Donald Davie, whom a critic has called the chief spokesman of New Englandism, is a poet-critic who, although, later on retracted his association with the Movement, can be counted as one of the founders of the Movement. As a critic he stands for urbanity of tone, didacticism of content and intelligence as guiding principles of poetic style based upon Neo-Augustons. As a poet he tries to revive Augustan precision and clarity, and has reinforced his preference for these qualities through a series of critical books and essays. His sense of a rational and literate reading public is the regulating force behind his poetry.
Among all the Movement poets Donald Davie may be called the propeller of the Movement with the publication of *Purity of Diction in English Verse, Articulate Energy, Late Augustens* and his poetic collections like *Brides of Reason, A Winter Talent, and The Forest of Lithuanie*, to quote Kenneth Allott:

Mr. Davis is, after Philip Larkin, the *New Lines* poet who has given me most pleasure, and *A Winter Talent* is one of the most satisfying collections of poems to be published since the second world war. Mr. Davie is extremely intelligent in both his verse and prose.¹

We find a close similarity between Donald Davie and Philip Larkin as they both were born in 1922 and had similar education. The background of both poets was that of lower middle class; they attend local grammar schools - Davie at Barnsley and Larkin at Coventry and went to university to read English - Davie at Cambridge and Larkin at Oxford. Larkin’s first mature and typical volume was published in 1955; in the same year Davie brought his *Brides of Reason*. Larkin accepted himself more as a novelist than a poet whereas Davie has pointed out in the Introduction to his *Collected Poems* Vol. I:

“It is true that I am not a poet by nature but only by inclination; for my mind moves most easily and happily among abstractions; it relates ideas far more readily than it relates experience. I have little appetite only profound admiration for sensuous feelings and immediacy; I have not the poets’ need of correctness.”²

It is true that Davie enjoys a better reputation as Samuel Johnson may be his nearest model in this and Davie’s interest in the last. Augustan literature may have something to do with this fact. he is equally lukewarm towards the modernists and the romantics, and the Augustan period is for him the period when the poetic spirit was most
at home in its surroundings. The relationship between poetry and life in that period was one of reciprocity, of mutual enrichment, and of fruitful cross fertilization. Johnson’s deep attachment with the contemporary British values, his predilection for moral satire, didacticism and structural symmetry of poetic diction impressed him so deeply that he became the follower of Dr. Johnson:

Johnson was too great a man to be representative of uncommon to stand for what was common to his age. It follows that the impact of his personality upon his contemporaries and upon us derives from no adventitious circumstances but simply from an innate passionate force. This man, who as critic insisted on the necessity for common sense of control, the flights of imagination, was the same whose imagination to peopled his solitude that he implored his friends company in the middle of the night.”

Alfred Donald Davie was born in Barnsley, Yorkshire, 17th July 1922 to George Clarke and Alice Sugden Davie and received his early education at Barnsley Holgate Grammar School. He did his B.A. from St. Catherine College, Cambridge in 1947, M.A. in 1949, and Ph.D. in 1951. He served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946 and married Doreen Davie in January 1945. His wife’s co-operation, encouragement and patience helped him in identifying his true vocation as a writer. He differs from the rest of his Movement colleagues as he is an academic iron who entered very deeply in British literature. He was lecturer in Dublin University from 1951 to 1957 in English. He spent a part of his academic career as a visiting professor in several universities like California, Santa Barbara and returned to Cambridge in 1959.
As a young man Davie was fascinated by Palgrave’s *The Golden Treasury* of the Best Songs and Lyrical Poems in English Language, which was given to him by his mother who had a keen interest in English poetry. His indebtedness to his mother is of deeper importance than mere filial relationship. She had a profound interest in English literature, specially English poetry, and Davie inherited this love for poetry from her. But his mother was interested in Romantic poetry which he rejected in his career. A number of his poems express his appreciation of church architecture which he learnt from Barnsley Grammer School, Baptism had a profound influence upon his career as a scholer, as a critic and as a poet. In his memoir *These the Companions*, he says about his study of 17th country literature and architecture at the English faculty library. Later on he began to doubt about the dissenting church.

and the Thirties (1980), These The Companions (1982). Apart from his poetic and critical works he has edited certain books like the Victims of Whiggery (1946), The Late Augustans (1958), Poems : Poetry Supplementary (1960), Poetic Poetika (1961), Selected Poems of Wordsworth (1962), Russian Literature and Modern English Fiction (1965) pasternak (1969) and Thomas Hardy issue of Agenda, The New Oxford Book of Christian Verse (1981). Since in the present work, the discussion will be limited to the 1950s the main focus will be only those volumes of poetry which Davie published in this decade.

Davie’s first two poems “Homage to William Cowper” and “Bertrand Russells Portraits Memory” were published in an untitled pamphlet. The first poem was written under the influence of Cowper’s “On the Death of Mrs. Throck Morton’s Bull Finch.” At one time Davie read Cowper with great enthusiasm in the early part of his career. The second one highlights the influence of the 18th century. Both were included in his Collected Poems (1950-70) and exhibit the characteristic feature of the Movement.

Brides of Reason (1955) contains 20 poems of which “Brides of Reason”, “Among Artisan’s House”, “Three Moral Discoveries”, “Hypochondric Logic”, “The Garden Party”, “Pushkin: A Didactic Poem”, “Remembering The Thirties”, etc. require explanation and critical evaluation for the judgement of this Movement poet. The title of this collection indicates the rational approach of the poet and his control over passion and emotion. The collection was published in the same year as Articulate Energy : An Enquiry Into the Syntax of English Poetry which focussed attention on ‘the advantages of
conventional, rational prose syntax in poetry, advantages frequently abandoned by experimentalists such as Pound and Eliot earlier in the twentieth century.  

His most valuable collection of poems is *A Winter Talent*—a collection of brisk social satirical poems written in the neat antithetical clauses which shown his command over stylised gestures of verse. The title of this volume indicates the diminishing of the reasonability in various areas of life e.g. religion, society, politics and culture, etc. The poems which special notice are “Time passing, Beloved”, “At the Cradle of Genius”, “Obiter Dicta: “The Mushroom Gatherera”, “Under St., Paul”, “Dissentient Voice”, “The Fountain”, “A Winter Talent”, and “Rejoinder to a Critic”. While sharing certain characteristic qualities of intelligibility, perspecuity, and economy of effects with other Movement poets, Davie stands out among this group for his vast literary and critical scholarship and a singular concern for the state of letters in the contemporary world where science and technology are marginalising native human values and sweeping the human scene with an aggressive consumersism. He is perhaps the most well-read poet and his readings are not confined only to the literature in the English language. He is a noted scholar of Russian literature and has contributed significantly to popularising Russian literature in Britain. He seems to share F.R. Leavis’ disenchantment with sterile literary scholarship which does not show any genuine concern with preserving human values in an age dominated by commodity culture. He also shares Leavis’ deep conviction in the cultural role of English studies and is equally forthright in his attack on social and romantic idealists of the thirties and forties. The Englishness of F.R. Leavis and his
emphasis upon the concern of the poet to his age and generation has also left a deep impact upon Davie. He accepted Leavis as his prophet and his journal Scrutiny as his Bible. Leavis condemned vagueness, festidiousness and skepticism of the twenties. While commenting upon The Anna Karenina and Other Essays of Leavis, Davie says:

Leavis is an English author rather than English critic. His writings constitute on oeuvre a brave and painful imaginative witness as irreplaceable as if it were made up on novels or of poems rather than essays.\(^5\)

But with the passage of time Davie’s admiration for Leavis has been tempered by his awareness that here emphasis on Englishness is a sign not only of intellectual insularity but also of cultural cowardice and spiritual poverty. As he has remarked for me, as for many of my generation, Leavis is the God that failed.\(^6\)

Bateson had been the teacher of most of the Movement poets whose critical opinion left their strong influence upon Donald Davie. He helped Davie in the preparation of The Late Augustans. He gaves primary importance to the meaning which we find in the poetry of Davie. In his English Poetry: A Critical Introduction he attacked the Romantic poets for overrating sounds and affirmed the importance of clarity and reasonability, a close partnership between the reader and the poet. According to Bateson, pleasure and social relation are the key functions of poetry. He says:

The content of poetry is best defined as human nature in its social relations. The purely private emotion and reflection can’t get into poetry because the use of language necessarily involves a specialization of individual experience. All the poems are therefore in the last analysis public poems.\(^7\)
Bateson also significantly observed that “Delight is generally a by product of virtue”\(^8\).

The similar idea is expressed by Davie in his *Purity of Diction in English Verse* when he observes that “A pleasure which I can only describe by saying that diction is pure”.\(^9\) It is also worth noticing that this pleasure principle is derived from Augustan poets. In his *Articulate Energy* he is quite explicit regarding this function of poetry. Syntax in its various forms gives pleasure. He describes poetic diction as subjective, objective, dramatic, musical and mathematical.

The social function of poetry is best defined in *Thomas Hardy and British Poetry* in which he says that the poet is neither a prophet or a bard but he is with others in his kind living in a ‘sublime democracy’, where civilised values of dissent and criticism cannot enter. He also says that prophets are not ‘fair minded, neither they are judicious’. So the poet cannot dissociate himself from his responsibility of being human to those with whom he lives and being human involves the responsibility of being judicious and fairminded. In this way the poet supports the intellectual venture of human kind.

When Ivor Winters published an American anthology *Poets of the Pacific*, Davie welcomed it enthusiastically because it provided an occasion for a poetry of statement which was openly didactic. This was also Davie’s ideal of poetry. Certain other qualities of this collection are intelligence, rational argument and severity of design which influenced Davie. His deep attachment with Thomas Hardy can be easily seen with the publication of *Thomas Hardy and British Poetry*. About hardy Davie has said, “In British
poetry of the last fifty years (as not in American) the most far-reaching influence, for good or ill, has been not Yeats, still less Eliot or Pound, not Lawrence, but Hardy”.10 Hardy’s preference for scientific humanism, technical brilliancy preference of Wessex, keeping in mind the trenches of the first world war, the choice of confessional poetry, simplicity of language and orderly structural pattern have earned Davie’s appreciation. He remarks:

“Accordingly it is Hardy, so much the stone mason of his poetic imagination and so resistant to the temptation of the mythological and the mythopieic, who can seem, more than pound the emblem and the exempler in our time of what Pound meant by ‘the hard in poetry’.11 Davie admired and imitated Pound and Pasternak also and was drawn to the ideal of heroic style in life and art. In 1955, when the Movement craze was at its zenith, Davie had the courage to assert:

I honour the poets, English, Irish and American who revolutionised English poetry thirty years ago; and indeed it seems to me that one of these poets. Ezra Pound influenced me much more deeply and more constantly in the present century.12

In Pound he found true seriousness as opposed to English amateurism. He admired at least some points of imagist poetics, specially its regard for the integrity of native scenes. Pound’s influence is seen in the Forest of Lithuenia (1959) and A Sequence for Francis Parksmen. The former is a successful work, particularly in its own view of ‘exotic provenance’ and the material which he borrowed from Pound and the later shows his feeling for North America. After reading this collection Philip Larkin
called him the friend of Ezra Pound. Davie describes it as a result of his first visit to North America from August 1957 to September 1958.

Davie read Russian literature thoroughly and edited a collection of essays in cooperation with Angela Livingston on Pasternak and wrote the Introduction of the book himself. He also translated his works into English. In his essay on *Sincerity and Poetry* he classifies confessional poetry into two groups: Wordsworthian which confesses to virtue (like Pasternak) and Byronic which confesses to vice (like Baudelaire) and puts D.H. Lawrence into the former group. In his poem ‘pushkin: A didactic poem’ there is hardly any didacticism of the conventional sort: It is the didacticism of a true poet to another practising poet. Pushkin emerges as a personal example for Davie, though their medium is not the same and their ethos is also much different. Davie’s reading of Pushkin washes the Russian poet clean of the conventional romanticism which is usually associated with his name and Pushkin comes out as a poet who has a sort of metaphysical proseness in his choice of themes and diction. In this connection the following observation of a critic seems apt:

At this time, however, the strict syntax and fine diction of Davie’s prose render Pushkin’s exact character more incisively than ever before. Certainly one aspect of the ‘radiant paradox’ must be that the two presences (Pushkin’s and Davie’s) rhymed for an instant. In his autobiography *Safe Conduct* (1931) he declared that the clearest, the most memorable and most important thing in art is its coming into being, and the work is the best work while telling of the most diverse things are in fact narrating their own birth.\(^{13}\)
Davie was influenced by Pasternak and the Russian writers in their use of regular and rational poetic syntax. Davie says that “in his poems Pasternak is constantly fascinated by his capacity of poetry for renewing and refreshing perception ... equally the distortion, deformation, displacement by which reality refresh itself in poems for Pasternak something that happens in the world, something that the poet notices and records.” Davie’s encounter with Pushkin occurred while he was working for his thesis on Pushkin and the influence of 19th century Russian Literature upon English. He also began translating Pushkin and other Russian writers into English. Mortin Dods worth has praised the qualities of Davie’s translation of Dr. Zhivago’s poems and has noted the influence of Pasternak in helping Davie to find a looser though still formal mode of verse after the light poetry of the fifties.

Apart from the influence of Russian literature, Donald Davie not; only followed the pattern of the eighteenth century Augustans in all respect but he helped in creating his generation’s interest in the neo-classical literature revived which can be seen in his publication of several works about the period. His major critical works show his attitude towards the Augustan poets. His Purity of Diction includes poets like Dryden, Pope and Cowper. In his essay “The Poetic Diction of John Singe” he opines:

In the 18th century most poets believed that what dignified man and distinguished him from the brute that was his faculty of reasoning. So the poetry they wrote is the poetry of reason and intellectuality and the diction they chose included many words for operation of the reason such as generalisation and analysis. In the 19th century most
poets glorified man’s will and his passion or his sensibility, rather than his reason. Their diction changes accordingly.15

Here lies the basic difference between Neo-Augustans who laid emphasis upon reason rather than emotion and the rest of the poets upto 1940s who mostly wrote about idealistic themes and emotional experiences. The diction of the Augustans required generalisation and analysis but the later poets could not follow that line. These basic neo-classical principles reasonability of theme, generalisation in content and analytical diction are found in plenty in Davie’s poems. He is not much in favour of rhetorical poems but the use of rhetoric in elegiac poems is favoured by him. He says:

“In English verse, however, it might be maintained that Thomas Gray was the last serious and greatly gifted poet of practice the rhetorical art and it needs to be said that rhetorical art can be great art for the Elegy is rhetorical in its own way no less than Gray’s Pindaric Odes.”16

The most favourite poet of Davie is Dr. Johnson whose bourgeois pious diction is admired by him. Johnson was called the spokesman of middle class and the progenitor of common use of language:

“It must appear that the common use to which Johnson appeals is to be found in the letters of his age.”17

The moral and didactic purposes of poetry are also praised. Jane Austen called Cowper and Johnson her favourite moral writers and Johnson’s admiration of Richardson testifies to a coarsening of the moral sense.18 The worth nothing reputation of Johnson, according to him, is the purification of language to bring up dead metaphors to life again; and this was found in all Augustan poets. This explains why we have recourse
to the terms in respect of Johnson, Goldsmith, Collins, and Cowper-poets writing more or less in completely Augustan tradition and late in that tradition.\textsuperscript{19}

To illustrate the moral values of Johnson’s poems we can quote Johnson’s ‘Prologue to A Word’ to this wise:

\begin{verbatim}
When pleasure fired her torch at Virtues flame,
And Mirth was Bounty with an humbler name.

The words like virtue, mirth and bounty are personified moral principles.
To wit reviving from its author’s dust
Be kind, ye Judges, or at least be just.

By the end of this poem, Johnson affirms that it is not possible to be just without being kind.
\end{verbatim}

In \textit{Purity of Diction} Davie discusses Johnson’s “Vanity of Human Wishes” and Dante’s \textit{De Vulgeri Eloquentia}. To quote Davie:

“... in Dante’s treatise we find a more comprehensive exposition of certain principles of poetic diction, implicit in Johnson’s poetry and criticism, and when found there, embraced by contemporary critics and practising poets as peculiarity relevant to the writing of poetry today.”\textsuperscript{20} He favours Johnson who calls the poet as ‘unrealizable ideal of infinite transability’ and what survives all translations sort of crassy, stupid, unscrupulous and incompetent.\textsuperscript{21}

Davie is only concerned with Johnson’s poem exhibiting in English and in a small way the principle which Dante promoted. Dante is of opinion that it is human instability which has produced the progressive disintegration and its solution is to fuse provincial dialects inside the language for the fulfilment of artificial stability in Latin.
similar practice is noticed in the Movement poets in the 1950’s. W.K. wimsatt while appraising Dr. Johnson and his *Rambler* shows how Johnson continuously tries to define human and moral conditions by metaphors drawn from the natural sciences and examines how each metaphor drawn from the natural sciences helps to maintain the philosophical system with the help of Lock’s philosophy.

Donald Davie is one of those poets linked with the Movement who were Oxford scholars such as Philip Larkin, Kingsley Amis and John Wain. Thom Gunn and D.J. Enright who are also linked with the Movement were Cambridge scholars. Davie has noted the connection between university friendship and the emergence of literary figures:

“For the last fifty years each new generation of English poets ... was formed or formented or dreamed up by lively undergraduates of Oxford and each group has kicked up its Cambridge recruits only afterwards and incidently.22

Earlier both (Oxford and Cambridge Scholars) were unknown to each other but in the later half of the 1940s they got and read the works of each other based upon the same theme and technique.

Davie and Enright found the poems of Larkin and Wain in *Mandraks* and *Penguin New Writing*, and Larkin and his party found the works of Cambridge scholars in *Scrutiny, The Critic, Poetry London, Prospect*, etc. When Davie published his *Purity* in 1952 it was noticed by major Movement poets and after reading thoroughly they commented upon this critical work. Kingsley Amis’ experience is described by Davis thus: “One of my pleasant memory is of Kingsley Amis when we met for the first time
telling me how he had come across in Swansea Public Library and had read it (Purity of Diction) with enthusiasm. Keeping in mind his relation with other Movement poets he says: I exerted myself bit by bit to get to know other members of the group’. He met Wain as a result of First Reading and invited Larkin in Dublin. While commenting upon D.J. Enright’s Bread Rather Than Blossoms in his review entitled “Common Mannerism” Davie privately thinks of the common mannerism as an element helpful in the formation of the Movement.

The Movement poets are not concerned with “self expression” which is nothing but the poet’s presentation of individual problems and experiences; but they are concerned with ‘self-adjustment’ in the sense that they show their relationship with the readers. To quote an extract from his essay “Remembering The Movement:”

“What we all shared to begin with was hatred for writing considered as self expression; but all we put in its place was writing of self adjustment, a getting on the right terms with our reader (that is with our society) a hitting on the right tone and attitude towards him.”

In 1950’s there were poets like Tomlinson who were influenced largely by French and American literature. Tomlinson refused to join the silent conspiracy which now unites all the English poets from Robert Craves down to Philip Larkin. He appealed to believe as Pound and Eliot, Vallery and Mallarme who had changed the landscape of poetry in language other than their own. And Davie concludes, “No wonder he doesn’t appeal to our little Englandism.”
Davie, as Bernard Bergonzi has observed, is an international poet incorporating Russian and French literature and partly American history, yet his subject is only England. The difference between Davie and Larkin is that Davie is the poet of energy, Larkin of quite strength. Like Donald Davie Gunn is an English poet who has taken up residence in California but he has chosen themes from his native country. Tomlinson never emigrated to United States though he seems to have visited America and several other countries. The Movement poets follow the tone of addressing the common reader and sometimes they have been accused of being narrow and insular in their attitudes. Thus G.S. Fraser sums up the basic qualities of the Movement poets:

“There is a sense in which both the virtues and vices of the academic mind, precious and balance on the one hand, caginess, and muffled awareness of the world, on the other hand were the virtues and vice of the Movement.”

The Movement poets are ‘anti’ to all the idealistic literary traditions prevailing from Chaucer to the twentieth century in poetry. They are ‘anti’ to the humanistic tradition, to excessive feeling and emotion of the Romantic and Victorian poets, and to heroism of the twentieth century poets. Among all these earlier poets we find a hope for better future which is also rejected by these poets. Davie’s three major poems “Brides of Reasons”, “To Late for Satire”, and “Remembering the Thirties” are based on his attack upon these three major aspects of the English literary tradition.

Humanism has chiefly implied the revival of liberal learning in Renaissance. The ideal of such humanism is to restore the charms of the classical
civilization of ancient Greek and Latin. Its other important implication is the belief in man’s eternal capacity to mould his fate according to his wish and will. The Movement is against both of the meanings. They neither present Greek and Roman heroes in their work nor accept man’s eternal capacity. Humanism in the eighteenth century came to suggest that the poet must work to remove the follies of mankind which a satirist does. In the revival of neo-Augustan tradition the Movement poets never ignored the sensibility of their age. The eighteenth century was an age of stability and the poets could make their readers aware of their follies but the later half of the twentieth century, as Davie and his friends realized, was an age of instability. They expressed their responses to their period in phrases such as “out of crying in a satirine tone”, ‘woe’, Woe! or ‘it is later than you think’, or ‘things are going from bad to worse’. “And a whole generation of English writers grew with me in this modestly profitable skill”. Though their tones is satirine, they never dare enough to write satirical poems with the intention of improving the follies prevailing in society.

In his poem “Too late for Satire” Davie expresses various reasons of his rejection of satirical poetry which was the dominant poetic tradition of the eighteenth century-the age of enlightenment in which secular skepticism punctured the obscurantist prejudices of the Christian churches. The role of the satirist was that of a surgeon whose first and foremost task was to diagnose the maladies of their age and provide adequate remedial measures against them. A satirist had to safeguard himself from the sycophancy of within and also the sycophants of society. Their satires are rooted in their awareness
that human civilization has been moving from one decline to another and the multiplying
corrupions of history are too formidable to be left neglected. In the last stanza, Davie
accuses Pope of being pitiless and arrogant because Pope had said that he was proud to
see men afraid not of God but of him. Pope’s pitilessness was available to Davie and his
companions but they could not hope to rouse their age to see reason. They did not have
the confidence and sureness of Pope because the period in which they lived had become
immune to such didactic criticism. The corruptions were fast increasing but the satirists
were feable to make men aware of these corruptions, much less make them aware of the
necessity to remove them.

The Movement poets shared the eighteenth century writers’ hatred for
corruption but they were hopeless to diagnose the disease with the help of the old poets’
instrument. Since satire cannot serve their purpose, they need not write it:

To blame is lame, and satirists are late.
No knife can stick in history or the id,
The cutless carve us from the time to fate.28

It was appropriate to blame the Neo-Augustans to write satirical poems
because it was the demand of that time. Satire in the later twentieth century seems to have
become outdated. The pen of a satirist cannot improve the fault of historical events.

Davie has said:

“The poems of Philip Lakrin, himself neither socialist nor
totalitarian, have been exploited by ‘educators’, so as to furnish just
such persuasion.”29
Davie pays tribute to the Neo-Augustans but he does not ignore the historical events of his age which prevent him from being a satirist. He affirms the importance of moral value of poetry.

Another major target of their attack is the early twentieth century poetry which is supposed to be rich and authentic with its fusion of heroic myths and characters of the past juxtaposing the current social problems by using scientific images like an express train and an aeroplane. The intention of Davie in “Remembering the Thirties” is to alert his generation against such mistakes made by earlier poets.

The Movement poets were amused to read the long descriptions of the eventful experiences of the poets of the thirties. Their stories might have had a great reputation and influence the readers of the current time but history is changing so fast that those subjects have become irrelevant after the Second World War. The thirties poets wrote with hope about future. They used many heroic images to express their futuristic visions but after the Second World War these visions appear to be fantastic and unreal, because the conditions have declined further and reveal the hollowness of those visions and dream:

‘That what for them were agonies, to us,

Are high bow thrillers though historical,30

Their feats are fabulous for the Movement poets. The novels, for instance, which had been written before the Second World War, based on history, ‘set in my boyhood and boyhood home’, are quite insignificant and irrelevant in the changed circumstances. The poems written upon complacent freedom of working class represent
‘world more remote than Ethaca or Rome’. The thirties poets enriched their poems by using great heroes like Anschluss and Guernica but these heroes did not impress the Movement poets:

The Anchluss, Guernica-all the names
At which those poets thrilled or were afraid
For me mean schools and schoolmasters and games;
And in the process some one is betryed
Ourselves perhaps.31

The indirect style which is known as Audenesque is ‘too dated’ for Davie and his generation. This indirect style is used to highlight a trivial subject in a serious manner so that it may attract the attention of the readers very quickly.

In the second part of the poem Davie refers to the deceiving attitude of such poets who ‘were not so true’ and they tried to cheat the readers; and this technique is no less ridiculous than their attitudes:

The iron master met his Waterloo
But Rider Haggard rode along the fall.
‘Leave for cape wrath to night!’ they laughed away
On fleming’s treck or Isherwood’s ascent.32

Davie accused these poets of ambivalence and mockingly says that it was so because it was the demand of that time and everybody was doing the same thing. The selection of their subject was trivial ‘in times long glass’ but they tried to garb it with the help of several techniques. Later on these poets realised their mistake but they were helpless to do anything except to defend themselves. Their ideal cosmopolitanism dashed out and shrank into provincialism in the fifties:
And, curiously, nothing now betrays
Their type to time’s derision like this coy
Insistance on the quizzical, their craze
For showing hector was a mother’s boy.\textsuperscript{33}

The tone of the poets of the thirties was in its extreme either in south pole
or in north pole, either extremely tragic or extremely comic, not neutral, but in the fifties
‘a neutral tone is needed’. When they make the classification of absurd and impressive
tone, they find it more suitable and more appropriate in practice. A poet should not use a
hero for trivial action as the poets of the thirties were practising in their poems. The
concept of ‘courage’ for the Movement poets is nothing but ‘the vegetable king’. The
overall result of this poem is to attack the poets of the thirties. Anthony Haxtley says that
after the war it seemed essential to the unfair to the thirties.

Davie favours and strongly recommend England as the poetic subject like
other Movement poets as they were against cosmopolitanism of T.S. Eliot. In his essay
“England as Poetic Subject” he feels the scarcity of subject matter before the British
poets for his ancestor have made a clear cut distinction between a poetic subject and
non-poetic subject. Davie opines:

All reality is our province, and if nonetheless we find it hard to get
poems what can the reason be except some profound incapacity in
ourselves? Because of this reasoning English poets who find it all
but impossible to write poems about contemporary England as the
rich field of poetic subject.\textsuperscript{34}

T.S. Eliot, the representative poet of cosmopolitanism, preponderantly
determined by his being American\textsuperscript{35} and his language is blended with French and other
references. According to Davie, critics tried to evaluate Eliot on the basis of his American and French background; but it should be made on the basis of English tradition. John Press defines a provincial poet in *Rule and Energy*:

The provincial poet is one who is primarily concerned with the values of his culture, society and who is largely indifferent to what is beyond the world that he knows at first hand. Thus he cares very little of the poetry and the civilization of other ages and other countries, nor does he feel the need to justify his own practice by reference of the past.\(^{36}\)

“Among Artisan’s House” is a poem based upon the subject of a particular place Plymouth where Davie went in 1945, the last year of the Second World War and married a girl. Plymouth is one of the three home towns of the Royal Navy where he had gone as a sailor. Davie himself has said about this poem:

The house in this poem is the home of Doreen’s parents, in Paverell. But it is seen less as the domain of her mother than of her father. Welsh ship wright in whom I detected, though he was so far from his native ground, a capacity for that pious cherishing of places and customs that looked for in vain in the family that he, like I, had married into.\(^{37}\)

The first stanza of the poem presents the picture of Artisan’s houses of Plymouth:

High above Plymouth, not so high
But that the roof tops seem to sweat
In the damp see-mist, the damp see-sky
Lowers on terraced houses, set
Like citadel, so blank and high;
Clothes lines run to a handy cleat,
And plot are furiously neat.  

The later two stanzas explain the decay of British civilisation which is not observed by the mass of the people. Few people consider this fact and have a great opinion about it but it has a very ‘small and mean’ quality of being useful. The civilisation is either in imperfect developed part or in a decaying form. The poets like Davie accept that the loss of civilisation certainly affects the common phenomena of society but they have no idea for its remedy. The small civilities are crying in a painful tone to safeguard themselves which at a time had a very large range and the revival of the same is expected by the poet. The poet asks the reader to search for the remedy when he finds himself in helpless situation.

The meaning of this title lies in the last but one stanza where the poet expresses the cause of the decay of the British civilisation. The life had become bound in the ‘hills over plymouth sounds’ in a continuous process of mechanisms and people had no time to think of British civilisation and were always busy with their work; so the decay was but natural. The real fact about current British affairs is given in the concluding stanza:

There is no moral to the scene,  
Curious relic from the past. 
What has and not what might have been  
It serves to show now. And at last  
Shortly nothing will be seen  
By which historian may fix  
The moral shape of politics.
Plymouth survived heavy points blasting during the Second World War and the ‘continuity is clear/From Drake to now’. ‘Mutual respect’, ‘terraced Houses’, ‘moral shape of politics’ symbolize communal and democratic values.

The Movement poets are against any kind of extremity, especially of emotion and passion, imagination and fancy of the Romantic and Neo-Romantic poetry. On certain grounds Movement poets pay a great regard to Dylan Thomas but they have also reacted against him and called him, in Enright’s words “a bubble who feel among literary touts”.⁴⁰ Davie, in his memoir, These The Companions has said:

I recognised in America the trap into which Dylan Thomas had lately, tragically, and also notoriously fallen, recognized it so clearly that I was glad not to have the same temptation, except on the smallest scale, offered to me. The trap was to break through all the social inhibitions.⁴¹

The Movement poets accused him of rhetoric, of excess of feeling, of over reliance on metaphor as against the qualities of restraint, plain statement and positive commitment. “Romantic”, Davie comments, “was for me and my friends the ugliest imputation that could be thrown at any one or anything, a sentence of death from which there was no appeal.”⁴² His poem “Hypochnodraic Logic” sees ‘the Shelleyan failing’ less a weakness than as vagueness. The pain of Shelley is created by appendicites a disease which requires surgery, is in ‘worst obscession’. It was earlier unannounced by the poet but the sarcasm lay in stage that he had to expose it. In his school days also he felt the necessity of surgery of these oddities prevailing in society, so he failed as a student. Every pain for him is more real than illusory. Shelley is described as a poet:
... who have thought
A truth more true as more remote
Or in poetic world confide
The more their air is varified.\(^{43}\)

Another metaphor is ‘elephantiasis’-skin disease causing great enlargement of skin. The charge against Shelley is this that his poems are really speaking vague but they are ‘supposed to be true’.

The way in which Romantic poets present their subject is ‘crippled’. The impartial critic can judge that:

Disease is what we all deserve,
Or else disdain a painless life
While any squeel beneath the knife.\(^{44}\)

Whenever we go into the depth of any impulse we find such mental depression. The poets like Shelley can surprise greatly with their attitudes which only pretend to be true. Their pictures seem to be strange yet their original examples may be remote ‘inside a frightened mind’ which may be unable to see clearly but it is not blind at all. The fact is that Romantic poets twisted the subject to make it serious in such a way that they can perplace an innocent reader.

Nineteenth century poets not only dealt with mental depression, but also with personal experience. However, their recourse to fantastic images and vague and generalized styles left Davie and his generation cold. Davie specially reacted sharply against them and their likes.
Davie’s title poem of the first collection *Brides of Reason* is the most typical representative poem of the Movement phase which was first published in 1952. About the origin of this collection he explains:

On 10 May 1952 I confided to my journal: ‘In my poetry of the last six months I have made concessions to vulgarity in the shape of point and glitter, striking similes, rhetorical words, memorable lines; anything that emphasizes the detail at the expenses of the whole. And I shall continue to do so, in hopes of public favour’. And in the pages of journal which begin to appear the poems that I afterwards assembled to make my first collection *Brides of Reason*.45

Since the book was published in the years he stayed in Dublin so it contains several poems on and about Ireland i.e. ‘Demi-Exile Howth’, ‘Thyestes’, ‘A Dachao and Rilke died’, ‘Eight Years After’, and in *A Winter Talent* also poems like ‘North Dublin’, ‘Samuel Beckett’s Dublin’, ‘Corrib An Emblem’, ‘The Wearing of the Green’, ‘The Priory of St. Saviour, Glend a Laugh’ etc. are about Ireland.

The poem “Brides of Reason” deals with the deep attachment of the poet to the eighteenth century poetry and attacks the Romantic poets dominated by imagination. While the romantic poets laid emphasis on value generalities such as imagination, emotion, love, beauty, and immortality, the Movement poets were looking for the opposite qualities which they could find only in the Augustan poets. The Augustans were pragmatic in their approach and gave more importance to the head than to the heart. They avoided personal experiences as themes and chose subjects which were larger in dimension and appealed to the common sense of the readers. Davie opines that Augustan
poets were pragmatic but their tradition was given up by the Romantic poets. The difference is explained on the basis of symbolic interpretation of Romeo and Juliet in his poem:

Charmed with his manners towards alternatives
The Unacceptable Romeo she has kissed,
The heart with this judicious husband lives,
And weds to Reason, seems a moralist.46

The 18th Century poet’s urbanity is also praised by Davie in this poem and he refers to the purification of language with a sense of order on the basis of theme and syntax, chastity of diction which is sparkling with intellect.

Davie has been accused by Martin Seymour Smith for constantly seeking a critico-academic excuse, for postponing an attempt to write poetry of a wider range.47 Davie justifies the lack of emotion in his self-defence poem “Rejoinder to a critic” and stands in the mid way:

You might be right, “How can I dare to feel?”
may be the only question I can pose ...

Here ‘you’ is not only meant for Saymour-Smith but also for those readers who have the same charge against him. In his essay “poetry or poems” he describes the function of a critic:

For my own part I believe that critics should be concerned with poems not with poetry; above all, with dividing the sheep from the goats, good poems from bad poems. This has the advantages of keeping the critic in his place ... As a poet he becomes a God, the critic becomes his high priest and partake of his sanctity.48
A poet like Davie cannot dare enough to feel because he knows the result of feeling of Romantic poets and Donne as well. He can only pose the question and can’t give the general reply or decision because it may not suit others, though he may be right. In “Rejoinder to a Critic” he quotes a few lines from Coleridge in which he expresses his agony of stealing the feeling of his own generalised form which makes the meaning difficult to understand by ordinary readers.

Again he quotes from Donne to explain the cause of his choosing reason instead of emotion. In one of his poems Donne enquired about the readers who have been injured by his love because love has such a wide and open area that it may not hurt the heart of any one. Still the result is reverse. The quotation has no relevance for ordinary reader who does not care about the sensibility of the age. ‘Who is injured by my love’ indicates that the contemporary situation is quite different from the earlier one because not love but hate is prevailing in society at this time. Earlier poets might think that feeling did good rather than harm to society. But after the Second World War there is no existence of feeling at all which was occurred due to nuclear bomb explosion in Japan and other countries:

Alas! alas, who is injured by my love?
And recent history answers: Half Japan!
Not love but hate? well, both are reversion of
The feeling that you dare me to. Be dumb!
Appear concerned only to make it scan!
How dare we now be anything but numb?
At the end of the poem he uses ‘we’ to indicate that the reader also faces the same problem as the poet.

Charles Tomlinson accuses Davie that the bomb was blast in Hiroshima not because of excess of feeling but “through the death of imagination in the leaders of democracy”\textsuperscript{50} and affirm the extreme necessity of feeling and imagination in poetry. But Davie’s sensibility in this poem shows his responsibility to society. The poem does not show his attitude against feeling and imagination but his attachment with readers for the welfare of society.

As most of the Movement poets belong to lower middle class, so the crisis of the same is presented by them. According to Blake Morrsion:

“More interestingly, neutrality can be seen at work in a poem which has some right to be thought the most politically direct of all Movement texts. Davie’s ‘The Garden Party’.\textsuperscript{51}

In his poem “The Garden Party” he calls ‘in our black country’ which lay emphasis upon poet’s national feeling. But ‘black’ indicates the calamity brought by Second World War. Under the shade of over green tree cedar in a large and wide open area he finds the children of ‘local magnates’ - the aristocrat of his locality playing tennis. The poet does not want to hide the envy raised in his mind due to the jealousy of class privilege as he belongs to lower middle class. He thought that those who want to please such persons are really foolish and ‘only wish I had my time again’ to show the capability hiding in me.
The poet invented a situation to quench his thirst of class privilege when he fell in love with a girl of higher class than his own. His anger could be observed whenever he used to shake his hand with the girl as “he shook absurdly” not politely to express his wrath. At the end of the poem he found the distinction between his own policy and his fathers’ ‘more submissive’. According to him ‘rich people are always sad’ which is said by Shakespeare; “Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown’. His ‘equalizing principle’ is that we (under-privileged) are suffered by them (aristocrats) “Their is all the youth we might have had”.

‘Tennis-courts’, ‘local magnates’, and ‘tango’ - American dance with strongly marked rhythm - the fourth stanza has a romantic mood in which he calls ‘faces hung pearls upon a cedar bough’, it shows a faint shadow of Pound who compares the faces of metro with petals on a wet black bough. The tone of the poem is not challenging but mild and witty. The pivot of the poem is attached with society what we find in most of the Movement poems.

His strong inclination towards the eighteenth century poetry is due to urbanity, and discipline which he describes in “Homage to William Cowper” and calls himself ‘a pasticheur of Late Augustan styles’. During the nineteenth century and early half of the twentieth century imagination and fancy dominated over poetry against which he raised his voice. He was against Romantic description:

This costive plan, this dense up holstery,
Those mice and kittens, this constrictive rhyme,
Those small infernoes of another time........
What is all this modish hecuba to me?52

He decides to write the poem in a particular social structure of the current time, keeping in mind the suitability of the reader in a simple and straightforward and orderly manner, in controlled thought. He need not care about ‘most poets let the morbid fancy roam’. ‘The sofa and the hare’ shows the urbanity of the poet which he borrowed from William Cowper. Coldness is another major quality of his poetry which is also found in Cowper--’ and hearths extinguished send a chill for miles’. Miltonic attachment with Cowper is observed by the poet:

“Cowper draws upon Milton whereas Johnson draws upon Dryden. At such moment Cowper uses Miltonic magniloquence for his own purposes and with success.”53

Davie’s concept of Englandism is found in ‘horror starts, like charity at home’. Davie shares the form and clarity from the eighteenth century writers, “the squalid rat broke through the finches’ fence/which was a cage, and still was no defence”, mocks with an ingenious and detached modern wit the predicament of the striken deer.”54

In his The Late Augustans he defends and highlights the poets who flourished after the death of Pope and before the publication of the Lyrical Ballads. “Belfast on a Sunday Afternoon” is a poem discovering the past as painful after the 18th century, after the founding of Protestant and Whig; the battle of Boyne, the defeat of kind James II and the Williamite settlement and the poem is sufficiently a long process of history of Queen Victoria as an emblem of strong monarchy and world empire:

“Pipe bands, flute band, brass bands and silver bands,
Pras-by-ter’s pibroch and the deacon’s serge,
Came stamping where the iron Maenad stands,
Victoria, glum upon the grassy verge.”

We often find in Davie’s poetry the repeated emphasis on moralising which can only be explained in historical perspectives. After the Second World War the British Empire declined. In 1947 India, in 1948 Burma and Ceylon became free; resultantly they (The Britishers) thought “a feeling of national loss was something to be shaped into national claim to virtue”.

Though politically and economically Britain was reduced but morally chastened. Davie’s “Three Moral Discoveries” (1951) describes:

The genuine prayer, when all is said and done
Is lead us not into temptation.

The Movement poets look at the problem of sex from the male perspective. For example, in Gunn’s “Carnal knowledge” male speaker is cynically unattentive to his beloved’s feeling and insults her intelligence. Davie’s “Three Moral Discoveries” is a poem about sexual need of the protagonist who was accompanied by Will—a symbolic character of feeling and emotion. Woman, in most of his poems in Brides of Reason is the mother of all corruption. All three stanzas and with an emotional crisis temptation, resentment and abdurance and indicate that these are social evils. The “Demi-Exile Howth” is based upon his Irish stay in Dublin in which he describes an urban discussion of English identity abroad wherein the poet declines overt commitment to either country.

In “Momertinus on Rhetoric A.D. 291” he describes the relevance of virtue which alone can rule the world:

But virtues has to, rule the world alone
And scorns assistance from a trick of light,
Here ceremonies rectitude, her tone
Not florid nor austere, but coming right.⁵⁹

Donald Davie is anti-cosmopolitan and in his poem “Creon’s House” he has consciously presented the new attitude which is antithetical to any kind of cosmopolitanism:

Now Europe’s hero, the humaner king
Who hates himself, is humanised by shame,
Is he cursed or a corrid spring?
A will that is bent or buckled? Tense, or Tame?⁶⁰

Calvin Bedient while commenting upon Creon says:
This Creon-so unlike Sophocles’ king, who sins through unbending pride and not thus through humbleness that unbands is Davie’s warning (as he discloses in the October 1969 _Encounter_ against such unnerving recoveries of nerve of Britain’s part in the Suez crisis, America’s part in Vietnam. In the beginning: Creon I think could never kill a mouse.⁶¹

It is a poet’s confession about reality which never exists in the reader’s mind. The didactic tone of address comes but at the end of the poem:
You that may think yourselves not proud at all,
Learn this at least from humble Creon’s fall:
The will that is subject, not over thrown,
Is humbled by some power not its own.⁶²

Kingsley Amis’ “Habbits and Intellectuals: A Reply to Donald Davie” explains Creon as a person willing in authority, versus Antigone, the person in perpetual
opposition who is too spiritually grand over to accept power and its corrupting temptations, and whom be equates with “my figure of the lefty.”

“Pushkin: A Didactic Poem” is a creative as well as critical poem of Donald Davie in which the poet on the one hand studies the characteristic features of Pushkin’s poetry; on the other hand he evokes all those theories which a great poet must have. About “Pushkin: A Didactic Poem” Davie has said, “I write the somewhat at the youthful aplomb of the title) appears in my Collected Poems in a version drastically abbreviated from the sheaf on sheaf of pages that I pored over and suffled around through many weeks and months in Trumpingon. It is extremely prosaic, and was meant to be... the incorporating into verse of more and more of the pross virtures, so as to see how near to prose.”

As the Movement poet feel pain due to the diminishing of Britain, a poet like Davie still struggles hard to amuse; so Pushkin faced the same problem before him. Davie compares him with Emily Bronte:

As in her verse
In Pushkin’s we assume the truth
That for life to be tolerable Men must
Be wary, in genius, quick to change
Among diversions, grave, or frivolous
To keep off spleen.

Emily Bronte is ‘less various, flexible, fiery, though as noble/As Pushkin was more stoical.’
“Time Passing, Beloved” has a lyrical touch, very often rejected by the poet, in which the poet expresses his rational approach towards love and the tyranny of time which crushes the relationship. Since there is no progress, the poet mourns over his fate:

... Time pasing and our passages of love
As ever, beloved, blind
As ever before; Time binding, unbinding
About us; and yet to remember
Never less chastening, nor the flame of love
Less like an ember.66

A Winter Talent is another collection of Davie’s poems published in 1957 which shows his maturity and his progress on the same theme, form and content as in the poems in The Brides of Reason; but the collection is concerned with nationalism to a large scale whereas the earlier collection is basically concerned with the 18th century preoccupation of the Movement poets, diminishing of moral values, against their predecessors etc. He glorifies not only England but also present the problems of other countries like Italy and Ireland which were facing a similar crisis as England. Another major theme of this work is the dissent religion of his Baptist childhood and his later interest in the Episcopalian church. Dekker opines that his ‘sense of place poems’ are merely descriptive and he quotes the second stanza of “North Dublin”:

A continuous gallery, clear glass in the windows
An elegant conventicle
In the Ionian order-
What dissenter with taste
But would turn, on these terms
Episcopalian.\textsuperscript{67}

Out of thirty seven poems his two poems “Time Passing, Beloved” and “The Wind of Penistone” have lyrical quality; most of the poems under the title “England” have been written in iambic pentameter. Five poems that make up ‘the Ireland’ are influenced by Austin Clarke’s country, the medieval, monastic world of the Irish Romanesque which constitutes so much of the Irish poets’ symbolic landscapes; and “North Dublin” fastens through this is no doubt fortuitous- on a part of the city often explored by Clarke, not least in \textit{Ancient rights}.\textsuperscript{68}

Under the subtitle ‘Dissentient Voice’ Davie presents four poems dealing with his baptist childhood and his upbringing as a protestant. In “The Evangelist” Davie finds a clearcut distincion between religion and dissenting background in other areas especially social. To quote Gregory A. Schirmer:

“And ‘The Evangelist’ is clearly the work of a poet who finds the temperament of Alexander Pope congenial: the poem’s tightly controlled metric and stanzaic regularity, the complex syntax of the final, revealing stanza, and the tendency toward qualification (Deserve, no doubts, a murmer of applause and which is perhaps why I disparage it’) all be speak a strong intellectual presence”.\textsuperscript{69}

“Obiter Dicta” like “Remembering the Thirties” is a poem about the change of values and perceptions between two generations. As they differ in age, so they need not follow the same pattern of morality:

Yet lapidary moralists are dumb
About the precepts that he acts upon,
Brown with tobacco from his rule to thumb.\textsuperscript{70}

As Kingsley Amis’s traveller moves in a ‘temperature zone’. Donald Davie feels the necessity of ‘temperate rule’ and art is turned to ‘commonplace not to personalise themselves.

In “Dream forest” the poet defends ‘the types of ideal virtue’ he has set up which require propagation. The poem is also an attack upon Romantic poets who often talk about the images of dream and forest signifying horror, terror, fear and exclamation. His ideal virtue is not specified to the life of a particular man nor it can be based upon a specific time. The two examples of Brutus and Pushkin are given to defend and to explain persons who have broken every kind of circle. Out of classic, romantic, realist, he has set up ‘a few trees’ like smoothness, urbanity, order and simplicity which are required in the present generation.

‘Limited Achievement’ is another poem dealing with his attack upon certain poets who strengthen their poems to build state vocabulary but the Movement poets are proud of their ‘highly skilled’ but pertinacious works. Those poets also lay emphasis upon ‘dismal properties’, ‘uneasiness’, ‘bloomy vault’ and ‘oppressive air’, which is irrelevant for the present generation. He who becomes successful in his single track is impatient with the restriction of the Movement poets. The same thing is found in ‘Rejoinder to a Critic” in which the poet defended himself.

Though the poet denies the attraction of sensuous beauty he expresses it in his “Cherry Ripe”. He is of the opinion that an architector, a painter cannot present any
odd picture for the fear of diminishing values; but the poet’s role is to present the facts before humanity. A similar idea is expressed in Philip Larkin’s “Lines on a Young Ladie’s Photograph” when he contrasts between the poet and other artists. Davie contrasts his own poetry and other arts, and says:

And for the most part I am pleased and greatful that my art is the conservative art, and there can’t be abstract poetry; and there can’t be action poetry as there is action painting. (Either no poetry is action poetry or all poetry is) Poetry can’t live in a state of perpetual revolution; even though it goes through the motions of doing so”.  

The poets should present the whole picture and not just parts.
And cherry ripe, indeed ripe, ripe, I cry
Let orchards flourish in the poet’s soul
And bear their feelings that are mastered by
Maturing rhythms to compose a whole.  

In “The Fountain” the poet’s love of Berkley and his grandoise philosophy can be observed but its contrast with the present generatn is also observed by the poet. The syntax of the poem deliberately finds similarity with Berkley’s “Philonasis”. The unpleasant coldness is observed like the British condition after Second World War, but only a genuine national figure can feel the diminishing values of the age which is unpleasant. This chillness is found in his other poem -

1. And hearths, estinguished send a chill for miles

(“Homage to William Cowper”)

2. Pragmatical Cold capulet, the head

(“The Brides of Reason”)

3. Chill eye beneath the chapel floor unseen

(“A Baptist Childhood”)

It is not a didactic poem though its witty one line (‘though that was not what Berkley meant at all’) prefigures the reservation Davie wants to express in this poem. The most remarkable achievement of the poem is its reference to Berkley’s contribution to enliven dead metaphors which attracts him more than other 18th century writers.

Most obviously a number of poems of his *Collected Poems* 1950-70 are concerned with the dissent tradition while others express his own ambiguous response to Baptism; in fact the former express his ethical and aesthetic principle of non-conformity which is most difficult:

When to conform is easy, to dissent;
And when it is most difficult, conform?^{73}

His four poem sequence published under a single main title ‘the Dissentient Voice’ expresses his more personal approach to religion than “The Evangelist”. This very dissent tradition is also derived from the Neo-Augustans as he mentioned:

I was taught to have pride in having born to that strain in the English tradition the strain of the English dissenters in which such promptness and badness could most be counted in, indeed to excess. I have listened in vain for any cheap protest from the English tradition. I am heir to the tradition of Oliver Cromwell and John Bunyan.”^{74}

The poem “A Baptist Childhood” echoes Dylan Thomas “Fern Hill”: When some were happy as the grass was green
I was happy as a glass was dark.\textsuperscript{75}

His second and third poems deny the charm and beauty of humanity and the tension between non-conformity and art:

The wolves threw off sheeps’ clothing once or twice
(For Queen Anne dead or the pretender Foiled)
but the fox knew that tastes were growing nice
And unction kept the hinge of dogma oiled.\textsuperscript{76}

The poet calls modernists as ‘Old zealots were such sobersides’. The last poem is addressed to the poet’s grandfater Baptist Deacon and it draws the distinction between Davie, the poet, and his grandfather, the man of religion. Davie finds his grandfather’s religion as fundamentally anti-humanistic:

A Gathered church. That posy, the elect,
Was gathered in, not into, garden walls;
For God must out of sheer, caprice resect
The Jugular stalks of those He culls and calls.\textsuperscript{77}

The influence of Irish churches and their role in the contribution of the national development is observed by the poet as he expresses it in These The Companions:

“The dissenters’ conception of a ‘gathered church’, gathered from the world and in tension with it, can’t help but be the model for Leavis... the reading was done in Dublin where the disestablished church of Ireland satisfied the need, bread in me as a child, envisage my church as in tension with the state, by no means caterminous with it as the church of England must pretend to be.”\textsuperscript{78}
No matter the religious poems published by Davie in the sixties under the impact of Episcopalian church stand apart from his earlier view which we find in his ‘Having No Ear’ and ‘The Devil of Ice’.


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