

“Pleasing All”: Thomas Heywood’s
Preservation of the Bases of Elizabethan Theatre

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I

In “To the Reader” prefixed to *The English Traveller* (1633) Thomas Heywood boasts in an apparently humble manner that there are two hundred and twenty “tragi-comedies” in which he has “had either an entire hand, or at the least a main finger” (Shepherd, vol. 4).¹ Thomas Heywood, a fellow actor-playwright of Shakespeare, was actively engaged in writing plays for a long period during almost half a century from the mid-1590s’ to the eve of the closure of the theatres in 1642. In such a long career, as he himself reveals, he had written much more plays than any of his contemporaries had done. From his productivity it can be inferred that just at the age when the genre of drama had attained unprecedented popularity Heywood’s plays were also such as might have been received with much applause and have won great acclaim. And yet, they have been underestimated by most Elizabethan scholars so far.² Amongst such writers T. S. Eliot criticizes Heywood’s work most bitterly; after sarcastically speaking of Heywood as “a facile and sometimes felicitous purveyor of goods to the popular taste” (172), Eliot goes on to say:

These indisputable plays exhibit what may be called the minimum degree of unity. . . . The sensibility is merely that of ordinary people in ordinary life. . . . Behind the motions of his personages, the shadows of the human world, there is no reality of moral synthesis; to inform the verse there is no vision, none of the artist's power to give undefinable unity to the most various material. (175)

Compared with the plays of contemporary playwrights, of which Shakespearean plays are the foremost example, what may be called "unity" (which Eliot thinks is the vital thing in terms of both moral and poetic vision in drama) is entirely lacking in Heywood's plays. Eliot specifies their salient quality as "sentimental reality," not "moral reality" (180), because Heywood gathers his materials from ordinary life, and makes no moral judgements which might elevate them into the poetic realm.

Setting aside for the time being the question of whether or not the themes Heywood handles are a direct reflection of the current ordinary life, it is nevertheless true that the poetic diction is very simple and unsophisticated. Also, in terms of dramatic construction, the plots are in many cases coarse and absurd; where there are both a main plot and a sub-plot in one play, they are merely juxtaposed; there are few cases where these two plots are interconnected effectively enough to produce a coherent meaning. In comparison with Shakespearean plays, Heywood's naturally appear to be unskilful.

However, did Heywood really lack dramatic skills? Can we ever dismiss his plays merely as hackwork? For as M.C. Bradbrook observes, we can easily recognize his "fine sense of

construction” (135) in such plays as *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (1638) and *The English Traveller*. These plays do have neat and ingenious plots in the tradition of Terence and Plautus, thus proving that he was not completely ignorant of sophisticated dramatic skills. We also ought to take notice of his frank prefatory statements in various works. (In these statements, especially in dedications to his patrons, he humbly and yet unaffectedly expresses his own attitude as a playwright.) What is most striking in these remarks is that, while humbly admitting the limitations of his talent for drama, he firmly believes in his own diverting and pleasing dramaturgy. This is in spite of the fact that recurring references to the didactic function of drama in *An Apology for Actors* (1612) make it clear that he had, at least at one time, concurred with the current trend of emphasizing the utilitarian effect of acting.³ Nonetheless, he puts a particular emphasis upon “diversion” as a theatrical effect. The title-page of *Apology* is adorned with a deliberately adapted passage from Horace’s *Ars Poetica*; Heywood changes Horace’s *Aut Prodesse volunt aut delectare poëtae* (“Poets aim either to benefit, or to amuse”) to *Et prodesse solent & deléctare* (“[Poets] desire at once to amuse and to benefit”) (Loeb 478). He affirms the Horatian proposition of “delightful instruction” and goes on to reinforce the function of “diversion” by rewriting Horace’s well-known passage. Furthermore, significantly enough, Heywood is convinced that his plays with this dramaturgy can be accepted not only by the general public, as he claims in his dedications, but also by learned people.⁴ Heywood thus had a belief in his own dramaturgy, and in a dramaturgy universally appealing to both the

uneducated and the learned.

The Elizabethan drama must have simultaneously satisfied the groundlings and the critics at court. In view of this circumstance, I think, Heywood's plays assume a greater importance; they can be claimed as repositories of the fundamental and universal elements in drama. Yet, the Elizabethan drama which could appeal to both the uneducated and the learned was not unchanging. In the Elizabethan period, the rapid change in economic and social life caused the change of literary tastes. Another question is, therefore, while Heywood had his own ideal form of drama, what position he took under the circumstance of gradually changing tastes of the audience.

The plays Heywood wrote range over the histories, the adventures, the domestics and the mythologies. Of all, the two genres of history and adventure most reflect the universally appealing dramaturgy peculiar to him.

In this essay I would like to survey mainly those of the two genres with special attention to *The Fair Maid of the West, Part I* (perf. c. 1604–10, published 1631), in which at once the life of lower-born people and the larger themes of contemporary society, even though half-fictionalized, are depicted.

II

What are Heywood's diverting plays like? What sort of dramatic themes and theatrical devices does Heywood adopt in his plays?

Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, which is presumed to have been first acted at the Blackfriars in 1607,

has long been known for its comments on the public theatre repertoire. In the “Induction” of this play, Citizen, jumping onto the stage, complains in this way: “this seven years there hath been plays at this house, I have observed it, you have still girds at Citizens.” Citizen insists on putting on stage the plays which express admiration for London citizens’ honour, not those which present ironic pictures of their lives. And the result is the appearance of Rafe, an apprentice grocer, in the role of knight-errant and as a representative of London citizens. This play is a patchwork of the repertoires of both the private and public theatres, and consequently there are occasional clashes between Citizen and Boy, a chorus-like actor at the Blackfriars. The following scene attracts our attention because the clashes are exposed most conspicuously:

Boy. Besides it will shew ill-favourdly to have a
Grocers prentice to court a kings daughter.

Citizen. Will it so sir? you are well read in Histories: I pray
you what was sir *Dagonet*? was not he prentice to a
Grocer in London? read the plays of the *Four Prentices
of London* where they toss their pikes so. . . .
(IV.i.43–48)

Citizen, referring to Heywood’s *Four Prentices of London* (perf. c. 1600, pub. 1615) as a good model, proposes that Rafe should court king’s daughter. But Boy dismisses as nonsense his idea of uniting the persons who differ from each other in social standing. In those days, the adventure plays, of which chief characteristic is a lowly protagonist’s fantastic adventure and his final achievement of a high position through it, had been an extraordinary attraction under the influence of Queen Eliza-

beth's control over the sea.⁵ The increasing power of the nation under Elizabeth overlapped with the swelling enthusiasm of low-born people. Heywood deals with this enthusiasm in the same way but puts it into his own plays of this kind like *Four Prentices* and *I Fair Maid* in so daring a way. Probably that is why Beaumont dared to name Heywood's play for his satire. The main plot of *I Fair Maid*, for example, is that Bess Bridges, a tavern maid, makes a romantic adventure in search of the body of her supposedly dead lover, Spencer, and is finally reunited with him despite the courtship of Fetz, King of Barbary. But, on the other hand, a series of sea battles between England and Spain still fought after the Armada becomes the historical setting for Bess's adventure; first, the opening scene begins with the thriving atmosphere in Plymouth, where England's lively soldiers are gathering for the Islands Voyage launched after the success of the Cadiz Raid under the command of Essex in 1596–97; secondly, the internal strife for the distinguished services to the state in the Islands Voyage between Sir Walter Raleigh and the Earl of Essex is implicitly represented, as evidenced by the words of a Spanish soldier, Bess's prisoner at Fayal, "English Raleigh won and spoiled it [Fayal] first" (IV.iv.31). In fact, Raleigh adroitly dissociated himself from Essex, his chief commander, and claimed credit at this expenditure. The fact is of historical importance in that after this Raleigh secured a strong position on the one hand and Essex headed for his fall which culminated in the rebellion in 1601 on the other. In the course of this play, thus, we cannot come to distinguish between the episode of love romance and that of historically famous battle. Such a direct combination of an

unimportant matter and a serious one is a feature discernible in many of Heywood’s plays. Besides the adventures, also in the histories like *If You Do Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* and *Edward IV*, Heywood attempts this combination in a mere parallel form. In *1 If You Do Know Not Me* the episode of suffering period of Queen Elizabeth before the coronation is placed side by side with that of achievements of good citizens like John Gresham, and also in *Edward IV* the episode of exploits in war by Edward IV is put next to that of changes of fortune of Jane Shore from a goldsmith’s wife to the mistress of Edward IV. In both cases, the two plots are put into a play so absurdly that every critic might be tempted to suspect Heywood’s talent for a dramatist. Taking into account his Plautine plots found in some plays such as *The English Traveller* and *The Captives* (pub. 1885),⁶ however, the way he juxtaposes his two plots without an apparent connection is nothing but his own invention resulting from his simultaneous interest in the humble life of the low-born and the serious theme of the nation.

Heywood is skilful in handling the mood of audience by means of simple theatrical conventions such as disguise and mistaken identity. Bess, living a chaste life in expectation of Spencer’s return, is amorously approached by some apparently courageous rogues. But she chastises Roughman, one of those rogues, for his impudent behaviour by the trick of disguising herself as a brave male soldier to “try what spirit’s in him” (II.ii.152). And later, Bess, again in disguise as a male soldier, sets sail in search of the body of the supposedly dead Spencer and happens to meet him in Barbary. Because of Bess’s male disguise and firm belief in Spencer’s death, however, she is

convinced that what she sees is Spencer's ghost: "Sweet ghost, thy rage forbear; / . . . I am amaz'd; this sight I'll not endure.— / Sleep, sleep, fair ghost, for thy revenge is sure" (IV.v.149–152). Bess's disguise, thus, brings about an entirely ridiculous confusion leading to the delayed happy reunion between Bess and Spencer. The false news about Spencer's death is also caused by an absurd trick; Spencer is seriously wounded in the settlement of a quarrel at Fayal. Goodlack, Spencer's friend, in leaving Spencer apparently on his deathbed and going aboard bound for England, hears the mourning bell "for Spencer who this night died of a mortal wound" (II.iv.15–16). But before long it becomes clear that the man who died of the wound was not Spencer, Bess's lover, but a man of the same name. Goodlack, never discovering this, gives Bess the false news of Spencer's death. These devices, absurd as they are, make the pendulum of the audience's feelings swing greatly from side to side; from deep disappointment to considerable relief.

Another very remarkable feature in Heywood's plays is that there are some tear-jerking sentimental scenes. The following scene, for instance, is typical of this aspect of Heywood's work. Bess, informed of Spencer's death, is expressing herself in tear-provoking words, speaking to Spencer's picture:

Thou resemblest him
 For whose sweet safety I was every morning
 Down on my knees, and with the lark's sweet tunes
 I did begin my prayers; and when sad sleep
 Had charm'd all eyes, when none save the bright stars
 Were up and waking, I remember'd thee.
 But all, all to no purpose. (*1 Fair Maid*, III.iv.45–51)

One touching expression after another connected with the conjunction “and,” along with the regular blank verse, strengthen Bess’s deep sadness and appeal for sympathy. Another sentimental scene of this kind can be found in the pitiful words of Jane Shore at the moment of her downfall from a high position of Edward IV’s mistress. The last scene of *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1607), in addition, in which Mrs. Frankford on her deathbed begs her husband’s forgiveness for her unchastity with similar tear-provoking words is the most famous. The sentimental element in drama is, in most cases, judged as an inferior one, but in the case of Heywood his gift in the treatment of audience’s mood manifests itself in this feature.

It is characteristic of Heywood’s diverting plays, no doubt, that they display an unsophisticated conventionality which even uneducated people can understand and respond to, and as such Eliot looks upon Heywood as a typical inferior author who accepts “whatever morality is current, because [he is] not interested to analyze the ethics” (179). Considering Heywood’s work in the context of the increasing cleavage between the private and public theatres hinted at in the passage from *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* quoted above (in which Boy comments that “it will shew ill-favourdly to have a Grocers prentice to court a kings daughter”), Robert Weimann regards Heywood as a spokesman for the most vulgar and uneducated audience, for he was a resident playwright for the Red Bull, the most notoriously low-brow of the London theatres. He argues about Heywood’s plays thus:

Heywood, à son tour, s’est éloigné dans ses pièces senti-

mentales et domestiques du «pot-pourri» des University Wits, par exemple, ou entre un plus grand nombre d'ingrédients. Dans le monde de Heywood la «passion» est considérée presque comme une faiblesse, l'ambition ou le crime comme une absence de raison et de religion. . . . Dans ce monde le sentiment et la sensation peuvent aisément devenir une compensation mélodramatique à l'unité de la pensée active et de l'action sensuelle dans les pièces plus anciennes. (“Déclin” 824)

This analysis, it can be said, is worth noticing in that Weimann considers Heywood's plays in the context of changing theatrical tastes. Here again, however, the critical standard is “unité”; Heywood's plays, mainly appealing to the uneducated in the Red Bull, are examples of a degraded form, because they lack “raison et religion”—what Eliot calls “ethics.” The deep-rooted distorted view which looms large behind both Eliot's and Weimann's condemnations is that plays like Heywood's, composed of sentimental and un-intellectualized conventions, constitute an inferior and degraded form; moral standards always come first in dramatic studies.

Heywood, on the other hand, seems to stand aloof from such prejudice. He deliberately adopts as many sentimental and un-intellectualized conventions as possible, based on his steadfast conviction that, “least the Auditorie should be dulled with serious courses (which are meere weightie and materiall),” poets ought to

in everie Act present some Zanie with his Mimick action,
to breed in the lesse capable, mirth and laughter: *For they
that write to all, must strive to please all. And as such
fashion themselves to a multitude, consisting of spectators*

severally addicted. . . . (original emphasis, *Gynaikeion*, To the Reader)

Judging from the dramatic themes he treats, and the theatrical devices he employs, Heywood had a sharp insight into the universal sentiments lying in the depths of our minds. And he makes the sentiments and responses of the lowly people the fundamentals of universality. His ideal form of drama, which he tries to embody in his diverting plays, is one which allures the uneducated first, and then the learned; in other words, one which aims to be universal in appeal.

III

An examination of the political and social dimensions of *I Fair Maid* also wears Heywood’s positive attitude towards the treatment of all the strata in society, since the parallel between Bess and Queen Elizabeth, even if absurd, gives a wide perspective on the world with which Heywood deals.

As Irving Ribner points out, Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene* was a model for political allegory in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods (285). The most striking example is Thomas Dekker’s *The Whore of Babylon* (1607), which is based on the struggle between Protestant England and Catholic Rome. *I Fair Maid* has also a similar framework: the ship “Negro,” which sets sail to seek for the body of the supposedly dead Spencer, in no time turns into a symbol of the English fleet. Bess’s desire for revenge upon the Spanish fleet that is reported to have ill-treated Spencer’s body because it is “an heretic body” (IV.iv.49) metamorphoses into Protestant England’s

insatiable desire to expel the Spanish fleet, the representative of Catholic power. Throughout this play the English fleet under the command of Bess is consistently characterised as “merciful;” the Spanish fleet, on the contrary, is described as “uncharitable” and “cruel.” Within the figure of Bess, who is at once “chaste” and “valiant,” are reflected such characters as Gloriana, Una, Mercilla and Britomart (shadows of the “most royall queen”) in *FQ*. The reference to Essex and Raleigh who with Spenser played their important roles in promoting the colonization of Ireland must be also an illustration of Heywood’s awareness of *FQ*. And above all, the most remarkable procedure he adopts from Spenser is the idealization of contemporary society through the use of the pastoral convention.

In Book VI of *FQ* Calidore, a courteous knight, comes across a wonderful vision on Mount Acidale, an extremely beautiful setting where Colin Clout merrily pipes for his love, a lovely shepherdess, with a troupe of ladies around her dancing to the tune of his pipe. Spenser makes us encounter the Noble Savage in this pastoral scene; the lovely shepherdess is merely “a cuntry lasse” (VI.x.25) yet at the same time embodies “diviune resemblaunce, beauty soueraine rare, firme Chastity, and courtesie” (VI.x.27). He here presents a true meaning of abstract notions such as “sovereignty,” “chastity” and “courtesy” through the paradoxical procedure that the social and respectable life at court cannot be established until one experiences the lonely and simple life in the country. But greater attention is not paid to the pastoral simple life; rather, there is an explicit concentration on both of two definitely different classes. What should be stressed here is that the extremes in social rank are

united in order for the more fundamental truth to be brought out.

An important aspect of pastoral lies also in the fact that the introduction of pastoral world has a special bearing on the real circumstances of contemporary society. In *Some Versions of Pastoral* William Empson, interpreting pastoral as “a social process,” makes an illuminating suggestion in this connection:

For such crucial literary achievements are likely to attempt to reconcile some conflict between the parts of a society; literature is a social process, and also an attempt to reconcile the conflicts of an individual in whom those of society will be mirrored. (19)

The pastoral world is brought into existence by “reconciling some conflict between the parts of society.” What deserves our notice is that just out of social discord the world in which different people are in concord is created. The pastoral world, we should say, is a utopia, in other words, an ideal place which is sheltered from friction in reality and would be invulnerable to such harms. Yet at the same time, we may add, beneath the surface of the beguiling peace and charm of the ideal pastoral world there is expressed the poet’s deep concern about the forces contesting with one another in his social milieu. Pastoral also serves as a strategy for critical view of real society on the poet’s part. This subtle trick, thus, is the most effective way for the poet to express his complex feelings towards the contemporary society.

Calidore’s intrusion having caused the momentary vision to be banished, then, Colin Clout comments on it as follows:

Sunne of the world, great glory of the sky,
 That all the earth doest lighten with thy rayes,
 Great Gloriana, greatest Maiesty,
 Pardon thy shepheard, mongst so many layes,
 As he hath sung of thee in all his dayes,
 To make one minime of thy poore handmayd,
 And vnderneath thy feete to place her prayse,
 That when thy glory shall be farre displayd
 To future age of her this mention may be made.
 (*FQ*, IV.x.28)

The reason why Colin Clout/Spenser affronts the Queen in this way, by praising a mere “countrey lasse” in regal terms, is, as he himself proclaims, his expectation of the Queen’s eternal reputation as a sovereign of peaceful society.⁷ And yet, the other side of the coin is his keen anxiety for the harsh realities which he had confronted. For Spenser, who had experienced many kinds of bloody conflicts as a lord deputy in Ireland, the pastoral world was probably a place which had been sheltered from such conflicts, an eternally idealized place sought for with nostalgic yearning.

Despite the difference in the direction of vector from one class to the other between *FQ* and *1 Fair Maid*, the harmony between classes is also detectable in the latter; whereas Spenser leads the readers down from the higher to the lower, Heywood makes the audience ascend from the lower to the higher. The procedure is the reverse of Spenser’s treatment of the Noble Savage.

Concerning the harmony between classes, the scene where Mullisheg, King of Fetz in Barbary, compares Bess to Queen Elizabeth is the most remarkable case in point:

Mull. Sweet, your name.

Bess. Elizabeth.

Mull. There’s virtue in that name.
 The virgin queen, so famous through the world,
 The mighty empress of the maiden isle,
 Whose predecessors have o’errun great France,
 Whose powerful hand doth still support the Dutch
 And keeps the potent King of Spain in awe,
 Is not she titled so?

.....
Bess. Mighty Fetz,
 You cast a blush upon my maiden cheek
 To pattern me with her. Why, England’s queen,
 She is the only phoenix of her age,
 The pride and glory of the Western Isles.
 (*1 Fair Maid*, V.i.87–94, 96–100)

Bess remains chaste for her lover, gives alms to the poor and fights a valiant battle as a female soldier; she is at once chaste, merciful and valiant enough to be compared to Queen Elizabeth. Low-born as she is, Bess has all virtues required to influence all the people in the play. Bess, a representative of the middle classes,⁸ on the other hand, to borrow Empson’s words, represents “the whole class, its [the middle classes’] defining property” (81). Therefore, it is when Bess coincides with Queen Elizabeth, portrayed as the triumphant ruler over Western Europe, that the feeling that the rising power of the middle-class people is essential to the might of England is produced. It comes to us as no surprise, of course, that Heywood, who continued to write plays mainly for a low-brow audience, should focus so strongly on their encouragement. But this gives the impression that their power makes a powerful contribution to

the imperialist expansion and prosperity of England under Queen Elizabeth; or, put differently, that it was just because of the solidarity between classes that the golden age under Queen Elizabeth could be achieved.

Furthermore, the golden age achieved by Queen Elizabeth is represented as an ideal one. In *I Fair Maid*, the historical fact that Queen Elizabeth commanded the sea as monarch of the mightiest maritime power suddenly gives way to the historical fiction of England's reaching into exotic Barbary, that is, northern Africa. It is not difficult to discern behind this structure a strong longing that the thriving England where all the people in society are united would last and expand eternally. More importantly, Heywood sheds a greater light on the positive side for Essex in the episode of expedition to the Islands while making a slight mention of its negative side. This play was probably performed after the rebellion of Essex in 1601. Heywood nostalgically portrayed Essex whose popular favour coexisted with the lively sentiments among common people. The consistently optimistic picture of the social life, for these reasons, is in no way a real reflection of moral vision of contemporary society, but rather is a wish-fulfilment. And interestingly enough, if, as we have already observed, such an ideal world is a place sheltered from the conflicts in contemporary society, then it can be said that the cleavage between classes, in other words, the undercurrent of the isolation of the middle classes from the harmonious society where all the strata had once felt at ease with one another, is implicitly hinted.

IV

In *An Apology for Actors* explicit reference to two points that are suggestive of Heywood's concern about the tendency to impair the feeling of solidarity between classes can be found. The first point is the Puritan movement towards closing the theatres; Heywood refers to "the sundry exclamations of many seditious Sectists" who intend to "limit the use of certaine publicke Theatres" (B1^r) as the primary incentive to write his *Apology*. This is a notable piece of evidence for the increase in the Puritan power, although the closure of the theatres was yet some way in the distance. The power of this movement is also suggested by Robert Weimann's comparison between the 1598 and 1603 editions of Stow's *Survey of London*: in the 1603 edition Stow succumbed to the Puritans, eliminating allusions to theatres he had made in the 1598 edition ("Déclin" 827). What is more, Empson significantly argues that the prevalence of Puritanism among the middle classes made the pastoral trick invalid; Puritanism, which caused them to feel that they were self-conceited if they were absorbed in the theatre or the other arts, was a powerful cause of cleavage between the higher and the lower (12). The nascent Puritan attack on the arts was bound, sooner or later, to cause cracks in the solidarity between classes and in the concomitant seclusion of the pastoral world, and finally to lead to the complete loss of such pastoral world.

Secondly, a division of dramatic tastes is also implied in *Apology*: "Now to speak of some abuse lately crept into the quality. . . with the particularizing of priuate mens humors (yet aliue) Noble-men, & others. I know it distastes many" (G4^v).

Actually, in the reign of James I, plays with large political themes (including Heywood's) gradually became unacceptable because of the strengthening of censorship. Instead, court plays like those of Beaumont and Fletcher, which focused on the king and the court, became more common.⁹

That Heywood was aware of these changes and was swimming against the currents of contemporary society can be seen in "To the Reader," which was prefixed to *Four Prentices* when the play was published about fifteen years after its first performance. In this text, he still continues to insist on the honourable achievements of the middle classes, asking the readers to remember the old stability and success in the service of the cause of Protestant England (see Shepherd, vol. 1). But ironically enough, his expectation has gone awry; the gap has widened between his ideal society where all the classes are harmoniously united and the real society where the stability of classes has been disrupted by the prevalence of Puritanism. Another testimony of Heywood's unyielding attitude can be detected in the way that, contrary to the contemporary dramatic characteristic of focusing on one point, that is, the court, he writes the plays that have a tendency to expand outward; in 2 *Fair Maid*, apparently written more than fifteen years after *Part 1* in response to the continuing popularity of the latter, the scene extends from Barbary into Florence, Mantua and Ferrara. It is true, of course, that until the second decade of the seventeenth century the influence of the Puritan attack on the theatre was to some degree limited because of the sovereign's patronage. However, the germs of the circumstances which would make it difficult for Heywood to write his own plays according

to a dramaturgy which aimed to "please all" already existed. And Heywood remained proud of his own dramaturgy, although he fully breathed the contemporary atmosphere.

Taking account of Heywood's steadfast conviction that playwrights must "please all," therefore, it can be noticed that his attitude towards drama has a direct relevance to the conflicts of contemporary society, and to the concomitant desire for seclusion within an ideal society. Within Heywood's preference for an ideal form, the social and the dramatic go hand in hand; his attitude demonstrates a hankering for an ideal dramatic form, and also for an ideal society which would enable such drama to be produced. His uncompromising stance, in other words, is a sign of his struggle to preserve the most fundamental and universal elements in drama under circumstances of social change and altering dramatic tastes. Heywood's plays, to put it in another way, preserve the bases on which the Elizabethan theatre had developed.

Robert Weimann says the so-called "scene indivisible" which embraced at once the popular and the courtly elements of drama momentarily existed on the Elizabethan stage (*Shakespeare* 169–77). The explorations of this situation which have been made so far, however, have manifested a one-sided rational approach in that they are engaged in revealing the extent to which the plebeian culture was incorporated into the court culture or the activities of humanism. Such studies pay no attention to the emotionally touching elements which are un-intellectualized yet fundamental, because they apparently appeal exclusively to the low-brow. And when it comes to the most extreme cases in dramatic studies, some critics are ab-

sorbed in literary theoretical analyses which completely ignore such dramatic effects. These elements which appeal to the passion of the audience, of course, are difficult to handle in an academic way. But, so long as we employ only such rational and theoretical approaches in examining what dramatic elements can appeal at once to the learned and to the uneducated, we are eternally entangled in a one-sided view that emotionally touching and unsophisticated drama is an inferior and degraded form; and, for that matter, we are likely to overlook the essential elements in drama. Heywood's plays remind us of the fact that the universal appeal of drama resides in the theatrical effects such as shock of wonder and suspended feeling of disbelief. The reconsideration of them, therefore, can help us to maintain a balanced stance in dramatic studies without placing a quite undue emphasis on theoretical analyses.

The plays Heywood wrote with the aim of "pleasing all," are inevitably not always of sophisticated artistic quality. But in the theatres where they were acted, we can imagine his scenes provoking enthusiasm and applause, uniting all present in the pleasure of witnessing a universally appealing form of drama.

NOTES

This essay is a revised and expanded version of a paper read at the annual convention of the Shakespeare Society of Japan, which was held at Hiroshima in October, 1995.

1. All references to Heywood's plays are taken from *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood* except *The Fair Maid of the West*. The references to this play are to the Regents Renaissance Drama Series edition.

2. With reference to the history play, for example, Ribner argues that Hey-

wood is largely responsible for the English history play’s decline by infecting the treatment of historical matter with popular sentimental romance (272–78). With respect to the city comedy, Knights asserts that Heywood’s favourable description of the social lives of the middle classes illustrates his shallow insight into the new economic problems in the age (248–55).

3. For study on the purpose of acting, see Montrose 41–52.

4. For instance, in the “Epistle Dedicatory” to John Othow, counsellor at law in Gray’s Inn, added to *The Fair Maid of the West, Part 1*, Heywood says as follows: “I must ingenuously acknowledge a weightier argument would have better suited with your grave employment but there are retirements necessarily belonging to all the labors of the body and brain. . . .” He believes that his plays can be effective even for the learned as “diversion” in the retirements from serious work.

5. According to Gurr, the mass emotion stimulated by the Armada was immediately mirrored in plays’ subject matter between 1588–99 (132–37).

6. For more details on this point, see Gilbert.

7. For pastoral’s relevance to the praise of the sovereign’s rule as a golden age, see Levin.

8. Many characters in Heywood’s plays are the tradesmen and the average citizens who had been the backbone of the economic progress of the Elizabethan England. Wright classifies such characters into the middle classes, and regards Heywood as an interpreter of the middle-class culture. Following Wright’s standpoint, I think that Bess, who is a poor tavern maid at first, but later becomes an owner of a tavern owing to her energy and diligence, can be categorized as middle-class.

9. For censorship under James I, see Heinemann 36–47. For the symbolic focus on James I, see Goldberg.

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