James's governess, criticism of The Good Soldier has provided no solutions regarding the reliability of John Dowell, nor has there been any generally discernible consensus of opinion as to exactly what Ford's novel is about.

Part of the lack of agreement may be taken as testimony to the enigmatic quality which Paul Wiley, among others, points to as being the most important characteristic of Ford's successful handling of the "affair".² Faced with such an enigma, critics have exercised judgement too hastily, in matters such as the questions of Dowell's credibility, Edward Ashburnham's romanticism, or Leonora's Catholicism and

¹The Good Soldier, p. 97.

²Novelist of Three Worlds, pp. 5-6.

'normality', without paying sufficient attention to structural details, tone, use of language, the implications for the novel's form of the juxtaposition of past and present, to name but a few items which are part of the rhetoric of The Good Soldier. Avoiding the example provided by Schorer's article "Technique as Discovery", critics have separated form and content and considered them as distinct entities, resulting in confusion and a lack of agreement. More recent discussion has focused upon the problem of form,³ but there is still a need for a further examination of the relationship that exists between form and content -- that is, how we are made to see what we see.

Besides arguing about the credibility of John Dowell and exercising judgement too readily, thereby creating an artificial distinction between the subject and its treatment, critics have also been bemused as to exactly where the norms of the novel lie. Dowell has been seen to uphold and to deny them, while there have been other attempts to support Edward, Leonora or Nancy Rufford as moral centres -- though no one has yet made a case for seeing Jimmy or Florence as embodying normative values. Yet, curiously enough, amid all this dissension there is general agreement that The Good Soldier is a masterpiece of modern fiction, even if the reasons for such an evaluation are strikingly disparate. Of the few attempts to fault the novel, Harold F. Mosher, Jr.'s remarks are of particular interest since he argues, albeit rather curtly, that The Good Soldier is a "flawed" piece of work because

³For example, see Ann S. Johnson, "Narrative Form in The Good Soldier", Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, IX, No. 2 (1968), 70-80.

it "fails rhetorically".⁴ In Mosher's three-page discussion, which devotes a large proportion of the available space to Parade's End, The Voyeur and Pale Fire, it is perhaps difficult for him to give specific reasons for his denigration of the novel. Yet, because he has reacted negatively, especially as the result of an apparent disagreement with Wayne C. Booth, his article should be of special concern to readers interested in Ford's rhetoric, and a suitable place to advance our examination of criticism of The Good Soldier.

Why, we may ask, has The Good Soldier failed rhetorically? Mosher's answer seems to be that, since both Parade's End and The Good Soldier "dramatize a conflict between Victorian and 'modern' values", the latter "fails" because it does not dramatize this conflict as "clearly" as the tetralogy: "What Ford intended to do and failed to do on a small scale in the early novel he accomplished on a larger scale in the later novel * * *."⁵ Mosher argues that "the same problem of morals" is not as easily solved by the reader of The Good Soldier as it is by that of Parade's End: "One is reluctant to say whether Edward is the English gentleman trying to preserve good feudal values or whether he is a sentimental ass spreading chaos in an age that requires order or whether he is a new life force urging vitality and love on a tired and corrupt generation."⁶ One might add that the same criticism could

⁴ Harold F. Mosher, Jr., "Wayne Booth and the Failure of Rhetoric in The Good Soldier", Caliban, VI (1969), 50.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

be made of Christopher Tietjens, if the reader had not paid close enough attention to the rhetoric of the tetralogy. A similar failure to examine The Good Soldier in detail has resulted in the kind of 'reluctance' Mosher feels regarding Edward Ashburnham.

His reasons for this evaluation are possibly contained in the following questions: "Would it be correct to say, for example, that Ford chose the wrong point of view -- the unreliable first-person narrator -- for The Good Soldier? Or could one say that Ford did not discredit Dowell enough so as to create more obvious dramatic irony -- that, in other words, his handling of point of view, not his choice of it, was wrong?"⁷ The key words here are "unreliable" and "discredit". The implication of Mosher's argument seems to be that, because Ford wanted us to see the "problems" he raised -- presumably the conflict between Victorian and "'modern'" values -- as "settled" without ambiguity or doubt, that they are not is indicative of the degree to which the unreliability of the narrator clouds the issue, or the degree to which Ford fails to discredit Dowell. Mosher appears to be saying that Ford intended clarity, but that his choice or handling of the first-person narrator leaves a lot to be desired.

However, the distinction Mosher makes between the novel's "problems" and their treatment is a false one. Form and content are not clearly separable entities. The Good Soldier does, in fact, achieve a form of clarity that is the result of Ford's employment of a first-person narrator intent upon understanding, and making us comprehend,

⁷Ibid., 50-51.

what happened in the past. In addition, the novel is not ultimately reducible to one "conflict". The subjects that are raised are far more complex than this, as is the manner in which they are handled. The rhetoric of The Good Soldier lies in the way in which the narrator tries to create a sense of clarity from a situation or "affair" that is full of ambiguities and partial glimpses gleaned from the major protagonists. In short, the rhetoric or technique, in the wider sense, is discovery.

One would have thought that Mark Schorer would have carried this message, from his article written in 1948, over into his appreciation of The Good Soldier.⁸ For, as the discussion in the opening chapter illustrated, Schorer is very much preoccupied with the question of the relationship between form and content, with technique as being a process of discovery. But, written at about the same time as "Technique as Discovery", his interpretation of The Good Soldier does not live up to the expectations aroused by his theoretical piece. Though he does spend some time discussing the structure of Ford's novel, Schorer rushes to judgements about its content, without paying sufficient attention to the way in which its narrator presents his material. Before discussing his article in detail, it is worth pointing out that part of the difficulty may be due to Schorer's handling of novels written in the first-person, where he exhibits a tendency to reduce his discussion of technique to an analysis of the function of irony as a means of undermining the credibility of the narrator. It is a difficulty we all share,

⁸M. Schorer, "The Good Soldier: An Interpretation" (1948, 1951), in Ford Madox Ford: Modern Judgements, pp. 63-69.

and, as Wayne Booth's monumental study illustrates,⁹ those questions of reliability or unreliability, of whether there is or is not irony, are such that they prevent an easy solution. There is no magical formula to tell us whether we should trust one narrator over another, no yardstick by which we may measure degrees of irony, other than the insights provided by vague concepts like tone, distance and authorial presence. The imprecision of our critical vocabulary hinders rather than helps our attempts to understand enigmas like The Good Soldier. Throughout literature, there are traps to catch the unwary reader, a situation aggravated by modern literature where a relativism in values and methods of presentation complicates the issue. There can be a great sympathy for a reader who begins with the assumption that all narrators are totally unreliable and all works flooded with irony unless proved otherwise. It is a prescription that assumes 'guilt' before 'innocence', one that would place, if pursued to its absurd conclusion, a negativism at the centre of the study of literature.

These difficulties are emphasized, in Schorer's case, by looking at his reading of another novel told in the first person, H. G. Wells's Tono Bungay.¹⁰ His negative criticism of this work gives an insight into the foundation of Schorer's critical method, the novels and prefaces of Henry James. James, it is known, is a writer who exhibits a great awareness of the artistic implications of irony, authorial

⁹In particular, see Part III of The Rhetoric of Fiction.

¹⁰"Technique as Discovery", The Novel: Modern Essays in Criticism, pp. 80-82.

presence and distance. However, as David Lodge observes, James did not write every novel in the English language, and we do writers like Wells an injustice by reading their works as if this were so:

Tono-Bungay sins, deliberately, against most of the Jamesian commandments: it is picaresque, full of apparent digressions in the form both of episodes, and of expository comment on politics, economics, history, and society. It is told in the first person, and rejoices in 'the terrible fluidity of self-revelation' which James saw as the great weakness of that mode of narration.¹¹

For the purposes of this discussion, it is not necessary to evaluate the analyses Schorer and Lodge produce. Rather, one is more interested in the assumptions each brings to the critical task. Schorer seems eager to judge the work from the standpoint provided by Henry James, whereas David Lodge asks that we keep "an open mind", so that Tono Bungay be allowed to present its own canons of evaluation, in that it is "confessional in form."¹² Because of this open-minded attitude, Lodge emerges with a conclusion that sees the novel as "an impressive, and certainly coherent, work of art."¹³ He has looked for its principles of coherence, rather than dismissing it as being inferior to anything James produced.

It is this open-mindedness that is being proposed as a method of approaching The Good Soldier, since it may help to avoid some of the critical excesses which the novel has received. But, it should be

¹¹Language of Fiction, p. 215. It is interesting to note that the first issue of Ford's English Review contained sections from Tono-Bungay.

¹²Ibid., p. 216.

¹³Ibid., p. 215.

emphasized, it is a critical open-mindedness, since, like Dowell, we are forced to evaluate our experience at some point unless we wish to remain in a vacuum of neutrality. Without paying attention to the principles of coherence and the kinds of effects achieved, the reader is liable to see irony where none exists, to see it pointed against Dowell when he is directing it against himself, and to judge his position without having due regard for the changes he undergoes which enable him to provide his own distance and perspective. Ultimately, it is a failure to pay close enough attention to the form of Dowell's story, with all its digressions and repetitions as these relate to the values that pervade the whole work. In an understanding of these concerns lies the means of appreciating the "achieved content" of the novel.

While considering some structural details of Ford's novel, Schorer pays little attention to the function of the narrator in relation to the changes that take place both in himself and in his view of events. Yet, Schorer begins with a theme from "Technique as Discovery":

As in most great works of comic irony, the mechanical structure of The Good Soldier is controlled to a degree nothing less than taut, while the structure of meaning is almost blandly open, capable of limitless refractions. One may go further, perhaps, and say that the novel renews a major lesson of all classic art: from the very delimitation of form rises the exfoliation of theme.¹⁴

Perhaps one could begin here to question Schorer's assertion that The Good Soldier is in fact a work of "comic irony", for it is an

¹⁴"An Interpretation", p. 64.

observation based upon a rather dubious premise:

The Good Soldier carries the subtitle 'A Tale of Passion', and the book's controlling irony lies in the fact that passionate situations are related by a narrator who is himself incapable of passion, sexual and moral alike. His is the true accidia, and so, from his opening absurdity: 'This is the saddest story I have ever heard', on to the end and at every point, we are forced to ask: 'How can we believe him? His must be exactly the wrong view.' The fracture between the character of the event as we feel it to be and the character of the narrator as he reports the event to us is the essential irony, yet it is not in any way a simple one; for the narrator's view as we soon discover, is not so much the wrong view as merely a view, although a special one. No simple inversion of statement can yield up the truth, for the truth is the maze, and, as we learn from what is perhaps the major theme of the book, appearances have their reality.¹⁵

This condemnation of Dowell becomes even stronger, as Schorer speaks of his "self-infatuation", of his mind as not being "quite in balance", a figure who suffers from "the dull hysteria of sloth * * * the sluggish insanity of defective love."¹⁶ As will be shown, this kind of reading rests upon a failure to realize that Dowell does come to understand what passion means (and that this is possibly one reason Ford may have chosen a sexual innocent, in order to show or render the process of discovery). Also, it marks an oversight on Schorer's part to see that there is no fracture between "the character of the event as we feel it to be and the character of the narrator as he reports the event to us"; for it is through the narrator's telling of the story, as he tries to reconcile the various sources at his disposal (Edward, Leonora, Dowell as he was then, and his dairies), that we come to see what the events may have been. He controls our view of the past and, as will be

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 68.

discussed, he is fully conscious of his responsibility. Above all, Dowell wants to make us see: "You, the listener, sit opposite me. But you are so silent. You don't tell me anything. I am, at any rate, trying to get you to see what sort of life it was I led with Florence and what Florence was like."¹⁷

But, a readiness to rush to a judgement of Dowell has been a common trait of criticism on the novel that has appeared since the publication of Schorer's interpretation. When in agreement that the work is one of comic irony, critics have seen the narrator as "devious and neurotic",¹⁸ a snob,¹⁹ "the other sterile modern",²⁰ "a psychic cripple",²¹ a "symbol of a sick society",²² and, in a reading that appears outrageous, McFate and Golden discuss Dowell's "latent homosexuality": "The narrator perpetuates abnormal relationships with women because, although they entail suffering, they are less painful than the conscious acceptance of his fear of impotence and latent homosexuality."²³ For the most part, as with Ohmann and Cassell,²⁴

¹⁷The Good Soldier, 24.

¹⁸P. Wiley, Novelist of Three Worlds, p. 187.

¹⁹J. Hafley, "The Moral Structure of The Good Soldier", Modern Fiction Studies, V (Summer, 1959), 123.

²⁰H. R. Huntley, The Alien Protagonist of Ford Madox Ford, p. 18.

²¹J. Meixner, Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p. 159.

²²M. Seiden, "Persecution and Paranoia in Parade's End" (1966), in Ford Madox Ford: Modern Judgements, p. 156.

²³P. McFate and B. Golden, "The Good Soldier: A Tragedy of Self-Deception", Modern Fiction Studies, IX (Spring, 1963), 58.

²⁴C. Ohmann, Ford Madox Ford, p. 73.
R. Cassell, Ford Madox Ford, p. 168.

these readings are extensions of Schorer's thesis, if only to extremes.

The opponents of Schorer's analysis have themselves exhibited a reprehensible tendency to rely upon criteria that seem critically unsound. Frequently, they have resorted to biographical data in order to substantiate their arguments. Thus, on several occasions, there have been rather suspect comparisons made between Dowell and Ford himself. Loeb, Mizener and Barnes are the more noticeable examples of this, though E. B. Gose, Jr.,²⁵ whose article along with that by Samuel Hynes has proved invaluable to this discussion,²⁶ also makes the same kind of comparison. Harold Loeb, in attempting to dismiss Schorer's argument as "preposterous", declares that such criticisms are invalid because "in order to discover what the author is about, they have to go behind Dowell's vision of what is happening and correct it in the light of their own judgement and intuition."²⁷ However, Loeb himself goes behind Dowell's vision, by putting down "the little I know about the author. For biography can aid criticism * * * ."²⁸ Yet, it can also

²⁵H. Loeb, "Ford Madox Ford's The Good Soldier: A Critical Reminiscence", London Magazine, III (Dec., 1963), 65-73.

A. Mizener, The Saddest Story, pp. 258-277.

D. Barnes, "Ford and the 'Slaughtered Saints': A New Reading of The Good Soldier", Modern Fiction Studies, XIV (1968), 157-170.

E. B. Gose, Jr., "The Strange Irregular Rhythm: An Analysis of The Good Soldier", P.M.L.A., LXXII (June, 1957), 494-509.

²⁶S. Hynes, "The Epistemology of The Good Soldier", Sewanee Review, LXIX (Spring, 1961), 225-235.

²⁷"A Critical Reminiscence", 66.

²⁸Ibid.

hinder it, by distracting our attention away from the text to the dubious biographical 'facts' that are available, a task made all the more questionable for scholars by Ford's propensity for embellishment. By seeing Dowell as Ford, Loeb is claiming a false authority for the narrator of The Good Soldier, adding an undue and unfair weight to his argument. For, by doing so, the critic adds a sense of reliability without having shown that it is present in the text. Questions of trustworthiness should be resolved, if they can be determined, within the confines of the novel itself. Otherwise, we become involved in an overly speculative argument. It is worth adding that Loeb claims to have personally known "the oracle", and that he uses his knowledge as a basis for judging the work at hand. As W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley have argued: "Critical inquiries, unlike bets, are not settled in this way. Critical inquiries are not settled by consulting the oracle."²⁹ They propose that "the way of poetic analysis and exegesis", where the critic looks into the work itself, is "the true and objective way of criticism", as opposed to the biographical approach with all its probabilities and variables. With their conclusion one can only agree.

As Wimsatt and Beardsley point out, it is "the very uncertainty of exegesis" that may tempt a critic into a form of genetic inquiry.³⁰ This is certainly true of the most recent of Ford's biographers.

²⁹W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy" (1946), in The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry (Kentucky, 1967), p. 18.

³⁰Ibid.

Beginning The Saddest Story, whose very title is indicative of the approach taken in the book, with an introduction that sees Ford as part Ashburnham, part Dowell,³¹ Arthur Mizener argues: "The only recourse for criticism confronted by disagreement so radical as this is to such evidence of the author's intention as can be discovered outside the novel."³² With several references to Loeb's article ("And Ford was like that"), Mizener observes: "The belittlement in Dowell's comparison of the sexual act with eating is a considered expression of Ford's own judgement in the matter."³³ He also states: "* * * what Dowell says about passion is not intended as ironic exposure of Dowell's neurotic personality but is what Ford thought true."³⁴ (There follows a quotation from The Good Soldier, which omits the most important part, and another from Parade's End, both curiously denying the premises of Mizener's method, which is to go outside the novel or novels for evidence.) The examples are numerous, reflecting his tendency to claim a false authority, a position that is more understandable when it is remembered that Mizener is writing a biography about a figure who still continues to retain a strong quality of enigma.

However, in all fairness to Mizener, his reading of The Good Soldier comes far nearer to that being proposed in this chapter than Schorer's, and it is ironic that the latter's conclusions, based upon a

³¹The Saddest Story, pp. xii-xiv.

³²Ibid., p. 258.

³³Ibid., p. 259.

³⁴Ibid.

method which will be a part of the subsequent examination of the novel, are ones my study rejects. Perhaps, as has been argued, they are an indication that Schorer stepped outside the framework of his analysis. But they may also indicate, in support of Wayne Booth's argument, that works written in the mode of The Good Soldier do tend to make their appeal to readers who at least sympathize with the writer's "perceptions and norms". Mizener himself makes a similar point when he speaks of "Professor Schorer's Lawrentian conception of human nature" as being the reason for his colleague's conclusions about Dowell.³⁵ Given such an apparent lack of objectivity, a sceptic might agree with Booth, whose statement about James bears a close resemblance to the situation surrounding The Good Soldier:

Surely James is not to be blamed for all of this. Though some of the stories are unintentionally ambiguous, the ambiguities are certainly not so broad as to allow the same narrator to be a villainous prude and a heroic homosexual. Yet if we exonerate James, must we not blame the critics? Or repudiate criticism itself as wholly capricious?³⁶

However, there is perhaps no need to develop such negative questions if it is remembered that Schorer is guilty of being too eager to apply the canons of irony, and that he lacks the open-mindedness that is a necessary part of criticism, particularly when dealing with modern fiction.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 258.

³⁶ The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 366. Attention should be drawn to Booth's subsequent discussion, where he argues against those critics who insist upon seeing these "ambiguities" as being proof of the "multileveled house of fiction", and, in doing so, skillfully outlines many of the problems facing readers of works such as Lolita or Ulysses. See pp. 366-374.

That this kind of elucidation is possible can be illustrated by Samuel Hynes's illuminating article "The Epistemology of The Good Soldier", in many ways an extension of E. B. Gose, Jr.'s earlier analysis. Gose proposes that "we extend our sympathy to include not only Ford and the novel but also Dowell as narrator. * * * Although we certainly cannot take all his prejudices as being Ford's, I believe we will find that the two make essentially the same evaluation of life."³⁷ Gose encourages us to see Dowell as an "impressionist" who "paints an essentially honest picture."³⁸ His argument is one with which the present study is in agreement; it is to be regretted, however, that Gose makes too many parallels between Dowell and Ford, as well as committing a few errors in reading that also mar his argument.³⁹ But he does allow for a more open-minded reading of the novel that sees Dowell as a developing character: "It is as though he were only

³⁷"The Strange Irregular Rhythm", 495.

³⁸Ibid., 501, 506.

³⁹Richard Cassell is right to point out that the phrase "those two" (The Good Soldier, 86) does not refer to Florence and Edward, but to Jimmy and Florence. This kind of inaccuracy, together with too many statements such as "Ford intended us", leads a critic like Cassell into Schorer's 'camp'. Cassell sees Gose's conclusion that "[Ford nor Dowell] will pass final judgement" as being essentially correct, "but it seems to me that this is a condition Ford sees but does not necessarily approve of." (R. Cassell, Ford Madox Ford, p. 171). But Cassell does not say how he sees what Ford sees. The present study wishes to withdraw 'Ford' from the argument and let the novel speak for itself through its rhetoric. This will show that the novel is not as morally relative as these critics seem to believe. That it is presented in terms of differing points of view does not mean that its conclusions are relative, as Gose suggests.

understanding the affair himself as he tells his story."⁴⁰ It is a point of view Samuel Hynes develops by seeing the problems the novel raises in primarily epistemological terms: "* * * a novel is a version of the ways in which man can know reality, as well as a version of reality itself."⁴¹ Thus, in an age where relativism dominates, "the nature of truth and reality" can be raised to "the level of a structural principle", particularly in the case of novels related in the first person where there is no apparent external authority:

Schorer errs on this crucial point when he says that 'the author, while speaking through his simple, infatuated character, lets us know how to take his simplicity and his infatuation.' For the author does not speak -- the novel has no 'primary author'; it is Dowell himself who says, in effect, 'I am simple and infatuated'⁴² (though there is irony in this too; he is not all that simple).

Hynes argues persuasively that Dowell's inadequacies are shared by all the other characters, that the narrator has positive qualities, such as "his capacity for love", that single him out and enable him to move towards some partial knowledge, "if only of his own fallibility". In short, Dowell is a "limited, fallible man" engaged in the struggle of trying to understand what happened.⁴³

Hynes's reading of the novel is the result of an open-mindedness that enables him to see Dowell's faults and his attributes. Possibly, he over-emphasizes "knowledge" as a value in the novel -- one would like to know what kind of knowledge it is -- that detracts from the novel's

⁴⁰"The Strange Irregular Rhythm", 505.

⁴¹"The Epistemology of The Good Soldier", 225.

⁴²Ibid., 229.

⁴³Ibid., 230.

uniqueness. In addition, Hynes perhaps lays too great a stress upon the narrator's restraint "from passing judgement, even on those who have most wronged him."⁴⁴ Dowell does make judgements, and these are an important part of our understanding of the moral structure of The Good Soldier. Also, Hynes restricts the definition of "passion" in the novel to being either "anarchic and destructive" or "Christ's sacrificial suffering."⁴⁵ As E. B. Gose, Jr., points out, Dowell's view of passion is "central to an understanding of the problem raised by the novel".⁴⁶ Gose does not develop his point sufficiently, or bring enough evidence to support his contention; but, as will be argued, the role of passion is far more important than the limited alternatives Hynes provides. Passion lies at the very heart of the novel, as it does in Parade's End. It is a force that can lead to order and creation, and Ford's understanding of this human quality is part of his unique contribution to the English novel. It is what places him, as an Englishman, "in the tradition of Flaubert", an opinion with which Harold Mosher, Jr., disagrees.⁴⁷

However, if there are certain basic objections to the readings proposed by Hynes and Gose, the student of Ford Madox Ford must feel grateful for their pioneering work. My examination of recent critical

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., 233.

⁴⁶"The Strange Irregular Rhythm", 503.

⁴⁷"Wayne Booth and the Failure of Rhetoric", 50.

opinion on The Good Soldier -- while it does not mention every writer on the novel, it does cover the spectrum of scholarly debate -- leads the present writer to argue for more support for Hynes and Gose over the more widely held position formulated by Mark Schorer. The ensuing argument will attempt to build upon the insights provided by these two critics through a thorough and detailed analysis of The Good Soldier that will pay particular attention to the way in which we are made to see the fictional world Ford presents. Any scrutiny of the novel's rhetoric must deal with the role of the narrator, and it is with an examination of the function of John Dowell that this discussion of The Good Soldier will commence.

ii

Why then were artists soft: effeminate: not men at all:
whilst the army officer, who had the inexact mind of a
schoolteacher, was a manly man?

Some Do Not . . .

But [the governess] behaves about as well as we could
reasonably expect of ourselves under similarly intolerable
circumstances.

The Rhetoric of Fiction

To see things as they really were -- what an impoverishment!

L. P. Hartley, The Go-Between

While discussing varieties of distance, Wayne C. Booth
remarks:

For practical criticism probably the most important of
these kinds of distance is that between the fallible or
unreliable narrator and the implied author who carries the
reader with him in judging the narrator. If the reason for
discussing point of view is to find how it relates to literary

effects, then surely the moral and intellectual qualities of the narrator are more important to our judgement than whether he is referred to as 'I' or 'he', or whether he is privileged or limited. If he is discovered to be untrustworthy, then the total effect of the work he relays to us is transformed.

Our terminology for this kind of distance is almost hopelessly inadequate. For lack of better terms, I have called a narrator reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), unreliable when he does not. * * * [Unreliability] is most often a matter of what James calls inconscience; the narrator is mistaken, or he believes himself to have qualities which the author denies him. * * * All [unreliable narrators] make stronger demands on the reader's powers of inference than do reliable narrators.⁴⁸

Adhering to Booth's definitions of unreliability and reliability, the case of John Dowell may present, at first glance, sufficient difficulties for us not to place him in either of the categories. In the final analysis, this is perhaps the best view, and happens to be in accord with Hynes's estimate of the narrator as being a "fallible" man with all the limitations that plague human beings. For, Dowell does have faults and virtues, the emphasis falling upon one or the other as a result of the angle of vision from which we are looking at him. Expressed in simplistic terms, from one point of view he may seem a fool, a cuckold who deserved his fate, an individual who threatens to strangle his black servant and cannot prevent his supposed friend from committing suicide, while suffering from extreme sexual incapacity at the same time. Indeed, as the previous discussion illustrated, many of these attitudes have found critical expression. Stated as they are above, they present a rather impressive checklist of inadequacies and

⁴⁸The Rhetoric of Fiction, pp. 158-159.

'crimes' upon which to build a case for total unreliability. If these were his "moral and intellectual qualities" then our deliberation would be brief, and we would be forced to return a verdict of 'guilty' on a charge of unreliability.

However, despite the admission and revelation of this catalogue of faults, from the moment we meet Dowell until we leave him, the tale works against this hasty judgement. The sheer power of his telling reveals a developing sense of moral and intellectual values that contrast with the defects upon which so many critics have pounced. These values are the norms, and the following discussion will be concerned with proving that this is the case, with trying to show how these norms are supported by the whole range of rhetorical effects contained in the novel, that Dowell's view is essentially the 'right' one.

Comparisons can sometimes be illuminating, and The Good Soldier has been compared with several works, including The Great Gatsby. (It is significant that both Dowell and Nick are characters in whom others have sufficient confidence to reveal themselves.) Another point of departure may be provided by L. P. Hartley's The Go-Between, a novel, as Paul Wiley points out, that has many of the characteristic elements of Ford's handling of the "affair".⁴⁹ Indeed, Hartley, like Graham Greene, has been considerably influenced by Ford, a debt that is clearly demonstrated by the number of reviews Hartley has written on works such

⁴⁹Novelist of Three Worlds, p. 299.

as Parade's End.⁵⁰ In addition, both Ford and Hartley may be said to be largely concerned with the same social group as a subject for their novels, a point made all the more clear by placing The Go-Between alongside The Good Soldier. But, of greater interest to a reader of these two novels is the fact that both make use of the first-person narrator. Like John Dowell, Hartley's narrator, Leo Colston, looks back to a time of innocence, contrasting this view with a later time when he began to "see things as they really were".⁵¹ In doing so, he raises questions about the value of that earlier vision, whether it was not preferable and did not come nearer to the 'truth' than his later experience. As with Dowell's "Tale of Passion", one of the major subjects the novel explores is the enigmatic quality of the relationships between men and women. This is given a further emphasis by being looked at through the eyes of a sexual innocent, as he tries to penetrate the barriers society has erected around these affairs, particularly their sexual aspects. In overcoming this mystery, under traumatic conditions, Leo also loses his feeling for the magic that pervaded his life, and spends the greater part of his subsequent experience collecting sterile facts and existing in a greyness.

It can be seen from this description that there are basic similarities between the two novels that make a comparison between them worthwhile. It is perhaps a fault in The Go-Between that the contrast

⁵⁰ See Ford Madox Ford: The Critical Heritage, pp. 108-109, 113-115, 152-153.

⁵¹ L. P. Hartley, The Go-Between (London, 1953), p. 266.

between past and present lacks the depth and emotional impact of Ford's novel. The issues are too clearcut, especially considering that they have infected the narrator's whole life. The reader does not experience the same sense of there being a process of discovery, the feeling of stumbling towards some form of insight or vision, as in The Good Soldier. Such a flaw may be due to Hartley's having defined the norms of the novel in the introductory chapter, where Leo compares his own predicament with that of the twentieth century as a whole:

'Has the twentieth century,' I should ask, 'done so much better than I have? When you leave this room, which I admit is ~~dull~~ and cheerless, and take the last bus to your home in the past, if you haven't missed it -- ask yourself whether you found everything so radiant as you imagined it. Ask yourself whether it has fulfilled your hopes. You were vanquished, Colston, you were vanquished, and so was your century, your precious century that you hoped so much of.'⁵²

The values are carefully laid down, and we do not experience the struggle and the doubts that Dowell undergoes. This is also illustrated by the imposition of a symbolic structure on the novel in the shape of the signs of the Zodiac. Here, too, is a tendency towards a pre-judgement of the issues, rather than an exploration of them.

Nevertheless, The Go-Between is far more than a minor piece of work, as it captures something of the tremendous sense of collapse that Ford and Hartley both see English society as having undergone, while also extolling the values of imagination and feeling that are asserted through the telling of the story. The clarity of the presentation and the way in which Leo now supports imaginative qualities prevent our

⁵²Ibid., p. 23.

judging him harshly, like Dowell, as a "sterile modern". Leo's visit to Brandham Hall, as a child, had shown him the possibility of an enlarged view of life as contained in the kind of romance vision that lies at the heart of Ford's work: in Katherine's promise of regeneration, in the sentimentalism and benevolence of Edward Ashburnham, and in the green world in which Parade's End concludes. Thus, the gifts that are brought for Leo, that seem to belong to another sphere of existence, are coloured the green of the romance world:

The expenditure had been godlike; it belonged to another, ampler phase of being than the one I was accustomed to. My mind could not grasp it but my imagination could make play with it, for unlike my mind, which could dismiss what it did not understand, my imagination loved to contemplate the incomprehensible and try to express my sense of it by an analogy.⁵³

The "analogy", of course, rests with the figures of the Zodiac. The result is that the schoolboy Leo, trained to be a "conformist",⁵⁴ comes to see his dream as reality: "I was in love with the exceptional, and ready to sacrifice all normal happenings to it."⁵⁵ A Robin Hood,⁵⁶ the whole of his existence at Brandham Hall up to that fatal birthday party, fulfils the expectations of a romance viewpoint, showing how life can be more than a collection of facts. His life descends into greyness as a result of his gradual failure to believe in that larger existence, and his readiness to assert the duplicity of Marian's behaviour. Though he

⁵³Ibid., p. 57.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 18.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 102.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 81. See also pp. 113 and 114.

eventually takes the blame for the outcome, our sympathy for him is built upon the realization that it all happened when he was a young boy, and is the result of the "system", as he calls it, of conventions that prevent the open expression of love. Finally, it is perhaps a situation brought about by the "human heart" itself.⁵⁷ The predicament is one that resounds through The Good Soldier, as the characters, with their weak hearts, try to break the bonds of their own upbringing. As in The Go-Between, only one figure manages to do so, both Dowell and Leo possibly appearing the most unlikely candidates for such a feat.

In Hartley's novel, the grey viewpoint is not 'reality', something Leo discovers when he compares the romance self with what he thought was his real self:

I did not realize that this attempt to discard my dual or multiple vision and achieve a single self was the greatest pretence that I had yet embarked on. It was indeed a self-denying ordinance to cut out of my consciousness the half I most enjoyed. To see things as they really were -- what an impoverishment!⁵⁸

With a striking resemblance to The Good Soldier, Leo puts this down to not knowing the true meaning of passion: "I did not know it by the name of passion. I did not understand the nature of the bond that drew the two together * * * ."⁵⁹ As with Dowell, Leo's understanding comes at a later date, most importantly in his final interview with Marian:

'Yes, Leo, you. You know the facts, you know what really happened. And besides me, only you know. You know that

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 265-266.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 247.

Ted and I were lovers: well, we were. But we weren't ordinary lovers, not lovers in the vulgar sense, not in the way people make love today. Our love was a beautiful thing, wasn't it? * * * We were made for each other. Do you remember what that summer was like? -- how much more beautiful than any since? Well, what was the most beautiful thing in it? Wasn't it us, and our feeling for each other? Didn't you realize it, when you took out letters for us?' * * * 'There was nothing mean or sordid in it, was there? and nothing that could possibly hurt anyone. We did have sorrows, bitter sorrows * * * . But they weren't our fault -- they were the fault of this hideous century we live in, which has denatured humanity and planted death and hate where love and living were.'⁶⁰

One of the ironies of the novel is that this affair did hurt someone, Leo Colston, and it is never finally resolved whether this mental and emotional injury detracts from the quality of that love. But, in Leo's last gesture, his errand to tell Edward "that there's no spell or curse except an unloving heart",⁶¹ there is a form of resolution as he asks: "With every step I marvelled more at the extent of Marian's self-deception. Why then was I moved by what she had said? Why did I half wish that I could see it all as she did?"⁶² "A foreigner in the world of the emotions",⁶³ Leo is finally moved to an exhibition of feeling, an experience that expresses release. It is a sense of freedom that comes as a result of telling his story, and also involves emancipating the characters of the past from their past. By liberating them, Leo frees himself, something he has not been prepared to do until he begins

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 294-295.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 296.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

his tale:

As to these 'others' of Brandham Hall, somehow I could not think of them as going on after I had stopped. They were like figures in a picture, the frame enclosed them, the twofold frame of time and place, and they could not step outside it, they were imprisoned in Brandham Hall and the summer of 1900. There let them stay, fixed in their two dimensions. I did not want to free them.⁶⁴

But, through the artist's medium, Leo lifts the curses of time and place, frees those characters imprisoned there and his own imagination. In doing so, he fulfils his role as a magician -- a part left behind in his youth -- and realizes that there is something that can take "me outside myself and the limitations of my normal personality."⁶⁵ Or, to underline this insight with the words of Henry James on what the novelist's craft involves: "* * * the good health of an art which undertakes so immediately to reproduce life must demand that it be perfectly free. It lives upon exercise, and the very meaning of exercise is freedom."⁶⁶

In The Go-Between, we therefore see how crucial the rhetorical device of using a first-person narrator is to the novel's meaning. In Leo Colston's telling of his story lies the fusion between form and content, as he succeeds in transcending the bonds of selfhood. To judge him in terms of the self that existed between the original traumatic experience and this confrontation with the past is to do the novel a

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 283.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 103.

⁶⁶Henry James, "The Future of the Novel" (1899), in The Future of the Novel, p. 9.

disservice. For the narrator develops during this meeting with his multiple selves, and the change is not towards death and sterility, but involves an expression of creativity and love. Indeed, the novel could have been given the subtitle belonging to The Good Soldier, "A Tale of Passion", if we use the word passion in the sense that Dowell comes to understand it. Our view of the novel is greatly altered if we approach it through its rhetoric, and a detailed analysis of Hartley's work would show how the novel's effects are directed towards this end.

One can transfer these insights to The Good Soldier. Here, as with Leo Colston, it would be a mistake to judge John Dowell in terms of the picture of his past self that he provides. Like Leo, Dowell is involved in a confrontation with the past, a time where his own behaviour may have left a lot to be desired. But, unlike the narrator of James's The Aspern Papers, who remains locked in his own egoism and still expresses "chagrin at the loss of the letters",⁶⁷ Dowell undergoes a process of discovery that leads him to criticize what he did. This allows him to move outside the self in an attempt to comprehend what happened, an act that is itself an expression of freedom.

The similarities between The Good Soldier and The Go-Between, both in their subjects and in individual techniques, make the latter a useful way to enter into an appreciation of Ford's novel, as it allows us to see the way in which the rhetoric of Hartley's fiction moulds our responses to the world created in a similar manner. This may be shown

⁶⁷ Henry James, The Aspern Papers (1888), in The Turn of the Screw and Other Short Novels (New York, 1962), p. 251.

by an examination of the role of the narrator in The Good Soldier in an attempt to discover some of the basic norms that lie behind this work.

iii

As most critics of Ford's earlier work have pointed out, many of the 'themes' contained in The Good Soldier may be found in his early novels.⁶⁸ What is lacking is the ability to treat these subjects with any degree of success, the Fifth Queen trilogy, as has been argued, being an exception to this rule. It is possibly incorrect to claim that, until he reached the age of forty, "Ford had no themes".⁶⁹ However, Hynes is surely right to argue that Ford "consequently imitated not life, but other men's romances."⁷⁰ Indeed, to support his assertion, Hynes names some of Ford's imitations of works by James, Twain and Wells.⁷¹ Of these, it is perhaps A Call that deserves attention,⁷² for, as several critics have observed, it bears a striking resemblance to The Good Soldier, marking an attempt to write in the Jamesian manner

⁶⁸ See, for example, Norman Leer, The Limited Hero, pp. 25-67.

⁶⁹ S. Hynes, "Ford and the Spirit of Romance", 20.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., 19.

⁷² Ford Madox Ford, A Call (London, 1910).

(including the names given to the characters).⁷³

Put briefly, A Call reads more like bad James than bad Ford, the attempt to emulate "the master" being beyond Ford's capabilities, even though he perhaps thought he could do it. The novel remains a superficial work about manners and social conduct, controlled by an authorial voice who does not make the most of the opportunities available as a result of the distance that exists between him and his characters. Instead, there is a proliferation of weak similes -- "'That chap is like a seal'"⁷⁴ -- which serve in the place of a fully developed sense of tone. Almost as an apology for this, Ford felt the need to add an "Epistolary Epilogue" that tells us what the author really thinks of Robert Grimshaw or Katya Lascarides.⁷⁵ The result is a rather poor study of the individual who supposedly puts the demands of society above those that might lead to a larger sense of life: "When he had practically forced Dudley Leicester upon Pauline, he really had believed that you can marry a woman you love to your best friend without enduring all the tortures of jealousy."⁷⁶

If The Good Soldier also involves the drama of missed opportunities and failure, it does so in a way that makes A Call look

⁷³P. Wiley, Novelist of Three Worlds, pp. 153-159. The question of 'imitation' is a delicate issue, for it might be argued that, in writing The Good Soldier, Ford was copying the "confessional form" of Wells's Tono Bungay, thereby detracting from the quality of the former. Rather, it is the way in which a particular influence is developed that is of importance.

⁷⁴A Call, p. 3.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 295-304.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 282.

like an apallingly amateur piece. Part of the difference between the two novels must lie with Ford's decision to build the rhetoric of the later novel around a single narrator who engages in the process of writing, of telling the story to an audience. In following this undertaking, that is, providing in our own way the sympathetic ear of "a woman or a solicitor" which Dowell offered Edward Ashburnham,⁷⁷ we see the creation of a framework to contain the past, a form that does not capture but frees the participants. Here, then, lies our understanding of the rhetoric of The Good Soldier, as contained in a statement made by Ford in Mightier Than the Sword, where he shows an awareness of the role of the artist that reflects upon the rhetorical function of John Dowell:

That is why the creative artist is almost always an expatriate and almost always writes about the past. He must, in order to get perspective, retire in both space and time from the model upon which he is at work. . . . Still more, he must retire in passion . . . in order to gain equilibrium.

Turgenev carried the rendering of the human soul one stage further than any writer who preceded or has followed him simply because he had supremely the gift of identifying himself with -- of absolutely feeling -- the passions of the characters with whom he found himself. . . . And then he had the gift of retiring and looking at his passion -- the passion that he had made his . . . the gift of looking at it with calmed eyes.⁷⁸

This is a comment that has a direct bearing upon our comprehension of the role of that other "creative artist", John Dowell, while illustrating Ford's sense of the importance of passion.

⁷⁷The Good Soldier, 35 and 214.

⁷⁸F. M. Ford, Mightier Than the Sword: Memories and Impressions * * * (London, 1938), pp. 207-208.

One of the most important observations to make about Dowell is the awareness he exhibits of his position as a storyteller, of his attempt to "sit down to puzzle out what I know of this sad affair."⁷⁹ In this capacity, he is full of a desire to communicate his experience to another person, as indicated by his frequent references to the "silent listener".⁸⁰ Thus, he addresses us upon numerous occasions about the task in hand:

You may well ask why I write. And yet my reasons are quite many. For it is not unusual in human beings who have witnessed the sack of a city or the falling to pieces of a people to desire to set down what they have witnessed for the benefit of unknown heirs or of generations infinitely remote; or, if you please, just to get the sight out of their heads.⁸¹

Or, again, with a strong resemblance to Conrad's method of telling a story through Marlow's consciousness, another character who, like Dowell and Nick Carraway, inspires other people to place him in their confidence:

I don't know how it is best to put this thing down -- whether it would be better to try and tell the story from the beginning, as if it were a story; or whether to tell it from this distance of time, as it reached me from the lips of Leonora or from those of Edward himself.

So I shall just imagine myself for a fortnight or so at one side of the fireplace of a country cottage, with a sympathetic soul opposite me. And I shall go on talking, in a low voice while the sea sounds in the distance and overhead the great black flood of wind polishes the bright stars. From time to time we shall get up and go to the door and look out at the

⁷⁹The Good Soldier, 15.

⁸⁰For example, Ibid., 24, 136 and 161.

⁸¹Ibid., 17.

great moon and say: -- 'Why, it is nearly as bright as in Provence!' And then we shall come back to the fireside, with just the touch of a sigh because we are not in that Provence where even the saddest stories are gay.⁸²

The presence of a third party allows Dowell a distancing perspective, a point from which he can ask us, and himself, whether what he is communicating can be grasped by someone else, whether it can be seen. In addition, this passage shows a narrator who is very conscious of the problems associated with tone, if his story is tragic or sad, if it is "gay". Thus, in the following quotation, we find this concern with the definition of tone, of deciding whether there is any external principle of order in the Universe -- other than the internal principles of his own art -- that will strike the right note for the whole affair:

I call this the Saddest Story, rather than 'The Ashburnham Tragedy,' just because it is so sad, just because there was no current to draw things along to a swift and inevitable end. There is about it none of the elevation that accompanies tragedy; there is about it no nemesis, no destiny. Here were two noble people -- for I am convinced that both Edward and Leonora had noble natures -- here, then, were two noble natures, drifting down life, like fireships afloat on a lagoon and causing miseries, heartaches, agony of mind, and death. And they themselves steadily deteriorated. And why? for what purpose? To point to what lesson? It is all a darkness.⁸³

As Jo-Ann Baernstein has shown, such a deterioration is reflected in the animal imagery. Leonora moves from the horse-woman to a cat, and finally a rabbit. Edward changes from the raging stallion to a dumb,

⁸² Ibid., 22-23.

⁸³ Ibid., 146.

persecuted brute.⁸⁴ Yet, it should be noted, Dowell later calls the affair "the Ashburnham tragedy" in spite of such a decline.⁸⁵ Though some critics might argue that here is another instance of an incapable and neurotic narrator revealing himself, it may also be seen as an example of Dowell's attempt to elevate these events to the stature of tragedy, to give them the dignity of the fate of a Katherine Howard. In doing so, Dowell resembles Katherine, as, like the romancer, he works to transform experience, to give it a shape, to grasp and render the enlarged possibilities of life that so many of the characters have denied.

Unlike Katherine or Cromwell, Dowell has no external order that would make such a task easier. For him, there is no readily available Catholic religion -- in its embodiment, Leonora, it has become a negative, denying force -- and there is no handy book, like Il Principe, from which he can glean some precepts by which he may judge what has happened. Rather, as he points out, and as the fate of Edward Ashburnham illustrates, Dowell is surrounded by chaos, and the problem then becomes one of whether he can find some internal principles that will enable him to give a sense of form to the chaotic mass of past events. These involve not only artistic precepts, but also a searching within himself to discover values and norms that will help him. "In my fainter way", as Dowell expresses it, he comes to recognize qualities in

⁸⁴ Jo-Ann Baernstein, "Image, Identity, and Insight in The Good Soldier (1966), in Ford Madox Ford: Modern Judgements, pp. 106-128.

⁸⁵ The Good Soldier, 205.

himself that have hitherto remained dormant -- other than on occasions, such as his wife's suicide, when the shock releases a hidden impulse like his passion for Nancy Rufford -- and which are developed and nurtured by the very act of writing itself. In short, in attempting to find creative values that will act as a yardstick for his drama, he discovers that these attributes are present in himself, the "trained poodle" who once ran around Leonora.

In this way, then, references to "the lamentable history of Peire Vidal",⁸⁶ to Ashburnham's ancestors,⁸⁷ and to his feudal code,⁸⁸ these may be taken as indications of Dowell's desire to elevate the story, to give it a stature and a meaning, to transform it into something whole. Thus, throughout The Good Soldier, we encounter a narrator who is continuously balancing and juxtaposing viewpoint against viewpoint, reference against reference, in order to ascertain whether this desire is possible. Dowell searches for values -- embodied in Leo Colston's and Katherine Howard's visions of a romance world -- that can sustain the barrage by the forces that seek to deny anything other than the ordinariness Rodney Bayham and Leonora express. Coupled with this motive is a clearly visible intention to explore all the points of view available to him at the time these events were taking and had just taken place, and, now, during the course of his constructing the tale. This sense of fairness is a quality that draws us to Dowell, since it

⁸⁶Ibid., 25-26.

⁸⁷Ibid., 16.

⁸⁸Ibid., 132.

represents an attempt to paint a complete picture of the past as independent of his own prejudices as possible:

I HAVE, I am aware, told this story in a very rambling way so that it may be difficult for anyone to find their path through what may be a sort of maze. I cannot help it. I have stuck to my idea of being in a country cottage with a silent listener, hearing between the gusts of the wind and amidst the noises of the distant sea, the story as it comes. And, when one discusses an affair -- a long, sad affair -- one goes back, one goes forward. One remembers points that one has forgotten and one explains them all the more minutely since one recognizes that one has forgotten to mention them in their proper places and that one may have given, by omitting them, a false impression. I console myself with thinking that this is a real story and that, after all, real stories are probably told best in the way a person telling a story would tell them. They will then seem most real.⁸⁹

Noticeably, he continues:

At any rate, I think I have brought my story up to the date of Masie Maidan's death. I mean that I have explained everything that went before it from the several points of view that were necessary -- from Leonora's, from Edward's and, to some extent, from my own. You have the facts for the trouble of finding them; you have the points of view as far as I could ascertain or put them. Let me imagine myself back, then, at the day of Maisie's death * * * . Let us consider Leonora's point of view with regard to Florence; Edward's, of course, I cannot give you, for Edward naturally never spoke of his affair with my wife. (I may, in what follows, be a little hard on Florence; but you must remember that I have been writing away at this story now for six months and reflecting longer and longer upon these affairs.)⁹⁰

The repetition of the phrase "point of view", the stress upon the value of "reflecting" upon these events are both indicative of Dowell's concern with and awareness of the artistic process, of the need to weigh and portray differing viewpoints in order to give a true "impression"

⁸⁹Ibid., 161.

⁹⁰Ibid., 161-162.

of the past. (It is worth pointing out that, in the next paragraph, Dowell criticizes Leonora for not reflecting upon events: "Perhaps she should have reflected longer; she should have spoken, if she wanted to speak, only after reflection."⁹¹) Dowell is not a self-infatuated character, who, if so preoccupied with his own self, would only present one point of view, his own. He is an individual who scrupulously declares the viewpoint he is presenting, a figure who refuses to distort the insights given to him, in so far as he is capable of doing so: "Heaven knows what happened in Leonora after that. She certainly does not herself know. She probably said a good deal more to Edward than I have been able to report; but that is all that she has told me and I am not going to make up speeches."⁹² Even now, as he freely admits, his reconstructed picture may be incomplete: "But there are many things that I cannot well make out, about which I cannot well question Leonora, or about which Edward did not tell me."⁹³ Indeed, with the occurrence of the adjective "well" twice in this quotation, it could be argued that there exists another interpretation for Ford's choice of a surname for his narrator.⁹⁴ That is, in his name, there is an indication of his

⁹¹ Ibid., 162.

⁹² Ibid., 185.

⁹³ Ibid., 126.

⁹⁴ For other, perhaps more adventurous, readings of the name see J. Meixner, Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p. 157; and N. D. Isaacs, "The Narrator of The Good Soldier", English Fiction In Transition, VI (1963), 14-15.

desire to render the affair to the best of his ability, to do the task well.

This aspiration on Dowell's part cannot be over-estimated.

Throughout his tale, we are made aware of these various points of view:

"And now, I suppose, I must give you Leonora's side of the case. . . ." ⁹⁵

His wish is to bring the characters to life, to make us feel the situation from their side, a labour that involves employing the artist's skills to the full, since he must keep each character "going":

You are to remember that all this happened a month before Leonora went into the girl's room at night. I have been casting back again; but I cannot help it. It is so difficult to keep all these people going. I tell you about Leonora and bring her up to date; then about Edward, who has fallen behind. And then the girl gets hopelessly left behind. I wish I could put it down in diary form. ⁹⁶

This he tries to do, but rejects the structure provided by the diary in a very short space of time. For, to impose a chronological pattern upon these events would be to falsify them, to give them a shape and 'consequential' form they do not warrant. By not conforming to the pattern of the diary, Dowell is able to give the past, and the characters involved, a greater sense of life, thus allowing us to see them more clearly. In addition, it is also important that he rejects this method, since he received his insights at different times, in his conversation with Edward the night before Nancy's departure, ⁹⁷ and his

⁹⁵ The Good Soldier, 156.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 192.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 214. See also 102 ff.

subsequent discussions with Leonora: "I asked Mrs Ashburnham * * * ." ⁹⁸
 To relate them "consequentially" would be to falsify the way in which he
 learnt these things, while hindering his powers of reflection as well.

This sense of retrospection, of casting backwards to grasp the
 meaning of what happened, allows us to perceive three John Dowells: ⁹⁹
 the Dowell who lived through the affair itself; the character after his
 talks with Leonora and Edward; and the narrator who develops during the
 course of the story he tells. ⁹⁹ The distinctions are approximate, but
 do help us become aware of an immense discrepancy between what Dowell
 was and what he is: "Well, there you have the position, as clear as I
 can make it -- the husband an ignorant fool, the wife a cold sensualist
 with imbecile fears -- for I was such a fool that I should never have
 known what she was or was not -- and the blackmailing lover." ¹⁰⁰
 Dowell is very much aware of himself as having been a fool: "But think
 of the fool that I was. . . ."; ¹⁰¹ "you may consider me to have been an
 imbecile"; ¹⁰² "Well, I was a fool." ¹⁰³ He is also conscious of his role
 as the "sedulous, strained nurse", ¹⁰⁴ the "eunuch" who stood in contrast

⁹⁸ Ibid., 20. See also 98-99.

⁹⁹ Another perspective is provided by his diaries. See 92.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 88.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 91.

¹⁰² Ibid., 99.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 175.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 19.

to Edward Ashburnham.¹⁰⁵ But, if a fool then, Dowell triumphs in his ability to synthesize conflicting viewpoints, and in his readiness to exercise the positive quality of imagination in order to penetrate and render them. In doing this, he succeeds where many others have failed. For, as he points out, one of the saddest aspects of this whole affair is that, on so many occasions, the characters involved were unable to exercise imagination, were incapable of seeing things from another viewpoint. Thus, Leonora and Edward maintained a private lack of communication that hindered any resolution of their difficulties: "There was the complication caused by the fact that Edward and Leonora never spoke to each other except when other people were present."¹⁰⁶ "And isn't it incredible that during all that time Edward and Leonora never spoke a word to each other in private?"¹⁰⁷ This breakdown is one that Dowell transcends in his telling of the saddest story.

Though some critics might argue that this is a negative criticism of Dowell, it is to his credit that Edward sees him as "a woman or a solicitor", since Edward has a particular view of women that reflects favourably upon the narrator:

At that date, you understand, he had not the least idea of seducing any one of these ladies. He wanted only moral support at the hands of some female, because he found men difficult to talk to about ideals. Indeed, I do not believe that he had, at any time, any idea of making any one his mistress. That sounds queer; but I believe it is quite true as a statement of character.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 22.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 113.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 19.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 141.

It is an indication of Dowell's latent sympathy that Edward can open his heart to him, as he would do to a woman: "But I guess he just had to speak to somebody and I appeared to be like a woman or solicitor. He talked all night."¹⁰⁹ (As we shall see, the need "to talk" is very much at the centre of Parade's End.) Standing in juxtaposition to the feminine ability to receive, to listen and act as a "moral support", a phrase that recurs in Dowell's vocabulary, there is the masculine desire to explore. The impulse is defined in what must be the most misunderstood passage in the whole novel, the section where Dowell details what is meant by the word "passion", as felt by men like Edward Ashburnham. In quoting the piece, it should be remembered that Dowell's views coincide, for the most part, with what he represents as Edward's own view of this attribute:

I have come to be very much of a cynic in these matters; I mean that it is impossible to believe in the permanence of man's or woman's love. Or, at any rate, it is impossible to believe in the permanence of any early passion. As I see it, at least, with regard to man, a love affair, a love for any definite woman -- is something in the nature of a widening of the experience. With each new woman that a man is attracted to there appears to come a broadening of the outlook, or, if you like, an acquiring of new territory. A turn of the eyebrow, a tone of the voice, a queer characteristic gesture -- all these things, and it is these things that cause to arise the passion of love -- all these things are like so many objects on the horizon of the landscape that tempt a man to walk beyond the horizon, to explore. He wants to get, as it were, behind those eyebrows with the peculiar turn, as if he desired to see the world with the eyes that they overshadow. He wants to hear that voice applying itself to every possible proposition, to every possible topic; he wants to see those characteristic gestures against every possible background.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 214.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 105-106.

Dowell goes on to discuss the sex instinct, about which he admits "I know very little" -- indeed, to the horror of Lawrentian critics, he discounts it as being of no more importance than eating, which, it should be added, is a significant enough human activity! Critics have pounced upon this as being sufficient grounds for condemnation, without paying close enough attention to what it is that Dowell is trying to say about passion:

But the real fierceness of desire, the real heat of a passion long continued and withering up the soul of a man is the craving for identity with the woman that he loves. He desires to see with the same eyes, to touch with the same sense of touch, to hear with the same ears, to lose his identity, to be enveloped, to be supported. For, whatever may be said of the relation of the sexes, there is no man who loves a woman that does not desire to come to her for the renewal of his courage, for the cutting asunder of his difficulties. And that will be the mainspring of his desire for her. We are all so afraid, we are all so alone, we all so need from the outside the assurance of our own worthiness to exist.¹¹¹

These two passages provide the mainspring for the rhetoric of The Good Soldier. Passion, as described here, isolates the value that lies behind the novel, as it does with Parade's End, the quality that defines Dowell's own ability as a storyteller, as a maker of "A Tale of Passion". For, as Hynes has noted, perhaps without grasping the full implications of his observation:

Dowell has one other quality, and it is his most saving attribute -- his capacity for love; for ironically, it is he, the eunuch, who is the Lover. Florence and Ashburnham and Maisie Maidan suffer from 'hearts', but Dowell is sound, and able, after his fashion, to love -- to love Ashburnham and Nancy, and even Leonora. It is he who performs the two acts of wholly unselfish love in the book -- he crosses the

¹¹¹Ibid., 106.

Atlantic in answer to Ashburnham's plea for help, and he travels to Ceylon to bring back the mad Nancy, when Leonora will not. And he can forgive, as no other character can.¹¹²

And, one must add, the most unselfish act he performs is in writing or relating the tale in the way that he does, revealing all his own faults and failings, as he broadens his outlook and acquires new territory, as he explores another identity. It is the supreme expression of passion -- of the kind of passion Hynes calls love -- and marks the only way, apart from death, in which one of the characters in this affair achieves a sense of freedom and release. Dowell stands alone, the sole figure who makes a truly lasting testimony to the value of a creative passion.

Too few critics, besides Hynes -- one might include Gose and Graham Greene¹¹³ -- have glimpsed at Dowell's expression of passion, or his "capacity for love". That passion is one of the normative values in the novel, by which we respond to and are shaped by the experience we undergo, seems to be an argument with even fewer proponents. Even critics who sense a strong undercurrent of sympathy in the novel tend to dismiss this as, in some way, a fault:

Ford, one uneasily supposes, doesn't himself know what his attitude is to the situation he presents. The gap between presentation and 'values' is never bridged. Ford's presented values are those of the craftsman; the man Ford, most compassionate of novelists, is himself in an impasse, an impasse of sympathy for all sides.¹¹⁴

¹¹²"The Epistemology of The Good Soldier", 230.

¹¹³In his "Introduction" to The Bodley Head Edition of The Good Soldier, 7-12.

¹¹⁴H. Kenner, "Conrad and Ford" (1952), in his Gnomon, p. 169.

It is precisely that gap which is bridged, and the compassion is not an "impasse", but a positive value that enables Dowell to render the affair in all its fullness, thereby coming to an understanding of it. It is through the prevailing consciousness of Dowell that form and content are fused and the manner of presentation and "values" are one.

Two expressions of passion illustrate this concern. First, there is Dowell's passion for Nancy Rufford which finds its fullest embodiment within the telling of the tale itself. Critics have avoided the problem of how the narrator comes to know what he does about Nancy immediately prior to her departure and eventual madness. Clearly, Dowell cannot have asked her what her views were, as the girl is left uttering only a few words, "a picture without a meaning".¹¹⁵ One possible explanation is that, having grasped some details from people like Leonora, Dowell, in an expression of passion for Nancy, assumes her identity and tries to see things as she experienced them: "* * * the real heat of passion * * * is the craving for identity with the woman he loves. He desires to see with the same eyes, to touch with the same sense of touch * * * ." ¹¹⁶ In evoking Nancy's thoughts and feelings, Dowell succeeds in completing an imaginative leap into the identity of another human being.

The second illustration lies in Dowell's coming to see himself as "following the lines of Edward Ashburnham",¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵The Good Soldier, 218.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 106.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 204.

"a sentimentalist"¹¹⁸: "But I guess that I myself, in my fainter way, come into the category of the passionate, of the headstrong, and the too-truthful. For I can't conceal from myself the fact that I loved Edward Ashburnham -- and that I love him because he was just myself."¹¹⁹ The transition from the past "loved" to the present "love" is significant. For, in his art, Dowell has found the means to transcend the limitations of space and time, as did Leo Colston, to recreate the character who, though destroyed, still survives in the narrator's story as a symbol of the noble figure, one of the "very splendid personalities" who oppose the normality and greyness that levels and denies. His love cannot be categorized as homosexual, as McFate and Golden have done. It is the passion of the artist who surveys new territory and comes to see that "I suppose that I should really like to be a polygamist * * * ."¹²⁰ His 'polygamy' is that of the artist who explores identities by practising the 'masculine' art of passion, assimilating the various points of view, with all their ideals and aspirations, through the 'feminine' principle of receptivity. In him, through the process of writing, the masculine and feminine

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 218 and 220.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 217.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 204.

principles are united.¹²¹

Therefore, Dowell's tale is exactly as its subtitle suggests, a tale of passion told by a character who eventually sees himself as one of "the passionate", but who, like Turgenev, has "the gift of retiring and looking at his passion -- the passion that he had made his . . . the gift of looking at it with calmed eyes."¹²² Around this, the rhetoric of The Good Soldier operates in a manner best summed up by Henry James, while speaking of Balzac:

It is a question, you see, of penetrating into a subject; his corridors always went further and further and further; which is but another way of expressing his inordinate passion for detail. * * * He at all events robustly loved the sense of another explored, assumed, assimilated identity -- enjoyed it as the hand enjoys the glove when the glove ideally fits. My image is indeed loose; for what he liked was absolutely to get into the constituted consciousness, into all the clothes, gloves and whatever else, into the very skin and bones, of the habited, featured, colored, articulated form of life that he desired to present. How do we know given persons, for any purpose of demonstration, unless we know their situation for themselves, unless we see it from their point of pressing consciousness or sensation? -- without our allowing for which there is no appreciation. * * * It all comes back, in fine, to that respect for the liberty of the subject which I should be willing to name as the great sign of the painter of the first order.¹²³

¹²¹For a very different, pseudo-Freudian reading of these two principles in The Good Soldier, see Jo-Ann Baernstein's article quoted earlier in this chapter. Needless to say, I disagree with her view of Dowell's lack of awareness and that his identification with Edward is "the dream-vision of the trained poodle who thinks he wants to be a raging stallion." (p. 117). Miss Baernstein limits Dowell's identification to "Dowell's sexual identity with Edward" and fails to take account of other meanings of the word "passion".

¹²²Ford Madox Ford, Mightier Than the Sword, p. 208.

¹²³Henry James, "The Lesson of Balzac" (1905), The Future of the Novel, pp. 110, 117.

The resemblance between this quotation and Dowell's thoughts on passion might make the more speculative critic wonder if Ford had read or heard this lecture.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, this passage does crystallize our view of the technique of The Good Soldier, enabling us to see the way in which our responses are moulded as a result of this exploring and juxtaposing of assimilated identities, as the narrator looks at the past from a vantage point that enables reflection. This perhaps accounts for the controlled tone of the novel, and the great period of time that passes during its telling.¹²⁵ For the tone never becomes hysterical, in spite of the catastrophic events that have taken place. Instead, it attains the "equilibrium" that Ford appreciated in Turgenev, which is the result of "retiring", enforced by Dowell's knowledge that he is writing for a "silent listener".

Dowell's identification with Ashburnham cannot therefore be dismissed as some form of disguised homosexual relationship, for Edward embodies the masculine principle in the tale, the idea of the lover as an explorer, which is so crucial to an understanding of the contributing forces behind Dowell's role as the relater of the affair. In this connection, it is significant that, on several occasions, Ashburnham is seen as a novelist, or as someone who has the novelist's capacity to make us see: "But the fellow talked like a cheap novelist. -- Or like

¹²⁴ Further speculation might follow as to how far James provided a model for Dowell. This is, of course, outside the scope and methods of this study.

¹²⁵ See, for example, The Good Soldier, 162 and 201.

a very good novelist for the matter of that, if it's the business of a novelist to make you see things clearly."¹²⁶ His is the imagination that roves in an effort to find the woman who will "set her seal upon his imagination".¹²⁷ As will be discussed later, he is the "splendid fellow" who embodies the possibilities of the romance point of view. Therefore, his study is decked in green, the colour associated with Katherine Howard:

Edward was sunk in his chair; there were in the room two candles, hidden by green glass shades. The green shades were reflected in the glasses of the book-cases that contained not books but guns with gleaming brown barrels and fishing-rods in green baize over-covers. There was dimly to be seen, above a mantelpiece encumbered with spurs, hooves and bronze models of horses, a dark-brown picture of a white horse.¹²⁸

The description is repeated again by Dowell,¹²⁹ who noticeably writes from the gun-room at Branshaw: "From there, at this moment, I am actually writing."¹³⁰ "I sit here, in Edward's gun-room, all day and all day in a house that is absolutely quiet."¹³¹ Out of the world of the gun-room comes the tale of passion, and, in Dowell's taking over Branshaw, we see another attempt to keep some memory of what Edward, when alive, stood for. Unlike Edward, Dowell lacks the "courage and the virility and possibly also the physique" to live the romance

¹²⁶Ibid., 102. See also 35.

¹²⁷Ibid., 107.

¹²⁸Ibid., 184.

¹²⁹Ibid., 214.

¹³⁰Ibid., 16.

¹³¹Ibid., 218.

vision,¹³² and there is a tension in the novel between the narrator's artistic triumph and the failure in life of Edward Ashburnham. It is Edward's failure, and the reasons for it, that the remainder of this chapter will explore.

Through the creation of a tale of passion, The Good Soldier affirms the qualities of love and imagination that play such an important part in our understanding of Parade's End, as Dowell examines these values in comparison with the deadening aspects of the grey world of social convention. The rhetoric of the novel is closely linked to this exploration, as it is to the juxtaposition of several viewpoints through the reflecting consciousness of the narrator. He discovers norms in his tale which are those of the novel itself, the qualities of the artistic and transforming sensibility that finally triumphs over that which denies the novelist's medium and his aesthetic: "Leonora could not stand novels."¹³³ That these values are asserted through the consciousness of a character who once had been cuckolded and duped, as he is now aware, is but to underline their strength. For, the great contrast between the various Dowells emphasizes the qualities of the later figure who struggles to make sense of it all. In the following analysis of the novel, there will be an examination of this process, as Dowell explores essentially two sensibilities in conflict, those of Leonora and Edward. This inquiry will show how the rhetoric works to shape our response to one over the other.

¹³² Ibid., 217.

¹³³ Ibid., 158.

iv

Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown
 grey from thy breath;
 We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the fulness
 of death.
 Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a
 day;
 But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives
 not May.
 Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the world is not
 sweet in the end;
 For the old faiths loosen and fall, the new years ruin
 and rend.

A. C. Swinburne, from "Hymn to Proserpine"

The need for a close analysis of The Good Soldier is indicated by Ford's own statement concerning the complexity of his novel: "And I will permit myself to say that I was astounded at the work I must have put into the construction of the book, at the intricate tangle of references and cross-references."¹³⁴ As the remainder of my chapter will endeavour to show, the "tangle" is the result of a workmanship designed to depict the narrator's mind at work, as his powers of memory range back and forth in an effort to discover the significance of the past.

Thus, in the process of telling his story, Dowell modifies his point of view, his judgement and his overall comprehension of what happened. As argued previously, part of his task involves trying to erect a framework for such an understanding, a principle by which he may give an order or shape to experience, resulting in the discovery of

¹³⁴Ford's dedicatory letter to Stella Ford, quoted in The Good Soldier (New York, 1957), p. xx.

the values built around the idea of passion presented in the novel. In the opening paragraph, we encounter a Dowell who is embarking upon this process, a character who modifies and qualifies statements, balancing one possibility against another:

THIS is the saddest story I have ever heard. We had known the Ashburnhams for nine seasons of the town of Nauheim with an extreme intimacy -- or, rather with an acquaintanceship as loose and easy and yet as close as a good glove's with your hand. My wife and I knew Captain and Mrs Ashburnham as well as it was possible to know anybody, and yet, in another sense, we knew nothing at all about them.¹³⁵

As Hynes has pointed out, one concern of the novel is epistemological in origin.¹³⁶ It is worth adding that this subject is underlined here, since the narrator uses various forms of the verb "to know" seven times within the space of thirteen lines, the repetition involving the degree to which the Dowells' relationship with the Ashburnhams, may have been an "intimacy". Indeed, the question is raised as to the extent to which anyone can know another person, a problem Dowell explores and answers through his art. As Dowell observes here, the issue, in a social milieu, is related to the English concept of "acquaintanceship", an idea that can prevent knowledge, and one that has repercussions for all the characters concerned.

In the opening paragraph, Dowell's imagery warrants our

¹³⁵The Good Soldier, 15.

¹³⁶Perhaps, in his creation of the Philadelphian, John Dowell, Ford had in mind Katya's comments on those city-dwellers in A Call, p. 243: "'But somehow, what was dreadful, what made it so lonely, was that they didn't know what they were there for. It was as if no one knew -- what he was there for. I don't know.'"

attention. Often, during the course of the novel, he attempts to define things in terms of objects such as buildings, clothing or furniture. The simile of the glove, reminiscent of James's use of this article, in the passage quoted earlier from "The Lesson of Balzac", can be illuminated by referring to the words of a character in The Portrait of a Lady, where Mme. Merle addresses Isabel Archer as follows:

'There's no such thing as an isolated man or woman: we're each of us made up of some cluster of appurtenances. What shall we call our "self"? Where does it begin? Where does it end? It overflows into everything that belongs to us -- and then it flows back again. I know a large part of myself is in the clothes I choose to wear. I've a great respect for things! One's self -- for other people -- is one's expression of one's self; and one's house, one's furniture * * * these things are all expressive.'¹³⁷

Unlike Katherine Howard, who had a clear understanding of self-identity, in Dowell's images of "things" there is a greater tendency towards seeing the self as something fluid, and, without the beliefs of the Catholic faith, reality as subjective and fleeting. In this situation, the self and one's knowledge of other people tend to be defined in relation to "things".

The impermanence of reality is further emphasized by Dowell's rootless existence, the American traveller shifting across the face of Europe, the impressionist trying to catch the "spots of colour" in reality: "* * * the whole world for me is like spots of colour in an immense canvas. Perhaps if it weren't so I should have something to catch hold of now."¹³⁸ It is a point of view that helps us to

¹³⁷ Henry James, The Portrait of a Lady (New York, 1908), pp. 287-288.

¹³⁸ The Good Soldier, 24.

understand the countless repetitions of the same event, as it is looked at from differing angles of vision, and the very technique of Dowell's craft. As he paints his impressionist canvas, he comes to a wide portrayal of the affair, involving varied lights and shades. Knowledge is never complete in such a world, but, with the developing picture, both Dowell and the listener achieve a greater understanding of the past. In this connection, it is interesting to observe that the occurrence of the verb "to know" tends to decline as the picture develops. However, that it does not finally disappear gives some indication of the subjectivity of the world Dowell portrays. The portrait, at best, can only be partial. It can never be totally complete.

The opening paragraph also sets the tone for the whole tale, a tone that Dowell wishes to establish in the very first sentence. Some critics have taken this note of sadness to be an indication that Ford is proposing an absurdist's view of the world, in line with, say, Beckett or Albee.¹³⁹ But, it should be remembered that The Good Soldier appears to evolve a world where meaning is denied, and not one where there is no meaning. Unlike, for example, Shakespearean tragedy, normality is not a significant whole that includes man society and the universe within it. As opposed to the creative norms the novel expresses, normality is limited to the individual's instinct for self-preservation, a rapacious greed for material security, as with

¹³⁹L. W. Jones, "The Quality of Sadness in Ford's The Good Soldier", English Literature in Transition, XIII (1970), 296-302.

Leonora's attitude towards Edward. It is destructive and self-seeking. The exceptional being is destroyed, not to point some lesson of universal morality, but solely for the preservation of limiting social structures. That being did embody a kernel of meaning, and, as contained in Dowell's story itself, this indicates a potential that society tries to crush, a possibility portrayed in the historical concept of the feudal lord. The note of sadness is an indication that society denies this transforming idea, not that the notion fails to exist.¹⁴⁰

However, these subjects are not immediately apparent, as Dowell struggles to find a position from which to view the past. (His idea of being the storyteller, with a sympathetic listener, does not occur until the beginning of Chapter Two.) To a large extent, he starts out with the conventional and the expected, until the full magnitude of what has happened begins to strike home. Thus, in the first paragraph, Dowell moves from using the first-person singular to the first-person plural, as he speaks of his wife and himself as a single unit. The proliferation of the form "we", in the early stages of the novel, also coincides with Dowell's view of Florence as being "poor": "poor Florence", "poor dear Florence", "poor thing".¹⁴¹ It is an evaluation that will be subsequently modified at length, and is indicative of his

¹⁴⁰For an argument that enlarges this point into a thesis, based upon Ford's reading of J. R. Green's A Short History of the English People, see H. R. Huntley, The Alien Protagonist of Ford Madox Ford.

¹⁴¹The Good Soldier, 15, 18.

tendency to fall back upon conventional views of experience, when faced with the bewildering mass of impressions from the past. It is when he sees that this is an inadequate account of events that he drops the pretence of presenting his wife as a "poor thing". In this connection, it is also interesting to note that he begins by giving us the publicly announced reasons for Edward's and Leonora's heart ailments, a stance whose qualification, in the words "approximately" and "imprisonment", only becomes significant as his tale unfolds.

The first chapter shows this 'feeling out' of the past continued, particularly with regard to the problem of what these events signified to Dowell at that time, and what they appear to be like now:

Permanence? Stability? I can't believe it's gone. I can't believe that that long, tranquil life, which was just stepping a minuet, vanished in four crashing days at the end of nine years and six weeks. Upon my word, yes, our intimacy was like a minuet, simply because on every possible occasion and in every possible circumstance we knew where to go, where to sit, which table we unanimously should choose * * * .¹⁴²

The concentration upon ages, dates and times also reflects a tendency to reach for the readily graspable observation. Yet, Dowell begins to discern greater questions behind these insights, whether the truth lies with the view that sees the past as "a prison full of screaming hysterics", or if it is best contained in the symbol of the minuet:

And yet I swear by the sacred name of my creator that it was true. It was true sunshine; the true music; the true splash of the fountains from the mouth of stone dolphins. For, if for me we were four people with the same tastes, with the same desires, acting -- or, no, not acting -- sitting here and there unanimously, isn't that the truth? If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and

¹⁴² Ibid., 17.

discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that for nine years I possessed a goodly apple?¹⁴³

Such a juxtaposition of two views of the past carries important implications for the rest of the novel. It conveys to Dowell's listener the extent to which Florence, Leonora and Edward were able to maintain the public appearance of the minuet, while undergoing intense private suffering, in an attempt to preserve a facade of behaving with the manners expected of "'quite good people'", the inverted commas indicating how such a term covers up that suffering. Perhaps the most extreme expression of this attempt "to keep up the appearance of calm pococurantism"¹⁴⁴ is Edward's taking Nancy to the station: "It was the most horrible performance I have ever seen."¹⁴⁵ But, for Dowell, the appearance is maintained for nine years.

However, the juxtaposition between the minuet and the prison should not lead to facile contrasts between the world of appearances and the world of reality in order to make a superficial condemnation of Edwardian society. For, as Dowell later observes, "the modern English habit of taking every one for granted" may prevent the individual knowing his fellow beings, but: "Mind, I am not saying that this is not the most desirable type of life in the world; that it is not an

¹⁴³ Ibid., 18.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 213.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 215.

almost unreasonably high standard."¹⁴⁶ Thus, in the opening chapter, he refers to this society as being at the very peak of civilization, and yet still not understanding what goes on within the human heart. As in the example provided by Leonora's motives, the task of understanding is a difficult one:

Yet, if one doesn't know that at this hour and day, at this pitch of civilization to which we have attained, after all the preachings of all the moralists, and all the teachings of all the mothers to all the daughters in saecula saeculorum . . . but perhaps that is what all mothers teach all daughters, not with lips but with the eyes, or with heart whispering to heart. And, if one doesn't know as much as that about the first thing in the world, what does one know and why is one here?¹⁴⁷

For, if society has reached a "pitch", possibly above which it cannot reasonably expect to go, then the solution to man's ills may not lie in a condemnation and reform of social institutions. The problem, as the heart motif suggests, may lie within the individual, who is preoccupied with his own security and welfare and the preservation of the normal, rather than anything larger than himself. Though there is criticism of society -- for example, in allowing Leonora to be brought up with such a 'garrison' outlook -- Dowell is aware that the problem may be far larger than that particular milieu. It may well lie within the human heart itself.

The prison-minuet antithesis also shows how, like Leo Colston, Dowell is aware of a finer level of existence, a "true sunshine", a "true music", things which Leonora is never ready to accept. Thus, he

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 41-42.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 20.

changes the participle from "acting" to "sitting",¹⁴⁸ for the former would convey the impression that the minuet was not real or "true". To use Leo's words, "to see things as they really were" can be an impoverishment, for it removes the vision of a magical existence which is itself a form of reality. For Dowell, the experience at least provides him with a yardstick against which to measure events, a means of inquiring why the dance may or may not pervade the whole of life. It is something that stands him in good stead when he comes to balance Leonora's point of view against that of Edward.

As previously stated, the first chapter is mainly concerned with finding a means to present the past, a difficulty that provides no easy answer. This is especially true with regard to sexual morality, although the problem of finding a framework, by which to judge, extends to all areas of human existence: "I don't know. And there is nothing to guide us. And if everything is so nebulous about a matter so elementary as the morals of sex, what is there to guide us in the more subtle morality of all other personal contacts, associations, and activities? Or are we meant to act on impulse alone? It is all a darkness."¹⁴⁹ With no relevant guidelines to create a 'consequential' story, the only solution in approaching the past must be to render it: "* * * to tell it from this distance of time, as it reached me from the lips of Leonora or from those of Edward himself."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 18.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 22.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

Using this method, he may be able to come to some understanding of that past, and, as a result, come to terms with it ("just to get the sight out of their heads."¹⁵¹).

The quality that distinguishes the early stages of Dowell's presentation is his sense of wonder, shown by his prevalent use of the words "extraordinary" and "amazing".¹⁵² It is this heightened sense of interest and incredulity that was present at the time he first met the Ashburnhams, and which has not deserted him now, that allows him to render in great detail. It also permits him to gain insight into the past:

Good God, what did they all see in him? for I swear there was all there was of him, inside and out; though they said he was a good soldier.

* * * What did he even talk to them about -- when they were under four eyes? -- Ah, well, suddenly, as if by a flash of inspiration, I know. For all good soldiers are sentimentalists -- all good soldiers of that type. Their profession, for one thing, is full of the big words, courage, loyalty, honour, constancy. And I have given a wrong impression of Edward Ashburnham if I have made you think that literally never in the course of our nine years of intimacy did he discuss what we would have called 'the graver things.'¹⁵³

It is this interest that allows him to create a full impression of an individual character, and to understand Edward's sentimentalism, with its literary foundations in Scott and the Chronicles of Froissart.¹⁵⁴ This skill eventually leads him to recognize aspects of Ashburnham's

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁵² See, for example, 35 and 41.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 33-34.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 124.

own personality in his own self. It is the gift of the artist.

In this connection, it is worth pointing to a particular element of Ashburnham's sentimentalism that comes to dominate Dowell's tale:

And yet, I must add that poor dear Edward was a great reader -- he would pass hours lost in novels of a sentimental type * * * . And he was fond of poetry, of a certain type -- and he could even read a perfectly sad love story. I have seen his eyes filled with tears at reading of a hopeless parting. And he loved, with a sentimental yearning, all children, puppies, and the feeble generally . . .¹⁵⁵

Our interest focuses upon the fact that Dowell uses the word "sad" in connection with Edward's reading matter. For, as already observed, he employs this adjective in order to describe the tone of the whole affair. Possibly its occurrence, in these two contexts, also indicates the kinship between these two characters, leading to Dowell's growing realization that Edward is one of the "good people" in the tale, that he is the good soldier.

Therefore, the affinity between Dowell and Edward, that grows during the course of the novel, helps us to understand the origin of the tone of the narrator's tale. It is firmly embedded in a development of Ashburnham's sentimentalism, one of those "perfectly sad" love stories that "he could often read". But, it is not a cheap sentimentalism, and Dowell can clearly distinguish between what is of value and what is not: "And I was quite astonished, during his final burst out to me * * * I was quite astonished to observe how literary and how just his

¹⁵⁵Ibid., 34.

expressions were. He talked like quite a good book -- a book not in the least cheaply sentimental."¹⁵⁶ It is this quality that Dowell seeks to preserve, an attribute that is destroyed by the normalizing pressures of society. Yet, it is something that is present in nearly everybody, as is perhaps shown by the extraordinary observation that Edward, Leonora and Florence all have blue eyes.

As James Trammell Cox observes,¹⁵⁷ Ford's prolific use of the colour blue -- as in the blue eyes of his characters, the blue sea, blue irises and so forth -- may indicate the world of "romantic illusion". But, Cox goes on to point out that this "illusion" is something that Ford is criticizing. Noticeably, looking at the novel through a perspective provided by Denis de Rougement, Cox argues, in another article,¹⁵⁸ that this "illusion" resembles the romantic love of the courtly love tradition:

What seems to be Ford's principal point in this juxtaposition of modern love upon past becomes apparent as we turn to a consideration of one further aspect of the courtly love tradition: the religion of love. For here Ford spreads out, and it is not only Edward who appears to have been corrupted by a medieval concept of love which has survived to render basic human relationships ridiculous or at best impracticable in the twentieth century. The 'irreligion of the religion of love' has manifestly engendered a pervasive confusion of divine and human love that has left no relationship among the characters unaffected. In fact, it would seem from the

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 35.

¹⁵⁷ J. T. Cox, "The Finest French Novel in the English Language", Modern Fiction Studies, IX (Spring, 1963), 79-93.

¹⁵⁸ J. T. Cox, "Ford's 'Passion for Provence'", E.L.H., XVIII (1961), 383-398.

abundance of allusion to this confusion that Ford, like Flaubert, sees it as the chief source of the moral chaos in which these good people exist.¹⁵⁹

Cox's criticism would be damaging to Edward's sentimentalism if it did not result in an inconsistent reading of the novel. Thus, he wishes us to see Ashburnham as the "villain" of the piece, and the premise of the novel as being that "Romantic love is not divine: its rewards are more those of hell than heaven."¹⁶⁰ But, Cox goes on to remark that Ford

* * * could not draw the fictional conclusion his premise establishes * * * . Instead he about-faces with a closing endorsement in tones that echo the author's emotional identification with his villain rather than a convincing arrival at understanding by the narrator * * * . It is the slightly intrusive voice of an author, writing under the strain of romantic difficulties of his own * * * . With this intrusion Ford by no means ruins his novel -- he lifts it above the level of the totally controlled work of art. With his praise of passion at any cost, he voices a proud, defiant faith in the beauty and the dignity of man's struggle to realize his ideals * * * .¹⁶¹

If this were true, such intrusion would detract from the overall quality of the novel, by undermining its artistic poise and control. However, in a work that is told in its entirety through the consciousness of a single narrator, it seems impossible to say whether this or that passage is or is not an authorial intrusion. Further, there is no inconsistency in tone or direction, during the last few pages of the novel, that would indicate that Ford had made his presence felt. Throughout his tale, Dowell refers us to the quality of sadness which has its roots in Edward's sentimentalism. In addition, this tone is a part of the

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 390.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 394.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 395, 398.

gradual assimilation of Edward's viewpoint, over Leonora's, during the course of this process of reconstruction. Also, as argued in part three of this chapter, the centre of this sentimentalism lies in the idea of passion, which is the mainspring of Dowell's art and the central value around which the novel is built, the 'key' to its rhetoric. Though one might agree with Cox's final conclusion, as quoted above, there is no need to make The Good Soldier a lesser work, of inconsistency and intrusion, in order to reach those findings.

Cox's interpretation illustrates a tendency to play down or criticize Edward's sentimentalism, perhaps due to the derogatory associations the term has for contemporary readers. Far from being used in a derisive sense, the word "sentimental" involves ideas that have much in common with an eighteenth-century concept of benevolence, involving a readiness to help less fortunate people through genuine social feeling and concern. Thus, Edward's experiences as a county magistrate are viewed as "still sentimental",¹⁶² and his actions regarding the girl accused of murdering her child, as well as other generousities like giving an Irish cob to Selmes,¹⁶³ should also be viewed in this light. These are sentiments Leonora completely fails to understand, for reasons that will become clear. That Dowell does comprehend them is a testimony to his readiness to exercise generosity, as in writing his tale. It is worth noting that he goes to Ceylon to pick up Nancy, and not Leonora, in response to the Colonel's request

¹⁶²The Good Soldier, 34.

¹⁶³Ibid., 181.

made through a belief "in the goodness of human nature."¹⁶⁴ Dowell's gesture is an expression of his essential goodness and generosity, adding another dimension to his surname. Even though he was fooled, he did nurse his wife, going to what now seem comically extraordinary lengths to look after her. As with Edward, Dowell's actions and sentiments are abused and misunderstood.

It is Edward's coming upon the scene that so germinates Dowell's imagination, giving him a purpose where he had known a "sense almost of nakedness": "I had no attachments, no accumulations."¹⁶⁵ Like the life Leo Colston experienced at Brandham Hall, the result is a sense of romance, beginning in the manner of an Arthurian legend: "'But I'm sure we're all nice quiet people and there can be four seats at our table. It's round."¹⁶⁶ "'And so the whole round table is begun."¹⁶⁷ One of the ironies of The Good Soldier is the extent to which these blue-eyed, blue-gowned characters like Leonora succeed in preserving Dowell's sensation of the reality of a romance world, and yet cannot project that romance into their own lives. Thus Leonora's eyes create a protective blue wall: "She looked me straight in the eyes; and for a moment I had the feeling that those two blue discs were immense, were overwhelming, were like a wall of blue that shut me off from the rest of the world. I know it sounds absurd; but that is what it did feel

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 203.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 29.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 38.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 39.

like."¹⁶⁸ Later Dowell adds: "And Leonora assured [Edward] that, if the minutest fragment of the real situation ever got through to my senses, she would wreak upon him the most terrible vengeance that she could think of. * * * She was determined to spare my feelings."¹⁶⁹ By her actions here, she shows that she has the quality necessary to encompass a vision larger and finer than her normality. But she cannot extend this in order to understand why her husband behaves the way he does.

This failure is first brought home by Dowell's stressing Leonora's coldness:

As far as I am concerned I think it was those white shoulders that did it. I seemed to feel when I looked at them that, if ever I should press my lips upon them that they would be slightly cold -- not icily, not without a touch of human heat, but, as they say of baths, with the chill off. I seemed to feel chilled at the end of my lips when I looked at her . . .¹⁷⁰

The emphasis upon her coldness is continued throughout the tale, and links up with her Catholic conscience and her "rigid principles."¹⁷¹ In addition, it connects with another detailed observation about her that Dowell makes:

Certain women's lines guide your eyes to their necks, their eyelashes, their lips, their breasts. But Leonora's seemed to conduct your gaze always to her wrist. And the wrist was at its best in a black or a dog-skin glove and there was

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 49.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 93. See also 39, where Leonora treats Dowell like an invalid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 38.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 61.

always a gold circlet with a little chain supporting a very small golden key to a dispatch box. Perhaps it was that in which she locked up her heart and her feelings.¹⁷²

The attention to detail in observation marks the beginning of Dowell's delineation of Leonora's personality. What is significant here is that her physical appearance draws notice to one of the most important factors about her, her predisposition towards locking away her feelings and containing herself within the walls of her own self, as opposed to her husband's more collective or 'polygamous' ideas. This trait is developed by Dowell at length, as the story unfolds. When the walls do finally break down, the result is an uncontrolled outpouring of feeling, as found in her desire for revenge, or her wish to bring down her riding-whip across Nancy's face.¹⁷³ In this connection, it is significant that Florence first meets Leonora with that key caught in Maisie Maidan's hair: "She just boxed Mrs Maidan's ears -- yes, she hit her, in an uncontrollable access of rage, a hard blow on the side of the cheek, in the corridor of the hotel, outside Edward's rooms."¹⁷⁴ The key caught in Maisie's hair gives us an insight into how, ultimately, Leonora cannot hide her feelings or lock away her heart. Shutting them away leads to the same violence Nancy experiences at her Catholic school, a "sort of saturnalia", an orgy of violence that can be turned off at the sound of a hand-bell.¹⁷⁵ Once the key is released, Leonora appears

¹⁷²Ibid., 38-39.

¹⁷³Ibid., 182.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., 54.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., 114. Significantly, the saturnalia ends "like the crack of a whip".

her normal self, her feelings and heart safely concealed in the dispatch box.

It is in this manner that Dowell adds to his picture of the past, gathering as many details as possible in order to give us a full sense of these events, exercising a great degree of understanding without which this would prove unimaginable. His view is as important as anyone else's, and he therefore relates many of the incidents to us from his point of vision at that time. This is the case with the journey to M-----. Here, it should be remembered that Dowell's predilection for "digression" does not reveal the workings of a neurotic mind, but is illustrative of the way in which memory functions. The significance of a particular episode may not be immediately apparent, and it may thus seem superfluous. However, as a general rule, Dowell's mind works by association. He talks about some part of their behaviour, in this case the "modern English habit of taking everyone for granted" as related to one's lack of knowledge about "one's fellow beings",¹⁷⁶ and then his memory associates some event with those observations. For example, the discussion regarding the "modern English habit", resulting in Dowell's having to eat "tepid, pink india rubber",¹⁷⁷ leads on to the journey, which neither the Ashburnhams nor Dowell want to take, but which they are expected to ("there was no objection"). This principle of association is an integral part of the

¹⁷⁶Ibid., 41.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 42.

novel's rhetoric, for not only does it act as a means of structuring the tale, while illustrating the way in which memory works, but it also helps to shape the reader's response to given events and viewpoints.

Critics have noticed the cultural and historical ramifications of this scene,¹⁷⁸ while generally ignoring that, through the associations it has in Dowell's mind, it reveals how "you never really get an inch deeper than the things I have catalogued".¹⁷⁹ This concern is perhaps acknowledged by the narrator telling us what happened from his own point of view, rather than reconstructing the incident wholly from what he was told by Leonora or Edward. For, though he sensed "something treacherous, something frightful, something evil in the day"¹⁸⁰ when Florence touched Edward's wrist, he totally misunderstood Leonora's response:

Don't you know,' she said, in her clear hard voice, 'don't you know that I'm an Irish Catholic.'

Those words gave me the greatest relief that I have ever had my life. They told me, I think, almost more than I have ever gathered at any one moment -- about myself. I don't think that before that day I had ever wanted anything very much except Florence. I have, of course, had appetites, impatiences . . .¹⁸¹

He then digresses further, paying attention to what, until Leonora's outburst, had mattered to him, as well as including some observations about Edward's heart condition and his affairs. After sixteen pages,

¹⁷⁸ See Barnes and Hafley.

¹⁷⁹ The Good Soldier, 42.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 48.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 50. The space here signifies a new chapter.

he declares:

At any rate the measure of my relief when Leonora said that she was an Irish Catholic gives you the measure of my affection for that couple. It was an affection so intense that even to this day I cannot think of Edward without sighing. I do not believe that I could have gone on any more without them. I was getting too tired. And I verily believe, too, that if my suspicion that Leonora was jealous of Florence had been the reason she gave for her outburst I should have turned upon Florence with the maddest kind of rage. Jealousy would have been incurable. But Florence's mere silly gibes at the Irish and at the Catholics could be apologized out of existence. And that I appeared to fix up in two minutes or so.¹⁸²

Dowell therefore accounts for his past sense of relief, in that he thinks Leonora's response may have been due to Florence's "gibes" against her religion. As a result of that feeling, he learnt how much the Ashburnhams meant to him, and how far he would go to keep their affection, to the extent of turning on his wife. These are things he records for our consideration, reactions he experienced at the time the events took place. In addition, due to the fact that he now realizes how wide of the mark he was in interpreting Leonora's behaviour, the journey also serves to illustrate the original observation about one's lack of knowledge regarding other people, and how necessary the process of reconstruction is if there is to be any understanding of the past. In a general sense, it is a means of supporting his art.

The incident is also another reminder of the extent to which Leonora can go to protect Dowell's vision of the minuet: "And I want you to understand that, from that moment until after Edward and the girl and Florence were all dead together, I had never the remotest

¹⁸²Ibid., 66-67.

glimpse, not the shadow of a suspicion, that there was anything wrong, as the saying is. * * * How in the world should I get it?"¹⁸³ That he did not "get it" might be taken as evidence that Dowell was and still is a fool. But, this is again to ignore the perspective provided by time. Leonora could also have said something to him, but chose not to, both out of her concern for Dowell and as a result of her desire to maintain the public appearance of having a faithful husband.¹⁸⁴

Dowell, aware of the degree to which he was deceived and may be considered a fool, skilfully focuses our view of events in one of the several card-playing images that occur in the novel: "And what chance had I against those three hardened gamblers, who were all in league to conceal their hands from me? What earthly chance?"¹⁸⁵ Our view of the past depends upon our feeling the power of this image, of a nightmare game of cards where the stakes are far greater than money, with Dowell sitting there under the impression that it is all a minuet. That the others could not totally succeed in maintaining this dance is possibly presaged in Leonora's crushing the piece of "pellitory", Dowell's green world, and throwing it over the wall, perhaps the "wall of blue" she encompasses him with.¹⁸⁶ The gesture may also be taken as an image of her future treatment of her husband's own wish to live by different standards.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 68.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 163-164.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 68.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 67.

But the romance vision did exist -- and was true, even if a "goodly apple" full of rottenness -- thus allowing Dowell to see a level of experience greater than the 'Galilean' greyness, to refer to Swinburne's poem, that finally defeats Edward. In the expedition to M-----, there is an instance of what it feels like to have such a viewpoint, with Dowell's description of the journey itself. Here, we can see the contrast between what he was then and what he realizes now:

I like being drawn through the green country and looking at it through the clear glass of the great windows. Though, of course, the country isn't really green. The sun shines, the earth is blood red and purple and red and green and red. * * * Still, the impression is that you are drawn through brilliant green meadows that run away on each side to the dark purple fir-woods; the basalt pinnacles; the immense forests.¹⁸⁷

The juxtaposition between "blood red" and "green" indicates the different perspectives Dowell has achieved, as he compares past and present. What happened to him on the journey was an enlarging experience, and Dowell can still capture some of its magic, as in his frequent use of the conjunction "and", which recreates something of the wonder he felt.¹⁸⁸ Now, it seems impossible to view the world as "green", given the dark realm of the forest, other than looking at it through the "clear glass" of his art.

It is through this method of digression and juxtaposition that Dowell gives us a full impression of the past. As pointed out previously, he is continually weighing and balancing perspective against

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 46.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 46-48.

perspective, imagining and exploring, in the sense covered by the term "passion", until he arrives at an understanding of those events. There is evaluation, but it is reached after the process of understanding. Thus, there is Dowell's "picture of that judgement", where he hopes God "will open to [those who are dead] the springs of His compassion."¹⁸⁹ Significantly, in black and white, the dream contains one of the first modified judgements about these characters, in Dowell's attitude to the lonely Florence:

And, do you know, at the thought of that intense solitude I feel an overwhelming desire to rush forward and comfort her. * * * But, in the nights, with that vision of judgement before me, I know that I hold myself back. For I hate Florence. I hate Florence with such a hatred that I would not spare her an eternity of loneliness. She need not have done what she did. * * * It was playing it too low down. She cut out poor dear Edward from sheer vanity; she meddled between him and Leonora from a sheer, imbecile spirit of district visiting.¹⁹⁰

Now Edward warrants the epithet "poor dear", a term that begins to acquire sentiment and meaning, instead of being a conventional description of one half of the "we" with which the novel opened. It is worth adding that, in this dream, Dowell concludes: "Well, perhaps, they will find me an elevator to run. . . ."¹⁹¹ It is an example of the kind of humour he can turn upon himself.

Part One ends with the grotesque death of Maisie Maidan, an event handled in an almost flippant manner, a tone that Dowell

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 69.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 69-70.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 70.

apologizes for occasionally taking at an earlier stage in the novel: "Forgive my writing of these monstrous things in this frivolous manner. If I did not I should break down and cry."¹⁹² With the use of frivolity, he can distance himself from the most "monstrous" events, in order to be able to write about them, an observation that should be borne in mind when one is dealing with other concerns, such as Edward's suicide.

This interjection of a different tone becomes more evident in Part Two, where Dowell deals with the incidents leading up to his marriage, and follows these through to his wife's suicide. He projects himself into these affairs, and accepts a measure of responsibility for what took place: "I first met Florence at the Stuyvesants', in Fourteenth Street. And, from that moment, I determined with all the obstinacy of a possibly weak nature, if not to make her mine, at least to marry her. I had no occupation -- I had no business affairs."¹⁹³ Acting then "like a Philadelphia gentleman",¹⁹⁴ these occurrences now appear to him to be full of irony: "The young man called Jimmy had remained in Europe to perfect his knowledge of that continent. He certainly did: he was most useful to us afterwards."¹⁹⁵ The whole affair, involving Dowell, Jimmy and Florence, has a tendency to border upon bedroom farce. But, as his comments indicate, the narrator is now

192

Ibid., 61.

193

Ibid., 75-76.

194

Ibid., 80.

195

Ibid., 77.

aware of this:

I had, no doubt, eye-openers enough. * * * So I guess Florence had not found getting married to me a very stimulating process. I had not found anything much more inspiring to say than how glad I was, with variations. I think I was too dazed. * * * [Old Hurlbird] concluded, as they always do, poor, dear old things, with the aspiration that all American women should one day be sexless -- though that is not the way they put it. . . .¹⁹⁶

Perhaps the incident that most approximates farce is that which has Dowell locked out of his wife's bedroom, in order to facilitate her liason with Jimmy:

Her room door was locked because she was so nervous about thieves; but an electric contrivance on a cord was understood to be attached to her little wrist. She had only to press a bulb to raise the house. And I was provided with an axe -- an axe! -- great gods, with which to break down her door in case she ever failed to answer my knock * * * . It was pretty well thought out, you see.¹⁹⁷

But the task of keeping his wife alive -- "Why it was as if I had been given a thin-shelled pullet's egg to carry on my palm * * *"¹⁹⁸ -- means that he is extremely susceptible to such machinations. It is a situation that is aggravated by his sexual innocence, and, if we find this incredible, we should remember that both Leonora and Edward were also as unaware of sexual matters: "It will give you some idea of the extraordinary naïveté of Edward Ashburnham that, at the time of his marriage and for perhaps a couple of years after, he did not really know how children are produced. Neither did Leonora."¹⁹⁹ A large

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 82.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 84-85.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 86.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 132.

contributing factor to this "tangle" of events is that so many of the characters involved knew so little about human sexuality, as Dowell points out in the opening chapter of his tale.

The juxtaposition between the past and present, between what Dowell knew then and comes to know now, allows him to develop an awareness of the motivating forces behind the behaviour that took place. This is particularly true of the chain of occurrences beginning with Edward's relationship with Nancy Rufford. Increasingly, Dowell's view of Edward becomes one of esteem, whereas his opinion of Leonora starts to decline.²⁰⁰ Critics who have seen Ashburnham as the villain, the cause of two deaths, have overlooked this development, as well as the fact that he is kept in the dark, by Leonora, both about Maisie's death and Florence's suicide. Indeed, fearing disgrace and ruin, Leonora tries to manage Edward's financial affairs more and more. But, in this connection, it is well worth quoting another of Dowell's asides, delivered in the "frivolous" manner that prevents him from breaking down:

In Milan, say, or in Paris, Leonora would have had her marriage dissolved in six months for two hundred dollars paid in the right quarter. And Edward would have drifted about until he became a tramp of the kind I have suggested. Or he would have married a barmaid who would have made him such frightful scenes in public places and would so have torn out his moustache and left visible signs upon his face that he would have been faithful to her for the rest of his days. That was what he wanted to redeem him. . . .²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 88.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 61-62.

Dowell claims he is right because of the Kilsythe case, where public revelation cured Edward of his desire to philander among the "lower classes". But, with her coldness and rigid principles, based upon her Irish Catholic upbringing, Leonora does everything she can to keep things quiet. In doing so, she tries to check and dominate Edward, placing a "leash" upon her husband whenever possible, especially in his relationship with Nancy.²⁰²

But, Leonora's attempts to dominate Edward do not check his imagination or his "passion", or the appeal to the "moral side of his life" that a girl like Nancy makes.²⁰³ Dowell is aware of the element of "corruption" here, but excuses Edward on the grounds that he had no intention of injuring her: "I believe that he simply loved her."²⁰⁴ "He was very careful to assure me that at that time there was no physical motive about his declaration."²⁰⁵ (In this respect, here is a form of "passion" that Dowell defines immediately after Edward's conversation with Nancy.) It is worth adding that, near the end of the novel, Edward's one desire is that the girl should go on loving him five thousand miles away, something Leonora does her best to prevent.²⁰⁶ This, as Dowell adds, is the act of a sentimentalist.

²⁰² Ibid., 113.

²⁰³ Ibid., 103.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 105.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 103.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 207.

Nancy is the woman who has set "her seal upon his imagination",²⁰⁷ and the wish is that she will continue to love him because she has done so.

It is the Ashburnhams' relationship that is to occupy the rest of the novel, with Dowell attempting to balance, for the most part, two radically opposing points of view, those of Edward and Leonora, who carry on "a long, silent duel with invisible weapons, so she said."²⁰⁸ Their silence cannot be over-emphasized, for it is one of the contributing factors to the duel, the conflict being conveyed in images such as the cat and pigeon.²⁰⁹ From Leonora's viewpoint, her Catholicism provides a rigid framework in which to act, but one, unlike Katherine Howard's, that seeks to limit rather than engage in regeneration. When the situation begins to deteriorate, even these values desert her. In Edward's case, acting through, what Dowell calls, a principle of "self-sacrifice" with regard to Nancy,²¹⁰ his collapse takes the form of heavy bouts of drinking. As Leonora observes, the matter is all the more complicated by Nancy's innocence, as both of them start by trying not to corrupt her.²¹¹ However, with Leonora's breakdown, Nancy becomes a weapon in her duel with Edward, and the resulting corruption, which is by no means wholly Leonora's fault,

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 107.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 113.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 119 and 157.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 107.

²¹¹ Ibid., 113.

passes the limits of human endurance. Then, Nancy passes into the simplicity and 'purity' of madness, where the world is excluded and her faith reduced to one sentence.

Dowell's success lies in his ability to contrast one viewpoint with the other, in order to show how completely incompatible they are. His juxtaposition begins with an understanding of the Ashburnhams' marriage, a match arranged with the aid of a family visit and a photograph. Interestingly enough, it is only Leonora's face that is hidden by the apple tree,²¹² the tree, with its "grey lichen" and "raddled trunk" possibly imaging the denying or greying aspects of her religion.²¹³ It is likely that her hidden face may signify her want of knowledge or experience, but it may also be intended to amplify the extent to which Leonora has no magnetism for her husband, as her personality remains hidden or locked in: "But she had not for him a touch of magnetism."²¹⁴ This absence of "passion" means that communication begins to break down immediately. Thus, while falling back on the attitudes instilled in her while young, she has little time to listen to Edward, to understand the generousities which she considers excessive.

Therefore, Leonora rejects Edward's offer of a Catholic chapel at Branshaw, and his reactions to her refusal tell us a great deal about the reasons for their incompatibility: "He was truly grieved at

²¹²Ibid., 125.

²¹³Ibid., 123.

²¹⁴Ibid., 127.

his wife's want of sentiment -- at her refusal to receive that amount of public homage from him. She appeared to him to be wanting in imagination -- to be cold and hard."²¹⁵ Her total opposition to any expression of sentiment, to any act that evokes imagination, and her very impenetrability prevent her from understanding her husband. Thus, in the case of Edward's generosity to his tenants, she listens to her father's advice, but later admits "that Edward was following out a more far-seeing policy in nursing his really very good tenants over a bad period."²¹⁶ Her response is to begin practising "economies", and Edward's sensing a net closing around him expresses the beginning of her attempts to dominate him, to restrict his movements. The result is that he starts to look elsewhere for the "moral support" he needs for his schemes, his ideas and evocations of sentiment. As Dowell points out:

You see, he was really a very simple soul -- very simple. He imagined that no man can satisfactorily accomplish his life's work without loyal and whole-hearted co-operation of the woman he lives with. And he was beginning to perceive dimly that, whereas his own traditions were entirely collective, his wife was a sheer individualist. His own theory -- the feudal theory of an over-lord doing his best by his dependents, the dependents meanwhile doing their best for the over-lord -- this theory was entirely foreign to Leonora's nature. She came of a family of small Irish landlords -- that hostile garrison in a plundered country.²¹⁷

It is Leonora's "garrison" frame of mind that Dowell had earlier emphasized when describing what should have happened to Edward:

²¹⁵ Ibid., 128.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 129.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 131-132.

"* * * the only thing to have done for Edward would have been to let him sink down until he became a tramp of gentlemanly address * * * ."218

But, Leonora refuses to "let [Edward] sink", and Dowell sets "down a good deal of Leonora's mismanagement of poor dear Edward's case to the peculiarly English form of her religion."²¹⁹ Dowell enlarges upon his insight by referring to the role of Leonora's ancestors, ostracized and persecuted: "* * * a small beleaguered garrison in a hostile country, and therefore having to act with great formality * * * ."220 Such conditions form the history of Leonora's family, and account a great

²¹⁸ Ibid., 61.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid. It is interesting to add that Dowell compares this "Nonconformist temperament" with "the New England conscience". For, if we extend the latter to include the experiences of such a conscience as reflected in Canadian literature, there are some interesting comments by D. G. Jones, in his book Butterfly On Rock, that illuminate Dowell's portrait of Leonora. Jones speaks of the "colonial mentality", and argues that: "The only defence for a garrison culture is to abandon defence, to let down the walls and let the wilderness in, even to the wolves" (Butterfly on Rock, Toronto, 1970, p. 8). His comment deals primarily with the experience of Canadians faced with the wilderness of Nature, which may be seen as a refusal to open themselves to what that medium contains. Instead, they remain walled in, defenders against what they consider to be irrational and hostile.

Noticeably, Jones argues that his comments refer to "all men" (p. 7). Certainly, they can be applied to Leonora, particularly when his observations are looked at in the light of novels like Margaret Laurence's The Stone Angel (Toronto, 1964), or Sinclair Ross's As For Me And My House (New York, 1941). Leonora's want of imagination may fruitfully be compared with Hagar Shipley's life in Manawaka, or Mrs. Bentley's wearing the mask of conventionality. Unlike them, for Leonora there is no opening out, no confrontation with anything outside her own self. Instead, she withdraws into herself while trying to control life, to make it fixed and materially secure, until she finds her 'harbour' in the marriage to the "rabbit", Rodney Bayham.

deal for her tendency to lock away her feelings, her concern with material security, her individualism and want of imagination.

The "garrison" mentality separates Leonora from her husband, making her try to rule over his 'sentimental' imagination. Thus, Dowell adds a perspective to the motives behind Edward's suicide that places Leonora in a bad light. Regarding Ashburnham's defence of the girl accused of murdering her baby, Dowell declares:

Yet even then Leonora made him a terrible scene about this expenditure of time and trouble. She sort of had the vague idea that what had passed with the girl and the rest of it ought to have taught Edward a lesson -- the lesson of economy. She threatened to take his banking account away from him again. I guess that made him cut his throat. He might have stuck it out otherwise -- but the thought that he had lost his Nancy and that, in addition, there was nothing left for him but a dreary, dreary succession of days in which he could be of no public service . . . Well, it finished him.²²¹

It is "economy" that lies at the heart of the failure in their relationship, reflecting Leonora's lack of imagination and her want of sentiment, as well as her withdrawal into herself. As pointed out earlier, when the breakdown does come, her passion, like that of Sylvia Tietjens, finds its expression as a willfully destructive and uncontrollable force: "Heaven knows what happened in Leonora after that. She certainly does not herself know."²²² "In the case of Edward and the girl, Leonora broke and simply went all over the place. She adopted unfamiliar and therefore extraordinary and ungraceful attitudes

²²¹The Good Soldier, 171.

²²²Ibid., 185.

of mind."²²³ To use Dowell's image, cut off from the moorings provided by her religion, she drifts like some helpless ship:

She relaxed; she broke; she drifted, at first quickly, then with an increasing momentum, down the stream of destiny. You may put it that, having been cut off from the restraints of her religion, for the first time in her life, she acted along the lines of her instinctive desires. I do not know whether to think that, in that she was no longer herself; or that, having let loose the bonds of her standards, her conventions and her traditions, she was being, for the first time, her own natural self. She was torn between her intense, maternal love for the girl and an intense jealousy of the woman who realizes that the man she loves has met what appears to be the final passion of his life.²²⁴

Dowell adds the comment that her behaviour may also have been prompted by "a sort of hatred of Edward's final virtue."²²⁵ What becomes apparent is that she is made for more normal circumstances, those that do not make demands upon the imagination.

One result of the union between a "garrison" mentality and the imaginative, exploratory feudalism or sentimentalism practised by Edward, is that their marriage remains sterile: "She was childless herself, and she considered herself to be to blame."²²⁶ Significantly, Dowell points out that Leonora's insistence upon blame was considered, by her spiritual advisers, as being "a morbid frame of mind".²²⁷ They advise Leonora not to go on thinking this way, but she continues to do so. It is worth adding that, when she eventually marries Rodney Bayham,

²²³ Ibid., 207.

²²⁴ Ibid., 177.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid., 60.

²²⁷ Ibid., 133.

we learn how very little time passes before she is expecting a child.²²⁹ Dowell's image of them as "rabbits" plays on this association, as well as the fact that, after Edward's death, the rabbits are soon on the lawn destroying what is left of his vision of a 'green' world.

It would probably be incorrect to attribute a rigid determinism to Dowell's view of these characters, although, as in Leonora's case, their upbringing certainly affects their way of looking at the world and their behaviour. Perhaps, to echo Katherine's words: "As a man is born so a man lives; as is his strength so the strain breaks him as he resists the strain."²³⁰ However, Dowell does understand that the strains are so immense that, as a result, a character like Leonora deserves our sympathy, for there are no villains in the story. If Dowell moves towards Edward's viewpoint, and rejects Leonora's, he does so after having fully explored what may have been the contributing factors to her behaviour. From Dowell's growing understanding comes our comprehension of the reasons for Edward's having engaged in successive affairs, largely as a result of his wife's lack of imagination and her practising of "economies".

Thus Leonora regards Edward's behaviour, in acts such as

²²⁸ Ibid., 216.

²²⁹ Ibid., 98-99.

²³⁰ The Fifth Queen Crowned, 591. This sentence may account for the use of the word "strained" which one or two critics have seen as a misprint. See The Good Soldier, 19 and 122.

jumping overboard the troopship, or his presentation of the stirrup and designs to the War Office, as being a "sort of madness".²³² But, as Dowell observes, these are "generosities", "virtues" which Edward's widow will eventually record on his tombstone (probably as an acknowledgement that she now recognizes their worth).²³³ However, in order to substantiate his view, Dowell must make us see Edward's affairs as expressions of an imagination that, unable to find support in Leonora, looks elsewhere. In short, Edward's behaviour must appear reasonable, even when bordering on the "madness" of his affair with La Dolciquita. If Dowell fails to win our agreement, then Leonora's actions would appear those of a reasonable woman faced with a rather odd husband, determined to bring them to financial disaster through his 'natural' excesses.²³⁴

To make us see Edward's point of view -- by now we are in Part Three, Chapter Four -- Dowell first of all puts the extent of Edward's affairs in the perspective he thinks they warrant: "His love-affairs, until the very end, were sandwiched in at odd moments or took place during the social evenings, the dances, and dinners."²³⁵ Part of the difficulty in dealing with his affairs is that they appear to take up a disproportionate amount of time, and consequently give a false impression: "Anyhow, I hope I have not given you the idea that Edward

²³²Ibid., 134.

²³³Ibid., 135.

²³⁴Ibid., 164. See 209, where Leonora also sees Edward's behaviour as "sexual necessities".

²³⁵Ibid., 136.

Ashburnham was a pathological case. He wasn't. He was just a normal man and very much of a sentimentalist."²³⁶ Dowell then raises the question of how well we can know anybody, and what guidelines we can use. The reason for such an inquiry is clearly stated:

For who in this world can give anyone a character? Who in this world knows anything of any other heart -- or of his own? I don't mean to say that one cannot form an average estimate of the way a person will behave. But one cannot be certain of the way any man will behave in every case -- and until one can do that a 'character' is of no use to anyone.²³⁷

In one sense, the rejection of the conventional idea of a 'character' supports Dowell's impressionist method. But, in addition, it also refers to the problem of Edward's behaviour, whether his actions were pathologically motivated, or the result of a genuine and understandable thirst to satisfy his imagination; in short, whether Leonora's view of him is or is not correct. This takes us back to the question of "first impressions", something Dowell has relied upon a great deal:

That question of first impressions has always bothered me a good deal -- but quite academically. I mean that, from time to time I have wondered whether it were or were not best to trust to one's first impressions in dealing with people. But I never had anybody to deal with except waiters and chambermaids and the Ashburnhams, with whom I didn't know that I was having any dealings. And, as far as waiters and chambermaids were concerned, I have generally found that my first impressions were correct enough.²³⁸

The omission of the Ashburnhams from the fourth sentence is important, since, like the case of the maid who suddenly stole after being

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid., 139.

²³⁸ Ibid., 136-137.

apparently honest, they may deny the validity of Dowell's relying on impressions. The case of the maid, some might say, is exceptional. However, it is evident that she stole in order to "save her young man from going to prison", and the act was therefore understandable. If not, one may infer, the robbery would have been looked upon as irrational or an exhibition of some pathological disorder, as Leonora might have looked at it.

Here lies the importance of Dowell's subsequent digression, outlining his experiences in Philadelphia. The case of Carter, his "second-nephew of mine twice removed", deals with an episode where people think that there is something distinctly odd about him (something that would make him appear other than 'normal'). But Dowell pursues the point and discovers that it was only that he was a "Vermont Democrat". The oddity has an explanation, at least we can understand it, if we inquire deeply enough. Thus, Dowell returns to the example of his maid: "We should not have believed her capable of it; she would not have believed herself capable of it. It was nothing in her character. So, perhaps, it was with Edward Ashburnham."²³⁹ He goes on: "Or, perhaps, it wasn't. No, I rather think it wasn't. It is difficult to figure out."²⁴⁰ But, he does try to do so, and there follows an account of two incidents, which become understandable if, like Dowell, we exercise imagination by trying to discover what may have prompted Edward to behave the way he does. As with the Kilsyte

²³⁹ Ibid., 139.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

case, where Leonora behaved as the model wife, we can now see why Edward became involved. For Dowell enables us to visualize the situation from Ashburnham's point of vision:

For, whilst Edward respected her more and was grateful to her, it made her seem by so much the more cold in other matters that were near his heart -- his responsibilities, his career, his tradition. It brought his despair of her up to a point of exasperation -- and it riveted on him the idea that he might find some other woman who would give him the moral support that he needed. He wanted to be looked upon as a sort of Lohengrin.²⁴¹

The account extends into Edward's affair with La Dolciquita, where he desired "to retire with her to an island and point out to her the damnation of her point of view and how salvation can only be found in true love and the feudal system."²⁴²

Thus, through the imagination of an artist, what appeared inconsistent -- stealing a ring, jumping overboard, giving away a horse, loving one woman after another -- may begin to make sense and even appear 'logical'. This does not mean that Dowell sees the world as a rationally governed entity, but it shows that he does believe that the artistic process can dispel some forms of darkness, can make some of our actions comprehensible. For example, such clarification is present when Dowell declares: "* * * poor Edward's passions were quite logical in their progression upwards."²⁴³ Or, after exploring Edward's point of view, showing how he wanted "moral support", someone to listen

²⁴¹ Ibid., 140-141.

²⁴² Ibid., 144.

²⁴³ Ibid., 59.

to his ideals, Dowell can state: "That sounds queer; but I believe it is quite true as a statement of character."²⁴⁴ He has created a 'character', a possibility he earlier doubted, and, by doing so, he has affirmed the artistic imagination which made this possible, and denied the "garrison" mentality that, refusing to go beyond its own walls, judges these acts as exhibitions of some mental disorder. Leonora has no time for ideals, and, in the final analysis, no time for what matters in her husband.

And so, Edward's activities are not incomprehensible, and Dowell's understanding of and admiration for him are no last minute reversals or the result of authorial intrusion. Both concerns are extensions of the imaginative faculty, of the romancing mind seeking some form of enlarged existence. In this way, Edward's affair with Mrs. Basil, whose very name suggests the green world of romance, is an expression of this capacity, as it is first begun in the green realm of a Burmese garden, "under the pale sky, with sheaves of severed vegetation, misty and odorous, in the night around their feet."²⁴⁵ As Dowell points out, these sentiments are sometimes even seen by Edward as "madness":

It made him suspect that he was inconstant. The affair with the Dolciquita he had sized up as a short attack of madness like hydrophobia. His relations with Mrs Basil had not seemed to him to imply moral turpitude of a gross kind. The husband had been complaisant * * * . He thought that Mrs Basil had been his soul-mate, separated from him by an unkind fate -- something sentimental of that sort.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 141.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 151.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 153.

However, because of Dowell's exploration of Edward's point of view, we see that these impromptu expressions of passion are not signs of "madness", but reveal a character who is trying to find "moral support" for his ideals and sentimental beliefs, as in his profession of love for Nancy Rufford. (Dowell himself experienced a similar passionate outburst, described in the opening of Part Three, thus enabling him to sympathize with Edward's situation.)

But, Edward's search for "moral support" is countered by the dictates of social convention, and Dowell examines the conflict in Part Four. Edward does have clearly visible standards of behaviour -- many of the peculiarly English ones discussed in the opening chapters of the novel -- and these are covered by Dowell's use of the word "normal" in connection with him. Here is perhaps the reason for Dowell placing Edward's affairs in a social perspective, indicating how little of his day they took up.²⁴⁷ For, with the arrival of Nancy Rufford, Ashburnham is involved in an attempt to balance social conventions -- that he should not seduce someone for whom he is a father figure, and someone who is innocent -- with the demands of his imaginative sentimentalism. Edward's dilemma is best revealed in the scene where Nancy offers herself to him:

I have told you that the girl came one night to his room. And that was the real hell for him. That was the picture that never left his imagination -- the girl, in the dim light, rising up at the foot of his bed. He said that it seemed to have a greenish sort of effect as if there were a greenish tinge in the shadows of the tall bedposts that framed her

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 136 and 205.

body. And she looked at him with her straight eyes of an unflinching cruelty and she said: 'I am ready to belong to you -- to save your life.'

He answered: 'I don't want it; I don't want it; I don't want it.'

And he says that he didn't want it; that he would have hated himself; that it was unthinkable. And all the while he had the immense temptation to do the unthinkable thing, not from the physical desire but because of a mental certitude. He was certain that if she had once submitted to him she would remain his for ever. He knew that. * * * But, at that, Edward pulled himself together. He spoke in his normal tones; gruff, husky, overbearing, as he would have done to a servant or a horse.

'Go back to your room,' he said. 'Go back to your room and go to sleep. This is all nonsense.'²⁴⁸

The predominance of the colour green in this picture is indicative of the extent we are to view both characters as embodying the possibilities of the romance vision -- Nancy is one of the "splendid personalities" -- something Edward denies with the gruff voice of normality ("normal tones"). These conventions are in tune with "the traditions of [Edward's] house".²⁴⁹ His compromise with them would have been the idea of Nancy loving him five thousand miles away, an "aspiration" Leonora is determined to smash.²⁵⁰

It is in this way that the predicament is complicated by Nancy's innocence, and her role as a 'daughter' in the Ashburnham household. For, it is the one affair where Edward is understandably governed by convention, a situation where he checks his behaviour by

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 208-209.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 205.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 209.

resorting to drink. As Dowell argues: "Conventions and traditions, I suppose, work blindly but surely for the preservation of the normal type; for the extinction of proud, resolute, and unusual individuals."²⁵¹ Society does not need characters like Nancy and Edward, the reason why Dowell does not involve himself in it:

Yes, society must go on; it must breed, like rabbits. That is what we are here for. But then, I don't like society -- much. I am that absurd figure, an American millionaire, who has bought one of the ancient haunts of English peace. I sit here, in Edward's gun-room, all day and all day in a house that is absolutely quiet. No one visits me, for I visit no one.²⁵²

In the relationship between Nancy and Edward, and in Dowell's subsequent choice of an existence, we have the acknowledgement that "the rabbits" have gained a victory, the "happy ending" Dowell describes:

The villains -- for obviously Edward and the girl were villains -- have been punished by suicide and madness. The heroine -- the perfectly normal, virtuous, and slightly deceitful heroine -- has become the happy wife of a perfectly normal, virtuous and slightly deceitful husband. She will shortly become a mother of a perfectly normal, virtuous, slightly deceitful son or daughter. A happy ending, that is what it works out at.²⁵³

Perhaps the final indignity of this triumph is that Rodney Bayham practises economy and wears ready-made clothes: "Her husband is quite an economical person of so normal a figure that he can get a large proportion of his clothes ready-made. That is the great desideratum

²⁵¹Ibid., 205.

²⁵²Ibid., 218.

²⁵³Ibid., 216.

of life, and that is the end of my story."²⁵⁴

But, if society triumphs in the end -- with its denying, unimaginative aspects of normality -- this is matched by Dowell's growing awareness of its limitations, as in his judgement upon Leonora and his realization that he possesses many of the qualities found in Edward. In this connection, it is interesting that Edward quotes from Swinburne's "Hymn to Proserpine", and that Dowell sees him "like one of the ancient Greek damned";²⁵⁵ for Swinburne's poem juxtaposes the newly proclaimed Christian faith ("Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown grey from thy breath;") with the Greek and Roman religions, especially Proserpine with her promise of death as sleep. While lamenting the loss of the latter, the "I" of Swinburne's poem looks forward to the day when Christianity itself will fall: "Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy dead shall go down to thee dead."²⁵⁶ In the ending of The Good Soldier, there is something approaching the same feeling and viewpoint, that here passes a figure who, like the Greek damned, gave a dimension to experience not available in, say, Leonora's Christianity. It should be added that this perspective is added to by quoting the last lines of the poem:

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 218.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 216 and 217. It is interesting to note that here is another variation of the Persephone myth.

²⁵⁶ A. C. Swinburne, "Hymn to Proserpine", in The Complete Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne, ed. Sir E. Gosse and T. J. Wise (New York, 1925), I, 204.

"So long I endure, no longer; and laugh not again, neither weep. / For there is no God found stronger than death; and death is a sleep."²⁵⁷

With the idea of death as a release, there are the final words of the two sentimentalists:

I didn't think he was wanted in the world, let his confounded tenants, his rifle-associations, his drunkards, reclaimed and unreclaimed, get on as they liked. Not all the hundreds and hundreds of them deserved that that poor devil should go on suffering for their sakes.

When he saw that I did not intend to interfere with him his eyes became soft and almost affectionate. He remarked:

'So long, old man, I must have a bit of a rest, you know.'

I didn't know what to say. I wanted to say, 'God bless you,' for I also am a sentimentalist. But I thought that perhaps that would not be quite English good form, so I trotted off with the telegram to Leonora. She was quite pleased with it.²⁵⁸

Though dressed in "a grey, frieze suit", perhaps a token of his wife's victory, the final act of suicide is that of the sentimentalist, a gesture that enables him to escape Leonora's control. At the time not fully aware of the extent to which Edward's sensibility reflects a part of himself, Dowell's present sense of irony sees his past self as that of the animal who trots back to his mistress (as if at her beck and call). The final sentence of the novel must be one of the most moving, and yet savage lines imaginable, as it shows Leonora's pleasure at the destruction of her husband's "aspiration", the love that had set the seal on his imagination ("I am so desperately in love with Nancy Rufford

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 206.

²⁵⁸ The Good Soldier, 219-220.

that I am dying of it."²⁵⁹).

However, now Dowell has escaped the leash:

I cannot conceal from myself the fact that I now dislike Leonora. Without doubt I am jealous of Rodney Bayham. But I don't know whether it is merely a jealousy arising from the fact that I desired myself to possess Leonora or whether it is because to her were sacrificed the only two persons that I have ever really loved -- Edward Ashburnham and Nancy Rufford. In order to set her up in a modern mansion, replete with every convenience and dominated by a quite respectable and eminently economical master of the house, it was necessary that Edward and Nancy Rufford should become, for me at least, no more than tragic shades.²⁶⁰

Again, there is an emphasis upon the tragic,²⁶¹ in an effort to elevate Nancy and Edward above the normal and respectable, while dismissing the values of Leonora Bayham. The other form of jealousy may be seen as the awakening in Dowell of the 'polygamous' frame of mind experienced by Edward in his expression of passion. The desire to possess has been fulfilled, in one sense, by Dowell's artistry. He has explored Leonora's being, and has now discovered that she represents restraining rather than enlarging values.

This distinction made between Leonora and Edward is also accompanied by a further realization: "Mind, I am not preaching anything contrary to accepted morality. I am not advocating free love in this or any other case. Society must go on, I suppose, and society can only exist if the normal, if the virtuous, and the slightly

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 214.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 216-217.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 205.

deceitful flourish * * * ."262 Here, Dowell realizes that, if society is to go on, and it should be remembered that he has effectively withdrawn from it by buying Edward's mansion, it will do so at the expense of exceptional beings. In this situation, all one can do is to find some "hole" into which to crawl in order to preserve and develop the imaginative values those being represented to the best of one's abilities: "in my fainter way". (It is a solution adopted also by Valentine Wannop and Christopher Tietjens.) This Dowell does by trying to keep some physical reminders of Edward alive -- his house, the gun-room, "My tenants" -- and by looking after Nancy Rufford.

Dowell has also brought himself to a level of realization, both about his personality and about the duel between a deadening normality and the imaginative sensibility that looks for something greater than the values of economy, respectability and the world of ready-made clothes. As has been argued, it is the process of discovery that is all important, helping to define the rhetoric of the novel, as well as the relationship between form and content. As in the Fifth Queen, the emphasis lies upon the transforming sensibility, as we watch the central intelligence, through the rendering of the past, affirm the values of imagination, love and the belief in the enlarging possibilities of life, contained in his art, that society negates. Rather than reducing these values to a mythical structure, as in the Fifth Queen, Ford presents a narrator struggling towards these

262 Ibid., 217.

insights, necessitating the expression of the values and norms for which the work stands. The result is perhaps Ford's most successful contribution to the English novel.

v

Dowell's tale therefore stands as an embodiment of the values which are central to Ford's work -- particularly the quality of passion by which the narrator transcends the limitations of his own being. The Good Soldier is "A Tale of Passion", told by a character who comes to understand and express passion in its most creative form. Passion is the value or norm upon which the rhetoric of the novel rests; it is found in the desire to explore another's identity, both in order to see things the way he or she does, and to make us, as "listeners", see them as well. Having once realized the importance of passion to an understanding of The Good Soldier, we are now in a position that will help us better appreciate the range of effects in Parade's End -- especially the way in which passion is related to the rhetoric of Ford's tetralogy.

The numberless repetitions with variations of words, phrases, images, and allusions to scenes and thoughts create a complex series of reflexive references which serve various purposes in the weaving of the novel's pattern. Although it would be difficult to prove that Ford made or placed all of them deliberately, it is clear that he paid his usual close attention to the details on every level of his narrative.

Richard Cassell, Ford Madox Ford: A Study of His Novels

"Her mind so marches with mine that she will understand."

A Man Could Stand Up

[Pierre] told of his adventures as he had never yet recalled them. He now, as it were, saw a new meaning in all he had gone through. Now that he was telling it all to Natasha, he experienced that pleasure which a man has when women listen to him -- not clever women who when listening either try to remember what they hear to enrich their minds, and when opportunity offers to re-tell it, or who wish to adapt it to some thought of their own and promptly contribute their own clever comments prepared in their own little mental workshop -- but the pleasure real women give who are gifted with a capacity to select and absorb the very best a man shows of himself. Natasha, without knowing it, was all attention: she did not lose a word, no single quiver in Pierre's voice, no look, no twitch of a muscle in his face, or a single gesture. She caught the unfinished word in its flight and took it straight into her open heart, divining the secret meaning of all Pierre's mental travail.

Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace
translated by Louise and
Aylmer Maude

IV

RHETORIC AND PASSION IN PARADE'S END

Part One: Criticism and Parade's End

i

There has been less disagreement among critics of Parade's End than among those who have written on The Good Soldier, at least with regard to the moral framework of the tetralogy. For the most part, our attention has been directed towards viewing Christopher Tietjens as the moral centre of the novel; though several critics have debated the extent to which he may be seen as a comic or a tragic figure, the last Tory, a man of honour, a Christ figure, or Ford's first portrait of the limited hero. Any other forms of argument have usually concerned themselves with the problem of whether Christopher is to be thought of as a static or a developing character. But these discussions represent differences of opinion, and do not contribute to the kind of controversy we have seen in the criticism of The Good Soldier.

However, there has been considerable debate about the artistic merits of Parade's End: the extent to which the tetralogy may or may not be called a success in its entirety is still a matter of dispute. Critics have tended to praise one or two volumes over the others -- it being noticeable that, in many cases, their interest decreases as the number of volumes increases. Thus, several have found the series too

long, many wishing to leave out The Last Post as a sentimental afterthought, rather than an integral part of the whole.¹ Others make claims for Some Do Not . . . as standing head and shoulders above the other volumes, the latter being doomed to obscurity with the advent of time.² Paul Wiley disagrees: "By comparison with the three more compact units succeeding it, the first novel, Some Do Not, appears somewhat diffuse because of its partly expositional function * * *."³ One of the unfortunate consequences of this conflict of evaluation has been that it has resulted in some extraordinary attempts to account for the presumed decline in Ford's genius during the four volumes. Discussing the problem in the light of Ford's own account of a physical disability, his susceptibility to writer's cramp, John Meixner tries to connect this universal handicap with what he sees as being an "artistic abdication" in the later volumes: "Surely it is not unreasonable to speculate that Ford's suddenly intensified physical difficulty after Some Do Not was a psychosomatic manifestation resulting from the jolts administered to his personal pride, that it was a symptom of the artistic abdication evident in the pages of the last three books rather than its cause."⁴

These differences in evaluation may be due to several factors, the most important possibly being the gargantuan size of the whole

¹Graham Greene, "Introduction" to Some Do Not . . ., 5-6.

²J. Meixner, Ford Madox Ford's Novels, pp. 221-222.

³P. Wiley, Novelist of Three Worlds, p. 223.

⁴Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p. 231.

affair; for Parade's End is of such length and complexity that it makes great demands upon the skills of a reader who wishes to produce a critical statement which would reflect its size and intricacy.⁵ Richard Cassell's sigh of relief is implicit in several criticisms of the tetralogy, many appearing as if the writer is dealing with a work of one-hundred-and-fifty pages rather than one that stretches to four

⁵As David Lodge points out, the problems created by the length of a novel are not confined to works of four volumes: "I refer to the fact * * * that novels are such vast and complicated structures, and our experience of them is so extended in time, that it is impossible for the human mind to conceive of a novel as a whole without blurring or forgetting the parts through the accumulation of which this totality has been conceived" (Language of Fiction, p. 78). Of course, this "fact" is all the more evident when one is dealing with a work like Parade's End, which runs to some eleven-hundred pages in the editions I am using; for the pattern Ford weaves is of such complexity that it is indeed "impossible" to fully relate "the parts" to "the whole", whereby we may perceive its "totality" or unity. But, I feel that some effort ought to be made to demonstrate the unity of Parade's End in detail; that is, if we are to begin to realize how successful a novel Ford has produced. Towards this end, I have adopted Lodge's "'structural'" approach which involves "[tracing] significant threads through the language [and other rhetorical effects] of an entire novel". (Also, see Lodge on "Repetition", Language of Fiction, pp. 82-87 -- a subject which is important to an understanding of the method I have used.)

In adopting this approach, my intention is therefore to show the reader both the complexity and the unity of Parade's End, so that he or she will be made aware of its 'logic'. I am concerned with demonstrating and exploring similarities between each volume, and not with illustrating how, say, Some Do Not . . . is a successful novel in its own right. I appreciate the fact that my argument may itself become complex at times; it certainly will not conform to the rigid categories critics have previously imposed upon the novel (plot, character, technique and so forth), or their tendency to deal with each volume as a separate entity. However, I have included major divisions, following those Ford himself adopts -- mainly for the reader's benefit. These divisions should not be thought of as indicating a distinct argument -- but merely as pauses on our 'journey'. I hope my emphasis upon rhetoric, and my approach in general, will result in an increased awareness of the extent to which Ford has worked to create a successfully unified structure. It should also discourage talk about psychosomatic illness.

volumes: "Whereas The Good Soldier is almost Ford's shortest novel and is nearly perfect, Parade's End is his longest novel, and it is too long. A purely subjective, but I submit none the less valid, reaction is that the reader feels that The Good Soldier is exactly the right length, while he is relieved to finally reach the last page of Parade's End."⁶ Similar criticisms appear in different disguises, in many cases accompanied by such comparisons with The Good Soldier. There are also attempts to assail the length of the tetralogy by charging that it uses repetition without due cause: "Similarly, thoughts occurring in the mind of one character are often repeated later in exactly the same words in another's, without justification either in cause and effect or proximity -- only in the needs of plot machinery."⁷ This kind of criticism is difficult to follow -- with its vague references to "plot machinery" -- and it is particularly disturbing to notice that the objection is made by a critic, John Meixner, who has written a full-length book on Ford. He dismisses three volumes of Parade's End and finishes his chapter on the tetralogy modifying even that grudging acclamation: "Which of Ford's two finest novels, we must ask finally, is the greater? * * * But ultimately the greater achievement does seem to be The Good Soldier. Some Do Not, for all its high art, is not an unflawed work."⁸ Given Meixner's approach and method, such an assessment hardly qualifies Ford for a lengthy

⁶Ford Madox Ford: A Study of His Novels, p. 249.

⁷Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p. 223.

⁸Ibid., p. 256.

treatment, especially a survey. But, one then remembers the volumes that have been written on F. Scott Fitzgerald.

If charges of "prolixity" have abounded, by far the largest number have been directed towards showing that The Last Post is an unwanted addition. Most of these attacks have cited Ford's own expressed wish to have the final volume ignored.⁹ Thus, in his dedicatory letter to the last volume,¹⁰ addressed to Isabel Paterson, the authoress of a favourable review of the first three novels of the series,¹¹ Ford appears to see The Last Post as an afterthought, the type of rounding-off he had previously rejected in his epistolary epilogue to A Call:

For, but for you, [The Last Post] would only nebularily have existed -- in space, in my brain, where you will so it be not on paper and between boards. But, that is to say, for your stern, contemptuous and almost virulent insistence on knowing 'what became of Tietjens' I never should have conducted this chronicle to the stage it has now reached. The soldier tired of war's alarms, it seemed to me, might be allowed to rest beneath bowery vines. But you would not have it so.¹²

Such statements have been taken by many critics at their face value. For example, in his discussion of the dedicatory letters to Parade's End, Samuel Hynes concludes that The Last Post is a "pastoral romance"

⁹ Letters of Ford Madox Ford, ed. R. M. Ludwig (Princeton, 1965), p. 197.

¹⁰ S. Hynes, "Ford Madox Ford: 'Three Dedicatory Letters to Parade's End' with Commentary and Notes", Modern Fiction Studies, XVI (1970), 515-528.

¹¹ I. Paterson, Review of Some Do Not . . . , No More Parades, A Man Could Stand Up (1926), in Ford Madox Ford: The Critical Heritage, pp. 103-107.

¹² "Three Dedicatory Letters", 527.

which belies the historical character of the three previous volumes:

"Ford must have known, when he wrote that letter, that he had strayed from his noble intentions, out of actual history into romance."¹³ His opinion is shared by a great many critics -- among them, John Meixner:

The ending of The Last Post is, in short, a sentimental indulgence. It shares kinship with the unfelt, pseudo-Shakesperian conclusion to the Fifth Queen trilogy. * * * This easy sentimentality -- so counter to Ford's typically beleaguered, alienated sense of the world -- may well be precisely the reason why he did not like the book and did not want to include it with the first three. It was a fairy tale, a wish, the symbolization of something he wanted to be. But in his heart he did not believe it.¹⁴

Comments like these are used to undermine any contention that Parade's End is a unified structure which includes The Last Post.

In my discussion of Parade's End, I will argue against those, like Meixner and Hynes, who seek to deny the unity of the tetralogy. In opposing the majority of critics on Parade's End, I will attempt to show that the tetralogy does indeed possess a wholeness, and that the novel can only be fully understood if its unity is recognized. My defence is founded upon the view that the novel has not received the attention it deserves, having largely suffered at the hands of critics who are intent upon producing a survey of Ford's work. When doing so, they have avoided the subtle relationship that exists between form and content, between the subject of Parade's End and its rhetoric. By ignoring the rhetoric of the novel, other than discussing instances of

¹³Ibid., 523. However, Hynes would have included The Last Post in the Bodley Head edition -- its omission being one of the major outrages committed upon Ford's works.

¹⁴Ford Madox Ford's Novels, p. 221.

technical embellishment, criticism has not done justice to what is undoubtedly one of Ford's masterpieces. In particular, there has been a total lack of awareness of the way in which the novel's rhetoric is concerned with the discovery and depiction of passion, and how Ford's craftsmanship itself involves the expression of passion in its most creative form. As is the case with The Good Soldier, an understanding of passion as the subject of Parade's End can help us comprehend the way in which the rhetoric of the tetralogy works. In the ensuing discussion, I will endeavour to facilitate an awareness of the relationship between these two concerns.

Part Two: Passion as the Subject of Parade's End -- the Rhetoric of
the Tetralogy Examined Through an Analysis of Some Do Not . . .

i

'C'est lamentable qu'un seul homme puisse inspirer
deux passions pareilles dans deux femmes. . . .
C'est le martyre de notre vie!'

The Last Post

In his excellent book The Characters of Love, John Bayley says that "love is of all forces in society the most confusing and the most revealing; it stands both for the frightful difficulty of knowing other people and for the possibility of that knowledge; its existence implies the ideal existence of understanding and its absence the total removal of it."¹⁵ In many respects, his insight serves as a useful means of introducing Parade's End; for the main subject of the tetralogy may be said to be an exploration of love, or, to use Ford's word, passion. In The Good Soldier, we saw how important an understanding of passion was in that it accounted for the fusion that occurs between technique as rhetoric and the subject of the novel, as John Dowell exhibits Turgenev's gift of "identifying himself with -- of absolutely feeling -- the passions of the characters with whom he found himself",

¹⁵ John Bayley, The Characters of Love: A Study of the Literature of Personality (London, 1960), p. 149.

the ability to "retire in passion . . . in order to gain equilibrium."¹⁶

Dowell's gift is also found in Parade's End, where we are presented with the many facets of passion revealed by an authorial voice concerned with making us see both passion's positive and negative aspects. This goal can only be achieved by what Bayley calls, echoing Henry James's sentiments in the "Lesson of Balzac", "an author's love for his characters * * * a delight in their independent existence as other people, an attitude towards them which is analogous to our feelings towards those we love in life; and an intense interest in their personalities combined with a sort of detached solicitude, a respect for their freedom."¹⁷ Such respect is a quality Ford finds in Turgenev, James in Balzac, and Bayley sees in Chaucer, Shakespeare and James. It is a gift shared by those writers who "seem agreed that the private life and its problems requires the relative view",¹⁸ a spirit that transcends the boundaries imposed by genre and time.

Yet, while this spirit finally emerges in its most positive form in Parade's End as a love for the characters by the author, and, in the case of Valentine and Christopher, as a love by some of the characters for each other, the strength of the tetralogy also

¹⁶Ford Madox Ford, Mightier Than the Sword, p. 208.

¹⁷The Characters of Love, pp. 7-8.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 128.

lies in the fact that it explores various kinds of human relationships. Thus, the rhetoric of the work is concerned with making us see how passion involves hate as well as love, showing us how it can imprison some characters while freeing others. Ford carefully selected the words he used, and, in choosing the word passion as a collective term for the complex forces at work in human relations, he gives us a single focal point through which we can view the vast canvas portrayed in Parade's End. It is this focal point that I wish to explore.

The "Characters" of passion, to borrow Bayley's title, are indeed varied in Parade's End. For example, there is the Pre-Raphaelite idea of love embodied in the relationship between Macmaster and Edith Duchemin. Their passion is something Christopher severely criticizes in the opening chapter of Some Do Not . . ., a criticism echoed elsewhere in Ford's work.

Love, according to the Pre-Raphaelite canon, was a great but rather sloppy passion. Its manifestations would be Paolo and Francesca, or Launcelot and Guinevere. It was a thing that you swooned about on broad, general lines, your eyes closed, your arms outstretched. It excused all sins, it sanctified all purposes, and if you went to hell over it you still drifted about among snow-flakes of fire with your eyes closed and in the arms of the object of your passion. For it is impossible to suppose that when Rossetti painted his picture of Paolo and Francesca in hell, he or any of his admirers thought that these two lovers were really suffering. They were not. They were suffering perhaps with the malaise of love, which is always an uneasiness, but an uneasiness how sweet! And the flakes of flames were descending all over the rest of the picture, but they did not fall upon Paolo and Francesca. No, the lovers were protected by a generalized swooning passion that formed, as it were, a moral and very efficient mackintosh over them. And no doubt what D. G. Rossetti and his school thought was

that, although guilty lovers have to go to hell for the sake of the story, they will find hell pleasant enough, because the aroma of their passion, the wings of the great god of love, and the swooning intensity of it all will render them insensible to the inconveniences of their lodgings. As much as to say that you do not mind the bad cooking of the Brighton Hotel if you are having otherwise a good time of it.¹⁹

If limited to such a view, passion would be only a negative force in the tetralogy. However, Ford wishes to explore other kinds of love, and he seeks to portray the way in which society and its individual members approach the question of personal relationships.

Thus, for characters like Christopher Tietjens, whose sensibilities are formed by eighteenth-century "premises of taste", passion is something they have not needed to face directly -- that is, until changes in the external world force them to do so. Our first view of Christopher shows us that he is a man who believes in principles which stress intellect, reason and the suppression of emotions. For those of us who may be too eager to criticize or laugh at him, it should be remembered that it is unfair to judge Christopher by the standards of the modern age, with its emphasis upon the realm of feeling as opposed to reason. Christopher, like his brother, Mark, believes in the order provided by logic, both agreeing with the principle that:

To rest a determination of values upon the feelings, the floating inclinations, or the varying empirically-held opinions of particular individuality is to rest it upon the most fluid of foundations. For the abandonment of

¹⁹Memories and Impressions, 63.

the centrally ideal by empirical relativism not only results in a conflict of predilections from man to man, but, as Irving Babbitt so frequently insisted, in conflict and change within even the same man.²⁰

Indeed, from their point of view, such an "abandonment" is exactly what takes place in their own lives, resulting in an internal conflict which Christopher finally resolves in his relationship with Valentine Wannop. This breakdown occurs, in part, because the age in which he finds himself has long abandoned any concept of the "centrally ideal" in favour of the irrational and subjective, a world where the "natural" is not readily ascertainable.

Standing in contrast to this increasingly chaotic world is what Christopher calls the "normal life", the "peculiarly English" habit of so watching "over himself as materially to modify his automatic habits" in order to "have deep arm-chairs in which to sit for hours in clubs, thinking of nothing at all -- or of the off-theory in bowling."²¹ For him, this kind of society is preferable to any other. But, its great drawback is that "the peculiarly English habit of self-suppression in matters of the emotion puts the Englishman at a great disadvantage in moments of unusual stresses. * * * This, at least, was the view of Christopher Tietjens * * * ." ²² Since the "normal life" rarely confronts him with death, madness, passion or mental strain, in

²⁰ W. J. Bate, From Classic to Romantic: Premises of Taste in Eighteenth-Century England (1946) (New York, 1961), p. 12.

²¹ Some Do Not . . ., 223.

²² Ibid.

self-suppression "the great advantage would seem to have lain with English society; at any rate before the later months of the year 1914. Death for man came but once: the danger of death so seldom as to be practically negligible: love of a distracting kind was a disease merely of the weak * * * ."23 But once society's stability is undermined, this situation no longer holds true, and the Englishman becomes a "beginner" in the world of passion and human relations, because his principles of conduct are no longer adhered to by those with whom he deals. We do not of necessity condemn his principles in this situation; our interest lies in seeing how he will react to such upheaval.

Critics like Leer and Kashner are surely correct when they reject any description of Christopher as a static figure, in favour of a view that sees him adjusting as a result of social upheaval.²⁴ He is forced to come to grips with a part of himself that has hitherto remained and could remain under control, when the Englishman "[shows] industry and determination * * * ."25 But it would be a mistake to over-estimate the degree of change, or to narrow the range of interest covered by Parade's End to that of the Bildungsroman, as implied in the title of Kashner's article. Ford's canvas is much larger than that of

²³ Ibid., 224.

²⁴ Norman Leer, The Limited Hero, pp. 105-156.
Rita J. Kashner, "Tietjens' Education: Ford Madox Ford's Tetralogy", Critical Quarterly, VIII (1966), 150-163.

²⁵ Some Do Not . . ., 223.

a conventional Bildungsroman -- A Portrait of The Artist As A Young Man is one example of how this genre often tends to concentrate on a single figure -- as he wishes to cover the full spectrum of attitudes towards and expressions of passion.

Thus, in Parade's End, passion is depicted in the sense evoked by Ford's outburst on love according to the Pre-Raphaelite canon. It is also presented in the way in which Christopher is forced to face the needs of his emotional existence through the love he eventually realizes for Valentine Wannop. Both examples present very different aspects of passion. In addition, there is the emotional world of Sylvia Tietjens, a woman who comes to feel a strong passion for her husband, and who pursues him in the way the boar is hunted, as portrayed upon the walls of the hotel at Lobscheid. The experience of Mark Tietjens provides another example. He is the "sound man", who thinks he can cheat Fate by being modest in his aims and modest in the relationships he has with women. But, though he spends the whole of The Last Post on his back in a rejection of everything human, he too comes to feel a form of passion that Ambrose Gordon, Jr., quite rightly calls "his expression of love".²⁶ Ford also shows how Valentine Wannop grows as a character until, as her monologue in The Last Post demonstrates, she fully expresses her passion for Christopher.

The desire to represent the types of human experience that are evident in Parade's End necessitates the kind of rhetoric which explores that diversity to its fullest extent. Thus, Ford presents the material

²⁶The Invisible Tent, p. 140.

from a variety of points of view, each of which contributes to the whole. Yet, to echo Kenner's criticism of The Good Soldier, there is no impasse of sympathy for all sides, since the tetralogy brings the reader to comprehend and judge passion as it appears creatively and destructively, a judgement that will involve an affirmation of the former. It is here that our understanding of the rhetoric of Parade's End lies; for the central intelligence that pervades the work is the authorial voice which guides us to a judgement of a particular facet of human feeling, not through the use of direct authorial indictment, but as a result of the manner in which one expression of passion complements or contrasts with another. For the most part, the authorial voice refrains from judgement, the only clear example of intrusion coming in No More Parades: "The intolerable vision of the line, starving beneath the moon, of grey crowds murderously elbowing back a thin crowd in brown, zigzagged across the bronze light in the hut. The intolerable depression that, in those days, we felt * * * ." ²⁷ (My emphasis.)

Otherwise, even when presenting the material in the third person, the authorial voice tends to remain silent in terms of direct moral judgements. This does not mean that Parade's End is a work that shows rather than tells, as Ford mixes both modes of presentation for their optimum effect.

The artistic process in Parade's End can be demonstrated by a

²⁷No More Parades, 89.

discussion of the opening chapter of Some Do Not . . ., which not only illustrates the rhetoric of the tetralogy, but also shows how central the subject of passion is to any understanding of the work as a whole. The first chapter may be divided into four parts: the first section taking us to "In the train * * * Macmaster looked across at his friend."²⁸; the next continues until Christopher and Vincent begin their conversation;²⁹ the third contains that dialogue;³⁰ and the final part begins with the women "drifting" across the platform at Ashford.³¹ The first two divisions represent Ford's handling of point of view, the third the way in which he handles dialogue, and the fourth his depiction of a scene from a more 'omniscient' standpoint.

Several critics have made the claim that Parade's End is marked by a shift from an essentially nineteenth-century technique to a more modern one, as the tale progresses from Edwardian to post-war England.³² To an extent, there is an element of truth in this observation. However, such an assertion does overlook the consistency of Ford's rhetorical skills, which even a cursory glance at the first few paragraphs would reveal. Here, the method of presentation does not differ widely from that found in the opening pages of No More Parades or A Man Could

²⁸Some Do Not . . ., 21.

²⁹Ibid., 26.

³⁰Ibid., 26-33.

³¹Ibid., 33-34.

³²J. M. Heldman, "The Last Victorian Novel: Technique and Theme in Parade's End", Twentieth Century Literature, XVIII, No. 4 (October, 1972), 271-283.

Stand Up. It is the world that changes, and not necessarily Ford's depiction of it. Thus, the beginning of Some Do Not . . . is presented from a point of view, that of Christopher Tietjens, which is indicated by the several important qualifiers that prevent our taking this section as a more traditional form of narrative: "Tietjens felt certain", "Tietjens remembered thinking", "of himself Tietjens was not so certain", "as Tietjens knew", "Tietjens * * * could not remember", "Tietjens knew", "as Tietjens knew", "as Tietjens imagined himself".³³

As in the greater part of Parade's End, Ford's rhetoric involves presenting events as filtered through two very different minds, each contributing an insight into our picture of the whole scene. In this case, the two participants, Christopher and Macmaster, find their thoughts centring upon the recent past, while they are both on the 11.40 a.m. train from London to Ashford, on Friday, June 28, 1912.³⁴ That Ford plants these details of time and place at various points in the tetralogy gives some idea of his preoccupation with attaining a veracity, making us feel that we are there. That he does not open the novel with "On Friday, June 28, 1912, at 12.10 p.m." is indicative of the way in which he wishes us to receive this information as perhaps we would in life, not all at once, but in pieces that we have to fit together.

This process of construction, the rhetorical mode that is so

³³Some Do Not . . ., 11-12.

³⁴I have taken the liberty of building upon Arthur Mizener's detailing of these "chronological facts". See The Saddest Story, pp. 509-515.

much at the heart of The Good Soldier, dominates the opening chapter. Unlike the earlier novel, Ford does not want the view of his readers contained within a single point of vision, or necessarily within a presented point of view at all. R. W. Lid is surely wrong when he observes that "Ford * * * hangs everything on a single rendering of a scene, and once the scene has been enacted it cannot be gone over again."³⁵ Even though Lid does make a few exceptions to this rule, it is nevertheless inaccurate to insist that a scene is generally rendered only once. Ford, possibly more than James and Conrad, is concerned with the remembrance of things past, or, to use Ian Watt's description of Conrad's view of fiction, with "impressions recollected in maturity".³⁶ As in the first chapter, Ford's characters spend a great deal of their time in piecing together fragments from their memories, and we find a single episode not only reflected from different points of view, but also from the same points of view at different moments in time. An example of this is the night ride that Christopher and Valentine undertake during the single weekend in June, 1912. As with the fact that Ford builds each novel in the tetralogy around one afternoon, one day, or one weekend -- rather than taking immense chunks of time and dealing with them equally -- his use of repetition stems from the desire to extract the maximum possible meaning from a particular episode. It both shows how memory tends to focus upon

³⁵ Ford Madox Ford, p. 177.

³⁶ Ian Watt, "Conrad's Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'", Novel, VII, No. 2 (Winter, 1974), 114.

individual "spots of time", sifting them and refining them into a pattern of meaning, while also acting as a principle of construction for the novels themselves. The presence of repetition even extends to the language of Parade's End, as words like "passion", "circumspect", "chastity", "natural", to name but a few, are found in different contexts, each occurrence giving an added dimension to a word or revealing that it no longer has any meaning for the character concerned.

The concentration upon a few incidents or moments in time, the extraordinary attention Ford pays to obtaining the maximum effect from one event by reflecting it through different minds at various times, echoes James's praise of Balzac's "inordinate passion for detail" where "the relations of parts to each other are at moments multiplied almost to madness -- which is at the same time just why they give us the measure of his hallucination, make up the greatness of his intellectual adventure."³⁷ That James found this at times "also [Balzac's] great fault"³⁸ is an indication of the difference between him and Balzac, and between James and Ford. James tends not to go over the same material in the manner Ford chooses, whereas Ford deals in repeated incidents that echo in the individual consciousness throughout the tetralogy.

It is in this method that the germ of our understanding of Parade's End must surely lie. Through the variety of presentation of a single incident in point of view, place and time, Ford controls the

³⁷ Henry James, "The Lesson of Balzac", The Future of the Novel, p. 111.

³⁸ Ibid.

material in such a way as to enable us to feel "the measure of his hallucination" while moulding our judgements from such juxtaposition. Thus, Some Do Not . . . begins with the differences that are made evident between the view of events provided by Christopher Tietjens and Vincent Macmaster. Our concern should be with what each character did or did not see at the time an event took place. Subsequently, we should notice what interpretation he puts upon the incident at the time of recollection and the point of view he maintains about this past occurrence, as well as the process of remembering it at some point in the future. In addition, the reader is asked to compare this process with similar experiences undergone by other characters. Above all, as part of the novel's rhetoric, the sequence of recollections aims at making the reader reach some understanding about an individual and the way he sees the world. The differences between one point of view and another involve the reader in a perception of the relative depth of each character's vision.

The significance of this aspect of the novel's rhetoric can be seen by pointing to a structural device Ford employs in Some Do Not The novel begins and ends with Christopher remembering about recent and not so recent events. In Part Two, Chapter Six, he returns from his meeting with Valentine -- the time is at some point in the month of August, 1917 -- and looks back, his memory stimulated by two lines of poetry, one from Arnold's "Calais beach or Dover sands" and ". . . The other was by that detestable fellow: 'the subject of our little monograph!' . . . What a long

time ago! . . ."³⁹ Christopher's mind continues to cast backwards:

He saw a pile of shining despatch cases: the inscription 'This rack is reserved for . . .': a coloured -- pink and blue! -- photograph of Boulogne sands and the held up squares, the proofs of 'our little . . .' What a long time ago! He heard his own voice saying in the new railway carriage, proudly, clearly and with male hardness:

'I stand for monogamy and chastity. And for no talking about it. Of course if a man who's a man wants to have a woman he has her. And again no talking about it. . . .' His voice -- his own voice -- came to him as if from the other end of a long-distance telephone. A damn long-distance one! Ten years . . .⁴⁰

His recollection is important for what it tells us about Christopher's personality in 1917. Of course, he is wrong about the time that has passed, since it is in fact five years. Nevertheless, it seems like ten years, the difference being accounted for by the changes that have come over both England and Tietjens' own personality. The personal change is distinguished by the use of certain key words in the above reminiscence, "proudly, clearly and with male hardness". The words are important in that they illustrate how Christopher is aware of a difference between his past and present selves. He has lost some of that pride and hardness. As he pointed out to Sylvia: ""The strong man when smitten is smitten in his pride!"⁴¹ But this change has a different meaning for another character:

³⁹Some Do Not . . ., 347.

⁴⁰Ibid., 347-348.

⁴¹Ibid., 214.

For Valentine Wannop the war had turned Tietjens into far more of a man and far less of an inclination -- the war and Mrs Duchemin between them. He had seemed to grow less infallible. A man with doubts is more of a man, with eyes, hands, the need for food and for buttons to be sewn on.⁴² She had actually tightened up a loose glove button for him.

The process of remembering crystallizes these observations in our minds, and Tietjens' recollection at the end of Some Do Not . . ., which serves as a framework for the novel, accrues an added dimension when we learn later that Sylvia has been in the room all the time, waiting for the chance to corner her husband into sleeping with her.⁴³

Thus, Some Do Not . . ., like a large part of the tetralogy, is deeply concerned with the way in which memory records, sifts and evaluates experience, a process in which the reader is intimately involved. Moving from one end of the long-distance telephone line to the other, we can see how this process is already under way, as Christopher reflects upon the "perfectly appointed railway carriage". The individual details of the carriage and the smooth running of the whole train begin to acquire meaning until we reach the moment at which Christopher himself looks backwards to 1912. The carriage's apparent immaculateness, its aura of hygiene, the pattern of the geometrician's design suggest an order that can be maintained by the sound of a Balliol voice or a letter to The Times, but an order whose present appearance, like the mirror, now reflects very little and soon cracks. To get beneath the appearance, we must penetrate the individual

⁴² Ibid., 289.

⁴³ No More Parades, 77-78.

mind.

Delving into Christopher's thoughts we learn of the distinctions of class and attitude that exist between him and Macmaster, as suggested by the external impressions they create. A Tory figure, Christopher is noticeable for his "emotional taciturnity", his negligence in attire, his sardonic sympathy for his "friend's ambitiousness", his "natural gifts", all of which stand in contrast to Macmaster's mannered habits, his desire to "get on", his predilection for women of "the most giggling, behind-the-counter order, big-bosomed, scarlet-cheeked".⁴⁴ In this way, Ford balances one character against the other. Indeed, he juxtaposes one age against another, as Christopher's heritage dates back to the eighteenth century, while Macmaster's cultural legacy belongs to the latter part of the Victorian era. Our view of this contrast, as revealed in the subsequent dialogue about sexual morality and the future of England, undoubtedly places Christopher in a more favourable light. Yet, it would be a mistake to see the juxtaposition in black and white terms. Ford qualifies our impression of Tietjens, particularly in so far as his emotional existence is concerned and how he confronts the world of passion. This is achieved through the contrast between the way in which both characters review a single incident, the breakfast that took place on the Friday morning, which Kashner correctly calls "one of the finest

⁴⁴Some Do Not . . ., 24.

accomplishments of Ford's narrative technique * * * ."45 It is here that we begin to see the connection between the rhetoric of Parade's End and passion.

The first mention of what happened focuses upon Christopher's observations about the arrival of Sylvia's letter: "That morning, at breakfast, four months having passed, Tietjens had received a letter from his wife. She asked, without any contrition at all, to be taken back. She was fed-up with Perowne and Brittany."⁴⁶ The description is presented in an almost matter-of-fact manner, without any mention of a reaction on Christopher's part to what is news that does not come to the breakfast table every morning. We see the incident from his point of view, and Ford describes what Christopher observes and not what he feels: "Tietjens looked up at Macmaster. Macmaster was already half out of his chair, looking at him with enlarged, steel-blue eyes, his beard quivering. By the time Tietjens spoke Macmaster had his hand on the neck of the cut-glass brandy decanter in the brown wood tantalus."⁴⁷ Attention is paid to external objects, and to what the perceiver notices about Macmaster's behaviour, a series of reactions that, at this time, appear odd. About Christopher, all we are told is that he "said" and "answered". Even the movement of the decanter is attributed to Macmaster: "He noticed that the lip of the decanter agitated, tinkling

⁴⁵"Tietjens' Education", 154.

⁴⁶Some Do Not . . ., 17.

⁴⁷Ibid.

on the glass. Macmaster must be trembling."⁴⁸ The only visible emotional reaction on Tietjens' part is a negative one, with an added suggestion that he is "shivering": "He seemed to have no feelings about the matter. Certain insolent phrases in Sylvia's letter hung in his mind. He preferred a letter like that. The brandy made no difference to his mentality, but it seemed to keep him from shivering."⁴⁹ As the scene stands, the two occurrences of the verb "seemed" are the only indications that Christopher's view might not be the complete picture. Otherwise, the short episode has a semblance of control, of ordinariness -- as if nothing has happened to disturb the "normal" pattern of events, with the exception of Macmaster's behaviour. The sense of normality continues, as Christopher amazingly calculates to the nearest minute the time it will take to conclude the British Columbia figures.

Given that we know that Christopher believes you do not talk about feelings -- "Perhaps you didn't even think about how you felt."⁵⁰ -- the incident has immense significance in that it reveals how essential this principle is to an understanding of his personality. Christopher thinks that he can keep his emotions under control in an age which worships feeling. As Some Do Not . . . progresses, we see how increasingly difficult it is for him to retain such taciturnity, when his emotional self threatens to break loose from the controls he has previously managed to put upon it. Here, we are permitted to view

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid., 18.

⁵⁰Ibid., 15.

the beginnings of stress as we shift from Christopher's side of the railway carriage to the thoughts of Macmaster, a man who has a very different attitude towards the world of feeling. From his point of view we are given another insight into that morning's breakfast:

The words conveyed nothing to him at all. He understood that that was because he hadn't got over that morning. He had looked up from his coffee-cup -- over the rim -- and had taken in a blue-grey sheet of notepaper in Tietjens' fingers, shaking, inscribed in the large, broad-nibbed writing of that detestable harridan. And Tietjens had been staring -- staring with the intentness of a maddened horse -- at his, Macmaster's, face! And grey! Shapeless! The nose like a pallid triangle on a bladder of lard! That was Tietjens' face. . . .

He could still feel the blow, physical, in the pit of his stomach! He had thought Tietjens was going mad; that he was mad. It had passed.⁵¹ Tietjens had assumed the mask of his indolent, insolent self.

Macmaster's view is as partial as that provided by Christopher, and tells us as much about the former as the latter. However, most importantly, we see the strain that Tietjens is under -- how, in effect, his belief in the control of emotion is beginning to be challenged by a crisis. Norman Leer overstates the position when he observes that "Tietjens' major fault is that of typical aristocratic ineffectiveness in dealing with emotions * * * ." ⁵² Nevertheless part of the interest of Parade's End does rest in seeing how Christopher will confront the needs and demands that various kinds of passion make upon him, which is where the series resembles a Bildungsroman, as Kashner points out. Yet there is so much more than this particular strand in

⁵¹Ibid., 25.

⁵²The Limited Hero, p. 123.

the fabric.

But, it is with an emphasis upon the values of Christopher's English, Tory "club" that the tetralogy begins -- especially as these values are reflected in the emotional life of its members. The stress is upon silence in this matter, upon the "almost perfect" relationship that results from Christopher not needing to talk to his father: "They were like two men in the club -- the only club; thinking so alike that there was no need to talk."⁵³ The use of the verb "thinking" does, in one sense, cover feeling, which is assumed to be firmly under control; this control is part of the manners expected of gentlemen. The verb also stresses intellect and ideas of order based upon reason. It is not so much that these principles of conduct are judged as being in some way morally wrong, but that they collapse when threatened by an age whose premises emphasize feeling. At one time, these men may have thought so alike that there was no need to talk because they did share a set of values. It would be a mistake to dismiss this order because it implies a negative of not talking and Christopher emerges later in the tetralogy with the desire "to talk" to Valentine Wannop. With a centrally held core of principles, the need "to talk" may not have existed because each individual once knew how the other thought. But, with the disintegration of the external world, this capability begins to disappear and the established members of the club are forced into individual cells, none of them knowing how the others think or feel. Instead, they have to rely upon appearances, the realm in which Sylvia

⁵³Some Do Not . . ., 16.

finds it so easy to operate. Thus, Mr. Tietjens misjudges his son, and Mrs. Tietjens is not "very well" at the time Christopher's father tells him she is.

As a result of such isolation, individuals like Christopher come to feel a need to "talk", a desire to share their experience with another human being. Given that the world he knew no longer exists, the need becomes a highly personal one, which can only be met, at best, by a relationship with one person who holds to some of those values Christopher believes in. That it is a move from a society of men, all sharing much the same views, to a love for one woman gives an indication of the differing kinds of demand made upon an individual, like Tietjens, who has been steeped in the atmosphere of "the club". The need is something he acknowledges when he later speaks of the "communion" that may be possible with Valentine:

The beastly Huns! They stood between him and Valentine Wannop. If they would go home he could be sitting talking to her for whole afternoons. That was what a young woman was for. You seduced a young woman in order to be able to finish your talks with her. You could not do that without living with her. You could not live with her without seducing her; but that was the by-product. The point is that you can't otherwise talk. You can't finish talks at street-corners; in museums; even in drawing-rooms. You mayn't be in the mood when she is in the mood -- for the intimate conversation that means the final communion of your souls. You have to wait together -- for a week, for a year, for a lifetime, before the final intimate conversation may be attained . . . and exhausted. So that. . . .

That in effect was love. It struck him as astonishing. The word was so little in his vocabulary. . . .⁵⁴

⁵⁴A Man Could Stand Up, 415.

This passage has been quoted at length here because it illuminates Christopher's experience at the breakfast table, and also illustrates the different kind of relationship in which he eventually becomes involved. He moves, as does Valentine Wannop, from a world where one "didn't talk", where there was no apparent "need to talk", to a world where a "bond" between people is once again created, where a link is forged between language and the kind of passion Ford sees as being creative. General Campion, the man who believes in keeping emotions safely locked up in tobacco shops, asks one question that lies at the heart of Parade's End:

'I'm enormously sorry, sir. It's difficult to make myself plain.'

The general said:

'Neither of us do. What is language for? What the hell is language for? We go round and round * * * .'⁵⁵

Part of the answer to his inquiry rests in Christopher's awareness, in A Man Could Stand Up, that language possibly exhibits its supreme function and its ultimate meaning in "the intimate conversation that means the final communion of your souls", and that he might be able to achieve this state with Valentine. In effect, language finds its fulfilment in the expression of love, in the fruition of the kind of passion Dowell described in The Good Soldier.⁵⁶ Such a use of language to express love realizes its existence in the creation of the tetralogy itself, where rhetoric and subject are united through passion, or, as

⁵⁵No More Parades, 249.

⁵⁶The Good Soldier, 105-107.

in the love between Valentine and Christopher, in the creation of a child whose birth is promised at the end of The Last Post.

If language finds its fulfilment in these forms of creation, in Valentine's and Christopher's case this is marked by a coming together of their thoughts and feelings, until they share a common vocabulary. The similarity in their use of language is particularly evident in A Man Could Stand Up. Critics who have made negative comments about the repetition of certain words -- seeing it as a sign of a decrease in artistic capability -- have overlooked the purpose of such recurrence. As will be discussed, one of the main directions of the tetralogy is a movement towards the world of "talk", to a situation where language is shared, so that it is used rather than abused. Until language is allied with or expresses love, both Valentine and Christopher remain distinctly separate people, individual cells who do not say what they feel to each other. Gradually, we see them move closer together, so close in fact that their language suggests this intimacy by its similarity. Through the use of the word "communion", Ford indicates that that state ultimately lies beyond language, a quasi-religious experience for which language serves as a ladder so that "communion" may be reached. Possibly, it is a state of being that language cannot describe, can merely hint at, a reason why Ford's interest shifts from Valentine and Christopher to Mark in The Last Post. Having led the way to a "communion" of two souls, he can go no farther.

The artistic process itself also embodies the creative use of

language, as, to use William Carlos Williams' terminology,⁵⁷ Ford seeks to reattach the word to the object, so that language once again has meaning. This Ford achieves by coming to know his characters as a result of the passion he expresses, and by giving them an existence of their own through language. Yet, while Parade's End seeks to express language creatively, it also reveals and makes us see how words can be abused, by including characters who remain separate and isolated and use language to wound rather than heal. The tetralogy allows us to experience the limitations of characters like Sylvia, and how their expressions of passion so often turn out to be sterile or destructive. Such negativism involves a refusal to tolerate the faults of another individual and a failure to come to know them as people. Parade's End explores these kinds of passion so well that we, as readers, come to feel the inadequacies and limitations. And so, exploration is itself a creative act in which we are involved, satisfying the desire to know other human beings as described by Dowell in The Good Soldier. Through knowing them, we too feel passion.

My argument may appear to have moved a long way from the railway carriage, occupied by Christopher and Macmaster, but the foregoing does help to put their discussion and thoughts in perspective. The dialogue that takes place between the two friends illustrates, in so far as pre-war England is concerned, how great a disparity has grown between language and emotion, how language is now used, by many people,

⁵⁷William Carlos Williams' review of Parade's End (1951), in Ford Madox Ford: The Critical Heritage, p. 255.

as a screen. The subject of Macmaster's little monograph, as well as the imprecise prose of the document itself, crystallizes this observation. Thus, Christopher pulls apart the "sonorous, rolling and full-mouthed" lines from poems by D. G. Rossetti to reveal both the poet's and Macmaster's "sham sexual morality", "your fumbling in placket-holes and polysyllabic Justification by Love", the "lachrymose polygamy" of a society reflected in the Pre-Raphaelite version of Paolo and Francesca as "your fellow whines about creeping into Heaven."⁵⁸ Tietjens dominates the conversation through apt quotation, and it remains to be seen whether the rest of the novel bears his observations out, if his picture of England as heading for war (as a result of its hypocrisy) is more correct than Macmaster's talk of how the country will be saved by the "circumspect classes". For his part, Christopher sees a close analogy between the way in which his countrymen conduct their emotional affairs and the way in which they behave politically or morally, an insight focused in the image of the mirror-gazer, D. G. Rossetti:

'I tell you it revolts me to think of that obese, oily man who never took a bath, in a grease-spotted dressing-gown and the underclothes he's slept in, standing beside a five-shilling model with crimped hair, or some Mrs. W. Three Stars, gazing into a mirror that reflects their fetid selves and gilt sunfish and drop chandeliers and plates sickening with cold bacon fat and gurgling about passion.'⁵⁹

As opposed to this, Tietjens proposes something "clean" -- "monogamy

⁵⁸ Some Do Not . . ., 29.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 28.

and chastity" -- which Valentine embodies ("clean and wholesome").⁶⁰ Now, according to Christopher, England is "'always, as it were, committing adultery -- like your fellow! -- with the name of Heaven on our lips.'"⁶¹ It is a view that Macmaster does not want to face when, like the ostrich putting his head in the sand, he thrusts his head out of the carriage window.

Though Christopher is, to an extent, "jibing" Macmaster, the points raised during the course of their dialogue are given weight by the ending of the first chapter. Our view of the anonymous "drifting" women on the platform at Ashford confirms many of Christopher's statements. As representatives of the ruling classes of society, these women seem to have less idea where they are going than their footmen, the latter acting as shepherds "shepherding" their flocks from one train to another.⁶² There is a general lack of purpose about the whole affair, and an excess of "lovely sable cloaks". It is here, too, that we first become aware of the discrepancy between society's view of a person and our view: "'Kiss Sylvia's finger-tips for me. She's the real thing, you lucky beggar.'"⁶³ This is a comment that is repeated at the golf club, where the city men talk of Gertie as the "real thing",⁶⁴ a repetition that suggests an undermining of Campion's

⁶⁰Ibid., 136.

⁶¹Ibid., 32.

⁶²Ibid., 33.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid., 77.

judgement.

Therefore, when seen in the context of the tetralogy as a whole, the opening chapter gives an insight into the relationship between the subject of Parade's End, social and individual responses to and expressions of passion, and its rhetoric, the way in which the novel explores the subject. The remainder of my discussion will be concerned with developing this relationship, which culminates in the love between Valentine and Christopher and the depiction of Mark's struggle to become reconciled with the world.

iii

The "drifting" women of the first chapter of Some Do Not . . . are the subject of Chapter Two: "[Mrs. Satterthwaite] drifted, all shadowy black silk, across the shadows of the dining-hall * * *";⁶⁵ "[Sylvia] drifted towards the door."⁶⁶ By writing in a detached manner, and not taking account of a particular consciousness, Ford also continues the manner of presentation found at the end of the last chapter, asking us to view these characters externally. This rhetorical mode requires us to stand and look at the figures he presents and judge them accordingly. Both Mrs. Satterthwaite and her daughter are shrouded in descriptions of fatigue and boredom. The former is

⁶⁵Ibid., 37.

⁶⁶Ibid., 42.

⁶⁷Ibid., 34.

"ultrafashionable and consummately indifferent",⁶⁷ "lazily pleased",⁶⁸ "lazily amused",⁶⁹ "extremely emaciated",⁷⁰ her eyes "very tired or very different by turns",⁷¹ extremely indifferent and yet again indifferent.⁷² Sylvia Tietjens is "bored",⁷³ shows a lack of interest,⁷⁴ sits "languidly on the sofa",⁷⁵ acts "listlessly",⁷⁶ shows "languid and incredulous amusement",⁷⁷ all of which contrasts with her appearance as Our Lady,⁷⁸ her wonderfully moving face and her semblance of virtue.⁷⁹ These two women provide a microcosm of the governing classes of English society, and, like the women on the platform at Ashford, represent "the future mothers of England", as Sylvia calls them.⁸⁰

In Sylvia's case, the impression of "drifting", of boredom and

⁶⁸Ibid., 35.

⁶⁹Ibid., 36.

⁷⁰Ibid., 38.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., 41.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid., 44.

⁷⁷Ibid., 43.

⁷⁸Ibid., 41.

⁷⁹Ibid., 45.

⁸⁰Ibid., 51.

lack of direction, is supplemented by her being described as "Gothic".⁸¹ First found in the country that is the home of Gothicism, Sylvia is one of Ford's most successful female creations, a creature who can make beauty and truth appear the same,⁸² an enigmatic character who embodies the dark, wild, impulsive and, according to some, the supposedly free and 'natural' aspects of the human personality. But, the question as to whether her behaviour is or is not 'natural' is one that occupies an important place in this chapter, as it does in the tetralogy as a whole.

Thus, Mrs. Satterthwaite sees Sylvia's behaviour as a "natural antipathy" for Christopher, but Father Consett attributes it to "'unnatural living and unnatural practices that cause these complexes'", as he also calls Sylvia's intention to return immediately to her husband, without a "decent" interval, "unnatural".⁸³ The definition of "natural" is very much up in the air at this stage -- if it is ever finally resolved -- and judgements of Sylvia's behaviour as "unnatural", if we were inadvisedly tempted to use the word, do not become clearer until the tetralogy progresses further. In many ways, her antipathy towards Christopher is "natural", the result of two totally different points of view found in two very different centuries, the eighteenth and the nineteenth. However, it is worth adding that we can also see

⁸¹Ibid., 47. See also No More Parades, 19.

⁸²As the narrator comments about Fittleworth's view of Sylvia in The Last Post, p. 201.

⁸³Some Do Not . . ., 56.

her as "a beautiful, brilliant, neurotic young woman who embodies the chief symptoms of the contemporary social decay."⁸⁴

In many respects, Sylvia is unbridled passion. Yet, she is also a woman who can see her husband with a far greater degree of insight than any other character, with the exception of the later Valentine, a woman who vacillates between love and hate until it becomes impossible to distinguish of what her emotional being consists. But, she cannot accept her husband for what he is, since she wants to force him to feel the way she does, while making him "wince". Her observations about Christopher's "immorality",⁸⁵ which makes her feel sick because she is incapable of proving him wrong, are based upon this mutual incompatibility. For her, Christopher is "wooden", but her efforts to compel him to feel are destructive rather than creative. As Christopher subsequently points out:

But, positively, [Valentine] and Sylvia were the only two human beings he had met for years whom he could respect: the one for sheer efficiency in killing: the other for having the constructive desire and knowing how to set about it. Kill or cure! The two functions of man. If you wanted something killed you'd go to Sylvia Tietjens in the sure faith that she would kill it; emotion: hope: ideal: kill it quick and sure. If you wanted something kept alive you'd go to Valentine: she'd find something to do for it. . . . The two types of mind: remorseless enemy: sure screen: dagger . . . sheath!⁸⁶

⁸⁴J. J. Firebaugh, "Tietjens and the Tradition", Pacific Spectator, VI (Winter, 1952), 24.

⁸⁵Some Do Not . . ., 54-55.

⁸⁶Ibid., 161-162.

Sylvia's destructiveness is ultimately inexplicable, and remains enigmatic throughout the tetralogy. However, we find several expressions and representations of her kind of passion -- for example, on the walls of the Lobscheid hotel room:

The walls of the large room were completely covered with pictures of animals in death agonies: capercaillies giving up the ghost with gouts of scarlet blood on the snow; deer dying with their heads back and eyes glazing, gouts of red blood on their necks; foxes dying with scarlet blood on green grass. These⁸⁷ pictures were frame to frame, representing sport * * * .

Father Consett picks up the last word in connection with the "devils" trying to enter, not only into the hotel but also into individuals like Sylvia:

'I don't say that it's devils trying to get in,' the Father said, 'But it's just as well to remember that devils are always trying to get in. And there are especial spots. These deep forests are noted among others.' He suddenly turned his back and pointed at the shadowy wall. 'Who,' he asked, 'but a savage possessed by a devil could have conceived of that as a decoration?' He was pointing to a life-sized, coarsely daubed picture of a wild boar dying, its throat cut, and gouts of scarlet blood. Other agonies of animals went away into all the shadows.

'Sport!' he hissed. 'It's deviltry!'
'That's perhaps true,' Sylvia said.⁸⁸

Consett's interpretation of the passionate forces that seek to destroy an individual's sense of balance is one of many, as are Sylvia's dabblings in and her preferring to "pin my faith on" the spiritualism of Mrs. Vanderdecken and, "of course, Freud."⁸⁹ Here are three

⁸⁷ Ibid., 38-39.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 53.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 52.

'explanations', with a fourth provided by the mythology of Astarte Syrica,⁹⁰ all of which seek to give an account of this "deviltry". No explanation is entirely complete, but all recognize the presence of Sylvia's kind of passion, though she comes to see that Father Consett's insights are perhaps nearest to an understanding of her. A Freudian interpretation would give no better an account, in terms of the tetralogy, than a mythological one. Instead, the question that must be asked is: how do society and its individual members propose to live in harmony in the presence of the kind of emotion Sylvia embodies?

It is a question that society, with the exception of Christopher and Mark, never answers, other than in terms of a refusal to face and control such a destructive force within itself. In Sylvia's view of the war, we see one aspect of this power at work. Even though Ford "no more [backs] the political opinions of General Campion than those of Sylvia Tietjens, who considered that the World War was just an excuse for male agapemones * * *",⁹¹ we should see Sylvia's thoughts as both revealing a form of "objective correlative" for her own passion as well as the kind of destructiveness it can lead to on a social plane. Thus, Sylvia's experiences at the front, in Part Two of No More Parades, provide a startling picture of what her passion leads to:

The real compassion in the voice of that snuffling, half-drunken old man had given her a sense of that enormous wickedness. . . . These horrors, these infinities of pain, this atrocious condition of the world had been brought about in order that men should indulge themselves in orgies of

⁹⁰Ibid., 51-52.

⁹¹S. Hynes, "Three Dedicatory Letters to Parade's End", 524.

promiscuity. . . . That in the end was at the bottom of male honour, of male virtue, observance of treaties, upholding the flag. . . . An immense warlock's carnival of appetites, lusts, ebrieties . . . And once set in motion, there was no stopping it. . . . This state of things would never cease. . . . Because once they had tasted of the joy -- the blood -- of this game, who would let it end? . . . These men talked of these things that occupied them there with the lust of men telling dirty stories in smoking-rooms. . . . That was the only parallel!⁹²

Christopher provides other "parallels" that do include honour and virtue.⁹³ But, what is important about Sylvia's comment is that, while it looks back to the walls of the hotel at Lobscheid, it results in an incident that tells us a great deal about her, as, sitting in the hotel room at Rouen, she becomes drawn into her surroundings:

But the tumult increased to an incredible volume: even the thrillings of the near-by gramophone of two hundred horse-power, or whatever it was, became mere shimmerings of a gold thread in a drab fabric of sound. She screamed blasphemies that she was hardly aware of knowing. She had to scream against the noise: she was no more responsible for the blasphemy than if she had lost her identity under an anaesthetic. She had lost her identity. . . . She was one of this crowd!⁹⁴

The loss of identity suggests that Sylvia has become a part of what surrounds her, and marks one of the rare moments in the tetralogy where she does obtain a glimpse of the connection between her own behaviour and that of other people or society at large. Otherwise, she speaks of herself as being separate from society, and divorces herself from its actions and motives. In other words, Sylvia cannot see that the

⁹²No More Parades, 186-187.

⁹³Ibid., 204-205.

⁹⁴Ibid., 188.

motives she attributes to the other characters' behaviour may, in fact, be a description of her own. But, like the gold thread in the "drab fabric of sound" and the gold fabric of Sylvia's dress, Ford makes a link between her destructiveness and the type of passion she sees in the external world.

The essence of Sylvia's passion dates back to her childhood, when her desire to thrust a kitten's paws into walnut shells was met by the gardener's threat to tan her backside. It is a physical challenge that is paralleled by Gunning in The Last Post, both he and Mr. Carter suffering from the bloodshot eyes that perhaps come as a result of trying to keep the world in some sort of focus against the force Sylvia personifies:

Oddly enough, it had given a queer pleasure, that returned always with the recollection. She had never otherwise in her life been threatened with physical violence but she knew that, within herself the emotion had often and often existed: If only Christopher had thrashed her within an inch of her life . . . Or yes -- there had been Drake. . . . He had half killed her: on the night before her wedding to Christopher. She had feared for the child within her! That emotion had been unbearable!⁹⁵

The "passion" for Drake becomes a longing "to be transfused by the mental agony that there she had felt: the longing for the brute who had mangled her: the dreadful pain of the mind. * * * She had, nevertheless, longing, but she knew it was longing merely to experience

⁹⁵The Last Post, p. 229.

again that dreadful feeling. And not with Drake."⁹⁶ This is the passion that drives Sylvia to be Christopher's tormentor; she is a woman whom we come to understand, whose view of the world we see fully, but one whose motives we can never really hope to explain. Neither Mrs. Vanderdecken nor Freud finally help her to understand herself, nor enable her or us to categorize the reasons for her actions. Even with her final release of her husband, in The Last Post, she remains the same enigmatic creature we first encountered, with a capacity for insight into people other than herself, with an incredulous ability for creating "shower-baths" and a mind that one can appreciate in the way her husband does.

Ultimately, she is a character to be pitied, as Mark does in The Last Post: "'You poor bitch! You poor bitch!'"⁹⁷ A prisoner of her own emotions, Sylvia is the opposite of her husband in that she cannot exercise control. She is a woman who is possessed by passion, a force that finally drives her to commit, by her own admission, acts of "vulgarity". Although she appears to have freedom, the passion she feels is a power that denies this appearance; it is a force that prevents her both from attaining freedom and from allowing others their liberty. Through the rhetorical device of making us see her point of view, something that is evidence of the author's love and respect for the freedom of each of his characters, we come to

⁹⁶Some Do Not . . ., 188. It is interesting to note that Ford also uses the word "longing" to describe Valentine's desire for furniture and fine clothing. See The Last Post, p. 241. Unlike Sylvia, Valentine manages to control her "longings" through a respect for Christopher and what he represents.

⁹⁷The Last Post, p. 238.

acknowledge Sylvia's limitations and her ability to affect or seduce the other characters. Noticeably, here, in Chapter Two of Some Do Not . . ., she "seduces" Father Consett into not being able to take Mass, in much the same way she influences Campion, Port Scatho and all the others who are captivated by her. Only Christopher and Mark, it seems, have the power to resist.

iv

Chapters Three and Four, of the first part of Some Do Not . . ., are very much a single unit, though they do not represent, as Heldman would have us believe, the first timeshift in the novel. Both chapters deal with the events that occur on that Friday afternoon, including the arrival of the "fair woman" prophesied by Father Consett. Again, Ford exhibits his willingness to mix modes of presentation, relating the afternoon's happenings from the distancing perspective provided by filtering them through Macmaster's and Christopher's points of view that same evening. Thus, Chapter Three begins: "At the slight creaking made by Macmaster in pushing open his door, Tietjens started violently."⁹⁸ Chapter Four ends with a qualification of this statement: "In that way the sudden entrance of Macmaster gave him a really terrible physical shock. He nearly vomited: his brain reeled and the room fell about."⁹⁹ That the series of occurrences begins and ends with a description of the "stresses" Christopher is suffering gives some

⁹⁸Some Do Not . . ., 59.

⁹⁹Ibid., 103-104.

indication where the primary interest of these chapters lies. It rests in an exploration of the pressures about which Christopher is now becoming aware, as he was not in the earlier breakfast scene:

He drank a great quantity of whisky in front of Macmaster's goggling eyes; but even at that he couldn't talk, and he dropped into his bed faintly aware of his friend's efforts to loosen his clothes. He had, he knew, carried the suppression of thought in his conscious mind so far that his unconscious self had taken command and had, for the time, paralysed both his body and his mind.¹⁰⁰

"Faintly aware" and "knew" are indicative of the degree to which Christopher is made to take notice of those forces his conscious mind once found possible to control. However, there is still a negative applied to the verb "to talk", the "couldn't" that becomes "could" in A Man Could Stand Up. The events of these two chapters help us to understand why this negative still exists; Christopher is isolated as a human being in a world that no longer comprehends him or his motives.

Ford carefully draws further distinctions between Christopher and Vincent Macmaster, differences that both reflect upon their respective abilities to distinguish between the genuine and false in antiques as well as in life, both being aspects of the former's "natural gifts". Such preliminary delineation also prepares us for what follows, particularly with regard to the aspects of Christopher's behaviour which Macmaster cannot understand. From the moment we begin to look back at the day through Macmaster's eyes,¹⁰¹ the contrast

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 104.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 66. "Macmaster sat down again and deliberately began to review the day. It had begun with disaster, and in disaster it had continued."

between his and Christopher's views of antiques should be borne in mind, since it questions Macmaster's ability to evaluate anything, including his friend's actions. Vincent is a man who both lacks Christopher's "natural gifts" and uses any knowledge he acquires for material gain, as in being called in to value items by Somerset House ("an occupation at once distinguished and highly profitable"¹⁰²). We should remember these insights when we see that Macmaster cannot understand why Tietjens later seems to throw opportunities to the wind.¹⁰³ The implication is that there is something wrong with Christopher, but Macmaster's judgement stems from his material bent. One of his limitations, like those of others in Parade's End, is that he cannot even begin to understand his friend's actions, and makes very little effort to do so.¹⁰⁴

This reservation about Macmaster's judgements also extends into his first meeting with Edith Ethel Duchemin, and the birth of a relationship that expresses another kind of passion, an affair that is deeply entwined in responses to Pre-Raphaelite images of emotion and morality. The "impression" made upon Macmaster by Edith Ethel is matched by her surroundings, "the ideal English home", "an ideal cure of souls for a wealthy clergyman of cultured tastes * * *."¹⁰⁵ The

¹⁰²Ibid., 60.

¹⁰³Ibid., 65-66.

¹⁰⁴See also Some Do Not . . ., 26.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 70.

suggestion is that the intimacy is nurtured far more by "ideal" external objects than by any internal qualities in the characters themselves -- all of which takes us back to Macmaster's failure to distinguish between genuine and fake Chippendale, though he does not hesitate to express an opinion about it. Here, his sensibility is inundated by the images of the standard rose-trees, whose flowers Edith Ethel continually surrounds herself with for their effect; the paintings of Simeon Solomon, "one of the weaker and more frail aesthetes"; the "tradition" whose best objects are reserved in an inner "sanctum" for "the elect" to see.¹⁰⁶ It is the "tradition" for which Macmaster falls, rather than for any qualities in its people, and the hollow ring of his passion dates from this observation.

Ford presents such initial details from Macmaster's point of view, allowing the reader to view the degree to which the Scot is impressed or 'seduced' by these objets. The entire way of life is carefully manipulated in order to correspond to the rules of "the elect", mannerisms and patterns of behaviour being described in terms of "naturally" and "natural" as if they are so: "[Edith] added, with a faint and rather absent smile, the word, 'Naturally.' Macmaster at once saw that it was natural for a clergyman to be much occupied during the week-ends."¹⁰⁷ This kind of behaviour, which includes Edith's smile, covers what is in effect happening, and we are quickly reminded what she is trying to screen: "A rather considerable volume of harsh

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 70-71.

sound was coming through the end wall of the room -- the barking of dogs, apparently the hurried removal of pieces of furniture or perhaps of packing cases, guttural ejaculations."¹⁰⁸ "Harsh" is a word later associated with the Reverend Duchemin,¹⁰⁹ and it may be presumed that he is now undergoing one of his attacks. More importantly, there is Edith's attempt to withdraw to the garden and "my husband's roses", her posing and resemblance to the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, the "higher morality" in which Valentine Wannop believes for so long.

Macmaster is totally captivated by this manifestation of the "tradition", Mrs. Duchemin's seeming perfection and circumspection echoing the earlier lines Christopher had so severely jibed at:

"She walks, the lady of my delight,
A shepherdess of sheep;
She is so circumspect and right:
She has her thoughts to keep."¹¹⁰

(One remembers who was shepherding whom across the platform at Ashford, as the "drifting" women were herded there.) But, it is not until Chapter Five that we see the full picture of the "tradition", and the disparity that exists between its verbal coinage of circumspection and rightness and its inability to find a level of emotional existence that does not result in the scatological madness of the Rev. Duchemin or the "dotty" behaviour of "those who invent gossip frequently".¹¹¹ Seeing

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 71.

¹⁰⁹ For example, see 124.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 30-31.

¹¹¹ The Last Post, p. 98.

the "tradition" from Macmaster's point of view allows a perspective that will make such a judgement more emphatic.

v

Our attention is now drawn to the events at the golf club and their aftermath, when the haunt of the Tory Englishman is broken into by a modern Englishwoman and two city "swipes" who talk "smut".¹¹² Initially, we are shown the "club" through Macmaster's consciousness; his is the outsider's view that allows us to see that "for these Tories at least, this was really the end of the world. The last of England!"¹¹³ The "club" that appeared to work so well for the men involved is now falling apart, paralleled on the microcosmic scale by Christopher's marital problems, which at one time might have been hushed up. Now, with the disintegration of the social milieu, this no longer proves feasible. The social crisis demands a different set of responses.

Thus, the events on the golf course are the last straw for men like Campion and Christopher -- a signal that the "club" cannot really cope with what is happening and that its values are indeed crumbling. What is more, the new membership, "social swipes [like] Sandbach",¹¹⁴ also brings with it a different set of standards that takes another view of life. Sandbach, for example, assumes that Christopher's relationship with Macmaster is motivated by the former's need to get

¹¹²Some Do Not . . ., 79.

¹¹³Ibid., 78.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 99.

"out of scrapes with girls", when the reverse is true. Christopher's curt rejoinders to "the son of an ennobled mayor of Middlesborough" prompt Sandbach to use his inaccurate presumptions against Tietjens in a conversation with General Campion. In doing so, Sandbach attributes his own motives for action to another human being, without taking the trouble to ascertain or even imagine whether he is falsifying the situation or not.

However, the new membership does contain one person who, if she has not paid her entrance fee, deserves admission to the club on the grounds that she represents a vitality sadly lacking there. Her sudden appearance makes Christopher aware of the gradual death of the social framework in which he has existed. He feels, for the first time, "as if he were in a light museum, looking at specimens. . . ."115 -- the specimens being his fellow golfers. This sense of looking at something as if it belongs to the past marks the beginning of the end of the "club" and all it stands for. By the time Some Do Not . . . concludes, Christopher has resigned his membership, and his withdrawal dates from his view of the "museum". The Balliol voice can now no longer guarantee the smooth running of the system by a word or letter in the right place. Thus, the whole episode on the golf course has something grotesque and passé about it, as if we are looking at relics. The scene becomes comic because the values by which Tory endeavours might have been judged are now no longer universally accepted. The ridiculous creeps in, as the policeman looks like "a lobster just

115 Ibid., 88.

boiled", and Christopher "like a rhinoceros seeing purple".¹¹⁶ Into this situation runs Valentine Wannop, her athletic figure contrasting with the lobster, the rhinoceros, and the men who are lame,¹¹⁷ her voice reminding them of the youthful exuberance most of them have lost: "She called in a shrill, high voice, like a young cockerel's * * * ."118

If Valentine's sudden appearance gives us a perspective upon the deterioration in England's "club", there is also the insight Christopher provides -- particularly in his subsequent conversation with General Campion. Their discussion is important, for it involves one of the first instances of Christopher's actions being misconstrued. Several critics have placed the blame for these errors squarely upon Christopher's shoulders; so it is as well to choose this example for an examination of the framework Ford erects that prevents our judging Tietjens harshly. Unless we gauge these minor incidents correctly, we will emerge with a distorted reading of the whole.

The debate between Christopher and Campion concerns Christopher's presumed marital infidelities. Campion's comments rarely

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 88, 89.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 33, 74 and 85.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 90. It is worth noting that this image is echoed elsewhere in the tetralogy. Thus, Christopher's first hallucination, while at the front, is that of "that splash: it was in the shape of a healthy rooster * * * ." A Man Could Stand Up, 311. Valentine also speaks about roosters in connection with Christopher's masculinity. See The Last Post, pp. 254-255. This repetition is both indicative of Ford's eye for detail, and, as an image, it focuses our attention upon an essential part of Christopher's being that Valentine helps to rescore.

rise above cliché, and his arguments reveal a complete lack of trust in his godson. It is this lack of trust that is important, since it indicates an absence of "harmony" -- a quality that should exist between friends, relations and gentlemen. Christopher himself comments upon the breakdown of "harmony" at a later stage in the tetralogy:

'One's friends ought to believe that one is a gentleman. Automatically. That is what makes one and them in harmony. Probably your friends are your friends because they look at situations automatically as you look at them. . . . Mr. Ruggles knew that I was hard up. He envisaged the situation. If he were hard up, what would he do? Make a living out of the immoral earnings of women. . . . * * * Naturally he believed that I was the sort of fellow to sell my wife. So that's what he told my father. The point is, my father should not have believed him.'¹¹⁹

It is this inability to see things from another point of view, as do the novelist and his readers, that lies at the heart of so many of the misunderstandings which take place in Parade's End, especially those that affect Christopher Tietjens. Critics like Kennedy¹²⁰ and Kashner are surely wrong when they lay the blame for these happenings at Christopher's feet. For example, Kashner argues that Christopher's is not, as some critics have suggested, a "real soul in harmony that [is] destroyed", but that of a man who, "like his world, [is] living a form without substance, and that it is indeed that form which is destroyed."¹²¹ Miss Kashner questions his role as a "saint", who is

¹¹⁹No More Parades, 255.

¹²⁰A. Kennedy, "Tietjens' Travels: Parade's End as Comedy", Twentieth-Century Literature, XVI (1970), 85-95.

¹²¹"Tietjens' Education", 153.

"so much in harmony with his soul that he could not help doing good".¹²² She claims that Ford "makes it quite clear that a man who has not saved himself cannot save another, really * * * ." ¹²³ She supports her argument by listing some of the cases where the results of his "salvations" end in disaster, because his "actions proceed of a convention which is not wholly harmonious with his soul."¹²⁴ It is the way she details these disasters that is most revealing:

And therefore the results of his 'salvations' of others are virtually always disastrous. He saves MacMaster for Mrs. Duchemin and the ultimate result is that a baby is aborted and a social system erected which deeply hurts the rejected Valentine. He saves Valentine from the men at the golf course, only to ruin her reputation entirely. He takes Sylvia back, only to subject her to seven years of hell, living with his silence, his distaste for her. He lends MacMaster a great deal of money, driving Mrs. MacMaster nearly mad with rage against himself, so that she takes it out on Valentine and adds to the chaotic situation which nearly causes Valentine to miscarry. He saves ONine Morgan's life by refusing him a pass to go home (where his wife's lover would kill him), and ONine is killed as a result of being still on duty. Tietjens has not saved himself. His actions (with the exception of the last) proceed automatically from his blind acceptance of conventions, and they bring destruction to him and to others.¹²⁵

It is that "automatically" which one wishes to pick up. If we return to Tietjens' thoughts on harmony, there the word is used to describe the conditions which should exist between friends, but do not; that is what leads to Christopher's eventual declaration that he has not a single

¹²² Ibid., 156.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 156-157.

friend in the world.¹²⁶ What is at the heart of all these disasters is, as Kashner points out, "a lack of harmony between men".¹²⁷ But the absence of harmony is not Christopher's fault. Neither is the fact that the principles he adheres to are no longer shared by the majority of people. Christopher still continues to believe that such a condition as harmony is necessary for friendship -- that, as friends or lovers, one should know "automatically", or make an effort to know, what the other person thinks. This idea and Christopher's other principles are not what leads to the catalogue of errors Miss Kashner cites. The pattern of cause and effect she suggests is not one that exists in the tetralogy, particularly when she exaggerates the situation with assumptions about aborted pregnancies. These disasters are not directly traceable to "a convention which is not wholly harmonious with his soul"; for Christopher, whose soul is that of an individual who "hated no man",¹²⁸ is a character whose altruistic principles are in tune with his soul.

Instead, these disasters stem from the failure of many of the other characters to believe in principles like "harmony" or altruism. They fail to make the effort to go beyond their egotistic preoccupations in order to see whether someone can behave differently. Instead, they attribute their own sordid motives to everyone's actions, and Christopher's presence makes us see this all the more clearly. For

¹²⁶No More Parades, 23.

¹²⁷"Tietjens' Education", 158.

¹²⁸Some Do Not . . ., 102.

example, he lends money to Macmaster in order that his friend may keep himself 'clean', so that Vincent may not suffer the reputation of living on Edith's money. But Mrs. Duchemin fails to see this, or even to try and understand Tietjens' motives. The disastrous result of Christopher's "salvation" is her fault and not his. Our sympathy is with him, and the rhetoric of the novel, as will be shown, makes us judge negatively those who fail his trust, his good intentions and faith in them as human beings. His actions do proceed "automatically", but not from a convention that is at odds with his being, but from one which is an integral part of his self, the quality that sets him apart and which others find so intolerable because it reflects upon their own failings. When Christopher does decide on a more personal response to life, we feel that this is society's loss as we have been shown how impossible it is for him to exist within such a framework. As a result, the "automatically" that should exist between friends narrows itself down to two. But there is a sense of failure about this as well as triumph. The public life has lost what only the private life can nourish.

These attempts to look at Christopher in a more negative light than he deserves prevent us from understanding the qualities that make him a man who retains his integrity while others, like Macmaster, sell theirs. His "salvations", like Edward Ashburnham's, are based upon a mixture of eighteenth-century benevolence and sentimentalism, two qualities that are looked upon as being positive rather than

negative.¹²⁹ That they are treated by society as negative acts is an indication not only of how far it has disintegrated into cellular rather than unified structures, but also how Christopher's principles of altruism and benevolence are opposed to the present standards of greed and self-advancement. Here, as the epigraph to No More Parades suggests, men of intellect are counted as refuse in favour of the sensuous vagaries of Macmaster's prose, where words no longer have meanings but can be changed and abused for any desired effect, whether it is to disguise the truth about personal relations or about war aims. Kennedy is right when he points to the "direct simplicity" of Tietjens' story, for it is the simplicity of his vision that stands in contrast to the endless complication of the world that surrounds him. But even assuming, for the sake of argument, that Parade's End is a Comedy, rather than a Tragi-comedy, it is difficult to see the justness of Kennedy's claim that "we are not meant to grieve at the protracted suffering caused Tietjens by a corrupt society. Rather we should laugh at and ultimately with him. We should also revel in those other feelings of release, freedom and clear vision that come with the best of comedy."¹³⁰ Such an argument seems an extension of the more critical

¹²⁹ It is a mistake to assume that Ford wants us to view Christopher as a "Victorian", as does Paul Wiley: Novelist of Three Worlds, p. 227. Tietjens' is an eighteenth-century figure; another indication of this is his statement that there has been nothing of value written since the eighteenth century, with the exception of a novel by Mrs. Wannop. See Some Do Not . . ., 145. Interestingly enough, Mrs. Wannop emerges as a character with similar traits to those exhibited by Christopher. For example, like Tietjens, she cannot stand servants among her "'intimate things'". See Some Do Not . . ., 12 and 157.

¹³⁰ "Tietjens' Travels", 85.

and detached view Kashner proposes, which finds its most absurd expression in Kennedy's representation of Christopher's suffering:

[His loss of memory] is part of the destruction in Tietjens of the repressive habit; it is part of the process which will refine out of him the dogmatic Tory and free in him the erotically successful comic hero. That he loses his mind, his most prized asset, should not be regarded as tragic or pathetic. Of course, any suffering looked at too closely becomes unbearable. But we are not asked to look closely at Tietjens' private loss. Instead we are given the very funny picture of Tietjens laboriously trying to memorize the Encyclopedia Britannica and being unable at one point to answer a question about Metternich because he had not yet reached the 'M's.' Suffering of this sort seems to be so deserved that it cannot be tragic.¹³¹ (my emphasis)

Such a criticism can only be the result of dealing in too many oppositions: Tory or "erotically successful hero", comedy or tragedy. The tetralogy does not deal with these antitheses, the tones are mixed and characters, like Christopher, do not change as radically as Kennedy suggests. Tietjens retains most of the Tory attributes that we see in Some Do Not We feel for him rather than laugh at him, as he suffers because of these qualities of goodness. If we laugh at him, we laugh at these qualities, and, as a result, the work collapses.

As already discussed, what changes is Christopher's stand towards the emotional life, and the way in which he expresses passion. Sylvia puts her finger on the problem when she sees him as "'Modelling himself on Our Lord. . . . But Our Lord was never married. He never touched on topics of sex. Good for Him. . . .'"¹³² As Christopher

¹³¹ Ibid., 88.

¹³² No More Parades, 161.

later observes: "'But my problem will remain the same whether I'm here or not. For it's insoluble. It's the whole problem of the relations of the sexes.'"¹³³ The predicament, as Sylvia points out, is one that "Our Lord" never seemed to have dealt with, but which Christopher must face. With the crisis that comes, he is, as already discussed, a "beginner".¹³⁴ It is as a "beginner" that he must face the world of passion, and both our sympathy and judgement are exercised in seeing him face the problem of his relations with women, a dilemma he has not really had to confront until his wife's marital infidelities force it upon him. Parade's End is the story of a "goodman", as his brother Mark calls him,¹³⁵ who finds he has to face a part of himself which, had society remained in a state of equilibrium, would probably never have surfaced. That he is a man of principles makes the situation more difficult, but makes its solution one that does not compromise human integrity and honesty.

This perspective upon Christopher's character is necessary if we are to properly view incidents such as his conversation with Campion at the end of Part One, Chapter Four. Indeed, the formulation of such a view is important if we are to comprehend other matters such as Sylvia's condemnations of Christopher, her views of passion and human conduct, or the passion which grows between Valentine and Christopher (involving their discovery of where they stand in relation to other

¹³³ Ibid., 249.

¹³⁴ Some Do Not . . ., 224.

¹³⁵ The Last Post, p. 284.

people's behaviour and moral standards). As far as Christopher is concerned, a distinction between "principles" and "conventions" can help us understand why we are not called upon to be more critical of him -- a distinction that critics like Kashner fail to make.¹³⁶ In the conversation with Campion, we see how, for Christopher, the issues are questions of principle rather than matters of social convention. Campion, refusing to believe what his godson tells him, only wants "a plausible story to tell Claudine. Or not even plausible. An obvious lie as long as it shows you're not flying in the face of society * * * ." ¹³⁷ For him, it is a matter of keeping up appearances, whether or not this involves lies. The truth is irrelevant, especially when it fails to sound as convincing as a lie: "'Then I'll take it that you tell me a lie meaning me to know that it's a lie.'" ¹³⁸ That is what makes men like Dreyfus unbearable for Campion: "'* * * fellows like that unsettle society. You don't know where you are. You can't judge. They make you uncomfortable. . . . A brilliant fellow too!'" ¹³⁹

¹³⁶This is a distinction that, while it is difficult to maintain, does help us to distinguish between the principles that are fundamental to Christopher's personality and the social conventions practised by people like Macmaster and Edith Ethel. For the most part, Christopher's actions are based upon principles which require the use of conventions when these are in accord with what he believes. Thus, Sylvia's distinction has a relevance here: "'I tell you he's so formal he can't do without all the conventions there are and so truthful he can't use half of them.'" Some Do Not . . ., 46.

¹³⁷Some Do Not . . ., 97.

¹³⁸Ibid., 95.

¹³⁹Ibid., 98.

That is to say, "you" cannot judge by the conventions with which "you" operate, ultimately because these are founded upon lies and deceit, rather than on a love of truth.

This "love of truth" is at the bottom of Tietjens' principles:

'I am really, sir, the English public schoolboy. That's an eighteenth-century product. What with the love of truth that -- God help me! -- they rammed into me at Clifton and the belief Arnold forced upon Rugby that the vilest of sins -- the vilest of all sins -- is to peach to the head master! That's me, sir. Other men get over their schooling. I never have. I remain adolescent. These things are obsessions with me. Complexes, sir!'¹⁴⁰

Thus, he acts out of a concern for what he believes is "right": "But he had behaved rightly! It was not mere vanity. There was the child up at his sister Effie's. It was better for a boy to have a rip of a father than a whore for mother!"¹⁴¹ With this preoccupation with what is right, and not what appears to be acceptable, Christopher's and Campion's argument over the castles has the same kind of relevance as the earlier distinction made between Christopher and Macmaster regarding their judgement of antiques. We see how Campion's is the same sort of "muddle-headed frame of mind" that eventually allows men like Sandbach to get away with so much: "[Tietjens] was considering that it was natural for an unborn fellow like Sandbach to betray the solidarity that should exist between men. And it was natural for a childless woman like Lady Claudine Sandbach with a notoriously, a flagrantly unfaithful husband, to believe in the unfaithfulness of the husbands of

¹⁴⁰ No More Parades, 248.

¹⁴¹ Some Do Not . . ., 100.

other women!"¹⁴²

In such a situation, language becomes debased and the world of personal relations founded upon endless deceit. It is not to be wondered at that Sylvia's kind of personality finds room in which to move and torment her husband, as society so readily permits the distortion of language and falsehood. Under these conditions, her passion grows unchecked, even by her husband's desire to do what is right, protect his son and "live within his income, he wanted to subtract that child from the influence of his mother."¹⁴³ Indeed, Christopher's longing to act on his principles increases Sylvia's antipathy towards him. For she comes to realize that he is living by standards that expose her lies to herself. These values are the product of a mind that she once claimed to know and to be bored by,¹⁴⁴ but which she begins to see she doesn't know. As a result she becomes increasingly attracted towards Christopher; but her longing is to possess him and make him a prisoner of a passion like her own. For not to do so would be to admit to herself that she is not free, while acknowledging that there exists one person in the world who can achieve a degree of freedom and independence. In this sense, it is Sylvia who is Eve, not Valentine.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Ibid., 101.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 103.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 46.

¹⁴⁵ See Ford Madox Ford: Modern Judgements, pp. 26-27, for a listing of some of the interpretations of Parade's End, including Valentine as Eve.

In this way, our view of minor incidents affects our perspective upon the tetralogy as a whole. Events such as the conversation between Campion and Christopher allow us to see how severely Christopher's principles are challenged or threatened, and yet how his values are ultimately what matters. Only by paying close attention to details can we hope to fully realize the justness of his values -- even when these details appear to be irrelevant discussions about antiques or Tudor castles. But these 'irrelevancies' are part of the novel's rhetoric, included in order to mould our judgements about the characters involved -- especially relevant when these characters come to make statements or reveal a point of view about larger issues such as human relationships or passion. Ford's method of fashioning our responses is nowhere more evident than in the ensuing chapter -- the breakfast at Duchemin's -- a piece of writing by which all readers of Ford's seem impressed.

vi

As if checked for a moment in their stride, all the others paused -- for a breath. Then they continued talking with polite animation and listening with minute attention. To Tietjens that seemed the highest achievement and justification of English manners!¹⁴⁶

For many readers, this insight into Christopher's attitude towards what takes place during the breakfast at Duchemin's may be a criticism of him, an acknowledgement that he believes in appearances or

¹⁴⁶Some Do Not . . ., 128.

is forced to accept them. Tietjens' thoughts in Chapter Six, where he expresses his distaste for Edith, together with what we learn during his conversation with Campion in Chapter Four, these insights should warn us that such a judgement is inadequate. For Christopher this is the highest justification of English manners, in that it is in accord with his beliefs about social decorum. Without an attempt to maintain a "surface calm", society becomes as "lachrymally emotional as the Italian or as drily and epigrammatically imbecile over inessentials as the American * * * ." ¹⁴⁷ Thus, people should be able to deal with a predicament like the Reverend Duchemin's outbursts without undue fuss. The pattern of behaviour is entirely in accord with his principles.

For at least two other characters, the situation is different. By narrating the central episode of this chapter through predominantly three viewpoints, those of Edith Ethel, Macmaster and Tietjens, Ford indicates how, for the two Pre-Raphaelites, their manners are not in tune with their principles. They use manners as a "screen", not in order to maintain a "surface calm", but in order to continue, what Christopher calls, a "sham sexual morality". ¹⁴⁸ It is the absence of hypocrisy that distinguishes Tietjens' support of manners from Edith's and Macmaster's. Their code of conduct shows an interest in chastity not as a principle, but because they find it "thrilling".

In Chapter Five, Ford explores the aspect of passion that is revealed in the relationship which develops between Edith and Macmaster,

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 223.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 29.

culminating, in Some Do Not . . ., in the latter's betrayal of his friendship with Christopher when he receives a knighthood. As Chapter One opened with a contrast between the two young men, so Chapter Five begins with the juxtaposition between Edith and Valentine, as the latter jibes at Edith's notion of chastity. The scenic description is part of the Pre-Raphaelite "tradition", but the flowers, fruits and ornaments that so impressed Macmaster have now become protective screens: "* * * a congeries of silver largenesses made as if a fortification for the head of the table; two huge silver urns, a great silver kettle on a tripod, and a couple of silver vases filled with the extremely tall blue spikes of the delphiniums that, spreading out made as if a fan."¹⁴⁹ The excessive ornamentation also contrasts with the Wannop household's "frugality" which Christopher later finds.¹⁵⁰ In addition, our recollection of his conversation with Macmaster in the railway carriage means that we cannot help but be critical of the Duchemins' "sanctum" and their unquestioning support for Ruskin.

The tone of the chapter is comic and satiric, even though, under differing conditions, the sight of a scatological madman might be cause for our sympathy. Mrs. Duchemin is trying hard to cover the "post coitum tristis" outbursts of her husband, the fascination of the word "chaste" for him indicating the tradition at its most corrupt. It is worth pointing out that Edith Ethel first brings up the subject of chastity here: "'There's something beautiful, there's something

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 104.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 149.

thrilling about chastity * * * ."¹⁵¹ The view contrasts sharply with Christopher's earlier declaration, where he maintained that chastity was a worthwhile principle to follow for it avoided social complications and disorder and the hypocrisy of the "lachrymose" polygamists who now find it exciting: "'Chaste!' [Duchemin] shouted. 'Chaste, you observe! What a world of suggestion in the word . . .' * * * He shouted three obscene words and went on in his Oxford Movement voice: 'But chastity . . .'"¹⁵² Illustrating how Ford wishes us to view the same word differently in another context, it is noticeable that the word chastity is here used to describe the Scots girl who was Rossetti's model for Alla Finestra del Cielo, the heavenly aspects of Maggie Simpson's angular frame, and her social position ("'She was naturally of that class'"¹⁵³) enhancing the excitement of her presumed chastity. This takes us back to Christopher's portrayal of the "'obese, oily man who never took a bath'", standing with his "'five-shilling model'" beside a mirror and gazing at their reflections while "'gurgling'" about passion."¹⁵⁴

Of particular interest in Chapter Five is Ford's depiction of the passion between Edith and Vincent that grows amid the choric background provided by her husband. Mrs. Duchemin is drawn to the literary language of the Scot, expressions that are of the "tradition", words

¹⁵¹Ibid., 110.

¹⁵²Ibid., 127.

¹⁵³Ibid., 126.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., 28.

that act as screens for reality rather than descriptions of it, language that finally says nothing: "'One understands . . . One is surely trained and adapted to understand . . . that these great scholars, these abstracted cognoscenti . . .'"¹⁵⁵ It is the language of the opening paragraph of Macmaster's little monograph, a piece of prose that sets the tone for a relationship which deals in movements under tablecloths, disguised railway trips and a secret marriage. This is language that contrasts with that used by the Yorkshireman, marked by its directness, or Valentine's saying what she wants to say regardless of the consequences: "'Oh, chuck it!'"¹⁵⁶ Finally, it stands in juxtaposition to the norm of clarity, precision and the anti-embellishment of Ford's prose itself.

Ford manages to deflate Edith's and Vincent's expressions through the use of hyperbole, as "blissful waves" pass between them, and Macmaster uses "exactly the right words".¹⁵⁷ The wallowing in sensuous prose which Vincent missed earlier is now experienced by Edith, aided by the sight and scent of her beloved roses. She herself plays the verbal game, as she buckles about "her her armour of charm",¹⁵⁸ again a form of screen or protection, to address the clumsy

¹⁵⁵Ibid., 118.

¹⁵⁶For example, see A Man Could Stand Up, 284 and 385. It is a phrase Christopher picks up, signifying the way in which Ford makes us see how they gradually come to share a world of "talk". See A Man Could Stand Up, 385 and 465.

¹⁵⁷Some Do Not . . ., 118.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

being who claims her attention: "'Oh!' she answered. 'If it wasn't my husband's doing it would look like ostentation. I'd find it ostentatious for myself.' She found a smile, radiant yet muted."¹⁵⁹ "Ostentation" is precisely the right word for such a display, the overblown language and the need to find a smile growing as she yearns for "the kindredly running phrases -- as if out of books she had read! -- of the smaller man."¹⁶⁰ It is exactly the kind of language Ford reacted against in his poetry, and which led to his rejection of some of Ezra Pound's verse.¹⁶¹

The language and gestures also act as a screen for a battle for domination that Edith visualizes between herself and Christopher for her man. In *Macmaster*, Edith sees her desire for the "male tender, in-fitting; the complement of the harmony, the meat for consumption, like the sweet pulp of figs. . . ."¹⁶² In other words, *Macmaster* is a reflection of herself in a mirror which she hopes she can transform to her own will. As a result, she resents Christopher, the man of "right intuitions", because he is "the male threatening, clumsily odious and external!"¹⁶³ From this moment in time, her desire to possess becomes obsessive as she tries to force *Macmaster* to sever all connections with Tietjens, and resents the debts that her lover owes him, loans that

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 119.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ See Hugh Kenner, "The Poetics of Speech" (1970), in Ford Madox Ford: Modern Judgements, pp. 169-180.

¹⁶² Some Do Not . . ., 120.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

Tietjens pressed on his friend so he could preserve his independence and self-identity. It is an obsession that continues into The Last Post, and is one of the contributing factors to her passion. Edith is the kind of woman who cannot allow her man his own sense of selfhood, but must mould him in her own image: "She devoured Macmaster's face with her eyes * * * ."164

The hyperbolic use of language leads to the "complete heaven" of physical contact beneath the cloth, while continuing to ring words "with great neatness of phrase, but with what refinement!"165 Edith's devouring of the male is almost complete by the chapter's end: "She had a moment of fierce pleasure at the thought that Tietjens was not to be of the company: her man would be outsoaring the vulgarian of his youth, of his past that she didn't know. . . ."166 Possibly another reason for her dislike of Christopher is that he represents a past which she cannot possess. But the future fate of her companion can be hers to dominate, and Macmaster now begins his descent to a knighthood. The final picture sets the tone for his journey, being full of excess and complete with the necessary mirror: "He began to see himself; in the tall room, with the long curtains: a round, eagle mirror reflected them gleaming: like a bejewelled picture with great depths: the entwined figures."167 The chapter ends with a climaxing hyperbole that

164 Ibid., 122.

165 Ibid., 129.

166 Ibid., 131.

167 Ibid., 132.

achieves the intended effect of deflation, a sensuous outpouring that warrants our derision: "Afterwards he must come to the house to ask after her health and they would walk side by side on the lawn, publicly, in the warm light, talking of indifferent but beautiful poetries, a little wearily, but with what currents electrifying and passing between their flesh. . . . And then: long, circumspect years. . . ."168

The words are an amalgam of Pre-Raphaelite expressions -- "side by side", "circumspect" -- all of which undermine our view of their passion. Instead of a relationship that is a source of fruition, theirs will be a denial, a struggle for possession and mastery, an intimacy whose emptiness Valentine Wannop will come to see. It is a relationship that withers, that leads to no genuine growth of selfhood, as indicated by the fact that the direct presentation of their inner lives ceases to be of any real interest to the novelist. From now on, we are mainly presented with the other characters' views of them. Edith Ethel and Macmaster have 'captured' each other, preventing anything positive happening in the future. Ironically, Macmaster now treads like a conquerer, not realizing that it is his self that has been conquered.¹⁶⁹ Thus, the passion of the lady of the roses and the critic stands as a reminder of the negation that human relationships can contain; and the two fade, as individuals, into oblivion.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 133.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

Rhetorically, the novelist has allowed his readers to explore and realize this negation.

vii

In order to emphasize the criticism of the form of passion Edith and Macmaster express, Ford immediately shifts to a scene involving Christopher and Valentine. Here, the tone changes and with it Ford's use of language and his subject. We move from the overblown, decadent language of some examples of late-Victorian poetry to the concrete object, the precise word used to express the rhythm of everyday speech instead of a language that masks and kills:

Tietjens lit a pipe beside the stile, having first meticulously cleaned out the bowl and the stem with a surgical needle, in his experience the best of all pipe-cleaners, since, made of German silver, it is flexible, won't corrode and is indestructible. He wiped off methodically, with a great dock-leaf, the glutinous brown products of burnt tobacco, the young woman, as he was aware, watching him from behind his back.¹⁷⁰

The contrast is immense, focusing upon the meticulous cleaning of the pipe, the return of the needle to Tietjens' pocket and the concrete description of the surrounding scene. Here, there are no "blissful waves" of emotion between the couple that differs so much from Edith and Macmaster. At this stage, they remain "Dead silent: unable to talk * * * ." ¹⁷¹ However, this inability to talk will eventually lead to the gradual development of a relationship which, unlike that between

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 134.

the Pre-Raphaelite pair, is marked by a growing together rather than a battle for possession, involving a passion that results from a recognition of each other's faults and attributes instead of a devotion to an aesthetic tradition. Christopher develops the juxtaposition between the two couples as he views the "virginal cockiness" of his companion, as opposed to the "paolo-post Pre-Raphaelite prostitute" with whom his friend has become entangled: "'Poor Macmaster! He's finished. Poor devil: he'd better have ogled this kind. * * * You can cut it on his tombstone, you can write it on his card that a young man tackled on to a paolo-post Pre-Raphaelite prostitute. . . .'"¹⁷²

The shift to Valentine's point of view provides an insight into her first impressions of Christopher, that "fool" whom she regards as "the most extraordinary man: as mad as he was odious."¹⁷³ Their expression of passion builds upon a mild provocation on her part: "'I suppose you think that a mighty fine performance,' she said. * * * 'Setting poor, weak women in their places * * * . I suppose you soothe women like that, too. I pity your wife. . . .'"¹⁷⁴ But it is a comment delivered without the vindictiveness of Sylvia, as Valentine has the quality of being that allows her to withdraw or mellow her jibes at Tietjens. In Valentine's background lies a degree of humility that Sylvia lacks, a quality underlined by the "frugality" of her existence

¹⁷² Ibid., 136-137.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 138.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 143.

with her mother, a "frugality" she carries into her life with Christopher.

However, it is the night ride that brings Valentine and Christopher closer together, one of those moments in time that stand in the individual consciousness as a point around which subsequent experience revolves. Because we are primarily interested in Christopher's state of stress at this period, for Valentine's moment of immense change does not come until the war itself brings about a crisis in her life, the scene is mainly related from Christopher's viewpoint, Valentine's experience being shaded into the picture at a later date. It is only with this filling in of detail that we begin to realize the full significance of the night ride in the development of their love. Subsequently, we learn that Valentine also felt the same "impulse" Christopher experienced: "Great waves of blood rushed across her being as if physical forces as yet undiscovered or invented attracted the very fluid itself. The moon so draws the tides. Once before, for a fraction of a second, after the long, warm night of their drive, she had felt that impulsion."¹⁷⁵ Our interest lies as much in her discovery of the forces that propel her being, as in Christopher's awakening to them:

There came back to her overpoweringly the memory of their drive together and the moment, the overwhelming moment, when, climbing out of the white fog into the blinding air, she had felt the impulse of his whole body towards her and the impulse of her whole body towards him. A sudden lapse:

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 330.

like the momentary dream when you fall. . . . She saw the white disk of the sun over the silver mist and behind them was the long, warm night. . . .¹⁷⁶

The memory involves the repetition of significant objects and phrases, the sun and the moon dominating the original incident, unifying the masculine and feminine principles noticed in The Good Soldier, a symbolical expression that helps to crystallize the event in Valentine's mind. In addition, the "long, warm night" evokes memories of Tietjens' question "'That we've got through the night? . . .'"¹⁷⁷ The night, with its magic and mystery, is a moment that brings the two together, finding a place in the unconscious until it surfaces to give a form to experience. For example, the memory of "That magic night" recurs in A Man Could Stand Up, where Valentine sees it as "symbolical" of Christopher's capacity for becoming involved in unravellable messes.¹⁷⁸ But, its symbolic role is not confined to this function, and it stands as an incident that gives a depth and resonance to subsequent experience, a reminder of what life can be. In this sense, for Valentine and Christopher, it is the most important night in pre-war England.

The atmosphere of mystery encourages Christopher to become aware of his emotional being, a part of himself that has hitherto remained under control. The impressionistic landscape assists in this process, the mood it creates striking Christopher as being "absurd":

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 291.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 174.

¹⁷⁸ A Man Could Stand Up, 288.

"But the absurd thing was this mist! * * * Silly stuff! Magical! That was the word. A silly word. . . . South Country . . . In the North the old grey mists rolled together, revealing black hillsides!"¹⁷⁹ For him, the atmosphere involves release:

He had then forty-eight and three-quarter hours! Let them be a holiday! A holiday from himself above all: a holiday from his standards: from his convention with himself. From clear observation: from exact thought: from knocking over all the skittles of the exactitudes of others: from the suppression of emotions. . . . From all the wearinesses that made him intolerable to himself. . . . He felt his limbs lengthen, as if they too had relaxed.¹⁸⁰

Though some critics may take this passage as a negative criticism of his Toryism, it would be inaccurate to say that when, finally, Christopher decides he must live with Valentine he abnegates his standards and principles. Rather, the passion that develops allows him a framework in which he may keep his beliefs alive. This moment, during the ride with Valentine, is a temporary respite from the pressures he is living under, the persistent strain caused by the realization that Sylvia had "lured him on" and that his son may not be his.¹⁸¹ It is an instant where both Christopher and Valentine are reminded that experience need not be so intolerable and full of

¹⁷⁹ Some Do Not . . ., 159, 160.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 163-164.

¹⁸¹ Mizener is correct when he states that, contrary to Wiley's claim in Novelist of Three Worlds (p. 255), Christopher and Sylvia did not meet in a French railway compartment. See The Saddest Story, p. 510 and Some Do Not . . ., 154: "In a railway carriage; coming down from the Dukeries." This, as Mizener points out, is a reference to Nottinghamshire.

betrayals and falsehoods.

Indeed, it is a poetic moment for them both, without the accompaniments of Pre-Raphaelite verse and mirror-images of self-love. Ford effects the contrast by keeping their conversation upon concrete subjects, upon the discussion of Latin poetry and the German language, the opposite of the "tradition". Valentine and Christopher exhibit a respect for words and the meanings of words, as they discuss Latin nomenclature. The contrast with the pre-Raphaelite "tradition" is heightened by the moment when Christopher almost kisses Valentine:

Her otter-skin cap had beads of dew; beads of dew were on her hair beneath: she scrambled up, a little awkwardly: her cheeks bright. Her hair was darkened by the wetness of the mist, but appeared golden in the sudden moonlight.

Before she was quite up, Tietjens almost kissed her. Almost. An all but irresistible impulse.¹⁸²

This crystallizes into one clear poetic image, the associations of the sun and moon, the mist and its aura of mystery, one of those moments against which later experience is evaluated. Though Christopher resists the impulse because of the beliefs he holds, this event marks itself in his consciousness as a point at which he sees that feelings and emotions can be genuine and honest, and that passion need not end in the excesses of his friend's relationship with Edith, or his wife's relationship with him and the world in general.

As if by way of comment, Ford places an important Pre-Raphaelite expression in the final pages of the chapter: "They

¹⁸²Some Do Not . . ., 173.

wheeled the cart backwards off the motionless horse. Tietjens moved it two yards forward -- to get it out of sight of its own blood. Then they sat down side by side on the slope of the bank."¹⁸³ (My emphasis.)

Here marks the beginning of Ford's use of these phrases from Macmaster's favourite poet in a different setting, one that gives the words a meaning apart from the context of pre-Raphaelite verse. Thus, Ford is suggesting that it is not the words themselves that have the strained connotations that they have for Edith and Macmaster, but the use to which they are put.

The sudden arrival of Campion marks the end of Ford's picture of the pre-war world, as the warrior heralds the arrival of war and the beginning of the ostracism of Christopher Tietjens. These two concerns, the holocaust and public disapprobation, are to challenge Christopher's principles to the utmost, though we are reminded that he cannot do without them: "'Damm all principles! * * * But one has to keep going . . . Principles are like a skeleton map of a country -- you know whether you're going east or north.'"¹⁸⁴ Part One of Some Do Not . . . has prepared us for this challenge, while exploring various forms of passion. Ford utilizes the rhetoric of his craft -- point of view, the juxtaposition of characters with each other, the timeshift, his use of language, dialogue, landscape and objects -- to bring his readers to a developing awareness of the relative value of these kinds

¹⁸³ Ibid., 179.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 181.

of passion. The remainder of Some Do Not . . . develops these concerns, as we see how individuals confront their emotional lives under conditions where social decorum all but collapses.

viii

The jump from Part One to Part Two of Some Do Not . . . takes us a distance of five years, from June-July, 1912, to August, 1917. The gap is far more than a simple chronological one, since it involves Britain's entry into the First World War. By choosing a day in the penultimate year of the conflict, Ford indicates his preference for dealing with the outcome or results of war, rather than its initial impact, as the minds through which he reflects these changes struggle to give a pattern to their recent experience. The contrasts with pre-war England are immediate. Instead of beginning with the "perfectly appointed railway carriage" and its two gentlemanly occupants, Ford opens with the volatile temperament of Sylvia Tietjens. From her standpoint we see the changes that have occurred, a viewpoint about which we have had and will continue to have reservations.

Though not directly relating to the war, Ford presents the outcome of Sylvia's earlier promise to herself to settle down by her husband and practise a "chastity of life".¹⁸⁵ Adding a further dimension to the word "chastity", Ford asks us to view Sylvia's

¹⁸⁵Ibid., 189.

chastity as an expression of her emotionalism, a sudden decision based upon whim rather than principle: "She had [practised a chastity of life] ever since her return to her husband; and this not because of any attachment to her husband or to virtue as such, as because she had made the pact with herself out of caprice and meant to keep it."¹⁸⁶ Many of her subsequent decisions and attitudes are based upon, to use Bate's term, the "most fluid of foundations", namely her unpredictable and uncontrollable emotions which lead to an obsessive passion for her husband. This "foundation" must be kept in mind when we are faced with Sylvia's condemnations of Christopher's past behaviour.

Since we last met her at Lobscheid, Sylvia has spent a great deal of her time "turning down" men in an effort to madden them. The desire to feel people under her domination, victims of the same capricious emotions she experiences, is a very strong one in her personality, finding expression in the comparison she makes between herself and the fish-eagle: "The whole affair reminded her of herself in her relationship to the ordinary women of the barn-yard. . . ."¹⁸⁷ It is important that these "turnings-down" are viewed as a "sport", since this takes us back to Father Consett's use of the word in Part One, Chapter Two. There "sport" was connected with the idea of deviltry and possession, and, to a large extent, Sylvia shows herself as being a woman possessed by passions she is unable to control. Yet, if she can affect a large proportion of England's manhood, Christopher

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 184.

Tietjens now proves an exception. Another is his brother Mark; he also rejects the kind of passion that Sylvia feels, as well as the power that she exercises over other men. But, if she can influence the two brothers and make them respond to the attractions she exhibits in her "turnings-down", then her beliefs have an unqualified universal significance in that her generalizations apply to all men. In his presumed obstinacy, Christopher unknowingly defies all his wife represents, as does Mark with his refusal to believe Sylvia's lies. In their refusal, there is an echo of that "harmony" both men believe in, a reminder that all men do not behave as Sylvia claims, whether at home or on the battlefield. As a result of being unable to possess her husband, Sylvia finds him becoming an obsession, especially when she suspects something may be happening between Christopher and the "Girl Guide" -- the latter's powers of attraction proving incomprehensible to her. The struggle becomes titanic, as Sylvia seeks victory and complete domination of the skies.

One of Christopher's defences is his unaccountability, something of which he is not fully aware. As previously pointed out, Sylvia earlier claimed to know everything there was to know about him, and to be bored as a result:

Occasionally Sylvia was worried to know why people -- as they sometimes did -- told her that her husband had great gifts. To her he was merely unaccountable. His actions and opinions seemed simply the products of caprice -- like her own; and since she knew that most of her own manifestations were a matter of contrariety, she abandoned the habit of thinking much about him.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 193-194.

But, her lack of interest is due to the fact that she ascribes her own motivations to Christopher's behaviour, an error in judgement that she is forced to concede, when his mixture of "prophecy and politics" turns out to be correct. As a result, his "rightness" maddens her even more and, in her frustration, she hurls a plate at him.

Told from Sylvia's point of view, the scene is all the more effective as a depiction of their private life, because we see the way in which she torments Christopher, and how his taciturnity, which he believes in as a principle, has a negative effect on her. His silence is even more frustrating for Sylvia when we realize that she needs a conversation of sorts in order to employ her talent for using words as weapons to the full. Unless Christopher responds, there is no battle for her, and no possibility of victory. Thus, Sylvia punctuates her speeches with question marks, statements demanding an answer which she can then respond to in turn in an effort to wound. Apart from these questions, there is an irreconcilable gulf between the two of them, as they tend to lapse into silence: "They played that comedy occasionally, for it is impossible for two people to live in the same house and not have some common meeting ground. So they would each talk: sometimes talking at great length and with politeness, each thinking his or her thoughts till they drifted into silence."¹⁸⁹ Sylvia and Christopher are separate beings, each having little in common with the other, their sensibilities so opposed that their encounters bring the worst out in both of them. Finally, because there is so little between them, they

¹⁸⁹Ibid., 207.

tend not to understand each other fully. For all his genuine efforts at the front, Sylvia remains an enigma for Tietjens, a woman whom he can respect but cannot live with in any degree of harmony.

But, for Sylvia, there is a battle still to be fought, one in which she uses her ability to manipulate words and to fabricate descriptions of her relationship with Christopher. She can represent reality in such a way that it suits her own end, this being all the easier to achieve in an age of moral relativism. Thus, her account of their relationship may appear wholly true. But, if examined closely, we see that her arguments are severely open to question. For example, in her description of their marriage, she declares:

'Well, be proud when you die because of your honour. But, God, be humble about your . . . errors in judgement. You know what it is to ride a horse for miles with too tight a curb-chain and its tongue cut almost in half. . . . You remember the groom your father had who had the trick of turning the hunters out like that. . . . And you horse-whipped him, and you've told me you've almost cried ever so often afterwards for thinking of that mare's mouth. . . . Well! Think of this mare's mouth sometimes! You've ridden me like that for seven years. . . .'

She stopped and then went on again:

'Don't you know, Christopher Tietjens, that there is only one man from whom a woman could take 'Neither do I condemn thee' and not hate him more than she hates the fiend! . . .'¹⁹⁰

Sylvia is apparently claiming that, in his treatment of her, Christopher has exercised an error in judgement, that, in fact, she deserved to be treated in another way. But it is the manner in which she believes she should have been handled that betrays the falsehood of

¹⁹⁰Ibid., 217.

her argument:

'If,' Sylvia went on with her denunciation, 'you had once in our lives said to me: "You whore! You bitch! You killed my mother. May you rot in hell for it. . . ." If you'd only once said something like it . . . about the child! About Perowne! . . . you might have done something to bring us together. . . .'

Tietjens said:

'That's, of course, true!'¹⁹¹

One of the problems here is in deciding how seriously we should take Christopher's comment, or whether we should perhaps view it as part of his gentlemanly conduct or as an extension of his thesis that a woman who has been "let in for it by some brute" has the "right" and the "duty" to "let down a man."¹⁹² However, Sylvia's "denunciation" should also be viewed in the light of her longing to experience that "dreadful feeling" once again, "the longing for the brute who had mangled her * * *"¹⁹³ and her later wish that "Christopher had thrashed her within an inch of her life. . . ."¹⁹⁴ In addition, we should realize that, were Christopher to indulge in the actions Sylvia suggests, his behaviour would mean a denial of everything he stands for and an assertion of Sylvia's emotionalism. From what we have learned of the characters, to call his wife a "bitch" or "whore" to her face would run counter to the rudiments of his character. It would mean succumbing to the destructive passion she embodies, and becoming a man

¹⁹¹Ibid., 216.

¹⁹²Ibid., 218.

¹⁹³Ibid., 188.

¹⁹⁴The Last Post, p. 229.

for whom passion is a prison, rather than an eventual source of sustenance for himself and his ideals.

Thus, unless we pay close attention to what attitudes lie behind the view we are given by a particular character, we face the risk of emerging with too negative a judgement of Christopher's behaviour, based upon the ammunition provided by his wife and the people she 'seduces' to her side. That Ford initially presents the material from Sylvia's point of view allows us to see how easily this may be achieved, in a world that no longer subscribes to a central core of values. Yet, if we finally emerge from the chapter with a view of Sylvia which incorporates an awareness of her passion and her ability to manipulate and misuse language, we are also made to see what has contributed to this state. It is partly the result of her having been abused by men like Drake. Here is an event that clouds her subsequent experience, forcing upon her a touchstone by which she judges all male behaviour, making it impossible for her to accept her husband's motives and actions as being in any way honourable, because she feels Christopher should behave the way she does. In many respects, as with Leonora Ashburnham's strict upbringing, the past has determined the present self. Without the ability to face her own problems, or to internalize them, and without Dowell's gift of transcending his own viewpoint through an expression of creative passion, so that she could see the world and herself through another's eyes, Sylvia remains trapped by that past. In this respect, as with so many of his characters who are similarly placed, Ford makes us exercise sympathy and understanding, as well as judgement. Unlike Sylvia, we are

fortunate enough to see the world from another point of view.

The shift from Sylvia's to Christopher's viewpoint involves our seeing the other side of this "problem of the relations of the sexes". The juxtaposition confirms the contrast between the two characters, while giving us an insight into the stresses that all public and private relationships are under as a result of the war. On the personal level, the conflict has brought Christopher even further into contact with aspects of his personality that he has been able to control in the past. Now, deprived of the "shape of memory",¹⁹⁵ he finds difficulty in ordering his present experience. Faced with the continuous worry of domestic problems, by the pressure of war itself, and by the destruction of his reputation, Christopher looks to a "hard, frugal life" that will give him a degree of peace. His desire is for a kind of mysticism that will rid him of the hypocrisies of his age, a way of life that might be found by joining the Foreign Legion: "It would be restful to serve, if only as a slave, people who saw clearly, coldly, straight, not obliquely and with hypocrisy only, such things as should deviously conduce to the standard of comfort of hogs and to lecheries winked at. . . ." ¹⁹⁶ It is an ambition that belongs to the past, but one that still remains in accord with his character, finding its fruition in his relationship with Valentine Wannop, in a passion that nurtures these ideals.

All these problems Tietjens now faces are centred upon the

¹⁹⁵ Some Do Not . . ., 211.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 234.

arrival of Port Scatho with his accusations against Christopher's good name. Such is the pressure that Tietjens almost believes his accusers may be right: "Tietjens gave himself again for a moment to the luxury of self-pity. He considered that he was dull-minded, heavy, ruined, and so calumniated that at times he believed in his own infamy, for it is impossible to stand up for ever against the obloquy of your kind and remain unhurt in the mind."¹⁹⁷ That he does "stand up" is a testimony to the strength of his personality, and our sympathy goes with him in this effort. Worn down by the incessant pressure, his central core of selfhood manages to survive the strains that send a man like McKechnie mad. Or, to express this in terms he applies both to himself and Valentine Wannop: "His private ambition had always been for saintliness: he must be able to touch pitch and not be defiled. That he knew marked him off as belonging to the sentimental branch of humanity."¹⁹⁸ This form of heroism Valentine and he manage to achieve, as Katherine does in the Fifth Queen trilogy. However, here, matters are less clear cut, morality is threatened by ambiguity, and there is not the framework provided by a religious faith upon which to rely.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 235. This sentence is an indication that Christopher is concerned with the problems of 'standing up' prior to A Man Could Stand Up, possibly another signal that we are meant to judge his efforts equably throughout Parade's End.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 234. See also 143-144.

ix

"" . . . But you see . . . Don't you see?""

She said:

""No! What am I to see? I remember . . .""

The remainder of Part Two, of Some Do Not . . ., revolves around that afternoon and evening; it is seen from two points of view, those of Valentine and Christopher, which stand in contrast to Ford's previous juxtaposition between those of Sylvia and Christopher. This focus of interest upon Valentine and Christopher is important, for it involves the recognition that they share a passion for each other, a realization that is to be the one positive and creative thing Christopher will have with him at the front, and the source of his reconstruction. That a rebuilding of the framework of his life is necessary is shown by his conversation with Mark Tietjens, the "sound man" who has been led into erroneous judgements about his brother on account of the corrupt use of the "club" by a man like Ruggles. The system has failed, and the result is Christopher's ostracism. Mark finds that his laconic, unimaginative sensibility, which shares Christopher's belief in logic, clear-thinking and reason, no longer has a place in an England that denies these values. It is the beginning of the movement that will take Mark into isolation and withdrawal:

""* * * [these South Country swine are] incapable of understanding the motives of a gentleman. If you live among dogs they'll think you've the motives of a dog.""¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 267.

But, for Christopher, an alternative presents itself in his awareness of a passion for Valentine:

Christopher felt his jaw drop. Not a second before -- that very second! -- he had made up his mind to ask Valentine Wannop to become his mistress that night. It was no good, any more, he said to himself. She loved him, he knew, with a deep, an unshakable passion, just as his passion for her was a devouring element that covered his whole mind as the atmosphere envelops the earth. Were they, then, to go down to death separated by years, with no word ever spoken? To what end? For whose benefit? The whole world conspired to force them together! To resist became a weariness!²⁰⁰

It is not until later in Some Do Not . . . that we learn how, from Valentine's viewpoint, Christopher has come to this knowledge. Ford carefully makes us see what led to Tietjens' awareness, and he does this with a technical skill that pivots upon Valentine's meeting with Christopher outside the War Office. It is a moment that we have seen experienced from Christopher's side, and that we subsequently view from Valentine's,²⁰¹ as Ford details the events that resulted in her being there at this time. Relating the incident from two different angles allows us to see the remaining dissimilarities that exist between them, as well as the intimacy that has gradually developed.

The growing together of these two characters is illustrated by the initial description of their first encounter that we have seen since that "magic" night in 1912. For each of them, the other completes the landscape, the final jigsaw piece without which the picture remains a collection of fragments and not a whole: "They turned the corner of

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 266.

²⁰¹ The incident is related from Christopher's point of view on 274-277, and from Valentine's on 339-341.

the arch. Like something fitting in, exact and expected, Valentine Wannop stood looking at the lists of casualties * * * . With the same air of finding Christopher Tietjens fit in exactly to an expected landscape she turned on him."²⁰² The sense of the other person giving the landscape an order is particularly strong for Valentine, as we learn when Ford relates the same incident from her angle of vision, where Christopher's presence restores a balance to her self and her sense of reality:

His looks were wandering round the cornice of these stone buildings. Immediately she was Valentine Wannop again; it needed no word from him. Words passed, but words could no more prove an established innocence than words can enhance a love that exists. He might as well have recited the names of railway stations. His eyes, his unconcerned face, his tranquil shoulders; they were what acquitted him. The greatest love speech he had ever and could ever make her was when, harshly and angrily, he said something like:

'Certainly not. I imagined you knew me better' -- brushing her aside as if she had been a midge. And, thank God, he had hardly listened to her!²⁰³

Miss Kashner overlooks this aspect of their "love speech" when she singles out incidents, where one lover says something that may mean something else, as being part of the "constant leitmotif" for most of Parade's End, which is a "total lack of communication" between individuals.²⁰⁴ However, Ford does not deal in terms of impossible relations, but in terms of human relations, and an indication of this realization on his part is found in Ford's awareness of the difficulty

²⁰² Ibid., 274.

²⁰³ Ibid., 340-341.

²⁰⁴ "Tietjens' Education", 157-158.

that these characters find in expressing their innermost selves, and how they have to be alive to the importance of looks and presence.

Though both Valentine and Christopher have moved closer together, Christopher is partially correct when he declares: "'I support [the war] because I have to. Just as you decry it because you have to. They're two different patterns that we see.'"²⁰⁵ Yet, the patterns have a greater similarity than when we last encountered them as a couple in 1912, and the remainder of Some Do Not . . . is concerned with this proximity, particularly the way in which the interval of time has affected Valentine's personality. It may be claimed that the final section is an answer to Christopher's questions to Valentine's inquiry about the possibility of his being the father of Edith Ethel's supposed child: "'Damn it all. How could you ask such a tomfool question? You! I took you to be an intelligent person. The only intelligent person I know. Don't you know me?'"²⁰⁶ Part of Valentine's recent life has been spent in coming to know Christopher, while discovering that what "looked truthful" need not necessarily be so, as is the case here with Mrs. Tietjens. That she still has doubts about Christopher gives some indication how far this process has to go.

x

Chapters Four and Five, of Part Two, deal with the changes that have overcome Valentine during this period, while under the increasing

²⁰⁵Some Do Not . . ., 275.

²⁰⁶Ibid., 276-277.

"strain" she has felt since the outbreak of war. The "turning-point" for her has been Edith Ethel's outburst about an unwanted child, a child each thinks the other has had. For Valentine, the effect of Edith's question has been to open out before her a realm of experience she has hitherto thought confined to her working life in Ealing. Rhetorically, this broadening of outlook brings us, through her point of view, to a further confirmation of the inadequacies of the Pre-Raphaelite sense of passion. Previously, Valentine had thought this a thing of beauty: "The passion of Macmaster for Edith Ethel and of Edith Ethel for Macmaster had seemed to her one of the beautiful things of life. They seemed to swim in a sea of renunciations, of beautiful quotations, and of steadfast waiting."²⁰⁷ The need for "renunciations" seems to govern the world, including her relationship with Christopher Tietjens. Edith's question changes this perspective.

Valentine comes to see that there exists a gulf between what appears to be the case and what lies underneath the appearance. Her realization affects her personally: "She was aware that Edith Ethel had done her an irreparable wrong, for you cannot suffer a great sexual shock and ever be the same. Or not for years."²⁰⁸ Yet, the result of the changes in her self brings Valentine closer to Christopher, for she finds that he stands in contrast to what her recent experience has shown: "She was astonished not to find him so loathsome as she had expected, for, just at that time, * * * she had an automatic feeling

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 285.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 287.

that all manly men were lust-filled devils, desiring nothing better than to stride over battlefields, stabbing the wounded with long daggers in frenzies of sadism."²⁰⁹ It is surprising how close this view is to Sylvia's thoughts on the war, as Christopher himself comments. But, the whole tone of their conversation, during one of Macmaster's Friday afternoons, stands in complete contrast to that earlier one between Christopher and his wife. It is an example of the kind of "talk" that Tietjens comes to see as necessary if two people are ever to share their experience in a world stripped of the values that might once have made "talk" unnecessary. They can communicate because Valentine possesses the quality of being that allows her to keep "an open mind" about things such as whether it is dishonourable for Mrs. Duchemin to spend her husband's money on Macmaster.²¹⁰ This spirit is reflected in her discussion with Christopher, where she allows her expectations and prejudices to be denied by his being "astonishingly mild".

This openness, on her part, enables Christopher to advance his picture of the present state of their relationship:

'You and I are like two people . . .' He paused and began again more quickly: 'Do you know these soap advertisement signs that read differently from several angles? As you come up to them you read "Monkey's Soap"; if you look back when you've passed, it's "Needs No Rinsing". . . . You and I are standing at different angles, and though we both look at the

* 209 Ibid., 290.

210 Ibid., 303.

same thing we read different messages. Perhaps if we stood side by side we should see yet a third. . . . But I hope we respect each other. We're both honest. I, at least, tremendously respect you and I hope you respect me.²¹¹ (my emphasis)

The interweaving of the phrase from the earlier Pre-Raphaelite poem has already been commented upon at the end of the night ride, a scene of which their present conversation is an extension. At this stage in their relationship, they do look at things differently, but their "talk" remains, like the poetic moment in Part One, as a germ for their future understanding of and passion for each other. Another indication of their growing passion is Valentine's remembering that Christopher had said that "'I'll put to you things I have put to no other soul."²¹² "No other soul" means that he is talking of things he cannot tell Sylvia, thus placing Valentine in a privileged position between Christopher's wife and his own conscience.

Our seeing Christopher's dilemma from Valentine's point of view enables us to understand his position in a way that would not have been possible if events were related solely from his angle of vision. For we are engaged in watching a character discover another individual and having to modify her opinions as a result. In a sense, technique is discovery here, as the way in which we come to see Valentine's view of things, and the way she arrives at her viewpoint are as important as what is discovered. For it is our vision of the development of understanding and the growing together through "talk" that matters as

²¹¹Ibid., 290.

²¹²Ibid., 292.

much as Valentine's realizations about the "simplicity of [Christopher's] revelation", his "doubts" and "fears", his unselfishness, his clear-sightedness in the affairs of others and his simplicity in his own.²¹³ Her growing understanding of his idealism and sentimentalism, which is revealed through the intimacy of their conversations, leads to what is perhaps one of the most highly-charged moments the two share in Part Two. Their closeness is a compliment to Valentine's qualities as a sympathetic listener, a necessary attribute in Ford's sense of a creative passion. This readiness to listen also involves a realization that they are not so very far apart in their opinions:

'But I wanted to see where our similarities come in. We've always been -- or we've seemed always to me -- so alike in our thoughts. I daresay I wanted you to respect me. . . .'

'Oh, I respect you! I respect you!' she said.
'You're as innocent as a child.'

He went on.

'And I wanted to get some thinking done. It hasn't been often of late that one has had a quiet room and a fire and . . . you! To think in front of. You do make one collect one's thoughts. I've been very muddled till to-day . . . till five minutes ago! Do you remember our drive? You analysed my character. I'd never have let another soul . . . But you see . . . Don't you see?'

She said:

'No! What am I to see? I remember . . .'

He said:

'That I'm certainly not an English country gentleman now; picking up the gossip of the horse markets and saying: let the country go to hell, for me!'

She said:

'Did I say that? . . . Yes, I said that!'²¹⁴

²¹³Ibid., 293.

²¹⁴Ibid., 296-297.

Her questions, which are not used, like Sylvia's, as weapons, are based upon a firm desire to sympathize and understand, something indicated by the use of the verb "to see". On this foundation a relationship may be built and not destroyed, since each character tries "to see" things from the other's point of view.

Placed against Valentine's intimacy with Tietjens, and her growing passion for him, there are her problems at home and her rift with Edith Ethel Duchemin. Valentine's "affection" for the elder woman has survived several setbacks, but recent events make it impossible for her to maintain the view she held previously of Edith and Vincent. The Macmasters have transported the culture of the rectory into new surroundings, again with "no ostentation", yet with all the chandeliers, pictures by Turner and mirrors of that former existence. Even the figure of Edith Ethel has been transposed, as we are told that she is "also from the rectory", complete with her "dark blue silks" and her roses.²¹⁵ Out of their relationship, there has been little that can be deemed creative. Instead, the picture of Edith and Vincent is one of stagnation and an unwillingness to come to terms with the immense upheavals that are taking place.

But Valentine does change and does not stagnate as a character. The "little brown bird",²¹⁶ as Edith calls her, patiently waiting on the outskirts of this supposedly "higher civilization", begins to see the Macmasters' cultural soirées in a different light. In particular,

²¹⁵Ibid., 305.

²¹⁶Ibid., 306.

her growing insight focuses upon one occasion which Valentine thinks of in great detail, the visit by Sylvia Tietjens. Sylvia's startling ability to reduce the pretentious to the ridiculous enables Valentine to see things anew: "Macmaster, perched on the centre of the hearth-rug, had an emotion that was extraordinarily comic to witness, but that Valentine was quite unable to analyse."²¹⁷ In addition, Sylvia's very appearance, with an air of "unconcern", makes Edith Ethel look, for Valentine, "suddenly small, insignificant and relatively coarse."²¹⁸ With this vision, Valentine approaches Tietjens' view of Edith in Part One.

What then happens is a high-light of the novel, one that Ford handles with great skill, as Sylvia ignores the centre of attraction and aims straight for Mrs. Wannop: "'You're Mrs Wannop. The great writer! I'm Christopher Tietjens' wife.'"²¹⁹ This gesture need not be the act of "goodness" that Valentine deems it to be, for we know how calculated some of Sylvia's actions can be as a result of her desires to be the centre of attention and to deflate the expected and accepted codes of behaviour. Indeed, it is noticeable that, in so far as Sylvia is concerned, Valentine is unable to distinguish between beauty and goodness: "The one thing she, Valentine didn't know, the one mystery that remained impenetrable, was whether Sylvia Tietjens

²¹⁷ Ibid., 307.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 311.

was good to her husband!"²²⁰ "Beautiful! The most beautiful woman she had ever seen! And good!"²²¹ But, from one glance, she realizes that Sylvia knows where Valentine stands in relation to her husband: "From that moment Valentine Wannop never had any doubt. She knew that Sylvia Tietjens knew that her husband loved her, Valentine Wannop, and that she, Valentine Wannop, loved her husband -- with a passion absolute and ineffable."²²²

For Valentine, the afternoon is a crucial moment in her life in that it awakens her to a new perspective of the Pre-Raphaelite cult and all it stands for. Together with her conversations with Tietjens, her "great love-scene" that meant every word Christopher spoke "sung of passion",²³³ these moments lead her to a development of the self beyond the schoolgirl who once saw Christopher as a "fool" into a woman who can largely discriminate between individuals and points of view, without the material prejudices that dominate so many other characters. Realizing that Macmaster is not "the soul of honour" Tietjens believes him to be,²²⁴ she comes to see the Macmasters' way of life as an empty shell of impersonation: "[Mrs. Duchemin] had behind her all her mirrors, the drops of her lustres, shining points of gilt and of the polish of dark woods. Valentine thought that she

²²⁰Ibid., 315.

²²¹Ibid., 311.

²²²Ibid.

²²³Ibid., 330.

²²⁴Ibid., 314.

had never seen anyone so absolutely impersonate kindness, tenderness and dignity."²²⁵ The awareness of imitation is central to Valentine's understanding of what surrounds her: "For Mrs Duchemin had revealed the fact that her circumspect, continent, and suavely aesthetic personality was doubled by another at least as coarse as, and infinitely more incisive in expression than, that of the drunken cook."²²⁶ Now she can see that Edith is a "snob", and a woman whose professed morality acts as a screen rather than a guide for her behaviour. Against these insights there is only her relationship with Christopher standing as something positive, and his presence is such that it makes her "Valentine Wannop again * * * . She was clean-limbed, clear-headed. . . . * * * Her mind cleared, like water that goes off the boil. . . ."²²⁷

Without Christopher her landscape becomes confused, so that she can only respond to life by carrying on her day to day existence as a schoolmistress, within the framework the school provides. Thus, with Christopher's departure for the front, Valentine enters into a state of "suspended animation", from which she is awakened some fifteen months later, in A Man Could Stand Up, by Edith Macmaster's telephone call. Yet, as the discussion of Part Two has shown, Valentine has undergone great changes in her values and point of view -- changes that bring her to a realization of her passion for Christopher, and an understanding

²²⁵ Ibid., 321.

²²⁶ Ibid., 328.

²²⁷ Ibid., 341.

of the forces that are involved in that passion and in the one which exists between characters such as Edith and Macmaster. Utilizing the point of vision she offers, Ford confirms the criticisms made in Part One of the society that has now entered a state of war, while emphasizing the qualities that both Christopher and Valentine embody. Without the perspective Valentine provides, Christopher's virtues might have appeared unreal and impractical, open to the charges that characters like Sylvia, Edith and Campion make. With Valentine's view of the recent past, we are made to see Christopher's values as assets and not liabilities. Her insights are therefore important in that they reflect both upon the development of her own personality and also give an added dimension to Christopher and his position in society. If this view had not been made available, the meaning of the second half of the novel, indeed of Some Do Not . . . as a whole, might have been entirely different.

Valentine's and Christopher's passion for each other remains dormant during the remainder of the war. But, as Chapter Six makes clear, related from Tietjens' viewpoint, Valentine's offer of a future relationship has been embedded in his consciousness: "'But when you come back . . . Permanently. And . . . oh, as if it were in public. . . . I don't know!' she had added. 'Ought we? . . . I'd be ready. . . .'" She added: 'I will be ready for anything you ask.'"²²⁸ Her willingness serves as a source of life for Christopher, something upon which he can draw when the war appears to be ending and the future has to be faced.

²²⁸Ibid., 350.

In 1917, because they do not want to make their affair something private and underhand, like Macmaster's liaison with Edith Duchemin, they choose not to consummate their union, not to finalize it. This decision sets them apart as two who "do not" compromise themselves or their values. Thus, Christopher's principle of gentlemanly conduct is one that continues to exist in their relationship. But it is no longer evident in the club, from which he has now resigned: "'Gentlemen shouldn't be expected to belong to a club that has certain members on its committee.'"²²⁹ The members of England's "club" now include Sir Vincent and Lady Macmaster, a situation that causes Tietjens to feel ashamed for the first time in his life. Against this desert of existence, there is that "little bubbling up of water"²³⁰ that Valentine and Christopher mean for each other, a relationship which is not fully realized publicly until Sylvia pulls the cord of her final shower-bath and Tietjens can feel himself free to look elsewhere for "moral support". It is the severance of the relationship between husband and wife that occupies a large part of No More Parades, as Ford develops his depiction of the destructive passion Sylvia expresses and the way it affects both her and Christopher.

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With Tietjens' remembrance of things past, in Chapter Six, we have moved the length of that telephone wire which runs from June, 1912,

²²⁹Ibid., 353.

²³⁰Ibid., 355, 352.

to August, 1917, a journey that has resulted in immense personal and social changes for many of the cast of characters involved. In the multifarious presentation of differing views of this time period, with the juxtaposition of these points of view, and the handling of the material in a manner that allows for the maximum effect, Ford has made his readers see this world in all its variety. The rhetoric of Some Do Not . . . brings us to an understanding of what is involved in Ford's sense of the many expressions and embodiments of passion, some of which are destructive, while others exist creatively. The remainder of the tetralogy continues with this subject, focusing upon the way in which the emotional life of the man of war is affected by both the home- and battle-fronts. It is this "strain" that Ford explores in the next volume, No More Parades.

Part Three: Passion as a Destructive Force in Parade's End --No More Parades

i

"Es is nicht zu ertragen; es ist das dass uns
verloren hat . . ."

The first paragraph of No More Parades²³¹ contrasts sharply with the opening of Some Do Not There are similarities, such as the presence of two figures who form a focal point for the picture. But the differences are more marked, as we move from the semblance of solidity and precision, of hygiene and newness, to the world of war in which the landscape moves and changes with the arrival of each shell. However, if the picture is one of chaos, it nevertheless possesses a strange unity of its own. For, here, there are no reserved compartments, and the Welsh miners and Balliol voices are mostly subject to the same "strains", with the exception of people like Levin, who now seem comic and out of place. It is this kind of kinship that Cowley later comments upon: "'A man * * * would take the risk of being shot for wounding his pal. . . . They get to love their pals, passing the

²³¹It is difficult to work out the time covered by No More Parades. In Part Three of this volume, Campion asks for the date and accepts Christopher's statement that it is "'* * * Thursday, the seventeenth, I think, of January. . . .'" No More Parades, 257. This would place Part Two on January 16, 1918. Mizener has deduced that Part One opens in December, 1917, which means that there is a considerable gap in time between Parts One and Two. This gap would allow for events such as Levin's wedding, described by Sylvia in Part Two. See The Saddest Story, p. 513.

love of women. . . ."232 Otherwise, the mud sucks and covers, presenting, as many references indicate, a portrait of Dante's Inferno. But, in this hell, the pressures are mental and emotional, rather than physical punishments.

The absence of solidity is something Ford wrote about in No Enemy.²³³ Here, the scene is striking for its fragile appearance, with the architecturally impossible houses that children draw which, if built, would soon collapse: "When you came in the space was desultory, rectangular, warm after the drip of the winter night, and transfused with a brown-orange dust that was light. It was shaped like the house a child draws."²³⁴ The tetralogy has now moved into Winter, with its accompanying associations of death, in contrast to the Summer world of Some Do Not . . ., where things were still alive as well as being clean and free from such dust. The bombardment that takes place reminds us of the differences:

An immense tea-tray, august, its voice filling the black circle of the horizon, thundered to the ground. Numerous pieces of sheet-iron said, 'Pack. Pack. Pack.' In a minute the clay floor of the hut shook, the drums of ears were pressed inwards, solid noise showered about the universe, enormous echoes pushed these men -- to the right, to the left, or down towards the tables, and crackling like that of flames among vast under-wood became the settled condition of the night.²³⁵

The feeling of helplessness, of being tossed about at whim, enables us

²³²No More Parades, 183.

²³³F. M. Ford, No Enemy: A Tale of Reconstruction (New York, 1929).

²³⁴No More Parades, 9.

²³⁵Ibid.

to understand the sense of contrast between the two novels. In addition, the destruction that is now a part of these men's lives is underlined when one remembers that the tea-tray, in Some Do Not . . ., was either used for its intended purpose, or as a nickname for Christopher's father. Here, like the incident involving the collision between Champion's car and the Wannops' cart, possibly the only destructive use to which this image is put in the previous novel, and an episode that several critics have seen as a symbolic clash between two centuries, the image of the tea-tray now becomes a threatening missile intent on achieving some physical distortion. But, instead of one instance, the whole horizon now showers forth tea-trays.

Yet, the physical happenings are almost secondary to the mental strain each man undergoes. An immediate instance is the case of the "mad" Mackenzie (McKechnie) whose insanity increases as the bombardment proceeds, until it climaxes into a strange sanity of talk about the Apocalypse.²³⁶ During the strafe, most of the individuals involved are conspicuous for the way in which their minds take them mentally outside the hut. Thus, the two miners talk about a cow and "one runner on the floor was filled with a passionate rage because the elder officer had refused him leave to go home and see why his wife, who had sold their laundry, had not yet received the purchase money from the buyer * * * ." ²³⁷ The English sergeant-major is "worried" about the draft; the Canadian "was worried about a pig-skin leather

²³⁶ Ibid., 13.

²³⁷ Ibid., 10.

pocket-book."²³⁸ The key verb here is "worried"; what it suggests is the mental and emotional strain each soldier undergoes while at the front, much of it being brought about by news from home, or the lack of it. As the Commanding Officer points out in A Man Could Stand Up, while dying of the cancer Sylvia later pretends to have:

'Look here you!' he said. 'You're an educated man . . . What's the worst thing about this war? What's the worst thing? Tell me that!' His chest began to heave. 'It's that they won't let us alone. Never! Not one of us! If they'd let us alone we could fight. But never. . . . No one! It's not only the beastly papers of the batallion, though I'm no good with papers. Never was and never shall be. . . . But it's the people at home. One's own people. God help us, you'd think that when a poor devil was in the trenches they'd let him alone. . . . Damn it: I've had solicitors' letters about family quarrels when I was in hospital. Imagine that!' * * * 'I was better off as a Sergeant,' he added gloomily. 'But Sergeants don't get let alone. They've always got women after them. Or their wives take up with Belgians and they get written to about it. Sergeant Cutts of "D" Company gets an anonymous letter every week about his wife. How's he to do his duty! But he does. So have I till now. . . .'²³⁹

One of the most important passages for an understanding of the two war novels, this outlines the pressures felt by all the men; the pressures are later given a cryptographic image in Campion's note about Christopher: "'Colonel's horse: Sheets: Jesus Christ: Wannop girl: Socialism?'"²⁴⁰ With the exception of the horse, all the subjects have been brought to the General's attention by Christopher's representative of the domestic scene, Sylvia Tietjens.

It is the domestic life, then, that causes these men the most difficulty, whether it is McKechnie, O Nine Morgan or Christopher

²³⁹ A Man Could Stand Up, 394-395.

²⁴⁰ No More Parades, 246.

himself. Such persistent pressure, about which they can do nothing, is the subject of a passage by Ford which has been quite rightly singled out by several critics as a means of furthering our understanding of No More Parades. Worry about domestic issues is the strain that lies behind so many of the crackups that take place, or of the mental fatigue which makes physical suffering small by comparison:

But it seemed to me that, if I could present, not merely fear, not merely horror, not merely death, not merely even self-sacrifice . . . but just worry; that might strike a note of which the world would not so readily tire. For you may become callous at the thought of all horrors of more than a million dead: fear itself in the end comes to rest. . . . But worry feeds on itself and in the end so destroys the morale that less than a grasshopper becomes a burden. It is without predictable term; it is as menacing as the eye of a serpent; it causes unspeakable fatigue even as, remorselessly, it banishes rest. And it seemed to me that if the world could be got to see War from that angle there would be no more wars. . . .²⁴¹

Thus, the C. O. in A Man Could Stand Up finds the domestic and social pressures from the home front and the worry they cause intolerable. But, he can shrug off the possibility and the certainty that he has cancer, eventually dying without ceremony in the cab occupied by Valentine and Christopher. For these men, physical suffering and injury can even be a release.

The rhetoric of No More Parades and A Man Could Stand Up is therefore designed to explore the experiences of worry and mental strain, the emotional upheavals undergone by men who have hitherto been proud of their ability to remain composed. Here, as in Some Do Not . . ., this exploration involves the passions these men feel; the

²⁴¹F. M. Ford, It Was the Nightingale, 226. See also "'Three Dedicatory Letters to Parade's End'", 523-524.

story of McKechnie is a case in point:

So this fellow was too dark and good-looking to be a good officer: yet he was a good officer. That explained it. The repressions of the passionate drive them mad. He must have been being sober, disciplined, patient, absolutely repressed ever since 1914 -- against a background of hell-fire, row, blood, mud, old tins. . . . And indeed the elder officer had a vision of the younger as if in a design for a full-length portrait -- for some reason with his legs astride, against a background of tapestry scarlet with fire and more scarlet with blood. . . . He sighed a little; that was the life of all those several millions. . . .²⁴²

In the final sentence, as with his decision to keep the identities of his characters anonymous for as long as possible, Ford indicates his desire for us to see that this situation, involving a few figures in one hut, is to be thought of as a microcosm of a larger predicament. When we experience Christopher's sufferings at the hands of his wife, we should remember that his is not an isolated example.

The battleground and its immediate vicinity are therefore a far cry from the 11.40 a.m. train to Ashford. So, too, the language used here is drastically different from that of the "club" or of the "higher civilization" (Macmaster still believes he and his wife are preserving): "'Not so much swear words, O Nine Morgan,' the sergeant-major said."²⁴³ Swear-words have no particular meaning, but act as a release for tension and also provide a private language for the men suffering this strain, something they share in common. Otherwise, like the landscape itself, conversations shift and change, fading in and out with little continuity, jumping from Dai Morgan's dialogue with his

²⁴²No More Parades, 15.

²⁴³Ibid., 12.

friend to that between McKechnie and Tietjens. The entire scene is one of fluidity and movement.

Christopher Tietjens' problems have not been simplified by his decision to go to France. Instead, as suggested by the first sentence describing them, they have become more complex:

To the elder officer, burdened with the command of a unit of unreasonable size, with a scratch headquarters of useless subalterns who were continually being changed, with N.C.O's all unwilling to work, with rank and file nearly all colonials and unused to doing without things, and with a depot to draw on that, being old established, felt that it belonged exclusively to a regular British unit and resented his drawing anything at all, the practical difficulties of his everyday life were already sufficient, and he had troublesome private affairs.²⁴⁴

Ford creates an impression of the immensity of Christopher's difficulties by separating the subject from the main verb, and sandwiching in between a list of some of these worries: "To the elder officer * * * the practical difficulties of his everyday life were already sufficient * * * ." The "troublesome private affairs" are almost tacked on as an afterthought, but these will form his main burden in No More Parades, as Christopher will reel under the effects of the passion Sylvia has formed for him, the "impossible complication" he had singled out in Some Do Not²⁴⁵ The paragraph continues with questions and problems, centring upon the dispersal of the draft, which increases our awareness of the pressures he is under, and the sense of depression he feels:

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 13-14.

²⁴⁵ Some Do Not . . ., 279.

Intense dejection: endless muddles: endless follies: endless villainies. All these men given into the hands of the most cynically care-free intriguers in long corridors who made plots that harrowed the hearts of the world. All these men toys: all these agonies mere occasions for picturesque phrases to be put into politicians' speeches without heart or even intelligence. Hundreds of thousands of men tossed here and there in that sordid and gigantic mud-brownness of mid-winter . . . By God, exactly as if they were nuts wilfully picked up and thrown over the shoulder by magpies. . . . But men. Not just populations. Men you worried over there.²⁴⁶

What concerns Christopher is that these "wet millions" will die without "parade", in order to swell the private vanities of the home Cabinet. Their worries become his, and his burden is increased as a result: "It was the worries of all these wet millions in mud-brown that worried him. They could die, they could be massacred, by the quarter million, in shambles. But that they should be massacred without jauntiness, without confidence, with depressed brows: without parade. . . ." ²⁴⁷ In this context, one remembers Edith Ethel's insistence upon taking "abstract views of the higher matters", and the way in which Macmaster used figures, made by Christopher in the belief that they would not be used, in order to gain a knighthood, calculations designed to prevent the creation of a single command and thus prolong the war. As a result, the worry seems all the more brutal, as these men become trapped in the mud, the brown mud and brown-orange dust that clings to everything, reducing the landscape to a uniformity of "no more parades".

For his part, Tietjens tries to give some sense of parade to his activities and to those of his men. But the effort is localized,

²⁴⁶ No More Parades, 15-16.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 16-17.

since the war is that of a mechanized, impersonal world. But his efforts are all the more remarkable because of this, especially when we understand the pressures he experiences. Through the portrayal of Christopher's consciousness, the generalization about the worries of domestic affairs find a heightened expression: "* * * an intolerable pang went all through his heavy frame -- the intolerable pang of home news to these desparately occupied men, the pain caused by disasters happening in the darkness and at a distance. You could do nothing to mitigate them!"²⁴⁸ The helplessness is intensified by the images that dominate the mind, finding their most tormenting expression in the "gothic" form of Sylvia Tietjens:

His eyes, when they were tired, had that trick of reproducing images on their retinas with that extreme clearness, images sometimes of things he thought of, sometimes of things merely at the back of the mind. Well, to-night his eyes were very tired! She was looking straight before her, with a little inimical disturbance of the corners of her lips. She had just thought of a way to hurt terribly his silent personality. . . . The semi-clearness became a luminous blue, like a tiny ²⁴⁹ gothic arch, and passed out of his vision to the right. . . .

She haunts his memory, making sure that she will not be forgotten, by posing for photographs with "hilarious companions and the statement that her husband was in hospital at the Front. . . ." ²⁵⁰

The pressure is such that mental breakdown is always a possibility, and is increased by the feeling that the individual's mental and emotional states need not be fully under his control, there

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 18.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 19.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 20.

being a close correlation at times between internal thoughts and external occurrences: "The memory seemed to burst inside [McKechnie] with the noise of one of those beastly, enormous tin-pot crashes -- and it always came when the guns made that particular kind of tin-pot crash: the two came together, the internal one and the crash outside."²⁵¹ As with Christopher's picture of Sylvia, memory itself becomes a burden, something that does not order experience, but acts as a well from which come the intolerable images that burst inside the mind like a shell. With such a negative state of association, it seems difficult for any individual to latch onto a principle of order that would give his experience a framework of reference, and would allow him to find something in the past to act as a symbol to encourage this process. Yet, somehow, Christopher stays sane.

The absence of order, of "parade", finds its most clearcut expression in the much discussed image of the disbanding of the regiment:

'Well, the end of the show was to be: the adjutant would stand the batallion at ease: the band would play Land of Hope and Glory, and then the adjutant would say: There will be no more parades. . . . Don't you see how symbolical it was: the band playing Land of Hope and Glory, and then the adjutant saying There will be no more parades? . . . For there won't. There won't, there damn well won't. . . . No more Hope, no more Glory, no more parades for you and me any more. Nor for the country . . . Nor for the world, I dare say. . . .'²⁵²

As if to verify the argument, O Nine Morgan falls in the doorway and the tone changes to that of comic absurdity, where the "jocular and

²⁵¹Ibid., 26.

²⁵²Ibid., 28.

grotesque", as Ford describes the moon, combine.²⁵³ The sudden and unexpected transforms the real into an absurd realm where blood has to be described in metaphors of paint, the figures surrounding the corpse resembling girls. Demonstrating the way in which the external scene triggers the individual's memory by association, Tietjens is reminded of the episode of the horse in Some Do Not There, he could appeal to his principles. Here, the situation is more difficult.

In the death of O Nine Morgan, Ford again shows his interest in internal consciousness, rather than with the physical suffering that occurs, as he focuses upon Christopher's reactions while he tries to find something to grasp onto in this mass of experience. Here, the image of Valentine Wannop, the "little tranquil, golden spot",²⁵⁴ provides such an entity, a focal point that will grow in importance as the tetralogy continues.

But, the scene can change instantaneously. With the exception of the continuous mental strain, nothing remains constant. People, places and landscapes are in a state of flux, as soldiers arrive and depart, and shells and bombs fall. Even the moon collaborates in creating a sense of change, as having suddenly "taken it into its head to rise",²⁵⁵ it converts the scene "into a slumbering, pastoral settlement", and the tone becomes "sentimental".²⁵⁶ The death of O Nine

²⁵³ Ibid., 34.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 31.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 34.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

Morgan moves into the past, only to return in snippets of conversation or, in Christopher's case, as an image that haunts the mind with associations of guilt and anxiety. The death itself has no framework in which to have meaning, there being no order by which it could be raised to the stature of tragedy.

For Christopher, the pressures increase, culminating in Part One with the arrival of Campion's note and the news from Levin that his wife has pursued him to the battlefield. It is the rapidity of events that is so noticeable in No More Parades, as one occurrence follows another in quick succession. Experience has an immediacy it did not have in Some Do Not . . .; there is a greater tendency now to deal with life in terms of the present, rather than to see it from the comfort of the club's armchair. The absence of an opportunity to reflect adds to the sense of flux, since the individual finds it extremely difficult to withdraw from what has happened in order to gain perspective. Thus, it is only after Levin arrives with news of Sylvia's presence that Christopher has the first real opportunity to stand at one remove from experience. It is one of those rare occasions for thought which are imperative if Christopher is to act with any degree of consistency. He himself is aware of this inner need: "He was a man who lived very much by rules of conduct. He had a rule: Never think on the subject of a shock at a moment of shock. The mind was then too sensitized."²⁵⁷ The need for reflection causes Christopher to seek a diversion in the writing of a sonnet in under two minutes. What this reveals is his

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 38.

desire for some sense of order, something with which he can control and shape his experience, some form of "parade". For "parade" is the subject of the sonnet:

Now we affront the grinning chops of Death * * *
 And in between the carcasses and the moil
 Of marts and cities, toil and moil and coil * * *
 Old Spectre blows a cold protecting breath . . .
 Vanity of vanities, the preacher saith . . .
 No more parades, not any more, no oil . . .
 Unambergis'd our limbs in the naked soil . . . * * *
 No funeral struments cast before our wraiths, . . .²⁵⁸

It is a meaning that he conveys in his own interpretation of the poem: "Of course the general idea was that, when you got into the line or near it, there was no room for swank: typified by expensive funerals. As you might say: No flowers by compulsion . . . No more parades!"²⁵⁹ Without some semblance of order, experience becomes chaotic, and there is no means of sharing it with another human being. It is in this context that the passion that exists between Valentine and Christopher will play its important role.

But, without Valentine there, and without a shared set of

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 41, 43. This poem bears a striking resemblance to an early draft of Wilfred Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth", in The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen, edited, C. Day Lewis (London, 1963), p. 45:

What passing-bells for you who die in herds?
 -Only the monstrous anger of the guns!
 -Only the stuttering rifles' rattled words
 Can patter out your hasty orisons.
 No chants for you, nor balms, nor wreaths, nor bells,
 Nor any voice of mourning, save the choirs,
 And long-drawn sighs of wailing shells;

* * *

And bugles calling for you from sad shires.

²⁵⁹ No More Parades, 43.

values that each man could hold to, which would govern his conduct in the war, experience bombards the individual consciousness, attaining a pitch where each moment of time seems to contain an infinity of its own, though it is followed by a thousand similar moments:

* * * buttons and numerals gleamed in the air that the universal khaki tinge of the limbs seemed to turn brown, as if into a gas of dust. Nasal voices, throat voices, drawling voices, melted into a rustle so that the occasional high, sing-song profanity of a Welsh N.C.O.: Why the hell haffn't you got your 124? Why the ----- hell haffn't you got your 124? Don't you know you haff to haff your bleedin 124's? seemed to wail tragically through a silence . . . The evening wore on and on. It astounded Tietjens, looking at one time at his watch, to discover that it was only 21 hrs. 19. He seemed to have been thinking drowsily of his own affairs for ten hours. . . . For, in the end, these were his own affairs. . . . Money, women, testamentary brothers.²⁶⁰

The prevalence of verbs of appearance gives these events their shifting, subjective atmosphere. There is no certainty about the external world, since our view of it can be changed by tired eyes, a heightened psychological state, or by the arrival of some explosive, either military or domestic.

The domestic explosion for Christopher is Sylvia's unexpected arrival. Chapter Three must stand as one of the most successful pieces of writing Ford produced of the mind in a state of shock, as Christopher struggles to fit experience into some scheme of things, equipped mainly with the jargon of his military existence since 1914. In Some Do Not . . ., we learned of Christopher's mental difficulties; how, having lost the "shape of memory",²⁶¹ he is forced to rely upon

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 46-47.

²⁶¹ Some Do Not . . ., 211.

military language: "It was part of the disagreeableness of his mental disadvantages that upon occasion he could not think of other than military phrases."²⁶² Here, it is noticeable that a great many of his similes and metaphors are military in origin, as "this affair was like coming back after two months and trying to get the hang of batallion orders. . . ."²⁶³ Under stress, it seems that these forms of comparison are the only means by which he can shape his experience, for the martial way of life does have its procedures and sense of process (as also in the example of the orderly-room lance-corporal).

Thus, Christopher makes a comparison between his relations with Sylvia and returning to batallion because: "The orderly hands you a dishevelled mass of faintly typewritten matter, thumbed out of all chance of legibility, with the orders for November 16 fastened inextricably into the middle of those for the 1st of December, and those for the 10th, 15th and 29th missing altogether. . . ."²⁶⁴ Like any affair of the past, it comes to the mind in fragments -- as Dowell's affair came to him -- and the problem arises as to how Christopher can construct some order out of these pieces of information, glimpses and half-glimpses of people's actions and motivations: "But having faced what he considered to be the worst of the situation, Tietjens set himself coolly to recapitulate every aspect of his separation from his

²⁶²Ibid., 226.

²⁶³No More Parades, 69.

²⁶⁴Ibid.

wife."²⁶⁵ These aspects seem to change when he realizes that Sylvia has had her "affairs canvassed by the Other Ranks", has broken the tacit rule that there should be no scenes in front of the servants. Why she should have done so is part of the problem.

Christopher's consideration of what happened four or five months ago has previously depended upon the assumption, which we now learn for the first time, that their union had been severed by the word "Paddington" which Sylvia had shouted on his last day in England. If it has, there exists the possibility that he might be free for Valentine, a prospect that is entirely new to him, but which becomes an idea around which he rebuilds his own life: "'Perhaps I could write letters to her. And live . . .'"²⁶⁶ But, now, his mind cannot cope with the complications and endless possibilities, so he reverts to the military jargon that has played an increasing role in his recent history:

The facts of the story must be stated before the moral. He said to himself that he must put, in exact language, as if he were making a report for the use of garrison headquarters, the history of himself in his relationship to his wife. . . . And to Miss Wannop, of course. 'Better put it into writing,' he said. * * * 'When I married Miss Satterthwaite,' -- he was attempting exactly to imitate a report to General Headquarters * * * .²⁶⁷

This process culminates in the first recounting of their final meeting, as Christopher realizes the importance of Father Consett's prophecy that Sylvia would attempt to destroy his "equanimity".²⁶⁸ Between

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 70.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 77.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 75.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 78.

Sylvia and the war, his equilibrium has almost been lost, and the battle, for Tietjens, becomes a question of whether he can maintain his equanimity, and what will help him to do so.

This report only partially helps, since it falsifies experience instead of encompassing it: "It was no good going on writing. He was no writer, and this writing gave no sort of psychological pointers."²⁶⁹ The problem still remains: "What was at the bottom of all the madness and cruelty that had distinguished both himself and Sylvia on his last day and night in his native country?"²⁷⁰ In effect, it seems that his wife has thrown him into Valentine's arms, partly out of pity and partly in the hope that, as a result, he might feel some form of sexual attraction towards her. The design has not been fulfilled. Instead, Christopher has begun to realize a passion for Valentine, something about which he had not been fully aware until the day he last met her: "He had never realized that he had a passion for the girl till that morning; that he had a passion deep and boundless like the sea, shaking like a tremor of the whole world, an unquenchable thirst, a thing the thought of which made your bowels turn over. . . . But he had not been the sort of fellow who goes into his emotions. . . ." ²⁷¹ But, if his wife had forced him into Valentine's arms, then "that let him out": A woman cannot throw her man, her official husband, into the arms of the first girl that comes along and consider herself as having any

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 78-79.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 79-80.

further claims upon him."²⁷²

It is his inability to discover what Sylvia's "game" is that appears to worry him most, and why she behaves the way she does: "She was a thoroughbred. He had always credited her with being that. And now she was behaving as if she had every mean vice that a mare could have. Or it looked like it. Was that, then, because she had been in his stable? But how in the world otherwise could he have run their lives?"²⁷³ That he admits the possibility of Sylvia's earlier criticisms of him is indicative of the quandary he is in. Ultimately, there seems to be no answer to these questions, except the realization that his wife is now running around making scenes and trying to continue the "cruelty" of the conversation they last had.

Possibly the most important outcome of this piece of "introspection" is that Christopher is beginning to see how far his previous life as Tietjens of Groby, where he did not need to justify his behaviour to anyone because he was Tietjens of Groby, is now crumbling around him: "That was the right of the Seigneur in a world of Other Ranks."²⁷⁴ But the whole structure seems to have collapsed now that he feels he has been "betrayed from above", that the "collective entity", along with the whole idea of "parade", has gone by the board. If the "centrally ideal" has become so corrupt, so given to vanities, the individual is forced to fall back upon what he has

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid., 81.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 80-81.

within him, the "integrity of your character" that was so important for Katherine in the Fifth Queen. An indication of this change is that Christopher now feels personally responsible for O Nine Morgan's death:

Was he, he said to himself, to regard himself as responsible for the fellow's death? Was his inner mentality going to present that claim upon him? That would be absurd. The end of the earth! The absurd end of the earth. . . . Yet that insignificant ass Levin had that evening asserted the claim to go into his, Tietjens of Groby's, relations with his wife. That was an end of the earth as absurd! It was the unthinkable thing, as unthinkable as the theory that the officer can be responsible for the death of the man. . . . But the idea had certainly presented itself to him. How could he be responsible for the death? In fact -- in literalness -- he was.²⁷⁵

In this passage lies the germ for A Man Could Stand Up, where the emphasis begins to fall upon the individual, personal response to experience, and the different kinds of premises this involves. Here, we see how the accent upon the personal leads to a connection with the emotional, as Christopher comes to feel a sympathy with O Nine Morgan: "In this case it was because of one fellow, a dirty enough man, not even very willing, not in the least endearing, certainly contemplating desertion. . . . But your dead. . . . Yours . . . Your own. As if joined to your own identity by a black cord. . . ." ²⁷⁶ In addition, he becomes aware of sentiments inside himself, a "strong passion! . . . For his girl and his country! . . ." ²⁷⁷

It is because the world is foundering around him, removing the

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 87.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 88.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 96.

possibility of there remaining externally perceivable and consistent standards of conduct and values, that Christopher is forced in upon himself, into "introspection" and a greater reliance upon his feelings, particularly his passion for Valentine Wannop. Yet, if this change in Christopher is under way in Part One of No More Parades, there still remains the struggle with Sylvia ahead, the woman who is all feeling and whose passion has become cruelly sexual in nature. Part Two stands at the centre of the novel, and its function is pivotal. For it marks the point at which the relationship between Sylvia and Christopher is irreparably broken, and Christopher is left in a position where his future no longer involves his wife, the moment at which the "parade" of their marriage collapses.²⁷⁸

ii

The switch from the depot to the "best" hotel is almost the same as that between the depot and the railway-carriage of Some Do Not Indeed, the vocabulary reminds us of the earlier scene, with the "admirably appointed" lounge, that is "bemirrored", in which Perowne is begging "lachrymosely" to be allowed into Sylvia's room.²⁷⁹ Told primarily from Sylvia's point of view, it is here that we come nearest to an understanding of her personality, as she ranges back in her mind to her affairs with Drake and Perowne, and forward through

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 113-114 and 160.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 115. See Some Do Not . . ., 11.

the latter stages of her marriage with Christopher. Like her husband, she has also undergone a change during the past few months, a change that has involved an increased obsession with the physical passion she feels for him: "Suddenly she clenched both her hands and let out a hateful little breath of air between her teeth. 'By the immortal saints,' she exclaimed, 'I swear I'll make his wooden face wince yet.'"²⁸⁰ The emphasis falls upon the word "hateful", for Sylvia's passion for her husband has taken the form of fits of sexual hatred, intensified by the realization that he is gradually moving out of her sphere of influence.

Ford's penetration of Sylvia's point of view, and his ability to capture the passion she feels, must stand as a testimony to the power of the tetralogy as a whole -- especially the way in which he portrays the growing sexual frenzy Sylvia experiences during Part Two of No More Parades. The emphasis is upon the relationship between this "Sadic" quality²⁸¹ and her tendency to act as a result of caprice: "'It came into my head to come suddenly [to Rouen]. Ten minutes before I started. And I came.'"²⁸² Her pursuit of Christopher is the fulfilment of Father Consett's prophecy, and indeed marks the beginning of Sylvia's hell on earth, when she begins to realize that Consett's statements about her contain far more truth than her dabblings with spiritualists or Freud:

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 117.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 79. "Sadic" is Ford's word.

²⁸² Ibid., 120.

Then have mercy on me, for half the time I don't know what I'm doing! . . . It was like a spell you put on me. At Lobscheid. Where my mother was, when I came back from that place without my clothes. . . . You said, didn't you, to mother, but she told me afterwards: The real hell for that poor boy, meaning Christopher, will come when he falls in love with some young girl -- as, mark me, he will. . . . For she, meaning me, will tear the world down to get at him. . . . And when mother said she was certain I would never do anything vulgar you obstinately did not agree. . . . You knew me. . . .

She tried to rouse herself and said: He knew me.
 . . . Damn it he knew me!²⁸³

Part Two deals with the history that has led to this acknowledgement, factors that have contributed both to Christopher's tormented mind and her own predicament: "* * * for half the time I don't know what I'm doing!"

It is here, for the first time, that we look back to Sylvia's escapade with Perowne in France, particularly the reasons involved in her decision to run away: "At the later date Sylvia had no difficulty in accounting to herself for her having gone off with such an oaf: she had simply reacted in a violent fit of sexual hatred, from her husband's mind. And she could not have found a mind more utterly dissimilar than Perowne's in any decently groomed man to be found in London."²⁸⁴ But these experiences have confirmed her view that, in comparison with Christopher, all the other men she has known appear like "inarticulate schoolboy[s]": "As beside him, other men simply did not seem ever to have grown up. . . ."²⁸⁵ It is such a strange blend of attraction and repulsion that forms one of the foundations for her

²⁸³ Ibid., 158-159.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 126-127.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 127.

passion for him, involving her desire to humiliate him, to dominate him and yet to be humiliated and dominated by him: "'If that man would throw his handkerchief to me, I would follow him round the world in my shift!'"²⁸⁶ Yet, Sylvia's plans to disconcert Christopher, by going off with a man of blatantly inferior intelligence, backfire upon her because of her inability to stand Perowne at all, and the fact that she is not around to witness Christopher's humiliation. Having bumped into the Thurstons, an event later reported by Thurston to Campion, she decides to keep her options open by returning to her husband.

The end result of this continuous battle can be seen in Chapter Two, as she tries to use Cowley to get at Christopher, who remains "expressionless" most of the time, a mode of behaviour that makes Sylvia all the more frenzied. Their relationship has reached a new pitch, a heightened tone that cannot possibly be sustained indefinitely. Both are described as being at "the end of [their] tether",²⁸⁷ and Sylvia finds herself completely at the mercy of her emotions as a result:

Emotion was going all over Sylvia . . . at the proximity of Tietjens. She said to herself: 'Is this to go on for ever?' Her hands were ice-cold. She touched the back of her left hand with the fingers of her right. It was ice-cold. She looked at her hands. They were bloodless. . . . She said to herself: 'It's pure sexual passion . . . God! Can't I get over this?' She said: 'Father! . . . You used to be fond of Christopher. . . . Get Our Lady to get me over this. . . . It's the ruin of him and the ruin of me. But, oh damn, don't! . . . For it's all I have to live for . . .' She said:

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 124.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 121, 241.

'When he came mooning back from the telephone I thought it was all right. . . . I thought what a heavy wooden-horse he looked. . . . For two minutes. . . . Then it's all over me again. . . . I want to swallow my saliva and I can't. My throat won't work. . . .'²⁸⁸

This passage is both startling, in that we see to what Sylvia's life has been reduced, and yet it begs our sympathy as we are shown how these "fits of emotion" are beyond her control and how one part of her wants to be released from them but the other prevents it. In his characterization of Sylvia Tietjens, Ford has exceeded anything his two mentors, James and Conrad, managed to achieve, for we actually feel the passion this "poor beast of a woman", as Christopher calls her, is subject to.²⁸⁹ It is in his depiction of Sylvia that Ford, for many readers, makes his greatest contribution to the portrayal of character in the novel.

Sylvia has become such a prisoner of her destructive passion that she is becoming "clumsy", losing her ability to "take his hide off with a word."²⁹⁰ Sexual relations are now a matter of conquest or defeat, rather than an integral part of any intimacy. The idea has become obsessive: "She said to herself: 'I pray to God the stiff, fatuous beast likes sitting here listening to this stuff. . . . Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, make him take me. . . . * * * I'm going mad. . . . Both I and he are going to go mad. . . .'"²⁹¹ Ford indicates

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 140-141.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 81.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 141.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 144, 145.

how her self-control is disappearing by the number of statements Sylvia makes which she either could not help making or regrets having made: "She could not help it. . . ." ²⁹² "Sylvia said -- she did not want to say it * * * ." ²⁹³ "She wished she hadn't said it: she wished she hadn't said it." ²⁹⁴

The two incidents she relates, that afternoon's ceremony at Lady Sachse's and her earlier visit to Mark Tietjens' flat, are examples of this lack of control. What really disturbs her about Christopher's behaviour is that "He was so appallingly competent, so appallingly always in the centre of his own picture." ²⁹⁵ In a sense, this reminds her of her own inadequacies, her own inability to retain a stability or personal "equanimity". That she does not yet know how far Christopher's stability is threatened, as revealed in Part One, is evidence of the degree to which their relationship has deteriorated. Having seen Christopher struggling to maintain an equilibrium, the sudden juxtaposition of Sylvia's point of view, and her unending desire to torment him, makes us even more critical of her sudden, impulsive declaration to Campion that her husband is a socialist, again an outburst she cannot prevent:

But, thinking it over in the smoking-room after dinner, by which time she was a good deal more aware of what she did want, she was not so certain she had done what she wanted. . . . Indeed, even in the octagonal room during the

²⁹² Ibid., 140.

²⁹³ Ibid., 142.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 152.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 148.

economical festivities that followed the signatures, she had been far from certain that she had not done almost exactly what she did not want. . . .²⁹⁶

Even Campion finds this charge hard to believe, and, with Thurston hovering in the background, it seems as if Sylvia may have pushed things too far.

The other incident is her sudden impulse, "on the spur of the moment", to blacken her husband's name in Mark's eyes. Related through the elder brother's letter, it represents one more attempt to lash "the last stud-white bulldog of that breed".²⁹⁷ Filtered through Sylvia's consciousness, we see how she is aware that Mark is standing by his brother, something she had not reckoned with. It is a mistake in strategy, for her persecution of Christopher relies heavily upon the readiness of other people to believe her word and not that of her husband. That Mark is prepared to support him closes one avenue of inflicting more and more pain upon Christopher, though there have been plenty of other opportunities, such as the time he was in hospital, "the thought that he was probably in pain making her wish to add all that she could to that pain. . . ." ²⁹⁸

Apart from Sylvia's last effort at wounding Christopher by having Groby's cedar cut down -- which she first learns here would hurt him²⁹⁹ -- the climactic attempt to humiliate and be humiliated is

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 151.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 160.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 167.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 177.

her bid to seduce her husband. It is noticeable that, as in the example provided by Levin's marriage ceremony, this effort on her part follows an act of sentimental generosity by Christopher, his giving the orderly five pounds seven shillings to help him out. Sylvia's reaction has a close parallel with Leonora Ashburnham's behaviour in The Good Soldier, since it involves an unwillingness on the part of both characters to tolerate such acts of kindness, and a tendency to be maddened by them through a lack of understanding. With Sylvia, the desire to dominate Christopher increases with the realization that he has a commitment to men like the orderly:

Now! Anyone: any fatuous staff-officer, whom at home he would never so much as have spoken to: any trustworthy beer-sodden sergeant, any street-urchin dressed up as orderly. . . . They had only to appear and all his mind went into a close-headed conference over some ignoble point in the child's game: the laundry, the chiropody, the religions, the bastards . . . of millions of the indistinguishable. . . . Or their deaths as well!³⁰⁰

The resemblance to Leonora's condemnation of Ashburnham's acts of generosity should be kept in mind. In particular, we should remember that Christopher's behaviour stems from the same kind of sentimentalism which Edward expressed in his love for Nancy Rufford: "If [Christopher] knew that the Wannop girl was loving him in Bedford Park, and he in the Khyber states with the Himalayas between them, he would be quite content. . . ." ³⁰¹ It is this kind of contentment that both Leonora and Sylvia cannot tolerate.

Sylvia's intolerance extends to her growing realization that

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 186. See 204-205.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 157. See The Good Soldier, 207.

Christopher may indeed be going through some kind of mental breakdown. Her response is not one of understanding; instead it involves an increased desire to "torment and allure". Both her lack of understanding and her enslavement to sudden fits of sexual passion are revealed by what is one of the most misunderstood questions in the whole tetralogy: "He knew she had almost kissed him on the lips. . . . And that his lips had almost responded. . . . The civilian, the novelist, had turned out the last light. . . . Tietjens said, 'Hadn't we better talk?' . . ." ³⁰² From our knowledge of her passion, and our later awareness of what Christopher means by "talk", we can see the vast gulf that exists between these two characters. For them, the word "talk" means two entirely different things, and they ascend the stairs to disaster.

The expressed need to "talk" to another human being, in an effort to order his life once again, is possibly the first full indication of a change in Christopher's point of view -- from a belief that men share values that enable them not "to talk" to a position where "talk" is necessary if one is to make any meaningful connection with the eternal world, while not compromising oneself in any way. The rhetorical juxtaposition of Christopher's and Sylvia's points of view, in Parts One and Two, indicates how Sylvia has failed her husband in this highly personal need. Her passion does not include "talk"; it is wholly concerned with sexual domination and humiliation and illustrates how far she has become trapped by her own emotions.

³⁰²No More Parades, 192.

It is to Ford's credit that he has been able to give such a character an existence, allowing his readers to explore an aspect of human passion that few writers successfully come to grips with. Though it is not in Sylvia's kind of passion that Christopher's "peace" lies, Ford has enabled a far richer response to the fullness of the relationship that grows between him and Valentine by making us see a contrast that involves a marriage where destructiveness is the dominant force.

iii

Part Three, of No More Parades, takes place the following morning, January 17, 1918, Ford having chosen not to portray the events that occur after Sylvia and Christopher have gone upstairs to her room. The incident undoubtedly has great dramatic possibilities, but Ford passes these up in favour of dealing with the aftermath or the effects of such an important event. Possibly this reveals a concern that the sudden appearance of Perowne might prove too dramatic, and take the reader's attention away from the important and irrevocable consequences that occur as a result. Thus, in Part Three, we are preoccupied with the significance of the previous night, as Christopher, Levin and Campion piece together what happened and what it means.

That the scene is set on the following morning perhaps indicates how, for Tietjens, this is indeed a new day in his life. It is a point of no return which means, above all, the publicity of his marital problems, as marked by the fact that Campion and Levin are involved in discussing the aftermath. In Part One, Christopher dealt

with his problems alone, especially those involving Sylvia, but, with the inclusion of Perowne and O'Hara, these difficulties have come out into the open. It is in relation to this publicity that we may see one of the most important meanings of the title of No More Parades, a meaning which becomes clear in a conversation between General Campion and Christopher:

Tietjens said:

'Still, sir . . . there are . . . there used to be . . . in families of . . . position . . . a certain . . .'
He stopped.

The general said:

'Well . . .'

Tietjens said:

'On the part of the man . . . a certain . . . Call it . . . parade!'

The general said:

'Then there had better be no more parades. . . .',³⁰³

Campion's answer to the problem is to send Christopher to the front in the hope that Providence will sort the matter out. For the General, the publicity of Christopher's affairs offers no alternative.

Part Three, therefore, is concerned with the end of an individual "parade"; it also carries the possibility that all parades may have come to an end. As we begin the first chapter, the emphasis is very much upon dealing with this change. We do not yet know what has happened during the time between Sylvia's final words and the next morning, and we are very much involved with the piecing together of the fragmented events of the past night. Ford makes his readers participate

³⁰³ Ibid., 250.

in the process of reconstruction, a process which is carried on within the context of there being "no more parades" of any sort.

The mood of the opening chapter is very much the lull after a storm, a chaotic series of occurrences that included screams, telephone calls, bombardment and a drunken General. Parts One and Two are very much concerned with disorder and chaos, and with Christopher's attempts to seek some principle of order. Part Three sees him resigned to whatever fate the newly arrived "god" (Campion) decrees; it is a resignation that resembles the indifference experienced by Katherine Howard at the end of the Fifth Queen. Yet, there is another side to his personality that is expressed, while asleep, in the form of a letter to Valentine Wannop:

'It's . . .' Levin hesitated, 'extraordinarily difficult to say what you did say. . . . I don't profess to remember long speeches to the letter. . . . Naturally it was a good deal broken up. . . . I tell you, you were talking to a young lady about matters you don't generally talk to young ladies about. . . . And obviously you were trying to let your . . . Mrs Tietjens, down easily. . . . You were trying to explain also why you had definitely decided to separate from Mrs Tietjens. . . . And you took it that the young lady might be troubled . . . at the separation. . . .'³⁰⁴

Christopher's "talking" in his sleep not only reveals his need to communicate his experience to another human being, in particular Valentine Wannop, but also the extent to which recent events have placed him at the very edge of sanity. However, it is to his credit, as well as being a testimony to the strength of his character, that he does not go "mad", like the "bore" McKechnie in A Man Could Stand Up.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 210.

Thus, while Ford depicts Christopher's mental difficulties during his encounter with Campion, throughout Part Three we also see how he struggles to maintain his dignity and self-control: "He must master his legs. He mastered his legs."³⁰⁵ It is this strength that one notices in the character of Katherine Howard in the Fifth Queen, or, as Tietjens expresses it here: "'* * * the thing is to be able to stick to the integrity of your character, whatever earthquake sets the the house tumbling over your head. . . .'"³⁰⁶ For Ford, as many critics have noted, integrity is one of the supreme human virtues, regardless of whether the individual succeeds or fails in the conventional sense. Here is the individual "parade" Tietjens does manage to maintain, even though all the other "parades" are crashing around him.

But it is not achieved without great personal cost. The trial of the previous night, indeed of his whole history dating back to 1912, has led to a "crack" in his personality, as symbolized by the image of the shaving mirror:

It was providential that he had shaved with extra care. An insolently calm man was looking at him, the face divided in two by the crack in the glass: a naturally white-complexioned double-half of a face: a patch of high colour on each cheek-bone; the pepper-and-salt hair ruffled, the white streaks extremely silver. He had gone very silver lately.³⁰⁷

Not only has his past experience aged him physically, it has also

³⁰⁵Ibid., 197.

³⁰⁶Ibid., 205.

³⁰⁷Ibid., 197.

produced a "crack" in him,³⁰⁸ involving an, as yet, unacknowledged desire to "talk" with Valentine Wannop, besides the more conscious pattern of action that we have witnessed in his dealings with society. It is not until he realizes that the desire to "talk" can be accommodated with his ideals of personal integrity in a way of life which includes Valentine that this "crack" can be healed.

In Part Three of No More Parades, however, we are at the lowest ebb in the tetralogy, the point at which Christopher has either to die, like Katherine and Ashburnham, because there is no place for him in a society that ruthlessly hunts a person of principles, or be reconstructed in a different set of relations which will accommodate his ideals without a destructive compromise. This nadir calls for the depiction of the state of Tietjens' consciousness, as he wanders from subject to subject, his span of attention destroyed by the last pulling of the string of a "shower-bath":

'By God! How my mind wanders! How long will it go on?'
He said: 'I am at the end of my tether.' He had missed what the general had said for some time.

The general said:

'Well. Has he?'

Tietjens said:

'I didn't catch, sir!'

'Are you deaf?' the general asked. 'I'm sure I speak plain enough. You've just said there are no horses attached to this camp. I asked you if there is not a horse for the colonel commanding the depot. . . . A German horse, I understand!'

Tietjens said to himself:

³⁰⁸As the war has resulted in a "crack" across the table of History. See A Man Could Stand Up, 272. Perhaps this is the image of the mirror with which the tetralogy began. See Some Do Not . . ., 11.

'Great heavens! I've been talking to him. What in the world about?' It was as if his mind were falling off a hillside.³⁰⁹

This sense of fatigue dominates the last section.

In addition to the depiction of the immense strain that Christopher is suffering, there is considerable discussion as to where the responsibility lies for the catastrophe in his marriage. Campion begins by asserting Sylvia's innocence, something Tietjens continues to defend in the manner he has always chosen to adopt. But, even Campion finds the defence difficult to maintain in the light of Thurston's evidence:

The general burst out:

'By God! I had taken that woman to be a saint. . . .
I swear she is a saint. . . .'

Tietjens said:

'There is no accusation against Mrs Tietjens, sir!'

The general said:

'By God, there is!' * * *

The general said:

'You have been living practically on terms of separation from her for a number of years? You don't deny that that was on account of your own misbehaviour * * * .'³¹⁰

Yet, the general realizes that such an account of Tietjens' marriage does not ring true, an observation that has consequences for our view of Campion in The Last Post: "'No! I don't believe it. I know you did not keep any girl in any tobacco-shop. I remember every word you said at Rye in 1912. I wasn't sure then. I am now. You tried to let

³⁰⁹No More Parades, 241.

³¹⁰Ibid., 236.

me think it. You had shut up your house because of your wife's misbehaviour. You let me believe you had been sold up. You weren't sold up at all."³¹¹ It is this insight that leads Campion to think: "He knows he's given his wife away! . . . Good God!"³¹² His view confirms our understanding of the situation and the degree to which Christopher has been ostracized because of other people's unwillingness to understand his motives, a result, in turn, of the visible lack of good faith and "harmony" in society.

v

In short, then, No More Parades depicts the tremendous costs and effects of a passion that is wholly destructive in nature. The novel's three-part structure shows this outcome from two points of view, culminating in the presence of disintegration and disharmony in Part Three. Ford's use of the tripartite form, in this novel, contrasts with that found in A Man Could Stand Up, where the two individual consciousnesses merge into one in the final section. The differences in the concluding parts of the two novels are indicative of the distinctions between the kinds of passion that dominate them. Passion in A Man Could Stand Up results in harmony; in No More Parades it produces disunity.

That disunity is reflected in the contrasts between two points of view we are shown in No More Parades, both revealing characters who

³¹¹ Ibid., 253.

³¹² Ibid., 256.

react very differently to the strains of the later stages of the war and of their relationship. The main difference centres upon the word "control". On the one hand, there is Sylvia Tietjens, a woman who, because her life has become reduced to the dictates of sexual passion, cannot retain control of herself and ends by doing things involuntarily. Such accelerated lack of self-mastery eventually leads to her loss of "identity".³¹³ By identity, Ford seems to mean those qualities of personality that enable self-control, that allow for a consistency of conduct in the dealings of one character with another. This would appear to be what Christopher means by "equanimity",³¹⁴ an equilibrium between thought and feeling which is so seriously challenged in him as soon as the tetralogy begins in 1912. Sylvia, through her emotionalism, allows her personality to become subject to caprice, and the result is a loss of "equanimity". Her "anaesthetic" that results in this loss is the passion she experiences -- a force based wholly upon feelings, and which can strangely lead her to admire the strength of intellect in her husband.

Our view of Christopher, in No More Parades, is different. His identity, as already discussed, is based upon eighteenth-century notions of the self as finding its fullest expression in the subscription to a centrally-held set of values, involving the control of feelings for the good of the "collective identity", as he calls it. This notion gives him a strength of character which, though he experiences intense worry

³¹³No More Parades, 188.

³¹⁴Ibid., 78.

and fatigue, enables him to preserve his identity so that he can maintain a consistency of conduct even when "counselled" to his death. McKechnie's presence serves as a rhetorical means of highlighting this strength, as McKechnie, suffering similar pressures, goes to pieces.

The juxtaposition of husband and wife allows us to see the rejection, on Ford's part, of the kind of passion Sylvia embodies, in that its outcome results in a destructiveness and a weakening of the individual. The pale shadow of her earlier self, the Sylvia we encounter in The Last Post is further evidence of such deterioration. As argued at an earlier stage in this chapter, Ford is rejecting feeling alone as a premise for human conduct. The notion that freedom can be attained through feeling is thus exposed as a delusion, since, like Sylvia, the individual becomes a prisoner of his or her emotions, liable to vast changes of internal states by the external landscape. If we are to survive such instability, Ford seems to be saying, there must be some form of fusion between thought and feeling. The mind and memory, a storehouse of experience sifted by the mind, must be involved in any state of personal equilibrium.

Yet, Christopher, in spite of these great pressures, manages to retain his integrity. But he has also developed a "crack" in his personality, where thought and feeling have grown apart. Part Three makes us see the difficulty that results as he struggles to remain in control of his mind, something he constantly prays he will not lose. His prayers contrast markedly with those uttered by Sylvia, in Part Two, with her appeals to the Saints to grant her sexual relations with her husband: "He exclaimed to himself: 'By heavens! Is this epilepsy?'"

He prayed: 'Blessed saints, get me spared that!' He exclaimed: 'No, it isn't . . . I've complete control of my mind. My uppermost mind.'³¹⁵ But, Christopher's innermost being, the other side of the "crack", is leading him to think of Valentine Wannop, and it is not until this idea enters his mind that there is the possibility of unity, once again, between intellect and emotion.

One is tempted to use pseudo-Freudian terminology to describe this relationship between thought and feeling, but there is little indication in the tetralogy itself that Ford conceived his characters in these terms. Neither would the importation of quasi-Lawrentian understandings of the personality help; for Parade's End specifically rejects the idea of sexuality as a means of discovering a harmony of the self or a harmony between men and women. Possibly the best way to understand this idea of unity is in terms of the image Christopher himself provides in No More Parades:

Tietjens was sentimental at rest, still with wet eyes. He was walking near Salisbury in a grove, regarding long pastures and ploughlands running to dark, high elms from which, embowered. . . . Embowered was the word! -- peeped the spire of George Herbert's church . . . One ought to be a seventeenth-century parson at the time of the renaissance of Anglican saintliness . . . who wrote, perhaps poems. No, not poems. Prose. The statelier vehicle!³¹⁶

Like T. S. Eliot, Christopher looks back to an age that existed before the "dissociation of sensibility" set in, to a time where there was no "crack" in the mirror that 'reflects' his identity.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 252-253.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 256.

It is the unity between intelligence and feeling that defines the relationship which grows between Valentine and Christopher: "Her mind so marches with mine that she will understand."³¹⁷ A relationship that is not based upon a unification of these two qualities cannot hope to be any more than the marriage which exists between Sylvia and Christopher. That was founded upon a momentary seduction in a railway carriage, and the desire of a woman to find a father for her child. But, in the passion shared by Valentine and Christopher, there is a firm base upon which a unity may be built, as love allows them both the freedom and control that will enable a restoration of thought and feeling into a harmony. It is a process that will be the primary concern of the ensuing discussion of A Man Could Stand Up. Here, in No More Parades, Ford has made us see where a lack of "equanimity" leads, and the rhetoric of the novel has been directed towards the discovery and depiction of this view of a destructive passion.

³¹⁷A Man Could Stand Up, 442.

Part Four: Passion as a Regenerative Force in Parade's End --

A Man Could Stand Up

i

"She could! She could! She could!"

A Man Could Stand Up is divided into three sections, two of which take place on Armistice Day, 1918 (11/11/18). As in the other volumes of the tetralogy, there is remarkably little action or incident. In Part One, for example, the main happenings are Edith Macmaster's telephone call and Valentine's conversation with Miss Wanostrocht. Yet, this part of the novel reflects, by focusing upon one individual, the conditions that Ford wishes us to see as being present in the whole of society. In particular, he is concerned with what the word "peace" means for someone who has lived for four years under the constant shadow of war.

We last met Valentine Wannop in August, 1917, at the time of Christopher's departure for Rouen in Some Do Not Since then she has held herself in a state of "suspended animation", from which the telephone awakens her. Like the image of the long-distance call in the final chapter of Some Do Not . . ., the telephone acts as a link between the present and the past, a spur to the memory that brings the past rushing forth. Part One concerns itself with Valentine's efforts to come to terms with this sudden influx of images and half-remembered events, a process of ordering experience that is accentuated by the

news that Christopher Tietjens has returned alive, but possibly a sick man.

It is interesting, in the light of the conclusions drawn from No More Parades, that one of the most frequently repeated words in the opening paragraphs is "control". Here, the word is used to signify not just the self-control that enables the individual to escape the chaotic emotionalism of the kind seen in Sylvia Tietjens, but also the "control" society imposes upon its individual members that will force them to conform to its standards. One of the questions raised in Valentine's mind is how far this form of control is justified in the light of recent experience. Are society's standards those by which she should judge her own "equanimity", or are they so debased that she must look elsewhere for some principle of order?

Whereas Christopher has founded his principles upon strictly eighteenth-century notions of conduct, Valentine's have been largely derived from the Victorian age, particularly that stratum previously inhabited by her mother and father. Generally speaking, Victorian morality has now proved itself bankrupt: "Middle Class Morality? A pretty gory carnival that had been for the last four years!"³¹⁸ But, it is the kind of "control" evident before the War that the Middle-Class moralists now seek to reinstate with the advent of peace. "Peace" for society means a return to the way things were, involving a denial that anything has happened in between to affect its structure.

It should be remembered, when dealing with A Man Could Stand Up,

³¹⁸Ibid., 300.

that, amid the saturnalian expression of "joy" (another word very much at the heart of the novel), Valentine does not reject the notion of control per se: "It occurred to her that probably at that minute the whole population of the world needed to be under control; she knew she herself did."³¹⁹ Critics more attuned to a view of the tetralogy that lumps all notions of control under one heading, as repressively "Victorian", might take into account that Valentine does see a need for control in her behaviour. Like the word "passion", "control" can mean different things in different contexts. In Valentine's case, she desires the same kind of control Christopher is relieved to find he can exhibit in Part Three of No More Parades when he keeps "'control of [his] mind'".³²⁰ Christopher's sense of control is entirely consistent with his eighteenth-century sensibility, and enables him to retain his identity. In the control Valentine feels that the School and Lady Macmaster are trying to impose upon her, she realizes that the word signifies standards of conduct and values that have been shown to be inadequate, hypocritical and inconsistent with her needs if she is to keep her identity and individual integrity. Yet, some form of control is necessary if the individual is to avoid Sylvia's fate, and Christopher provides this 'form' for Valentine through his intellectual and moral support. It is worth adding that she does the same for him:

Because he needed her moral support! When during the late Hostilities, he hadn't been out there, he had drifted to the tea-table much earlier of an afternoon and stayed beside

³¹⁹ Ibid., 263.

³²⁰ No More Parades, 253.

it much longer: till after everyone else had gone and they could go and sit on the tall fender side by side, and argue . . . about the rights and wrongs of the War!

Because she was the only soul in the world with whom he could talk. . . . They had the same sort of good, bread-and-butter brains; without much of the romantic. . . . No doubt a touch . . . in him.³²¹

This passage looks forward to Christopher's realization of the opportunities Valentine offers for "talk", while also taking us back to that afternoon in Some Do Not In addition, it carries an echo of Dowell's earlier definition of passion in The Good Soldier: "So, for a time, if such a passion come to fruition, the man will get what he wants. He will get the moral support, the encouragement, the relief from the sense of loneliness, the assurance of his own worth."³²² (My emphasis.) It is the idea of "moral support" that is central to both Dowell's and Valentine's understanding of what passion means, and we should add Christopher's name to this list. The repetition of the phrase "moral support" not only illustrates how important the idea is to our view of what Ford means by a creative passion, it also helps in linking passion with the notion of "control". Through "moral support", through a creative passion, the individuals concerned can find qualities in each other that allow for control and balance, for "equanimity".

Thus, in Part One of A Man Could Stand Up, Valentine is very much concerned with questions of control, of the standards of conduct by which she is to order her future existence. The voice at the other

³²¹A Man Could Stand Up, 291.

³²²The Good Soldier, 106.

end of the telephone reminds her of one set of values that she has previously rejected:

The voice said:

'You remember your Carlyle. . . .'

It was exactly what she did not want to hear. With the receiver hard at her ear, she looked round at the great school-room -- the Hall, made to let a thousand girls sit silent while the Head made the speeches that were the note of the School. Repressive! * * * But she was there, being reminded of the dyspepsia of Thomas Carlyle! * * *

'To-day,' the quotation ran, 'I saw that the soldiers by the public house at the corner were more than usually drunk. And then I remembered that it was the birthday of their Redeemer!'

How superior of the Sage of Chelsea not to remember till then that that had been Christmas Day! Edith Ethel, too, was trying to show how superior she was.³²³

"Remembered" and "reminded", indicate the way memory is acting, for the moment, as a threat to Valentine. But, she also recalls how Edith's standards included "sets of quotations for appropriate occasions", "the higher things" and other values Valentine came to see were empty in the lives of Edith and her husband, "author of Walter Savage Landor, a Critical Monograph, and of twenty-two other Critical Monographs in the Eminent Bores' Series. . . . Such books!"³²⁴ Her own statements lead to the central question: "No more respect! Was that to be a lasting effect of the cataclysm that had involved the world?"³²⁵ As far as the values Edith evokes are concerned, the answer, for Valentine, appears to be in the affirmative.

³²³ A Man Could Stand Up, 268, 269.

³²⁴ Ibid., 270.

³²⁵ Ibid.

Opposed to the claims of the School and Edith's notion of control, there are a variety of possible things one could do:

People would be able to travel now. It was incredible! Incredible! Incredible! But you could. Next week you would be able to! You could call a taxi! And go to Charing Cross! And have a porter! A whole porter! . . . The wings, the wings of a dove: then I would flee away, flee away and eat pomegranates beside an infinite wash-tube of Reckitt's blue. Incredible, but you could!³²⁶

The verbs "would" and "could" are essential to our understanding of the two final volumes of the tetralogy; one, in fact, appears in the title A Man Could Stand Up. Implying possibility, they delineate the degrees of choice that lie before several characters with the advent of peace. For Valentine, the opportunities seem endless, but the problem becomes one of what she "ought" to do: "You ought to be in the streets, hitting policemen's helmets with bladders."³²⁷ The echo of Christopher's observation in 1912 -- "* * * however else can a woman keep clean and wholesome! * * * [but by] bashing in policemen's helmets"³²⁸ -- reminds us of the inner qualities Valentine possesses. In addition, for her, the verb "ought" does not imply the same devotion to a bankrupt morality that it does for Edith: "' . . . that [Christopher] ought presumably to be under control * * * .'"³²⁹ In Valentine's case, "ought" suggests what one "could" do by way of something fulfilling and worthwhile. It is worth adding that it also involves the awakening of that "Cocky",

³²⁶ Ibid., 266.

³²⁷ Ibid., 268.

³²⁸ Some Do Not . . ., 136.

³²⁹ A Man Could Stand Up, 263.

"Cockney" self which Christopher had admired so much: "She felt eighteen again."³³⁰

If the telephone reminds Valentine of what she should not do, and of a self she knew when she was eighteen, it certainly brings to light one possibility of what she "ought" to do, namely, begin a life with Christopher Tietjens:

She could not afford -- she could not bear! -- to recall even his name or to so much as bring before her mind, into which, nevertheless, they were continually forcing themselves, his grey-blond face, his clumsy, square, reliable feet; his humpish bulk; his calculatedly wooden expression; his perfectly overwhelming, but authentic omniscience. . . . His masculinity. His . . . his Frightfulness!³³¹

His capability for getting into complicated messes is offset by the qualities that perhaps only she has seen in him: "Those people had sponged mercilessly on him for years and years without ever knowing the kind of object upon which they sponged."³³² With the sudden reminder of his presence, Valentine has to estimate where they stand: "'Chuck it. You're in love with a married man who's a Society wife and you're upset because the Titled Lady has put into your head the idea that you might "come together again". After ten years!"³³³ But this is to "'put things too crudely'"³³⁴ and she must think again what their

³³⁰Ibid., 267.

³³¹Ibid., 281.

³³²Ibid., 282

³³³Ibid., 284.

³³⁴Ibid.

relationship has to offer. Thus, with such recollections, there also emerge images of the night ride and the world of 1912: "Six years ago! What changes in the world! What cataclysms! What Revolutions!"³³⁵ Yet, through it all, there remains Christopher's essential "goodness", and with that memory comes the discovery that she is the only person in the world who really understands him and can act as a "moral support" for him. For Valentine, memory has provided one creative possibility of order which she "ought" to grasp.

The other "ought" is that which includes Edith Macmaster and the school. Her conversation with Miss Wanostrocht represents another aspect of this pull towards Victorian duty, and the headmistress symbolizes one future possibility that Valentine's life could take. It may be that Ford has already prepared us for this possibility by having Valentine's surname previously mixed up with that of the headmistress: "[Sylvia] complains," says Levin in No More Parades, "'about you taking her sheets. And about a Miss . . . a Miss Wanostrocht, is it? . . .'"³³⁶ Miss Wanostrocht stands for the "nunlike" existence Valentine has experienced during the last year or so in particular, the kind of life which results in the imprisonment of the self, as we see the Head locked in her "cell": "Miss Wanostrocht, who had been taking her thin, black cloth coat from its peg behind the highly varnished pitch-pine door of her own private cell * * * ." ³³⁷ The

³³⁵ Ibid., 286.

³³⁶ No More Parades, 84.

³³⁷ A Man Could Stand Up, 277.

colours, including that of her "dun-coloured hair",³³⁸ signify the drabness of a future in a School with its "varnished pitch-pine bench that had black iron-clamped legs against the plaster wall, non-conformistically distempered in torpedo grey * * * ."339 The head-mistress makes appeals to the values Professor Wannop stood for, and which she thought were present in Valentine: "'It was your moral rather than your athletic influence that made me so glad to have you here. . . . It was because I felt that you did not set such a high value on the physical. . . .'"340 But the claims of her father's world, and that of Edith, no longer hold Valentine because they do not result in anything but hypocrisy and the values of the institution, which are symbolized by Pettigul One:

The clumsy, fifteenish, bumpy-faced girl was a symbol of that place -- healthyish, but not over healthy; honestish but with no craving for intellectual honesty * * * . It was, in fact, all 'ishes' about that Institution. They were all healthyish, honestish, clumsyish, twelve-to-eighteenish and big-boned in unexpected places because of the late insufficient feeding. . . .³⁴¹

These are standards Valentine no longer wants to subscribe to, and she indicates her rejection of them by suddenly breaking the telephone cord.³⁴² Her desire is not to let such values come between her and Christopher, but to find out for herself where the two of them stand.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid., 280-281.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 308.

³⁴¹ Ibid., 294-295.

³⁴² Ibid., 293.

At the end of Part One, this is an open question: "'And we've no means of knowing where we stand nowadays!'"³⁴³

Armistice Day is therefore a turning-point in Valentine's life, a time when she has to discover where she stands. This has been an issue that Christopher himself faced "Months and months before". Part Two deals with his solution to the problem: like Valentine, he is looking for a solution that will not demand any compromise, nor any loss of integrity.

ii

That in effect was love. It struck him as astonishing. The word was so little in his vocabulary. . . . Love, ambition, the desire for wealth. They were things he had never known of as existing -- as capable of existing within him. He had been the Younger Son, loafing, contemptuous, capable, idly contemplating life, but ready to take up the position of the Head of the Family if Death so arranged matters. He had been a sort of eternal Second-in-Command.³⁴⁴

A critic eager to find proof of immense changes in Christopher during the course of the tetralogy might contrast the above statement with some of his views in Some Do Not . . .: "And utterly careless as Tietjens imagined himself of careers or offices, he was, if sardonically, quite sympathetic towards his friend's ambitiousness."³⁴⁵

³⁴³Ibid., 310.

³⁴⁴Ibid., 415.

³⁴⁵Some Do Not . . ., 13.

"He was without ambition * * * .";³⁴⁶ "* * * love of a distracting kind was a disease merely of the weak * * *".³⁴⁷ These quotations might be taken as evidence of a complete rejection of Christopher's eighteenth-century sensibility. However, this view would overlook how Christopher sees some of these "things" as signs of a "personal deterioration", such as the desire for wealth and ambition, while realizing that love will help him avoid a moral collapse through a life of frugality with Valentine Wannop. Their passion 'stops the rot', so to speak, and allows him to preserve those qualities that contribute to, what Valentine calls, his "goodness". Yet, there is a change in him which enables him to differentiate between these "things". As he himself points out, in relation to the Commanding Officer's request for a loan: "After all, it didn't matter what kind of man this was, it was a question of what sort of a man Tietjens was becoming."³⁴⁸

Indeed, the C.O.'s request is illustrative of the problems Christopher sees as facing him. Chapter Five opens with a request for money, something that Tietjens would not have thought twice about in the past, as shown by his gift to the orderly in No More Parades and his financial loans to Vincent Macmaster. But, now, Christopher has a different reaction: "From the sudden fierce hatred that he felt at the thought of giving money to this man, Tietjens knew that his inner mind based all his calculations on the idea of living with Valentine Wannop

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 224.

³⁴⁸ A Man Could Stand Up, 397.

. . . when men could stand up on hills."³⁴⁹ "Hatred" is a strange word in view of our realization that Christopher was, and still is, an individual "who hated no man".³⁵⁰ In addition, there is his "passionate desire to command that battalion. It was the last thing he would have expected of himself."³⁵¹ There is also his desire, chronologically expressed prior to the C.O.'s request for money: "But he, Tietjens, was . . . Damn it, he was going to make two-hundred and fifty quid towards living with Valentine Wannop -- when you really could stand up on a hill . . . anywhere!" Immediately, the colonel bursts out with: "'Look here! Lend me two-hundred and fifty quid!'"³⁵²

It is a pivotal statement in that Christopher's answer will tell him "what sort of a man [he] was becoming." "He said: 'I can't lend you the money. I'll guarantee an overdraft to your agents. For two-hundred and fifty.' Well, then, he remained the sort of man who automatically lent men. He was glad."³⁵³ Doing things "automatically", in this sense, is one of the conditions of belief that ought to exist among gentlemen: "'One's friends ought to believe that one is a gentleman. Automatically.'"³⁵⁴ Tietjens has retained this quality,

³⁴⁹Ibid., 389.

³⁵⁰Some Do Not . . ., 102.

³⁵¹A Man Could Stand Up, 390.

³⁵²Ibid., 396.

³⁵³Ibid., 397.

³⁵⁴No More Parades, 255.

and he is "glad" as a result.

However, his generosity is modified by another objection:

'You've practically got the money in your hand as you sit there. I've only to write the letter. It's impossible your agents should refuse my guarantee. If they do, I'll raise the money and send it you.'

He wondered why he didn't do that last in any case. A year or so ago he would have had no hesitation about over-drawing his account to any extent. Now he had an insupportable objection. Like a hatred!

He said:

'You'd better let me have your address' * * * .³⁵⁵

This last statement the earlier Christopher would never have made; he would have trusted the man's good faith to return the money when convenient. It reveals a battle in A Man Could Stand Up between the selfish and selfless aspects in his personality, a conflict brought about by the stresses he has lived under for the past six years, and which is finally resolved through his love for another human being.

Kashner over-states the case when she proposes that one of the central juxtapositions in No More Parades and A Man Could Stand Up is that between society and the self:

[Christopher] is now in the state at which Macauley and Meixner leave him: he is a man whose tenuous ideals have been shattered. But with the shattering of those ideals comes a new idea. If a man cannot live for society, for England and Home, perhaps he can live for himself. * * * It was the calumny of the world and the pressures of Sylvia which forced him to think of Valentine as a mistress; now, slowly, he begins to abdicate the society which ruined him and think new thoughts. One alternative has been taken away: it is the self which remains.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁵ A Man Could Stand Up, 398.

³⁵⁶ "Tietjens' Education", 159.

Her statement is consistent with her desire, shared by William Carlos Williams, to isolate a re-birth pattern: "In A Man Could Stand Up, Tietjens is re-born."³⁵⁷ This is not to say that Ford does not incorporate such a design in his work, since we have already seen his interest in the phenomenon in the Fifth Queen trilogy. But, we should not be too eager to reduce everything to this framework, particularly when it leads Miss Kashner to stress the "self": "Perhaps he can live for himself." For such an emphasis might mean, for some readers, that in choosing to live for the self, Christopher is choosing the path of self-centredness and self-interest instead of his previously altruistic behaviour. Indeed, it is an interpretation Kashner encourages us to take in her discussion of the final scene in Part Two, where she argues that Christopher rejects his notion of saving others in favour of saving himself. But, it need not be a positive assertion, as many have assumed, when he declares while being buried: "He could see the imploring lips form the words: 'Save me, Captain!' He said: 'I've got to save myself first!'"³⁵⁸ It is his altruism that is buried temporarily, to re-surface in Christopher's attempts to save Duckett and Aranjuez, and his satisfaction, based upon his eighteenth-century sentimentalism, that he had not lost "one of the men but only an officer": "It was akin to the feeling that made him regard cruelty to an animal as a more loathsome crime than cruelty to a human being, other

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 160.

³⁵⁸ A Man Could Stand Up, 431.

than a child. It was no doubt irrational."³⁵⁹ But, the sentiment is not irrational; it is consistent with his sensibility. Thus, when he is subsequently questioned by Campion, it may be argued that he is referring to the part of him that was buried temporarily by his selfish impulses.³⁶⁰ But, now it has been given a focus in his passion for Valentine Wannop: "He was going to live, he figured, in a four-room attic-flat, on the top of one of the Inns of Court. With Valentine Wannop. Because of Valentine Wannop!"³⁶¹ This understanding of passion, as noted in Valentine's wish to live with Christopher -- "Because he needed her moral support" (my emphasis) -- is the desire to live for another human being: "* * * the real heat of a passion long continued and withering up the soul of man is the craving for identity with the woman that he loves. He desires to see with the same eyes, to touch with the same sense of touch, to hear with the same ears, to lose his identity, to be enveloped, to be supported."³⁶² This "loss of identity", unlike Sylvia's, is one that involves the discovery of identity, for, in seeing and understanding the world from another's point of view, the individual is no longer a "prisoner" of the self, as is Sylvia Tietjens, but a person who attains a state of freedom. One chooses the word "prisoner" carefully, for prisoners disgust Christopher:

³⁵⁹Ibid., 431.

³⁶⁰"I could not be found because I was buried. Temporarily."
Ibid. This statement does not refer to Christopher's being buried for the two previous volumes, but to the temporary loss of the qualities in him that are so essential.

³⁶¹Ibid., 420.

³⁶²The Good Soldier, 106.

It was detestable to him to be in control of the person of another human being -- as detestable as it would have been to be himself a prisoner . . . that thing that he dreaded most in the world. It was indeed almost more detestable, since to be taken prisoner was at least a thing outside your own volition, whereas to control a prisoner, even under the compulsion of discipline on yourself, implies a certain free-will of your own. And this had been an especially loathsome affair. Even normally, though it was irrational enough, prisoners affected him with the sense that they were unclean. As if they were maggots. It was not sensible; but he knew that if he had had to touch a prisoner he would have felt nausea. It was no doubt the product of his passionate Tory sense of freedom. What distinguished man from the brutes was his freedom. When then a man was deprived of freedom he became like a brute. To exist in his society was to live with brutes: like Gulliver amongst the Houyhnhms!³⁶³

It is interesting that Tietjens refers to his wife as a "poor beast of a woman",³⁶⁴ especially in the light of the comments that have been made about her being a prisoner of her emotions. His is the insight of sympathy at the realization of what Sylvia has become. Her "loss of identity" is not an expression of a "Tory sense of freedom", but the extension of her desire to dominate her husband, to make him a prisoner and a brute: "I remembered the white bulldog I thrashed on the night before it died. . . . * * * There's a pleasure in lashing into a naked white beast. . . . Obese and silent. . . . Like Christopher. . . ."³⁶⁵ In doing so, she become further imprisoned to that longing to be treated like a brute: "* * * the longing for the brute who had mangled her: the dreadful pain of the mind."³⁶⁶ In effect, she becomes one of

³⁶³ A Man Could Stand Up, 403.

³⁶⁴ No More Parades, 81.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 160.

³⁶⁶ Some Do Not . . ., 188.

the Houyhnhms.

But, in his love for Valentine, Christopher manages to regain his identity, and the "Tory sense of freedom" which enables him to remain a "Gulliver amongst the Houyhnhms". His passion for Valentine allows him to do these things, to find or re-discover his identity through the discovery of and respect for another individual. If we find difficulty with this statement, we should remember John Bayley's observation concerning the great author's love of and respect for the freedom of his characters.³⁶⁷ As Ford realizes, when speaking of Turgenev, this desire to penetrate another identity through passion results in "equilibrium" -- the "equanimity" and sense of freedom Christopher seeks. But the only way to such freedom, as Ford the artist demonstrates, is to come to know another person, which requires transcending the self-centred bonds which Christopher feels closing around him in A Man Could Stand Up. Without living for someone or something, he would become a prisoner like his wife.

Previously, that "something" has been his Tory belief in the "centrally ideal" -- which required the individual to subjugate self-interests in favour of the good of the community.³⁶⁸ Now, that "something" becomes "someone" -- and his passion for Valentine is the quality that leads him towards "equanimity". In this way, Christopher does not change as much as some critics might care to suggest. The last thing he does is to "live for himself"; for to do so would involve

³⁶⁷ See also James's "The Lesson of Balzac", 116-117.

³⁶⁸ It is a similar subjugation to that undergone by Katherine Howard in the Fifth Queen.

living for self-interested motives, for the kind of narcissistic compulsions experienced by the Macmasters and Sylvia Tietjens, who are continually gazing into mirrors at images of themselves. Christopher and Valentine, by way of contrast, choose to live for each other, because of each other. It is here that the meaning of their passion lies, as does that of the rhetoric of the tetralogy; like Christopher, the artist expresses his passion through the writing of Parade's End, which takes him beyond the self.

Yet, the impulse towards selfish goals is strong in A Man Could Stand Up, and Part Two revolves around the conflict between selfish and selfless motives and actions. The section opens in Spring. Here, the emphasis will be upon renewal, of the kind provided by the support Valentine and he offer each other, the restoration of the values that are central to Ford's work. Yet, for the greater part of this section, Christopher is, like Valentine in Part One, desperately searching for something that will bring back "equanimity" in his life: "He imagined that his brain was going: he was mad and seeing himself go mad. He cast about in his mind for some subject about which to think so that he could prove to himself that he had not gone mad."³⁶⁹

Madness is a condition that worries Christopher a great deal, for it brings to the forefront the irrational, the element of fear which is at odds with his sensibility. Thus, while in command, we see him trying to dispel fears and doubts, or even superstitions, previously about death to Perowne, now about skylarks to his men: "'Gilbert White

³⁶⁹ A Man Could Stand Up, 336.

of Selbourne * * * called the behaviour of the female STORGE: a good word for it.' But as for trust in humanity, the Sergeant might take it that larks never gave us a thought."³⁷⁰ Though his men take it as a sign of eccentricity -- "'Skylarks not trust 'uman beens in battles! Cor!'"³⁷¹ -- these expressions of intelligence nevertheless help to restore a sense of trust between the batallion's men and its commanders. In other words, the powers of intellect are shown to be sufficient to overcome the crisis; it is the same appeal to intelligence that Valentine echoes in her reference to Gilbert White: "STORGE, Gilbert White calls it!"³⁷² This repetition serves as a reminder of how their minds do indeed "march" together.

In Part Two, Christopher also conquers the irrational through his explanations of the impossibility of a full-scale German attack, due to the German preference for a wind to blow the gas in the right direction. In addition, there are other intelligent acts and observations which lead to the number of testimonials that leak through to him: "'Damn cool you were, sir. Damn cool. I never saw a knife drawn so slow!'"³⁷³ "'You, sir. . . . You're a law hunto yourself!'"³⁷⁴ It is this seeming ability to conquer fear and madness that makes him

³⁷⁰Ibid., 315.

³⁷¹Ibid., 316.

³⁷²Ibid., 453.

³⁷³Ibid., 332.

³⁷⁴Ibid., 343.

saunter along the lines: "Even if the Colonel should refuse to be relieved of the command, Tietjens was determined that the men should have the consolation of knowing that headquarters numbered one cool, sauntering soul amongst its members."³⁷⁵ Some officers can instill such confidence by humour, as in the case of the Major who had his men shout "'Banzai'", but Tietjens has to do this by appearing "unconcernedly reflective and all there -- and he could tell them, at trying moments, that, say, their ideas about skylarks were all wrong. . . . That was tranquilizing."³⁷⁶ He can also manage humour:

The men shuffled uneasily * * * and Tietjens explained: 'No, this isn't drill. It's only that your hats all at sixes and sevens give me the pip!' And the whispers of the men went down the little line:

'You 'ear the orfcer. . . . Gives 'im the pip, we do! . . . Goin' for a wawk in the pawk wiv our gels, we are. . . .' * * *

'Oo-er! Djee 'eer 'im? Di'djee 'eer the orfcer? The noo C.O.?'³⁷⁷

Yet, if by appearing "reflective" Christopher can restore some semblance of order in his men's lives, there remain his own fears and nightmares, his own confrontation with the irrational in a context that threatens to destroy the very function of intelligence as a means of shaping experience. This is illustrated by the "splash of purposeless whitewash", his dreams of a voice under his camp-bed, and the inability of the language he finds himself using to convey what surrounds him:

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 382.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 382-383.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 345, 346.

"No, you could not get the effect of that endless monotony of effort by numbers. Nor yet by saying 'Endless monotony of effort' . . . It was like bending down to look into darkness of corridors under dark curtains. Under clouds. . . . Mist. . . ." ³⁷⁸ The irrational even threatens to use the mind for its own ends, as with the endless calculations of the probability of being hit by a bullet or a shell. That piece of mathematics echoes one of his major fears: "All through the war he had had one dread -- that a wound, the physical shock of a wound, would cause his mind to fail." ³⁷⁹

The increasingly present power of the irrational is accompanied by the disappearance of many of the notions of order Christopher had seen as being essential: "Traditions were going by the board!" ³⁸⁰ "It was another tradition that was gone." ³⁸¹ Still, Christopher believes that he can withstand this deterioration by being "Tietjens of Groby; no man could give him anything, no man could take anything from him. He flattered himself that he in no way feared death, pain, dishonour, the after-death, feared very little disease -- except for choking sensations! . . ." ³⁸² But, with the disappearance of the traditions that supported such a lifestyle, he finds that this no longer is a means of structuring his future life, especially if it is to

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 319.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 324-325.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 323.

³⁸¹ Ibid., 326.

³⁸² Ibid., 327.

include Valentine.

The inroads made by the irrational into his mind, the vanishing of tradition and order lead him into states of being where he thinks he will go mad. His efforts to prevent insanity lead him to the age of Herbert, Donne and Crashaw once again: "But what chance had quiet fields, Anglican sainthood, accuracy of thought, heavy-leaved, timbered hedgerows, slowly creeping plough-lands moving up the slopes? . . . Still, the land remains. . . ."383 Interwoven with this search, there is a possibility of survival: "They might, in consequence, survive. . . . Then what was he, Tietjens, going to do! Take orders! It was thinkable. . . ."384 But, as with Valentine in Part One, the question remains as to what form his future life is going to take.

Under this strain, Tietjens undergoes what he characterizes as a personal "deterioration", involving those "things" he had not thought of as being within him:

Looking at McKechnie coolly as if to see where next he should plant his fist he had thus speculated. And he was aware that at the most dreadful moment of his whole life, his besetting sin, as the saying is, was getting back on him. With the dreadful dread of the approaching strafe all over him, with a weight on his forehead, his eyebrows, his heavily labouring chest, he had to take . . . Responsibility. And to realize that he was a fit person to take responsibility. * * *

'Derry will act along the lines of my suggestions. He doesn't have to take orders from me. But he has said that he will act along the lines of my suggestions. I shall accept the moral responsibility.'385

383 Ibid., 339.

384 Ibid. These orders are, of course, religious orders.

385 Ibid., 362.

As he later puts it:

He felt himself solid. He was really in a competition with this fellow. It was deterioration. He, Tietjens, was crumpling up morally. He had accepted responsibility: he had thought of two hundred and fifty pounds with pleasure: now he was competing with a Cockney-Celtic-Prizeman. He was reduced to that level. . . . Well, as like as not he would be dead before the afternoon. And no one would know.

Think of thinking about whether anyone would know or no! . . . But it was Valentine Wannop that wasn't to know. That he had deteriorated under the strain! . . .³⁸⁶

His dealings with McKechnie, like those with the colonel, remind him that he is undergoing a kind of "personal deterioration", something also found in his encounter with the German deserter. Ambition and a desire for wealth are things at odds with his ideas of gentlemanly conduct. If he continues to live this selfish sort of life, there will be a further deterioration into the kind of ambitiousness practised by people like the Macmasters, and an inability to respond to the needs of other people. This Christopher notices in his treatment of Smith: "I'm sorry, Smith, I can't help it. Fall out!" He was sorry. He believed the fellow. But responsibility hardens the heart. It must. A very short time ago he would have taken trouble over that fellow. A great deal of trouble, very likely. Now he wasn't going to. . . ."³⁸⁷ As a result of this degeneration, he experiences a need to leave such a way of life with "a passionate desire to go where you could find exact intellect: rest."³⁸⁸ "Peace" for him means leaving this form of self-

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 371-372.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 388.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

corruption and finding "someone to talk to" who will help him find "equanimity", while preserving values such as intelligence.

The possibility of finding "exact intellect" involves a modification of his earlier view of passion. But, unlike wealth and ambition, love expresses the idea of giving as well as taking. If he is to survive, passion is the only alternative that offers something positive in order to prevent a further deterioration. Thus, in Chapter Six, we find Christopher reclining upon a slope, prior to standing up "In the sunlight."³⁸⁹ Valentine Wannop is that "blur of sunlight": "It was words that his mind found that let him know that she was fair, snub-nosed, rather broad-faced and square on her feet. As if he had made a note of it and referred to it when he wanted to think of her. His mind didn't make any mental picture: it brought up a sort of blur of sunlight."³⁹⁰ This earlier recollection makes him stress the qualities about her that are important for him: "It was the mentality that obsessed him: the exact mind, the impatience of solecisms and facile generalizations! . . . A queer catalogue of the charms of one's lady love! . . . But he wanted to hear her say: 'Oh, chuck it, Edith Ethel!' * * *"³⁹¹ It is Valentine's type of mind that offers some control and order in his life, some exactitude in a world given over to the irrational, to generalization and solecism. Above all, living with her might enable him to remain a gentleman, and his

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 412.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 384-385.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

realization of the possibilities she holds for the future enables him to still think of himself as one: "He ought to write her a letter. What in the world would she think of this gentleman who had once made improper proposals to her * * * ." ³⁹²

But the trappings of the gentleman, the "feudal atmosphere" are lost for him, because if he is to live with Valentine he will have to retire as "second-in-command" of Groby: "You could not have a Valentine Wannop having with you in a Groby the infinite and necessary communings." ³⁹³ You cannot do this because it would be conduct that would not be consistent with what is expected of a Tietjens of Groby. Instead, he seeks an equilibrium in the life they will lead, for she appears the only person who can do this for him: "She made the sunlight!" ³⁹⁴ Their way of life will be one where, in accordance with his principles, "They would do what they wanted and take what they got for it", like Christopher's earlier view of Dante's Paolo and Francesca. A basic principle of Ford's gentleman, Christopher accepts that this is a form of action that he has chosen as being right, and he must therefore take the consequences.

Thus, Christopher emerges from Part Two with the awareness that the only way he is going to be able to restore an equanimity in his life, and prevent a further deterioration in himself, is in the

³⁹² Ibid., 415-416.

³⁹³ Ibid., 422.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

possibility that his passion for Valentine Wannop embodies. Love, he has come to see, is not a "disease merely of the weak", but that, when it involves the preservation of exact intellect and the sharing of values between two people, it can be a source of strength. Through "talk", as becomes clear in The Last Post, they will re-establish that common ground which once existed between individuals who once found there was no need to talk. In their relationship, where they live for each other, both Valentine and Christopher can find the degree of control they feel their lives lack and which the values seen in the external world can no longer give them. The accent is upon balance and harmony, upon frugality and, above all, love.

iii

Frugal and glorious. That was he! And he had designed this room to love her in. It was the room she would have asked. . . . The furnishing . . . Alcestis never had . . . For she, Valentine Wannop, was of frugal mind, too. And his worshipper, Having reflected glory. . . . Damn it, she was getting sappy. But it was curious how their tastes marched together. He had been neither haughty nor gauche. He had paid her the real compliment. He had said: 'Her mind so marches with mine that she will understand.'³⁹⁵

Part Three brings Valentine and Christopher together in an atmosphere of celebration. Their respective points of view are interwoven, reflecting that, for them, the only way they could possibly stand up after the war is together: "But they wanted to TALK. You can't

³⁹⁵Ibid., 442.

talk unless you live together."³⁹⁶

At first, believing Edith Ethel, Valentine thinks she might have to confront a madman, someone who has fallen a victim to the irrational. Instead, she sees Christopher is not mad, that he has managed to survive through his ordeal because of his essentially eighteenth-century qualities: "He was eighteenth-century all right. . . . * * * But then the eighteenth century never went mad. Until the French Revolution: and that was either not mad or not eighteenth century. * * * Always the gentleman. * * * He was eighteenth century."³⁹⁷ Such is her sympathetic nature that Valentine senses Christopher has had to endure tremendous mental suffering: "Ah, the dreadful thing about the whole war was that it had been -- the suffering had been -- mental rather than physical."³⁹⁸ For such suffering, she can be "the woman that could atone", the emphasis upon the verb "could" reminding us of the possibilities they hold for each other. For Valentine, "The enemy was fear. She must not fear. He rescued her from fear."³⁹⁹ In this way, they help each other to conquer the irrational and create balance.

Victorian morality makes one last effort to keep them apart, in the form of Mrs. Wannop. Ironically, as in the whole of the tetralogy, its standards are merely a means of forcing them together:

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 443.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 437, 438.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 452.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

Her mother had made their union. For they looked at each other for a long time. What had happened to their eyes? It was as if they had been bathed in soothing fluid: they could look the one at the other. It was no longer the one looking and the other averting the eyes, in alternation. Her mother had spoken between them. They might never have spoken of themselves. * * * They had already lived side by side for many years.⁴⁰⁰ (my emphasis)

The use of a phrase from Rossetti reminds us that language has now found a meaningful context, in the expression of a passion between two characters with "bread-and-butter" brains. Valentine herself remembers the old context:

Early-Victorian instinct! . . . The Mid-Victorians had had to loosen the bonds. Her mother, to be in the van of Mid-Victorian thought, had had to allow virtue to 'irregular unions'. As long as they were high-minded. But the high-minded do not consummate irregular unions. So all her books showed you high-minded creatures contracting irregular unions of the mind or of sympathy; but never carrying them to the necessary conclusion. They would have been ethically at liberty but they didn't. They ran with the ethical hare, but hunted with the ecclesiastical hounds. . . . * * * She remembered the long -- call it 'liaison' -- of Edith Ethel Duchemin and little Vincent Macmaster. Edith Ethel, swathed in opaque crêpe, creeping widow-like along the very palings she could see across the square, to her high-minded adulteries, amidst the whispered applause of Mid-Victorian England. So circumspect and right! . . . She had her thoughts to keep, all right. Well under control! . . . Well, she had been patient.⁴⁰¹

The contrast between the two sets of relationships illustrates the different kind of order that exists between Valentine and Christopher, a harmony that involves an openness not apparent in Edith's affair of secrecy. They are prepared to sacrifice high-mindedness in order to

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 464.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 454, 455.

retain that absence of hypocrisy: "They desired to live hard even if it deprived them of the leisure in which to think high!"⁴⁰²

For his part, Christopher also listens to the voice of the Victorian age "pleading with infinite statesmanship for [its] daughter."⁴⁰³ His principles of conduct prohibit him from snubbing Mrs. Wannop: "It is not done."⁴⁰⁴ But, as he looks at his wife's letter, he knows there is no chance of another alternative but living with Valentine, while holding to his principle that "'I can't divorce my wife. She's the mother of my child. I can't live with her, but I can't divorce her.'"⁴⁰⁵ Yet, the war has changed him to the extent that he will no longer stand "unbearable things":

The war had made a man of him! It had coarsened him and hardened him. There was no other way to look at it. It had made him reach a point at which he would no longer stand unbearable things. At any rate from his equals! He counted Campion as his equal; few other people, of course. And what he wanted he was prepared to take. . . . What he had been before, God alone knew. A Younger Son? A Perpetual Second-in-Command? Who knew? But to-day the world changed. Feudalism was finished; its last vestiges were gone. It held no place for him. He was going -- he was damn well going! -- to make a place in it for . . . A man could now stand up on a hill, so he and she could surely get into some hole together!⁴⁰⁶

Mark perhaps overstates the situation when he remarks: "And under the long strain of the war [Christopher] had outgrown alike the mentality

⁴⁰²The Last Post, p. 254.

⁴⁰³A Man Could Stand Up, 459.

⁴⁰⁴Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶Ibid., 462-463. Again, there is the play on the words "would" and "could".

and the traditions of his own family and his own race. The one and the other were not fitted to endure long strains."⁴⁰⁷ Rather, Christopher has preserved the best qualities of that "mentality". Now, in a union with Valentine which prevents him taking up the role as a Tietjens of Groby, he sets out to live and preserve those values in a relationship that fuses thought and feeling, while being faced by a world that tries to prevent any balance between the two. Tietjens' manhood is attained as a result of his courage in standing up to these prolonged strains. The state of equilibrium, of harmony, that once existed between the men at the club has given way to the passion that exists between Valentine and Christopher. Their passion is the quality with which they must face the additional stresses that occur in The Last Post.

A Man Could Stand Up therefore ends with Valentine and Christopher united, having finally realized that their only means of survival lies in a life together. Though not without its material hardships, their relationship expresses the creativeness and harmony of Ford's understanding of a passion that gives balance and equanimity, while providing a meaningful context in which language can exist. As will be discussed, it is a love that dominates the whole of The Last Post, creating an atmosphere of "peace" without which Parade's End would be incomplete.

⁴⁰⁷The Last Post, p. 139.

Of all the Tietjens novels Last Post is surely the greatest tour-de-force; its action takes place in a day, yet seems timeless; the chief actors assemble as though for the brief appearance of a curtain-call, yet each brings the sense of a full lifetime with him. It moves with the tempi of life, sometimes tediously slow, sometimes at break-neck speed. It is full of complicated issues, of pure and base motives, of noble endeavours and unhappy outcomes, all bewilderingly mixed -- all viewed partially and fleetingly from a hundred angles. It has the richness and the confusion and the profusion of life.

L. P. Hartley

'Yes,' Marie Léonie said, 'pour moi-même je ne demanderais pas mieux!'

The Last Post

Part Five: The Last Post -- an Added Dimension to the Subject of
Parade's End

i

Mark was nevertheless thankful for the respite. He had to acknowledge to himself that he was not as young as he had been. He had a great deal to think of if he was to get the hang of -- he was certainly not going to interfere with -- the world and having to listen to conversations that were mostly moral apophthegms had tired him. He got too many at too short intervals. If he had spoken he would not have, but, because he did not speak both the lady who was descended from the Maintenon and that boy had peppered him with moral points of view that all required to be considered, without leaving him enough time to get his breath mentally.⁴⁰⁸

Most critics of The Last Post would not agree with L. P. Hartley's adulation for the final volume of the series; almost invariably, they seem to take the view that the last volume is a "sentimental afterthought", something that has little relation to the rest of the tetralogy. Yet, if one looks at Parade's End in terms of Ford's exploration of the worlds of passion, The Last Post emerges as one of the most moving of these novels. For, as Christopher comes to see that the passion he feels for Valentine Wannop is no "disease", but a means by which he can find "peace", companionship and harmony, so Mark Tietjens finds "peace" in his attempt to "get the hang * * * of the world", and, through this act of understanding, comes to make his final, belated expression of passion or love. In "talking" to

⁴⁰⁸The Last Post, pp. 119-120.

Valentine Wannop, he signifies that passion is the only worthwhile value in a world that is "fusionless and dishonest".⁴⁰⁹ It is an affirmation that supports the rhetoric of the whole work and provides an added dimension to its subject.

Having taken Christopher to a point where he cannot develop him further as a character, Ford concentrates upon Mark's attempt to put his life and the world into some form of order -- an attempt that reflects upon his younger brother's own experience. Mark begins from a position of having consciously and stubbornly renounced the world:

He had managed the Transport as it should be managed. His department had. His own Department, built up by himself from junior temporary clerk to senior permanent official: he had built it up, from the day of his resolution never more to speak word [sic].

Nor yet stir a finger! He had to be in this world, in this nation. Let them care for him, for he was done with them. . . . He knew the sire and dam of every horse from Eclipse to Perlmutter. That was enough for him. They helped him to read all that could be read about racing. He had interests enough!⁴¹⁰

For a man who, on news of the terms of the peace treaty, had resolved "never more to speak word" (my emphasis), it is significant that he eventually does speak in support of his brother, in a sense blessing the relationship that exists between Valentine and Christopher: "'Never thou let thy barnie weep for thy sharp tongue to thy goodman. . . . A good man!'"⁴¹¹ It is what induces him to "talk" that reveals the major

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 118.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., p. 17.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 284.

interest of the novel.

At the beginning of The Last Post, Mark is very much the man who "wouldn't": "He, Mark Tietjens, had never cared for hunting; now he would never do any more; he had never cared for pheasant-shooting. He would never do any more. Not couldn't; wouldn't from henceforth. . . ." ⁴¹² The use of the verb "wouldn't" implies choice; but, unlike Christopher, Mark has chosen not to stand. In many ways, he is like the Christopher we saw reclining on the slope in the sixth chapter of Part Two of A Man Could Stand Up, though Mark has decided that he "wouldn't", that he no longer wishes to stand. Thus, we find him flat on his back, about to suffer the physical effects of his inactivity:

For a man who never moved, his face was singularly walnut-coloured; his head, indenting the skim-milk white of the pillows should have been a gipsy's, the dark, silvered hair cut extremely close, the whole face very carefully shaven and completely immobile. The eyes moved, however, with unusual vivacity, all the life of the man being concentrated in them and their lids. ⁴¹³

However, the last sentence of this passage indicates that Mark's renunciation of the world is not total, and that his eyes, the means of vision and understanding, are very much alive. They are what forms his link with the external scene, a faculty that he will put to good use.

⁴¹² Ibid., p. 15. This distinction forms a recurring motif in The Last Post, as it did in A Man Could Stand Up. See The Last Post, p. 31: "[Marie Léonie] could not rid herself of the conviction that if [Mark] would, he could talk, walk and perform the feats of strength of a Hercules." Also, see Ibid., p. 282: "He would have given the world to sit up and turn his head round and see. Of course he could, but * * * that would give the show away! * * * He could have chuckled!"

⁴¹³ Ibid., p. 13.

For Mark, in the final hours of his life, has many things to consider. As he later expresses it, some of his previous decisions may have been too hasty, and some of his judgements too severe:

Mark took credit to himself because he did not stir a hair. He had so made up his mind, he found, that Christopher's son was not his son that he had almost forgotten the cub's existence. But he ought not to have made up his mind so quickly: he was astonished to find from the automatic working of his brain that he so had. There were too many factors to⁴¹⁴ be considered that he had never bothered really to consider.

The "automatic" gives us a clue to the characteristics of this revision. Ford does not use the word often in the tetralogy, and when he does so it is usually in the context of the behaviour of those who are or need to be in harmony with each other: "'One's friends ought to believe that one is a gentleman. Automatically. That is what makes one and them in harmony.'⁴¹⁵ It is this quality that has been so absent from Mark's recent life, in his dealings with his brother, his father and the world in general. The situation is largely one over which he has had little control, due to the rapid disintegration of the standards that enabled gentlemen to understand each other's behaviour without the need for "talk". But, with the present respite, Mark finds such a quality of passion necessary for "talk" within himself. The "automatic working of the mind", the faculty of understanding another human being's motives and actions through love and imagination, allow Mark to reconstruct the past, to make it into a picture or a work of art. In his efforts, we have an image of the artistic process itself. As in Ford's memories

⁴¹⁴Ibid., p. 92.

⁴¹⁵No More Parades, 255.

and impressions, the factual accuracy of Mark's recollections is of secondary importance. It is the passion he conveys which is finally all that matters.

The working of Mark's mind covers a full range of happenings in the past, including his brother's decision not to accept the money he offered, their quarrel, the state of England and the English, his father's suicide, the parentage of Michael Mark, and Sylvia's motives. These things become "challenges" for him, that warrant "solutions":

But the actual sight of this lad whom he had never seen before, presented the problem to him as something that needed solution. It came as a challenge. When he came to think of it, it was a challenge to him to make up his mind finally as to the nature of Woman. He imagined that he had never bothered his head about that branch of the animal kingdom. But he found that, lying there, he must have spent quite a disproportionate amount of his time in thinking about the motives of Sylvia.⁴¹⁶

These "solutions", in turn, involve revisions of previously held opinions.

In the past, Mark has been a man who feels that he can lead a life of relative calm and ease, if his existence lacks the ambitiousness that he finds present in so many people: "Mark was accustomed to regard himself as master of his fate -- as being so limited in his ambitions and so entrenched behind his habits and his wealth that, if circumstances need not of necessity bend to his will, fate could hardly touch him."⁴¹⁷ But Mark's belief is challenged by his father's query about the likelihood of Christopher and his son coming into Groby: "As he saw Christopher then, the fellow was the last person in the world

⁴¹⁶The Last Post, pp. 92-93.

⁴¹⁷Ibid., p. 117.

to have the charge of Groby * * * ."418 Such a possibility "upset the whole scheme of his life", 419 the reputation Christopher possessed at that time being one of a "bungler". But, as we already know, the information was provided by the infamous Ruggles, who created the interpretations of appearances for Mark, which he in turn conveyed to Mr. Tietjens senior. All this is knowledge we have previously gained, but it is now given a new dimension by being related from Mark's point of view. For Mark, this gossip resulted in his father's death, something for which he must accept the "blame", in accordance with his principles. What really disturbs him is that Christopher subsequently refused the estate: "He proposed never to forgive either his father or Mark. He had only consented to take Mark by the hand at the urgent solicitation of Valentine Wannop. . . . That had been the most dreadful moment of Mark's life."420

The result is that Mark has to revise his view of Christopher, as well as taking another look at a great deal of what has happened since that meeting outside the War Office, including his own decision not to speak another word. As related both from his and Marie Leonie's points of view, Mark's resolution is based upon the observation that logic and reason have disappeared in England and the World, that the "pattern" by which he sees things has disintegrated: "* * * you must have a pattern to interpret things by. You can't really get your mind

418 Ibid., p. 116.

419 Ibid.

420 Ibid., p. 119.

to work without it. The blacksmith said: By hammer and hand all art doth stand! . . . He, Mark Tietjens, for many years interpreted all life in terms of Transport. . . . Transport, be thou my God. . . . A damn good God."⁴²¹ As Dowell points out in The Good Soldier, where he uses the same analogy with the blacksmith, "these delusions are necessary to keep us going"; that is, like the baker, we must believe the "solar system revolves" around us and the activities we perform.⁴²² Mark's "delusion" is that the solar system revolves around transport, around logic and reason. With the news of the terms of the Armistice, he realizes that the world no longer believes this to be so.

But, such is his essential soundness, Mark now looks around for some other pattern by which he can come to terms with the world. It is noticeable that the quality of understanding, which is the foundation of this pattern, is first glimpsed at, by Mark, in a conversation with Valentine Wannop, the woman who comprehends Christopher's ideals and allows him to live without trying to destroy his essential goodness. The discussion needs to be quoted at length, with the proviso that it should be remembered that the conversation is related from Marie Leone's point of view, the woman who gives an outsider's perspective which substantiates many of the positions taken by Valentine and the two brothers:

[Valentine] had begun to argue with Mark. Hadn't there, she had asked, been enough of suffering? He agreed that there had been enough of suffering. But there must be more. . . . Even out of justice to the poor bloody Germans. . . . He had called

⁴²¹Ibid., p. 279.

⁴²²The Good Soldier, 57.

them the poor bloody Germans. . . . * * *

* * * [Valentine] kept on recurring to the idea that punishment was abhorrent to the modern mind. Mark stuck to his point that to occupy Berlin was not punishment, but that not to occupy Berlin was to commit an intellectual sin. The consequences of invasion is counter-invasion and symbolical occupation, as the consequence of over-pride, is humiliation. For the rest of the world, he knew nothing of it; for his own country that was logic -- the logic by which she had lived. To abandon that logic was to abandon clearness of mind: it was mental cowardice. * * *

Valentine had said: 'There has been too much suffering!'

He had said:

'Yes, you are afraid of suffering. . . . But England is necessary to the world. . . . To my world. . . . Well, make it your world and it may go to rack and ruin how it will. I am done with it.'⁴²³

The passage details Mark's objections to the stand taken by England and her allies. However, what is also important is the way in which Valentine argues that there has been enough suffering, that, by implication, it may be a time to try some other way of dealing with one's enemies. Such forgiveness involves the spirit of understanding Mark expresses in The Last Post, especially in the final chapter, and is an attribute which enables him to sympathize even with Sylvia's predicament:

He felt himself begin to perspire. . . . Well, if Sylvia had come to that his, Mark's, occupation was gone. He would no longer have to go on willing against her; she would drop into the sea in the wake of their family vessel and be lost to view. . . . But damn it, she must have suffered to be brought to that extreme. . . . Poor bitch! Poor bitch! The riding ⁴²⁴ had done it. . . . She ran away, a handkerchief to her eyes.

⁴²³The Last Post, pp. 177, 179. The comma after "over-pride" is in the text.

⁴²⁴Ibid., p. 276.

It is the power of reconciliation, based upon an understanding through passion, which is essential to the relationship between Valentine and Christopher, that allows Mark to fit things together. Thus, he finally comes to believe that Michael Mark is his nephew; that his father did not commit suicide; that Christopher was "wise in his choice";⁴²⁵ that "'It's boon to tak oop!";⁴²⁶ and that he is now "reconciled with things."⁴²⁷ These conclusions are the culmination of "the satisfaction of a great night" which he has been through -- the kind of night Valentine and Christopher shared in Some Do Not It is a perspective that allows him a larger and more poetic view of things: "Lying out there in the black nights the sky seemed enormous. You could understand how somewhere heaven could be concealed in it. And tranquil at times. Then you felt the earth wheeling through infinity."⁴²⁸ In view of Ford's use of the words "could" and "would", the phrase "could understand" has a special significance here. Though Mark would not stand, because he has found the world so fusionless and devoid of logic, he has chosen to try and put things in order. Ford's depiction of Mark's point of view makes us feel this effort, leading to one of the most moving moments in the entire tetralogy: his struggle to "talk" to Valentine in Part Two, Chapter Four. Mark's reward, momentarily glimpsed prior to his death, is a vision of infinity,

⁴²⁵Ibid., p. 277.

⁴²⁶Ibid., p. 281.

⁴²⁷Ibid., p. 277.

⁴²⁸Ibid., p. 272.

something that leads him to journey beyond the imprisoning walls of the self. The emphasis upon the word "felt" underscores the value of the kind of understanding which can be achieved through a creative passion.

ii

It is this sense of understanding, a necessary part of the kind of passion that can result in "harmony", which permeates The Last Post -- a tone set by the final section of A Man Could Stand Up. Since Armistice Day, things have not been at all easy for Valentine and Christopher. They have suffered economic hardship and the continued assaults of the estranged Sylvia, including her theatrical performance of falling down the stairs, her court case for the restitution of conjugal rights, and the persistent barrage of rumours and visits by her spies. She has managed to capture Lord Edward Campion, with his dreams of India, and turn him into a man of "impotent irritation".⁴²⁹ Yet, from the juxtaposition between Sylvia's and Valentine's viewpoints, we can see how much more creatively Valentine has served and supported Christopher, has finally understood him than ever Sylvia was capable of doing. Instead of wishing to imprison him, Valentine has allowed him his own freedom. Part of Sylvia's bitterness, and her desire to persecute Valentine and Christopher, is based upon the realization that, because of their passion, they have found peace:

⁴²⁹ Ibid., p. 192.

Her main bitterness was that they had this peace. She was cutting the painter but they were going on in this peace; her world was waning. It was the fact that her friend Bobbie's husband, Sir Gabriel Blantyre -- formerly Bosenheir -- was cutting down expenses like a lunatic. In her world there was the writing on the wall. Here they could afford to call her a poor bitch -- and be in the right of it, as like as not!³⁴⁰

The use of the verb "afford" is indicative of the kind of wealth that Valentine and Christopher have in this life, a "wealth" not based upon the capacity that they have to pay expenses. It is an existence which causes Sylvia intense jealousy when she sees such peace. Yet, because of the irrational forces in her personality, that were discussed in relation to No More Parades, she has not been able to comprehend the attractions of this way of life until now:

Otherwise, from both the doctor and the parson, she had an impression of Tietjens's as a queer household -- queer because it was so humdrum and united. She really herself had expected something more exciting! Really. It did not seem possible that Christopher should settle down into tranquil devotion to brother and mistress after the years of emotion she had given him. It was as if a man should have jumped out of a frying pan into -- a duckpond.⁴³¹

It is this lack of understanding which leads her to torment them:

And the thought that Christopher was doing for that girl what, she was convinced, he never would have done for herself had added a new impulse to Sylvia's bitterness. Indeed her bitterness had by now given way almost entirely to a mere spirit of tormentingness -- she wanted to torture that girl out of her mind. That was why she was there now. She imagined Valentine under the high roof suffering tortures because she, Sylvia, was looking down over the hedge.⁴³²

⁴³⁰ Ibid., pp. 338-339.

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 237.

⁴³² Ibid., pp. 202-203.

As we can see, from Valentine's point of view, she is doing just that.

But the spirit of understanding and compassion that the relationship between Valentine and Christopher has given to their home, and which affects Mark, also makes an impression upon Sylvia. It leads her to her first act of generosity, the first really free thing she has done in the whole of Parade's End. Here, for the first time, she uses the verb "to save", whose meaning she once saw as Christopher's mission in life: "'You damn fool. . . . You damn fool. . . . I want to save. . . .'"⁴³³ Her desire to save Valentine's child perhaps incorporates her realization that Christopher is now completely beyond her domination, that he has committed himself fully to another human being. With this insight, she relinquishes her hold over him by promising divorce. Her gesture of salvation underlines the virtue of Christopher's actions, which others previously interpreted according to their own selfish motives.

But, if Sylvia is affected by the sense of peace which pervades the household, Ford leaves us in little doubt that even this existence is not without its hardships. From Marie Leonie's point of view, we see the material difficulties that they are all enduring: "And what, then, was this determination to ignore the developments of modern genius. * * * Why did they ignore the aeroplane?"⁴³⁴ Yet, for a woman who considers it a duty to acquire wealth, Marie Leonie can understand Valentine's and Christopher's rejection of the fruits of "modern genius".

⁴³³Ibid., p. 237.

⁴³⁴Ibid., pp. 39, 40.

She sees that this life has its compensations, and that, "if Mark had died in the ordinary course", "She would probably have married a rich farmer or a rich grazier, and, by choice, she would have pursued a life of bottling off cider and moistening the eggs of sitting hens."⁴³⁵ In fact, she sees that "she was leading no other life than that which she had always contemplated. * * * 'pour moi-même je ne demanderais pas mieux!'"⁴³⁶ The compensations outweigh the disadvantages.

The same kind of tension between material want and support for this way of life is an essential part of Valentine's monologue, with her "unsatisfied longings" for furniture that is not removed, and for good clothing.⁴³⁷ But, she realizes what is at stake here, including Christopher's "masculinity"⁴³⁸ and the quality in their relationship that enables them to think alike "without speaking"⁴³⁹:

It was queer that her heart was nearly as much in Christopher's game as was his own. As housemother, she ought to have grabbed after the last penny -- and goodness knew the life was strain enough. Why do women back their men in unreasonable romanticisms? You might say that it was because if their men had their masculinities abated -- like defeated roosters! -- the women would suffer in intimacies. . . . Ah, but it wasn't that! Nor was it merely that they wanted the buffaloes to which they were attached to charge.

It was really that she followed the convolutions of her man's mind. And ardently approved. She disapproved with him of riches, of the rich, of the frame of mind that riches

⁴³⁵ Ibid., p. 43.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., pp. 43, 44.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., p. 241.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., p. 242.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., p. 246.

confers. If the war had done nothing else for them -- for those two of them -- it had induced them at least to install Frugality as a deity. They desired to live hard even if it deprived them of the leisure in which to think high! She agreed with him that if a ruling class loses the capacity to rule -- or the desire! -- it should abdicate from its privileges and get underground.

And having accepted that as a principle she could follow the rest of his cloudy obsessions and obstinacies.⁴⁴⁰

It is in this statement, perhaps more than any other, that the difference between Valentine and Sylvia may be seen; it is a contrast that looks back to Christopher's observations about their respective capacities to kill or cure. It is the curative sense of passion that forms the basis for both this volume and the tetralogy as a whole, that gives it its harmony.

Without the final volume, which is a paean for the kind of passion that is the formulating spirit behind Parade's End, the love that is the very fibre of its fabric, which constitutes the value towards whose discovery the rhetoric is directed, and by which the discovery is effected, the series would not possess the unity it does. The Last Post is concerned with the delineation of at least two characters who now come to see that the passion existing between Valentine and Christopher is something that offers life rather than denies it. For Mark, and perhaps Sylvia, the insight comes too late for them to live by it. Nevertheless, Mark's sense of reconciliation is a momentous realization on his part; he can now see that the parts may be fused together, given the desire to "get the hang of * * * the world."⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 254-255.

⁴⁴¹Ibid., p. 119.

Without his vision, the series would lose a great deal; with it, we have confirmation that Valentine's and Christopher's existence is not an escape but an affirmation of what matters.

The Last Post therefore concludes with our affirmation of the kind of life Valentine and Christopher have chosen: "Christopher no doubt was wise in his choice. He had achieved a position in which he might -- with just a little more to it -- anticipate jogging away to the end of time, leaving descendants to carry on the country without swank."⁴⁴² The perspective provided by the focus upon Mark's consciousness has given an added depth and richness to the wisdom of this choice, in the same way that differing views have performed a similar function in other parts of the tetralogy. In Mark's final words, the novel ends with an expression of the fundamental human value that pervades the entire work. The final volume is in tune with the rest of the series, not out of key.

⁴⁴²Ibid., p. 277.

Part Six: A Concluding Statement on Parade's End

"'She would have liked to have his last words. . . .
But she did not need them as much as I.'"

The Last Post

From this discussion of The Last Post, which has sought to show how it belongs with the three previous volumes, it should be clear that there exists an inseparable relationship between passion and rhetoric in Parade's End -- as the one helps to discover the other. It is a fusion that is best summed up, from the point of view of Ford's involvement in this process, by John Bayley's statement that "that author, in fact, is best on love who best loves his own creations." Passion, in the sense in which it applies to Valentine and Christopher, as well as to Mark, is the foundation of Ford's rhetoric in the tetralogy; it is a means by which he is able to create, penetrate and explore individual characters and the way they do or do not understand each other. In his "respect for the liberty" of his characters, in his handling of point of view, in his concern for the proper use of language, Ford expresses his love for his art. Through this passion, we are made to see the full spectrum of human relations, as rhetoric and subject are united in the depiction of the worlds of love. The result, as in the case of Parade's End, is a testimony to the author's sensitivity towards and his knowledge of the varied expressions of passion. Without this, modern fiction would be sadly lacking a monumental celebration of love.

EPILOGUE

'Can you explain away love too?' I [Sarah] asked.

'Oh yes,' [Smythe] said. 'The desire to possess in some, like avarice: in others the desire to surrender, to lose the sense of responsibility, the wish to be admired. Sometimes just the wish to be able to talk, to unburden yourself to someone who won't be bored. The desire to find again a father or a mother. And of course under it all the biological motive.'

I thought, it's all true, but isn't there something over? I've dug up all that in myself, in Maurice too, but still the spade hasn't touched rock.

Graham Greene, The End of the Affair

The structure and language of modern literary criticism, with its tools of analysis and logic, lead us almost inevitably towards explications of human enigmas that begin to sound rather like Richard Smythe's disquisition on love,¹ especially when he uses words which we have singled out as being of importance in Ford's fiction. Like Greene's Sarah, we should always be aware that Smythe's spade does not finally touch rock -- that the love of which he speaks remains ultimately inexplicable, like the novels by Ford in which, as passion, it is given expression. At best, we can only hope to remove a few handfuls of earth in an attempt to glimpse at what lies beneath.

¹Graham Greene, The End of the Affair (London, 1951), p. 127.

Such a reservation is necessary, particularly to a study that has sought to explore the process of Ford's fiction, if we are to avoid the notion that the Fifth Queen, The Good Soldier or Parade's End are very much cut and dried affairs. Concepts like rhetoric, or words such as passion, can only act as tools or focal points by which we may come nearer to an understanding of the uniqueness of Ford's work. They may, to use Dowell's terminology, help us to "see things more clearly"; but they will never allow us to explain an individual novel completely. However, my emphasis upon the rhetoric of Ford's major novels and romances, and how it reveals what I regard as his central subject, namely passion, is intended to enable a closer awareness of Ford's major productions. As a result, in Ford's words, we may understand "what" we are made to see and "how" we are made to see it. Only in an appreciation of the inseparability of form and content can such an awareness be realized.

In addition, my approach, with its emphasis upon rhetoric, has also been concerned with making Ford a more readily acceptable author for those of us who find the Fifth Queen, The Good Soldier or Parade's End unpalatable because they have been taught to view these fictions as solely exemplifying the importance of such constricting ideas as the feudal lord, the limited hero, the alien protagonist, the small producer, the last Tory, etc. For those readers who find Ford's Toryism or Feudalism an obstacle to appreciation, I have tried to redirect their attention towards a more central concern -- to rhetoric and how this reveals and is revealed by passion. In turn, this emphasis has enabled us to see that ideas such as Toryism are not dead or arid,

but that they involve qualities -- imagination, freedom, and the need for love -- which, hopefully, are not regarded as belonging to the past, in that they can help to restore and revitalize the essence of what Ford feels it means to be human.

We have also seen how fundamental qualities such as imagination, freedom and love are, as found in Ford's exploration of passion in a creative sense, in that passion is the most important value lying behind the novelist's craft itself. Ford's comments upon passion in Turgenev's art, which have already been discussed, are nowhere more valid than when viewed in the context of Ford's major productions themselves. When he writes with passion, with the desire to create characters, to give them and his fictional world an independent existence, and to make his readers become a part of that world in order that they may feel passion as well, then his work rivals anything produced by James or Conrad, the two giants under whose shadows he has been for far too long. Yet, when Ford writes without passion, when his rhetorical skills fail him, then his novels and romances resemble the work of the worst amateur. It is unfortunate that there is such a discrepancy in Ford's literary output; but it should not blind us to the very real achievements that exist.

Of those novels where he does succeed, the Fifth Queen, The Good Soldier, and Parade's End stand alone as fictions where Ford's rhetoric matches his subject. The romance trilogy, which has been so badly maligned by critics, speaks for the skills of the romancer who penetrates identities through passion, depicting a central character who offers regeneration through a life of faith and love. The effects are large, and the result is worth our allowing for this latitude. The Good

Soldier, "A Tale of Passion" told by a narrator who comes to feel passion, succeeds, through its rhetoric, in exploring the subject of passion within a small space, and the product rivals anything in the extended nouvelle written by Henry James or his 'descendants'.

Parade's End, which explores the same subject on a grander scale, succeeds in exploring passion from many different angles, and it also triumphs within its extended framework.

It is these fictions that should be examined and held up as paradigms of the novelist's craft, and the rest of Ford's work might well be ignored. Yet, in spite of the efforts of the recent revival of interest, Ford still does not hold his place in any 'great tradition', whether it be that created by Academics or by a more general readership. While courses continue to be taught on Henry James, James Joyce or William Faulkner, Ford Madox Ford is unjustifiably pushed into the background which includes such inferior talents as that of Virginia Woolf, or the shallow productions of a man like William Golding, whose work appeals to the categorising aspects of the analytical mind. It is time that this state of affairs was changed; and, I hope, my study of Ford's rhetoric has made a small contribution towards this goal.

WORKS CONSULTED

The following list includes all those works that are cited in the text or were used in the preparation of the study. For the reader's benefit, I have constructed a chronological listing of books, pamphlets and selected articles by Ford Madox Ford, which notes the editions used if these were not the first. The remainder of my checklist is arranged alphabetically.

For a more complete record of the dates and places of publication of Ford's works, the reader should consult David D. Harvey's scholarly book: Ford Madox Ford 1873-1939: A Bibliography of Works and Criticism (Princeton, 1962). Harvey's endeavours obviate the need to include a fuller bibliography. For the same reason, I have decided to cite only the year in which each work by Ford was published and not the year that appears on the title-page, if this is different.

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