SYNOPSES

THE QUARREL BETWEEN THE MILLER AND THE REEVE IN THE *CANTERBURY TALES:* Review of its Motive and Revenge

Jiro Takimoto

Many critics have discussed the quarrel between the Miller and the Reeve in the *Canterbury Tales,* especially with reference to its motive and revenge. Concerning the motive, for instance, Tupper says that "the strife between the Reeve and the Miller is thoroughly traditional" in the medieval life of the English manor. Manly brings out the Reeve's "living model", an anonymous manager of the Norfolk estate of the Pembroke family, saying that "Chaucer had in mind two persons from the same district—perhaps from the same manor—who had a long-standing quarrel." Contrary to these factual commentaries, Pratt and Lumiansky, the school of New Criticism, hold the opinion, from the structual standpoint of the story, that "the Miller worked years ago as servant boy in the Reeve's household, at the time when the Reeve, then a carpenter, was a cuckold by a cleric." To this opinion Owen raises an objection on the ground of the chronological discrepancy in the representation of Oswald the Reeve, who, according to Pratt's interpretation, should be the same person as John the Carpenter.

As for the revenge, the problem of the Northern Dialect used by the two clerks in the Reeve's Tale is chiefly discussed, because it is regarded as the soul of the Reeve's Tale devised skilfully as retaliation against the Miller. Tolkien interprets it as "a linguistic joke" primarily to amuse the audience, as is often seen in French fabliaux. Unsatisfied

with this view of Tolkien's, Muscatine insists, from the stylistic viewpoint, that the Northern Dialect means the crudest scheme to retaliate upon the Miller.

The aim of this thesis lies in reviewing these interpretations by many critics on the premise that the *Canterbury Tales*, though unfinished, is not a collection of tales, but a work of " a complex whole ".

SATIRE IN *AN EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT*

Yasuo Iwasaki

This is a satiric poem on persons well-known to the eighteenth-century men of letters. Motives for writing a satire may have been Pope's own indignation and retaliation against those people for various personal reasons. Of course, it is interesting to see from a biographical point of view, what caused him to write the poem but here I rather treat the poem separately from the biographical factors.

As already mentioned in Maynard Mack's *The Augustans* and *The Muse of Satire*, the speaker "I" in the poem "must not be taken as identical with the historical Alexander Pope", but as "the dramatic Alexander Pope". Therefore, the satiric speaker is "an assumed identity, a *persona*." His functions is to persuade us of the truth of what the poem talks and represents.

The speaker gives us six images of himself: (1) a sincere wisher for a peaceful life, (2) a victim of evils, (3) a man of courtesy, (4) a true poet, (5) a reformer of evils, and (6) a virtuous man. These six images are the attributes of the speaker's, who figures as a perfect and ideal man in morality as well as in intellect in the poem.

The objects against which the speaker directed his satire are classified into four sorts of men: (1) poetasters void of intellect, (2) Atticus, a successful poet lacking of virtue, (3) patrons, ironically speaking, the destroyers of literature, and (4) the detestable Sporus, an aristocratic. The satiric objects in the poem give us the anti-images of the speaker, namely, the images of nothingness in intellect and virtue.

Accordingly, this poem has a positive side and a negative one: it represents the fullness of virtue and intellect as seen in the speaker, and the nothingness of them as in Sporus for instance. The contrast

between these two sides is brought out in order to teach us what is true and what is false. These different kinds of images are typified by the speaker and Sporus in the last part of the poem, and a finishing stroke of satire is given to the latter. The speaker attains his aim to find out and show who is the king of dunces. This is a kind of drama, and no matter what motives of writing the poem the historical Alexander Pope might have, the literary value of the poem seems to lie in these dramatic effects.

VANITY FAIR

— Becky Sharp as a Woman-Picaro —

Touichiro Ohta

The picaresque novel which emphasized the lower elements of reality was a fiction of the anti-hero. The spirit of the story of the anti-hero was satirical and corrective. In England, the romances of roguery which reached England from Spain bridged the gulf between the old story for the story's sake and the new story of the ethical life. They promoted the development of the modern novel. The picaro's aim was a study of actual life; his method was observation, and his subject was everyday happenings. The picaro of the picaresque novel appeared as a person who told his adventures in the world. The deeds proper to the rogue were cheats, tricks and frauds. In most cases he was born of poor parents who did not grace their union by a ceremony. Often he became an orphan. He had to take care of himself or perish. In order to live, he had to serve somebody, and so he flitted from one master to another. He outwitted all of them and the satire in his narrative is his description of them. Having run through various strange vicissitudes, measuring by his rule of roguery the vanity of human estates, he brought his story to a close.

The literature of roguery arose in Spain in the middle of the 16 th century. It was the comic biography of an anti-hero who made his way in the world through the service to masters, satirizing their personal faults. The picaro could realize all tricks and shams in the world, he was not easily cheated by any one, and he removed the veil of "romance" with his sharp, critical observing eye. With his free, critical insight and his too strong curiosity about people, he could not belong to ordinary society, or even to a particular special one; it is

said, therefore, that he could not help becoming an adventurer in the world, a servant flitting from one master to another. Society was reviewed by the picaro, minutely, fearlessly, mockingly. It was true that a picaro, entrenching himself in a safe citadel, keeping himself out of harm's way, satirized his masters' faults, but also, gradually, he came to describe, satirize himself and betray his own weakness. In seeking a place for peaceful living, the picaroes of the 18 th century became almost gentlemen, landlords in the country.

There was always the element of picaresque in Thackeray's works. In *VANITY FAIR*, Becky Sharp would be regarded as a woman-picaro—anti-heroine. Her mother was a French dancer, and her father a poor painter. She was deprived of her parents and became an orphan in her early age. Having a head, lacking heart, she was quite passionless and distinctive in roguery. Her wit secured her immunity from contempt or condemnation. There was in her a good deal of the marionette operated upon a single automatic principle—avarice. She would betray her friends for an advantage; her conception of love was a profitable marriage. She flitted from Sedley, Rawdon to Lord Steyne, and at last sought a place for peaceful living. She excelled all her literary forbears in finesse and vitality. Thackeray was called a satiric moralist; his satiric element would be probably produced by the creation of Becky Sharp, anti-heroine. We could not realize the literary value of this *VANITY FAIR* without regarding Becky Sharp as a woman-picaro.

DICKENS'S ADORATION OF NATURE

— in connection with sentimentalism in his earlier works —

Masaie Matsumura

It is evident that Dickens was skeptical from the beginning about the progress of nineteenth century society. Progress was for him a corrupting factor of human nature. He was a believer in the goodness of human nature. Man is good by nature, and if he were allowed to keep the natural state, happiness would be concomitant. As it was, Dickens stroke an angry blow at the unnatural machinery of society.

When he wrote *Pickwick Papers*, Dickens was still, as it were, in the atmosphere of the eighteenth century—the age when nature was not yet wiped out by the artificial progress. Mr. Pickwick was an ideal gentleman, who was rich, but benevolent, cheerful and innocent. But almost at the same time, Dickens began to be afraid that such kind of ideal gentleman was receding fast to the past ; no longer was the Golden Age. And there came into his works Mr. Dombey and Mr. Scrooge, who were as rich as Mr. Pickwick, but cold-hearted and unnatural. They were men whose nature was corrupted by covetousness, selfishness, pride, and jealousy, all which were the evils of the nineteenth century society as Dickens perceived it.

But Dickens kept a firm hold on the belief in the innocence and natural instinct of man, creating Oliver Twist and Little Nell as his first molds of the belief. As long as the natural instinct is kept unhampered by decaying or man-made customs and traditions, perfectibility is assured. Dickens had much in common with Worthworth in his adoration of nature and the innocence of a child, and in his preference of the country life to that of the town, Dickens was a successor of

Fielding, Smollett, and Goldsmith, while his high estimation of sentiment and emotion closely connected him with the school of sensibility of the eighteenth century.

The emotional interpretation of nature was a teaching of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury. In his *The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody,* Theocles, voicing Shaftesbury's own ideas, speaks of the Spirit of Nature, and meditation in nature awakes in him the belief that in so harmonious a universe, there could be no evil and that the human heart is as beautiful and good as the great Spirit of Nature.

Dickens, following the teaching of the theory as he understood it, was no admirer of the noble savage, but he had faith in noble children and noble idiots. The corruption of a social regime can be cured not by revolution, but by changing the heart of the men concerned. And to preach the principle, he resorted to sentimental idealization of human nature, which characterizes some of his earlier works such as *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop.*

Dickens was a humanitarian reformer after all. He rejected original sin, and the religious doctrine that makes faith a torment was nothing but a cant. Religion must not make man gloomy, but must make him cheerful. Hence he wrote "Sunday under Three Heads" against Sir Andrew Agnew's "Sabbath Bills".

Dickens's sentimentalism was due to his susceptibility to the tender emotions, and sympathy for unfortunate victims of the social institutions, though he was not always free from mere indulgence in emotion for its own sake, as in the scene of Nell's death. Carlyle and Lord Jeffrey were among the enthusiastic admirers of Dickens's fine achievement of sentimentality. But there is no denying that he conceded to the public taste, as far as his sentimentalism is concerned.

Dickens was far deeply preoccupied with the dark of society, and his uneasiness about evils, growing almost a nightmare, came to defy his moral sense as he proceded on to a later period.