



Synopsis

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SYNOPSIS

THE EMPEROR JONES AND MACBETH

bn Toshio Kimura

This brief article is intended to discuss certain points of resemblance between Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, a play of "the swelling act of the imperial theme" in the Elizabethan period, and O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*, one of the representative expressionistic plays in contemporary America.

As in the story of the rise and fall of a no-king, Macbeth in "borrow'd robes" comes to feel "his title hang loose about him, like a giant's robe upon a dwarfish thief," so no-Emperor Jones' pants become "so torn away that what is left of them is no better than a breech cloth." The "fair is foul, and foul is fair" pattern of irony in *Macbeth* has its counterpart in the contrast of "black" and "white" in *The Emperor Jones*. Macbeth at first thinks "Come what come may, time and the hour runs through the roughest day" and Jones, when he is going out of the palace, is firmly convinced that he will "be 'cross de plain to de edge of de forest by time dark comes," but neither of them can come out safe. Jones' frantic wandering in the forest corresponds to Macbeth's "I am in blood stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er." Fear stricken of their own crimes, both of them see visions. (It is noteworthy that, not being sustained by the sense of any settled social, moral or providential order, Jones' regressive psychology does not tend toward the spiritual exaltation that Macbeth attains, and exclamations and low slang take the place of rich poetry.) The "knock" that Macbeth hears in II. ii., haunts Jones too throughout the play in the persistent beat of the tom-tom. Macbeth falls when

he knows that "the wood began to move" and that "Macduff was from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd," and Jones is brought down by the "silver bullet." As *Macbeth* is closed when he himself becomes "the show and gaze o' the time" after vainly trying to "look like the time" "to beguile the time," so *The Emperor Jones* is closed with Smithers' sneer "Where's yer 'igh an' mighty airs now, yer bloomin, Majesty? . . ."

In the final analysis, however, the strong resemblance of the two plays just pointed out helps all the more to sharply distinguish them. "The time is free" again at the end of *Macbeth*, but the world around Jones seems to enjoy no such free time even after Jones is shot to death.

THE TRADITION OF THE IMAGINATION
THEORY IN THE ENGLISH
LITERARY CRITICISM

by Masao Okamoto

It was not until the Romantic age that the theory of Imagination, if it might be called in such a name, was firmly established in the long history of English literary criticism. Before that age, since the Renaissance, the tradition of the Imitation theory founded on the popular interpretation of Aristotle's *Poetics* being prevalent, the idea of imagination never grew into a theory, though the idea of invention or device was sometimes seen in the critics especially of the eighteenth century. In the latter half of the eighteenth century the idea of imagination began to appear predominantly in some Romantic poets such as Young and Blake, but the idea had not yet grown into a theory. And it was S. T. Coleridge, poet and critic, who first established the theory of imagination in the history of English literary criticism.

The history of literary criticism corresponds to the history of philosophy in general in the modern times, and the idea of the creative mind came out of the idea of 'ego' or 'self' in European philosophy. The history of literary criticism is nothing but the history of the discovery of creative mind caused by the awakening of 'ego' in literature. In the Romantic age writers began to know that the literary works are born not by the writer's imitation of the outer world, but by the expression of those which are within the heart of the writer. It was really a Copernican Turn in the history of literary criticism.

Coleridge, being a philosopher as well as a poet, attained this

monumental achievement by the help of his knowledge of philosophy both English and German, to say nothing of his poet's insight. He inherited the idea of imagination especially of those philosophers as Plotinus, Hume, Hartley, and Kant. I intended to elucidate the theory of imagination entertained by Coleridge in the light of the those philosophers' writings. Especially I wished to elucidate Coleridge's definition of imagination from the point of view of hysthology.

A SURVEY OF "HAKUMEIKI" BY TAKUBOKU HIRATA

by Umejiro Kinugasa

The Bungakukai (*The Literary World*), a literary magazine, made its first appearance in the 26th year of Meiji (1893), and went out of existence in the 31st (1898). Several young lovers of literature wrote for it, and among them was Tokuboku Hirata (1873-1943) who in after years became a remarkable translator and essayist.

This literary magazine was like a vat in fermentation with burning passions of those who aspired to beauty and lived on a lofty ideal. It is true that most of them had pessimistic ideas and painted dismal pictures of life, but they introduced fresh romanticism into this country through their agony and passion, while they made the heaven which grew up into naturalistic literature.

Young Hirata studied English language and literature at The First High School and Tokyo Higher Normal School. He was such a good scholar that one of his masters praised him sky-high and said, "Hirata is superior to me in some point." Dr. Ernest F. Fenollosa, author of *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, is said to have been one of those wonderful teachers who very much influenced him.

Once he read *Life of John Keats* by William Michael Rossetti (1887), in which he found Keats's blighted-love letters to Fanny Brawne. Sympathizing with poor Keats, he translated the letters into Japanese and added his own deep impressions to his translation, which he published in the 15th number of *The Bungakukai* (1894). His emotional essay was entitled "Hakumeiki" (A Record of Sad Fate).

Just at that time he was as lovesick for the sister of one of his

literary friends as Keats had been. It is possible that his anguish of love and sympathy with Keats induced him to write "Hakumeiki". In his essay we find not only sufferings of ideals and disillusion, but romantic yearnings and passions, and thus we realize that he was greatly influenced by this ill-starred poet.