Chapter V
INCEST AND THE OUTSIDER

It has been pointed out earlier in this study that dramatists use certain situations and human attitudes as dramatic equivalents of alienation. The power-situation and the attitudes of discontent and reform have been examined in the drama of different ages where they gave rise to Outsiders such as the power-seeker, the malcontent and the reformer who were studied in the foregoing three chapters. This chapter probes the situation of incest as a dramatic metaphor of alienation down the ages.

Incest violates the most fundamental laws of religion and society. The Bible\(^1\) contains multiple injunctions against it. Anthropological studies demonstrate that the taboo against incest is a long-standing one and is strictly maintained in primitive societies. Hence the presence of an incestuous obsession at the conscious or subconscious level, or an intellectual attitude of approval towards incest in an individual signifies an alienation from traditional social morality and religion. Sometimes, when the incestuous passion becomes an obsession, it alienates the individual from reality, because he becomes oblivious of everything else. While these levels of alienation, social and religious, are present in almost all characters entangled in an incestuous situation, only occasionally is such a character led into self-estrangement manifested as an internal battle or even madness. Existential alienation from the human predicament itself is rarely experienced, though there might be an alienation from external reality.

The incest motif may be seen to be an effective image of the tragic impasse - the powerful drive of an inner force meeting with a strong external attempt to suppress it. Here is the classical situation of the Individual versus Society, the conflict between the Outsider's obsessive desires and the restrictions imposed by social conformity.

However, not all incestuous protagonists are Outsiders. It is only when an individual's incestuous passion, or his intellectual
attitude to incest alienates him from society, morality and religion and leads him to either an alienation from reality or existence or an estrangement from self or an awareness of being alienated that he may be called an Outsider in the context of incest.

The theme of incest appears in drama from the time of Greek tragedy up to the twentieth century. This chapter will deal with representative plays from the drama of the Elizabethan-Jacobean age, the latter half of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century. The dramatic treatment of incest varies from play to play. The theme may be used primarily for its sensation-value as in Beaumont and Fletcher's *A King and No King*. In Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, the obsessive power of incestuous attraction when it operates at a subconscious level is revealed in a subtle, intuitive manner. In *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, the theme is treated ambivalently bringing out both the horror and the fascination. Arbaces, Ferdinand and Giovanni are thus the three Jacobean Outsiders studied in the situation of incest. Sometimes incest may be made a vehicle of social protest by profaning the sacred. Thus when marriage, which is sacred, becomes a mockery or a mere social convenience, even incest is claimed to be preferable to it, if incest is accompanied by sincerity of feeling! This view of Mrs. Alving in Ibsen's *Ghosts* is faintly anticipated in Ford's *'Tis Pity She's Whore* and elaborated by Leonido in Osborne's *A Bond Honoured*. This is not an endorsement of incest by the dramatist but is an extreme form of protest against established attitudes. Mrs. Alving in *Ghosts* and Vivie Warren in *Mrs. Warren's Profession* are reviewed in brief because their intellectual attitude towards incest is unconventional. In these plays, the approval of incest in theory becomes a means of social criticism. In twentieth-century drama, *Under Plain Cover* by John Osborne uses the incest theme to expose society's faults especially its interference in private lives. In Leonido in *A Bond Honoured* almost all the levels of alienation are explored. In Harold Pinter's *The Home-Coming*, incest is seen as a symptom of a diseased social condition in permissive society.
The presence of this theme in the drama of all ages indicates the fatal attraction which incest has had for the human mind. According to Shelley, "Incest is, like many other incorrect things, a very poetical circumstance." In drama, such Outsider figures are not represented as Everyman figures but rather as the Other — the antithesis of the audience image of itself. But the projection of socially disapproved characteristics on to the Other does not necessarily make the Other a hated or despised figure. Quite often the audience may derive vicarious satisfaction by witnessing this character indulging in things forbidden by social norms of morality. This accounts for the mixed reaction aroused by the Outsider — disapproval, horror and yet sympathy and fascination.

As shown in the earlier chapters, here too the intellectual background of the age has an impact on the conception of the Outsider figure. Thus neo-Platonism in the Elizabethan-Jacobean age, the prevalence of the attitude of social criticism and reform in the late nineteenth century, Darwin's theories and Freudian psycho-analysis have left their traces on the conception of the incestuous Outsider down the ages. The neo-Platonic worship of beauty was possibly derived from Plotinus. Beauty was considered to be a sure proof of the presence of Virtue and hence believed to be worthy of Love. This identification of Beauty and Goodness and their coexistence with Love was an Elizabethan commonplace. In Jacobean drama Giovanni, Arbaces and D'Amville use this argument to justify their love which is otherwise taboo. Even in pre-Darwinian days, when the medieval and Elizabethan world-view placed man below the angels and above animals, the incestuous Outsider longs to upset man's place in the universe and bring him on par with animals, chiefly because they mate heedful of consanguinity. Thus in Ovid's Metamorphoses, Myrrha who is inflamed with passion for her own father Cinyras cites the analogy from animals and tries to prove that incest is ordained by nature but prohibited only by man's laws. This argument is used by Arbaces and D'Amville. Whereas in earlier times the general social and moral expectation was that man should constantly strive to rise above his animal nature, exposure to the post-Darwinian climate encourages an
acceptance of brute-instincts as the most natural thing to man. This is seen particularly in persons cut adrift from their traditional religion and faith. Viewed through the Freudian lens, the traditional horror of incest becomes just an infantile feature and the incestuous Outsider is seen as a neurotic who either through developmental inhibition or regression is still bound by the infantile incestuous fixations. In Freud's division of mental apparatus into the ego, id and superego, the inclination of the id ruled by natural instincts would be towards incest, while the superego which represents the inherited ethical standards of mankind constantly strives to repress these instincts. The incestuous Outsider would then be a person in whom the instincts are at their strongest, rendering the superego inactive. To express it in Flathian terms, incest is a case of the "old yellow" driving the individual to break through the restrictions of the "plaster-saint". A frequent stance met with in our century is "that complete loss of moral indignation which often comes from much study of psychology," which G.B.Harrison attributes to John Ford in the seventeenth century. As John Arthos puts it,

The point is in part that judgements rooted in ancient and lasting horrors have been diluted in the objectivity of the categories of psychology when these become the coins of critical fashion.

All the three Jacobean plays chosen for study here deal with the brother-sister relationship. In Beaumont and Fletcher's A King and No King Arbaces the protagonist is a vaunting megalomaniac whose incestuous passion for his supposed sister Panthea is related to his self-glorification. Just as the Ptolemies promoted brother-sister incest because no one else was considered to be a worthy consort to a Ptolemy except another Ptolemy, Arbaces too believes himself to be the only fit match for his non-pareil sister Panthea. He tells Tigranes,

........ Nature did her wrong
To print continual conquest on her cheeks
And make no man worthy for her to take
But me that am too near her. (I.1.167-170)

However, though he declares that no one else is worthy of her except himself, he adds at once that he is too near her. Thus he is not a flouter of morality from the beginning. Like a sudden infection
he is overcome by a consuming passion for her when he returns from
wars after many years. The frenzy cuts him off from others and gives
rise to lengthy asides and monologues of self-analysis. His fantasy
world becomes more real to him than the external world around him
and Macbeth-like he addresses a hallucination as if it had objective
reality.

What art thou that dost creep into my breast
And darest not see my face? Show forth thyself.
I feel a pair of fiery wings display'd.
Hither, from thence. You shall not tarry there. (III.i.79-82)

Being unable to pluck out the passion from his heart, he declares
that she is not his sister, revealing an alienation from reality, a
refusal to accept reality. He almost usurps God's omnipotence and
claims to have power to create or dissolve any relationship.

She is no kin to me nor shall she be;
If she were any, I create her none,
And which of you can question this? My power
Is like the sea, that is to be obey'd.
And not disputed with. (III.i.165-169)

Here the figures of the egoistic power-seeker usurping divine power
and the incestuously obsessed Outsider coalesce.

There is in Arbaces a certain anguished awareness of his
alienation. He realises that his incestuous passion drives him to
reject religion and morality, makes him an Outsider among men and
brings him down to the bestial plane. He says,

He that undertakes my cure must first
O'erthrow divinity, all moral laws,
And leave mankind as unconfin'd as beasts,
Allowing them to do all actions
As freely as they drink when they desire. (III.i.196-200)

Although at first Arbaces equates himself with beasts in shame
(IV.iv.64-66), soon after that he regrets not being born free of the
incest taboo like animals.

What is there that acknowledges a kindred
But wretched man? Whoever saw the bull
Fearfully leave the heifer that he lik'd
Because they had one dam? (IV.iv.135-138)

His argument is the same as Myrrha's in Golding's translation of
Ovid's Metamorphoses. Not only does Arbaces arrogate God's omni-
potence to himself, he also insinuates that his incestuous passion
is willed by God as a punishment for his pride and rides himself of all responsibility for it. This is seen in III.i.327-334. Just as in the mythical figures of Oedipus and Phaedra unwitting incest and incestuous passion are shown to originate from the capricious Greek gods, here too the obsession is traced to the will of God in the Christian sense.

Throughout the play there is a tension between the desire to satisfy the incestuous passion and the desperate clutching at traditional morality and the thought of good and evil. The oscillating rhythm in his speeches conveys his tortured self-division. The see-saw rhythm alternating between resistance and yielding to sin is sounded most insistently in Arbaces' interview with Panthea. At the beginning of the scene (IV.iv.6-8) Arbaces prays to heaven for protection from a temptation to sin. When Panthea enters the room he girds himself up strongly to resist the passion contending within him. He also carefully avoids, what would be called "occasions of sin" in Christian doctrine and bids her not to come near him. He confesses his sinful passion to her in a tone of self-recrimination and begs Panthea to pray for him to die before he transgresses by violating her. But here his keyed-up resistance approaches the breaking point when she confesses her love for him and a willingness to reciprocate his passion if only they were not brother and sister. At this Arbaces rages in helpless fury as if the mere words "brother" and "sister" and their sounds thwarted their desire. He declares,

I have lived
To conquer men and now am overthrown
Only by words - "brother" and "sister". Where
Have those words dwelling? I will find 'em out
And utterly destroy them, but they are
Not to be grasp'd. (IV.iv.116-121)

He transfers his rage against moral conventions and social taboos to the words, thus revealing his powerlessness before the force of traditional norms and his anger at such a state of things.

Mardonius and Bessus who are real persons in the play may also be seen as symbolic representations of the divided selves in Arbaces. Seen in the morality-play tradition they may also represent the good and evil angels which accompany Everyman.
In the last scene of the play Arbaces reaches the moment of decision. He makes a deliberate choice of evil, knowing it is sinful and wishes to translate the willed decision into definitive action. Arbaces enters dramatically with a drawn sword, determined to commit murder, incest and suicide in that order, knowing well that he courts damnation thereby. The restraining bands of self-control have given way under the continual strain and he is now ready to become the deed's creature after performing these crimes.

It is resolv'd; I bore it whilst I could;
I can no more. Hell, open all thy gates,
And I will through them; If they be shut,
I'll batter 'em, but I will find the place
Where the most damn'd have dwelling. (V.iv.1-5)

The quick rhythm of the mid-stopped lines suggests short-breathed panting movements as if shaken by an uncontrollable frenzy. The obsessive passion has driven him, in intention, outside the limits of religion, morality and society's laws. Arbaces stands detached from himself and views his intended progress in wickedness with honesty. He has willed himself to become an Outsider, but before he can carry out his resolution into action the secret of his birth is revealed. Since it is proved that he is not Panthea's brother, he can now marry her and is saved from murder, incest and suicide through no effort of his own but sheerly by the author's clever manipulation. The ending is an example of evasion of responsibility on the authors' part. They refuse to carry out implications and issues to their logical conclusion. This shows that they are not really interested in probing the incestuous Outsider, but merely want to exploit the theme of incest for its sensation value.

However in the major portion of the play incest and the effect caused by it in the individual are evoked by appropriate imagery. The mingled horror-fascination provoked in Arbaces by the temptation to incest is revealed in his comparison of Panthea to music and disease in the same speech.

Why should there be such music in a voice
And sin for me to hear it?.............

But you are nought to me but a disease,
Continual torment without hope of ease, (III.i.187-194)
Related to the disease imagery are the many references to poison, especially to denote the incestuous passion.

But I am desperately sick,
For she has given me poison in a kiss, (III.i.320-321)
The use of such images of disease and poison by Arbaces (as also by Racine's Phaedra) to signify incestuous passion reveal his desperate clinging to insider values of social morality which regard incest with horror. Another image used by Arbaces (and Phaedra) to describe the destructive nature of their obsession is that of fire. The passion is an inwardly raging fire which tortures and consumes the victim. This image signifies the inner division between conformity and outsider-tendencies and the pain of self-estrangement.

Secret scorching flames,
That far transcend earthly material fires,
Are crept into me, and there is no cure. (III.iii.21-23)

Thus in the major part of the play Arbaces is swayed by what is to all appearance an incestuous passion. This cuts him away from his fellowmen, from the world of reality around him, from existing religion and morality and from himself. Incest thus makes him an Outsider at various levels. But the alienation theme and the Outsider figure are not allowed to change the basic structure of the play, as it would have been changed if the Outsider had been allowed to develop freely. So finally the play adheres to the usual Beaumont and Fletcherian stereotype version of the romantic tragi-comedy with a facile happy ending which is brought about by a stock dramatic device — the last minute revelation of a birth-secret which unites all knots. Thus the problem of incest and the Outsider is not faced squarely. There is an escape into wishful fantasy by making a forbidden taboo acceptable at the end. It is a question of evasion on the authors' part. They have exploited the salacious interest aroused by a dramatic presentation of incest without facing the responsibility of probing it till the end and taking a firm stand on it.

The play's appeal to the prurient interest of the audience in dealing with the sensational theme of incest has been traced by critics to a morally lax contemporary society. According to
It is no wonder that *A King and No King* and plays like it gained a quick popularity. What member of a society which was characterized by a falling off in the general discipline would not like to see his own licentious fantasies symbolically projected with such dramatic effectiveness? The play's popularity seems to confirm the hypothesis that the Outsider usually represents the fears and secret aspirations of society. He is the feared and envied 'other'.

John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, as it has been pointed out in an earlier chapter, contains Outsiders of various categories. The Cardinal could be studied as a brief sketch in the Machiavellian power-context, Bosola as a Malcontent Outsider and Duke Ferdinand as an Outsider with an incestuous obsession. Though the introduction of the incest motif may be attributed to the Jacobean taste for sensation, the theme is handled with restraint and presented only suggestively. The play traces the development of Ferdinand's incestuous obsession from its subconscious state to its near-approach to consciousness when the horror of the realisation precipitates him into madness. The obsession progressively alienates him from external reality and social and moral norms and finally culminates in total self-estrangement in the psychological sense.

From the beginning of the play Ferdinand is unduly interested in his sister's suitors. Like Arbaces and Giovanni whose incestuous passion for a sister makes them jealous of her suitors, Ferdinand also resents the very idea of a suitor to his widowed sister. His commission to Bosola is to spy on her. He tells Bosola: "I would not have her marry again" (I.i.273). To this Bosola makes a very natural rejoinder "No, Sir?" in a mild query. But Ferdinand's reaction to this casual reply is violent and out of proportion. "Do not you ask the reason; but be satisfied I say I would not" (I.i.275-276). The curtness, petulance and high-handed manner of the reply seem to hint that if the reason were asked, something sinister and evil would be unearthed. Perhaps the speaker himself is not fully aware of the reason but is dimly conscious of something forbidden which he does not care (or dare) to probe and analyse further. The emotion is indeed in excess of the fact.
In the studied speech of Ferdinand and the Cardinal warning the Duchess against remarriage, there is a marked difference between the attitudes of Ferdinand and the Cardinal. While Ferdinand seems to have a personal stake in the issue and uses strongly emotive language, expressing a preoccupation with sex and lust, the Cardinal is cold, distant and uses irony which has a further distancing effect. For example the Cardinal's initial advice is given in an objective, detached manner. "Your owne discretion/Must now be your director" (I.i.318-319). Ferdinand's opening lines on the contrary insinuate the sexual relationship. He tells her, "You are a widow/You know already what man is" (I.i.320-321). After the Cardinal leaves, Ferdinand conveys a veiled threat to her by showing her his poniard, a gesture replete with archetypal sexual symbolism. As he prepares to leave he compulsively indulges in the salacious innuendo on "the lamprey".

Ferdinand's incestuous obsession with his sister, which remains for the most part unconscious, is a powerful undercurrent which drives him to jealous rage and insane fury in IV.v, when he hears that she has a lover. Here again his frenzied reaction is contrasted with the Cardinal's cool intellectual stand. His imagination conjures up a vision of the Duchess and he almost sees her "in the shameful act of sin". He rails at her, as if he could actually see her in fantasy before him. This is a trait which he shares with many Outsiders to whom the inner world is more real than the external one. He shouts out:

Goe to (Mistris)
Tis not your whores milke, that shall quench my wild fire,
But your whores blood. (II.v.62-64)

When at last Ferdinand seems to wake up from his hallucination, he notes the difference between his brother's reaction and his own. His question is brief and wary - "Have not you/My palsy?" But again towards the end of the scene Ferdinand loses control over himself and swept by violent passion, he uses language replete with destructive images.

I would have their bodies
Burnt in a coale-pit, with the ventage stopp'd,
That their curs'd smoake might not ascend to Heaven.
Or dippe the sheets they lie in, in pitch or sulphure,  
Wrap them in’t, and then light them like a match;  
Or else to boile their Bastard to a cullisse,  
And give't his leacherous father, to renew  
The sinne of his backe. (II.v.87-94)

The progression here from "their bodies" through "the sheets they lie in" to "their bastard", shows the train of his thought centring on his sister's sexual relations with her lover. Then the reaction of exhaustion and inertia sets in after the violent sexual jealousy has spent its fury in words.

In, in, I'll go sleepe—  
Till I know who leapes my sister, I'll not stirre: (II.v.99-100)

When he visits Malfi more than two years later, a voyeuristic impulse arising probably from the incestuous obsession makes him secure a duplicate key to his sister's bed-room. He confronts her with a poniard, a gesture reminiscent of his earlier threat with it. Her spirited defence of second marriage draws forth from him a self-pitying image in which he vaguely identifies himself with her first husband, thus revealing his subconscious incestuous desires.

And thou hast taine that massy sheets or lead  
That hid thy husbands bones, and fouled it  
About my heart. (III.ii.131-133)

The sadistic tortures executed on the Duchess at Ferdinand's orders reveal a frenzied mind possessed with a vengeful and jealous obsession. It is his incestuous attraction towards her which makes him feel personally betrayed by her remarriage so as to seek revenge. But he is unable to face the truth about his feelings towards her as long as she is alive. After her death we witness his tortured self-questioning which may have been followed by a stark revelation of his incestuous obsession and perhaps it is this which drives him mad.

As Ferdinand views his sister's strangled body all his fury drains out of him and he is filled with infinite compassion and a love untouched by lust or incestuous longing. It is almost as if her death has purged him of the evil within, leaving him capable of pure admiration and sympathy for her. "Cover her face: mine eyes dazell: she di'd yong" (IV.ii.281). The obsessive passion has been
completely drained out and in its place is a tendresse for a twin-sister who had shared a life in the womb with him.

She and I were Twinnes:  
And should I die this instant, I had liv'd  
Her Time to a Mynute. (IV.ii.284-286)

In the presence of his sister's corpse Ferdinand begins to examine himself about his motives and this brings him dangerously near the discovery of a terrible truth which had been hidden in the dim depths of the unconscious. A rigorous self-examination begins in him regarding his own motives but we are not taken along with the thought-process to its bitter end.

For let me but examine well the cause;  
What was the meanenes of her match to me? (IV.ii.300-301)

Towards the end of this scene his rejoinders to Bosola become very brief and curt until in the last one he becomes almost completely alienated from the reality around him. Oblivious of the presence of Bosola he mutters to himself anticipating his lycanthropia.

I'll goe hunt the Badger, by Owle-light  
'Tis a deed of darkenesse. (IV.ii.360-361)

Bosola makes the authorial comment - "He's much distracted" (IV.ii.362).

When we see Ferdinand next, he has crossed the frontiers of sanity into madness. The self-questioning begun earlier may have been pursued further revealing the terrible secret in the heart of darkness and the horror of it may have driven him mad.

Ferdinand becomes alienated from Man and the human condition in his madness. He projects his disgust and horror at himself on others and sees only bestiality in Man. He is overcome with disgust and nausea at humanity.

Hence, hence, you are all of you, like beasts for sacrifice, there's nothing left of you, but tongue, and belly, flattery, and lechery. (V.ii.78-80)

But even in his madness, in the midst of much apparently inconsequential chatter, his mind centres round his sister and his guilt. Though remorse works within him, there is also an Iago-like disinclination to confess, because confession would mean relating to another outside oneself and this would pave the way to the end of
alienation. But Ferdinand remains an Outsider. "What I have don, I have don: I'll confess nothing" (V.v.52). As in Lady Macheth’s case, the poignant regret over a past crime surfaces in a sleepwalker’s whisper - "Strangling is a very quiet death," (V.iv.58). The dying words of Ferdinand are a reassertion of his affection for his sister untouched now by any other sinister passion but only tinged with remorse. "My sister, oh my sister, there’s the cause on’t" (V.v.90).

Thus the play reveals the destructive effects of an obsessive passion in an individual making him an Outsider. The obsession, even when it is unconscious, becomes the driving force of a person’s life. It alienates him from other human beings, from traditional values of society, religion and morality, from reality and finally leads to self-estrangement in the form of madness.

The play works out the progressive alienation of the various types of Outsiders in it until at the moment of death each dies aware of being absolutely alone. At the beginning, there seems to be a grouping of characters in two rival clans - the brothers and their followers versus the Duchess and her small retinue. But the play’s structure unfolds the gradual isolation of each character cut off even from those on his side, as for example Ferdinand, the Cardinal and Bosola. It is the working out of the alienation theme to its final consummation in Ferdinand, the Cardinal and Bosola that justifies the existence of the V act, even after the death of the heroine in Act IV itself. The Outsider and his alienation thus subvert the tragic structure and extend the play beyond its traditional catastrophe - the death of the protagonist.

While Beaumont and Fletcher used the incest situation to titillate the audience and did not probe deeper into it, Webster studies it in depth and yet with delicacy. It is traced in its subconscious phase and the alienation it causes in the individual is depicted progressively until it culminates in the total self-estrangement of madness. The incestuous obsession is shown to be a tragic passion which has the fierce, inevitability and corrosive quality of a malignant cancer which kills from within.
Giovanni the hero of John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's A Whore is the last of the seventeenth-century Outsiders considered here with an incestuous desire for a sister and he is also the most blatantly shocking by traditional standards. While Arbaces' obsession is finally made legitimate by the authors' trick and Ferdinand's is left just below the level of conscious volition, Giovanni recognizes, openly expresses and consummates his incestuous passion. In contrast to Arbaces who is horror-filled at his depravity and struggles against it, Giovanni glorifies his passion and justifies it.

From the very first scene of the play Giovanni is seen as an Outsider driven by an obsessive passion for his sister. It is this incestuous passion which makes him reject social conventions, morality and religion, thus taking him outside the fold of ordinary humanity. He belittles the traditional norms of morality and considers society's taboo on incest as a petty hindrance to self-fulfilment.

Shall a peevish sound, A customary form, from man to man, Of brother and of sister, be a bar 'Twixt my perpetual happiness and me? (I.i.24-27). Like Arbaces he tries to dismiss the brother-sister relationship as merely a matter of words and sounds.

The case for incest is presented by Giovanni in three main arguments. The first is a derivative form of the neo-Platonic worship of beauty as the receptacle of virtue and therefore worthy of love. The second is an argument from consanguinity. The third is not so much an argument as a blaming of Fate or Destiny for the passion.

In the opening scene, Giovanni poses the neo-Platonic argument to the Friar. As the first step in the argument he establishes the right of all men (including himself) to love. He then speaks of beauty as being worthy of worshipful love. From these general premises he passes on to the particular - the beauty of his sister. Then he arrives at the conclusion that he legitimately loves his sister because she is beautiful and worthy of love. On two more occasions in the play Giovanni calls upon this neo-Platonic argument
from beauty to his defence - to woo Annabella in I.ii. and to justify his incest to the Friar in II.v. While wooing Annabella in I.ii. he also appeals to the Platonic ideal of soul-mates who share a common beauty.

Wise nature first in your creation meant
To make you mine; else't had been sin and foul
To share one beauty to a double soul. (I.ii.232-234)

After committing incest, when he tries to justify his act to the Friar he uses the principle that virtue resides in beauty. Beauty of body implies a virtuous mind and so love of beauty is itself a virtue. Since Annabella is beautiful, his love for her and hers for him are both virtuous. The argument smacks of sophistry.

So where the body's furniture is beauty,
The mind's must needs be virtue; which allowed,
Virtue itself is reason but refin'd,
And love the quintessence of that. This proves
My sister's beauty being rarely fair
Is rarely virtuous; chiefly in her love,
And chiefly in that love, her love to me.
If hers to me, then so is mine to her; (II.v.18-25).

Giovanni's pose as a worshipper of beauty, reveals a curious mingling of both carnal infatuation and a desire for an abstract ideal of perfection. Ecstatic images of an ethereal beauty coexist with lascivious suggestions of a physical and sexual attraction. For example in II.i. his praise of "Beauty's sweet wonder" is followed by coarse jesting on the loss of maidenheads. According to T.S. Eliot, the passion of Giovanni and Annabella "hardly rises above the purely carnal infatuation." ¹⁴

In his second argument he appeals to consanguinity and pleads that the affinity of blood-relationship signifies nature's sanction of a union between brother and sister. This argument too is first tried out on the Friar and repeated to win Annabella.

Nearness in birth, or blood doth but persuade
A nearer nearness in affection. (I.ii.235-236)

Last of all he claims that his incestuous passion was forced upon him by an external compulsion which he variously calls fate or destiny. He says,

'Tis not, I know,
My lust, but 'tis my fate that leads me on. (I.ii.153-154)
In thus defending his passion with intellectual arguments drawn from Plotinus' identification of beauty, virtue and love and Plato's theory of kindred souls and from consanguinity, Giovanni reveals a total lack of any sense of guilt in him. Unlike Arbaces, Giovanni is not at all aware of any transgression. Here incest is not presented as a matter of evil choice after a struggle. There is no internal conflict in Giovanni. Although to please the Friar he agrees to try prayer and penance, he feels sure that they would be of no avail.

The Friar represents the stand of orthodox morality and religion and tries to win back Giovanni to conformity through repentance and penance. But Giovanni expresses a loss of belief in the efficacy of prayer and fasting and tends to dismiss penance and a call to repentance as mere "oldmen's tales".

Giovanni completely inverts the moral values of society and strikes at the very foundation of the social structure when he glorifies incest and decries marriage as something which would damn his sister. When the Friar advises marriage for Annabella Giovanni bursts out in jealous indignation:

Marriage? Why, that's to damn her! That's to prove Her greedy of variety of lust. (II.v.41-42)

Giovanni's incestuous passion thus makes him reject social norms, religion and morality and makes him an Outsider in society. Giovanni progressively becomes more and more alienated from reality and the actual world until at the end he lives and acts in a world of his own which eclipses the world outside as far as he is concerned. When Annabella writes to him in repentance, the truth is so unpalatable that even though he recognizes her handwriting, he cries out that it is a forgery. From his earlier self-deception of transferring the responsibility for his own will and decision on to Fate, now he moves to the other extreme of deluding himself that he holds Fate under his control.

Why, I hold fate
Clasp'd in my fist, and could command the course
Of time's eternal motion. (V.v.11-13)
Till the end he imagines that he can sway destiny. "For in my fists I bear the twists of life" (V.vi.72). But he is soon made to realise his own powerlessness.

0, I can stand no longer! Feeble arms, Have you so soon lost strength? (V.vi.83-84)

This last scene presents a glaring example of his blindness to the truth about himself when he sets himself up as the avenger, lover and chief-mourner of his sister, unable to face the reality that he is the destroyer, ravisher and murderer of his sister. Incestuous obsession thus alienates him from reality and self and finally drives him to murder the object of his passion.

The reason given by Giovanni to Annabella for murdering her is his concern for her honour. ("To save thy fame and kill thee in a kiss" V.v.84) The reason which he gives himself is to foil and outwit the plots of Soranzo (V.v.99-100). Two other fanciful motives also had been suggested by him earlier in this scene. One is the usual blaming of destiny which is accused of ordaining her early death (V.v.59-62). Another is a sudden and incongruous desire to despatch her soul to "Heaven", which, if we were to believe his earlier claim, does not exist.

Go thou, white in thy soul, to fill a throne Of innocence and sanctity in Heaven. (V.v.64-65)

Such colossal self-delusion of expecting Heaven as a reward of incest brings out the total alienation of Giovanni from the world of reality and traditional moral norms. His belief in the neo-Platonic identification of beauty and goodness and their co-existence with love genuinely convinces him of the goodness of their incestuous love. So from his point of view his own existence seems to be a Plotinus-oriented celebration of beauty and love.

The gulf between his delusion and the reality of the ordinary world is brought out in the horror inspired in his listeners at his public confession of incest and murder. Society's shocked response throws his self-glorified passion into relief as an abnormality and a horrible aberration. But at the same time, except for the Friar, society is no pure upholder of virtue. For example Soranzo's fury is not so much about the incest as over the aspect of adultery. But
his assumed role of the wronged husband is ironic considering that he himself had wronged Richardetto in a similar manner. This illustrates the lax morals within society which therefore loses the moral right to cast stones at the incestuous Outsider. The Cardinal, who is shown to be unjust and partial in an earlier scene, is horrified at the incest and murder. But this initial reaction is followed immediately by the decision to confiscate the family's wealth and increase his own revenue, thus revealing the greed and avarice of the Church.

Thus the neo-Platonic celebration of Beauty by the incestuous Outsider is set off against the social norms violated by it. But in presenting the Outsider's deviation from norms, there is no element of conflict, neither internal warfare within Giovanni between natural instinct and inherited moral sense or social pressure; nor an external struggle between the norm-breaking Outsider and the norm-upholding society. Perhaps it is this absence of conflict which diminishes the sense of tragedy at the end of the play.

The controversy about Ford's moral attitude and the violent extremes towards which critics gravitate making him either "a deliberate perverter of morality" or "a stern moralist" reveal the horror-fascination exerted by the incest theme and the Outsider figure. This invariably generates an ambivalent attitude to the Outsider and the play and by shifting the emphasis to one point or another a delicately poised balance can be upset.

The interest in incest which is found in many plays of the early seventeenth century is often considered to be a mark of a decadent culture. According to G.B.Harrison,

It was however a sign of decadence in Ford and his audience that they needed such a stimulus to arouse their excitement. It seems as if incest is the pungent fare served to tickle the jaded appetite of a decadent audience sated by the glorious Renaissance drama.

The use of the prevalent neo-Platonic concept in this play has already been pointed out. Besides the identification of Beauty and Goodness which merit Love, the age also believed in the identification
of Love and Death. Edgar Wind describes this and suggests the Platonic theory of love as the key to a philosophy of death. According to him the Renaissance identified Love with Death in the painful and joyous aspects. It was believed that if love has a perfection, then it is impossible to arrive at that perfection without first dying with regard to the more imperfect things. This idea may perhaps be applied to Giovanni's meting out death to the object of his love. It is as if he kills Annabella to make perfect their love, which, according to him would be polluted by her living with Soranzo after repentance. Murder is therefore used as a definitive action arising from his total alienation from reality and from the norms and morals of his society.

In 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, an Outsider with an incestuous obsession based on neo-Platonism according to Plotinus subverts the tragic structure. His worship of beauty, which leads him to the justification of an incestuous love and which dictates the killing of the loved one to make love perfect, sets him apart as an Outsider estranged from both society and reality. But at the same time this abnormal celebration of beauty which is basically a romantic notion takes away the tragic intensity from the catastrophe. Further the Outsider is so totally engrossed in his own fantasy world that there is no possibility of a conflict with general implication in the play - either within the protagonist or between the protagonist and society. The absence of conflict, except for the jealous rivalry between Soranzo and Giovanni, prevents the play from achieving tragic resolution. Though the theme of revenge is present in the play and is mentioned by Richardetto, Hippolita, Soranzo and Giovanni, the play cannot be considered a revenge-tragedy since revenge is not the chief motivating force of the action. The plot derives its sense of inevitability from the irrevocable decision of the Outsider to follow his obsessive passion steadily with single-minded devotion. Thus the incestuous passion of the Outsider is seen to affect the dramatic structure.

Language operates in two ways in the representation of the incestuous obsession in the play. While to the Outsider it is a
magnificent obsession, others recoil from it in horror. This is especially seen in the use of lyrical rhetoric and imagery. The language used by Giovanni to describe his passion or his sister’s beauty which inspired it or the final triumph in death is always eloquent and richly evocative revealing that he glories in all this. The violent revulsion caused by incest and lust in others is conveyed through the use of the leprosy image which counterpoints Giovanni’s ecstatic worship of his sister’s beauty. The Friar advises him,

Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust
That rots thy soul, acknowledge what thou art,
A wretch, a worm, a nothing. (I.i.74-76)

Soranzo’s disgust on discovering Annabella with child expresses itself in the same lust-leprosy image—“lust-be-leper’d body” (IV.iii.61). It is Annabella herself who gives the corrective to Giovanni’s unqualified adoration of beauty when she realises that

Beauty that clothes the outside of the face
Is cursed, if it be not cloth’d with grace. (V.i.12-13)

The paradoxical juxtaposition of Giovanni’s ecstatic rhapsody on beauty with the lust-leprosy image provides an implicit moral comment in itself.

The author’s attitude towards his Outsider hero is one of sympathy and understanding which however should not be taken as an approval of incest. Ford handles incest at a philosophical level and presents it first as an intellectual attraction, though the sensual element is also present. However, the play’s action demonstrates that the obsessive passion of the Outsider is self-destructive and destroys the object of the passion also. The use of the Friar representing the best of the insider tradition, the touch of irony implied in the inflated magniloquence of Giovanni and the obvious sophistry of the arguments given to him counter-point the apparently lyrical representation of the love between Giovanni and Annabella.

Thus in Arbaces, Ferdinand and Giovanni, their incestuous obsession alienates them from society and from all moral and religious norms. The passion effectively cuts them away from the reality of the external world so that they seem to move in a fantasy world of their own creation. In all the three characters the passion is shown to be
both self-destructive and harmful to the sister who is loved. In the case of Arbaces and Giovanni, the sister is a passive figure who yields or is willing to yield after an initial resistance. While in Arbaces and Ferdinand, the passion leads to self-estrangement, Giovanni does not experience self-division or an inner conflict. In the treatment of this subject there is a final evasion of the issue in Beaumont and Fletcher; there is psychological realism and a firm moral base in Webster; in Ford there is ambivalence suggesting both the horror and the fascination evoked by the theme. All the three plays appear in the early seventeenth century when the Renaissance wave had spent itself out and reveal the steadily deteriorating taste for the sensational in a decadent society.

The incest theme appears in the poetry and drama of the Romantic age. George Steiner sees incest as a substitute or surrogate "for the lost dangers of revolutionary action". Steiner says; Romantic ideals of love, notably the stress on incest, dramatize the belief that sexual extremism, the cultivation of the pathological, can restore personal existence to a full pitch of reality and somehow negate the gray world of middle-class fact. In Shelley's Cenci, incest is not presented as a sensual obsession but as an image of tyranny. Shelley in his Preface to the play identifies vengeful hatred as the root-cause of Cenci's incestuous passion. Cenci's self-portrait in I.1.81-91 reveals him as a power-mad criminal Outsider whose dominant will finds fulfilment in evil. It is Cenci's mad lust for power over the mind and soul of people which is exemplified in his diabolical plan to pervert his daughter Beatrice's will so that she might be damned. Thus in Cenci, incest is not presented as an over-powering sensual obsession which drives a man into becoming an Outsider, as in seventeenth-century drama; neither is incest used as a vehicle of social criticism as in the nineteenth century; incest is rather seen to arise from a megalomaniacal delight in evil power. Cenci the protagonist is primarily a power-mad Outsider who adopts incest as a means of wielding tyrannical power over his daughter. He approaches the archetypal figure of the ogre-father.
In the drama of Ibsen and Shaw incest does not appear as a major theme. But the intellectual attitude of an individual towards incest contributes towards defining that person as a social non-conformist, if not a full-fledged Outsider. In *Ghosts* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Ibsen and Shaw present a theoretical acceptance of incest through their characters in order to draw attention to the existing evils in society such as prostitution and the desecration of marriage through infidelity and adultery. The view that incest is acceptable when it is motivated by sincere affection is meant to be a shock which will awaken the audience to recognize the moral evils in society.

The question of incest is ignited in Ibsen's *Ghosts* among other explosive material and helps to define the kind of Outsider that Mrs. Alving turns out to be. In principle she approves of the possibility of an incestuous marriage between her son Oswald and his half-sister Regina, provided she can be sure that he is serious and would not ruin the girl's life and that there would be no deceit involved. She defends her attitude to incest by claiming that it is infidelity in marriage and extra-marital relationship which led the way to such incestuous marriages. So when society tolerates marital infidelity, it has no right to condemn the resultant incest between siblings. She even obliquely hints that incest is in the very nature of things because at the beginning of creation mankind must have originally multiplied through incestuous unions.

Well, for that matter we are all descended from unions of that sort, they say. And who was it arranged things like that here on earth, Pastor Manders?

As is usual in Ibsen, an Outsider-attitude is placed beside an insider's view of life. Parson Manders registers the shocked reaction of an insider on seeing her permissive attitude to incest. He is a typical insider, conforming to tradition and speaking in clichés. Mrs. Alving is only a partial Outsider, revolutionary in thought but conforming in action. As John Northam puts it, "She is that sort of radical willing to think for herself, but not to act." Theoretically she approves of even incest when it is accompanied by frankness and sincerity of feeling between two individuals. For her
this is far better than the underhand deceits involved in clandestine extra-marital affairs, which were themselves responsible for such incestuous relationships. Her attitude is a protest against the double standards of society which allows, winks at or shields adulterous relationships outside marriage, but recoils in horror from the possibility of incest among the offspring of such adulterous unions. However, when it comes to putting her personal convictions into practice, she finds it impossible to break away from the bondage of allegiance to what she herself regards as dead ideas and beliefs. These are the Ghosts which haunt her and she has never succeeded in laying them. She experiences powerlessness as she exclaims,

It is not only what we have inherited from our fathers and mothers that exists in us, but all sorts of old dead ideas and all kinds of old dead beliefs and things of that kind. They are not actuall alive in us; but there they are, dormant all the same and we can never be rid of them. (p.384)

This is her tragedy, that she should be self-divided, being an Outsider in her conscious beliefs but haunted and made captive by insider allegiances which operate at a level below consciousness and from which she cannot free herself. She thus experiences self-alienation in being unable to live up to her own essential self and inner convictions. Her frequent self-reproaches of cowardice arise from this inner conflict in which "the radical collides with and submits to the social". 22

The attitude to incest revealed in Ghosts may be traced to the age in which the play was written. In his discussion of Mrs. Alving's view on incest, Brian Downs notes the impact on Ibsen of the new biological theories.

Ibsen had outstripped most of his co-evals in the acceptance of the new science. He not only drew his own conclusions from it but interested himself in some of its details. 23 From the time of Ovid, one of the arguments forwarded in favour of incest was the analogy with animals. The classic counter-argument of Christianity was the doctrine of the special creation of man in God's image, setting him above the animal world. With the advent of Darwinian theories of evolution, man loses his privileged position in the eyes of the rationalist. With man being placed on par with
animals in the evolutionary process, a rationalist's corollary would be that man should not be denied any freedom enjoyed by animals, which would mean sexual permissiveness of all kinds, including incest.

While in Jacobean and Caroline drama the authorial view-point finally implied disapproval of incest, here there is a shift in the perspective. Incest is viewed as just another relationship between man and woman, in which sincerity or absence of deceit is the only moral criterion. From this follows the implication that even incest, if it is sincere and without any underhand dealings, is preferable to a sham-marriage, hypocritically held together to keep up social appearances.

To Arbaces, Ferdinand and Giovanni, who are proud of their lineage, the thought that their sisters share the same blood with them attracts them towards incest. But in Ibsen and Shaw consanguinity does not enter the discussion on incest at all. In itself it neither repels nor attracts. Shaw attributes the attraction between the sexes to "romantic illusion" which arises from unfamiliarity and denies any role to consanguinity. It is as though the blood-relationship does not matter at all when the individuals grow up away from each other. Bernard Shaw says in The Quintessence of Ibsenism,

We are beginning to recognize the important fact that the absence of romantic illusion as between persons brought up together, which undoubtedly exists, and which used to be mistaken for natural antipathy, cannot be depended on as between strangers, however close their consanguinity........ Ibsen took this modern view that consanguinity does not count between strangers. I have accepted it myself in my play Mrs. Warren's Profession.

Mrs. Alving's absolute lack of horror or disgust in contemplating the possibility of incest is also seen in Frank Gardner and Vivie Warren, the half-brother and sister in Bernard Shaw's Mrs. Warren's Profession.

According to Frank Gardner, consanguinity does not matter at all between strangers. It is only when brothers and sisters are brought up together that there is a "fraternal feeling" of indifference arising from familiarity, which effectively prevents any romantic illusion or attachment between them. When strangers meet and feel attracted to each other, the blood-relationship between them, if any,
does not affect their attitudes in any way. Frank tries to convince Vivie of these Shavian ideas. Frank tells Vivie

I have lots of sisters; and the fraternal feeling is quite familiar to me. I assure you my feeling for you is not the least in the world like it. The girls will go their way; I will go mine; and we shan't care if we never see one another again. That's brother and sister. But as to you, I can't be easy if I have to pass a week without seeing you. That's not brother and sister.25

However, his is a romantic repudiation of social conventions regarding incest. He shifts the focus from consanguinity to the absence or presence of romantic illusion.

Vivie Warren is also unmoved by the revelation of the brother-sister relationship between herself and Frank whom she had wanted to marry. According to her their consanguinity makes no difference at all in her "imagination or conscience", "for of course it makes no real difference".

Thus both Vivie and Frank reveal a singular lack of disgust or horror at incest. In this they are Outsiders who reject a traditional social morality. With Ibsen and Shaw there is a definite change in the Outsider's attitude to incest. There is neither the horror-fascination which had been the major reaction to incest hitherto, nor a deliberate glorification of it as by Giovanni. Instead the question of incest is dealt with in a very indifferent and casual manner, making the traditional horror of it sound "both unimportant and old fashioned".26

When Vivie and Frank finally decide against marrying each other, it is for other reasons and not because of the incest involved. The repudiation of marriage by Vivie stems out of disillusionment with romantic ideals. Frank's decision can be traced to an innate moral sense which revolts against the use of money earned through the sexual exploitation of women in prostitution. Both Vivie and Frank reject the false norms of a hypocritical society which encourages and battens on prostitution while hiding beneath a veneer of respectability. In this they are social rebels in a mild manner though they lead no revolution or reform.
The traditional view of society regarding incest is held by Crofts and Rev. Samuel Gardner who are certainly not qualified to be the upholders of morality in the light of their own personal lives. The owner of a chain of brothels and a clergyman who in his youth had fathered an illegitimate daughter are not exactly cut out to be champions of social morality. It is remarkable that Vivie and Frank who had unconventional views on incest are among the most moral characters in the play, endowed with a basic integrity of character. This need not mean that Shaw advocates incest but rather he uses it to shock society out of its moral hypocrisy which seeks to cover up the ulcerating dissipation within society. Shaw seems to imply that the fact that prostitution has been made into a flourishing business is something which should cause more concern in society than the incestuous relationship between half-brother and sister which after all is the result of another prevalent social evil—the desecration of marriage through adultery.

Thus in Ibsen and Shaw incest is not an absorbing and alienating passion as in seventeenth-century drama. Disregard for the taboo of incest at the intellectual level is presented as a sign of a liberated individual who pleads for sincerity and integrity in personal life. These characters are Outsiders only in their non-conformist views and not in any deeper sense. They and their views are used by the dramatists to record their own criticism of what they consider to be worse evils in society.

* * * *

In Ibsen and Shaw the theme of incest is played in the minor-key in plays whose chief concern is an indictment of the widespread evil and corruption in society. John Osborne in *Under Plain Cover* uses incest as a launching pad from which he directs his missiles at society, especially at its morbid love for the sensational. While Beaumont and Fletcher cater to this very same taste of society, Osborne attacks it savagely.

When the play begins Jenny and Tim are unaware of their brother sister relationship. As husband and wife they have set up a home
which is their sanctuary, from which society is banished totally by them, though mention is made of Jenny's job. Their love-relationship takes an elaborate form of fantasizing and play-acting complete with dress-outfits which arrive to order by post "under plain cover". They enact with relish the roles of the sadistic master and masochistic house-maid, the sadistic nurse and masochistic patient, the portrayal of which is done by Osborne with objective sympathy spiced with humour. As Simon Trussler puts it:

There is tact and lightness of touch in Osborne's exploration of the couple's relationship - and also a recognition of the tender-ness that is generated by their fantasies.27

Jenny and Tim realise that they are very similar in nature and their union is unique in that two of the same kind have married. The games they play help them to structure their time together,28 while most others like them would be alone by themselves each imprisoned in his own self, his own cocoon of psychological alienation.

Jenny: Do you think there are many people like us?
Tim : No, Probably none at all, I expect.
Jenny: Oh, there must be some.
Tim : Well, yes, but probably not two together,
Jenny: You mean just one on their own,
Tim : Yes.
Jenny: How awful - We are lucky. (p.40)29

When the fraternal relationship is discovered, Osborne's presentation of the treatment of incest by newspapers is a stringent criticism on sensation-mongering which is eagerly lapped up by a starved, decadent, excitement-loving public which requires cheap thrills and melodrama every day to rouse its jaded appetite. The newspaper report in the play is a parodying replica of the sentimental sob-stuff ladled out to the sensation-hungry public by an adept in popular journalism.

How could they have known. They were innocent. And yet they were guilty. Guilty in the eyes of men and God. Yet, who could not wring pity from their heart at the hand Fate had played them. (p.49)

The moral or psychological issues concerning incest are of no interest at all to the journalists or their public in the play. For them this is just another "scoop", full of sentimental clichés such
as "she smiled through her tears and nodded." (p.55). Stanley Williams, the news reporter who covers the story, possibly writes it for Jenny in an autobiographical tone dripping with maudlin self-pity under the caption "I MARRIED MY BROTHER". The account begins with a studied dramatic revelation.

I am the girl who married her brother. Yes, the handsome man who is the father of my two darling baby boys is my father's child, my mother's son. (p.56)

The journalist tries out all the possible ways of expressing the brother-sister relationship - "my father's child", "my mother's son" and "brother". This reveals the poverty of ideas and of emotions and is an attempt to squeeze what little feeling one can from the situation of incest. In Sophocles too the incongruity of the incestuous relationship is dwelt upon obsessively by Oedipus, Jocasta and the Chorus, but there the repeated probing conveys horror on the part of society, agony and shame in the two involved. 30

Not satisfied with this story, the newspaper sponsors Jenny's remarriage within a fortnight to a clerk and gets exclusive coverage over the event. A new slant is given to the story by bringing Tim to watch the wedding from a distance "the loneliest man in Britain" (p.59). Tim is photographed congratulating and toasting the couple, with a characteristic write-up by Stanley. "Turner was warmly, fondly welcomed. He shook hands with his sister, the mother of his babies" (p.62).

After this the matter is taken up again only after nine years, viewed through the eyes of a drunken Stanley, desperately on the look-out for a story. Stanley suspects that the couple which has lived in utter seclusion for the past seven years in a suburban house in Leicester is Tim and Jenny. The ubiquitous newspaper reporter tries the various tactics of pleading, persuasion, threats and encouragement to draw them out of the house.

To Timothy and Jenny I leave this message, You can't escape the world. Even if you want to, it won't let you. Come out then I say, show yourselves. Be brave, Be courageous. Fear not, fear not. (pp.63-64)

The message is a dreadful parody in that he should use the repeated Biblical injunction "Fear not", which is meant to allay the fears and
anxieties that flesh is heir to. Here the "fear not" is an invitation to come out and be preyed upon by society's morbid appetite for sensational gossip.

Tim and Jenny unite again, this time in a consciously incestuous relationship and go into retreat to escape from the prying eyes of a voyeuristic public and its pander, the officious newspaper reporter. They refuse to expose themselves to the public gaze and have successfully sealed themselves off for seven years from the world. The world had intruded once before into their private world and exposed them to public view to gratify its own taste for the sensational. So now they shake off society's interference and retreat into a world of their own and shut out society from it resolutely. As confirmed incestuous Outsiders they refuse to be drawn into a dialogue with the self-appointed representative of society and upholder of public morality - the reporter. They know that the world's interest in them and its offer to help are only a means of satisfying its own depraved cravings and so they will not be taken in by its gimmicks again.

Of the two attitudes to incest, that of society is shown to be morbidly prying and melodramatic without even a touch of a moral note; whereas that of the individuals concerned is not exposed to our view. But the intensity and sincerity of their feelings can be guessed at from the intimacy revealed by them before the incest was known and by the fact that they go into hiding to protect that private world of theirs from public interference once again. They banish the outside world and make society the prying Outsider.

Osborne resolutely draws the curtain on the private life of Jenny and Tim when they resume their relationship, now known to be incestuous. This is not out of any squeamishness about the theme but perhaps out of a respect for authentic living even when it flouts traditional norms. This need not mean permissiveness but is an exposure of the relative attitudes and sense of values of society and the Outsiders. When social behaviour and public responses to crucial moral situations deteriorate, even incest seems preferable to society's moral lassitude. The incestuous Outsider is the medium...
through which criticism is focussed on society, its deadened moral sense, its resorting to cheap thrills to rouse and excite itself. Though the Outsiders' abnormal psychology and the sadomasochistic implications of their union are probed, the play is more an indictment of society than of the Outsider.

Osborne has always been a stringent critic of contemporary society, its attitudes and values. Here he condemns in particular society's love for crude sensationalism. He fiercely attacks newspapers and reporters who feature among his many favourite targets like royalty and the evangelical revival.

The structure of the play conveys the tyrannic power which society wields over individuals reducing them to automata and the escape of the individuals into total isolation from society. More than half the play is devoted to the building up of the fantasy world of Tim and Jenny giving the audience an intimate glimpse into it. Then comes the discovery of incest and the spectacle of the Press and society wallowing in the sensational news. This is conveyed on stage by a scenic change from an intimate two-some to a free-for-all public show compered by Stanley. The change from a private world to the public is sudden and drastic. When society and the press take charge of the situation, Jenny becomes a talking marionette spouting out speeches written by Stanley, while Tim makes gestures prescribed by the press. This brings out the mind-killing nature of the mass-media. Tim and Jenny are never again shown sharing a moment together in privacy except behind closed doors from which both the society in the play and the theatre-audience are shut out. Here there is an indication that the author identifies his own audience with the prying society in the play. Ronald Hayman comments on the "leisurely pace of the earlier scenes" as against the "quick disposal" of nine years in a short narrative. This rhythm suggests the early security and joy of their life together, followed by the quick destruction by society and the silent, secret rebuilding of their relationship, now deliberately keeping society out of the home which is their refuge.

In A Bond Honoured Osborne again uses the theme of incest and the device of shocking exaggeration to wake society out of its sleep
Leonido in Osborne's play is conceived as an individual who carries on a dialectic with society, other individuals, religion, Jesus Christ and Self. He is portrayed as a complete Outsider alienated at interpersonal and social levels, estranged from God, religion and self, with traces of existential alienation.

Leonido, who is himself intensely alive every moment of his life, rails at the somnolent existence of others around him. His servant Tizon's sleepy and slow movements are used as a foil to Leonido's vitality. Leonido regards Tizon's existence as death-in-life and pours invective on him most savagely.

To find you asleep, all mess and remains like some decomposing beast, by the roadside, is so hateful to anyone awake to life itself, - you're lucky I didn't kill you. (p.16)

When Tizon pleads that he was tired, Leonido mockingly enquires, "Why should you be tired, you onlooker? You do nothing. . . . . I - I live for you, Tizon" (p.16). He classes together his father Gerardo, his prospective brother-in-law Dionisio and Tizon as men who were "born old" (p.19). As an Outsider who has cut off filial bonds he insults his father, strikes him and even blinds him.

Leonido's fierce individualism is such that he does not wish to follow the "process" and become a stereotype like others. He wants to be unique. "They were all consumed with process. Had no idea of the unique. Me, I had overstrong instinct" (p.38). In his quest for the unique, Leonido has taken on "a negative identity" which according to Erik Erikson is one way in which youth deals with its identity crisis or sense of faltering identity. In thus assuming an identity perversely based on all that is considered undesirable, Leonido sets himself up "as a solo fighter against all the values of his age".

Leonido is portrayed as an Outsider who rejects social morality, in particular the taboo restrictions of society. He revels in incest with an obsessive drive and asserts his identity and
Leonido's multiple incest is a deliberate violation of social taboo and is an attempt to undermine and destroy the very foundation on which society is structured. The institution of marriage and the family relationships recognized in it are sought to be destroyed by him. He presents a deliberately shocking image of marriage as a continual rape being carried out on woman. He tells his father:

Father, note this, note I am your son. . . . . By my mother naturally. And naturally raped, raped was the word I said, by you. As I raped her in her turn. (p.59)

He insinuates that his father's "rape" on his mother, which brought forth Leonido, pre-determined the son's life as a series of brutalities and rapes - "that is how I was born. By the same brutality. As you well know" (p.35).

Leonido exposes marriage in his society to be a matter of profit, a bargain struck between the father and the suitor. He is infuriated by the discussion between his father Gerardo and the suitor Dionisio. "Talking dowries and property and being important over my sister's body and disposing of it - as they think" (p.19). As in Levi Strauss' theory of the origin of marriage, woman is presented as a commodity in a commercial exchange. He therefore prefers a genuinely passionate, though incestuous relationship to marriage. He rather unfairly attributes a mercenary motive to Dionisio's offer of marriage and contrasts it with his own passion for Marcela.

..... being looked on as a good bargain ..... Gerardo! Do you hear me now! I always worked for passion rather than for profit, for the salt pearls that ran down the knots of her spine. (p.29)
On his sister's wedding night Leonido rails at the orthodox bourgeois marriage as a humiliating subordination and a fraud and believes that any excess, including incest, is preferable if it involved only passion and not profit.

Leonido: We have never thought of winning — only of each other. I thought of us only as two children together. (she laughs) Anything, any excess is preferable to this miserable subordination, this imposture, this —

Marcela: Go!
Leonido: This low, — low, uterine appeasement! (p.31)

Incest is thus used as a device to focus attention and criticism on the debasement of the marriage—relationship by social convention. Incest, shown to be accompanied by sincerity of passion, is an extreme form of protest when marriage becomes a mercenary contract or meaningless relationship losing its spiritual significance and sacred nature. Here perhaps drama "opens the sacred to scrutiny and so at once profanes and purifies it". Incest, however, is not consciously aware of his role as profaner and purifier of the sacred. He does not deliberately plan or rationalize his position that through incest he is going to jolt society out of its debasement; but the author may be dimly aware of this. A sympathetic presentation of the incestuous Outsider need not necessarily mean an endorsement of his behaviour; neither must it be construed as a moral approval of incest. It may be an acceptance of nature's law that the sacred is profaned violently when hypocrisy and untruth are rife. Deviant behaviour is very often a protest against excessive mechanization or commercialization of life and the conversion of men into objects. It is a protest against attempts to destroy individuality, the natural instincts and man's essential humanity.

Besides being alienated from other men and from social norms, Leonido is also estranged from religion and God. He disbelieves in virtue both in itself and as manifested in men. According to him all men are selfishly in pursuit of pleasure and are absolutely "purblind to the need of others" (p.20). When by chance one performs "what people call a good thing" (p.20) it invariably happens to be one which gives him pleasure. According to him "good and evil are men's opinions of themselves" (p.21). As for him, he seems to have made hi
choice - "Evil be thou my good". According to Alan Carter Leonido is an expression of what might happen to man if he were able to free himself of all his bonds and pursue evil as some form of clinical experiment. Hayman describes him as a hero who pursues evil in an almost saintly way, like Genet, using his own life like a laboratory test to locate the bounds of human possibility.

Disbelief in good and evil as absolute realities leads naturally to the rejection of Christian doctrines concerning repentance and forgiveness of sins. At the end of Act I when Leonido leaves Sicily for Tunis he rejects Christ's passion and death which had won forgiveness of sins for all men. He sends word through Tizon - "Go and tell my father this - I renounce his blood. Also his God, his law, the baptism and the sacraments, oh yes, and the Passion and Death" (p.39). In II.ii. Leonido repudiates the overtures of the shepherd-Christ figure. He scoffs at the Shepherd's concern for his sheep and tells him to abandon them to "die as they want to" (p.52). In this scene Leonido's alienation is presented in theological or doctrinal terms whereas in Act I the sociological dimension was presented in his violation of taboo. The basic doctrine of Christianity is the redemption of mankind through Christ's passion and death, by which he paid the penalty for all the sins of men and men have to only avail themselves of the store of grace won by Christ for them. The shepherd claims to have paid for all that Leonido had spent in his life. While the protagonist in Lope de Vega's play returns to the shepherd's fold as an insider, Osborne's Leonido rejects redemption and remains an Outsider.

Leonido's rejection of salvation and the forgiveness of sins is given an existential interpretation. Leonido is a Nietzschean figure who has gone beyond good and evil and finds repentance meaningless. Buying forgiveness with repentance would be to seek an easy way out and he does not want it. When brought to the trial, he wishes to make full payment. "We don't expect acquittal do we? ........ No, we want a harsh tribunal and the full exercise of justice" (p.55). In the place of Christian repentance, forgiveness and a return to the fold, here we have a persistence and a persever-
ance in the chosen path of an Outsider. There is an existential toughness and courage in facing the consequences of one's actions, in accepting full responsibility for them, in bearing the burden of retribution fully like Sisyphus or like Orestes in Sartre's Flies. In Hayman's opinion Leonido's insistence on "a harsh tribunal" "gives him a superficial resemblance to Camus' Meursault in L'Etranger or to the penitent judge in La Chute".

Leonido experiences existential alienation when the realisation dawns on him that in spite of his striving for uniqueness, his fanatic concern to live every moment of his existence, he would still be forgotten in a month. No lasting imprint of him would survive him. He is obsessed by the idea of existence as bound by the memory of others. If, after death, others do not think of him, would he cease to exist? Here we have the idea of "being" as perception and remembrance by others. He apostrophizes Marcela in imagination -

Marcela, miserable deluded and deluding family. Where are you? Where's your timorous Dionisio? Where is your memory of me? It shall soon fail. My imprint will have died out of all hearts inside a month. Discard. A discard. (p.51)

It is this fear of oblivion, of losing objective identity in the minds of others which makes him plead before he is led out to execution - "Remember me a little longer" (p.60).

In the last scene, Leonido appears "distracted, like a madman" (p.51). Madness appears as a recurring image in many Outsiders, symbolising the individual's estrangement from self. It is significant that only when he is "distracted", Leonido analyses the good and evil present in himself. Until then there had been only non-chalance. In this scene Leonido recognizes a duality in himself. He realises the eternal war between good and evil being waged within him, between the spirit and the flesh, the law of God and the law of sin. This is represented by means of a colloquy between Leonido and a voice. In this exchange Osborne transcribes a passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Chapter 7, verses 15-24, into the play's text. The continuous scriptural passage is here broken up and assigned to Leonido and the voice, rather like a liturgical service with scripture readings in parts by different voices. It is...
a non-naturalistic device and does not imitate real conversation.
The voice initiates the Biblical passage.

Voice: For that which I do.
Leonido: I allow not. For what I would, that I do not. But what I hate: that I do. I know that in me.
Voice: In my flesh.
Leonido: There is no good thing. For the will is present in me. But how to perform what is good. I find.........
Voice: Not.
Leonido: For the good thing I would, I do not.... But the evil: that I do. So then I find the law. When I do good evil is present in me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity.

Voice: To the law of sin.
Leonido: Which of my members? Who shall deliver me? (p.52)

Leonido here uses St. Paul's words to express the conflict within him between the good which his mind wants to do and the evil which the flesh impels him to do. The law of God in a person's spirit is vanquished by the law of sin in the flesh because of the power of evil. Though the words used are Paul's, there is a vast difference between Leonido and Paul in their basic attitude and in the conclusion drawn. In verses 17 and 20 Paul apparently disclaims the individual's responsibility for his actions - "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me". It is significant that these verses are omitted in Osborne's text, revealing Leonido's assumption of full responsibility for his deeds. He does not shift the blame to something else. The question "who shall deliver me?" is posed both by Paul and Leonido. Paul answers his rhetorical query with - "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord". In the play the shepherd appears as the answer but Leonido rejects the Christ/shepherd figure's offer of forgiveness.

Though the play is set in the Renaissance it is as much the product of the author's age and reflects contemporary anxieties and concerns. The Christian framework of the original is retained up to a point, but the play also reveals the failure of what most often passes for Christianity. The play mirrors the crisis of faith in an age when the so-called Christianity is just a collection of rituals and doctrines which do not satisfy the modern man's need
for transcendence. A satirical view of this pseudo-Christianity which has failed man is given in Tizon's catechizing of Lidora in clichés which are learnt and repeated mechanically. This deserves Leonido's sarcastic comment: "And Lidora picking up Christian crumbs and comfort from the servant's table" (p.59). The individual's commitment to the person of Christ and the acceptance of the living Jesus as one's personal saviour and Lord, which form the core of the true Christian experience, are entirely lacking in Tizon's version of Christianity, (pp.56-58) which may be taken as that of the Establishment. Tizon's exposition is just a collection of doctrines and prayers, the dry bones of dogma without the life-giving presence of Christ as encountered by each true Christian. It is this debased version of Christianity which fails Leonido and makes him incapable of responding to the shepherd.

Leonido's self-analysis and assessment portray an individual in the twentieth century who feels the impact of new theories in psychology and philosophy, theories which he begins to apply to himself.

I have been mostly, a fair mixture of intelligence, mostly, self-criticism and, yes, gullibility. Yes, that's a hesitating assessment, . . . . Gullibility, self-criticism. Such people are always identifying, scrambling for their stars, for signs in themselves, in the latest philosophy twice a week. If you have no dreams or portents for the day, they will knock one up for you. If you have not hit your wife or thought of killing your father, Mother, Daughter, Son. They will think you impoverished or insensible. You will be made to dream again. I want no more dreams. (p.51)

Here it almost sounds as if the character (or is it the author?) repudiates the glib justification of one's hostile feelings towards one's family as something natural. He also rejects the pseudo-psycho-analytical compulsion to have dreams of killing one's parents or children, to prove that one is not impoverished or insensible. It is almost as if the pressure of psychological theories drive the gullible individual towards parricide, matricide and incest, when he begins to apply the theories to himself. Hence the weary conclusion - "I want no more dreams". Thus Leonido's career may be said to explore the effect of psychological theories and philosophical postulates on a person of "gullibility and self-criticism". In
particular the impact of Freudian psychology and existential philosophy seems to be examined when an individual carries them through relentlessly to their logical conclusions regarding parricide and incest, bad faith and sincerity, freedom and responsibility.

Osborne claimed that his plays are meant to be "lessons in feeling". Viewed in this light A Bond Honoured may be regarded as an attempt to shock an age which has become so immune to moral indignation because of a breakdown in the value system that something drastic has to be resorted to in order to awaken it from somnolence. Leonido's incest (with his sister) may then be seen even as a plea for sincerity in human relationships, as against the mercenary motive which often governs bourgeois marriage. It is a plea for authentic living as opposed to self-deception and living in bad faith.

The development of Leonido as an Outsider from interpersonal and social alienation to existential and doctrinal alienation is the theme which gives the play its structural unity. Osborne in his note to the play says, "I concentrated on his development..... and discarded most of the rest, reducing the play to one long act" (p.9). Though in an introductory note Osborne claims to have reduced the play to "one long act", actually it falls into two parts. Each act focuses attention on different aspects of Leonido's alienation. The first act laid in Sicily with the accent on incest and the resultant alienation is interpreted in sociological and psychological terms. The second act is placed in Tunis, where Leonido's estrangement takes up existential and theological overtones.

A retrospective technique is used to present Leonido's past in a condensed narrative form. The past is made to account for the present. The Freudian hypothesis regarding the adolescent's fantasy of being the mother's lover is made a reality in Leonido's past and from this stems his incestuous passion for Marcela his daughter-sister. Though he killed his mother, he has not broken free from the prison of mother-fixation, but has raped thirty women, including Marcela and yet finds no release.

Both the backgrounds are rendered sufficiently remote to house the unrealistic mode in which the play is written. The stage-
direction at the beginning is paradoxical, outlining an unreal symbolic structure, almost like a ritual, together with an acting style which is supposed to be violent and primitively wild and yet have also "an easy modern naturalness". According to Osborne, All the actors in the play sit immobile in a circle through most of the action. When those who are all in the same scene rise to take part in it, they all do so together. (p.15)

Simon Trussler regards Osborne's direction as an attempt at a convention able to contain the absurd plot he has inherited - a plot which paradoxically he comes close to endowing with 'absurdity' of a more contemporary kind. Thus the intended structure of the play is that of "ritualised fantasy". But in working out the alienation of the Outsider, Osborne is carried away by the forcefulness of his protagonist. Leonido's clear articulation of his experience of alienation at various levels is too explicit to allow the play to stay at the fantasy level. Thus the Outsider and his alienation are seen to have subverted the originally intended structure of the play.

The Outsider's alienation is conveyed through the use of dramatic devices, language and imagery. The use of long monologues and passages of self-analysis by Leonido convey his self-absorption and inability to communicate with others. There is no real communication because he is incapable of establishing reciprocal relationships with others. When the speeches are not long and reflective, they are pungent abuses and sneers which are strictly one-sided. Leonido's indulgence in irony and the frequent assumption of the sardonic tone even against himself is a measure of his complete detachment from others and from self.

Leonido's deliberate and self-conscious use of language is another sign of his uniqueness as an Outsider. He does not believe in traditional clichés or in glossing over the truth with words. It is as if he wishes to tear the veil of language which hides the truth within its folds. He is most impatient with Tizon's conventional phrases and mechanical responses. Thus in the opening scene we have this exchange:
Leonido: You're flailing aren't you?
Tizon: I am sure -
Leonido: No. Not am sure.
Tizon: I was watching -
Leonido: Am not sure.
Tizon: Master -
Leonido: You're dishonest, treacherous and you even botch treachery worse than most other men. Not am sure. Tizon.
Tizon: Yes.
Leonido: What?
Tizon: Yes, Master.
Leonido: Yes, to what? What? Yes? You don't know, you back it as easily as "no" if you think it'll come up. (p.17)

In this exchange, Tizon's unthinking "I am sure..." and "yes" draw forth a torrent of abuse, corrections and cross-questioning to expose their meaninglessness. "I am sure..." does not really signify any certainty and "yes" is not an affirmation of any point raised. Leonido vehemently rejects the polite euphemisms used by traditional society to evade truth. From his point of view all hypocritical beating about the bush is a sign of bad faith and an inability to face truth squarely. Thus when Tizon advises him to be "Circumspect" (p.18) and hints circumlocutiously at "What may or may not in the past, that is, have occurred between you and your sister," (p.18) Leonido bursts out with - "Not may or may not have. Has, Did. Is. Not was, might, may, Is." He is aware of linguistic traps and veils which distort or hide truth and reality. Hence he fanatically demands precision in the use of language. When Marcela retires with her husband Dionisio on their wedding night, Tizon's pious advice of resignation, - "You must accept it" meets with the retort "I accept nothing. Nothing is offered", (p.29) revealing Leonido's characteristic impatience with conventional phrases and his concern for a correct and meaningful use of words.

A recurrent image that runs through the whole play is that of a bond, a contrast between him and God, by which he is bound to pay for all that he has spent throughout his life-time. It is a bond in God's hands, to be redeemed and paid for at Leonido's death. Throughout life Leonido speaks with nonchalance about his bond or agreement with God, as if that gave him license and immunity for the present - license to do whatever he wanted because he was willing to
pay for it all at the end at the settling of accounts with God, and immunity from any immediate consequence or punishment. The much-vaunted bond, thus symbolizes his flaunting of his alienation from men and society, holding that he is not accountable before men but has to settle directly with God. For example when Tizon asks him, "Don't you think you'll pay for all this handiwork of yours?" Leonido replies, "I'll tell you: send the bill in to God. I'll settle with him later" (pp.33-34). But when the shepherd claims that he had cleared Leonido's debt with God and asks Leonido how he intends repaying the shepherd, Leonido confesses bankruptcy. Perhaps all that the shepherd demands is genuine repentance as he recalls to Leonido's mind all his transgressions (p.54). But Leonido spurns the shepherd's offer of love and prefers to face judgement unflinchingly. Thus the bond imagery is used to convey his estrangement from society throughout life in regarding himself unaccountable to anyone and in denying all reciprocity in his relationship with others. At the time of death, the same image is used to suggest his alienation from God in rejecting repentance and facing the consequences of his actions with existential detachment.

The author's attitude to him is sympathetic and yet objective. Leonido is shown as the most alive person, strongly individualistic, fashioning his own language to express himself and rejecting hackneyed clichés. Yet he too has his moments of bewilderment, doubt and misgiving as for example in "Why I don't know. Something is wrong. God or myself" (p.38). He is the child of an age of upheaval and drastic changes, when man has nowhere to turn to for a lasting support. The pious sentiments of the establishment are exposed to mockery because they lack a firm foundation of faith and are based on shallow hand-me-down clichés which have not been experientially proved in their upholders' lives. The terrible burden of being a law unto oneself because of the breakdown of an externally imposed system of values, is portrayed, together with the heady wine of self-sufficiency in not recognizing anything outside oneself as a control over one.
In Harold Pinter's *Homecoming* incest is not the major theme. But the total lack of moral horror on the part of the characters in contemplating the possibility of incest is seen as the sign of a society where the value structure has collapsed. Here incest is no longer a taboo accompanied by fear, fascination and disgust. It becomes domesticated and pedestrian, a routine matter dealt with in a casual manner.

The basic situation in the play is incestuous. A man's father and brothers aspire to share his wife in common. In the presentation of this there is a singular lack of moral indignation or horror in the attitudes of Max, Lenny, Joey, Ruth and even Ted when they carry on discussions and negotiations concerning Ruth's future in the menage. The very mention of incest had evoked horror in Castabella in *The Atheist's Tragedy*. But here incest is discussed very casually in keeping with the normlessness of modern permissive society. Even Ted the husband is not greatly perturbed or shocked by the turn of events. The phenomenon of the wronged husband horrified by his wife's incestuous infidelity (like Soranzo in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*) is dead as a dodo. Instead, in Ted we see a Doctor of Philosophy who views the situation with intellectual equanimity. While in earlier plays the incestuous characters were Outsiders, here it is the husband deprived of his wife who is the estranged figure. Ted is taken up for study in Chapter VII as an example of the defeated Outsider in Pinter's plays.

In *The Homecoming* incest is a symptom of a sick society where promiscuity is the order of the day. The amoral Outsider is not a unique or isolated phenomenon. Normlessness is so rampant that every individual is estranged from the traditional moral system and values. The macrocosm in which this family operates is a decadent society, where running a chain of brothels is a lucrative business. Lenny as the manager of many such flats claims to have "a very distinguished clientele" (p.73). His proposal to entertain visiting professors and heads of departments brings out the moral laxity among the elite. Lenny's anecdotes whether real or imaginary, about the woman with venereal disease who accosted him (pp.30-31) and about the "parked
car... with a couple of girls in it" (pp.67-68), further strengthen the impression of moral putrefaction and depravity in society. The play's central situation is a sign of the general degeneracy of morals in society. While in earlier plays the attitude to incest defined only one character as an Outsider; here almost every character, except Sam, seems to have rejected traditional codes of morality.

It is generally acknowledged that Pinter's plays operate at two levels - the naturalistic and the symbolic. In Osborne's A Bond Honoured the author's intention to present a ritualized fantasy is subverted by the explicit demonstration of the Outsider's alienation at various levels. In Pinter's Homecoming, behind the apparent naturalism of the play, a fantasy ritual is enacted on Woman. The identification of Ruth with Jessie the dead mother-whore focuses on the role of Ruth in this incestuous menage as wife-mother to all the men except Sam. This is perhaps a fantasy-image of the woman's role in relation to her husband and children in a family. As a wife she has to mother the husband and as a mother she has to provide her sons with the comfort and strength which a wife would give. She may perhaps be seen in effect as wife-mother to all the men in the family. Thus the incestuous situation in Pinter which shocked the public may perhaps be seen as an image of woman's dual role in a family. But when Ruth accepts the matriarchal role at the end of the play, it also includes prostitution. Prostitution is imposed on her by the very same family in which she is to be wife and mother. In thus reducing the mother-wife figure to a prostitute, is Pinter hinting at a violence being perpetrated on woman in the family and by the family?

In The Homecoming the central incestuous situation is an image of the alienation of the entire family from traditional morality. It signifies a condition of anomie in society. Like Heartbreak House this play also presents and analyses a collective situation - the alienation of a whole society.

The Outsider entangled in an incestuous situation is alienated from society and its traditional moral norms. Sometimes he attacks the time-honoured social institution of marriage and presents incest
in opposition. It is significant that in each of the three ages considered in this chapter, there is at least one Outsider who opposes incest to marriage and prefers an incestuous relationship with sincerity and passion to a debased bourgeois marriage whose profit motive and hypocrisy are condemned. Giovanni, Mrs. Alving and Leonido are used in different degrees to profane the sacred in order to throw it open to scrutiny and thereby purify it. When marriage, which is sacred, becomes a mockery or a mere social convenience or a commercial bargain, incest profanes it. The shock generated by this violation may hopefully wake up society from its sleep of unawareness, complacency or lethargy and force it to re-examine its mores and values and purify its institutions. Hence the presentation of incest in this light is not an endorsement of the profanation but has a therapeutic purpose.

The impact of the age is seen in the presentation of incest. The neo-Platonic worship of beauty derived from Plotinus led to the Renaissance identification of beauty and goodness and their co-existence with love. Giovanni and Arbaces use this as an argument to justify their incestuous passion. In an age of social consciousness, the tendency towards reform and liberation uses incest as a vehicle of social criticism as in Ghosts and Mrs. Warren's Profession. The impact of Freudian theory is seen most clearly in American drama, which does not come within the range of this study. In Eugene O'Neill's Mourning Becomes Electra and Desire Under the Elms, incest becomes a matter of infantile mother-fixation or a demonstration of the son's jealous hatred of the father. In Cocteau's Infernal Machine the Sophoclean framework is adapted to portray a contemporary image of life in the light of existential ideas, the absurd and psycho-analysis. In a permissive society where the value-structure has disintegrated and there is a complete loss of moral indignation, incest becomes a symptom of society's diseased condition as in The Homecoming.

As the theme of incest is traced down the ages, the horror of incest is seen to diminish steadily. In seventeenth-century drama the majority reaction to incest is horror. In Arbaces there is inner
conflict and horror before he decides to commit incest. In Ferdinand, when the subconscious incestuous desire is just beginning to be dimly realised, the horror of it drives him mad. Though Giovanni glories in his incest, horror is registered by the society around him. In the nineteenth century incest is a minor theme in drama. In Ibsen and Shaw incest is not an absorbing and alienating passion as in seventeenth-century drama. The intellectual attitude of an individual towards incest, viewing it without horror or condemnation but rather with approval, is considered to be a sign of an emancipated mind. Mrs. Alving, Frank Gardner and Vivie are singularly lacking in horror in contemplating incest but the society around them as represented by Parson Manders, Reverend Gardner and Croft is shocked by such an attitude. In the twentieth century, in Osborne's Under Plain Cover, Tim and Jenny are not horrified by their incest; society's attitude is not so much horror as a prurient craving for sensation. Leonido in A Bond Honoured is like Giovanni in his glorification of incest but society still retains its horror at incest as seen in Dionisio and Gerardo. In Pinter's Homecoming incest is featured briefly and is not seen as a perversion at all. The attitude of everyone concerned, including the man whose wife is to become the common mistress of his father and brothers, is casual. Incest has completely lost its moral horror in modern permissive society.

When the progressive alienation of the Outsider in the context of incest is studied honestly and followed up till the end as in Ferdinand in The Duchess of Malfi, it affects the structure. The play's fifth Act may be justified only as an examination of the final stages of the Outsider's alienation even after the protagonist's death in Act IV. But when the Outsider is not allowed to develop freely, as in A King and No King, there is no structural change. The play remains a stereotype tragi-comedy. In 'Tis Pity She's A Whore, the incestuous Outsider's total isolation from other individuals, society and reality impels him to elevate his obsession into a glorious passion. The ending is therefore paradoxical, being triumphant from the point of view of Giovanni and horrifying to all others. The ambivalent treatment of incest and the absence of dramatic conflict subvert the tragic structure. The play is not a regular revenge-
tragedy but is more like a Platonic celebration of beauty though it also includes a critique of the same. In *Ghosts* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, incest is a minor theme and does not noticeably affect the structure. In *Under Plain Cover* the language itself conveys the tyrannic power of society over individuals converting them into marionettes. In *A Bond Honoured* the intended structure of a ritualized fantasy was possibly suggested to the author by the psychological interpretation of incest as an adolescent's fantasy.

The use of monologues by Leonido and Giovanni depicts their alienation from others. Each of the Outsiders has a distinctive tone and style of speech which sets him apart from others. The megalomania of Arbaces, the jealous frenzy of Ferdinand, the triumphant celebration of incest by Giovanni, the intimate sadomasochistic fantasy of Tim and Jenny and Leonido's impatience with clichés and euphemisms together with his own self-conscious use of language distinguish them as linguistic Outsiders in their milieu. The sanity of the incestuous Outsider is often open to question. While Arbaces and Giovanni are almost carried to the brink of insanity by their obsession, in Ferdinand and Leonido madness is effectively used as an image of their alienation both from others and from self.

While the power-seeker, the malcontent and the reformer may in general be assigned to the drama of a particular age, as being intimately related to the socio-cultural background of the age, incest as a dramatic theme seems to be common to all ages. The presence of incest as an image of alienation in the drama of so many ages perhaps suggests that the topic fascinates the human imagination though it may also horrify it.