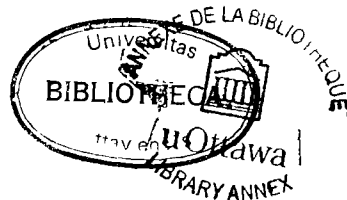


A PRESENTATION AND EVALUATION OF
KARL SHAPIRO'S THEORIES OF CRITICISM

by

Ralph Donald Sturm

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through the Department of English
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quirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy.



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INTRODUCTION

During the past twenty years the name, Karl Shapiro, has been frequently recurring in literary periodicals and in the columns of literary criticism in newspapers. Some critics have begun to recognize Shapiro as an organizer and leader of a group of critics in opposition to the Eliot school of criticism and the new criticism in general. Shapiro's reputation as leader of the opposition reached an all time high after the publication of his book In Defense of Ignorance in 1960. Even before the publication of this work, critics had begun to choose sides with regard to Shapiro's tenets. Shapiro had become a power which could not be ignored.

Despite the rather widespread interest in Shapiro's views on the nature of art, no comprehensive study, analysis or evaluation of them has ever been undertaken. Although he has been recognized as a new power in the field of literary criticism no author has as yet presented any satisfactory or conclusive evidence of the merits of his power.

It was then thought that Shapiro's critical theories and attitudes about literature, or what can simply be called his criticism, would be worthwhile objects for research and consideration in the form of a thesis.

Since Shapiro is a living author it will be neces-

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sary for the purpose of limiting the thesis, to extend the research and consideration of his works to a particular date. This thesis will then take into consideration only those writings of Shapiro published before January, 1961. This date has been chosen not merely as an arbitrary limit for the thesis but because a working bibliography has revealed that little of significance in the field of critical theories has been published by Shapiro since that date. He has edited one book in the field of criticism and one article indirectly related to criticism since January 1961. ¹

The purpose of this thesis, then, shall be, in general, to evaluate the critical theories and opinions of this new power in literary criticism, Karl Shapiro.

It will first of all be necessary to establish that Shapiro's writings are recognized as influential by critics. Although this fact will be to some extent obvious from the bibliography, it will be necessary to make the fact explicit within the body of the thesis.

Furthermore, this thesis will have to determine whether Shapiro is opposed to Eliot and the new criticism

1. Karl Shapiro (ed.), Prose Keys to Modern Poetry, New York, Harper, 1962, pp. 260.

-----, "Library, Asylum, Platform for Uninhibited Leaps", Library Bulletin, issue of February 15, 1963, vol. 37, pp. 661-669.

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in general and if so, to what extent. If it can be established that there is opposition, then the nature of this opposition will have to be observed to determine whether the opposition is emotional or scientific or both.

With these basic problems clarified in the first part of the thesis it will then be possible to analyze and present Shapiro's opinions about the nature of art, its functions, purposes and relationships in as ordered and in as clear a fashion as his works permit.

It is hoped that this thesis will be able to establish Shapiro's definition of poetry and his own understanding of the definition. The thesis will then attempt to investigate Shapiro's opinions about the uses and purposes of poetry. Closely related to this investigation will be the consideration of poetry under the aspect of its being understood, of the place the audience and publication plays in poetry. It will also be necessary to consider Shapiro's attitude toward poetry in its relationship to history, faith and mysticism and even its more general relationship to language itself. Shapiro's tenets relative to the function of prosody in the nature of poetry will also be considered. Perhaps most basic of all, this thesis will have to present as clearly as possible Shapiro's ideas about the creative process, about poetic knowledge: what it is and how it comes to be. Also an important consideration

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will be the function of criticism within Shapiro's body of doctrine. Finally a cross-section of the views and opinions of critics about Shapiro's theories will be presented. Just as the thesis will be begun by attempting to establish that Shapiro is recognized as a new power in the field of criticism, so the second part of the thesis will end with a cross-section of contemporary critics in their agreement or disagreement, their support or opposition to Shapiro's opinions.

After Shapiro's doctrine shall have been presented, the principal tenets of his doctrine will have to be evaluated. Jacques Maritain's theories of poetry and art will be used as the criterion of evaluation. It will be desirable for the sake of brevity and clarity to use only one author as a criterion of evaluation and Maritain is the most suitable because of his stature in the field of criticism and because of the comprehensiveness of his writings.

Finally, this thesis will attempt, on the basis of the analysis and evaluation of Shapiro's doctrine, to come to conclusions relative to his significance as a critic, his reputation as the leader of the opposition to Eliot and the new criticism in general, and whether his work merits further investigation from other aspects or with other criteria of evaluation.

PART I

ABOUT SHAPIRO AND HIS NEGATIVE ATTITUDES

INTRODUCTION

The first part of this thesis is the least important of the three parts but, nevertheless, a very necessary part.

The first chapter of the first part shall have as its object merely to indicate that Karl Shapiro is a contemporary power in the area of criticism and is recognized as such by other representatives of the same area.

The second chapter of the first part: "Shapiro versus Eliot" is necessary to understand that part of Shapiro's opposition to Eliot is based on emotional reactions against Eliot's alleged anti-semitism, his alleged use of religion or rather misuse, his alleged interest in criticism rather than art, and his escape from the United States. The fact of this emotional reaction must be kept in mind as a qualifying factor whenever Shapiro disagrees with Eliot or attitudes which Shapiro thinks have been furthered by Eliot.

The third chapter of the first part shall have as its object a presentation of Shapiro's opposition to some modern trends. The significance of the second part of the thesis, dealing with Shapiro's poetics, can be understood better in the light of Shapiro's opposition and negative attitudes toward much of the contemporary literary panorama.

CHAPTER I

SHAPIRO'S CREDENTIALS

One indication of the stature of an author is the rise of favorable and unfavorable schools of thought about his work. The last twenty years have seen critics, professional and amateur, choose sides relative to Shapiro's criticism.

A brief examination of some of the observations from both of these schools of thought will be helpful in determining rather clearly Shapiro's position and degree of importance in the atmosphere of contemporary literary criticism.

Some critics see Mr. Shapiro as the leader of something new in the American literary scene.

It is quite possible that the Essay on Rime will one day be studied, much as the Preface to Lyrical Ballads, as a formal recognition in our time that one age is done and another is beginning. It is appropriate that Karl Shapiro should have written it for in his poetry the modern idiom has become natural and easy, supple -- distinctively of our time. ¹

The same critic observes:

Shapiro is the voice of the newly adult generation. His object in the Essay on Rime has been to separate the straw from the 'naked seed of rime.' The aberrations, an inevitable part in the development of a

1. William Van O'Connor, "Shapiro on Rime", Kenyon Review, Winter 1946, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 113.

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new poetic norm, are observed-- not centered upon-- and dismissed. It is seen that one age is done-- and that 'in ends are new beginnings.' 1

One of Shapiro's fellow-poets has observed:

... one feels assured of one thing: this little book is destined to become a kind of literary watershed.... Mr. Shapiro has done it, at all events, and it needs less than half a poetic eye to see at once that in thus offering himself up as a catalyst and crystal-lizer of the period, he has quite startlingly changed everything. The whole poetic scene, whether one looks at it with the inertia of the one-or-two-generations past or the tendentiousness of the generation-to-come, is subtly reorganized, and for good. 2

The article from which the above excerpt is taken closes with: "He [Shapiro] has put himself in an enviable and dangerous position, at the head of his generation." 3

David Daiches thinks Shapiro understands the relationship between art and actuality very well and that his contribution to poetics is intelligent but not revolutionary. He also notes some historical errors made by Shapiro. 4

Babette Deutsch thinks Shapiro is good when he speaks of a poet's obligations but she also accuses him of

1. Ibid., p. 122.

2. Conrad Aiken "Watershed", The New Republic, December 1945, vol. 113, no. 23, p. 752.

3. Ibid., p. 754.

4. David Daiches, "A Poet's Poem about Poetry", New York Herald Tribune Books, January 6, 1946, vol. 22, no. 20, p. 5.

being somewhat brash in writing half-truths. ¹

Alfred Kazin is simultaneously sympathetic and negatively critical of Shapiro's attitude toward neo-orthodoxy and of his mode of procedure. ²

Page after page could be filled with observations of notable critics showing that Shapiro does have credentials more than sufficient to render him a power on the scene of criticism. Additional evidence of credentials by quoting and citing a greater number of authors here is not necessary because these critics and their observations throughout the remainder of the thesis will make Shapiro's status amply evident.

The numerous books and articles by Shapiro as well as those about him which portray his critical attitudes and tenets have been well tabulated and published in bibliographical form. ³ A glance at this work and especially at the names of authors who have thought Shapiro important enough to champion or oppose is sufficient evidence of his importance as a critic.

1. Babette Deutsch, "Poet of Familiar Things", New York Herald Tribune Books, January 10, 1954, vol. 30, no. 22, p. 12.

2. Alfred Kazin, "The Poet Against the English Department", The Reporter, June 9, 1960, vol. 22, no. 12, p. 44.

3. William White, Karl Shapiro; a Bibliography, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1960, pp. 113.

CHAPTER 2

SHAPIRO VERSUS ELIOT

At first thought the title of this chapter might seem in poor taste. Should not the title rather indicate Shapiro's opposition to certain tenets which T.S. Eliot holds relative to literature ? The answer must be in the negative. It seems amply apparent that Shapiro's opposition to Eliot is in considerable part on the emotional and personal level. It would be naive to presume that this emotional opposition has in no way influenced Shapiro's opposition to Eliot's theories.

In this chapter Shapiro's emotional and theoretical opposition to Eliot and to Eliot's theories will be examined insofar as such an examination is necessary to understand Shapiro's criticism. Some of the elements of theoretical opposition will be mentioned only in passing since they will be treated at greater length in other places in this thesis, especially where Shapiro's tenets of criticism are investigated.

1) Emotional Opposition

Shapiro is a Jew although by his own admission he is

a "non-participating Jew".¹ As a Jew he is sharply conscious of what he regards as Eliot's anti-semitism.

What has being a Jew got to do with literary criticism? Quite a bit evidently. The mere act of defending oneself against the shallow Jew-baiting of Pound or the profound racism of Eliot constitutes a 'position'. And insofar as I have a position, it is bound to be something of a 'Jewish position'.²

Freedom in any form is anathema to modern Classicism. Even 'free verse' is not really free, says the poor fettered Eliot. And the 'free-thinking' Jew is, of course, a grave danger to whatever is the opposite of freedom.³

Shapiro's emotional opposition is not merely based on Eliot's alleged anti-semitism. Also Shapiro accuses him of usurping religion's functions in general.

Some clever French critic once said that the nineteenth century began with the poetry of religion and ended with the religion of poetry. This saying, although I doubt its authenticity, sticks in my mind; it is one of those epigrams that would be fascinating to document and even to write a book about. One can see the plan of strategy at once; the nineteenth century begins in France with the romantic Catholicism of Chateaubriand and ends with the poet-priests Mallarmé and Valéry. It begins in England with the religious mysticism of Blake and Wordsworth and ends with the poetic high seriousness of Arnold, Pater and Yeats. Even in America the equation works, with the poetic mysticism of Emerson and Whitman turning into the cultural priestliness of T.S. Eliot. Anywhere one looks, in fact, it appears that the

1. Karl Shapiro, Personal Interview with the Author, October 24, 1962, file A, card no. 1.

2. Karl Shapiro, "The Jewish Writer in America", American Judaism, vol. 9, no. 4, April 1960, p. 10.

3. Ibid., p. 27.

'poetry of religion' resolves into the 'religion of poetry'. 1

Shapiro's contention is that symbolism in France was very close to being a religion but that it failed as a religion. Symbolism failed because it believed that the meaning of the world could be apprehended through poetic symbols. Eliot's religion is a "descent from symbolism to a lower plane of poetic endeavor; for religion in Eliot is just another name for civilization". 2

Shapiro further accuses Eliot of destroying the relationship of culture and religion by making culture subsume religion and by reducing religion to a servant of civilization. 3

Eliot's sanction of religion is parallel to Pound's cultural sanction of fascism. Religion to Eliot is primarily a social question, and not a mystique. It is a dismal crutch for a society he detests. 4

Eliot's cultural development may be sketched in this manner. He begins an uneasy symbolist; he knows something is wrong with symbolism, and that it has not worked. He approaches religion in the typical manner, by negating it (at a time when negating religion is an anachronism). The negation is also typical in its dual anti-Catholicism and anti-Semitism. He then explores the possibility of a relativistic mythology, thus flattering the more rationalistic of the mythologists and anthropologists....

1. Karl J. Shapiro, "Modern Poetry as Religion", American Scholar, vol. 28, September 1959, p. 297.

2. Ibid., p. 299.

3. Ibid., p. 299.

4. Ibid., p. 304.

This is the famous 'mythic method' and it is so overwhelmingly a succes d'estime that Eliot is suddenly elevated over and above Yeats and Pound and becomes the living incarnation of modernism. He has now earned the authority to proceed on his own, and it is at this juncture that he makes his extraordinary conversion to the Church of England. It is extraordinary in every respect, the last decision anyone would expect from a twentieth-century American intellectual and poet. Now, with religious authority behind him, and with historical tradition at his side, he begins the elaboration not of his poetry, but of his criticism. ¹

Shapiro is emotionally opposed to Eliot on the basis of what he regards as Eliot's un-Americanism. He sees both Pound and Eliot in this category: Pound a devotee of Mussolini and Eliot an escapee from the United States to England. ²

Shapiro is not adverse to criticism of his country. He praises Whitman and Henry Miller for criticism of the United States. He denounces Pound and Eliot for what he considers a condemnation of their country rather than a criticism of it. ³

Shapiro apparently sees some kind of link between his accusations of Eliot on a religious basis and on a political or patriotic basis. He accuses Eliot of being part of

1. Ibid., p. 304.

2. Karl J. Shapiro, "Two Trans-Atlantic Statements", Poetry, vol. 69, February 1947, p. 274.

3. James E. Miller, Karl Shapiro and Bernice Slote, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 260; p. 202.

an esthetic-political-religious platform, the seeds of which were planted by T.E. Hulme. This platform consists in a belief in the brutality of man springing from original sin, the leadership of the aristocracy and the historical, cultural priesthood of the poet. The net result of Eliot's leadership exercised in this manner is his responsibility for modern poets writing of their contempt for modern life.¹

Shapiro thinks that Eliot's fascination with the Metaphysicals was the result of his interest in fusing sacred doctrine with poetic knowledge. Shapiro thinks the same explanation suffices to explain Eliot's association with symbolism and with secular mythology. All this Shapiro thinks is Eliot's frustrated attempt to find the mystical center of experience. Having failed in these attempts he turned to and accepted, according to Shapiro, the tenets of T.E. Hulme who is alleged to have directed Eliot to "orthodoxy in letters and to ritual and dogma in the spiritual realm... and it was Eliot's undoing." ²

The matter of Shapiro's emotional response to Eliot's literary activities has been sufficiently indicated above. Additional substantiation of the reality of such

1. Karl Shapiro, (ed.), American Poetry, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1960. Pp. xvii, 265; p. 6.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 58.

emotional opposition will be evident at various points in this thesis where the friction of their opposing views will be obvious. It does seem that this emotional reaction of Shapiro is sufficiently noteworthy to be taken into consideration as an element of his criticism. This observation has been well put by Alfred Kazin.

Shapiro's essays are full of the same excellent and detached insights. He is often brilliant in his judgment of particular texts, as luminous and witty then as he is unnaturally programmatic and self-defeating and even a bit hysterical on Eliot as the evil genius of modern literature. ¹

Shapiro himself gives the best testimony to the hystericism mentioned above by Kazin.

For the young talent there is a clear and present danger of turning analytical before the blood runs cold. Colonies of Bohemia, of course, are old hat and can survive only in California where the cultural lag takes on the character of a literary renaissance. I wish I could find a student who yells that he hates T.S. Eliot. Instead I have to listen to youngsters (sometimes Jews) who argue quietly why they like Ezra Pound. ²

1. Alfred Kazin, "The Poet Against the English Department", The Reporter, June 9, 1960, vol. 22, no. 12, p. 45.

2. Karl Shapiro, "The Careful Young Men; Tomorrow's Leaders Analyzed by Today's Teachers", The Nation, vol. 184, March 9, 1957, p. 208.

CHAPTER 3

SHAPIRO'S OPPOSITION TO MODERN TRENDS

After considering Shapiro's opposition to T.S. Eliot a wider view of Shapiro's opposition to modern trends generally would seem to be in place. Only after clarifying Shapiro's opposition to Eliot specifically and to modern trends generally can one see rather clearly the tenets of Shapiro's criticism.

In this chapter an attempt will be made toward such clarification by showing the significant elements of opposition to modern trends abstracting from personal, emotional involvement on Shapiro's part.

The decline of prosody is one modern trend opposed by Shapiro. Later in presenting his tenets of criticism we shall see that prosody plays a significant part in Shapiro's poetics.

His contention is that most contemporary poets and scholars are of the opinion that prosody is not a science but that the analysis of rhythm in poetry is a purely subjective matter.¹ On the other hand, he notes that critics often regard prosody as a "kind of ritual in which the poet

1. Karl Shapiro, A Bibliography of Modern Prosody, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1948. Pp. 36; p. 1.

'objectifies' experience. This is nonsense." 1

In the same line of thought, Shapiro complains that our contemporary rationalistic intellectuals tend to regard poetry as language merely or language treated in a particular way. 2

Shapiro puts the matter rather nicely in the following words:

Some time in our grandfathers' generation
Rime took to looking at itself as form,
X-rayed its own anatomy, discussed
The trend of art toward science, until by dint
Of hypnotism a means became an end.

Resultantly, all that once had seemed inherent
And lawful in composition now appeared
Not stale but actually incoherent. Form
Became the atoms that bombard the senses;
The composer became a compositor; the line
Crumbled to bits of syllable, and design
All but supplanted count of eye and ear;
Until the day arrived when many a poet
Sat with a lapful of pied type and lead
And puzzled over the fragments, while some few
Descanted on the attraction of the new. 3

That Shapiro does not despair over the state of prosody is obvious from the fact that he published A Bibliography of Modern Prosody and also from a statement made in the New York Times: "The Poetry of the next few years will

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 276.

2. Ibid., p. 277.

3. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; pp. 13-14.

probably achieve a greater technical simplicity if only because simplicity is so rare that it is once again new."¹

i) Modern Errors in Criticism

The object of this section of this chapter will be to portray not Shapiro's doctrine of criticism but only his more significant objections to what he considers the undesirable condition of modern criticism.

Shapiro is concerned about the "fact" that criticism is more popular than poetry today. He ventures to suggest in viewing the history of literature that criticism flourishes when poetry fails. People will insist on literature and if they cannot have poetry they will have criticism.²

Shapiro bluntly questions the honesty of contemporary criticism, though he grants that it may be sincere. He uses the word "sincere" as a synonym for loyal. In other words Shapiro says that modern critics are sincerely dedicated to a system which is not honest. This system is not honest because it acts as an intellectual bond that keeps the critic from honestly contradicting himself and from

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Poet Dissects the Modern Mind", New York Times Magazine, issue of Sept. 23, 1945, Section 6, p. 46.

2. Karl Shapiro, "A Critic in Spite of Himself", Texan Quarterly, vol. 2, no. 3, issue of Autumn 1959, p. 30.

viewing a work in its entirety and in its relations to other things. He accuses Eliot of being this sort of objectionable critic, a critic who has become famous because of a catch-word terminology. Shapiro's attitude in this matter could be summarized by saying that his objection is that poetry serves criticism rather than criticism serving poetry. ¹

This objectionable system of criticism leads to a lack of respect for judgment.

The absence of judgment in modern criticism is beyond belief. Critics in fact no longer exercise judgment about literary works; they discourage it. They talk about poetry or fiction in terms of Myth or Symbol or Structure, anything at hand which can be intellectualized. The poem is only a conversation piece leading to a discussion of the higher abstractions concerning society or religion. ²

The very moment a poem is written, according to Shapiro, critics begin to question the tendencies, backgrounds and reading material of the author in a pedagogical fashion. ³ Says Shapiro: "Thinking about art, intellectualizing it, is the chief disease of art in our day." ⁴

In place of judgment, this criticism sets up two barriers to judgment. The first is the morass of

1. Ibid., pp. 32-33.

2. Ibid., p. 33.

3. Karl Shapiro, "The Farmer and the Poet", Poetry, June 1961, vol. 98, no. 3, p. 172.

4. Ibid., p. 171

concepts, the second is a list of approved works (in effect, an Index Expurgatorius). ¹

Shapiro accuses the moderns, and principally Eliot, of doing away with the judgment and substituting in its place theory, or a set of precepts. He agrees that the term "controlled hysteria" describes this attitude to which he is so opposed. ²

Just as harmful, according to Shapiro, to progress in poetry as the supplanting of the function of judgment is the diminution of the place of emotion in poetry. This process of diminution and the undue emphasis on ideas or the function of the intellect in poetry is called in general "intellectualizing emotion" ³ and is what Shapiro means by academic criticism or the kind of criticism he so violently dislikes. ⁴

Eliot and Pound receive their share of blame for this decrease of emotion in literature. Whereas Eliot is accused of advising poets to feel their thought, Auden showed the poet how to think his emotions. ⁵

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Critic in Spite of Himself", Texan Quarterly, vol. 2, no. 3, Autumn 1959, p. 33.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; pp. 42-43.

3. Ibid., p. 130.

4. Ibid., pp. 264-265.

5. Ibid., p. 128.

I discovered to my horror when I began to teach modern poetry that it was not really poetry I was teaching for the most part, but criticism. It was only about ten years ago that it began to dawn on me that poetry called Modern is little more than a façade for various philosophies of criticism, literary maneuvers and cultural propaganda for one or another persuasion. ¹

Shapiro accuses the neo-critics of making poetry something extraordinary, something outside the realm of the ordinary man, of making something very simple to be very difficult.²

Shapiro is equally quick to accuse moderns of turning poetry into a science:

Modern criticism has waged war against science in the same way that it has waged war against poetry. Modern criticism is really a branch of what is called Social Science-- a better name would be Moral Science-- the hybrid science which includes such dubious sciences as economics, political science, psychology, sociology, and even history. History, which used to be a true literary art like poetry, has been debased in our time to a pseudo-science. Criticism tries to debase science and subvert poetry.... Most sociologists are poets working in the wrong medium. ³

As late as the Edwardian
In English verse the use of single style
Was taken for granted, but one more generation
Saw the decomposition and analysis
Of meaning, personality, and form
In art. No guardian of the ages past

-
1. Ibid., p. 265.
 2. Ibid., pp. 270-271.
 3. Ibid., pp. 278-279.

Could stem the universal change of heart
Which led us toward our schizophrenic end. 1

It is Shapiro's contention that a devotion to evidence and fact bears responsibility in narrowing man's vision and imagination in poetry. The constant search for the criterion and the value has caused criticism to triumph.²

Shapiro finds evidence of this attitude in schools where students regard poetry as something that must be read only at examination time. Twentieth century poetry has become an academic matter, a matter of textbooks.³ Textbooks such as Understanding Poetry are blamed for their objectivity which manages, Shapiro thinks, nearly to annihilate genius.⁴

In questioning the honesty of modern criticism the matter of the academic ranges high in the list of things wrong with modern criticism in Shapiro's opinion. The objections will be more meaningful in view of Shapiro's positive doctrine of poetics to be presented in a subsequent chapter.

1. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945, Pp. 72; p. 35.

2. Ibid., p. 64.

3. Karl Shapiro, Book Review of "O to Be a Dragon" by Marianne Moore, New York Times Book Review, vol. 64, issue of October 4, 1959, p. 41.

4. Karl Shapiro, "The Careful Young Men; Tomorrow's Leaders Analyzed by Today's Teachers", Nation, vol. 184, issue of March 9, 1957, p. 208.

Shapiro furnishes a good summary of those objections he entertains against contemporary criticism when he gives a compilation of the contents of a book that he thinks should be written.

Someone must write a non-partisan (non-philosophical, non-scientific, non-mystical) book about poetry, a book that steers between the extremes of objectivity and intuition, a book that avoids theories of value as well as the mechanics of structure, a book that takes poetry for itself and not as a substitute for something else, a book that keeps poetry on a plane with other kinds of knowledge, neither above or below them, a book without cultural hysteria or cultural frigidity, a book without a single prescription for behavior, without a single doctrine or absolute. What a liberating power this work would have! How it would free poets from all the boggy theories of obligation through which they must now struggle-- the debilitating discipleships, the social antagonisms, the false dreams of mission and high office and destiny.... 1

ii) Poetry and Religion

Shapiro asks the question whether poetry has become a religion. He answers affirmatively.² This simple answer is a bit deceptive unless one understands what Shapiro means. In this instance "modern poetry" covers only that poetry written approximately from 1915-1925. Further, it becomes obvious that the term "religion" really

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp.73; p. 1.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Modern Poetry as Religion", American Scholar, vol. 28, issue of September, 1959, p. 297.

means something that is a substitute for religion.¹

Symbolism, in Shapiro's view was close to being a religion in France but it failed. Following this failure was a descent from symbolism to a kind of substitute for religion with a devotion to civilization (especially in Eliot) and culture. This culture is said to derive from religion but at the same time includes religion and almost absorbs it. Shapiro objects to the fact that this situation has made culture the principal object of the poet and his religion.²

Although Pound is recognized by Shapiro as the father of this so-called religion, he recognizes Eliot as the key to it. Whereas Yeats had tried to avoid religion by a certain mysticism, Eliot's religion is really a question of social ethics.³

Shapiro thinks that involvement in religion and mysticism helps the modern critics avoid accusations of parochialism and gives them a position to make pronouncements about culture. He regards the new criticism as an undesirable by-product of the culture of religion.⁴

1. Ibid., pp. 297-298.

2. Ibid., pp. 299-300.

3. Ibid., pp. 303-304.

4. Ibid., p. 305.

Shapiro is also opposed to what he regards as a modern erroneous attempt to unite various kinds of knowledge: philosophical, theological and poetic. He admits readily that a poet may be a religious man and a religious man may be a poet, although he regards this as somewhat unusual. He does, however, insist that to attempt to unite religious knowledge and poetic knowledge is a mistake.¹

In another place he notes:

There is always a tendency to find some more noble use of art than the mere search for the personal truth of life-- as if that were not sufficient. Art must lead others, art must improve others, art must even cure others. Yes, art leads us to perceive truth in beauty. But art is not medicine; art is not pedagogy; art is not jurisprudence; art is not the decalogue. The true poet does not fall into these attitudes of doctor and teacher and priest. He is detached from such quarrels. Other poets in their pride accept the world's challenge and purvey all sorts of real and quack remedies for readers who ask for them.²

The implication that the poet is a spiritual brother of God, both being members of the same profession, is intolerable.³

Shapiro goes a bit farther in his Essay on Rime. Perhaps the economy of words employed forces him to a more absolute statement of his doctrine on poetry and religion:

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska, 1953, Pp. 73; pp. 10-11.

2. Ibid., p. 57.

3. Ibid., p. 59.

Rime must refer
 Anti-religiously to belief and nature,
 Or else create the kind of nomenclature
 Which hints at natural science. The word mystic
 Today denotes a psychological
 Condition, or some freak of human reason. ¹

Another reason assigned by Shapiro as a cause for poetry turning into a religious criticism is that the poet veres away from his affinity with nature. This is when poetry can turn into politics and theology. The weak poet will tend towards some mystique or religion; the strong poet towards heresy or sainthood. In either case they have given up the natural affinity for nature which they, as poets, had. ²

Shapiro also sees a defect in poetry which is supposed to have a moral. He objects to this strongly saying that it is nonsense to ask what is the moral of a piece of art. He, therefore, has among his objections that poetry which is dedicated to authority and thinks that by this fact it becomes "degenerate, moralistic, authoritarian poetry." ³

1. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 54.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp.x,338, pp. 42-43.

3. Ibid., pp. 279-280.

Shapiro sums up his own objections about the relationship of poetry and religion:

Art with consequences is by definition bad art. Poetry can do no more than affirm the unification of human with nonhuman nature. If God enters the poet's work, religion cannot. Morality cannot. "Sin" cannot. ¹

iii) Objections Against Modern Classicism

Earlier in the thesis terms such as "academic", "modern criticism" and "intellectualization", have been met. Actually Shapiro uses many different terms to designate his objection to the weakness and undesirability of a literary situation that puts undue emphasis in his opinion on the intellectual and the objective to the neglect of the emotional and subjective.

One term he uses to denote such poetry is "modern classicism". This is not a favorite term of Shapiro. It is a term which he says "modernists shrewdly call themselves." ²

Shapiro has recourse to the authority of D.H. Lawrence whom he regards as one of the best authorities on American literature and agrees with Lawrence as follows:

1. Ibid., p. 283.

2. Karl Shapiro (ed.), American Poetry, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1960. Pp. xvii; 265; p. 6.

Speaking of the rhythm of American art-activity Lawrence says that there are two forces at work:

1. A disintegrating and sloughing of the old consciousness.
2. The forming of a new consciousness underneath.

And Edgar Allan Poe, says Lawrence, had only the first disintegrative force in his work. This makes Poe almost more a scientist than a poet. Poe is a man who must reduce everything to knowledge; he must know even at the expense of killing in order to know.... he is also the father of ratio-cinative criticism, the "scientific" criticism which is the fashion in the twentieth century. ¹

The leaders whom Shapiro names as the leaders of this classicist movement are, of course, Pound and Eliot. He claims that their platform has the following planks:

... a belief in Original Sin or in the natural brutality of man; a belief in aristocratic institutions and in the leadership principle; a belief in the poet or artist as a priest of civilized culture and the interpreter of history. ²

iv) Satirical view of the Modern Poet

A note of the satirical is frequently found in Shapiro's writing. It is then not surprising that one finds some of his objections to modern trends in literature phrased almost entirely satirically. His satire does seem to give something of his spirit of objection that cannot be found so easily elsewhere. Perhaps the best example of

1. Ibid., p. 3.

2. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

this satirical objection can be found in one of his articles in the New York Times. Since it is impossible to summarize the article and at the same time preserve the satirical elements, a rather long section of the article will be quoted here.

If one could write the typical composite poem of the present day, the finished product would appear to be a work of great intricacy of device from thirty to fifty lines in length, easy to read, but difficult to comprehend....

Our poem would be anti-lyrical in tone, anti-romantic in spirit, and in point of view probably anti-middle class. Finally it would exhibit something of the prophetic sadness of Eliot, but little of his music, something of Yeats or Rilke, and even a suggestion of the political watchfulness of MacLeish or Spender.

The poem would appear in a liberal magazine, a literary journal or quarterly review and would eventually find(sic) its way to three or four American and one of the English anthologies. About 5,000 people, mostly poets and college students, would read it. Its life expectancy would be about five or ten years. ¹

Speaking about the modern poet, Shapiro says:

His masters are not the masters of literary tradition or of the general reading public, and he is quick to suspect or repudiate the too popular or too easily accessible book. He occupies a jealous corner of the library, and is nervous about intruders. There is a secrecy in his studiousness.

His literary heroes... are discovered in conclave and by general consent of his colleagues....

It is not unusual to see that when a new name is set in the constellation, it is first put through a series of tests and minute examinations to determine its magnitude in the system. Our body of poets, therefore, takes on the appearance

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Poet Dissects the Modern Mind", New York Times Magazine, Sept. 23, 1945, Section 6, p. 20.

of an academy and shows many of the tendencies of a very conservative and even pedantic brotherhood. If a man such as Kipling or Tennyson is introduced, it is certain to cause a tremor within the circle. But such poets are usually dragged in by the collar and have been thoroughly chastised before being seated.

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of this hazing is the I.Q. test, in which it is dinned into the new member's ear that whatever his achievement as poet it is his status as thinker that matters. ¹

v.) Objections against the Useful and Functional in Poetry

Shapiro joins the ranks of many poets and critics in objection to the fact that the arts are often subjected to a practical end which becomes a motivating factor in the author's creativity.

Shapiro's opinion is that human interests are in the line of intellectual pursuits so that the submission of everything to the useful will eventually lead to the diminution of poetry's audience and finally will result in the degradation of all poetry. ²

Shapiro further denies that poetry is didactic except in a secondary sense. The only thing, according to him, that poetry really instructs is language itself. ³

According to Shapiro, one of the most objectionable

1. Ibid., p. 20.

2. Karl Shapiro, Trial of a Poet and Other Poems, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1947. Pp. 81; pp. 71-72.

3. Ibid., pp. 75-76.

functions of poetry is its function as a servant of culture. For Shapiro culture is that which is done with art, the use of art for the achievement of some purpose. Various professionals within the realm of culture dictate to poets what and how they should write. This system demands that a young poet ally himself to some commitment.¹

So pure is Shapiro in his objection to functionalism that he insists that even beauty itself may not be the aim of poetry, that poetry does not have even this usefulness: to propagate beauty. He does, of course, admit beauty as a quality of art.² In another place he observes: "But the worship of beauty is a form of idolatry which is little better than worship of the golden calf...".³

In another place he confirms the above by saying: "Let's give up the old pedagogical idea that the effect of poetry on the world is salutary."⁴

Perhaps the idea that poetry is salutary stems from a more basic objectionable trend according to Shapiro, namely, that a fanatic symbolism can betray the poet into the opinion that he has reached the absolute and must sing

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska, 1953. Pp. 73; pp. 2-3.

2. Ibid., p. 50.

3. Ibid., p. 57.

4. Ibid., p. 66.

about it to the world.¹

Shapiro's attitude toward the functionalism or usefulness of poetry might be summarized in his intense opposition toward poetry's being used for the purpose of arriving at solutions of any kind. This causes the dissolution of modern poetry when it indulges in social criticism, culture promotion, and sectarianism.² He states: "The uses of poetry are self-determining, however, and bear no relationship to history or society."³

Shapiro is guilty of advocating the usefulness of poetry. At the same time he accuses Pound and Eliot of anti-semitism in their literature, he calls for an artistic counter-attack on the anti-Jew. He thinks this will surely "pervade the consciousness of the anti-Jew who has not reached the pathological level."⁴

In justice to Shapiro it must be admitted that he has more recently been a bit optimistic about the future of poetry. He sees signs of the waning of rationalism and

1. Ibid., p. 70.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 283.

3. Ibid., p. 280.

4. Karl Shapiro, "The Jewish Writer and the English Literary Tradition", Commentary, vol. 8, October 1949, p. 370.

believes that the influence of Oriental attitudes is helping poetry out of its involvement with serving functions and usefulness.¹

vi) The Poet's Relationship to Society

Poetry has been, in Shapiro's opinion, greatly affected by the poet's position in society. He is concerned that the poet is not accepted as a normal member of society and that the poet does not then accept society or the world. Shapiro goes so far as to state that the modern poet is a sociological freak.²

Society has a theory of national destiny which is in part responsible for the split between poet and society. In other words the poet is expected to serve a kind of authoritarian patriotism which is opposed to the natural development of poetry.³

The machine and education are two other elements in Shapiro's opinion responsible for part of the separation of the poet from society. The machine results in a kind of admirable but unrooted poetry. Education on the other

1. James E. Miller Jr., Karl Shapiro and Bernice Slote, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 260. Pp. 29-30.

2. Karl Shapiro, "The Farmer and the Poet", Poetry, vol. 98, no. 3, pp.174 and 170.

3. Ibid., pp. 175-179,183.

hand helps destroy natural creativity by turning young people into a kind of mechanical obedience and suppressed brutality.¹

One can see the separation of society and the poet in America best by noting what a vast amount of our poetry is against the so-called American way of life. Shapiro says that his experience of lecturing abroad brought home to him this fact by his noting how foreigners had accepted so many of our poets as anti-American whereas they are really against not America but the materialistic way of life so common in America. To substantiate his point Shapiro lists poets who, he thinks represent opposition to the American way of life: Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Edgar Lee Masters, John Gould Fletcher, Robinson Jeffers, MacLeish, Cummings, Crane, Lindsay, Sahra Teasdale, Patchen, Yeats, Lawrence, Auden, Spender, Day, Lewis.²

Shapiro clarifies this matter theoretically:

Modern poetry represents official sincerity, or the myth of sincerity (called integrity), but little modern poetry is sincere except in relation to its myth. That is, modern poetry says that this is a bad world and we will not say anything about it except that it is bad. Anyone who says it is good desecrates the myth. Thus, the approach

1. Ibid., p. 183.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Why Out-Russia Russia?", The New Republic, vol. 138, Issue of June 9, pp. 10-11.

to the myth of language must be that in this world the language is debased-- etcetera, etcetera. 1

On the other hand Shapiro is of the opinion that some poets are not merely opposed to the evils of contemporary society but to that society itself.

Our poets today are sent out into the world by their writing masters into what they believe to be an enemy civilization and a hostile universe. Little wonder that they behave ever after like soldiers on their first patrol. Little wonder that they all mouth the same stereotype about our dying world and our dying way of life. Little wonder that the poetry of cultural anthropology and cultural history make up the bulk of the 20th century anthology. 2

vii) Poetry and Psychology

Shapiro feels rather keenly what he regards as the interference that psychology exerts on poetry.

He regards some of the defects in poetry today as psychological defects. Three principal fanaticisms, he believes, are responsible for much of the subversivism he detects in modern poets:

the fanaticism of symbolism which leads the poet to think he reaches the absolute;

the fanaticism of world-creation which leads the poet to think he is the maker of all things;

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 40.

2. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 73.

the fanaticism of the ego that has as its slogan: All things are nothing to me. (Shapiro seems to mean by this an existentialism or philosophy of the absurd).¹

Shapiro chooses as his example of an author led from poetry by psychology, W.H. Auden. He admits that this interest in psychology gives Auden's writings some fascination but that he sacrificed "poetic motive for the rational motive."²

Shapiro's only long treatment on poetry and psychology is an essay which is done somewhat humorously. A psychologist came to question Shapiro on his poetry. But soon Shapiro understood that the scientist's interest was not in his poetry but rather in the fact of his being a poet.³ Despite the length of the essay it lends nothing beyond the above observation to Shapiro's opposition to the influence of psychology on poetry.

1. Ibid., p. 70.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 116.

3. Ibid., pp. 219-238.

PART II

SHAPIRO'S POETICS

INTRODUCTION

Thus far in this thesis, Shapiro's opposition to Eliot and the group he represents has been presented. It is in the light of what Shapiro is against that his positive doctrine becomes clearer.

The task now to be faced consists in presenting as clearly as possible an orderly body of Shapiro's positive doctrine on literature. This undertaking is no small task. It involves gleaning from many articles and books the many statements he has made which expose and explain his doctrine. Various articles written at various times in various moods and attitudes seem to indicate on the surface disordered and sometimes contradictory statements. However, patient comparison and a dedicated attempt to examine the statements in the presence of one another and in the light of the whole does bear fruit. This fruit is valuable since it does represent a body of poetics which at the present time is bidding for recognition in the vast field of modern criticism.

It should also be noted that until recently (about 1960) Shapiro's poetics was a rather fluid knowledge. The vitality of his search for the truth about literature is enhanced by his humility which prevented him from clinging tenaciously to an opinion when he perceived that such an

opinion was no longer tenable or no longer preferable. During the last few years fewer and fewer modifications and changes of opinions are notable as his poetics took on an integrity and became steadily more competent to meet the various challenges offered.

CHAPTER I

A DEFINITION OF POETRY

In 1947 Shapiro gave the William Vaughn Moody Lecture at the University of Chicago. In this memorable speech he attempted to define poetry. This lecture was published later in Poetry.

Shapiro is of the opinion that poetry cannot be adequately defined and that any definition given will be of "negative merit."¹

The definition he suggests in this speech is as follows:

I think of a poem as a literary construct composed of not-words which in their flight from meanings arrive at a prosodic sense-beyond-sense. Its aim is not known.²

Earlier in the same speech he gives another definition of a poem:

A poem is a literary device of great beauty which through the means of metre, imagery, and strong emotional sentiment or beliefs, presents to the reader a unified configuration of original language forms, with the aim of communicating a sensual, emotional, or ideational experience of the writer.³

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January 1948, p. 210.

2. Ibid., p. 210.

3. Ibid., p. 202.

Shapiro rejects this latter definition as being one that probably would be offered in the schools. He rejects the definition because it does not extend beyond the literal meanings of words and their connotations. He also does not believe that it makes a proper distinction between prose and poetry.¹

Only one year after the publication of the Moody Lecture (two years after its delivery) he published a definition of poetry slightly modified by changing "Its aim is not known" to "the aim of the poem is its use."²

The definition then reassembled reads: A poem is a literary construct composed of not-words which in their flight from meanings arrive at a prosodic sense-beyond-sense. The aim of the poem is its use.

An analysis of Shapiro's explanation of the definition will now follow.

Literary construct: a structure that is produced intentionally.

Not-words: a full explanation of Shapiro's theory of the function of language in poetry will be considered later in this thesis. For the present it may be noted that by the term "not-words" Shapiro means to indicate that

1. Ibid., p.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning" Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 349.

words used in poetry have far more significance in their context than their mere prosaic meaning. This he believes is true to such an extent that the literal, prosaic meaning actually becomes secondary. This also explains briefly what he means by "Their retreat from meanings" and "arrive at a prosodic sense-beyond-sense."

In another place Shapiro has a kind of definition of the creative act. He has studied Jung and professes to see a notable relationship between the Chinese theory of synchronicity explained by Jung and the creative act. Synchronicity holds that there is interdependence between objective events themselves and between them and the subjectivity of the observer. The creative act consists in reading the pattern of objective interdependences and the observer's relationship to them or the subjective element.¹ Shapiro's concept of the poetic process will be examined later in this thesis.

The observation exposed in the above paragraph is somewhat clarified by another observation:

... there are not certain "subjects" for the poet and certain subjects for the saint and certain subjects for the mathematician. Poetry is not a matter of subject but of presence, the presence of the poet in a given scene. Anything is subject matter for poetry, even philosophy, even history, even the

1. James E. Miller, Jr., Karl Shapiro and Bernice Slote, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska, 1960. Pp. viii, 260; pp. 34-35.

daily news. The question is always whether the poet is poetically involved in that part of the action of the world into which he has wandered. ¹

Again Shapiro notes:

...the poet who creates out of his life has done so because he was part of a particular place and time, part of a particular milieu and nation, and part of a particular age. ²

With at least a skeleton of Shapiro's general attitudes about what poetry is, an examination of particular areas and problems in his poetics can now be presented.

Cardinal Points

Shapiro's definition of poetry can be stated thus: A poem is a literary construct composed of not-words which in their flight from meanings arrive at a prosodic sense-beyond-sense.

By "literary construct" is meant a poem intentionally produced. By "not words" Shapiro indicates that words used in poetry have a significance by virtue of their prosodic context so that they no longer are merely what they were in prose.

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; pp. 26-27.

2. Ibid., p. 69.

CHAPTER 2

THE USES OF POETRY

The above treatment of the definition of poetry states Shapiro's concept of the aim of poetry. Since the use of poetry is closely allied to this topic it will be treated next. This topic could be included under "The Process of Creativity" to be considered later. It is however easily distinguishable from the problems of the creative process strictly speaking and since Shapiro mentions the use of poetry somewhat frequently it was thought proper to treat of it under a separate heading.

It will be recalled that in the preceding chapter Shapiro spoke of the aim of a poem as being its use. Possibly the most often suggested aim of poetry is beauty. Shapiro insists that beauty is not an aim of poetry but rather a quality; a quality that results from "symmetry and harmony in a related and complete work."¹

Shapiro is even ready to call poetry useless in the ordinary view of poetry. He would agree that it is useless except for the fact that "... poetry does... ennoble the man who writes it by developing in him an almost habitual

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; p. 50.

love of beauty."¹

Shapiro is careful to point out that poetry, or more precisely, the poet, is in search of truth but not a useful truth in the sense of a truth to be used for the acquisition of something else. The poet reaches for a truth which can be arrived at only through beauty.²

Shapiro regards truth as being as natural as anything could be, that it is naturally a part of man and as such is not intended to "save anything", although it does show us many things we would like to save.³

Shapiro holds that poetry is not didactic unless one wishes to consider poetry didactic because from it one can learn "a curious wisdom-- the wisdom of love."⁴

Probably something of the observations of the preceding two paragraphs is what Shapiro is talking about in a short play he wrote. In this play a poet was taken with an American expedition force to Japan. The poet was selected as part of the company by the ship's captain so that the captain would have someone available to write letters

1. Ibid., pp. 66-67.

2. Ibid., p. 67.

3. Karl Shapiro, "The Farmer and the Poet", Poetry, vo. 98, no. 3, issue of June 1961, p. 185.

4. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75, p. 68.

well. Upon arrival at Japan (the Japan of many decades ago) the Americans presented gifts to the Japanese. All the gifts were eminently practical: death-dealing devices and alcohol. In return the Japanese gave presents of great beauty but also of total uselessness.¹

Shapiro is of the opinion that poetry is self-limiting. One of these limits which poetry has by its nature is that poetry is concerned with the now and does not distinguish past, present and future. Therefore poetry cannot be concerned with achieving anything since achievement implies progress and futurity.²

Additional information about Shapiro's opposition to functionalism and pragmatism in the use of poetry may be found earlier in this thesis (pp. 26-29).

Cardinal Points

Poetry is useless except that it ennobles the man who writes it by developing in him an almost habitual love of beauty.

The poet is in search of truth but not useful truth, that is, truth to be used for the acquisition of something

1. Karl Shapiro, Stethoscope for the Emperor, unpublished, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., April 24, 1958. Pp. 23, p. 15.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 280.

else.

Poetry is natural and not for saving anything although it does show us many things we would like to save. Poetry is not didactic.

CHAPTER 3

IMMEDIACY OF APPREHENSION

Closely allied to the problem of function and purpose is the matter of the apprehension of poetry and the question of audience appeal.

Shapiro is firmly convinced that immediacy of apprehension is a necessity for good poetry. He bases this conviction on the premise that the art of poetry is basically dramatic and that drama must by its nature provoke immediate response. Metaphors are not to conceal but to reveal. Shapiro also rejects the theory that a poem should have many levels of meaning. He regards such a poem as evidence of weakness in the artist.¹

In another article Shapiro does admit the possibility of a good poem's having many levels of meaning. He does, however, still insist that these many meanings are not the reason for the poem being a good one.²

Shapiro thinks he proves his point of the necessity of immediate apprehension by noting that the greatest

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; pp.45-46.

2. Karl Shapiro, "The Critic in Spite of Himself", Texan Quarterly, vol. 2, no. 3, issue of Autumn 1959; p. 35.

poetry is in dramatic or narrative form. He especially uses Dante as an example of poetry that is wholly and immediately apprehended.¹

Thus Shapiro insists repeatedly on immediacy of apprehension and prefers no multi-level significances.

The author of this thesis questioned Mr. Shapiro personally on his insistence on immediate impact of poetry on the audience. Mr. Shapiro indicated that it was not his opinion that poetry had to be able to be comprehended by any audience but that on some level a piece of art should be apprehended by the audience. The context of "on some level" did not indicate that Mr. Shapiro had abandoned his opposition to multi-level meanings in poetry. Rather the meaning of "on some level" in the context of the discussion could better be rendered by "in some degree."²

Shapiro also observes that critics are not mindful that there are many audiences. One does not expect the Punch and Judy audience to apprehend notably the significance of an opera.³

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 281.

2. Karl Shapiro, Personal Interview with the Author, Oct. 24, 1962. Card 3.

3. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 281.

It would seem that Shapiro's opinion is simply that good art should mean something to anybody and very much to a properly disposed and conditioned audience but a specialized audience should not be required.

Shapiro thinks that a failure to recognize immediate apprehension as a primary obligation will result in leaving the poet a "prey to intuition and every licence of the imagination."¹ (The term "intuition" is here used derogatorily meaning something like "irresponsible inspiration" or "pseudo-inspiration". This matter will be clarified subsequently when the process of creativity will be discussed.)

It seems proper to note here that in spite of Shapiro's insistence on immediacy of apprehension on the part of the audience he by no means wants this understood as functionalism or pragmatism in art. He says:

Both historic and mythic poets believe that poetry is a kind of higher Morse Code which can be translated into ordinary language if one knows the signals. But poetry does not communicate in this way at all. ... The very term "communicate" is a propaganda word which expresses a false reality. A poem is a perfectly intelligible thing in itself: it is coherent; it is whole; it is beautiful; but it is not winking at anybody. This is why the poet has a choice about publication itself: it would not necessarily change his poetry if he locked it all in a strongbox. ... Even the common experience of

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; p. 46.

viewing a particular work is, in a sense, fortuitous, for the creator has no obligation to anything but his creation.... The giving in art consists in making -- when the poet has finished the poem and it lies on the table before him, he has done his supreme act of charity. ¹

Shapiro believes, however, that the audience is essential for the welfare of poetry insofar as the audience serves as the best element of criticism and, more unerringly than professional critics, is able to separate the good poetry from the bad. ²

Cardinal Points

Immediacy of apprehension is a necessary quality for good poetry.

At least an unspecialized audience should be able to appreciate any poetry to some degree.

Keeping an audience in mind keeps the poet from going astray with pseudo-inspiration. Shapiro does not mean to obligate the artist to publication. Poetry not intended for publication is not necessarily inferior poetry.

The audience is usually a better critic and generally more accurate in its judgments than professional critics.

1. Ibid., p. 49.

2. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January 1948; p. 211. (Cf. also Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 350.)

CHAPTER 4

THE EVOLUTION AND HISTORICITY OF POETRY

It is obvious throughout this thesis that Shapiro is at pains to prevent poetry from being confused with science, religion and history. One unique characteristic of art is employed by Shapiro not only for better understanding the nature of art but also in an effort to keep poetry from being confused with other types of knowledge. It is his contention that poetry does not progress; that poets today have not progressed over Homer or Dante.¹

More basically Shapiro sees as the reason for no progress in poetry the timelessness of poetry.

Everything shows progress except poetry. The reason is that the poet exists in past, present, and future together. History to the poet is a fairy tale. Nor does the poet recognize Literature; he sees this poem and that poem but not in time, in sequence. The poet understands also that the events of one's own time rarely touch the poet or artist. His knowledge of the present is not a knowledge of wars, what's in the newspaper, and the latest highbrow opinion, but of how contemporaries talk.²

Shapiro thinks that the non-historicity of art is one of its principal characteristics. There is no progress

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry vol. 71, issue of January 1948; p. 211.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; pp. 280-281.

in art but only rebirth. He does not deny that poetry is involved with history, religion, philosophy and science but this is only accidental just as the fact that poetry inevitably memorializes certain events or places but not purposefully and only as a by-product. ¹

By historic poetry Shapiro means a poetry which espouses or opposes certain situations or ideologies in history or in time. By mythic poet he rather indicates the product of a poet who regards himself as a seer, an oracle, a spiritual elite. He employs these terms actually to cover pragmatic poets, poets espoused to certain systems and official poets -- those who have written poetry for the sake of accomplishing something. ²

It is presumed that it is obvious that when Shapiro denies the possibility of progress in poetry he does not mean that there can be no progress in the externals of art, in manual dexterity. This fact is obvious in his treatment of prosody. ³

Cardinal Points

Poetry does not progress. Therefore poetry is not

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; p. 46.

2. Ibid., pp. 53-54.

3. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; *passim*.

historical. It makes no distinction among past, present and future. This is not to say poetry is not involved with history and other sciences and arts but this is accidental just as is the memorializing effect of poetry.

CHAPTER 5

POETRY, BELIEF AND MYSTICISM

By nineteen twenty the thin ice of belief
 Had cracked and given way. The figure-skater
 Of rime had sunk beneath the lake, and art
 Took on a deep and submarine aspect.
 The corpse, the crawling rat, the bones, the wraith
 Arrived in sequence; a whole world lay wrecked
 And inundated. Prufrock filled with grief
 And whimsical mockery walked along the beach,
 Envied the crab and heard the mermaid sing.
 He toyed with death by drowning, fascinated
 Like Arnold by the ebbing Sea of Faith. ¹

It is Shapiro's contention that poetry does to some undetermined extent depend on faith. Whether the faith is true or not is not the question as far as the success of the poetry goes but the integrity of the believer is important for poetry. The very fact of the decline of poetry wherein faith and fantasy have become confused is evidence in support of the theory of the necessity of integrity (subjective) of belief. ²

Shapiro holds that faith is the "tap-root of art."³ He bases this opinion on the fact that evidence shows that

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; p. 60.

2. Ibid., pp. 61-62.

3. Ibid., p. 63.

belief pertains to the nature of man.¹

Shapiro perceives that in times of disbelief poetry is taken very seriously, more seriously than is warranted in the sense that the poet is tempted, as well as the reader, to try to fill the vacuum caused by the absence of faith with poetry. This, of course, is giving poetry an aim outside its nature.²

Shapiro works hard to arrive at an understanding of the relationship between poetry and religion. The unmistakable concern one notes when Shapiro speaks of this problem shows that it is a problem that affects him rather profoundly. He is not of the opinion that a man's faith need be of any concern to the man as poet strictly speaking.³ On the other hand he is well aware that some relationship does exist between poetry and religion. He believes that they are alike in that they are both centered on emotional modes of behavior. Yet he sees some kind of aversion in poetry for religion. The only conclusion he can arrive at is that one cannot claim that poetry is either only natural or only supernatural. The point is that

1. Ibid., p. 53.

2. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; p. 53.

3. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 117.

a poet must be one with his experience. Whether that experience is natural or supernatural is of no consequence as far as the nature of poetry is concerned.¹

In this age of disbelief the very term "mystic" has undergone a change of meaning. Today it seems most often not to denote any supernatural element but rather indicates "a psychological condition."²

Before presenting Shapiro's observations about mystical poetry it will be necessary to examine his use of the word.

Shapiro tries to explain, difficult as it is, his impression of the poetic psyche. He compares it to a tree.

To the roots belong the demonic principle, or that which cannot see, but works belowstairs, searching out and down in all directions for anchorage and food. It is probably the first part of the psyche to appear. The trunk and limbs I would identify with the metaphysical principle; this stands in and out of the earth at the same time and is simultaneously interested in being and knowing. The leaves, by far the most populous equipment of the tree, I would identify with the literary principle: only the leaves are millionfold; they flourish, manufacture food and die, some to enrich the earth, most to become dust. Last, the mystical principle, which I would place in the flower, fruit and seed of the tree.³

1. Ibid., pp. 277-278.

2. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 54.

3. Karl Shapiro, "The Meaning of the Discarded Poem", in the book: Rudolf Arnheim et al., Poets at Work, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1948. Pp. ix, 186; p. 90.

Shapiro cautions us about thinking that the mystical principle is superior to the demonic principle merely because of their position. The difference between the two is that "in the demonic principle the poetic material arrives, whereas in the mystical principle it is arrived at. The one begins in frenzy, the other achieves frenzy." ¹

This matter above seems to be all that Shapiro can say about this ethereal subject. Perhaps he has conveyed at least an impression of the problem he is plumbing. He does conclude that perhaps the only way to judge the level of inspiration (from the context it is clear that by level of inspiration he means the predominant principle, e.g., demonic or mystical, employed) is by examining the form of the poem. ² The significance of the term "form" in Shapiro will be treated later in this thesis.

Shapiro does see some basic relationship between science, mystical writings and poetry. The relationship is one of unity. He sees science as a search for unity with a belief in unity. Such a belief is necessary for science to be able to add one construct to another. Mystical writings he sees as a record of this unity and poetry as

1. Ibid., p. 90.

2. Ibid., p. 92.

an immediate expression of this unity.¹

Although Shapiro sees some kind of faith as a basic requirement for good art and although he is of the opinion that all great art was certainly based on faith, he does not see the high action of this faith as an aid to the poet or even ordinarily possible for the most part. A direct quotation can in this instance best explain Shapiro's stand.

The poet cannot even enjoy as much spiritual intimacy with God as the mystic or the saint, nor can his knowledge of God be as intelligible as that of the metaphysician. The poet's spiritual rapport with God is relatively crude and is like that of the magician and the psychologist rather than that of the mystic. For the poet, the unitive experience is forever blocked by the nature of creative work, art being an embodiment of personality and not a surrender of personality to the larger Being.²

The author of this thesis questioned Mr. Shapiro about the opposition he saw between spiritual intimacy with God or unitive experience and the creative work of the poet. Mr. Shapiro could only say that the intense, absorbing creative activity of the poet could deflect the poet from the pursuit of spiritual intimacy or the unitive experience. He gave no indication that he thought the two

1. James E. Miller, Jr., Karl Shapiro and Bernice Slote, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 260; p. 32.

2. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; pp. 59-60.

activities were opposed by their natures but only that a certain psychological incompatibility could easily exist between the two.¹

Thus his statement in the above quotation which seems to oppose the incorporation of the person in his art and the surrender of the person to God must be understood in the light of Mr. Shapiro's explanation, that is, that there is no real opposition.

Cardinal Points

There is a need for faith for good poetry. All good poetry has been historically based on faith.

This faith need not be objectively correct. Yet there seems to be an aversion in poetry for religion, But poetry not opposed to intimate union with God but absorption in artistic creativity can deflect the poet from spiritual union with God.

The poetic psyche is made up of the demonic principle, the metaphysical and the mystical.

1. Karl Shapiro, Personal Interview with the Author, October 24, 1962. Card no. 4.

CHAPTER 6

LANGUAGE AND POETRY

One could deal with language and poetry under the chapter on prosody or the chapter on the process of creativity. However, some reasons indicate that language would be better dealt with in a separate chapter. These reasons are: this subject dealt with in either of the other two chapters mentioned above would prove rather unwieldy both because of quantity and complexity; also certain problems of language in poetry could not be easily or logically included under the headings of prosody or creative process.

It should be borne in mind throughout this section of the thesis that the problems of language and poetry are intimately, inseparably united with problems of prosody and the creative process and that some degree of overlapping is not only unavoidable but perhaps even desirable.

Shapiro contends that poetry is not language any more than a landscape is paint. Rather poetry is a version of language, recognizes how limited language is and actually operates outside or beyond language.¹ This states basically Shapiro's idea of the relationship of language to

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 276.

poetry.

There is one extraordinary fallacy which lies at the bottom of most literary criticism and which is such an obvious fallacy to the ordinary reader and the poet that it seems a profundity when anyone mentions it. The fallacy is that of meaning, the treatment of poetry as language. One might in the jargon of the age, call it "the understanding fallacy" or "the semantic fallacy." Poetry is not language; its raw material is language, but from this point on the poet goes in the opposite direction. The word in poetry is not a word in any already existing sense, and I call it a not-word. ¹

In explaining his doctrine of the not-word, Shapiro indulges in an analysis of poem number eight in E.E. Cummings' "l x l". In a comment immediately following this analysis he says:

I said therefore in my first conclusion that the same word used in a line of prose and a line of poetry are really two different words, not even similar, except in appearance. (In Cummings' poem they are not even similar in appearance, though they are to the hearing.) Consequently I do not think we can refer to words in poetry, and I have chosen to call these things, whatever they are, "not-words." You will agree, I am certain, that the sense of Cummings' poem is not linguistic sense, pure and simple, but also something like pre-linguistic and post-linguistic sense, or what I call the sense-beyond-sense of the not-words. ²

Shapiro's argument leads him logically to conclude that what we call the sense of poetry is not merely the sense of language but is something completely different.

1. Ibid., p. 270.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 240.

We call this sense poetry.¹

Previously in this thesis Shapiro's opposition to poetry's being considered a matter of communication has been mentioned. One can see more clearly now the reason for that opposition. He says that in poetic drama, for example, the communicated sense is separate from the poetry. In other words, it is the narrative that can be communicated by the language sense. This language sense is in harmony with the poetry but is not identical with it.²

In prose the communicable sense or the linguistic sense of the word is its very reason for being. But as the word becomes involved in poetry its literal meaning becomes obscured although its prosaic definition may still be in evidence. Words are only the material cause of poetry.³

Shapiro foresaw a danger in his theory being pushed too far. He saw that if the non-word theory were pressed carelessly one could terminate with the ridiculous conclusion that a poem in a language one did not understand could be as significant to the reader as one in his mother-tongue. To solve this possibly unwarranted conclusion he admits an affinity between the prose word and the apparently same

1. Ibid., p. 338.

2. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January 1948, p. 200.

3. Ibid., p. 201.

word (not-word) in its poetic context. He is not sure of the nature of this affinity but claims only that it is less than identification.¹

Shapiro tries further to clarify his stand by pointing out that the literal or prosaic meaning of the words of a poem are important but are only of secondary importance. The poetic sense, he thinks, is probably more closely associated with the prosody of the poem than with the linguistic sense of its words.²

The sense of poetry is achieved by suppressing the functional value of the word and by liberating all those nonfunctional and accidental qualities of which words are capable. I do not know whether rhythm is a cause or an effect in poetry, but I am inclined to regard it as a result of using words in a non-linguistic manner.³

The sense-beyond-sense that is released when a word takes its place in the context of a poem is a word divested to some extent of its ordinary meaning to become a fluid element in the poem. Shapiro lists examples of sense-beyond-sense or rather what might contribute toward the sense-beyond-sense of a word: onomatopoeia or any other figure of speech; subjective associations; instinctual or racial memories.⁴

1. Ibid., p. 206.

2. Ibid., p. 207.

3. Ibid., p. 207.

4. Ibid., p. 208.

The difference Shapiro sees between a word used in prose and the same word used in poetry is the basis for his distinction between prose and poetry. At the same time his attempt to distinguish prose and poetry leads him to a clarification of the "not-word" doctrine. He says that the linguistic sense of the root-meaning of the word is carried over from prose to poetry but in the process loses some of its linguistic meaning while acquiring a new function in poetic meaning. The fact that one word may function both in a prose meaning and in a poetic meaning makes it possible for one form to be enriched by the other. At the same time this enrichment is only accidental since each of the two forms is absolute. Thus it follows that although there may be degrees of prose and degrees of poetry, nevertheless a thing must be absolutely either prose or poetry and not just more or less one or the other. To quote Shapiro from the same article directly:

... there seems to be a point at which the differences of degree result in a difference of kind, although there are, so to speak, degrees of poetry and degrees of prose. When one applies all the criteria for a form he can summon, criteria including not only the characteristics of the writing, but the intention of the author, and the uses of the form, he may come to the conclusion that the poetry is inferior but not that the poetry is prose. ¹

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, pp. 341-342.

Another important conclusion that Shapiro makes from his doctrine of the not-word is the fact that poetry can be translated only as poetry. That is, that the translation must contain the poetry of the original to whatever extent this is possible. Obviously this is rarely achieved. The translation itself must be a piece of poetry and the translator himself is a valid artist if he can produce a poetic translation. If a translation of a piece of poetry is done by a scholar one finds only a translation of the root meanings of the words. If a translation of a piece of poetry is done by a poet one finds perhaps a genuine product of art, a translation of the poetic meaning insofar as such is possible.¹

The problem of the possibility of paraphrase and explication is quite another thing according to Shapiro's theory.

... paraphrase, according to my view of poetry, is a total impossibility. Poetry is the only sense of poetry. We have already discussed this in the remarks on root meaning. Explication could scarcely transcend paraphrase. Certainly a good many poems require explication, but we should never imagine that we are talking about more than a fractional characteristic of poetry when the question of the poet's prose meaning is being settled.²

Four years after the above quotation was written,

1. Ibid., p. 344.

2. Ibid., p. 344.

Shapiro shows signs of being even more convinced of the difficulty of translating poetry and the fact that a genuine translation is really a new piece of art. He sees the untranslatable factor of poetry, namely sound, as the major deterrent to simple translation. He does not understand sound as something corresponding to the meaning. He understands sound as producing the imagery. The "inherent sensory meanings of the words are revealed by the choice of the words for its context."¹ There is obviously only one choice for each case. Therefore the translator of poetry actually has to recreate the poem.²

Shapiro admits that genuine translations are possible but rare. He lists as probably genuine translations: Catullus' rendering of the "Ode to Anactoria, the King James translation of "The Song of Songs" and the Soames-Dryden translation of "L'Art Poétique."³

Paraphrase, he re-emphasizes, can be nothing more to poetry than a listing of its ingredients. Paraphrase is to poetry about the same as the physics of sound to a

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; p. 39.

2. Ibid., p. 39.

3. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January 1948, p. 205.

string quartet. ¹

Thus far in the treatment of language and poetry, one has been able to see from the objective nature of poetry according to Shapiro's theory that translation is difficult and paraphrase limited to the root meanings of words. Shapiro also shows that from the viewpoint of the poet's place in creativity the same is true: translation is difficult and complete paraphrase impossible. He emphasizes the personal involvement of the poet. Language in poetry is refracted in the poet in a personal way. It is then obviously impossible, according to this theory for the same refraction to occur in another language in another person in the same way. Again Shapiro must conclude that a translation is really a new creation. ²

The involvement of the poet with language is intriguing for Shapiro. The poet wants to turn his experience into language. The poet feels in language and actually the feeling sometimes does not really become alive in the poet until it has been verbalized. The success of images depends on accurate selectivity of the right word. Image includes

1. Ibid., pp. 205-206.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vo. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 346.

all verbal functions in poetry.¹

One reason Shapiro is often preoccupied with the problem of language in poetry is that he feels a confusion between prose and poetry, a failure to realize that poetry does involve a change in words from their root meanings has been responsible for much that he regards as undesirable in modern poetry and in contemporary criticism.²

Shapiro further cautions against allowing grammar to control poetry. The function of language in Shapiro's opinion is to serve poetry. Poetry does not serve language in the sense of being subservient to it. Poetry does enrich the language since sometimes a poetic use of a word may come eventually to enrich the root meaning of the word.³

Perhaps somewhat inconsistently Shapiro urges the poet to use the language of his audience. Presumably this urging is not meant to contradict his more emphasized insistence that the poet has only one choice for the best word for any particular case. Although it is not definitive, the context would seem to indicate that Shapiro is

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 75; p. 35.

2. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 28.

3. Ibid., pp. 35-36.

merely urging the poet not to go out of his way to find an exotic vocabulary. He accuses some of our modern poets of doing that.¹

Cardinal Points

Poetry is not language but language is the raw material of poetry. A word loses much of its prose meaning when it takes its place in its poetic context and achieves new meaning. Its prose meaning is quite secondary in poetry.

Translation of poetry must be a translation of it as poetry. This amounts to a new creation. Paraphrase can only render the prosaic meanings of the words and not the sound or rhythm and therefore cannot render the poetic meaning.

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 44.

CHAPTER 7

PROSODY

This thesis will now be occupied with one of Shapiro's favorite topics. Shapiro feels a certain competence in this area perhaps more than in others. The emphasis he places on prosody is one of the points whereby he departs, in his own opinion, from modern characteristics of poetry as has been pointed out previously in this thesis.

Shapiro defines prosody thus:

But under rhythm I would include all aspects of prosody, such as the non-functional and accidental qualities of words and not-words. Let us say that prosody is the sum-total of all the factors present in a completed poem, including the root meaning, when we regard the root meaning as a purely structural element, but that stops short of its ultimate use as a poem. Prosody would therefore be the behavior of the poem, in toto, in so far as we can observe that behavior without imposing a unique personal view upon it. ¹

Shapiro clarifies this definition somewhat in further observations. He regards prosody as the objective elements of the poem. He thinks these elements are at least four: figures of speech meaning, meter, sound and image. He is well aware that these elements are inseparable but can be distinguished for purposes of study. These figures

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, March 1949, p. 344.

mentioned above are chosen from the vast storehouse of such images which the author has by virtue of all he knows and has experienced both in literature and otherwise.¹

The creative process will be treated later in the thesis. The above was intended to clarify what Shapiro means by the term "prosody".

In Shapiro's famous verse essay he explains what are the only two valid forms of prosody: by eye and by ear. On this basic assertion Shapiro builds all of his more detailed observations about the various elements of prosody which will follow in this chapter.²

In addition to these two basic forms of prosody, Shapiro recognizes two traditions of prosody: stress prosody and temporal prosody. A third may be added which is a mixture of the two.³

It might also be well to note here, although the matter would be just as properly discussed in a later chapter, that the organization of all the objective elements of prosody that appears in a poem is not necessarily something of which the poet is very conscious in all its steps.

1. Ibid., p. 345.

2. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; pp. 7-8.

3. Karl Shapiro, A Bibliography of Modern Prosody, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1948. Pp. 36; p. 1.

He is, in Shapiro's understanding, conscious rather of a pattern or ultimate form.¹

It is obvious from the context of this article that by "not conscious" Shapiro means rather that the prosodic organization of a poem is something which involves intuitive selection and the habit of art.

The poet, according to Shapiro, does not seek form, nor does he achieve form, nor invent form; rather he experiences form. In one place Shapiro defines form:

Form is the build of any organism,
Living or dead, of a whole tree or a leaf,
A whole poem or a word. In prosody,
Where all is motion, form is the interaction
Of all parts of rhythm that produce
The sensory effect of single rhythm.²

The following observations will help clarify Shapiro's concept of the meaning of form. Shapiro thinks that the formality of philosophy is logic and dialectic; the formality of natural science is the selection and organization of data; the formality of supernatural knowledge is in rite, sacrament and formulas.³

Applying Shapiro's idea of form to poetry, one can

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 345.

2. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 13.

3. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 30.

see that by form he means the components of a poem. For example, he refers to alliteration as the simplest form of harmony. The basic forms of poetry are: symmetry, harmony and wholeness. These are subdivided into rhythm, meter, sound, alliteration and the various figures of speech. By the term "wholeness" Shapiro means to exclude fragments. If one employs these various forms then the result is beauty which Shapiro regards as the general formality of poetry.¹ But more succinctly, Shapiro regards form as all those elements which are needed to bring poetic knowledge into being.²

Shapiro willingly accedes that the very presence of form in art is a mystery.³ He also is quite opposed to the distinction between form and content because this suggests a separation between prosody and the meaning of the words whereas the meaning is in the prosody.⁴

Shapiro does not object to subjective uses of a poem or personal interpretations. But he does insist that the meaning of the poem is the objective reality: the prosody of meter, sound, image and speech meaning.

1. Ibid., p. 29.

2. Ibid., p. 29.

3. Ibid., p. 29.

4. Ibid., p. 31.

My claim is that in a successful poem, most or all of the elements of meter, sound, image, and speech figures do reach the sensory mind of the reader and implant there a total prosodic image, more or less a true reflection of the original literary object. That this object improves or alters from reading to reading does not affect the basic character of the object; the alteration is in the reader. ¹

Shapiro is interested in a relatively new element in prosody. He calls it "visual prosody" and sometimes uses the term "objectivism", although the latter term is more comprehensive than the former. By "visual prosody" he indicates forms visible rather than audible. Shapiro neither condemns nor encourages visual prosody. He expresses profound respect for Cummings and Lawrence who employ this form. He is, however, hesitant in that he fears a danger inherent in tampering with the alphabet and in atomizing the language. ²

Style is important to Shapiro because the uniqueness of art depends in part on it. He says that style is really the repetition of a writer's characteristic habits. Through style, his character is impressed on that which he writes. Just as the word "style" originally meant the instrument with which writing was done, so today, style indi-

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1959, p. 345.

2. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 20-21.

cates the way with which a particular person may express himself.¹

The function of rhythm and meter are of the utmost importance in the poetics of Shapiro. Even pure rhythms without words do convey meaning. But if repeated for too long a time they become meaningless. This Shapiro knows from experience. If the meter is joined with rhythm it releases or at least helps release all non-functional or non-linguistic qualities of words. Too frequent repetition may not be indulged in or the meaning begins to suffer. This danger is not proximate in English since one can hardly perfectly repeat a rhythm without repeating the very same words. Meter in turn helps liberate the rhythms themselves.² When one adds the dimension of rhythm to a word a number of events take place.

First of all the meaning and the meter (two figures belonging to different categories of things) become equal in potency and exert an attraction on one another. Second (but I do not mean that these things occur in the order I am giving them, or any given order at all) the figures of sound are magnified. Finally, or simultaneously the figures of image emerge as intended and as hoped for.³

1. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; pp. 32-33.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vo. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 345.

3. Ibid., p. 345.

In other words, according to Shapiro, rhythm is the prime mover in changing a prose word or a word in its linguistic root meaning into its new existence in its poetic context.¹

Shapiro looks upon meter as the nucleus of prose, as a power, as prose raised to a numerical exponent. Prose he likens to flesh and rime to spirit.² Here in his verse essay he uses rime in a general sense meaning about the same as "poetic forms".

For Shapiro, rhythm is the "most obvious and most profound quality of art. To regard rhythm as a secondary characteristic of art is to fall into the hands of ... the people who talk about form and content."³ It should be noted that in discussing meter and rhythm, Shapiro uses the terms often interchangeably and sometimes uses rime in a sense including all elements of prosody.⁴

Meter in itself or in the abstract is invariable. It is only when meter or any rhythm is applied to concrete words that variability arises. Meter or rhythm in the ab-

1. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 73; p. 23.

2. Ibid., p. 31.

3. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 31.

4. Ibid., p. 31. (cf. also Essay on Rime, passim.)

stract does have a relationship to words but in particular application it has a relation with the words and an identity with the sense of the words. Meter is further related even to the peculiar needs of a particular man's grammar and vocabulary. Meter gives poetry its visible symmetry. One would hardly believe that meter or rhythm could do so many various tasks were it not for the concrete evidence available in good poems.¹ Meter is a frame for poetry. It is like lines of force that drive rhythm and symmetry into the pattern of a poem. It serves as a principle of selection. If there is no meter as in the case of free verse, then the poet has to supply some principle of selection. And yet genuine meter allows naturalness of expression.² Meter exists because of the laws of symmetry, harmony and wholeness.³

Verse, says Shapiro, is characteristic of most poetry. It is a "description of language rhythm in its highest degree."⁴ It seems that here Shapiro sees verse as an ordered and extended rhythmic pattern; not only are words rhythmic but a series of words make up a larger pattern by

1. Ibid., pp. 31-32.

2. Ibid., p. 43.

3. Ibid., p. 32.

4. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 345.

virtue of interrelationships which is called verse. He claims that prose is really non-verse, that it moves away from rhythm.¹

In discussing rhythm's meaning, Shapiro notes that rhythm does depend on the words themselves. Although often the rhythm of a prose word is not changed when it becomes part of a poem, the liberation of the rhythm of words may be accomplished as he describes in the following quotation.

... by using the known rhythms of words in the position of ideal rhythms in such a manner as to suggest that the real and the ideal might at some time coincide. The ideal rhythm shows what the real rhythm might become, but the real rhythm does not sink to the plain statement of the ideal.²

Shapiro thinks metrical prose is considered inferior because meter tends to dissipate the precision of literal meaning. Poetry, he notes, does demand such an expansion and diffusion of literal meaning but poetry must stop short of pretended or abstract, absolute rhythm. Otherwise rhythm becomes final and the rhythm would no longer be in concrete application with words.³

Above Shapiro has said that rhythm is the most profound quality of poetry. He now makes another rather ab-

1. Ibid., p. 345.

2. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January 1948, p. 210.

3. Ibid., p. 210.

solute statement, namely, that music is the most important sensory quality of language. He does not believe that this musical quality can be put into scale form or tables of harmony. He thinks there is no doubt that the sound of words is primarily responsible for producing images and sensory meaning.¹

Shapiro goes even further in asserting that not only does every language have its own melodic system but even every poet has his own system. And this system of sound or music is based on inherent sensory and inherent verbal meanings. Shapiro believes that the opinion of some semanticists that words have only the meanings assigned to them, if true, would destroy all poetry. On the contrary, the poet thrives on change and multiplicity in language.²

There could be a danger in the poet's attempt to manipulate sound and images too much. This Shapiro calls forced poetry. He is inclined to be suspicious when he hears critics speak about paradox, ambiguity and conceit. Although he does not condemn such terms he thinks they often indicate the possibility of forced poetry.³

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 36.

2. Ibid., pp. 36-37.

3. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 275.

A basic concept in Shapiro's poetics, although he dismisses it rather briefly, is the function of grammar in poetry. The poet may not have an autocratic hand with grammar but he is granted by Shapiro freedom to use new constructions on the basis of sound. Sound in poetry outranks for Shapiro the laws of grammar. He insists that "Not grammar, right or wrong, rescues the verse/ But verse the grammar." ¹

The topic, grammar, leads Shapiro into a consideration of rhetoric. Rhetoric for Shapiro is a rather inclusive term and its function quite broad.

Yet grammar is but the stem of rhetoric
And rhetoric the leafage of the tree
Of language. I do not use the term in any
Pejorative sense. The beauty of an image,
The functioning of a simile, paradox,
Abstraction, epithet, vocabulary,
Punctuation itself, these are the parts,
But hundreds more, of rhetoric. The interaction
Of myriad forms, like dancing leaves and flowers,
Creates the full expression called the poem.
Rhythm belongs to rhetoric.... ²

Shapiro goes on in verse to point out that prose conceals tropes and in general the rhetorical obtrusions whereas poetry uses these forms but carefully. Joyce is for Shapiro the model of the use of rhetoric in poetry. ³

1. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 73; p. 36.

2. Ibid., pp. 37-38.

3. Ibid., p. 38.

Although Shapiro is not clear in the matter he does give intention a place in rhetoric. He is disturbed by a modern tendency to chop up certain lines of the Scriptures to make them appear to be poetry when there is, according to him, no indication that such was the intention of the author. Shapiro advises predetermining the intention of the author, often obtainable from the title of the work, as to whether he intended writing poetry or not.¹ Shapiro does not delve into the matter of intention sufficiently for one to make any definitive conclusions. It would seem that his remark about the fact that there are no indications in certain sections of Scripture that it was the author's intention to write poetry would indicate that the intention of the author would not be any kind of absolute criterion but would have to be substantiated by the objective evidence in the poem itself.

In this chapter on prosody the problem of the distinction between prose and poetry was mentioned a few times, especially with regard to rhythm being the principal distinguishing element. Perhaps it would be well before closing the chapter to mention Shapiro's explicit doctrine on this distinction to avoid any misunderstanding.

There is no borderline between poetry and prose.
Even verse (meter) is no distinction. There is

1. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

only greater or lesser heat. The novel is simply the narrative poem in extension. The novel deals with the poetry of character, the poetry of situation, the poetry of history. It is possible to speak of more or less poetry in a writer, meaning more or less vision-of-reality. Everyone is part poet; it is the poet in each of us that responds to the whole poet. ... The most common universal experience of reality is love. The prose man falls in love once or twice, or according to some psychologists, thrice. If he keeps it up he is in danger of becoming a poet. ¹

Thus one sees that rhythm in itself is not the distinction between prose and poetry but only rhythm concretely identified with the significance of the words.

Cardinal Points

Shapiro distinguishes two basic kinds of prosody: that of the ear and that of the eye. Prosody is the objective elements of a poem. They are at least four: speech meaning, meter, sound and images. Prosody is either of the stress type or temporal type.

The poet is not necessarily very conscious of the prosodic organization but is rather conscious of a pattern or ultimate form.

Visual prosody is not to be condemned but one should be careful about tampering with the alphabet.

Rhythm and meter even in absolute form do express

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 275.

some meaning. When concretely united with words they serve to liberate the non-linguistic, non-functional qualities of words. Rhythm is the most obvious and most profound quality of art. One must not distinguish between form and content because this implies that rhythm is not part of the meaning.

Grammar is at the service of poetry in that the poet may depart from grammatical tradition for the sake of sound.

Rhythm concretely identified with the significance of words is the quality of poetry that distinguishes it from prose.

CHAPTER 8

THE PROCESS OF CREATIVITY

i) Experience

Not a single essay or a single chapter in any of Shapiro's writings is entitled "The Process of Creativity" or anything similar to the meaning of that title. Most readers interested in the writing of Karl Shapiro would probably be rather amazed to find that from his various works can be gleaned a surprisingly complete treatment of the creative process.

First of all Shapiro would have us bear in mind that poetry is different from other writing because it is a different way of looking at things, a different way of seeing things. Through a vital sensitivity the poet finds reality. Reality seen differently is the key to poetry. Poetry is not imaginary in the ordinary sense of the term, that is, unreal. The imagination is used to arrive at reality but genuine reality is what the poet is after, reality that others would miss.¹

For Shapiro experience is a vital quality of his doctrine of poetry; an experience which brings the poet in-

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; pp. 273-274.

to a consciousness of unity. He refers to this consciousness when highly developed as "cosmic consciousness." He says:

By cosmic consciousness is meant the capacity of the individual consciousness to experience a sense of total unity with all Nature, or the universe, or some degree of that experience. Whether this capacity is pathological or "normal" makes no difference; what is important is the fact of its existence and its significance. The literature of cosmic consciousness is ... very wide and is possibly the largest body of written matter in the world. ... In a sense, all literature of any kind before modern science is related to the literature of cosmic consciousness. ¹

This consciousness of unity, according to Shapiro, seems to flow from experience and inspiration. By inspiration he simply means the speed with which previous experiences fall into conjunction in the poet's mind. Poetic inspiration, then, is an interior act, an act which has to do with creating experience from the storehouse of memories, images and sounds that have been the fruit of the poet's experience. ²

At first sight Shapiro's thoughts on experience leading to a consciousness of unity may seem a rather ethereal or magic process. This is far from the case. Actually such experience is entered into by a kind of poetic

1. Karl Shapiro, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 260; p. 30.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Poets and Psychologists", Poetry, vol.80, issue of June 1952, p. 178.

sympathy or Einführung. The poet, through his sensitivity, has a sympathy, a feeling for other things. This feeling of oneness with other creatures is usually not a cosmic thing except in the very great poets and mystics. Ordinarily the oneness is experienced simply with real loves of immediate objects. Thus poetic knowledge will be limited by the limitation of the poet and also by its very nature. For example, it must not get into the historical and mystical knowledge. This limitation applies to the mode of knowledge and does not limit the subjects with which poetry may deal. ¹

Each poetic experience for Shapiro is unique because it is always a particular and concrete experience since this is the only valid experience for art. When the poet as poet begins to experience abstractions he is lost. The poet cannot experience anything but the concrete unless he kills his personality. ² Shapiro will show later the function of personality in the creative process.

In addition to the above limitations the poet must limit himself by restraining his use of experience until it has been processed or made one with himself. ³

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 26.

2. Ibid., pp. 23-24.

3. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 28.

The laws of poetry have never been able to be codified in Shapiro's opinion. Experience is so much of art that it is not only a principal source of the poem but from the viewpoint of the reader also, a poem cannot be taught but must be experienced.¹

On the one hand a poem springs into existence from experience. On the other hand, a principal source of poetry is the person of the artist himself. It is the personality of the poet plus his objective experience that forms the basis of a poem. This is the way a poet comes to experience the unity of things: his person is the point of unity of experiences. A good poem is "a demonstration of man's unity with Nature and with man's condition."²

Shapiro is so convinced of the role of the artist's personality in the process of creativity that he can say:

The poet leaves an actual record of his passion in the presence of world reality. He creates the image of himself, sometimes only a part of himself, sometimes his full self. With Shakespeare we have whole image; with Baudelaire we have a stylized and fragmentary image....

... Let us think of creation in art as the vocation, and only vocation of a certain kind of man. Let us then give it the honor of any vocation for knowledge. But let us admit also that the sum total of

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January, 1948, p. 211.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 283.

the creation of an artist can only equal himself.¹

To write good poetry Shapiro thinks the poet must avoid the self-consciousness that a revolution in knowledge has brought about. Modern man has been conditioned to look at himself from without and to see his acts as objects of science. This inclines man to ignore the "lyrical ego" as Shapiro calls the personality functioning in the creative process. In other words, Shapiro thinks that poetry must be written from the inside out; that a poet's experience is processed deep in his person and then expressed. The poet's own personality must not be an external objective experience like other experiences in the creative process.²

The multiplicity of style which Shapiro claims to find in modern art is, he thinks, an indication that the personality is not allowed to function today as it ought in the creative process.³

This is somewhat of a clarification of Shapiro's opinions expressed above: the modern revolution of knowledge and the need for man to stop viewing himself from

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 66.

2. Karl Shapiro, The Place of Love, unpublished, printed in Australia (no company named), 1942. In rare book section of the Library of Congress of the United States. Pp. 78; p. 5.

3. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 34.

outside himself.

ii) Imagination and Intuition

Shapiro can easily be misleading in his doctrine about imagination and intuition. Actually he says surprisingly little about either but that which he says can be easily misunderstood.

Shapiro has a great respect for the function of images in poetry. He does not have such a great respect for what he terms the imagination. He thinks the term imagination has become almost a synonym for creative process. He believes the confusion enters in over a confusion about the term "imagination" and the relationship of this term with the word "image". Shapiro says: "The poet makes images, poetry is image-knowledge, but it is not imaginative knowledge."¹

Shapiro can deny that poetry is imaginative knowledge because he understands the term "imaginative" to mean an unreal knowledge. He understands the term to mean what he thinks Shakespeare meant by poking fun at the imagination when he says that the imagination makes bushes of bears. Shapiro is of the opinion that the imagination is more the property of inventors than of poets. He even accuses sur-

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 16.

realists of being artificial in inventing dreams.¹

The above paragraph exposes what one might call Shapiro's lack of appreciation of the imagination. The distinction between the image-making quality of the poet and the term "imaginative knowledge" will clarify Shapiro's stand somewhat. One has to bear in mind that Shapiro by no means is opposed to the ability or inclination of the poet to make images. He realizes quite well that image making is not only desirable but that it presupposes all other qualities in the artist. In other words, image making is the crowning quality or ability of the poet. It is the result of his involvement with language and his experience. Some things pass for image making which are really mistakes of the imagination, like making bushes out of bears. In other words, Shapiro believes that image making is not so intent on creativity as it is on accuracy. Image making is dependent on all the senses but perhaps more on the sense of touch than is commonly supposed. Image includes all verbal functions of the poem. Shapiro is not sure if image also includes the temporal elements of the poem, for example, meter, but he is inclined to the negative opinion. He believes that if there is any dichotomy in poetry it is not between idea and image but between meter and image.

1. Ibid., p. 16.

Shapiro does not explain this opinion.¹

Shapiro recognizes the metaphor as the principal class of image. Metaphor is even a synonym for the word image. Shapiro, in speaking about metaphor, exposes what he considers the genuine function of image.

Metaphor takes to itself the property of all words and is concerned with those properties. Metaphor can assign new properties to words but not with license. In fact, it is the business of metaphor to find out the sensory and ideational possibilities of words which are inherent in them and which they acquire through use and abuse. Only in this way can metaphor bring about the metamorphosis in poetry which the poet needs.²

Thus it is obvious that Shapiro places the function of images very high indeed in the hierarchy of the components of the creative process. The only thing he can mean in the previous condemnation of the imagination in the sense of imaginative knowledge, is a condemnation of a misuse of the imaginative faculty with the result of a poetic knowledge which is not in accord with the reality of things and therefore neither poetic nor knowledge.

Shapiro is of the opinion that imagination in the derogatory sense with which he uses the term can yield only intuitions and in his opinion intuitive poetry is as unreliable as intuitive science.³

1. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

2. Ibid., p. 35.

3. Ibid., p. 16.

This derogatory use of the term "intuition" proves rather baffling. In a personal interview the author of this thesis questioned Mr. Shapiro on his meaning of the word "intuition" since no other reference to the term could be found in his published works which would help clarify his understanding of the term. Mr. Shapiro indicated that the place of intuition and the meaning of the term were areas in which his thinking had undergone quite a great change. Within ten years after he had written the above opinion about intuition he grew to see more clearly what intuition really is and what it means. Mr. Shapiro stated that today he would define intuition as "knowledge that comes without logical reasoning."¹

Although above it was pointed out that a possible dichotomy may exist between images and meter, Shapiro sees them as mutually assisting in bearing the form of poetry or in being principal components making poetic knowledge possible. He notes that images are even more important than ever in non-metrical poetry since the images themselves must bear the form of poetry to a much greater extent. Some poets can write good poetry without meter but depend more on their ability to make images.²

1. Karl Shapiro, Personal Interview with the Author, Oct. 24, 1962. Card no. 5.

2. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 34.

One more clarification might be well given in trying to present Shapiro's outlook on the imagination. The imagination which Shapiro condemns is the imagination loosely so-called which the mystics also condemn. He mentions agreeably St. Theresa's observation that the imagination is the fool in the house. Shapiro points out that imagination in this sense, actually a misuse of the imagination, results in a forced poetry, not a genuine revelation of reality.¹

Closely related to the above observation, another mentioned by Shapiro is the danger of using the adjective as the basis for metaphor or image. He claims that no serious work of poetry can be built upon modifiers. The image must basically rest on verbs and nouns.²

iii) Poetic Knowledge

Shapiro makes noble attempts in very many places in his works to describe what poetic knowledge is. An attempt will be made in this part of the thesis to gather Shapiro's observations, to study them comparatively and to try to present an ordered view of his opinions.

Shapiro regards poetic knowledge as a special kind

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 274.

2. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; pp. 43-44.

of knowledge. He recognizes it so special by various characteristics which it has such as its uniqueness, the fact that a piece of art can never be repeated, the fact that poetic knowledge is unable to be proved, it is not ordered as is scientific knowledge, nor consistent. Poetic knowledge is accepted by conviction. It is accepted as sincere and convincing or it is rejected. Poetic knowledge comes from experience only. Poetry is not universal and therefore poetic knowledge is not universal. It is only the personal, particular, human truth that cannot be arrived at by reason. It is a kind of truth that can be lived or made in art. Poetic knowledge cannot be put into an ordered system nor can it be developed in a body of truth as is done in the case of science. Poetic truth as such is not concerned with true or false but only with the credibility of the artistic work.¹ Shapiro puts the matter concretely thus:

Natural knowledge tells us that the world turns; religion tells us to forgive; poetry tells us that my love is like a red, red rose. Poetry tells us that ripeness is all, and it tells us that nothing is so beautiful as spring (two truths which "contradict" each other). We call a poem a true poem when we do not hesitate to believe it -- when it is impossible in its artfulness not to believe it.²

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; pp. 22-23.

2. Ibid., p. 23.

As Shapiro says in another work: a poet has to sense everything in the light of consciousness and need not think his way to the truth.¹

Shapiro, as mentioned above, does think poetry is a special kind of knowledge. He recognizes four kinds of knowledge: natural, supernatural, abstract and artistic. From context and as will be made clearer later in this thesis, abstract knowledge is practically synonymous with philosophical knowledge in Shapiro's plan. Although he recognizes these four kinds of knowledge, he does so for the sake of showing what poetic knowledge is but is not in favor of comparing poetic knowledge with the other kinds since this usually results, in his opinion, in trying to describe poetic knowledge in terms of the other kinds of knowledge. He does not believe one should try to make a hierarchy of the kinds of knowledge but should only recognize them as different.²

Since poetic knowledge is different in kind from natural or abstract knowledge it is pointless to be interested in the intelligence of an author. A poet can rank low in intelligence in the sense of ability at rational

1. Karl Shapiro, "The Farmer and the Poet", Poetry, vol. 98, issue of June 1961; p. 171.

2. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press. Pp. 73; pp. 7-8.

procedures of thought and can rank very high in poetic intelligence. Thus Shapiro says, it is pointless for critics to show that Beethoven was intellectually inferior to Mozart.¹

Because poetic truth does often cross the currents of other kinds of knowledge and because poetry is often quoted by scientists and philosophers there is a tendency to regard poetry as being in the same category with science and philosophy. The easiest way to show that it is not in the same category is to show that it is, in opposition to other kinds of knowledge, disordered and unable to be ordered. Other kinds of knowledge quote poetry because since it is a personal human truth it can be employed as a point of evidence in the development of an ordered body of knowledge.² But one must avoid the danger of poetic knowledge being regarded as metaphysical or symbolist knowledge which reaches beyond ideas and words. This is totally outside the nature of poetry.³

The above danger opens up a larger possibility, namely, that of regarding poetry as nothing but a beauti-

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. viii, 260; pp. 63-64.

2. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 47.

3. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

ful casing for ideas, a method of giving shape, a beautiful shape, to ideas and usually unoriginal ideas.¹

Actually, Shapiro thinks, many errors about poetic knowledge could be avoided simply by remembering that poetic knowledge is a personal knowledge and not a universal knowledge.

Poetry is innocent, not wise. It does not learn from experience, because each poetic experience is unique. The Madonna is painted a million times by a million hands and is never achieved -- or always achieved, depending on whether you take the rational or poetic view. ... His (the poet's) knowledge is not of the world, nor of himself, but of himself-as-world. ... Poetic knowledge puts us in the midst of experience.²

Shapiro goes on to point out that the poet is a mockery of personality when he tries to particularize a universal experience.³

Poetry has as its source the love of personal truth and its result is a thing of beauty. The relationship between personal truth and beauty is a nice one. Beauty is, for Shapiro, a necessary condition for art and is, moreover, the instrument of poetic truth. Beauty is not the object of poetic truth but rather a condition without which there can be no poetic truth.⁴

1. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

3. Ibid., p. 24.

4. Ibid., p. 57.

Beauty is the means whereby poetic truth is persuasive or convincing. If we doubt the beauty of a piece of art we cannot accept its poetic truth. We do not have to believe what the poet is saying to accept the poetic knowledge but we do have to believe in his sincerity. This belief is not so much an intellectual assent but rather is provoked by emotional appeal through the instrumentality of beauty.¹

The poet's work comes as a result of his emotional struggle with reality and his recollections of these struggles. "The poet wrests from the world the revelation of his personal reality."²

The poet must be in love with beauty. He must love beauty so much that he is compelled to create it for himself.³

Beauty is the instrument of poetic knowledge which gives this knowledge the stamp of authenticity. Authenticity is the word Shapiro uses to refer to poetic truth. A reader is compelled to accept poetic truth by virtue of the beauty which affords the truth its appeal of authenticity or genuine poetic truth.⁴

1. Ibid., pp. 63-64.

2. Ibid., p. 65.

3. Ibid., p.

4. Ibid., p.

The problem of logical truth and poetry has been dealt with earlier in this thesis when Shapiro's doctrine of the function of the prose meaning or root meaning of a word in its poetic context was discussed. A brief quotation from Shapiro here will suffice to renew and extend his stand on the matter.

The question remains to be asked, if the poet himself is poet only, and not also economist, moralist, and historian, what then is the poem in terms of its linguistic sense? I do not pretend to know. All I know is that if I were to be influenced by a poet who is a disciple of Swedenborg or Duns Scotus or Marx, it would be the poetry and not its belief that would affect me. For what is phenomenologically false may be just as useful to the poet as what is revealed or scientifically true, and a poem about a flat world may be just as true poetry as a poem about a round world.¹

According to Shapiro's doctrine the whole intellectual aspect of poetry is secondary in the sense that poetry appeals to the intellect only from a distance. Shapiro by no means denies the importance of the intelligibility of poetry as has been made quite obvious previously in this thesis. On the contrary, it will be recalled that he sees poetry ultimately as a matter of knowledge. But poetic knowledge gets to the intellect only through the senses. The poet or reader must work from sense to intellect and not work from an intellectual grasp and then

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January 1948, p. 204.

devote himself to an emotional and sensible appreciation. Shapiro sees the error of intellectuality as a danger in that it will lead to a scientific poetry and to an emphasis of the root meanings of the words of the text which are, as was mentioned before, secondary in the significance of the poem.¹

Previously this thesis has mentioned Shapiro's emphasis on sound and meter and prosody in general as being essential parts of the poem's meaning or the poetic knowledge. In another place he speaks specifically about the sensory quality of poetry as a primary function in the matter of poetic knowledge in the creative process.

Most poems that fail merely say; they do not do. But the good poet goes to infinite pains to re-create the scene and mood and quality of what he says. Each word is exploited for its image content, and here the poet must concern himself with the sensory possibilities of the words in terms of their truth to the situation and to himself. ... He searches for meanings in terms of the senses. The intelligence of art is sensory intelligence, the meaning of art is sensory meaning: unless the poet can argue through language colors, language shapes, language sounds, and through the natural image making genius of language, he fails as a poet.²

iv) The Ear in the Creative Process

Shapiro thinks having a good ear is the highest

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 337.

2. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; pp. 43-44.

compliment a poet can receive. It is by ear that the poet is sensitive to the significance of sound. By sound in this place Shapiro does not mean merely the musical quality of words but the musical sense of the line.¹

One paragraph from Shapiro directly quoted will show how much emphasis he places on the necessity of a good ear for producing good poetry. Incidentally this paragraph also shows Shapiro's gift of a good ear.

With ear the poet can do almost anything, yet he can never depart from the sound possibilities inherent in a word-form. If a word with a loud sound has a "soft" meaning (for instance, bough) the uses of the word in poetry will be quite restricted. The fact that there is always wind where there is a bough increases the loudness of the meaning slightly. The quality of the word is limited by this internal sensory conflict. The word bloom, because of its heavy sensuous sound, will always cast something of a shadow over the line in which it appears. If the word bloom were more important than the word flower in English, we would be a different kind of people with perhaps a more tragic, more melodramatic view of nature.²

For Shapiro the ear is an active faculty which operates well only when the poet is totally involved in what he is doing. The ear is the key to harmony and the instrument through which implicit meaning is made concretely obvious. Without a good ear the poet cannot have the pattern or ultimate reality of the poem in vision. As

1. Ibid., p. 38.

2. Ibid., p. 38.

far as the reader is concerned it is by ear that he is convinced of the validity of the poetic knowledge and of the sincerity of the poem and the poet.¹

In another place Shapiro calls the ear the instinct for poetry. He speaks of an ear for music as a parallel of instinct for poetry. This instinct for the sound of poetry plus some practice in the reading of poetry will make it possible for a reader of even minimum instinct to discern the whole or general structure of a poem although many of the detailed structures or components of the poem may be discernible only to the expert in poetry.²

v) Sincerity

The term "sincerity" has been used previously in this thesis in reference to the poet in the creative process. Although the term for Shapiro is quite uncomplicated it might be well briefly to clarify its meaning.

By sincerity Shapiro means to designate in a poet that quality which makes him faithful to his art and that quality as recognizable in his work which makes it acceptable as genuine and faithful as far as the reader is concerned. Sincerity has to do with two slightly distinguishable functions in the creative process: involvement and

1. Ibid., p. 44.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949, p. 345.

rhythm. A poet is sincere in his involvement if he accepts his milieu as it really is. He is insincere if, instead of accepting reality and becoming involved in it, he makes a myth toward which he exercises sincerity. By myth Shapiro means not what people believe or think but what they would like to think they believe. By sincerity in rhythm Shapiro means not only finding the rhythm of the language but also the personal expression of the rhythm of the language.

Poetic sincerity in the two forms mentioned above are really an expression of a deeper, more basic sincerity: sincerity to self. This is a matter of the personality of the author. He must accept himself honestly before he will be successful in accepting his milieu and finding the rhythm to express his personal involvement in this reality.¹

The insistence on involvement with reality is carried even further by Shapiro. He insists that the poet never thinks in terms of poetry but only and always in terms of the poetry of this particular thing or that particular thing in his experience. This is the genuine vision of reality. In the process of this vision the poet sees what others did not notice and peels away the veils that prevent most people from knowing the poetry of a par-

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 40 and p. 42.

ticular thing.¹

It is the necessity of the poet's being occupied with particular things that explains his affinity with nature.²

Consequent upon Shapiro's insistence on the necessity of the poet's being sincerely involved with the poetry of concrete reality is the emphasis of the poetry of the emotions over the poetry of ideas. Shapiro wonders what caused moderns to fear the emotions and consequently to fear beauty. He wonders what has caused the poetry of genuine vision to be corrupted into the poetry of sensation and finally into the poetry of ideas. He blames the symbolist movement in great part. This led us to a poetry of ideas, a poetry of scientific facts. "Rime at the ragged edge / Of civilization weeps among the facts."³

vi) Love as Personal Involvement

The emphasis described above of Shapiro on the involvement with the contemporary milieu, on sincerity, on nature and emotions leads on naturally to question the place assigned to love by Shapiro in the creative process.

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 274.

2. Ibid., p. 271.

3. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; pp. 65-67.

Shapiro indeed assigns an important role to love. Shapiro posits the observation that all creation comes about through love. Creation in the realm of art is no exception.¹

It is through love that the poet accomplishes the involvement with reality that is so essential to his poetry. Or perhaps Shapiro's thought is more accurately reflected by saying that love is the nature of this involvement.²

The poet is in a perpetual state of learning the world; and the poet's learning is by love and wonder, learning by fascination of the beautiful and the ugly, but learning, above all, by making a thing of wonder and wholeness with his own hands.³

The lack of love in the world goes hand in hand with verse of the mind. The emotions are feared. This results in an emphasis on intellectual verse.⁴

By love Shapiro includes being made one with experience. He says that the most frequent and universal experience of reality is love. Only this unity results in sincerity in poetry. Without love the relationship of the

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 66.

2. Ibid., p. 28.

3. Ibid., p. 28.

4. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 48.

poet to reality can only be forced by violence. Shapiro thinks there is much violent force in modern poetry and that it stems precisely from a kind of cold-blooded relationship with reality or in the intellectual approach.¹

One may not conclude from the observations of Shapiro thus far pointed out that a separation may be made in the poet between the objective and the subjective; that the poet is taken up with the subjective, with his emotional responses to reality with no thought of the objective or scientific. The point that Shapiro makes is that for the poet there is no distinction between objective and subjective. His inability to make this distinction is partly the reason why he is a poet. The poet is interested in being involved with reality with no thought of such a distinction.²

This thesis has previously indicated Shapiro's emphasis in the need for the personality of the poet to be united with the experience of reality. The poet expresses reality as united with himself. This is still Shapiro's point. His point is still that poetry is on the one hand not intellectual and objective and on the other

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 275.

2. James Miller, Karl Shapiro and Bernice Slote, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 260; p. 32.

hand is not imaginary in the sense exposed earlier, namely, as unrelated to objective reality.

Shapiro carries his theory on by insisting that as far as poetry is concerned the reasoning faculties are equal or inferior to the emotional and instinctual faculties as powers of perception. Rather all man's reasoning and other perceptive powers should work in unity toward a higher consciousness of reality.¹

For Shapiro the phenomenon of individuation is the starting point of or possibility of poetry. Science, for example, cannot tolerate the multiplicity of individuals. Whereas science works to discover the unity of all things, poetry delights in the diversity of things. For poetry everything is unique and not a member of a species. Poetry is equally interested in unity but a unity of the person of the poet with all the multiplicity of reality.²

Thus the intellectual power, the emotions, especially love, and the instinctual power called a good ear--all of these powers will ideally be working in unity to make the personality of the poet one with the staggering multiplicity of things and the experience of these things.

The multiplicity of reality which poetry recog-

1. Ibid., p. 331.

2. Ibid., pp. 33-34.

nizes is the basis along with the individuality of the personality of the poet for the fact that every piece of art is unique. Thus it is pointless to attempt to understand a poem scientifically, religiously or philosophically. The poem is its own unique meaning. Uniqueness is the primary characteristic of art.¹

Without this personal involvement with multiple, concrete reality there can be no spontaneity in poetry. It will on the contrary be studied and impersonal.²

vii) Genius in Poetry

All the above elements discussed as part of the creative process contribute to the genius of poetry. However, Shapiro has marvelously summarized what is the genius of poetry. Standing back as it were for a good perspective of his doctrine on the creative process he sees all the elements that go toward the making of poetic knowledge. All of these things can, as previously mentioned, be called the forms, or collectively the form, of poetry. The involvement of the poet in these elements, his grasp of their interrelationship, can be called

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 44.

2. James E. Miller, Karl Shapiro and Bernice Slote, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 260; p. 62.

intuition. ¹

viii) Craftsmanship

Only one short observation will complete an examination of Shapiro's thoughts on the creative process.

The matter of craftsmanship for Shapiro does not offer much of a problem. By craftsmanship he understands

... the work done on the verses after the poet has decided he has a start on a poem. But this may be the first as well as the last stage of composition. Yeats supposedly would begin with a sound pattern and not a subject, much less an inspiration of the emotional kind. ²

Cardinal Points

Poetic knowledge is not imaginative but uses images as a means of obtaining the truth. Poetic knowledge is image knowledge but not imaginary in the sense of not being real.

Experience is a vital quality of poetic doctrine. The involvement of the poet personally in the milieu of experience is the source of poetry. Insistence on the personal element and on concrete experience leads him to

1. Karl Shapiro, "The Meaning of the Discarded Poem" in Rudolf Arnheim et al., Poets at Work, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1948. Pp. ix, 186; p. 92.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Poets and Psychologists", Poetry, vol. 80, issue of June 1952; p. 179.

conclude that each poetic experience is unique.

Intuition is knowledge not arrived at through logical reasoning.

Meter is complementary to images in bearing the meaning of a poem.

Poetic knowledge is unordered and inconsistent.

Beauty is the means whereby poetic truth is persuasive or convincing. Beauty is that which shows the sincerity or authenticity of the work.

Poetic truth appeals to the intellect secondarily or indirectly. It is primarily a sensory truth.

The poet must have a good ear. He must, that is, be aware of the musical sense of the line. The reader is convinced of the validity of poetic knowledge through the ear.

The poetry of the emotions is emphasized over the poetry of ideas. The principal emotion involved is love. It is through love that the poet is involved with reality and the creation of beauty. Love is the means whereby the poet is "oned" with experience.

Poetic knowledge delights in the multiplicity of creation. Poetic knowledge looks for unity but only in the personal experience and knowledge of the poet. He is the focal point of unity for the staggering multiplicity of things.

CHAPTER 9

CRITICISM

After having studied Shapiro's doctrine of the nature of poetry and his opinions relative to the functions of the various component elements of poetry it seems proper now to consider his attitude toward criticism; what it is, what it should be, its functions. Not only will such a study form part of the complete poetics of Shapiro but it also will reveal more about his attitude toward poetry especially from the viewpoint of the reader. An understanding of his opinions about criticism will help show his concept of the place and function of poetry in relation to the minds of the readers, in the lives of men. Part of a doctrine of poetics would seem to be the question of the proper approach to the reading and appreciation of poetry based on an accurate understanding of the nature of poetry.

i) The Meaning and Purpose of Criticism

At the outset, before Shapiro's observations about criticism can be understood, it is necessary to be aware that he generally uses the term "criticism" in a derogatory sense. He does admit a valid type of criticism as will be shown later. The valid type of criticism is the art of judging art, in Shapiro's opinion. But the meaning of the

term as he habitually uses it is:

... the complex of mind
Which has beset the modern writer, that
Which is expressed through self-dependent pride
In thought, act and invention. Commonly
We call this Objectivity....
... Love of evidence and fact
Has narrowed vision and imagination
In poetry to the vanishing point. Our moral
Self-reliance in art disclaims the worth
And even the use of art. The frenzied poet
Exhausted in the half-lit cage of science,
Pretending faith and weak identity
With his subjective soul is not the Faust
Who stormed the door of Hell and roused the Devil.

. . . .

Satan calls us to save him from ennui
And to display our knowledge of the earth. ¹

Shapiro believes that one reason for the triumph of criticism in the derogatory sense is the fact that science has buried the spirit of man and that moral issues, the friction between good and evil are no longer notably present among moderns. In place of this friction is only the problem of true and false. ²

Shapiro believes that the very purpose of criticism has been misunderstood. Its function should not be to correct taste but to understand the nature of art. Thus from the viewpoint of its function it is really in the field of philosophy rather than literature. If, Shapiro

1. Karl Shapiro, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945. Pp. 72; p. 64.

2. Ibid., pp. 64-65.

further asserts, the artist becomes involved in the realm of philosophy his language will become abstract and he will cease to experience that unity with creation which is the mark of the poet.¹

An inevitable question arises about Shapiro's sincerity in his opinions about criticism. He is emphatic in condemning criticism and in pointing out its danger to the poet. Yet he himself seems to indulge in that which he condemns. Later in the thesis this objection will be offered by literary figures commenting on Shapiro.

Shapiro views his involvement in criticism as something that happened to him rather than something he did. Unwittingly he was involved in writing a review for Poetry and thus began an involvement and a reputation for being a critic of the Eliot school. This reputation was based principally on two essays which he now looks upon as departures from his principles. Except for these two failures Shapiro maintains that his involvement in criticism has been negative and that his critical writings have always been in condemnation of criticism.²

Although one may have no evidence for doubting the

1. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; pp. 270-271.

2. Ibid., pp. 265-269.

fact that Shapiro was unwittingly involved in criticism and that most of what he has written in criticism is in condemnation of modern criticism, yet the fact remains obvious from what has gone before in this thesis that Shapiro has written a great deal that can only be considered an investigation into the nature of poetry. This process of investigation, as noted above, he condemns for poets and assigns to the department of philosophy. But at least subjectively Shapiro does not regard himself as a philosopher or even capable of philosophical investigation into the nature of poetry. He says:

I cannot retain a philosophical concept in my head for more than five minutes and I suspect any poet who can. If poetry has an opposite it is philosophy. Poetry is the materialization of experience; philosophy the abstraction of it. ¹

Perhaps the solution to the above dilemma lies in what seems to be the fact: that Shapiro's apparently philosophical conclusions about the nature of poetry and the functions of its elements is the fruit of experience with poetry and not the result of a philosophical investigation. Nevertheless one must admit that the contradiction, at least apparent contradiction between Shapiro's condemnation of modern criticism and his own tendency to indulge in a rather intensive investigation of the nature of poetry has

1. Ibid., p. 264.

not been satisfactorily explained nor is there a satisfactory explanation in the writings of Shapiro.

Shapiro admits that there is a valid type of criticism. It is referred to by him as humanistic criticism. He understands this term to mean a criticism prompted by a love of poetry rather than by a preoccupation with any theory of poetry or a purely scientific motive. Such writers as Saint-Beuve, Saintsbury and Longinus he includes under the title of humanistic critics. He would also regard nearly all of his own critical writings under this heading. Shapiro is careful to avoid supporting extremes. He is not in favor of the critic who loves poetry with sentimentality nor is he in favor of the critic who is uncomfortable at the mention of the word "love".¹

Even with regard to the valid type of criticism Shapiro places stringent limitations. According to him only secondary data can be discovered by critical processes. By secondary data Shapiro would include the root meaning or prose meaning of the words used in the poetic context as well as any other data not directly or primarily part of the poem such as the biography of the author or the geography of the place of an event. He insists that the primary data are completely contained in the work and pro-

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January, 1948; p. 197.

ceed immediately from the object to the subject.¹

The best kind of criticism and that usually practiced by the humanistic critic is a criticism of comparison of two poems rather than the analysis of one poem. The comparison of two poems should not be based on any particular theory of poetry but simply on experience in reading poetry and the poetic instinct or ear (dealt with previously in this thesis) much as a person may listen to two musical compositions to discover which is better.²

Shapiro asks what it is that should be compared in the good type of criticism. In his opinion the factors of comparison are the reactions of the readers. It is his thesis that poetry cannot be understood but only reacted to. The reactions to a piece of poetry may be widely different among readers, even highly practiced readers. No final judgment on any poem can be said to have been arrived at until there is a basic agreement of reaction. Sometimes this may demand centuries of comparison before a final and permanent judgment is had. This comparison must be an integral one and not merely an intellectual comparison. Shapiro further cautions that the mere fact of long popularity or acceptance is not a conclusive argument for

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949; p. 336.

2. Ibid., p. 349.

a poem's being a good one. The majority of readers, he reminds us, will always be inexperienced and may frequently err in their artistic judgment. ¹

Shapiro's opinion is then that comparison and not explication is the touchstone of criticism. As a matter of fact explication can accomplish very little. ²

Shapiro's attitude toward criticism might be called the anti-intellectual attitude. He wants criticism to be a judgment resulting from a comparison of pieces of art. He does not want a piece of criticism to be an intellectual exercise but rather thinks that a piece of criticism should be a piece of art. However, he apparently does not here use the term "art" in a very strict sense. A direct quotation may in this instance better portray the tone of his opinion.

What is the role of criticism ? The answer is that a good work of criticism is a work of art about another work of art. Anything short of that is a failure. I have made no reference to scholarship. I revere scholarship, but no scholar I ever heard of has made the claim that scholarship is art. We need good literary scholarship more than ever today, scholarship based upon honest judgment and not mere intellectual exercise. We may even need good aestheticians, but this I cannot vouch for. But the critic who considers himself a man of letters should humble himself before

1. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, vol. 71, issue of January 1948; p. 213.

2. Ibid., p. 211.

literature and compose his essays in the same spirit of happy dedication as the poet or novelist. ¹

It would seem that Shapiro in this quotation does advocate the work of criticism to be scholarly but he wants this work to proceed out of a love for poetry rather than a love for scientific research. This attitude would be in accord with the rest of his doctrine of poetics. It seems uncertain whether he means here that a piece of criticism should be a work of art in the sense that it would be a result of the creative process previously explained in this thesis.

The above attitude about criticism is partly a result of Shapiro's reaction against Eliot. His desire that criticism be a work of art, (in whatever sense he uses the term) is in part a reaction against what he regards as the replacement of judgment by theory and the intellectualization of feeling. These errors lead critics into errors. Shapiro believes these errors are responsible for Eliot's approval of Kipling and his disapproval of Whitman. Shapiro does not believe such a judgment would have been possible unless it proceeded from a theory and an intellectual exercise. ²

1. Karl Shapiro, "The Critic in Spite of Himself", Texan Quarterly, vol. 2, no. 3, issue of Autumn 1959; p. 38.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960, Pp. x, 338; p. 43.

In brief Shapiro, from the above observations and from the general attitude of his writings, seems to be of the opinion that the critic should merely write his judgment based on his experience or appreciation of the works of art rather than record his scientific investigation of the work which could at best merely deal with the root meaning of the words.

The opinion of the above paragraph is strengthened by the fact that, in another place, Shapiro accuses the modern critics of being ashamed of any critic who is emotional in his reaction to poetry or allows emotion to enter into his judgment. As he says: "They approach poetry through the language of psychology, whereas the vocabulary of emotion among them is considered primitive and obscene."¹

It might be concluded from the above that Shapiro is promoting impressionistic criticism. Such a conclusion would be correct. He claims to be what is generally called an impressionistic critic.² Humanistic criticism is a criticism of comparison. The comparison deals with the artistic reactions of readers and is therefore impressionistic criticism.

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 48.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 264.

Impressionistic criticism or what is generally called impressionistic criticism is for Shapiro the only really valid literary criticism. Scientific esthetics, insofar as this study has any validity, is part of philosophy and not of literature.¹ The place for criticism, in his opinion, as it is ordinarily understood today, is in the philosophy department. It has nothing to do with literature.²

ii) Taste and Judgment

An impressionistic critic perhaps depends even more than other types of critics on taste.

Shapiro recognizes only two requisites for anyone to pass judgment on poetry: poetic instinct and practice or experience.³ These two requisites form the only criterion whereby a good poem can be known from a bad one. It will be recalled that previously in this thesis Shapiro's concept of poetic instinct was shown to be synonymous with a good ear. Practice develops this ear to the point of

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 11.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 42.

3. Karl Shapiro, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, issue of January 1948; p. 211.

facilitating judgment.¹

Literary taste is the property of the audience or the common man. It is a mistake to think that the taste of an audience is low. There is no means of determining the taste of an audience except by their on the spot judgment.²

The opinion that criticism, judgment of art, is the function of the common man is a theory dear to the heart of Shapiro. This fact was touched on previously in this thesis when immediacy of apprehension was treated. Shapiro's insistence on immediacy of apprehension necessitates to some extent the opinion that every man can judge art. Not only can every man make such judgments but every man should. After destroying the fetish of specialization every person should pass judgment; at least everyone serious about the use of words should do so. Shapiro describes the exercise of taste on the part of every man thus:

This reading of new works should be done with good subjective gusto, not with a manual of criticism in hand. It should be done in the first flush of feeling, when the mind is still warm with the pleasure or displeasure of the work. The mortuary gloom which fills most poetry lecture halls resembles

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949; p. 349.

2. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 281.

nothing so much as a students' operating theatre: the clinical, almost morbid curiosity of the listeners, the attitude of strain, even the applause for the cautery of the bleeding poem, all emphasize the life-and-death grimness of the affair. This is the opposite of a joyous occasion. ¹

Shapiro does not apologize for his insistence on the validity of the spontaneous judgment of the common man. As a matter of fact he recognizes as the criterion of art, whether it is liked or disliked. He says:

For there is one criterion of criticism that defies inclusion in the total knowledge of form, and that is the criterion of like and dislike. As long as it is possible to know all that can be known about a poem and yet dislike that poem, or to know nothing but one's experience of it and yet like it for that experience, criticism, and the formal part of criticism I call prosody, must remain tentative. Criticism, however richly it may inform the judgment, must always defer to a more instinctive source in the mind; and the fact of liking must remain the supreme touchstone of the work of art. ²

So much praise does Shapiro heap on the judgment of the audience of common men that he states there has never been a healthy literature that has not grown out of "naive, folk, and 'primitive' art." ³ For contemporary substantiation he offers in the same place as examples:

1. Karl Shapiro, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1953. Pp. 73; p. 72.

2. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949; pp. 350-351.

3. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; pp. 281-282.

jazz, movies, advertising, the comic strip and commercial design.

Not only is the approach of spontaneous judgment adequate in Shapiro's opinion but poetry is puzzling to many precisely because it is not approached with spontaneous judgment but rather with scientific study.¹

Cardinal Points

The function of criticism should be to understand the nature of art. This operation pertains to philosophy rather than literature. When a poet becomes involved in philosophy his language will become abstract.

Shapiro admits a valid type of criticism which he calls humanistic criticism. By this term he understands criticism based on a comparison of works rather than the analysis of a poem. Even this type of criticism is quite limited in what it can accomplish. This comparison deals with the artistic reactions of readers and is therefore impressionistic criticism. The validity of spontaneous judgment is ultimately based on whether a man likes or dislikes a piece of work.

This theory of criticism makes taste a very impor-

1. Karl Shapiro, "Poets and Psychologists", Poetry, vol. 80, issue of June 1952, p. 180.

tant necessity. The only two requisites for any man to judge art are: the poetic instinct and practice or the experience of art.

The reason that poetry is puzzling to so many persons is accounted for by the fact that they approach it scientifically rather than with feeling and spontaneous judgment.

CHAPTER 10

THE OPINIONS OF SHAPIRO'S CRITICS

The introduction to this thesis has emphasized the importance of a study of Shapiro's poetics. If anyone should doubt the need for a study of his poetics his doubt could be quickly solved by reading a few of Shapiro's critics who obviously are not in general favorably impressed with his works. The more one reads these critics the more one is convinced that although they have indeed pointed out a number of Shapiro's weaknesses, they have not taken the pains to make a critical study of his works with a sufficient degree of interest or sympathy to determine what his tenets really are.

Shapiro's critics generally content themselves with taking him to task in the following areas:

1. Influence on Shapiro.
2. Shapiro's anti-intellectualism.
3. Shapiro's confusion.
4. Shapiro's dogmatism.

A consideration of some of the more characteristic remarks of some of Shapiro's critics will help clarify considerably Shapiro's attitudes. A comparison of what has been shown as Shapiro's attitudes and tenets with the opinions of critics relative to what they consider his

attitudes and tenets to be, will help clarify his doctrine, will reveal any degree of misunderstanding that may exist between him and his readers.

It would also seem that for a thorough study of an author's poetics the opinions of his critics is essential to present accurately his status as well as his weaknesses.

It should be noted that only a few representative critics with rather clear-cut opposition to Shapiro have been selected. Even most of these critics have as many favorable as unfavorable remarks.

It is important to note that nearly all opposition to Shapiro on the part of his critics is limited to particular attitudes and not to his general doctrine of which the critics seem either to be unaware or are not concerned with it in view of the fact that they are nearly always dealing with a particular work of Shapiro. His critics will assail his remarks about particular authors, his bias about Pound, his habit of exaggeration, flat assertion or the statement of a half-truth without sufficiently qualifying the statement. This author was not able to find a responsible critic who rejected Shapiro's doctrine as such.

i) Influence on Shapiro

In an earlier chapter Shapiro's opposition to the cult of Eliot was discussed. His opposition to any kind of pressure or oppression from any source on the poet is

one of Shapiro's attractive features. By no means do all critics agree with his mode of procedure in opposing Eliot but his determination that the artist be free from the pressures of influence runs deep in Shapiro as has been evidenced throughout the previous pages of this thesis.

For example, during the Second World War, in which Shapiro did military service, he was determined not to be influenced by his status to the extent that he would become a war-poet. He further was determined not to be influenced by those recognized as contemporary masters in poetry to the extent that he would be enslaved to their dicta. Probably the most difficult resistance he exerted was toward Auden whose magnetism for Shapiro was strong. The new criticism did influence him too much for a while until he rebelled against even this influence.¹

Two forces, however, seem to have eluded Shapiro's careful guard against influences that might be a refractory force on his poetry: Catholicism and Judaism.

The struggle, that is obvious in his poetry, in the Catholic and Jewish traditions has inevitably influenced his criticism relative to the place of faith, belief,

1. Willard Thorp, American Issues: The Literary Record, vol. 2, Chicago, J.N. Lippincott Co., 1954. Pp. xiv, 997; p. 883.

religion and mysticism.¹

One may also recall, from the chapter dealing with his opposition to Eliot and Pound, how much of that opposition was based on their alleged anti-semitism. The influence on Shapiro of his Judaic background was responsible in great part for his refusing to vote² Pound's Pisan Cantos the Bolligen Prize in 1948 which Pound did receive in spite of Shapiro's refusal to vote for him.³

The author of this thesis questioned Mr. Shapiro on his attitude toward Pound's poetry. He was asked if he thought Pound's moral philosophy vitiated his poetry. Mr. Shapiro answered: "He's awfully good poetry. Moral philosophy stood in his way."⁴

One other influence seems to have escaped in part Shapiro's determination not to be unduly influenced. This influence was Whitman. Shapiro is so devoted to the defense of Whitman that he seems in his writings blind to the fact

1. Morton Seif, "Poet's Journey; the Struggle in the Soul of Karl Shapiro", Menorah Journal, Winter issue, vol. 37, no. 1, p. 51.

2. Shapiro was a consultant in poetry to the Library of Congress 1946-47. Cf. William White, Karl Shapiro; a Bibliography, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1960. Pp. 113; p. 13.

3. Karl Shapiro, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960. Pp. x, 338; p. 82.

4. Karl Shapiro, A Personal Interview with the Author, Oct. 24, 1962. Card no. 6.

that his hero was often guilty of what Shapiro so roundly condemns: using his poetry for the espousal of a cause.¹

ii) Shapiro's Anti-intellectualism

Shapiro is criticized most vehemently for his anti-intellectualism. In preceding pages of this thesis it was indicated that Shapiro is not wholly opposed to the intellect's place in art although he does make its place less predominant than is commonly done by most critics of this age.

Shapiro is probably responsible for much of this criticism leveled at him because he speaks without sufficient care for accuracy. He is accused of inaccurate chronology. One critic notes that the responsibility for the intellectual conspiracy is variously placed by Shapiro on Mallarme, Baudelaire, Eliot and even John Donne. He seems to fail even in the asserting that the emphasis on the intellect in poetry today is the work of a few authors.²

Alfred Kazin points out much the same weakness when he notes the incongruity of Shapiro's opposition to Eliot and the fact that he not only attacks Eliot with

1. Karl Shapiro, "Whitman Today", Walt Whitman Review, vol. 6, issue of June 1960, pp. 31-32.

2. Richard Ellmann, "A Poet Turns Critic", New York Times Book Review, May. 8, 1960, p. 10.

intellectual weapons but also gives analyses of Eliot's poetry in fine neo-critical style. In other words, it seems that Shapiro often practices that which he condemns.¹

The same dilemma in Shapiro is noted by another critic:

Criticism may not be Mr. Shapiro's metier; he proclaims as much. Genuine critics will not therefore stop dead in their tracks and refuse to think henceforth about what literature means, aesthetically or culturally or analytically or in whatever other way their insight leads them. In fact, Mr. Shapiro himself, when he is carried away by his subjects, thinks in this way rather strikingly -- and his more stimulating observations are of the "cultural" order he attacks most violently.²

Another opinion asserts that Shapiro's book, In Defense of Ignorance is both necessary and dangerous.

I have said that Shapiro's book, In Defense of Ignorance is both necessary and dangerous. It is necessary because somebody had to say that the school of Eliot has, roughly speaking, become our Orthodoxy, an informal academy entrenched in our teaching and publishing apparatus. Much recent verse is dry, God knows, and anyone who has circulated among our academic scenes knows that many of the people who produce it are dry people.... But his book is dangerous because on the basis of this truth it appeals to the ignorant in behalf of a destructive and narrow program. By the ignorant I don't mean those who have done poorly in school, for many fine poets, including some of those attacked by Shapiro, have been bad scholars. I mean instead

1. Alfred Kazin, "The Poet Against the English Department", The Reporter, vol. 22, no. 12, issue of June 9, 1960, pp. 44-45.

2. M.L. Rosenthal, "The Revolution Cometh", The Nation, vol. 191, no. 9, issue of September 4, 1960, pp. 184-186.

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those who through laziness or impatience have not examined the workings of human consciousness. ¹

One critic questions Shapiro's maturity because he launches out rather violently against idea-poetry. This critic points out that a poet may no more hate the abstract than he may hate the concrete. He needs both. Also Shapiro is noted as being in the practice of poetry superior to his own theories. ²

iii) Confusion in Shapiro

With enthusiasm a good number of critics assail Shapiro's confusion in many areas. As was pointed out previously, these accusations of confusion were incentives for the author of this thesis to attempt to present an ordered body of Shapiro's tenets.

Even in a field where he feels competent, prosody, Shapiro comes in for accusations of confusion. ³

In the area of prosody he is further accused of narrowness in rejecting or criticizing so much of the practice springing from contemporary attitudes toward prosody.

1. Hayden Carruth, "In Defense of Karl Shapiro", The New Republic, vol. 142, no. 25, issue of June 20, 1960, pp. 19-20.

2. Delmore Schwartz, "The Poet's Progress", The Nation, vol. 156, no. 2, issue of January 9, 1943, p. 64.

3. Anonymous, "The Book Window", The Christian Science Monitor (Magazine Section), January 12, 1946, p. 17.

He is accused of bias and irresponsibility in his attitude toward the prosody of Ezra Pound, especially as regards the Cantos.¹

Arthur Mizener accuses Shapiro of not being very much at home in abstract thought and therefore confusing at times. Nevertheless Mr. Mizener finds most of Shapiro's arguments quite acceptable although he does believe Shapiro overemphasizes the evils of "heretical theories about poetry's uses."²

Although many of his observations are found to be admirable Shapiro is judged guilty of presenting at time half-truths rather brashly and of speaking in a confused fashion.³

At least in part this confused presentation that critics frequently find in Shapiro could possibly be assigned to some neglect or inability to present his ideas in an organized way. Thus the theories themselves often

1. Brewster Ghiselin, "These Latter-Day Prosodists", Poetry, vol. 72, no. 6, issue of September 1948, pp. 332-335.

2. Arthur Mizener, "Poets as Critics", Sewanee Review, vol. 62, no. 3, issue of July 1954, p. 507.

3. Babette Deutsch, "Poet of Familiar Things", New York Herald Tribune, Book Reviews, vol. 30, no. 22, issue of January 10, 1954, p. 12.

are acclaimed but confusion noted.¹

iv) Dogmatism

The last major area of "guilt" can be categorized under the term "dogmatism".

This habit of flat assertion frequently slides over into a kind of hortatory style which gives the lectures the prophetic tone of a man making imperatives out of his personal preferences....²

The same critic indicates, as was noted above in the section on confusion, that it is Shapiro's occasional awkwardness in expressing himself that sometimes gives an unfortunate impression.³

In his enthusiasm to defend personal poetry of a simple and unpretentious vein, Shapiro is accused of dogmatically excluding that which does not substantiate his position.⁴

Cardinal Points

Shapiro is criticized for allowing himself to be

1. Richard Ellmann, "A Poet Turns Critic", New York Times Book Review, May 8, 1960, p. 10.

2. Arthur Mizener, "Poets as Critics", Sewanee Review, vol. 62, no. 3, issue of July 1954, p. 508.

3. Ibid., p. 509.

4. Don Geiger, a review of Beyond Criticism, Quarterly Journal of Speech, vol. 40, no. 2, issue of April 1954, p. 211.

unduly influenced by some forces in spite of his intense effort to avoid being so influenced.

He is criticized for his anti-intellectual attitude and for his opposition to idea-poetry as if ideas had nothing to do with art.

He is accused of a confusion in his theories which quite possibly might result of a failure or inability to present his thoughts in an organized, logical method.

He is taken to task for being dogmatic in making flat assertions and in sometimes giving the impression that he is an inspired prophet who need not be concerned with the burden of proof.

PART III
EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this third part of this thesis is to evaluate Shapiro's principal tenets or doctrine of poetry as expressed in the Cardinal Points at the ends of chapters in Part II of this thesis.

The criterion of evaluation will be the writings of Jacques Maritain. No attempt will be made in this thesis to validate the criterion. Rather these theories of Maritain will serve as an assumed basis of evaluation.

Maritain's work was selected as a criterion, first of all, because of his stature in the field of criticism. He has published widely and successfully in this area and has won recognition in the field by his lectures. Maritain was chosen also because he treats certain areas of criticism more completely than any other single author and it was thought advisable for the sake of order and brevity to use only one author as a criterion of evaluation. Thirdly, Maritain was chosen because his philosophy of poetry is based on and is an extension of the philosophy of St. Thomas and would seem, therefore, to be more readily and easily profitable to students of literature in a Catholic university.

Four prominent books by Maritain are amply adequate to serve as the criterion of evaluation. These four books

are:

First, Art and Scholasticism; second, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry; third, The Responsibility of the Artist; and fourth, The Situation of Poetry.

According to Mr. Shapiro's personal testimony, he has never studied Maritain. He remembers having read something by Maritain many years ago but asserts that Maritain was never an influence in his own development of theory.¹

Every chapter in the third part evaluates the chapter of the same number in the second part. For purposes of clarity and convenience each cardinal point will be restated and each cardinal point will be separately evaluated. It was thought that clarity and convenience in this case should have precedence over the undesirableness of repetition.

It should also be noted that Chapter Ten of Part Two is not evaluated in Part Three. Chapter Ten of Part Two gives opinions of critics about Shapiro as a conclusion to a presentation of Shapiro's tenets. It does not present Shapiro's attitudes and is, therefore, not evaluated on the basis of Maritain.

1. Karl Shapiro, Personal Interview with the Author, Oct. 24, 1962, Card No. 7.

CHAPTER I

EVALUATION OF "A DEFINITION OF POETRY"

Cardinal Point 1: Shapiro's definition of poetry can be stated thus: A poem is a literary construct composed of not-words which in their flight from meaning arrive at a prosodic sense-beyond-sense.

By "literary construct" is meant a poem intentionally produced. By "not-words" Shapiro indicates that words used in poetry have a significance by virtue of their prosodic context so that they no longer are merely what they were in prose.

Evaluation: Maritain distinguishes between art and poetry. Art is the "creative or producing, work-making activity of the human mind," whereas poetry is "that inter-communication between the inner being of things and the inner being of the human Self...".¹

Maritain further qualifies his concept of the meaning of poetry by saying that it is an "engine to make us pass through and beyond things".²

Shapiro does not distinguish between poetry and

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 318.

art as does Maritain.¹ Shapiro does sense that there is an element of mystery about the poetic process and that something goes on in the poet which is not quite understandable. This is evident when he speaks rather enigmatically about the demonic, metaphysical and mystical principles of the poetic psyche. This will be considered in the evaluation of Cardinal Point Five of Chapter Five of this part of the thesis. Shapiro does not proceed beyond this enigmatic doctrine.

Shapiro recognizes that words have a special depth of meaning in a poetic context beyond that which they have in prose. Maritain also recognizes this phenomenon when he speaks of poetry as "an engine to make us pass through and beyond things"² and when he acknowledges that in poetry, although the logical sense of words has not disappeared, it has "been digested... by the poetic sense...".³

An agreement is therefore obvious between Maritain and Shapiro in that they both recognize that an internal principle is involved in producing art and that poetry achieves some kind of knowledge or sense beyond the prosaic knowledge of things by means of a functioning of

1. Ibid., p. 394.

2. Ibid., p. 318.

3. Ibid., p. 75.

words whereby these words take on a new and more profound significance than their literal meanings.

Here, however, the agreement ends. Unlike Maritain, Shapiro has no clear idea of what the internal principle is or how it functions, nor does he have any explanation for the fact that words have a new and more profound meaning in poetry than in prose. Shapiro has merely observed a poetic phenomenon without having apparently succeeded in understanding its nature or operation.

CHAPTER 2

EVALUATION OF "THE USES OF POETRY"

Cardinal Point 1: Poetry is useless except that it ennobles the man who writes it by developing in him an almost habitual love of beauty.

Evaluation: Maritain supports Shapiro's observation that poetry is useless by noting that art is not concerned with the good of man but rather with the good of the work.¹ Admittedly the word "poetry" in Cardinal Point One refers to the product of art and the word "art" in Maritain above refers to the virtue. Nevertheless, Shapiro is referring in this context to the writing as the ennobling source rather than to the product as the ennobling source. Maritain does acknowledge that desires and ends of human life do play a part in causing poetry and thus are sources for nourishing art.² Maritain does insist, however, that the work itself must follow the intuition.³ Maritain does not speak explicitly about the development of an habitual love

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 50.

2. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. Pp. 120; p. 55.

3. Ibid., p. 56.

of beauty. In short, Maritain makes a distinction between the man and the artist. Shapiro does not.

Cardinal Point 2: The poet is in search of truth but not useful truth, that is, truth to be used for the acquisition of something else.

There are two points here and Maritain agrees with both. The poet is in search of truth but the truth he reaches is knowledge of the poetic intuition. Such knowledge is not useful in any ordinary sense.¹

No intention is implied of indicating here that Maritain agrees with Shapiro on what poetic knowledge is. This matter will be treated in its proper place, Chapter Eight of Part Three, where it will be shown that Shapiro gives no evidence anywhere of a theory of poetic knowledge comparable to Maritain's. When Shapiro speaks of the poet being in search of knowledge through poetry he certainly means only that through writing a poem the poet verbalizes in significant rhythm the personal impact upon himself of certain phenomena of his experience. When Maritain speaks of poetry as knowledge he refers to his doctrine of poetic intuition wherein the poet knows reality inseparable from

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 187.

his Self. 1

Cardinal Point 3: Poetry is natural and not for saving anything although it does show us many things we would like to save. Poetry is not didactic.

Evaluation: In statement of a broader principle Maritain supports Shapiro's observation. Maritain says that poetry brings a vision of reality beyond reality precisely to the extent to which poetry is useless. 2 He further notes that art does not demand the satisfaction of any particular need. 3

Maritain would qualify Shapiro's attitude in that he would insist that morality must be considered with the beauty of a poem because if morality or truth are contradicted by the poem the beauty of the poem is to that extent reduced. 4 This observation by Maritain does not contradict Shapiro but does add a qualification which Shapiro does not mention.

1. Ibid., p. 187.

2. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. Pp. 120; p. 85.

3. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 55.

4. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. Pp. 120; p. 60.

CHAPTER 3

EVALUATION OF "IMMEDIACY OF APPREHENSION"

Cardinal Point 1: Immediacy of apprehension is a necessary quality for good poetry.

Evaluation: This tenet of Shapiro is one he holds very intensely probably because of his dislike of obscure poetry generally. It seems by Maritain's standards he is somewhat incomplete in his consideration of immediate apprehension.

Although Maritain does insist that creative intuition is cognitive as well as creative ¹ and therefore that poetry must be intelligible, he does make some qualifications that Shapiro neglects.

Maritain says that what matters is the poetic sense whether the poem be obscure or clear, but that no poem can be completely obscure. A poem, it is true, must merely be, but it cannot be except by the poetic sense. ² Maritain further points out the inevitable limitation of immediacy of apprehension because "no poem can be absolutely clear since no poem can receive its being from the

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. XXXII, 423; p. 125.

2. Ibid., pp. 59-60.

intelligible or logical sense uniquely." ¹ Shapiro certainly vigorously holds that poetry is not made up of the logical as was noted in Chapter One of this part of the thesis but what Shapiro did not understand was that to insist as he does on immediacy of apprehension contradicts the inevitable lack of logical clarity which is necessary by the very nature of the poetic sense.

Shapiro would have done well to distinguish between the direct perception of the poem which is immediate and the understanding of the poem in its parts which may require much thought subsequent to the first reading. Or as Maritain says:

Our intelligence is aware of the existence of a signification, but the signified remains unknown. And it is enough for the poem to have a radiance, as a black diamond has, and for the intellect to receive a delight, still more insidious perhaps as the signified is unknown: since the fact that what is signified by a sign is unknown is almost the fact that the sign signifies the unknown. ²

Cardinal Point 2: At least an unspecialized audience should be able to appreciate poetry to some degree.

Evaluation: Maritain supports this contention of Shapiro again as regards the direct perception of the poem. Afterthought, according to Maritain, has nothing to do

1. Ibid., p. 61.

2. Ibid., p. 266.

with the direct perception of the poem. He says:

There is an intelligible meaning, but we don't know what this meaning is; only through reflective afterthought shall we be able to surmise something about it. But reflective afterthought has nothing to do with the direct perception of the poem. ¹

Thus Maritain would agree that an unspecialized audience should be able to appreciate poetry to some degree provided, of course, that they have some ability in the perception of the poem, that is, in the perception of the radiance or beauty of the poem. The audience need not be highly specialized in reflection or especially educated. An uneducated or unspecialized audience may never be able to come to a very satisfactory understanding of the intelligible meaning of the poem but this does not prevent the audience from appreciating the poem to some degree.

Cardinal Point 3: Keeping an audience in mind keeps the poet from going astray with pseudo-inspiration. Shapiro does not mean to obligate the artist to publication. Poetry not intended for publication is not necessarily inferior poetry.

Evaluation: Shapiro in Cardinal Point Three as well as in all of his observations about the audience, exaggerates its importance by failing to make a simple distinction.

He does not distinguish between the poet's psycho-

1. Ibid., p. 266.

logical needs and all his needs and what is essentially required for poetry. Shapiro is fifty-percent correct in his observation about the audience. He is willing to concede that publication is not a requisite for good poetry but is not willing to concede that even an audience is not a requisite for good poetry.

Maritain points out that the activity of art is not related in itself to the necessity of communicating to others although he admits this need enters in but not essentially. Maritain can even assert that sometimes poets actually suffer from being understood very well. Being understood very well sometimes makes the poet doubt his success in communicating something profound and cuts short his desire to appeal to the investigation and study of future generations.¹

Cardinal Point 4: The audience is usually a better critic and generally more accurate in its judgments than professional critics.

Evaluation: Maritain approaches this matter from a rather unempirical method whereas Shapiro's method is empirical. Shapiro thinks that we know historically and experientially that the judgment of the masses has proved

1. Jacques and Raissa Maritain, The Situation of Poetry, New York, Philosophical Library, 1955. Pp. ix, 85; p. 49.

to be more accurate than judgments of professional critics. Maritain, on the other hand, begins with the assumption that a professional critic is a critic precisely because he can perceive all that which makes contact with the poetic intuition.¹

For now it must simply be noted that Maritain's observation really cannot serve as an evaluation since the term "critic" is for him by definition one who can judge better than the average reader and for Shapiro the term "critic" means one who has so styled himself.

These different approaches will be somewhat more closely related and more agreement noted in Chapter 9 which will deal with the function of criticism.

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. XXXII, 423; p. 324.

CHAPTER 4

EVALUATION OF "THE EVOLUTION AND HISTORICITY OF POETRY"

Cardinal Point 1: Poetry does not progress. Therefore poetry is not historical. It makes no distinction among past, present and future. This is not to say poetry is not involved with history and other sciences and arts but this is accidental just as is the memorializing effect of poetry.

Evaluation: Here again Shapiro senses a truth which he is unable to present accurately or scientifically. He senses that poetry is not subject to the limitation of history, to its categories even though it is involved with it. Shapiro's difficulty is in explaining what he senses to be true. Once again Shapiro fails to make a simple distinction, a distinction which Maritain makes.¹ Maritain points out that poetry is like and unlike history. It is like history in that its mode of knowing is entirely existential: the thing grasped is grasped as non-conceptualized. In studying history one studies the actions of man as these actions existed or one approaches human actions existen-

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. XXXII, 423; pp. 126-127.

tially. Even ideas met in history are met existentially or as they were embodied in the actions of men. In poetry, too, one meets the thought, emotions and actions of men not abstractly but concretely in images.

But poetry is unlike history and more like philosophy because the signification of things is more proximate and less entangled in circumstances. "For poetic intuition makes things which it grasps diaphanous and alive, and populated with infinite horizons. As grasped by poetic knowledge, things abound in significance, and swarm with meanings".¹

Although Maritain does not deal with all the details involved in Point One above, he does give the reason for poetry's not being historical, whereas Shapiro had a number of detailed impressions of the fact that poetry was not historical but seems at a loss to explain it. Neither did he see the similarity between poetry and history by virtue of their existentialistic natures which they have in common.

1. Ibid., pp. 126-127.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF "POETRY, BELIEF AND MYSTICISM"

Cardinal Point 1: There is a need for faith for good poetry. All good poetry has been historically based on faith.

Evaluation: Shapiro senses the need for faith in good poetry and is aware of its presence in good poetry as a matter of historical fact. However, he is deficient as a critic in not being able to assign reasons for this observable phenomenon.

Maritain also approaches this problem of the relationship between religion and art in a rather historical way. He notes that it is religion which has raised art to its high level, to its very life, namely, to the level of symbols. Maritain means that historically the realization by the religious-minded that there is an invisible world is responsible for seeing the things of the visible world as symbols of realities of the invisible world. Maritain sees this emphasis on the life of symbolism in art as one of the contributions of ancient oriental art which was produced by religious-minded peoples. Thus it was religion which was basically the occasion of symbolism.¹

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. XXXII, 423; p. 11.

Shapiro failed to see this historical fact as a key to the explanation of why faith is necessary for good art. He noted that good art has been influenced by faith but a satisfactory explanation he could not find.

Maritain also sees as one of the Greek contributions to the development of art the pursuit of beauty, the liberation of transcendental beauty and the idea of beauty as a participation in divine attributes.¹

Shapiro also fails to note this historical development of the relationship between beauty and divinity.

Had Shapiro realized even one of the two historical contributions to art mentioned above he would have had an explanation for the phenomenon of a relationship between faith and poetry which he correctly noted as evident in good poetry.

Cardinal Point 2: This faith need not be objectively correct.

Evaluation: Maritain supports Shapiro's observation when he says:

I do not believe that the greater or less perfection in intrinsic truth of the universe of thought of a poet matters to his poetry save in quite a remote manner.²

1. Ibid., pp. 162-163.

2. Ibid., p. 382.

Maritain does admit in the same place that a lack of perfection in such intrinsic truth would be a limitation on the greatness or stature of poetry.

In the quotation above, Maritain means that good art can proceed from men of quite different cultural heritages and ideologies. The ideas, opinions and beliefs of Dante were, for example, quite different from the ideas, opinions and beliefs of Goethe or Baudelaire. But Maritain notes that some basic truths in the thought of a poet are necessary for good art. He says:

What matters to poetry in a close and direct manner are, I think, certain extremely simple but basic presences or existential certainties ...: for instance a certitude both of the mysterious irrefragable existence and the exigency of intelligibility involved in things; a certitude of the interiority of the human being, and of its importance; a certitude that between man and the world there is an invisible relationship deeper than any material interconnection.... 1

Maritain also supports Shapiro's observation in his opinions mentioned in the evaluation of the immediately preceding Cardinal Point. He could hardly speak of ancient oriental art and Greek art in such appreciative terms if an objectively true faith were a requisite for good art.

Shapiro does not proceed beyond the merely empirical observation that the faith necessary for good art need not

1. Ibid., p. 382.

be an objectively true faith. He does in no way indicate a grasp of any explanation of the fact.

Cardinal Point 3: There seems to be an aversion in poetry for religion. But poetry is not opposed to intimate union with God. However, absorption in artistic creativity can deflect the poet from spiritual union with God.

Evaluation: Maritain supports Shapiro's observation. Maritain sees poetry or the vocation of the artist as one with special dangers for the perfection of human life as well as special opportunities. In speaking of the dangers Maritain brings out how poetry or art may be considered as having an aversion for religion. He says:

A monk has given up everything to enter a state of life dedicated in itself to the pursuit of perfection. I would say that whatever his personal behavior may be, the occupational stream in which he is engaged runs in the direction of the perfection of human life.

And I would say that in the scale of the states of life which have to do with the spirit, the occupational stream of the artist is at the opposite extreme of that of the monk. The state of life of the artist is in itself dedicated to the world and the beauty and mystery and glory of the world. For the reason I have outlined, and doubtless many others, his occupational stream runs, I think we must admit, in a direction contrary to or estranged from the perfection of human life. ¹

Then Maritain, after considering how there is a

1. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. Pp. 120; pp. 109-110, 114.

certain opposition between poetry and religion, states the case for poetry as an aid to religion:

But this means in no way that the artist is necessarily carried along in the same direction....

If the artist has to struggle against a particularly strong occupational stream, he also has particularly strong assistance: I mean to say those aesthetic virtues ..., and that poetic experience, which of themselves, despite the difference in nature, are congenial with the virtues and experience of the saints, and tend to prepare the artist, if he wants, for the superior achievements of moral and spiritual life. 1

Again Maritain says:

But different as they may be, poetic experience and mystical experience are born near one another It is not surprising ... that poetic experience naturally predisposes the poet ... to contemplation ... and that mystical experience naturally prepares the contemplative to make the silence of love sometimes superabound in poetic utterance.... 2

Cardinal Point 4: The poetic psyche is made up of the demonic principle, the metaphysical and the mystical.

Evaluation: Shapiro becomes involved in a kind of oriental mysticism in describing these three components of the poetic psyche. For this reason comparison with Maritain is difficult.

For Shapiro the demonic principle stands for the

1. Ibid., pp. 109-110.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 235.

invisible basic workings in the soul, the unconscious or subconscious searching. The metaphysical principle is in general that part of the soul interested in being and in knowing. It is principally conscious in its activity. The literary principle is the senses, the completely conscious multiplicity of contacts with reality. All of these work together for the poetic process. The mystical principle is the fruit, flower, seed. The mystical principle is not higher than the demonic. The level of inspiration of a poem will depend on which principle is dominant.

Shapiro does not explain this complex and vague attempt he has made to explain the poetic psyche. The most that can be safely concluded from his words is that he thinks there is an unconscious element, a conscious intellectual element and a sensible element involved in the poetic process.

Maritain sees the poet as involved with this world as the mystic is involved with the spiritual. ¹

Maritain further points out that part of the pre-occupation with the relationship between poetry and mysticism is a result of certain French authors before the second World War, notably Bremond and Claudel. ²

1. Ibid., p. 140.

2. Ibid., p. 234.

He shows that poetry and mysticism are distinct in nature. He says:

Poetic experience and mystical experience are distinct in nature: poetic experience is concerned with the created world and the enigmatic and innumerable relations of beings with each other; mystical experience with the principle of things in its own incomprehensible and supramundane unity. ¹

Not only are the two types of knowledge different by virtue of their objects but also in their modes. Whereas the poetic experience comes about by means of "emotion stirring the human recesses of the subjectivity",² mystical experience comes about by intellectual concentration that produces a void where the Self is ineffably contacted or in the case of supernatural mystical experience by charity. ³

However, Maritain remarks the similarity of poetic and mystical experience in that they both produce a knowledge of connaturality. ⁴

Perhaps the most important difference differentiating poetic knowledge and mystical knowledge is that poetic knowledge tends to expression whereas mystical tends to silence. ⁵

1. Ibid., p. 234.

2. Ibid., p. 234.

3. Ibid., p. 234.

4. Ibid., p. 234.

5. Ibid., p. 235.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION OF "LANGUAGE AND POETRY"

Cardinal Point 1: Poetry is not language but language is the raw material of poetry. A word loses much of its prose meaning when it takes its place in its poetic context and achieves new meaning. Its prose meaning is quite secondary in poetry.

Evaluation: Maritain supports the above. The two authors agree on the above more completely than on any other point perhaps. Maritain agrees that the poetic sense is the intelligible and imaginal meanings of the words and the meanings of the musical relations between the words. Thus he observes the intelligible sense is subordinate to the poetic sense.¹

In addition to Shapiro's observations Maritain notes that poetic sense is also prior to action or theme.²

Shapiro is somewhat inaccurate when he speaks of a word losing much of its prose meaning when it takes its place in the context of poetry. Maritain corrects this inaccuracy by observing that logical sense does not disap-

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. XXXII, 423; p. 259.

2. Ibid., p. 259.

pear but is rather digested by the poetic sense.¹

Cardinal Point 2: Translation of poetry must be a translation of it as poetry. This amounts to a new creation. Paraphrase can only render the prosaic meanings of words and not the sound or rhythm and therefore cannot render the poetic meaning.

Evaluation: This point of Shapiro's is implicitly supported by Maritain's general doctrine on the nature of poetry. However, Maritain does not explicitly deal with the matter of translation.

In the book The Situation of Poetry which is composed of essays by Jacques Maritain and his wife Raissa, an essay by Raissa Maritain "Sense and Non-Sense in Poetry" deals with the above Cardinal Point quite explicitly and deftly. She supports Shapiro's observation completely.²

Obviously opinions of Raissa Maritain cannot be passed off as opinions of Jacques Maritain. However, to assume that co-authors of a book are in general agreement on the tenets of the book does not seem unreasonable. The above observation is, however, offered only as an assumption.

1. Ibid., p. 75.

2. Jacques and Raissa Maritain, The Situation of Poetry, New York, Philosophical Library, 1955. Pp. ix, 85; pp. 2ff.

CHAPTER 7

EVALUATION OF "PROSODY"

It may be well to note before beginning the evaluation of Shapiro's Cardinal Points in Prosody, that Maritain in this area is not a very satisfactory criterion in that he speaks of prosodic elements principally as they figure in his doctrine of poetic intuition and does not enter in any detail into the questions of the kind of prosody, the number of elements of prosody or into questions of distinctions between stress and temporal accents.

Cardinal Point 1: Shapiro distinguishes two basic kinds of prosody: that of the ear and that of the eye. Prosody is the objective elements of a poem. They are at least four: speech meaning, meter, sound and images. Prosody is either the stress type or temporal type.

Evaluation: Shapiro does not state clearly his distinction between prosody of ear and prosody of eye. It does seem from the context of his statements on prosody and from his rather wide meaning of the term that "ear" designates the sounds and rhythms of poetry and that "eye" designates primarily images and secondarily the appearance of the poem on paper.

At least Shapiro in another place does use "ear" to mean an ability to be aware of the musical sense of the

line.¹ This very point will be considered in the following chapter concerned with poetic knowledge.

Maritain certainly supports Shapiro's observations on the importance of music and sound in poetry as noted above and in Chapter Seven of Part Two on Prosody.

And the words ... are not only signs of concepts or ideas, but objects also, objects which are endowed with their proper sonorous quality....²

As will also be noted in the next chapter, Maritain notes the special need of a good ear for appreciating modern poetry.³

If Shapiro does mean by prosody of the eye to indicate the place of images then Maritain supports the importance of images as shall be noted in the next chapter. He does not, however, speak of images as part of prosody. Nor does he speak of the appearance of a poem on paper. Maritain says nothing specifically about prosody as such being a matter of eye and ear.

Neither does Maritain speak of prosody as the objective elements of a poem. But since Shapiro names the objective element as being the speech meaning (prose or log-

1. Karl Shapiro, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, vol. 73, issue of March 1949; p. 349.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 258.

3. Ibid., p. 321.

ical meaning of the words), meter, sound and image, and since he includes all of these in the term prosody, Maritain would presumably agree since these are all the elements that work to present the poetic intuition. As Maritain says:

... the poetic sense is an immanent meaning made up of meanings: the intelligible meanings of the words ... -- and the imaginal meaning of the words-- and the more mysterious meanings of the musical relations between the words, and between the meaningful contents with which the words are laden.¹

Maritain does not discuss the matter of the stress or temporal types of prosody.

Cardinal Point 2: The poet is not necessarily very conscious of the prosodic organization but is rather conscious of a pattern or ultimate form.

Evaluation: It is difficult to ascertain precisely what Shapiro means by "not necessarily very conscious." Presumably Shapiro means that the prosodic organization in its details does not notably depend on a conscious activity or awareness on the part of the poet.

If this is what Shapiro means then Maritain is in opposition to this opinion. Maritain says:

This vital concurrence of the multiple, or vital order bringing to complex orchestral unity parts struggling to assert their own individual claims, is the number or harmonic expansion of the poem. The property in question, being the most perceivable to the senses, is also the most apparent, and has therefore so obvious an importance that the

1. Ibid., p. 259.

arrangement of the parts, the proportion, correspondence, and mutual impact between them, are what is first seen in the work, and the laws of this arrangement are what the working or discursive attention of the artist or critic is most occupied with. ¹

Thus Maritain holds that it is precisely in the arrangement of the most obvious and immediately sensible parts of a poem that the highest degree of consciousness or discursive attention is employed.

Here Maritain does not contradict Shapiro's opinion that there is a consciousness of pattern or ultimate form. Maritain says:

Yet, essential as it may be, the number or harmonic expansion, being immersed in the materiality of the work, is only a kind of external reflection of the poetic sense..... ²

In other words, Maritain says, among other things, that the whole pattern or ultimate form of the poem is a reflection of the poetic intuition. To the degree that the poet consciously grasps or knows his poetic intuition, to that degree is he conscious of the whole pattern or ultimate form of the poem.

Cardinal Point 3: Visual prosody is not to be condemned but one should be careful about tampering with the alphabet.

1. Ibid., p. 364.

2. Ibid., p. 364.

Evaluation: Maritain does not speak explicitly about visual prosody by which Shapiro means to indicate the appearance of the poem which appeal to the physical eye rather than the ear.

Maritain does speak in more general terms of modern poetry:

Thus it is that modern poetry had to dispense with the regular form of the poem, and the necessity of the rhyme, and the other requirements of classical prosody. ¹

Maritain does not become more specific with regard to the Cardinal Point at hand.

Cardinal Point 4: Rhythm and meter even in absolute form do express some meaning. When concretely united with words they serve to liberate the non-linguistic, non-functional quality of words. Rhythm is the most obvious and most profound quality of art. One must not distinguish between form and content because this implies that rhythm is not part of meaning.

Evaluation: Maritain does not speak of rhythm and meter as being in absolute form. It is not clear what Shapiro means by these terms. How can one speak of poetic rhythm and meter in absolute form ? Does Shapiro intend to say that music without words has meaning ? But even in

1. Ibid., p. 321.

music the term absolute form can hardly be applied to any concrete rhythm or meter. The meaning of Shapiro's statement is doubtful.

Shapiro's next statement of the above Cardinal Point (Rhythm and meter when concretely united with words do serve to liberate the non-linguistic, non-functional quality of words.) is much more intelligible. Maritain agrees that rhythm and meter do liberate. He says:

Thus, in reality, the reader is confronted with a work of words which signifies, first, as an intermediary, and through concepts subjected to the primacy of logical connection, a definite set of things standing as objects of thought-- and second, as the final aim, a mysterious flash of reality which has been grasped without concept and which no concept can express. How can the reader be made aware of this second signification, the true signification of the poem ? Only by being brought back toward the original intuition. And this can be accomplished only through a magnetic, supraconceptual power, which is the music of the words (including that of proffered notions and images) strong enough to overcome the obstacle created by the intermediary signification, the definite set of things, and to put the eyes of our logical reason to sleep, and to lead us, captive, to a participation in the poetic intuition which was born in the spiritual night of the preconceptual activity of the poet. ¹

Again he says:

Thus it is that the music of words is of absolute necessity...; and together with the music of words, the rhyme and all the prosodic requirements of regular form. All these laws and exigencies are but the instruments of liberation of the poetic sense. ²

1. Ibid., p. 312.

2. Ibid., p. 313.

Maritain does not comment on the next statement of the above Cardinal Point (Rhythm is the most obvious and most profound quality of art). However, as was noted in the evaluation of the immediately preceding Cardinal Point, Maritain does note that the arrangement of the parts of a poem is what is first seen. He does not, however, speak of rhythm as the most obvious.

It is difficult to be certain as to the meaning of the final statement of Cardinal Point Four (One must not distinguish between form and content because this implies that rhythm is not part of meaning).

The question is: what does Shapiro mean by form and content. If by content he means the logically intelligible element of the poem, then certainly Maritain distinguishes quite emphatically between this and the nonconceptual element of the poem as will be explicitly pointed out in the chapter immediately following.

It seems impossible to understand how rhythm could be attributed its proper part in the meaning of the poem unless a distinction is made between the logical sense and the poetic sense. Otherwise there would seem to be no basis for attributing any function of meaning to rhythm.

Cardinal Point 5: Grammar is at the service of poetry in that the poet may depart from grammatical tradition for the sake of sound.

Evaluation: Maritain does not speak of grammar specifically in relation to poetry. However, he does speak often of the logical or intelligible content of poetry. Although insisting that the logical or intelligible content is subservient to the poetic sense, he nevertheless insists on the necessity of the logical content.¹

One could imply, therefore, at least that Maritain would agree with Shapiro that grammar is at the service of poetry, that a poet could depart from accepted grammar for the sake of sound insofar as it is part of the poetic sense provided that such departure from accepted grammar did not destroy the intelligible element of the poem.

Raissa Maritain in an essay in a book of which Jacques Maritain is co-author, and from which essay Jacques Maritain himself quotes,² speaks of the question of intelligible content. She says:

Because, of itself, poetry does not consist of a material object turned in upon itself, but refers to the universality of beauty and of being, perceived each time, it is true, in an individual existence. But it is by our spiritual and intuitive powers that we refer to being. The words which the poet uses cannot be stripped of their role as signs without depriving the poetry of its essential ties with transcendental beauty. It is not in order to communicate ideas, it is to maintain contact with the universe of intuitiveness that they must thus remain signs. ... It follows from all this

1. Ibid., p. 75.

2. Ibid., p. 75.

that if one reduces completely the words' function as signs, one enfeebles the poem's power of communication and of domination-- at the last extreme one annihilates the poetic sense itself, which is spirit. Thus we can understand why, although logical sense cannot be required in poetry for its own sake, for the sake of clarity of reason, still logical non-sense voluntarily and systematically imposed is incompatible with poetry. ... 'It is a fact of experience that the feeling for the unknown is not propagated except as beginning from the known,' Marcel Raymond has very truly written. 1

Cardinal Point 6: Rhythm concretely identified with the significance of words is the quality of poetry that distinguishes it from prose.

Evaluation: Although one could easily proceed from Maritain's observation about rhythm and the music of words to deduce that he is in agreement with Shapiro relative to the above Cardinal Point,² Maritain does not in fact make such a deduction nor does he give explicitly any explanation of a distinction between prose and poetry.

1. Jacques and Raissa Maritain, The Situation of Poetry, New York, Philosophical Library, 1955. Pp. x, 85; pp. 3-4.

2. Cf., in this thesis: Part III, Chapter 8, Evaluations of Cardinal Points 4 and 8. Also Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; pp. 394 ff.

CHAPTER 8

EVALUATION OF "POETIC KNOWLEDGE"

Cardinal Point 1: Poetic knowledge is not imaginative but uses images as a means of obtaining the truth. Poetic knowledge is image knowledge but not imaginary in the sense of not being real.

Evaluation: Maritain holds that in poetry the intuitive reason is predominant but that it exercises itself in vital relationship with the imagination.¹ Maritain supports Shapiro's tenet that poetic knowledge uses images when he speaks of the united operation of the powers of the soul:

The powers of the soul envelop one another, the universe of sense perception is in the universe of the imagination, which is in the universe of intelligence. ... And, according to the order of the ends and demands of nature, the first two universes move under the attraction and for the higher good of the universe of the intellect, and, to the extent to which they are not cut off from the intellect by the animal or automatic unconscious, in which they lead a wild life of their own, the imagination and the senses are raised in man to a state genuinely human where they somehow participate in intelligence, and their essence is, as it were, permeated with intelligence. 2

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 76.

2. Ibid., p. 110.

In another place Maritain says:

Furthermore, in poetic knowledge things are known as resounding in subjectivity, and as one with it, and this knowledge-- essentially obscure-- is expressed, not through abstract ideas, but through the images awakened by intuitive emotion. ¹

One more example of Maritain's support of Shapiro's tenet will suffice. He speaks of one thing being made known by the image of another. He calls such an image in the use of poetic knowledge an "immediately illuminating image." ² As an example of such an image he quotes from Moby Dick:

Thus it is for instance that in order to make known and expressed what is totally singular and conceptually inexpressible in the deliciousness of having 'nothing but the blanket between you and your snugness and the cold of the outer air', Melville wrote: 'there you lie like the one warm spark in the heart of an arctic crystal.' ³

Thus it is amply evident that Maritain supports Shapiro's tenet of the fact that poetic knowledge uses images as a means of obtaining truth.

With regard to Shapiro's insistence that poetic knowledge is not imaginary in the sense of being unreal, Maritain does not speak explicitly of the reality of poetic

1. Ibid., p. 187.

2. Ibid., p. 329.

3. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 329.

knowledge but this is implicitly contained on nearly every page of all of his works on poetry. The word "imaginary" in no way implies to Maritain, as it does to Shapiro, something unreal. ¹

Cardinal Point 2: Experience is a vital quality of poetic doctrine. The involvement of the poet personally in the milieu of experience is the source of poetry. Insistence on the personal element and on concrete experience leads to the conclusion that each poetic experience is unique.

Evaluation: The dependence of the poetic process on experience is an essential aspect of Maritain's doctrine and is at least implicitly asserted throughout all of his observations on poetry and art. Only explicit statements, however, will be admitted here in the evaluation of Shapiro.

Maritain maintains that by examining the most subjective art, that is, art intent on the artist's self, one does find the reality of things there, the meaning of nature and the significance of things. ² As Maritain says:

Our descriptive and inductive inquiry suggests that at the root of the creative act there must be a quite particular intellectual process, without par-

1. Ibid., passim.

2. Ibid., p. 33.

allel in logical reason, through which things and the Self are grasped by means of a kind of experience or knowledge which has no conceptual expression and is expressed only in the artist's work. ¹

In another place Maritain speaks of an interpenetration between nature and man. Each maintains its own identity but they are also united.² In connection with aesthetic feeling, Maritain observes, there is to some degree an invasion of nature by man. ³

Maritain further substantiates Shapiro's insistence on the importance of experience in these words:

Since art is a virtue of the intellect, it demands to communicate with the entire universe of the intellect. Hence it is that the normal climate of art is intelligence and knowledge: its normal soil, the civilized heritage of a consistent and integrated system of beliefs and values; its normal horizon, the infinite of human experience enlightened by the passionate insights of anguish or the intellectual virtues of a contemplative mind. ⁴

Maritain further shows that even the poet's knowledge of his own subjectivity is possible only by virtue of his knowledge of the world of things. ⁵ As he puts the matter:

1. Ibid., pp. 33-34.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Ibid., p. 6.

4. Ibid., p. 64.

5. Ibid., p. 114. Cf. also, Jacques Maritain, Art and Poetry, New York, Philosophical Library, 1943. Pp. 104; p. 89.

In other words, the primary requirement of poetry, which is the obscure knowing, by the poet, of his own subjectivity, is inseparable from, is one with another requirement-- the grasping, by the poet, of the objective reality of the outer and inner world.... 1

The above evidence that Maritain supports Shapiro's Cardinal Point must not be exaggerated. The above is evidence that Maritain supports Shapiro's opinion of the necessity of the poet's personal involvement. However, when Maritain speaks of the poet's being personally involved by knowing his own subjectivity inseparable from his grasp of reality he is speaking of the poetic process on a much more profound basis than Shapiro speaks. Maritain means by self and person that profound depth of the person which we have in common, that depth of the person which is sometimes called the non-idiosyncratic self. ² There is no evidence that Shapiro means anything by personal involvement and poetic experience other than a high degree of awareness on the part of the poet for the reality that he sensibly experiences.

Cardinal Point 3: Intuition is knowledge not arrived at through logical reasoning.

Evaluation: In commenting on historical opinions

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; pp. 114-115.

2. Ibid., pp. 10 ff.

that poets had in them a certain madness or inspiration, Maritain claims that the poet "obeys an all-conquering instinct which is free from and extraneous to logical and conceptual reason." ¹ Two pages later Maritain identifies what he calls "instinct" with creative intuition. ²

Again Maritain supports Shapiro's opinion in the following words:

... there is, apart from the process which tends to knowledge by means of concepts and abstract ideas, something which is preconceptual or nonconceptual and nevertheless in a state of definite intellectual actuation: not, therefore, a mere way to the concept ... but another kind of germ, which does not tend toward a concept to be formed.... In other words, such a thing is knowledge in act, but nonconceptual knowledge. ³

Again Maritain puts the matter neatly:

They are obliged to be at the same time at two different levels of the soul, out of their senses and rational, passively moved by inspiration and actively conscious, intent on an unknown more powerful than they are which a sagacious operative knowledge must serve and manifest in fear and trembling. ⁴

Maritain's concurrence with the above Cardinal Point of Shapiro is limited to the fact that both admit of a knowledge at which the poet arrives without logical

1. Ibid., p. 89.

2. Ibid., p. 91.

3. Ibid., pp. 111-112.

4. Ibid., p. 250.

reasoning. There is no evidence that Shapiro understands by the term "intuition" anything approaching the profound doctrine of creative intuition as explained by Maritain. Shapiro merely means that man does know things which have not been acquired through consciously logical thought processes.

Cardinal Point 4: Meter is complementary to images in bearing the meaning of a poem. (It should be noted that the word "meter" is used in a wide sense including rhythm.) ¹

Evaluation: Maritain speaks at length about the internal music, that is, the harmony within the soul of the poet. This music is expressed finally in the words of the poem.² He speaks of this matter in another place clearly but tersely in these words:

For the music of words is in the work of words the necessary response of the words to the inaudible music stirred by poetic intuition. ³

In still another place Maritain speaks of the "music of words-- and of the imagery contained in the words -- which will pass outside the soul, into the external

1. Cf. p. 73 of this thesis.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 304.

3. Ibid., p. 322.

world...." 1

Maritain certainly supports Shapiro's conviction that sound and image are very important in bearing the meaning of a poem. However, Maritain goes much more deeply into the matter to show that the external music is only a response to the internal. A sympathetic reading of Shapiro and of Chapters Six and Eight of this thesis might incline one to suspect that Shapiro feels an internal music closely akin to that of which Maritain speaks. However, nothing explicitly stated by Shapiro indicates the reality of an inner music as described by Maritain.

Cardinal Point 5: Poetic knowledge is unordered and inconsistent.

Evaluation: The above cardinal point is made by Shapiro to help distinguish philosophical or scientific knowledge from poetic knowledge. Precisely what Shapiro means here is not clear in his critical writings. It would seem safe to assume, since his poetry is well ordered, that he means that poetic knowledge is not subject to the laws of logical truth. If this assumption is granted on the evidence of the order in his own poems, then Maritain does support Shapiro entirely.

In criticizing the Surrealist movement, Maritain

1. Ibid., p. 304.

says:

Furthermore, in poetic knowledge things are known as resounding in the subjectivity, and as one with it, and this knowledge ... is expressed, not through abstract ideas, but through images awakened by intuitive emotion. As a result, science, the kind of science unnaturally required of poetic knowledge, is to be ruled by the law of images for which there is no principle of contradiction, and for which the sign contains and conveys the very reality of the thing signified. ¹

Again Maritain says of poetic knowledge:

But the supreme law of expression is no longer the law of rational and logical connections, it is the law of the inner connections between intuitive pulsions, and of the unconceptualized intelligibility of which the images ... are the vehicles. ²

It should be noted that Maritain supports Shapiro only in that poetic knowledge is not a knowledge ordered in the way scientific knowledge is ordered. There is no evidence in Shapiro's writings that he shares with Maritain the same theory of unconceptualized intelligibility.

Cardinal Point 6: Beauty is the means whereby poetic truth is persuasive or convincing. Beauty is that which shows the sincerity or authenticity of the work.

Evaluation: Maritain himself admits that vocabulary is not adequate for expressing the relationship between poetry and beauty.³ A certain degree of inevitable

1. Ibid., pp. 187-188.

2. Ibid., p. 315.

3. Ibid., p. 168.

obscurity will then result in an attempt to show Maritain's evaluation of Shapiro's tenets above. Maritain admits that art has an object, namely, the thing to be made. But poetry (Maritain's translation of Plato's mousikn') has no object essentially speaking. Poetry does not have an object in the thing to be made. But poetry does seek intelligible expression. Now poetry or poetic intuition, according to Maritain, tends toward art as a means of expression. Although poetic intuition is not ordained to beauty as an end, beauty is a correlative of poetic intuition or the end beyond the end. And since poetic intuition is an intellectual thing it can be expressed only in terms of what pleases the intellect, namely beauty. Therefore poetic intuition expresses itself in beauty but its object is not beauty but it merely strives to know itself by means of an objective correlative. ¹

Now all of these profound observations of Maritain may seem at first sight not intimately associated with the relatively simple cardinal point above. However, it would seem that Maritain's words do substantiate Shapiro's observations to the extent that beauty is a means of poetic truth, not an object. The three characteristics of beauty: integrity, consonance and radiance are in simple language,

1. Ibid., pp. 167-172.

that which persuades or convinces or makes acceptable to the intellect the intelligible poetic truth. And certainly the sincerity or authenticity of any artistic work can only be judged by the external product which is known to us aesthetically by a form in a matter which is beauty. No further implication of agreement between Maritain and Shapiro in the relationship between poetic knowledge and beauty is warranted on the evidence of Shapiro's writings.

Cardinal Point 7: Poetic truth appeals to the intellect secondarily or indirectly. It is primarily a sensory truth.

Evaluation: Shapiro is not clear in what he means by "primarily". He does not state explicitly that poetic truth is primarily intellectual. On the other hand it is difficult to read pages ninety to ninety-five of this thesis wherein Shapiro's doctrine of poetic knowledge is treated without at least an inference that poetic truth is ontologically primarily intellectual.

If Shapiro means that poetic truth is ontologically primarily sensory then Maritain is in direct opposition to him.

If Shapiro merely means that poetic truth is only chronologically primarily sensory then Maritain does support him obviously in his teaching on the function of images in the poetic process as mentioned in the evaluation

of Cardinal Points One and Two of this chapter and as will be again mentioned in the evaluation of Cardinal Point Nine of this chapter.

Cardinal Point 8: The poet must have a good ear.

He must, that is, be aware of the musical sense of the line. The reader is convinced of the validity of poetic knowledge through the ear.

Evaluation: In addition to what has been said about the music of the words in Cardinal Point Four of this part of the thesis, Maritain states:

'The poetic sense of a poem cannot be separated from the verbal form it animates from within', from the whole fabric of words it causes to exist. And the words, there, are not only signs of concepts or ideas, but objects also, objects which are endowed with their proper sonorous quality. Their function as signs, in their mutual interrelation, depends at the same time on this physical sonorous quality itself-- and on the images they convey-- 1

In speaking of modern poetry, Maritain observes:

Modern poetry is bound to obey more exacting laws and rules, for they are free and contingent rules, depending at each moment on the correctness of the ear, and on the fact of each and every word, measure and period in the poem being exactly in tune with the soundless music stirred by poetic intuition within the soul. 2

Thus Maritain supports Shapiro's insistence on the necessity of a good ear. No implication that Shapiro

1. Ibid., p. 258.

2. Ibid., p. 321.

shares with Maritain the idea of soundless music stirred by poetic intuition within the soul is intended.

Cardinal Point 9: The poetry of emotion is emphasized over the poetry of ideas. The principal emotion is love. It is through love that the poet is involved with reality and the creation of beauty. Love is the means whereby the poet is "oned" with experience.

Evaluation: Maritain repeatedly emphasizes the fact that poetry and art are primarily and essentially intellectual.¹ Shapiro, as was noted in the evaluation of Cardinal Point Seven above, does not clearly make such a statement, nor is it clear whether he regards poetry as ontologically primarily intellectual or sensory.

If by insisting on a poetry of emotion over a poetry of ideas, Shapiro means that poetry is a knowledge by means of emotion, then Maritain supports him in this precisely. Maritain says that in poetry the intellect exercises itself in connection with the imagination and emotion.² He further states that poetic knowledge proceeds from intellect through feeling and into the intellect through emotion.³ He also notes that the principle

1. Ibid., pp. 33, 49, 58, 76, 110, 111, 119-122.

2. Ibid., p. 76.

3. Ibid., pp. 119-122.

of identification in poetic knowledge comes about by means of emotion.¹

If Shapiro means that poetry is ontologically primarily emotional then Maritain is in direct opposition to Shapiro.

Shapiro's recognition of love as the principle emotion involved in creativity in uniting the poet with reality is supported by Maritain. Maritain notes that the intellect's connaturality with the object or the beauty of the object is brought about only by love.² Emotion with knowledge is a sine qua non for the perception of beauty.³ Necessary for poetry is the grasping of reality through affective union.⁴ Finally Maritain notes:

Let me add that the highest form of knowledge through inclination or congeniality is provided by that kind of presence of the one with the other which is proper to love. 5

Cardinal Point 10: Poetic knowledge delights in the multiplicity of creation. Poetic knowledge looks for unity but only in the personal experience and knowledge of

1. Ibid., p. 230.

2. Ibid., p. 58.

3. Ibid., p. 8.

4. Ibid., p. 114.

5. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. Pp. 120; p. 113.

the poet. He is the focal point of unity for the staggering multiplicity of things.

Evaluation: Maritain does agree that in the case of poetic knowledge, all realities are known as they resound in the subjectivity of the poet.

All that he discerns and divines in things, he discerns and divines not as something other than himself ... but ... as inseparable from himself and from his emotion, and in truth as identified with himself. ¹

Thus it follows that if everything the poet knows is known inseparably from himself and identified with himself, then the subjectivity of the poet could be thought of as a principle of the unity of poetry. But it must be kept in mind that by personal experience Shapiro does not mean the same thing as Maritain does. ²

However, Maritain does not speak of the subjectivity as a principle of unity. Maritain does not explicitly take up the question of the unity of poetic knowledge but presumes it as evident on the basis of his doctrine of poetic intuition.

Strictly speaking, therefore, Maritain does not support Shapiro in recognizing the subjectivity of the poet

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 115.

2. Cf. Evaluation of Cardinal Point 2 of this chapter.

as the principle of the unity of poetic knowledge. Rather Maritain regards the poet as the one in whom or by whom the unity takes place.

CHAPTER 9

EVALUATION OF "CRITICISM"

Cardinal Point 1: The function of criticism should be to understand the nature of art. This operation pertains to philosophy rather than literature. When a poet becomes involved in philosophy his language will become abstract.

Evaluation: Maritain supports Shapiro's opinion that the function of criticism should be to understand the nature of art. He says:

On the other hand, the intellect is reflective by nature; so, no virtue of the intellect, even practical virtues, can genuinely develop in its own particular sphere without a more or less simultaneous development of reflectivity. Now what is the name of reflective intelligence in the domain of art ? Its name is critical reason. ¹

Maritain then recognizes criticism as being philosophical as does Shapiro but he also recognizes it as belonging to the domain of art. In other words, whereas Maritain distinguishes within the poet between the poetic process and the reflective reason, he does not separate them to the extent that they are not both able to be operative in one and the same person or within one and the same

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 65.

domain of art. Maritain states:

... I would like to emphasize that the literary critic and the creative writer are in reality the same person in two different functions. A critic in science or philosophy is a scientist or philosopher; a critic in poetry is a poet.... 1

Shapiro not only distinguishes the two operations but tends to separate them so that being a critic is in opposition to being a poet.

On the other hand Maritain does agree that a great deal of exercise of the reflective reason can ruin a poet's ability to write poetry. He says:

The critic must perceive much more purely and deeply than the ordinary reader all that which, conveyed by the poem, makes contact, intuitively, with the creative intuition of the poet. In other words, the critic is a poet, and has the gifts of a poet, at least virtually. ...

There are critics, it is true, and remarkable critics, who are unable to compose a poem: poetry in them has migrated to their critical work. Charles Du Bos, whom I consider the greatest of French critics, was obliged to give up, after some vain attempts, even the idea of any creative work: I am sure he was a poet, and admirably gifted; but poetic activity had been paralyzed by a prodigious development of the reflective faculties. 2

This seems to be what Shapiro means by saying that the language of a poet who has become involved in philos-

1. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. Pp. 120; p. 84.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; pp. 324-325.

ophy will become abstract.

Cardinal Point 2: Shapiro admits a valid type of criticism which he calls humanistic criticism. By this term he understands criticism based on a comparison of works rather than the analysis of a poem. This comparison deals with the artistic reactions of readers and is therefore impressionistic criticism. In other words, the validity of spontaneous judgment is ultimately based on whether a man likes or dislikes a piece of work.

Evaluation: Maritain does not use a term such as humanistic criticism. Nor does Maritain say anything about a preference for a procedure of criticism involving comparison of poems rather than the analysis of a poem. He freely employs both procedures in many places in his critical works. Presumably he recognizes the validity of both procedures and does not see any conflict between the two procedures.

Neither does Maritain speak about impressionistic criticism explicitly by name. However, his whole approach toward criticism, as can be noted from the quotations from Maritain in the evaluation of the immediately preceding Cardinal Point, shows that his entire presumption is that criticism is directed toward the judgment of art and not a judgment of impressions of art or a judgment of reactions to art. Certainly impressionistic criticism is diametric-

ally opposed to Maritain's understanding of the nature of art as essentially intellectual, as essentially a matter of truth and definitely not a matter of impression as the term is used in the Cardinal Point above. In speaking specifically of criticism he says: "We should judge of it art as the living vehicle of this hidden truth."¹

The above paragraph may also be employed in comment on Shapiro's final statement of the above Cardinal Point, namely, that the validity of spontaneous judgment is ultimately based on whether a man likes or dislikes a piece of work. But in addition it must be said that on the basis of Maritain as noted throughout Part Three, it is impossible to see how the validity of the judgment could depend on whether a man likes or dislikes a piece of work. From the context of this observation of Shapiro one must conclude and indeed Shapiro does state that criticism must defer to liking or disliking a work.² In other words, one's favorable judgment of a piece of art can be verified ultimately only if one likes the piece of art. If one's critical powers tell one that a work is a piece of art and if one dislikes that piece of art then the conclusion is that it is

1. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960. Pp. 120; p. 90. Brackets inserted by author of the thesis.

2. Cf., Chapter 9 of Part II.

not a piece of art. Maritain has written nothing about such an attitude. Indeed, had he done so, one would be surprised.

Cardinal Point 3: This theory of criticism makes taste a very important necessity. The only requisites for any man to judge art are: the poetic instinct and practice or the experience of art.

Evaluation: Maritain speaks about taste only indirectly. He sees the need for taste but not as a means to impressionistic criticism but rather to objective criticism. He says:

The critic must perceive much more purely and deeply than the ordinary reader all that which, conveyed by the poem, makes contact, intuitively, with the creative intuition of the poet. In other words, the critic is a poet, and has the gifts of a poet, at least virtually. Before judging of the work as to its way of execution he must discover the creative intentions from which it proceeds and the more secret things which stirred the soul of its author. He must be able to receive "instantly" the "immortal wound" of which Robert Frost once spoke. ¹

By poetic instinct in Cardinal Point Three one can only presume that Shapiro designates a good ear since it was shown earlier in the thesis that instinct for him means a good ear for the music of poetry.² Surely Maritain would agree that a critic must have a good ear and be ex-

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 324.

2. Cf., Part II, Chapter 7.

perienced in poetry since he insisted, as was shown above in Cardinal Point One of this chapter, that a critic must be a poet. But Maritain would add to Shapiro's two requisites for a critic the development of ability in reflective reasoning. But again Maritain would view the poet as necessarily having such ability since he views the poet as containing within himself the critic as well as he views the critic as being necessarily a poet.¹

Cardinal Point 4: The reason that poetry is puzzling to so many persons is accounted for by the fact that they approach it scientifically rather than with feeling and spontaneous judgment.

Evaluation: Certainly Maritain supports Shapiro's conviction that poetry should not be approached as if it were a scientific work. But the agreement between Shapiro and Maritain is quite limited and rather superficial. Lurking behind Shapiro's opinion is an anti-intellectual attitude noted previously in Chapters Two and Three of Part One. On the contrary, Maritain shows the feeling with which poetry should be approached to be one raised to the level of intellect. In other words he sees emotion as the instrument making possible a connatural knowledge. Maritain says:

1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953. Pp. xxxii, 423; p. 324.

And poetic knowledge proceeds from the intellect in its most genuine and essential capacity as intellect, though through the indispensable instrumentality of feeling, feeling, feeling. At this point I would wish to insist that it is in a way a merely emotional or a sentimentalist theory of poetry that I am suggesting. ... It is an emotion as form, which, being one with the creative intuition, gives form to the poem, and which is intentional, as an idea is, or carries within itself infinitely more than itself. ¹

Maritain further supports the observation that a poem should not be approached as science by the distinctions he makes among science and poetry and art relative to the relationship between the cognitive and the creative functions. He says:

... the creative function of the intellect is entirely subordinate to its cognitive function. It is for the sake of knowledge to be engendered and expressed within the mind that the concepts are produced. ...

In the case of art, on the contrary, the cognitive function of the intellect is entirely subordinate to its creative function. The intellect knows in order to create. It is for the sake of the work to be made that both previously acquired knowledge and artistic knowledge come into play, and that the rules of making are discovered and applied. And the fruit of the creativity of the spirit is the work, which is caused to exist outside the soul.

In the case of poetry, the cognitive function of the intellect comes into play in poetic intuition: and the creativity of the spirit is free creativity. ²

1. Ibid., pp. 119-120.

2. Ibid., pp. 168-169.

Shapiro uses the word "science" without clarification. He does not show how a poem is science and is not science. Maritain supports Shapiro's non-scientific approach to poetry if Shapiro means theoretical science. Maritain distinguishes thus:

In the Scholastic vocabulary "art" is synonymous with "practical science" in the sense that it is a kind of science which is practical in its very essence or its very way of knowing, and practical from the very start-- science of the work to be made.

Practical science in this genuine sense is entirely different from applied science, that is, from a science which is theoretical in essence-- and then particularized or applied ... in order to achieve a practical result. ...

We must thus admit, if we get rid of our "scientist" modern prejudices, the existence of a poetic science which differs toto caelo from theoretical sciences, and which is however a real knowledge, attained through creative intuition. ¹

1. Ibid., pp. 49n-50n.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to establish that Karl Shapiro is recognized as a power in the field of literary criticism, to present clearly his literary theories and attitudes and to evaluate them on the basis of the writings of Jacques Maritain.

For this purpose the thesis was divided into three parts.

Part One showed that Shapiro was recognized as a power in literary criticism and that his position in this field was one of opposition to Eliot and the new criticism in general. It was further established that a notable part of this opposition was of a rather emotional nature.

Part Two presented Shapiro's theories as clearly as his writings permitted. His definition of poetry was established and his understanding of it given. His ideas on the use of poetry were presented and the importance which he attributes to the audience was discussed. Furthermore, Shapiro's tenets about the relationship of poetry to faith, mysticism and language were dealt with. His great concern with prosody was explained. In still more detail Shapiro's conviction about the poetic process were investigated and the function of criticism or literary judgment in his doctrine was explained. Finally, Part Two closed

with a look at the contemporary opinions of critics on Shapiro's opinions.

Part Three undertook an evaluation of Shapiro's doctrine with Maritain's writings as the criteria of evaluation.

It was found that nearly all of Shapiro's tenets had to be modified by Maritain's observations. Although a limited agreement was found between the two critics it was generally found that the agreement was rather superficial. For example, although they agree that poetic knowledge is a special kind of knowledge quite distinct from scientific knowledge, Shapiro does not arrive at any profound understanding of the nature of poetic knowledge as Maritain does. For another example, one might note that Shapiro quite rightly recognizes the fact that the logical meaning of words gives way to the primacy of the poetic meaning but he, unlike Maritain, is unable to explain why such is the case.

The ordered presentation of Shapiro's tenets and their evaluation on the basis of Maritain lead inevitably to certain conclusions.

In the first place, Shapiro is much too emotional in his opinions. This fact diminishes the possibility of proceeding with clear-cut principles to scientific conclusions about the nature and functions of art. Shapiro has

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permitted his dislike for the academic approach to poetry to flow over into an aversion in practice for an academic or scientific approach to a consideration of the nature of art and critical theories.

In the second place, Shapiro is not well equipped with the habit of philosophy. His reasoning power and power of judgment is undeveloped when compared to Maritain. A comparison of Shapiro's writings with those of Maritain shows quite clearly that Shapiro cannot or at least has not gone deeply enough into the nature of art to enable him to make a notable contribution to theories already developed in the field of literary criticism.

It is the conviction of the author of this thesis that a further attempt to evaluate Shapiro's tenets on the basis of other criteria would not be sufficiently fruitful to merit the consideration of scholarly research since the evaluation offered in this thesis is sufficiently indicative of a lack of depth in Shapiro's observations.

However, after long and sympathetic study of Shapiro's critical tenets, one does inevitably come to admire his almost unerring sense for what is good in poetry and what is desirable in approaching poetry, although Shapiro is unable to explain the correctness of his judgment or indeed is unable even to explain his likes and dislikes in any profound or definitive fashion.

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The author of this thesis would like to suggest the possible fruitfulness, based on the observation of the above paragraph, of a thorough investigation of Mr. Shapiro's actual practices in the writing of poetry; to investigate his poetry in an attempt to find therein a possible key to his critical tenets and a source whereby his critical writings could be adjusted and developed to present to the literary world a welcome contribution to contemporary critical theories.

Finally, it must be observed that the popular interest manifested in Shapiro's critical theories and the leadership attributed to him on the part of some critics cannot be justified on the basis of the intrinsic merit of his critical writings. Perhaps some critics have been favorable toward Shapiro and have championed his theories because they have found in him a person who fearlessly opposes attitudes and critical opinions which they themselves more timidly oppose.

APPENDIX

The following is a brief account of an interview which Mr. Karl Shapiro gave the author of this thesis on October 24, 1962. The interview was of ninety minutes in length. The contents of the cards represent only the core of the answers and discussion which followed specific questions.

No sound equipment was used. If there should be any discrepancy between Mr. Shapiro's opinions and his comments below the fault lies with the interviewer.

Card 1:

Question: Mr. Shapiro, despite the fact that you seem to loath any pressures from any area on the artist, you are accused of allowing resentment against anti-semitism influence your literary judgment. Do you think this is true ?

Answer: You know, I am a non-participating Jew. I am well aware personally of the force of anti-semitism. I have tried to be objective in literary judgment where anti-semitism was a factor.

Card 2:

Question: You have also been accused of allowing your sympathy toward Catholicism to influence your work. What about that ?

Answer: Well, I have been closely associated with things Catholic much of my life. I taught at Loyola in Chicago for two years. You may have read my poem about the elevator wherein I speak of my association with the Sisters. I have never seriously considered conversion.

Card 3:

Question: Why do you insist so much on the necessity of an immediate impact of poetry on the audience and the need of immediate apprehension ?

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Answer: I think that there are audiences who can't appreciate poetry but on some level any piece of art should be able to be apprehended by the audience.

Card 4:

Question: You seem to place an opposition between spiritual intimacy with God and the creative work of the poet. Could you say something about this ?

Answer: I only mean that the intense, absorbing creative activity of the poet could preoccupy and satisfy the poet to such an extent that he might be deflected from the pursuit of spiritual intimacy. That's all.

Card 5:

Question: You seem to use the term "intuition" in a derogatory way. Why ? What does the term mean to you ?

Answer: In the last ten years my thinking on this has changed quite a bit. Since I wrote what you refer to, I have seen a bit better what intuition is. I think, today, I would define it as knowledge that comes without logical reasoning.

Card 6:

Question: I could not quite understand your opposition to Pound's poetry on the basis of Pound's anti-semitism. Could you say something about this ?

Answer: He's awfully good poetry. Moral philosophy stood in his way.

Card 7:

Question: In so far as I have progressed in research, it seems that many of your observations run parallel to some extent to those of Jacques Maritain. Has he influenced your criticism ?

Answer: No. I remember reading something by Maritain many years ago. I don't remember what it was.

Card 8:

Comment by Mr. Shapiro: You know, I am very interested and flattered by the work you are doing. This is the first time anyone has done a thesis on my writings. I shall be looking forward eagerly to viewing your work.

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Barrett, William, "Pilgrim to Philistia", Partisan Review, vol. 13, issue of Winter 1946, pp. 126-129.

This article is a review of Essay on Rime in a favorable vein. He sees Shapiro with a mission to help the deplorable condition of modern criticism.

Bradley, Samuel M., "Letter to Karl Shapiro on Belief and Being", Approach: A Literary Quarterly, No. 33, issue of Fall, 1959, pp. 28-30.

This is a highly critical article of special interest since the letter is followed by various other attitudes in answer to Bradley's letter by Shapiro himself as well as Alfred Kazin, Leslie A. Fiedler and Ronald Offen.

Carruth, Hayden, "In Defense of Karl Shapiro", The New Republic, vol. 142, issue of June 20, 1960, pp. 19-20.

This favorable article points out some of the inaccuracy and unintelligent opposition to Shapiro's critical attitudes.

Cutler, Bruce, The Year of the Green Wave, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960, xiv, 64pp.

This work contains an introduction by Shapiro wherein his comments on poetry and its desired simplicity are offered as encouragement to new writers.

Daiches, David, "The Poetry of Karl Shapiro", Poetry, Vol. 64, issue of August, 1945, pp. 266-273. This article is of special interest in that Daiches sees rather clearly a manifestation of Shapiro's critical tenets in his poetry.

-----, "A Poet's Poem About Poetry", New York Herald Tribune Books, Vol. 22, issue of January 6, 1946, p. 5.

This article is a favorable but reserved review of Essay on Rime. It is an especially welcome article because of the stature of its author.

Ellmann, Richard, "A Poet Turns Critic", The New York Times Book Review, Vol. 65, issue of May 8, 1960, p. 10.

This brief article shows an appreciation for the need of what Shapiro is attempting although it is not an article of much insight.

Engle, Paul, "Five Years of Pulitzer Poets", English Journal, Vol. 38, issue of February 1949, pp. 62-63.

This article is of interest because it is one of the few which comments on Shapiro's leadership in the field of literature as a Pulitzer Prize winner.

Fitts, Dudley, "Mr Shapiro's Ars Poetica", Poetry, Vol. 68, issue of April 1946, pp. 39-44.

This article is a generally favorable review of Shapiro's Essay on Rime. It carries special interest since Shapiro is a former editor of Poetry.

Fleming, Rudd, "Wrong -- but Wonderful", feature in The Washington Post, issue of May 22, 1960, p. E7.

This article is a good representative of many articles which disagree with Shapiro's statements but approve of what he is attempting to do in In Defense of Ignorance.

Fussell, Edwin, "Karl Shapiro: The Paradox of Prose and Poetry", Western Review, Vol. 18, issue of Spring 1954, pp. 225-244.

This article is one of the more thorough treatments of Shapiro's criticism. It is a generous article but with rather solid insights into the strength and weakness of Shapiro's stand.

Ghiselin, Brewster, "These Latter-Day Prosodists", Poetry, Vol. 72, issue of September 1948, pp. 332-335.

This article is a review of A Bibliography of

Modern Prosody and contains some rather critical remarks and valuable observations on Shapiro's opinions about who is worthwhile in the area of prosody.

Glauber, Robert H., "Criticism Takes Over the Arts", feature in Chicago Sun-Times, issue of July 10, Section 3, p. 4.

This article is a review of In Defense of Ignorance, which agrees with Shapiro's fear that art is suffering from criticism.

Glicksberg, Charles, "Karl Shapiro and the Personal Accent", Prairie Schooner, Vol. 22, issue of Spring 1948, pp. 44-52.

This article is an appreciation of Shapiro's insistence on the personal element of poetry.

Hines, E.E., "The Poet as Critic: Shapiro Work Called 'Defiance of Intelligence'", feature in Lincoln Sunday Journal and Star, issue of June 19, 1960, p. 9B.

This article reports rather vividly some of the harsher criticism leveled at In Defense of Ignorance.

Kazin, Alfred, "The Poet Against the English Department", The Reporter, Vol. 22, issue of June 9, 1960, pp. 44-47.

This article is a review of In Defense of Ignorance, especially dealing with Shapiro's critical comments about the academic approach to the arts commonly found in our schools.

Maddocks, Melvin, "Is the Insurrection Premature?", Christian Science Monitor, (no volume), issue of July 14, 1960, p. 7.

This article recognizes Shapiro as a rebel against the status quo and as a leader of opposition to the new criticism but questions the current need of what he attempts to do in In Defense of Ignorance.

Maritain, Jacques and Jean Cocteau, Art and Faith, New York, Philosophical Library, 1948, pp. 138.

Although this work is not referred to directly in the thesis, it was valuable in attempting to understand Maritain. The work is a compilation of letters exchanged between Maritain and Cocteau.

Maritain, Jacques, Art and Poetry, New York, Philosophical Library, 1943, pp. 104.

Although this book was not used directly in this thesis it was valuable in that it gave the author of this thesis an opportunity to see Maritain at work in the critical evaluation of artists.

-----, Art and Scholasticism and The Frontiers of Poetry, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962, pp. vi, 234.

This work contains little that is not contained more conveniently in Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry and in The Responsibility of the Artist. It is valuable for a background to Maritain's development especially as regards art and morality.

-----, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Pantheon Books Inc., 1953, pp. xxxii, 423.

This work is Maritain's greatest work on the creative process and the nature of poetry and art. It would be difficult to overestimate the value of this work in the writing of this thesis. This book is the principal instrument in the evaluation of Shapiro on the basis of Maritain's doctrine.

-----, The Responsibility of the Artist, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960, pp. 120.

This book was especially valuable as a criterion of evaluation for Shapiro's attitudes toward the purpose of poetry and the general relationship between poetry and the life of men.

Maritain, Jacques and Raissa Maritain, The Situation of Poetry, New York, Philosophical Library, 1955, pp. x, 85.

This book was especially valuable as a criterion for Shapiro's views on poetic knowledge and experience as well as on the relationship between poetry and mysticism.

Matthiessen, F.O., "On the Confusions in Poetry", The New York Times Book Review, Vol. 50, issue of October 28, 1945, p. 1.

This article is a favorable review of Shapiro's Essay on Rime.

Miller, Henry, Tropic of Cancer, New York, Grove Press, 1961, pp. 318.

The forword of this book is an essay by Shapiro: "The Greatest Living Author" wherein he praises Miller as being just that. The forword shows Shapiro's relentless desire for a non-academic approach to literature.

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Miller, James E., Shapiro, Karl, Slote, Bernice, Start with the Sun, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 260.

In this work Shapiro speaks about cosmic poetry by which he wishes to designate poetry of exceptional depth. Herein he sees poetry as desirably related to the entire profound reality of things.

Mizener, Arthur, "Poets as Critics", Sewanee Review, Vol. 62, issue of July 1954, pp. 504-509.

This article is a rather closely reasoned review of Beyond Criticism. The article is valuable in that it is a fair and reasonable evaluation of both strong and weak points in Shapiro's tenets of criticism.

O'Connor, William Van, "Shapiro on Rime", Kenyon Review, Vol. 8, issue of Winter 1946, pp. 113-122.

This article is a critical but generous review of Shapiro's Essay on Rime. It is of special interest because it comes from a periodical that does not meet with the full approval of Shapiro.

Rosenthal, M.L., The Modern Poets: A Critical Introduction, New York, Oxford University Press, 1960, pp. 245, 248-250.

This work contains a sympathetic but critical appreciation of Shapiro's approach to poetry.

-----, "The Revolution Cometh", The Nation, Vol. 179, issue of September 1960, pp. 184-186.

This article recognizes Shapiro as the leader of the revolution in the United States against the new criticism and in general appreciates the work it reviews, In Defense of Ignorance.

Schott, Webster, "Poetry May Yet Break Free of Cult", feature in Kansas City Star, issue of June 4, 1960, p. 18.

This article is a favorable review of In Defense of Ignorance, in that it recognizes the need for someone to stand up against the excessive trend of new criticism.

Schwartz, Delmore, "Karl Shapiro's Poetics", The Nation, Vol. 141, issue of November 1945, p. 498.

This article is a rather unfavorable review of Essay on Rime. It is of special interest because of Schwartz' ability to attack Shapiro on the same emotional basis that Shapiro often uses in attack-

ing other authors.

Seif, Morton, "Poet's Journey: The Struggle in the Soul of Karl Shapiro", Menorah Journal, Vol. 37, Issue of Winter, 1949, pp. 51-58.

This article is of special interest although not very scientific or scholarly. It is the only article wherein the influence of Catholicism on Shapiro is treated to any notable extent.

Shapiro, Karl, (ed.) American Poetry, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1960, xx, 265 pp.

This work's value lies in the fact that it contains Shapiro's views on the distinction between English and American poetry as well as numerous comments on poets whose works are contained in the anthology.

-----, "Arguments on Rime: Karl Shapiro Objects", The Nation, Vol. 160, issue of December 23, 1945, pp. 690-692.

This article is of special interest because it brings out perhaps better than any other the highly emotional content of Shapiro's criticism that is sometimes met. The article is written in answer to an article derogatory about Shapiro's writing by Delmore Schwartz.

-----, "Aristotle is a Skeleton", Prairie Schooner, Vol. 32, issue of Fall 1958, pp. 245-247.

This article is a review of Opus Posthumous by Wallace Stevens and on a study of Robert Pack on Stevens. Its only value for this thesis is that the review does underline some of Shapiro's critical opinions.

-----, Beyond Criticism, Lincoln, The University of Nebraska Press, 1953, viii, 73 pp.

This work is a compilation of lectures given by Mr. Shapiro. It is the best brief collection of his tenets especially on poetic knowledge.

-----, A Bibliography of Modern Prosody, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1948, iv, 36 pp.

This work contains an introduction and an annotated list of seventy-one books and articles on modern prosody. Its value lies in the annotations which often portray Shapiro's attitudes.

-----, "The Careful Young Men: Tomorrow's Leaders Analyzed by Today's Teachers", The Nation, Vol. 184,

issue of March 9, 1957, p. 208.

Among other authors Shapiro was asked to write on the above topic. It shows his critical attitude toward contemporary education and its deficiencies especially in making an academic approach toward everything.

-----, "Case History of 'The Minute'", Hopkins Review, Vol. 2, issue of Summer 1949, pp. 3-9.

This article is of special interest since it is one of the few cases available in print wherein Shapiro describes the writing of one of his poems.

-----, "Dylan Thomas", Poetry, Vol. 87, issue of November 1955, pp. 100-110.

This article is valuable in that it shows a rather lengthy appraisal of a poet by Shapiro. It shows also Shapiro's appreciation of imagery and his attitude toward obscurity.

-----, English Prosody and Modern Poetry, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1947, iv, 16pp.

This booklet contains the annual Tudor and Stuart Club Lecture for April 18, 1947. It gives some of Shapiro's views on modern poetry's failure to value English prosody and the consequent weakness of much of modern poetry.

-----, Essay on Rime, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945, viii, 72 pp.

This book written in verse contains the basic tenets of Shapiro's criticism. Besides being of value for its contents, this book received a greater number of comments from critics and literary editors of periodicals.

-----, "A Farewell to Criticism", Poetry, Vol. 71, issue of January 1948, pp. 257-259.

This article shows rather well the dilemma under which Shapiro labors. It shows how harmful, in his opinion, a scientific approach to literature can be and is yet one of the best examples of his own rather scientific approach.

-----, "The First White Aboriginal", Walt Whitman Review, Vol. 5, issue of September 1959, pp. 43-52.

This article is of special interest in showing that Shapiro holds Whitman as an ideal because Whitman was independent of any pressures from critics and wrote without an academic approach to

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reality.

-----, In Defense of Ignorance, New York, Random House, 1960, xii, 338 pp.

This book is Mr. Shapiro's definitive work to date about his critical theories and literary opinions. Besides dealing with certain aspects of literary problems he deals with specific authors such as: Eliot, Pound, Yeats, William Carlos Williams, Dylan Thomas, D.H. Lawrence and Henry Miller.

-----, "The Jewish Writer", New Masses, Vol. 57, issue of November 6, 1945, pp. 23-24.

This article shows Shapiro's sensitiveness with regard to anti-semitism as one example of external pressures brought to bear on authors. This article was especially valuable since Shapiro accuses both Pound and Eliot of anti-semitism.

-----, "The Jewish Writer and the English Literary Tradition", Commentary, Vol. 8, issue of October 1949, pp. 369-370.

This article shows Shapiro's sensitiveness about anti-semitism as it has affected the literary world.

-----, "Karl Shapiro Challenges Graves", The New Republic, Vol. 134, issue of April 2, 1956, pp. 3, 23.

This article shows Shapiro's criticism as somewhat influenced by his semitic background since it is a comment on Graves' poem "These Be Thy Gods, O Israel."

-----, "Modern Poetry as a Religion", American Scholar, Vol. 28, issue of Summer 1959, pp. 297-305.

This article shows that one of Shapiro's critical opinions is that modern poetry is trying to replace religion.

-----, "A Non-New England Primer", Prairie Schooner, Vol. 34, issue of Summer 1960, pp. 182-183.

This article is an appreciation of the work of Henry Miller. The article is of interest to this thesis only in that it underlines Shapiro's devotion to the non-academic and free approach to literature.

-----, "A Note on American Poetry", Poetry, Vol. 69, issue of February 1947, pp. 273-275.

This article is worthy of note since it is one of several pieces of work in which Shapiro shows his

opinion that American poetry should reflect the independence of American people and should not allow itself to be forced to follow dictates of critics.

-----, "A Poet Dissects the Modern Poets", New York Times Magazine, issue of September 23, 1945, Sec. 6, pp. 20, 45-46.

This article shows Shapiro's dissatisfaction with the conditions of modern poetry.

-----, "Poets and Psychologists", Poetry, Vol. 80, issue of June 1952, pp. 166-184.

This article presents Shapiro's fierce opposition to what he regards as interference from psychology in the area of literature. He regards this influence as one of the weaknesses of modern poetry and modern criticism.

-----, "Poets of the Silent Generation", Prairie Schooner, Vol. 31, issue of Winter 1957, pp. 298-299.

This article is a review of poetry found in Western Review, Hudson Review and New World Writing. In this article one can better see some of Shapiro's objections to what is regarded as acceptable among modern critics.

-----, "Prosody as the Meaning", Poetry, Vol. 73, issue of March 1949, pp. 336-351.

This article is valuable since it shows an early attempt to establish the importance of prosody in poetry and to show that one of the defects of modern poetry is the lack of concern for prosody.

-----, et al., "The Question of the Pound Award", Partisan Review, Vol. 16, issue of May 1949, pp. 512-522.

This article is actually a series of opinions by Auden, R.G. Davis, Clement Greenberg, Irving Howe, George Orwell and Shapiro about the awarding of the Bollingen prize to Pound. This article in so far as Shapiro is concerned shows his bitterness about anti-semitism. He was opposed to Pound's receiving the award principally on the basis of Pound's alleged anti-semitism. This article shows how sometimes outside considerations affected Shapiro's literary judgment to an unusual degree.

-----, "Romanticism Comes Home", Prairie Schooner, Vol. 31, issue of Fall, 1957, pp. 182-183.

This article shows Shapiro's predilection for Romanticism and his opinion that it is returning to

the literary scene.

-----, A Stethoscope for the Emperor, (not published), a typed manuscript is in the rare book section of the United States Library of Congress, 24pp.

This work is a drama. Its only value for this thesis lies in the fact that it presents Shapiro's attitude about the lack of appreciation for the useless but valuable things of life, poetry included, on the part of Americans as compared with the Japanese.

-----, "T.S. Eliot: The Death of Literary Judgment", Saturday Review, Vol. 43, issue of February 1960, pp. 12-17, 34-36.

This article is of special interest in that it shows Shapiro's opposition to Eliot in that he accuses him of being one of the principles in ruining literary criticism in its best sense.

-----, "The Unemployed Magician", Poetry, Vol. 91, issue of December 1957, pp. 194-209.

This article shows Shapiro's critical attitudes about Romanticism and the non-academic approach in a contemporary author, D.H. Lawrence.

-----, "Voice of the Reader", Magazine of Books, Chicago Sunday Tribune, issue of February 1960, (no pagination) Sec., Letter to the Editor.

In this article or letter Shapiro airs his opposition to obscurantism and the "vested interests of the new scholastic criticism" which increases "the literary smog."

-----, "What is Anti-Criticism ?", Poetry, Vol. 75, issue of March 1950, pp. 339-351.

This article is of exceptional interest since it is a defense of modern poetry and the new criticism. Shapiro later regretted this article since he subsequently wrote in a diametrically opposite vein.

-----, "What's the Matter with Poetry?", The New York Times Book Review, Vol. 64, issue of December 13, 1959, pp. 1, 22.

This article is a brief and rather superficial but fiery summary of Shapiro's critical objections about trends in modern poetry.

-----, "Whitman Today", Walt Whitman Review, Vol. 6, issue of June 1960, p. 23.

This article emphasizes Shapiro's regard for Whitman and his conviction that he should be held up as the ideal of the independent and non-academic approach to literature.

-----, "Why Out-Russia Russia ? ", The New Republic, Vol. 138, issue of June 9, 1958, pp. 10-12.

In this article Shapiro makes a rather unsuccessful attempt to show that our critical attitudes are in the same line of procedure as those of Russia and with the same results becoming apparent.

Smith, Hammett W., "Karl J. Shapiro: A Poet in Human Relations", CLA Journal, Vol. 1, issue of March 1958, pp. 97-100.

This article does not have a direct relationship to this thesis except that it is an insight to the practice of personalism in the poetry of Shapiro and thus is of interest in relationship to the critical tenets of Shapiro in the area of personalism.

Spector, Robert D., "Wide Vision for Narrow Verse", Saturday Review, Vol. 43, issue of August 27, 1960, p. 26.
This is a rather favorable review of Start with the Sun.

Untermeyer, Louis, "War Poets and Others", Yale Review, Vol. 35, issue of Winter 1946, pp. 335-338.
In this article Untermeyer mentions Shapiro on p. 338 among the War Poets. Untermeyer is favorable in his judgments of Shapiro.

White, Gertrude M., "Must We Choose Between Whitman and Eliot?", Walt Whitman Review, Vol. 6, issue of December 1960, p. 10.

This is a well reasoned article which criticizes Shapiro's attitude in Start with the Sun in which he sets up Whitman and Eliot as natural opposites.

Williams, William Carlos, "Shapiro Is All Right", Kenyon Review, Vol. 8, issue of Winter 1946, pp. 123-126.
Williams' remarks are favorable. Since Shapiro has been so generous in his opinions about Williams, it is interesting as far as this thesis is concerned to see Williams' understanding and approbation of Shapiro.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to present and analyze Karl Shapiro's standing in the field of criticism and more especially to present and analyze his own doctrine on the nature and function of literature. The principal tenets of Shapiro's doctrine are then evaluated on the basis of the critical theories of Jacques Maritain.

Part One of the thesis establishes the fact of Shapiro's recognition in the field of literary criticism and presents his opposition to Eliot and the new criticism in general. It is also shown that this opposition is of high emotional content.

Part Two of the thesis presents the tenets of Karl Shapiro in the area of the theory of criticism. From a great number of books and articles by Shapiro there evolves a body of doctrine of literary criticism. His theory of the creative process is presented and analyzed. This theory is characterized by its emphasis on experience and a non-scientific or non-intellectual approach to art and the making of art. Shapiro has little patience with an academic approach to literature. The function of the imagination, emotions and the elements of prosody are underlined. Furthermore, a presentation and analysis of Shapiro's opinions about the function of literature shows that he is in-

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tolerant of any pressures on the artist which may decrease his freedom. He has little or no admiration for professional critics and insists upon the value of the judgment of the general audience. Neither, in his opinion, should literature be used to achieve practical ends. Shapiro does admit that, although art must be free, it is, nevertheless, closely related to other realities especially history, faith and mysticism.

Part Three of the thesis evaluates the Cardinal Points of Shapiro's doctrine. A comparison of Shapiro's doctrine with that of Maritain makes the deficiencies of Shapiro's opinions clear, although a superficial agreement between the two critics is apparent. The comparison leads inevitably to the conclusion that Shapiro is deficient in the philosophical habit and that, in general, he does not proceed deeply enough into the various aspects of the nature of art and its function to be able to add any notable contribution to the accumulated data in the field of literary criticism.

This thesis concludes that further investigation into Shapiro's tenets on the basis of other criteria would not prove notably fruitful since the criterion in this thesis has sufficiently indicated the deficiencies of his theories. This thesis further concludes that Shapiro's acceptance by other critics and his popularity in the field of

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literary criticism is not justified by the intrinsic merits
of his theories.