CHAPTER – V
THE RISE OF THE NEW APPROACH

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the production, regarding Shakespeare was projected, to have been ‘of bewildering abundance... ‘ and several minds of high caliber and brilliance were all involved in the task of interpreting Shakespeare. Discovery and invention both kept pace of each other and the subject matter of their interest was not merely Shakespeare’s mind but the whole of Elizabethan domain was under keen observance. It is also claimed by G.H. Herford that during those thirty years the work done by these Scholars can ‘surpass any previous generation’1 Yet the fact remains, this age of abundance and richness may have extended their boundaries ‘to Shakespeare’s elusive personal life’ and the Elizabethan, theatre but the demand to ‘make it new’ was still there and Shakespeare’s imagery and symbols needed urgent attention for the new generation of the twenty’s to understand Shakespeare.

Hence the New criticism brought about a gradual change and developed into a potent movement in and about nineteen hundred and twenty’s. This movement that was initiated by Pound, Eliot, Yeat’s, Richard, Empson and Leavis was formally given a name, when in 1941, John Crowe, Ranson published his book, The New Criticism remeniscensing, he baptized this crusade as the ‘New Criticism’.2

It is the endeavor of this work to present that this was not a concerted movement because there was no harmony and synthesis neither in their approach nor attitude. Each of these eminent persons projected and practiced this movement of the new approach according to their own individual vision.
Pound has ascertained, in this context that a scientist can only expect to become really great when 'he has discovered something' new. Not to be left behind I A. Richards boldly took up this challenge and carried out an experiment on the undergraduate student of Cambridge University and made them evaluate poems without telling them the authors name nor the background he belonged to. He wanted a first hand analysis in order to document and discover the result of such an experiment in his book *The Practical criticism*. Granville Barker also conducted live experiments with the acting of the play, and the theatre became a laboratory for him in order to 'prove' whether 'Shakespeare was a master of stage craft'.

Changes must take place it is the symptom of progress. But it was as Shakespeare had been put on trial by the modern scholars of this century, under the excuse that since the Elizabethan dramatist, believed in experimenting and venturing into new avenues they could do likewise. This discovery of the historical scholarship of Shakespeare’s Elizabethan background generated this fresh opening towards a new attitude in Shakespeare. Thus the New Critics saw themselves totally empowered to experiment with Shakespeare, creating a new genre of progress and evolution, towards the understanding of this ancient playwright in a new way.

However, this has to be emphasized, it was not mere change of a single nature, it was in fact, considered by eminent scholars as a revolution that came suddenly although some view it as a recalcitrant attitude towards the nineteenth century, character approach and also the historical and theatrical scholarship. Hence one can opine that because this very fresh and 'profitable approach wanted to make a deep and lasting impact, they veered a way out for their
crusade, rejecting and breaking away from all that was traditional and orthodox and thus achieved their goal.

The terminology of 'New' has spontaneously been used for this methodology because such a development was never before on the canvas of Shakespeare criticism. In the Victorian era a great deal has being written about Shakespeare but the use of symbol and imagery in his writing still remained in darkness. This side of his art remained in constant negligence and ignorance rather, until 1920. While Shakespeare’s characters and plots were analysed and his biographical and textual enigma were being removed, his style and language still perplexed and confused critics.

If we cast a backward glance, it will not be difficult to remember all the strictures that were laid upon Shakespeare’s language in the neoclassical period. Even Dryden had complained of his figurative expressions and he wanted to remove 'that heap of rubbish under which many excellent thoughts lay wholly buried.' Such a remark was not criticism, it was sheer lack of understanding, became the time of his age was not ripe enough to have discovered and decoded Shakespeare’s idiom.

According to L.C. Knights, ‘the implication of Dryden’s remarks became the common places of criticism for the succeeding generations.’ Even a genius like Pope was unable to decipher the metaphorical language and thought the playwright to have made a mistake in using such ‘high words and metaphors.’ To Francis Atterbury, who was the Bishop of Rochester, Chaucer was more legible to him than the obscurity of the bards Shakespeare language and ‘in a hundred places’ he just was unable to grasp Shakespeare. Warburton, an editor in the eighteenth-century has also objected to the ‘hard and forced
construction' of Shakespeare's sentences. The censure of Samuel Johnson in his Preface (1765) was also related to the faults of Shakespeare's age and he finds Shakespeare style 'ungrammatical, perplexed and obscure.'

It is reported by Hazelton Spencer, that the Neoclassicists could not appreciate the metaphorical opulence of the poetry in Shakespeare's plays, because they lived in a different era. In order to grasp the idiom of Shakespeare they either entirely rejected or changed; metaphors were changed to similes and a more dignified form was adopted in place of quibbles and low-words to maintain tragic decorum.

But at the close of the eighteenth century, Walter Whiter's, *A Specimen of a Commentary on Shakespeare* (1794) presented the study of Shakespeare's dramatic imagery for over a hundred and twenty years. His book presents a study of the formation of images and recommends a thorough examination of the image clusters. But perhaps it failed to have influenced the critical opinion of his age. However, in the 1930's it suddenly re-surfaced. Interestingly Muir observes that Whiter went unnoticed because the title of his publication was, 'deceptive', and hence although a 'pioneer work' it made no 'stir'.

The nineteen century critics as we can remember, never gave the feeling that they were handling the poetic plays of Shakespeare, they treated the plays more like novels and their central interest was in the characters. An exclusive study of Shakespeare's dramatic imagery never even crossed their mind, we do find a scattered comment here and there but this was only of passing interest. Except that in Coleoridge's case, who emphasized the organic beauty of the playwright's diction. Although obsessed with character depiction, his remarks were rare and uncommon in this age. In this regard even Dowden's and
Bradley’s name also crop up: ‘Dowden had some interesting remarks on the prevalence of blood in Macbeth, and Bradley referred to the animal imagery in King Lear. 11

There were other outside factors equally responsible for the appearance of this new way, which has already been traced in the first chapter of this thesis. Indeed, the scholars realized that enough had been said about his character and his still as a theatre artist and felt the need to give attention to Shakespeare’s style and language. They wanted to explore other procedures in order to translate Shakespeare.

The belief that a Shakespeare play might be regarded as a dramatic poem rather than a primarily a studying human character steadily gained support, and as it did, interest in the poetic and symbolic, as distinct from the psychological and dramatic, aspects of Shakespeare’s work increased. 12

Besides this concern there was another parallel movement led by some great writers and critics of the early twentieth century such as Yeats, Eliot, Joyce and Lawrence. The were bestowed with the epithet of ‘great guiding influences’ of the new approach. Their impact was upon these ‘New Critics’ who carried out the crusade. Wilson Knight, Caroline Spurgeon, L.C. Knights and F.R. Leavis – they refuted not only Bradley’s but also Stoll’s approach and have taught their era to See Shakespeare’s ‘essentially poetical approach’. 13 The revival of myth and the impact of Freud and Jung was indeed deep and shattering on the current literature of that phase. A renewed interest in the language and symbols of the Metaphysical poets, could distinctly be sensed. Due to all these causes the demand for a new way to evaluate a work of art whether ancient or modern became the necessity of the day.
If we cast a glance over the history of criticism that has existed after the nineteen thirty’s, it becomes obvious, how essential imagery had become. It has been granted a new very important role as if it is the answer to all the enigma of Shakespeare’s art. Critics have even tried to decode the problem of authorship and even think it essential for biographical information. In today’s world interpretation through poetic imagery has pervaded all genres and is considered most lucrative and gainful.

In 1933 it was L.C. Knights extreme manifesto that geared up this movement, “the only profitable approach to Shakespeare is a consideration of his plays as dramatic poems.”

This comment was deliberate, because he wanted to register his reaction against the orthodox way of interpreting Shakespeare that had been conditioned by character criticism. But during this time the focus was only on the language of Shakespeare and not on the action of the play. Some worthy books also got published on this subject in between the 1920 and 1930 by some reputed critics like G. Wilson Knight and H.W. Wells. In 1935 C.F.E. Spurgeon’s Shakespeare’s Imagery made quite an impact, and this resulted in a rapid increase of writing on this subject. ‘The profitable approach’ that L.C. Knights had wanted to pursue, had become a reality. This was further observed by A.H. Sackton in 1949:

‘...it is now becoming a commonplace of criticism that an Elizabethan play may be approached most profitably not as a study in human character, or as an expression of an individual philosophy but as a dramatic poem.’

Different authors concerned with the poetic approach, practice different methodology and goal to achieve an interpretation but nearly all of them agree with the proposal that a play should be regarded first and foremost as a poem.
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In spite of having shared theories there have been cross currents of antagonism; in practice only a few have a definite programme or a methodology to follow, some are mere imitators. Regarding the modus operandi of the new critics R.A. Foakes informs us:

“only a few, among them Caroline Spurgeon, W. Clemen, G. Wilson Knight and Una Ellis Fermor, have made clear their method of analyzing imagery and their reasons for following it. The majority seem either to have taken over another’s method, usually Miss Spurgeon’s, or to have criticized and adapted another’s method of approach, without considering the attitude upon which it was based.”

It is indeed very difficult to chalk out the exact methodology that these New Critics followed. The study of imagery and that too of Shakespeare’s may be a very useful innovation in the field of criticism, but there is as S.L. Bethell acquaints us

‘a good deal of confusion about the nature and function of Shakespeare’s imagery and about the critical technique required to deal with.’

The understanding towards this New approach can only be achieved if we take up some of its major critics who have employed this method to understand the Dramatic Imagery in Shakespeare’s plays. George Wilson Knight was a critic, actor, director and playwright and also a professor of English Literature at the University of Leeds. He is the first representative, of the symbolic explanation of Shakespeare’s dramas. These are some very invaluable contribution in the field of critical studies made by him; Myth and Miracle 1929. The Wheel of Fire (1930). The Imperial Theme. It was his view
primarily, that in a work of art, we are not to look for 'perfect verisimilitude to life, but rather, see each play as an expanded metaphor.'

His powerful book *The Wheel of Fire* was published in 1930 with an introduction supplied by T.S. Eliot. Knight was praised for delving "below the level of 'plot' and character", by Eliot and instead giving us 'music' which unified the entire work of Shakespeare. It is to the credit of G.W. Knight that he gave to Shakespearian play a new theme and converted then into 'dramatic symphonies'.

Gary Taylor illuminates them Knight's writing and makes the meaning clear;

Knights writes a chapter on "The Othello Music;" he writes a book on The Imperial Theme. In Knight's handling 'theme' becomes an insistent leitmotiv in the vocabulary of Shakespearian interpretation, fusing the word's musical definition with its rhetorical one. The object of Shakespeare criticism, as defined by Knight, is to identify the theme of each play. Thematic tones and images recur in the speeches and action of diverse characters; character and plot serve only to illustrate theme.

Some of the critics who have contributed towards this new approach, have made an effort to provide the ways and the means of interpreting the imagery and symbolism in Shakespeare plays. But among all these scholars it is W. Knights who has produced a detailed analysis and provided arguments in its favour and to some extent he has been convincing. If we remind our selves of the preface in the *Wheel of Fire* by W. Knight, it appears as if it was written as an assault on the prevalent traditional ways of thinking, where Shakespeare's drama was concerned. Then in place of the orthodox interpretation his own
critical theory was prescribed as a treatment and replacement. Knights had rightly pointed out his distaste for those critics and scholars who were obsessed by Shakespeare's 'intention' and he thinks that already too much had been said about his characters, plot and even sources. So he was eager to change the existing scenario and wanted to bring some balance in to Shakespeare's reading. Subsequently he proceeds to discuss this new method of understanding Shakespeare an approach that had been completely overlooked earlier the poetic interpretation.

He explains in detail that there are two basic elements in drama, the 'spatial' and 'temporal'.

The critics before Knight were dedicated to only one aspect of Shakespeare criticism that was 'temporal', the succession of event and the reason behind them 'linking dramatic motive to action and action to result in time;' and Knight is sure that by taking exclusive interest only in the temporally nature of Shakespeare's drama they wiped out 'what, in Shakespeare, is at least of equivalent importance'. In order to establish an equilibrium in one's point of view, 'one must be prepared to see the whole play in space as well as in time'. He provides strength to his contention, and further emphasizes regarding a Shakespearian Tragedy 'is set spatially as well as temporally in the mind,' he wants to convey here that in the entire play there are sets of inter-relations which communicate with one another and the 'time sequence' of the story does not depend upon it. Knight explains his idea in this manner,

'if we are prepared to see the whole play laid out, so to speak, as an area, being simultaneously aware of these thickly-scattered correspondences in a single view of the whole, we possess the unique quality of the play in a new sense'.

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Thus, we find that G. Wilson Knight has conceded equal status to both temporal and spatial elements. In his preface he opines: ‘to relate any given incident or speech either to the time sequence of story or the peculiar atmosphere, intellectual or imaginative, which binds the play’ and those poetic critics who have been his supporters have imitated him in ‘relating imagery to themes, patterns of meaning and recurrent symbolic motifs’.23 His followers mostly choose different groups of recurring images from the play, without giving any importance either to the characters who employed them in their utterances in the dramatic context in which they were used. The place and the time sequence is not important for them. They have a very deliberate programme laid out, and hence neglect of the temporal elements of the plays is absolutely necessary in order to maintain the purity of a play as a poem, liberating it from the claims of genre. In order to study the plays as poems, they had to forget in which dramatic context they were written, their interest centered around ‘the poetic’ worth of Shakespeare’s art. They concerned themselves with the metaphysical aspects, the moral implications and the metaphorical opulence. Their method was new and revolutionary since they were completely opposed to the traditional ‘dramatic’ approach. They considered the study of character, plot and theatrical technique as a kind of restriction of the scope that a Shakespeare’s play can provide for its interpreters and readers. And they thought that by not confining the variety and the complexity of a Shakespeare’s play, they could give free rein to their imagination and then do justice to each play as a whole.

G.W. Knight invented this new insight into the plays of Shakespeare and gave it a new lease of life, completely renovating the old structure. Yet by many scholars he is considered just an extension of ‘Coleridge, Hazlitt and Bradley in
thinking of Shakespeare as a philosopher’ and not as a dramatist, working with
the artist and staging his plays. This is where these New Critics differ from
Schucking and Stoll and appear rather to be followers of Bradley and the critics,
of the romantic era.

This similarity has also been noticed by S. Viswanathan:

The rise of the poetic approach has more to do with these
developments than with a revolt against Bradley. Placed in this
context, the School of the Poetic interpreters can be seen to have a
double relationship, not only of rivalry, antagonism and at times
conflict with the School of theoretical and historical scholarship
and interpretation, but of more or less tacit and unconscious
collaboration, even of indebtedness.

W. Knight held a similar view as the romantics but the difference was
very obvious. Because his predecessors Coleridge, Hazlitt, Bradley and even
Johnson’s treatment of Shakespeare was like a novelist when for Knights he
was a supreme poet. According to his opinion in the prefatory note to The
Wheel of Fire, ‘the literary analysis of great drama in terms of theatrical
techniques accomplishes singularly little.’ Shakespeare as a man of the stage
held no attraction for him although his experience as ‘an actor producer and
play-goer’ is immense. His experience further teaches him to probe the inner
meaning that is perhaps the reason, the discovery of the theatrical and historical
scholarship and interpretation appear inadequate to him and the ‘productions
remain inorganic’ since what he terms the re-creation from ‘within’ has not
been accomplished. This deficiency from the scholastic translation of
Shakespeare’s play could only be removed through a poetic interpretation.
Hence for W. Knights:
Poetry itself may be defined as pre-eminently as blend of the dynamic and the static, of motion and form and, at the limit, the perfectly integrated man, or superman is to be conceived as a creature of superb balance, poise and grace.

He raises the issue of the essence in Shakespearian plays, he does not find that element in characterization and is sure the traditional critics are at fault to have tried to discover that essence in characterization, this was the mistake they made and hence became victim to adverse criticism. Knight absolutely rejects the term ‘character’ criticism as he says he does not like to involve him self into a make belief ethical argument. According to him these critics always tilted their judgement of Shakespeare’s protagonists towards the ethical standards of real life: even a powerful hero in Shakespeare’s play like Macbeth has been converted into a feeble-minded door-mat, if one happened to encounter him in real life. Knight persists that Macbeth should not have been scrutinized like a man but rather like a dramatic persona, as the ethical criteria of real life is not that of art. He has emphasized the need to reform the ethical criteria of such critics who were at fault, and in his opinion, instead initiate them ‘into a new artistic ethic which obeys the peculiar nature of art as surely as a sound morality is based on the nature of man’. He further explains that according to the criticism of the traditional critics Macbeth and Lear may have been a disappointment in real life but when the play was stage they were declared dramatic successes. This stricture of Knight’s, may have been borrowed from the realist or the historical critics as they have been called because before Knights Wheel of Fire got published it was Stoll and Schucking who were persuasively arguing against this very notion of the traditionalists that Shakespearean characters were not at all plausible and lifelike. But as Stoll has vociferously shown in book after book that they were stage fit and not psychopathic case as the romantic would make us believe.
Through propagation of such thoughts and ideas Knight makes it explicit they his preference is for the ‘metaphysical’ approach rather than the ‘ethical’ as practiced by the character critics. He further thinks in this context that application of such crude tools of ‘ethical philosophy’ to the ‘delicate symbols of the poet’s imagination’ is not a profitable way of interpretation. These dramatic characters who are sources of our pleasure and entertainment were recurrently being searched for ‘failures’, ‘mistakes’ and faults. Knight feels strongly that such destructive criticism transforms our response towards a great work of literature and influences our experience that could be dynamic and positive. Hence to achieve such an experience one must consider ‘each play as a visionary whole,

Close-knit in personification, atmospheric suggestion, and direct poetic-symbolism; three modes of transmission, equal in their importance.”

Knight thinks it useless to study characters as separate elements, which would only result in distorting our vision of dramatic perception and led one searching a motive from real life again. The truth that an artist presents in a character is only for the dramatic and artistic interest. In the tragedy of King Lear, his daughter Cordelia cannot be projected without the drama in which she was cast, that is the only world where she exists. Knight’s wants to put a stop to such idiosyncrasies, when Shakespeare’s characters are removed from their real ‘poetical settings’ to become a part of discussion and discord among the critics.

Knight has recommended a new way of interpretation which treated each play as an organic whole, and not as an extract of a component like character
and plot. The poetics that Knight's has proposed regarding a Shakespearean play is the very basic theme of his interpretation:

"Being aware of this new element we should not look for perfect verisimilitude to life, but rather see each play as an expanded metaphor by means of which the original vision has been projected into forms roughly correspondent with actuality..."[^3]

The critics have to be aware of 'personification' if he is to give us a sense of the whole plan of a play. Knight according to his hypothesis has substituted 'character'—for 'atmospheric suggestion' and also 'poetic symbolism'. Thus Knight's makes it inevitable that to study Shakespeare's plays according to the poetic method one has to regard them entirely as dramatic poems, not merely dramas nor poetic dramas.

His aim is to give a correct translation of the play. He has called his method of analyzing a work of art 'interpretation' and restricting this to comparison and evaluation. Knight has stressed upon the primary task of a critic is to first to give an interpretation and not reach a conclusion but to understand a play, this is the essential part of a scholars duty. In order to achieve such an aspiration he gives his own poetics regarding the nature of Shakespeare's drama. And most of his understanding of Shakespeare's plays is based on his hypothesis that has already been discussed earlier. The best glimpse of his unique understanding of Shakespeare's plays could be gleaned from his lecture, 'Tolstoy's Attack on Shakespeare' (1934), reprinted in The Wheel of Fire, which Knight's admonishes such critics in the following words:

We have not understood Shakespeare. And our error has been this: a concentration on "character" and realistic appearances
generally, things which do not constitute Shakespeare's primary glory; and a corresponding and dangerous, indeed a devastating, neglect of Shakespeare's poetic symbolism.\textsuperscript{32}

Thus, for Knight's the conclusive structure of Shakespearean drama is comprised of the 'spiritual' symbolic, or thematic element- the spatial- in which the characters and plot—the temporal—are fused. The basics of, defining character of each drama is its static, pervasively thematic element. This explanation of Shakespearean drama is the correct analysis for Knights and he has interpreted most plays even Hamlet according to this definition. In order to understand a work of art interpretation is the medium that is chosen to comprehend its spatial temporal reality. This helps Knight to focus (of the play) and also probe 'the very essence of the play concerned'.\textsuperscript{33}

Knight further clarifies that the poet's creation (his plays and characters) have to be understood and the poet himself and in order to analyse such the help of interpretation can be employed, too which is again seen as an attempt to reconstruct the poet's vision.

One sees "the whole play laid out, so to speak, as an area, being simultaneously aware of these thickly-scattered correspondences in a single view of the whole..."\textsuperscript{34}

He outrightly objects to such curiosity that questions the intention of the poet in the construction of his work, the sources of the play, and the ethical aspects of the characters and their purpose. He clarifies illuminates illustrates and brands such inquiry as, 'irrelevancies born by intention to the instinctive power.'\textsuperscript{35}
To sum up, 'interpretation' according to Knight is an endeavour on the side of the critic to illuminate the basic, controlling, thematic design of a play; if it clarifies the truth of the play, then the solid elucidation can be said to be 'true' interpretation or understanding of the play.

G. Wilson Knight and L.C. Knight were two staunch supporters of this poetic school of thought. W. Knight in 1930, lowered the importance of character to music, L.C. Knight also did not lag behind, and in 1933 he rejected character delineation completely. Derisively mocking Bradley he wrote: “How many children had Lady Macbeth?” He was in fact, assailing the author of Shakespearean Tragedy for having presented the dramatic persona of Shakespeare’s major tragedies as true to life and trying to probe in the minutest of detail regarding these characters. This critic along with some others took up this issue of flaying the misguided tradition of Shakespeare criticism since Restoration and paving the path for interpreting Shakespeare in a new manner:

“... the only profitable approach to Shakespeare is a consideration of his plays as dramatic poems.... The total response to a Shakespeare play can only be obtained by an exact and sensitive study of the quality of the verse, of the rhythm and imagery, of the controlled association of the words and their emotional and intellectual force.... We start with so many lines of verse on a printed page which we read as we should read any other poem."^{36}

Lionel, Charles, Knights, a Professor of English in the University of Bristol, has written the Drama and Society in the Age of Johnson (1937), Shakespeare’s Politics (1937), Some Shakespearean Themes (1959) and An Approach to Hamlet (1960) and his essay, How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth? (1933) In this he proposes that this true to life attitude distorts the unity of the play. He wants to establish this unity in all of Shakespeare’s work, individually and as a whole. This intense reaction of L.C. Knights, towards his
 seniors was due to their critical method, because they involved themselves with every aspect of Shakespeare's plays but left the text and the words in it untouched. According to him it was 'the main business of the critic to examine'. With the same disposition as Wilson Knights, he highlights his argument that separating such aspects as plot, character and construction for study was not going to improve our full concentration of the play, and it may hamper our understanding of a work of art. Both the Knights have been pre-occupied with symbols, images and themes from the very beginning. His main concentration as can be gleaned from his analysis was towards the 'total response' of Shakespeare's play, which he believes,

"can only be obtained by an exact and sensitive study of the quality of the verse, of the rhythm and imagery, of the controlled associations of the words and their emotional and intellectual force, in short, by an exact and sensitive study of Shakespeare's handling of language".  

As is obvious here, the author is eager to emphasize Shakespeare's virtue as a poet, and his plays for him are treated foremost as poems. The Victorians failed to acknowledge Shakespeare as a theatre artist and playwright they converted him into a novelist. The poetic critics have ignored completely Shakespeare's supreme quality of a dramatist completely.

If Macbeth is presented as illustration, and the interpretation of both the approaches is taken into account, the variation between these two gets revealed. Bradley as we know, has made use of the traditional method of character criticism, acknowledges the play of Macbeth as a tragedy and considers it the destiny of a man of eminence who is responsible for his fall because of his ambition and also the hand of fate is foreseen. Even the calamity of Banquo is projected as brought upon him because of his own desire of conquest and the
design of the supernatural element in the form of witches. L.C. Knight has interpreted Macbeth, as ‘a statement of evil’. The complete meaning can only be comprehended according to what he puts forth, ‘from a lively attention to the parts, whether they have an immediate bearing on the main action or ‘illustrate character’ or not’.

Knights has also proposed a substitute to character criticism through his own study of the plays in terms of images and themes, the themes of the change of values of artificial chaos and of deceptive sight. According to Wilson Knight, ‘Macbeth is Shakespeare’s most profound and mature vision of evil’. In his essay on Macbeth L.C. Knight is aware of the method by which Shakespeare uses recurring and interconnected patterns of imagery. Very much like two other new critics, Heilman and Cleanth Brooks, he searches the images for an opening to what the drama really has to convey.

L.C. Knight in his book, Some Shakespearean Themes, has come forward with a new conception of Shakespeare the artist, who used to fulfill the demands of his Elizabethan audience. He thinks that the other critics of his school of thoughts have converted the old indifferent Shakespeare into a new and revolutionary one. In his view his predecessors have projected Shakespeare as if he was:

“...the God-like creator of a peopled world, projecting—it is true—his own spirit into the inhabitants, but remaining essentially the analyst of ‘their’ passions, he is now felt as much more immediately engaged in the action he puts before us.”

Most importantly, L.C. Knight makes us aware of two reasons, why his Shakespearean themes should bring ‘to light the assumption that it makes about the poetry’. Firstly because he wants to demote orthodoxy, and he advocates
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‘thought about the way the plays work’. The other reason, based on his assumption is that the verse has become the ‘centre’ of Shakespeare criticism in the current years.

“...this is because linguistic vitality is now felt as the chief clue to the urgent personal themes that not only shape the poetic-dramatic structure of each play but form the figure in the carpet of the canon as a whole.”

After justification of this new trend that he has decided to support, he also takes the role of a defender since he is endorsing this movement from the very beginning. L.C. Knights does not agree with the adverse criticism of Professor O.J. Campbell regarding two critics—Cleanth Brooks and D.A. Traversi.

Actually Professor Campbell gets his objection registered not because he is against such interpretative criticism but rather due to the excess towards which these critics seem to be indulging which they themselves have discredited earlier, in the case of Bradley and his followers.

In fact Una Ellis-Fermor has whole heartedly agreed to this admonishment: In the Shakespeare survey, this view has been presented:

Campbell’s sane, conservative estimate of the limitations of the function of interpretation in the study of imagery comes at a moment when it is needed, if not overdue.

L.C. Knight feels that such stricture as Campbell’s which undermine the role of imagery in Shakespeare’s plays, are critically doing a disservice to Shakespeare and blurring and misfocussing the ‘alternative critical principles’ that these ‘New Critics’ are aiming to achieve.
Continuing with this argument on 'some contemporary Trends', he praises the modern Shakespeare scholarship for giving them co-operation regarding this particular attention that they want to grant to Shakespeare, i.e., hearing 'the whole orchestration and seek our meanings there, not simply picking out the more obvious time.' In his opinion his focus on poetry is justified according to the research of the last thirty years which illuminate the situation that Shakespeare faced when he wrote for the Elizabethan audiences and theatres according to the conventions and traditions of Elizabethan dramas.

Before Knights sums up he again makes a claim,

".... The essential structure of Shakespearean Tragedy is poetic we at least do not violence to Shakespeare the Elizabethan dramatist."

Further he wants to concern himself 'with generative power'. His aim is to probe the very core of Shakespeare and find 'different meaning at different levels and thus, for Knights the interpretation of Shakespeare is a continuous search of 'ourselves'.

The foreword in his book expresses the 'belief' that Shakespeare's plays 'form a coherent whole, that they stem from and express a developing 'attitude to life'. Although he does concede the influence of a 'particular audience's' response to his individual plays, but he wants to assume that even though this may have been the fact but Shakespeare wrote to promote his own interest and not the interest of his indifferent spectators but rather preference was given to his own sense of life's meaning.
Caroline Spurgeon is also one of the most acclaimed pioneer of this approach, the immense value of her book, Shakespeare’s Imagery (1935) cannot be belittled.\textsuperscript{47} There are other scholars who have preceded her in interpreting Shakespeare according to the study of Imagery, but it was her contribution entirely to have for the first time verbalized this trend and regularized some of its outcome.

The study of imagery is the most essential aspect of Shakespearean plays, for her. In order to grasp the meaning of a play and also to understand Shakespeare as a person, one has to comprehend the customary images which in each play illustrates its basic sense. Spurgeon has not like G.W. Knight, given us a definition of imagery, though it is the only focus in all her agenda, elucidating these images instead, through illustrations of metaphors and similes. She gives credit to poetic imagery because it “gives quality, treats atmosphere and conveys emotion in a way no precise description however clear and accurate, can possibly do.”\textsuperscript{48}

R.A. Foakes in his enlightening essay, “Suggestions for A New Approach to Shakespeare’s Imagery’ in Shakespeare’s Survey has made a valiant effort of explaining what these Imagist are actually illustrating and for the readers convenience, has divided the study of this new imagery under four headings. In all these considerations the key figure who emerges as essential necessary focus is no other than Miss Spurgeon.

She restricted her discussion for a special purpose, to find out some thing about Shakespeare the man. She studied only “the little word picture used by a poet to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought”, because she believed these images
proceeded from “the storehouse of the unconscious memory”, and would reveal “the furniture of his mind.... The objects and incidents he observes and remembers, and perhaps most significant of all, those which he does not observe or remember”. She ignored references, as proceeding not from his unconscious but from his conscious mind, and as relating to the every day world of trivialities.  

Most often it has been observed regarding Spurgeon, that she is only interested in the ‘subject matter’. To illustrate her point of view we consider this line from Macbeth:

Sleep that knits up the ravell’d sleave of care (Macbeth II, ii, 37).

She considers ‘ravell’d sleave’ as the subject matter and does not concern her self with the underlying idea’, which has been termed ‘object-matter of the image’ by these new critics. Sleep’ may have dramatic importance and undercurrents of deep meaning but to her it holds a ‘wonderful picture of knitting up the loose fluffy all-pervading substance of frayed-out floss silk”.  

She has analyzed iterative patterns in the second part of her book Shakespeare’s Imagery and also pointed out the ‘dominant’ patterns of images. She has provided herself with this subject-matter so that she could manipulate ‘Shakespeare’s imaginative vision of the play concerned’ providing a reason for the study. Following her example, many other critics also study images in a similar vein and describe it as the ‘dominant’ pattern when actually they visualize the picture most obvious in the mind of the reader or the audience, because it is impossible to present the image projected by Shakespeare’s mind.
According to Spurgeon's preface, her very purpose for writing, Shakespeare's Imagery was an attempt to investigate his work and reveal the directions that the study of Shakespeare's images bring to light.

As she herself describes it, her study mainly reveals the hint made by the imagery, she deals with: Firstly her study of these imagery enlightens the personality, thought and temperament of Shakespeare. Secondly the themes and characters of the play are illuminated.

The other involvement of her book is with the dispute of authorship, which is queried through these freshly acquired images that have been used as evidences in favour of the author. These images concern 'the background of Shakespeare's mind and the origin of his imagery.' These images that occur in Shakespeare's plays have also been compared with the images of those of his contemporaries. This task of hers is full of toil and has taken up several years of hard work and perseverance. But Spurgeon has accepted this mission as a challenge because it is a method that is new and untouched and it enables one to get close to the mind of this great author. In her own word she has adopted this approach because it:

... throws light from a fresh angle upon Shakespeare's imaginative and pictorial vision, upon his own ideas about his own plays and the characters in them, and it seems to me to serve as an absolute beacon in the skies with regard to the vexed question of authorship.

Caroline Spurgeon's work is exceptional, because she has not just picked one or two passing thoughts of the poet's mind but in fact all his images, have been 'collected', 'sorted out' and then scrutinized very systematically:
"... the good with the bad, the disagreeable with the pleasant, the coarse with the refined, the attractive with the unattractive, and the poetical with the unpoetical. 54

They have all been studies in one group without any distinction or prejudice, examined for all kind of information and then the result is declared which may even be a surprise to the examiner himself.

Caroline Spurgeon feels these collected images reveal 'a world in themselves', because they exhibit the most fascinating of all experience and intense imagination that is a privilege to man. But to study them is not easy, and one needs a life time of devotion and dedication to the study of the 'brilliance that once existed in the authors mind.'

Spurgeon may well feel that she has revealed an absolutely new and enlightened avenue for examination and study, but in Shakespeare scholarship nobody could have the credit for having completed the study regarding Shakespeare. Her own work is up for scrutiny and critics are not satisfied with neither her subject matter or her methodology.

R.A. Foakes does give her allowance for a special reason that is, the purpose of her writing that has been mentioned in her preface and that has been discussed on the page preceding this one. Many other scholars who imitate her, paying full attention to poetic image, do not like her, have any 'special reason' for doing so. They are not actually concerned with the 'image picture' in Shakespeare's mind like Spurgeon is, rather they want to be a part of the trend in modern interpretation. 55
It is U.M. Ellis-Fermor who has marked this disparity among the New critics. Except W. Clemen she criticizes H.G. Wells, J.M. Murray and even F. Kolbe for being subjective. Spurgeon has been approved by Fermor for being scientifically objective.

Even Spurgeon’s approach to Shakespeare is not fool proof and many protest have been marked, one of them by L.H. Hornstein, ‘The Analysis of Imagery’, her method has also been assailed by W.T. Hornstein, in ‘Shakespeare’s Imagery’. Her incompatibility, in inefficiency her own data to the study of imagery and her inflexible attitude not granting that even simple reference could contain some fantastic idea. She also could not grasp nor permit that some of Shakespeare’s imagery may have been plagiarized or could have been a simple maxim, much in use, during the time Shakespeare lived. The major fault in her work, her opponents felt was her dictatorial decision regarding:

‘...what is conscious and unconscious in Shakespeare’s work.
The borderline between the two can never be known, and recent research into the use of logic and rhetoric in Shakespeare’s age suggests that figures of speech were artifices to be used deliberately for given effects.  

Spurgeon has also been fascinated with the clothing images in Shakespeare and particularly she finds this image very powerful in Macbeth. Foakes reveals that the study of such images may have been essential for the embellishment that Spurgeon wanted to achieve but their utility in the enhancement of the readers or audience’s understanding was less obvious. The work, of such images that have been sorted out by Spurgeon to be observed,
was of the more silent kind and according to Foakes their creation was to build up the ‘peculiar atmosphere’ of the play, which is more properly described by Wilson Knight the ‘spatial quality’. The special permission that had been granted by Foakes to Miss Spurgeon is withdrawn and he insists that such iterative words and the ‘object-matter of images, their dramatic importance’, have to be investigated carefully and researched, since the study presented by Spurgeon is incomplete.\textsuperscript{57}

The other writers with a similar interest as Spurgeon pertain to studying the role and outcome of the nature of imagery and for them the study of substance is of greater value, rather than a specific inquiry relating to Shakespeare.

It has been contended by I.A. Richards, that it is not compulsory that poetic imagery should attract visual or different perception but he has urged for the involvement of rational knowledge; primarily.\textsuperscript{58} According to D.G. James, the major function of imagery should be to communicate the fanciful notion or intention.\textsuperscript{59} Besides these, there are some other scholars of a similar school of thought relating to imagery. They are S.J. Brown who wrote The World of Imagery (1927) and Maud Bodkin, the writer of Archetypal Patterns in Poetry (1934). Also, more recent among these critics, the name of Rosemond Tuve and her work on ‘Imagery and Logic”; Ramus and Metaphysical, Poetics’, is worth mentioning, since she “has shown that the Elizabethan thought of imagery as logically functional in poetry, its business being to persuade the reader and compel his understanding. An image was effective, she
claims, if its controlled suggestions illuminated the idea concerned, and caused the reader to forget irrelevant associations.  

These writers who have been discussed, above related the images in the context of the reader, and not as personal pictures communicated by the author’s insight. The meaning of ‘sleep’ must be of great dramatic significance in the verse it is mentioned, but Spurgeon has managed to convince, the students of English literature that its significance is of ‘domestic or knitting image’, which does not seem to relate to the play of Macbeth but rather to the habit of the author and the picture in his mind.

It is difficult to estimate whether this inclination of Spurgeon to regard iterative patterns as the exclusive subject-matter of imagery which is instrumental in bringing forth Shakespeare’s fanciful insight, is foolproof. These kinds of assumption fail to satisfy the scientific temperament that prevails in today’s world and already voices of dissent can be heard. Even her reliable defender, Una Ellis-Fermor had to concede:

‘... in the special case of drama, there are sometimes reasons for extending it to include the frontiers of symbolism, description, or even, it may be, the setting itself.

Una Ellis-Fermor, The Frontiers of Drama

Thus, regarding the research that Spurgeon embarked upon, the definition of imagery certainly has to be expanded more than the scope provided by her. And for such scholars who want to find the meaning or to interpret the play or may be only to appreciate such a notion of imagery as provided by Spurgeon could prove insufficient.
All this discussion regarding the scope and subject-matter of Imagery, strengthens one’s resolve that the study of Shakespeare’s plays is in drastic need of a flexible definition of imagery that would take a play into consideration as a drama and not as a poem only. The prevailing temperament during was to study Shakespeare’s play as a dramatic poem hence more emphasis was given to poetic images by the critics who wanted to follow the dominant trend. Even G. Wilson Knight, desired to “see each play as an expanded metaphor”.\textsuperscript{62}

Cleanth Brooks idea of studying Shakespeare’s play was also borrowed from metaphysical poetry.\textsuperscript{63} R.B. Heilman another scholar of images considers “the large metaphor which is the play itself.”\textsuperscript{64}

A poem can very well become a metaphor even to exist “inside an image but how can the same be claimed of a Shakespearian play. These new critics forget that a play has a purpose, it has to be staged and also it has to convey some message to its viewers. The images that are functional in a play, cannot exist all by themselves. They are not just words, they have to have a link with the dramatic situation, stage effect and interplay of characters and even the time sequence has to fit in. These imagistic critics want to accomplish an impossible mission, through the interpretation they want to probe the complete meaning and also the significance of a play. Some like R.B. Heilman become all the more innovative and transform the characters into symbols and imagine the plays as extended metaphor and even a type of poetic allegory. Being, scholars of Shakespeare’s Dramas, how can they banish the other resources that also contribute towards an enhancement of understanding and enriching the effect and the meaning of the plays.
While comparing Wilson Knights to Spurgeon, Gary Taylor notes a very interesting distinction between them. Although W. Knights wanted to probe the consciousness of Shakespeare’s mind he could not, since he had no plan to see his desire carried out. It is, said about Caroline, that her method was less gullible than W. Knight.

“Wilson trying to illustrate the essence of Shakespeare’s mind, narrated instead the history of his body, an account dependent on events, relationship, chronologies, the thickness of material world.”

Hence it is said about Wilson that most of his study is based upon conjectures, since document in support of such fancy does not exist. Where as Spurgeon was assisted by Shakespeare’s own text and the images that he created in order to capture that eluding Shakespeare essence. She also in her eagerness to picture Shakespeare as a man ignored, “the dry records of legal documents and law-suits”.

T.E. Hulme’s description of the sensibility of modernism that he had found in poetic imagery leading to “the very essence of an intuitive language,’ perhaps this was the turning point in the criticism of Shakespeare which also inspired Spurgeon in discovering the very essence of Shakespeare in his own imagery.

What Spurgeon does is to first collect all the images separate them and than investigate them on a ‘systematic basis’, these are contrasted with the images of Bacon, Marlowe, Johnson, Chapman, Dekker and Massinger. These selected images are able to convey to Spurgeon that Shakespeare “was healthy
in body as in mind, clean and fastidious in his habits, very sensitive to dirt and evil smells”,

“a country man through and through”, who “does not like noise”, “a competent rider” who “loved horses, as indeed he did most animals, except Spaniels and house dogs”, “an expert archer”, commonly “deft and nimble with hands”.68

Regarding the inside person, “five words sum up the essence of his quality and character as seen in his images—sensitiveness, balance, courage, humour and wholesomeness”.69 The powerful writing of these two women writers of that time, still remains invaluable. Una Ellis-Fermor’s interpretation of The Jacobean Drama 1936. Muriel Bradbrook launched her prize winning essay on Elizabethan Stage Conventions published in 1932.

Most importantly these very women were instrumental in shaping Shakespeare’s prevalent image during the mid twentieth century. Most amazingly they were not conscious like their Victorian predecessor, that they were women. Virginia Woolf, it seems has given a new image to the women of twenty first century through her book, A Room of One’s Own. She acquaints us with the desire of creating a women who could have been ‘Shakespeare’s sister’ and could exhibit his genius.

Every secret of a writer’s soul every experience of his life, every quality of his mind, is written large in his works, yet we require critics to explain the one and biographers to expound the other.70

This citation has been used by Spurgeon as an epigraph to her book, Shakespeare’s Imagery, but Woolf’s ideology of feminism failed to have made
its mark on her work on Shakespeare. It is very clear and explicit here that gender discrimination of any kind is absent in Spurgeon’s work. In fact she has not perceived Shakespeare’s images from the point of view of a woman. These women writers were in the habit of using initials such as “C.F.E.” Spurgeon, “M.C.” Bradbrook and “U.M.” Ellis-Fermour so that they would not be considered any differently from “L.C.” Knight’s, “I.A.Richard’s and “E.E. Stoll. (P.260).

There were other variations that was obvious in Shakespeare’s interpretation as a reflection of the change in the social set up and the tilt towards the concentration in sex. Even Shakespeare could not be saved from this obsession of sex. Since this dissertation does not concern itself with this recent development in Shakespeare studies, the details would not be dealt with.

Eliot’s exposition in regard to the explanation of Hamlet “we should have to understand things” concerning Shakespeare “which Shakespeare did not understand himself.”72 These were some of the assumption with which these New Critics began and, even psycho-analysis was employed in order to defend their stance. Spurgeon used the images from psychoanalysis for the study of the author imagery:

The repeated evidence of clusters of certain associated idea in the poet’s mind... throws a curious light on what I suppose the psychoanalyst would call ‘complexes’; that is, certain groups of things and ideas—apparently entirely unrelated—which are linked together in Shakespeare’s subconscious mind, and some of which are undoubtedly the outcome of an experience, a sight or emotion which has profoundly affected him.73
The dogs or spaniels were definitely linked to the images of licking, groveling blending melting even to sweets like candy and sugar these images have been related, the moment one is mentioned, it conjures up the image of the other images. These manifold tangles that Spurgeon has discussed in her books, the idea seems to have been further broadened and studied by E. A. Armstrong in 1946. In his book *Shakespeare's Imagination* he has stumbled upon several more image clusters, those of disease restraint, bed, spirits, kite, birds, food and many others to name a few. His methodology is much more refined than that of Spurgeon. Although his functioning also concerns delving deep ‘below the level of consciousness,’ but he allows Shakespeare, ‘the ordering of the images to his subliminal mind’ and he involved himself more with the issue of plot and dramatic intention. Although Armstrong did not agree with Freud’s specific project of the psyche that was made evident but he thought that the procedure through which imagination had to pass was unconsciously operative and that it could be back tracked via the joining of similar imagery. Thus, Armstrong introduces us ‘to the image house of music’. Spurgeon too likes to compare Shakespeare’s recurring images to that of Waghner’s music. Shakespeare’s poetry is appreciated by Armstrong and Spurgeon as if they were writing about music, this had also been the trend of Shaw and Eliot and even Knight. The language of Shakespeare has the capacity to produce music for these critics. They transformed Shakespeare’s verse into music.

At this stage that Shakespeare has been brought at by his new critics, his appeal is directed towards music. Among his modern critics it is Gary Taylor who laments this fact that Shakespeare’s identity has been changed.

“But where O where has the author gone? He has disappeared again, fallen between the interstices of his own images.”
For these image interpreters like Armstrong, Shakespeare’s images reveal nothing about the author’s private life neither worldly, spiritual nor anatomical they exhibit only the objective conduct of a poet’s imagination, that has become its own authority. Shakespeare no longer matters as a person he has become a symbol for projecting thoughts and imagination.

This treatise on the New Critics would remain unfinished without mention of Cleanth Brooks. He has been very highly praised by Mr. Taylor:

“one of the most influential American critics of the twentieth century, maker of textbooks, propounder of critical and pedagogical method”.

Brooks, well-known essay on Macbeth is likened to that of Pope’s Dunciad and Bradley’s Shakespearean Tragedy. His essay was published in 1947 and is considered a representative of the characteristics of that era of Shakespeare. Brooks did not belong to England, but English Literature in the twentieth century was not any longer the personal property of the English. Joyce and Yeats and Shaw were Irish; Stoll and Eliot and even Pound were Americans. Literary studies were still controlled by Cambridge University. The change in the textual studies was brought about by two undergraduates Grej and Mcken’ow which came to be known as New Bibliography in 1890’s. In the early twentieth century an edition of novelty and excitement was published by Cambridge University Press, titled as the New Shakespeare by Dover Wilson. Richard’s, Leavise’s, Knight’s, Empson and Bradbrook in the 1920’s and early 1930’s flourished under the patronage of Cambridge. After the world war II the American education system adopted English literature in their colleges and universities.77
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Shakespeare was demarcated as a poet and not as a dramatist by Brooks in his popular essay, ‘Shakespeare as a Symbolist Poet.’ He was also allied to a special kind of modernist poetry that belonged to the French symbolist, Mallarme etc. In England it was supported by Arthur Symon’s effective book on The Symbolist Movement in Literature, and this same cause was represented in English by Eliot, Pound and Steven’s. This essay helps in placing Brooks in the direction of modernist poetry and also becomes an illustration of ‘reiterative thematic imagery of modernist criticism.’

Brook’s scholarship is commendable because since he corroborates his discourse with many references from established authorities of that time like T.S. Eliot, I.A. Richard, Spurgeon and even Coleridge, who did not belong to the twentieth century. Brook observes “an elaborate pattern in the imagery” of Macbeth; he also ascertains that some symbols are more obvious in the play. He also believes that to comprehend the play completely the ‘inner symbolism’ has to be grasped which in turn has been geared up by Shakespeare’s in conscious.

L.C. Knight’s, “Shakespeare and Shakespeareans” conveys this message to his disciples that the ‘essential qualification’ of a genuine critic of Shakespeare, should have “a lively interest in the present and the immediate future of poetry.” This same theme is utilized by Brooks, because he believes in such ideas of his contemporaries like Eliot and Knights. In today’s world of criticism and poetry, comprehension can only be attained, of an individual play or poem by confining it to the larger literary system. In effect of which Brook’s essay on Macbeth in The Well Wrought Urn, has been granted a status along with the essays on poems by Keats, Tennyson, Herrick, Donne, Gray and Wordsworth and even Yeats. In fact, Brooks has pleaded for such an
understanding in his essay on Macbeth, which consider the play as a link of a larger literary system. According to this school of thought, like Knights had long ago declared, ‘Macbeth is a poem’,

There are some inconsistencies in his book which have been marked by Taylor:

The book begins with Donne, then back-pedals to Shakespeare before resuming its forward motion. Indeed, in the original version of the essay Brooks introduces Shakespeare as “Donne’s great contemporary”.  

Then he definitely makes Donne appear, more superior as a poet, in comparison to Shakespeare by cleverly hinting that if Donne is read more frequently then it would ‘enable us to read Shakespeare more richly.’ By these skilful verbal nuances, he tries to subjugate and restrain the genius of Shakespeare to that of the Metaphysical poet. There is another subtle suggestion in his essay on ‘Macbeth’ that, as if, the development of the ‘New Criticism’ was brought about for the reinstatement of ‘Donne and the Donne tradition’.  

These are some of the irrelevancies that have been noticed in Brook’s writings:

1) “Brooks treats all parts of the play as though they were simultaneously present and visible to viewer”, collapsing time into a single dimension;...” A similar treatment is meted out to literary history.
2) It appears as if through the idea of projecting Shakespeare and comparing him with Donne, he wants to advertise the conceit projected in his own essay.

3) The critical method that he has adopted in his book *The Well Wrought Urn*, to analyze the poems from Shakespeare to Yeats, in exactly the same procedure purposely divorces the poems from their background. This particular method of study was derived from Eliot, Joyce and Pound, called the “mythic method”, that provided ample scope to these critics to project without any hesitation, works of writers from different periods.

4) He ignores all social, political, cultural and ideological considerations of Shakespeare’s age. He deliberately withholds even the facts regarding the King’s accession and that occurred in Shakespeare’s life span for the first time in England, the royal family and their children had inherited monarchy. All these factors has influenced the writing of Macbeth and even the audience were aware of the ‘social detail”, Nevertheless:

He suppresses history, including the history of texts. He wants a significance that transcends temporal particulars.85

Brooks had a great duty to perform, to wanted to change the description of poetry and bring eminence to his own vocation. In this light his acknowledging poetry as “more universal than the expression of the particular values of its time” conveys the significance of his deliberate attempt to bring about a change in ‘the temper of our times’ with this powerful ‘relativism’ that he finds in the medium of poetry.
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This was also perhaps a reaction towards the historical scholarship, which had nearly confirmed that Shakespeare belonged to the stage and relied upon certain conditions and convention that made his play a success in the theatre. By demonstrating such facts regarding Shakespeare, they placed him back on the Elizabethan and Jacobean scenario. Even the textual scholars of Shakespeare were it the grip of presenting, the real Shakespeare and to authenticate not only his work but the meaning and theatre performance. The restoration of Shakespeare by his critics, editors and directors only resulted in the appearance of a very artificial Shakespeare, who no longer belonged to the present time. Brooks along with the other New Critics changed the concept of belonging to a particulars time and space. Historical scholarship was completely uprooted by these critics and even the theatrical performance was rendered useless. The authority of the ‘New Critics’ was thus established and the dismissal of historical Scholarship was achieved. This also solved the problem of the American academics as through promoting this new way of Shakespeare’s interpretation these critics had completely hijacked Shakespeare from London.

Historical Scholarship and, book, documents had all thrived on the English soil, till now, but through this revival of a new Shakespeare by an American critic, America attained its supremacy in literature also. These New Critics who were the offsprings of the American environment needed only the new version of Shakespeare’s text and may be The Shakespeare Glossary in order to churn out Shakespeare criticism.

Brook’s made quite an impact on the American intellectuals and the school-college children. The greatest affinity between these New Critics was
their insolence towards their cultural inheritance and their preference of a formless existence. For Brooks and for the other 'New critics':

"... the search for universal values leads only to a confirmation of current values. "Eternity" is a euphemism for the isolationist present, which retrospectively commandeers the past." 87

Hence we find the continuing influence of these writers of Shakespeare's symbolism, imagery and ambivalence. Besides W. Knight's, C. Spurgeon L.C. Knight and Cleanth Brooks work, Wolfgang Clemen also made an impact, and his voice was also heard. Wolfang Clemen89 influenced a chronological enhancement of Shakespeare's use of imagery, yet he differed in the presentation of his book from Spurgeon and W. Knight. M.C. Bradbrook reviews his book in a befitting manner.

Each play is approached in the manner dictated by its own form; thus in Hamlet and Othello imagery is studied as it serves to distinguish character in Antony and Cleopatra and King Lear the use is more complex, the variety greater, and the world of the play more entirely. P.9, Sh. S: 7). Created and displayed through this means. Cleman is in search of "a truly organic method of understanding the images." 89

Although the impact of Clemen's book was not bewildering its reader it was indeed a retrieval from the traditional criticism and hence salutary. His approach was serious and perceptive and provided a change from Caroline Spurgeon's focus on comprehensiveness and W. Knights escape into a realm of poetic exuberance.
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The method that Clemen followed was utilized by Una-Ellis-Fermor in her Jacobean Drama (1936) and even Tillyard has applied it in his volume of Shakespeare’s Last Plays (1938). S.L. Bethel and D.Traversi also need to be mentioned in this context, since both of them studied The Winter’s Tale in detail with the application of this new method.

Hence this literary approach which led its scholars and students to take interest in the imagery and symbolism of Shakespeare’s plays, did not remain contented for long. The mere analysis of Shakespeare’s theme through imagery and symbolism opened new doors and paved the path of an approach that was full of ‘doctrinal irrelevances’. This was the unique contribution of Shakespeare himself, that he had the power of luring and encompassing the minds of his readers completely and also housing all kind of enchanted discoveries in his work and his personality. This kind of interpretative criticism was a welcome change for the scholars of Shakespeare who did not have all the pedagogical learning of either ancient literature of Elizabethan literature in order to excel as critics of Shakespeare. This new approach provided limitless scope from the binding effects of character and plot and also of the theatre and the text.

This was the deviation that these new critics have achieved, Hamlet has become the fantasy of a patient, who is being treated by a psychologist and also a drama of a son’s abnormal love for his mother’s suffering from Oedipus complex and The Winter’s Tale, the product of a vegetation myth. Thus, the dawn of nineteen hundred and thirty saw to it that:

‘Shakespeare the playwright was sunk in Shakespeare the poet.’
Eliot and Yeat’s reversed this and glorified this Elizabethan and Jacobean playwright as the greatest of all poets who created music for the tempest, the king and the beggar all alike.

Paradox, dichotomy and ambivalence, polarity and integration were favourite terms of the new critical diction.\footnote{91}

There is a recent controversy that has emerged between two schools of thought, the scholars of imagery or the ‘New Critics’ because they have entirely separated Shakespeare from his original settings and the theatre of his age, and the more traditional scholars of the historical background. Lionel Trilling in his ‘The Sense of the Past’ (The Liberal Imagination, 1948) has commented on this conflict that both are subjected to the whims and fancies of their own kind, and both of them replace explanation with interpretation. Trilling also hints that all this is a deliberate attempt on the part of the universities in order to keep a subject alive and developing, to keep more and more students occupied with the work of research and publishing. It is no longer a matter of reviving Shakespeare at all cost, but the scholars and teachers of literature have also to survive and hence thrive.

The most remarkable of all achievements of this approach is the possibility of evaluative judgment and that it grants critics scholars infinite scope to evolve towards a true perfection and glorification of art. But it requires great restraint from the literary champions of literature, in order not to become slaves of such a discipline but emerge as masters.
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13. Ibid., p.10.


16. This is cited from Retoric as a Dramatic Language in Ben Johnson 1948, p.4 in shakespeare Survey 5, 1952.

17. Sh. Survey 5, Ibid., p.81.

18. Ibid., p.62.


20. Reinventing Shakespeare, Ibid., p.239.


22. Ibid., 1930 edn. P.3.


24. Ibid., p.10.


26. The wheel of fire, P.VI.

27. Ibid., p.VIII.

28. Knight seems to be echoing stolls contention. This is one of the major objection that stoll has raized regarding the analysis of the Romantic.

29. The Wheel of fire Ibid., P.10.

30. Ibid., p.30.

31. Ibid., p.15.

32. Ibid., pp.271-72.

33. Ibid., p.2.

34. Ibid., p.3.

35. Ibid., p.35.

37. Ibid.

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44. Some Shakespearean Themes Ibid., p.20.

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76. Gary Taylor, Ibid., p.266.
77. Ibid., p.286.
78. Ibid.
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81. Taylor Ibid., p.281.
83. Ibid., p.642.
84. Taylor Ibid., p.292.
86. Ibid., p.293.
87. Ibid., p.294.
88. His book was translated in 1951 although his book Shakespeare Bilder was written in 1936. It was translated and revised as, The Development of Shakespeare’s Imagery (1951).
90. Ibid.