

The Ascent of F6: Exceptional Collaborative Case in Poetic Drama**Yahya Saleh Hassan Dahami**Department of English
Faculty of Science & Arts, Al Baha University
Al Mandaq, Saudi Arabia**Abstract**

To write plays are not easy, to make them verse, is difficult but to cooperate in composing poetic drama, is of great challenge. This study tries to prove the capability and manageability in collaboration not only in ordinary prose drama but also in poetic plays. It aims to trace, through an analytical and critical technique, the procedures of collaboration showing, to what degree both of the two collaborators, Auden and Isherwood, achieved success in dealing with contemporary poetic drama using modern language. The research is an approach on one of the likely best plays they shared, *The Ascent of F6* (1933). The study starts giving a glance on poetic drama then it traces the collaboration between W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood with special reference to the poetic play *The Ascent of F6*.

Key Words: Auden and Isherwood, collaboration, plays, poetic drama, twentieth century

Cite as: Dahami, Y. S.H. (2018). The Ascent of F6: Exceptional Collaborative Case in Poetic Drama. *Arab World English Journal for Translation & Literary Studies*, 2 (2).

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awejtls/vol2no2.11>

Introduction

Drama first was fashioned as religious chant and dance. Poetry with its beat, cadence, rhythm, pattern and rhyme demonstrated to be vivacious to drama. Early dramas draw upon the sacred instincts of all individuals. It found its language in the incantation and singing of the clerics and warriors. It mirrored the religious conviction of several countries as they found the supremacy of drama in instructing moral and religious values. Progressively this art form developed into what can be called a play. Writing poetic or verse drama is not that easy task a person may imagine. A dramatist can never write a well-accepted poetic play unless he or she is a poet or having the sense of poetry. It is argued, “a poet’s originality stems from his ability to synthesize a voice – his own true voice – from the different voices of the past, each of which can fill a need for the different aspects of his poetic identity” (Wasley, 2011, p.12).

In the last twentieth century, English poetic drama has taken a risk equivalent to the ancient prose one. It was relatively not affected by the overseas origins. “By the creation of a modern technique, it offers poetic drama in English the first justifiable hope of escape from the senile lethargy into which three centuries of imitation had plunged it” (Head, 1921, p. 37). Furthermore, “Poetic Drama is less a study of a literary genre than a predominantly historical account of the best-known modern English-speaking writers of verse plays” (Tydeman, 1991, p. 452). It initiated in England and Ireland and was brought to a convinced elevation by playwrights like T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, Christopher Fry, Christopher Isherwood, W. H. Auden, James Elroy Flecker, Stephen Phillips, John Millington Synge, John Masefield, John Drinkwater, Lascelles Abercrombie, Gordon Bottomley and several others. Unlike the poetic drama, prose drama was significantly affected and inspired by writing of Henrik Ibsen.

It was under Ibsen’s influence that serious realistic drama from 1890 onward ceased to deal with themes faraway in time and place. Ibsen had showed men that drama, if it was to survive a true life of its own, must cope with the human emotions and with things near and esteemed by people. From this, appears that melodramatic romanticism and the treatment of remote historical themes alike disappeared in favor of a treatment of actual English life, first of upper-class life, then of middle class and last of labor conditions. So far as choice of subject matter is concerned, the break between the drama of the romantic period and the naturalistic drama of the twentieth century is nearly complete. Blamires describes, (2003), Ibsen’s influence as an effective role in the progress of drama in the twentieth century. According to him:

The Norwegian dramatist, Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), broke through the slick conventionalities of the theatrical norm-ingenuous plots, easy dialogue well tuned to the contemporary ear, and themes undemandingly congenial to the theatregoing public. His plays analysed the social and moral prejudices of small-town life ... His attack was widened into a judgement on the social and political fabric of nineteenth-century society (P .331).

Contemporary poetic drama made its advent at the outset of the twentieth century in a very hopeful environment and atmosphere with the plays of Stephen Phillips. He was a poet who made an effort on poetic drama. The melodramatic romanticism and the treatment of far-off historical themes vanished in favour of factual English lifetime. Poetic drama ought to work under the weakening inheritance blank verse of the Elizabethan, which was once of the central features in charge for its catastrophe in the nineteenth century. It is believed that poetic drama has the aptitude to pierce into the sources of action and passion of human beings. Yet kept afloat by the faith which poetic drama was capable of probing into the deepest springs of human action and sentiment. Beyond the grasp of the realistic prose drama, a crowd of passionate practitioners in both England and Ireland involved themselves in the laborious mission of reviving poetic drama and creating it alive on the stage.

Several supporters and specialists thrived in reestablishing poetic drama on the platform. They worked hard until, to a great extent, set up poetic drama to be performed on the playhouse. In Ireland, the revivalists and supporters of poetic drama such as W. B. Yeats used English instead of Gaelic. Such a step associated the links with the equivalents in England to establish and reinforce an efflorescence of poetic drama. “The theatre was to be national and popular, but nonetheless ...its founders were committed to experimentation with an imaginative and poetic drama that would combine Irish subject matter with contemporary developments” (Owens, & Radner, 2000, p. 3).

Poetic drama in Britain, in its progress, is divided into two parts. The first one arisen in England and the second part took place in Ireland where it grasped its great zenith in the works of W. B. Yeats. Present poetic drama made its advent at the start of the twentieth century in a very hopeful milieu and mood. In his essay titled “The Function of Poetry in Drama” (Hanief, 2000, p. 116), Abercrombie elucidated the supremacy of poetic drama over the realistic prose drama. Poetic drama deals with the vital and substance of life whereas prose drama is added only to the ‘external shell of reality’. According to Abercrombie, poetry had better fit with the dramatic expression and not be a colorless copy of the Elizabethan drama. However, his plays were distinguished by command of poetry over dramatic. Bottomley might have developed into a chief verse playwright if his remote way of life and the stimulus on him of writers like Rossetti had not directed him to abandon modern life in favour of progressively esoteric theatrical experimentations similar to the Yeatsian.

Wystan Hugh Auden and Christopher Isherwood

Christopher Isherwood is measured by critics to be a vital English literary figure of the 1930s. He was born in Disley, Chesire, in 1904 and died in 1984 to English gentry. He is a prominent Anglo-American playwright and novelist. Several famous literary friends are shown in his stories in dissimilar names, comprising W. H. Auden, and Stephen Spender. His long stays in Germany which continued likely from 1929 to 1933 offered Isherwood with the materials and sufficient knowledge for his plays and novels. Isherwood emigrated with Auden to the United States, and got the American citizenship in 1946. “During the 1930s they collaborated on several

enterprises: the plays *The Dog Beneath the Skin*, *The Ascent of F6* and *On the Frontier*, and the travel book *Journey to a War*, based on their visit to China” (Page, 2000, p. 60).

The literary collaboration between Isherwood and Auden commenced as a result of reading the poetry of each other. Isherwood comments on such relationship that, when he does not like a poem of Auden, Auden throws it away but if Isherwood admires even a line or a stanza, Auden preserves it and improves it into a nice accepted poem because Auden did not like making corrections and refining his own writings. Isherwood worked “with Auden on the Group Theatre plays, *The Dog Beneath the Skin* and *The Ascent of F6*, which involved flying visits to London” (Lehmann, John. 1976). In addition,

The Group Theatre was founded in 1933 with the object of experimenting in theatrical forms in order to achieve a contemporary style. During the pre-war years it introduced to the English stage authors such as W. H. Auden [and] Christopher Isherwood (White, 1973, p. 3).

The collaboration between both Isherwood and Auden was a similar one to the cooperation between T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. In their collaboration on drama, as a result of being originally poets, Isherwood and Auden initiated to draw on their diverse gifts and powers. Isherwood delivered the tale and organization whereas Auden provided poetry as songs and dialogues. The first dramatic collaboration happened by chance when they were once in Germany in 1929. Auden describes the first step of relation as “the marriage of true minds” (Sharpe, 2013, p. 318) assuring that he has found the companion of ideal writing which resulted in their first poetic play *The Dog Beneath the Skin* (1935) then it successfully followed by *The Ascent of F6* (1937) and finally *On the Frontier* (1938).

Such closeness showed a somehow difference in their moods during writing. Isherwood used to write out in the gardens under the sunshine while Auden used to write indoors with a mood of stillness, windows closed and curtains down. In addition to that, Isherwood is attributed as a ‘realist’ whereas Auden as ‘parabolic’ – interested in moral stories using animal characters. It is clear that the plays they mutually penned elucidate their creative reaction and political inclination with the environment around them. Their friendship and relationship is more than literary collaboration. It is, so to speak, a degree of alliance.

Isherwood and Auden represented an exceptional case in the field of poetic drama in English in the twentieth century. “Auden’s collaboration with Christopher Isherwood began in the intimacy of a vacation together on the Isle of Wight in the summer of 1926, after a chance meeting late in 1925 during Auden’s first year at Oxford” (Leslie, 1968, p.83). They participated largely in the revival of English poetic drama of the mid of the twentieth century. In collaboration, they have written some verse plays. Auden wrote his first play *The Dance of Death* in 1933, and then he produced his second play *The Dog Beneath the Skin* in collaboration with Christopher Isherwood in 1935, the same year that witnessed the appearance of Eliot’s *Murder in the Cathedral* and Yeats’s *The Herne’s Egg*.

After two years in 1937, both of them produced their best play *The Ascent of F6*. Finally, they produced their third play *On the Frontier* in 1938. “The [three] plays were explicitly political, tacitly metaphysical” (Izzo, 2001, p. 120). And “During the twenties, [Auden] seemed to be interested in Freud, and in the thirties, in Marx” (Desai, 2004, p.1). Auden, like some others in the thirties of the twentieth century, grew up under the shadow of T. S. Eliot. “Eliot was certainly most familiar with Auden’s work because Auden had a contact with Faber and Eliot was at the editorial desk at the time. It was Eliot who considered Auden’s works for publication” (Niloufer, 1988, p. 108). In addition, “Mendelson quotes and highlights a single, generous personal statement written on the jacket of a book showing that Eliot once called Auden the forerunner of poetic drama” (Gindin, 1990, p. 125).

Auden positioned him in high esteem as a gifted poet who gave expression to the peculiar sensibility and feeling of Europe after the War, “his fascination with the mechanics of composition did occupy a most prominent position in his poetic and dramaturgical designs throughout his entire career” (Bolos, 2004, p. 174). He started experimenting poetry before writing plays in verse and “began to turn his primary attention to the ‘poetic’ dramas on which he and Christopher Isherwood collaborated” (Quesenbery, 2008, p. 23). He learned from Eliot many rudiments and fundamentals of the poetic trade and craft, but then he took a different direction from that of Eliot. The influence of Sweeney on Auden and his friends occupied them with Eliot’s personal passion for an innovative poetic drama to re-energize the stage. Auden and his colleagues perceived how to use rhythmical speech and echoed it in their poetry.

Auden made the political and economic problems of the time his focus on the contrary of Eliot who turned away from them. Auden set out to write social poetry and plays in order to diagnose a common malady and prescribe a remedy to his suffering generation. “As a poet, however, W. H. Auden was primarily concerned with the possibility of making poetry and dramatic art complement each other” (Veronese, 1998, p. 542). Auden, as a Marxist, was genuinely preoccupied with the political and economic calamities of his times. To quote him:

Poets are, by the nature of their interests and the nature of artistic fabrication, singularly ill-equipped to understand politics or economics. Their natural interest is in singular individuals and personal relations, while politics and economics are concerned with large numbers of people, hence with the human average and with impersonal (Bayley, 1975, p. 190).

Furthermore, “The history of Auden’s reputation has consistently followed a pattern in which initial outrage at new developments in manner and subject is supplanted by gradual acceptance and understanding of the merits of Auden’s changes” (Alba, & Knapp, 2004, p. 50). He was a great peace pioneer in the field of poetry as well as drama. “Despite the commitment to theatre implied by this continuity of production, these offer no good reason to doubt that Auden’s true strengths lay in his poetry” (Sharpe, 2007, p. 55). He had an acute sagacity of the new theatre, which enabled him to exploit the theatrical properties for building up effective drama. “The stage has become a

platform for sociological propaganda, for reform, for all sorts of current journalistic ideas” (Henderson, 1915, p. 32). He hoped “to reinvigorate the once vital influence of poetic verse drama” (Bolus, 2004, p. 4). The plays that he wrote in collaboration with Christopher Isherwood illuminate clearly the influence of T. S. Eliot, and of the German expressionistic theatre. Irrespective of that, Auden’s plays are written with great variety, they show and present a sense of verse of high emotions. Auden used verse in songs and in choruses with which the plays are interspersed.

The first play of Auden, *The Dance of Death* (1933), deals with the theme of the psychology of the contemporary decadent society. Such a theme is a favorite theme of Auden. This play is a remarkable piece for its professional skill in employing the means and resources of the music hall and ballet more willingly than for its dramatic complication or seriousness of idea. Auden in this play clearly advocates the notion that the way to deliverance from this psychological ailment and illness lies in the ideology of the Marxists.

Auden did not fully imitate Eliot in his manner of writing drama but he, largely, learned from Eliot the essential techniques of writing drama in verse. Auden greatly appreciated *The Rock*, saw the beauty and chances of an innovative choric method, and assimilated it and repeated it using his own approach. In the meantime, Eliot was elaborating and enhancing his chorus as he arranged his play *Murder in the Cathedral*. The outcome was a successful play of English choruses in which Eliot carefully dramatized the work of *The Rock*, where Auden converted such art in his own play *The Dog Beneath the Skin*.

Isherwood and Auden found social inequalities to be at the core of their struggle against. Their collaborated work in various methods opposes the Romantic beliefs. It was natural for both of them to be politically aware of struggle through poetry and drama, meant for a well world. They began intentionally to aim their verse at a wide audience, mostly through the poetic dramas because the theatre is of great appeal to common interested people. Both collaborators utilize a sort of exceeding poetry from a rhetorical perspective, for instance the “repetition of the same syntactic patterns [and the] use of rhetorical figures mainly schemes ... to express the boring daily humdrum” (Veronese, 1998, p. 540).

It is during the thirties that shown the production of the three main poetic plays, *The Dog Beneath the Skin* 1935, *The Ascent of F6* 1936 and *On the Frontier* 1938. These poetic dramas sought to stimulate a large number of spectators toward action. The collaboration between the two continued for almost their utter life. Isherwood and Auden continued friends all their life, and during their friendship, they collaborated on writing the three plays understudy. “Towards the end of 1934, Auden sent Isherwood a play called *The Chase*. They began a collaboration (by mail) which led, in January 1935, to a new play, *Where is Francis*” (McDiarmid, 1981, p. 169).

The Ascent of F6 (1937)

The Ascent of F6 is, “was one of the most successful of the Group Theatre’s production,” (Marcus, & Nicholls, 2004, p. 331) estimated to be the best and the most complicated play of the collaboration between Auden and Isherwood. *The Ascent of F6* “is a drama written in verse and

prose” (Veronese, 1998, p. 539). It expresses the dishonest and crooked operation of the power and influence of politics that can wrap itself in the garb of patriotism for appealing the support and allegiance of people. There is no place here for either honesty or knowledge. Politics is the central target for ruling and governing people where the baseness of behavior is justified and the failure is excused when the objective is getting power of politics over the people.

Mr. A. I'm sick of the news. All you can hear
Is politics, poilitics everywhere:
Talk in Westminster, talk at Geneva, talk in
the lobbies and talk on the throne;
Talk about treaties, talk about honour, ... (Auden, & Isherwood, 1939, p. 19).

The Ascent of F6 is “underhand manipulations by politicians at home and exotic landscapes of mountaintops with monks and demons” (Stan, 2004, p. 87).

Gunn. I don't really know exactly what to say. We
none of us know what F6 is going to be like. If you
ask me, I think she's probably an ugly old maid.
I'm scared stiff, but Ransom will hold our hands,
I expect ... They say that there's a ghost at the top (p. 52).

The first scene of the play opens with the hero, Michael Ransom, who “is by nature a leader of men” (Morgan, 2013, p. 196) reading a book of Dante and cynically mentioning virtue and knowledge. On the other hand, his brother, Sir James Ransom is shown elucidating to a set of people the nature of the problem that British Sudoland has caused to his government. The State is in turmoil, sedulously fermented by their neighboring Ostinian Sudoland.

In his speech, James Ransom refers to the F6, geographically, “a mountain in Asia,” (Patterson, 2007, p. 23) fictionally “sits on the border between British Sudoland’ and Ostinian Sudoland” (Garrington, 2013, p. 26), that is said to be haunted by a guardian demon or dragon. It devours any human being who dares to approach from the mountain. Only monks, who resent foreigners, inhabit the area. They can practice mysterious rituals learned from prehistoric Egypt. A falsehood has grown among the natives that any white man who can reach the summit of F6 first will be the ruler of the two Sudolands.

As a result, the Ostinians organize an expedition headed by Blavek, who has already stirred to the mountain. Sir James has no other choice except preparing his own expedition to try to reach the place first. He tries to induce his brother, Michael, a great mountaineer, to lead the British expedition but he sturdily declines. Michael “is chosen to lead a British expedition to climb the famous haunted mountain ‘F6’ so as to secure Britain's colonial prestige” (Sharpe, 2013, p. 109). His mother persuades him to accept the plan and Michael has no other choice but to agree.

The second act presents Michael, “He longs for power, to become a savior” (Replogle, 1965, p. 590), and his group in their tent close to the Monastery visited by the Abbot with a

mystical mirror to let them see the naked image of their targets. “The abbot explains to Ransom that the demon takes different forms for its temptations; he does not reveal that to Ransom himself it will take the form of his own mother” (Haffenden, 1997, p. 190).

Ransom. Before you go, may I ask you a question? As

Abbot, you rule this monastery?

Abbot. That is a wise observation. Mr Ransom, I am going to tell you a secret which I have never told a living soul. We have spoken of your temptation. I am now going to tell you of mine. Sometimes, when I am tired or ill, I am subject to very strange attacks. They come without warning, in the middle of the night, in the noon siesta, even during the observance of the most sacred religious rites. (p. 75)

Meanwhile, Michael is shocked by voices screaming for his help to reduce their suffering and misery. Later on, Michael speaks face to face with the Monk about the Monster.

Michael’s belief that life is evil makes him conquer the first temptation of the Demon. He wishes to triumph over the Monster in order to save human beings. Michael does not apprehend the dishonest motive behind the operation -- it is a secret desire for popularity. His companions urge him to continue the climb to F6 to keep the honor of their country because their rivals are there. Michael Ransom, a “Freelance adventurer and mountain climber,” (Piazza, 1978, p. 19) tells them that the summit will be reached, as they desire. Only one companion crawls with Michael Ransom towards the peak of the mountain. They are overtaken by a hurricane that sweeps away the companion while Ransom shouts in misery and anguish. He carries on desperately until he falls exhausted.

Some of the greatest poetic passages are articulated by the Duet, A pair who associate with one another, expecting and hoping the acceptance of the hero, Michel Ransom to save them from the catastrophe descending from the peak of mountain f6. They are quoted:

Him who comes to set us free
 Save whoever it may be,
 From the fountain's thirsty snare,
 From the music in the air,
 From the tempting fit of slumber, ...
 From the Guardian of the Tomb,
 From the siren's wrecking call,
 Save him now and save us all. (p. 112)

The Chorus of monks rises, asking when the deliverer shall come to destroy the Demon and save people. The Chorus asserts that, according to a prophecy, someone will appear and cut the heart of the Demon into pieces with his spear. This prophecy seems to be an echo of the secret desire of

Michael Ransom. As the play progresses, the technique becomes expressionistic. The world changes into make-believe as the main characters reappear and the events take place in a way that defies reason and logic. It is surprising; the Demon enters in the disguise of James Ransom. A game of chess is arranged between his team and that of his brother Michael. Michael is eventually defeated.

The Abbot presides over a trial of Ransom in a court where Michael, the head of the expedition, confesses that it was his own mistake, and F6 has shown him what he is. About himself, he says that he is a 'prig' and a 'coward'. Then he looks at the figure on the peak. The drapery discloses the young face of his own mother.

When the Demon is dead,
You shall have a lovely clean bed ...
A saint am I and a saint are you,
It's perfectly, perfectly, perfectly true. (p. 55)

The sun rises on the second day and the body of Ransom is found dead on the peak of the mountain. The funeral song sung by the hidden Chorus concludes the play.

The Ascent of F6 has several meanings. It could be understood as a morality play in which the chief figure is faced with a series of temptations. The hero discovers, as Thomas Becket in Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, that the most patent temptation is his secret desire to obtain power over people as the savior of human beings who challenged the danger of the Demon. On the surface, it can be understood as a political satire. Psychologically, the play can be considered a satire on the Oedipus complex.

The central part of the play is a spiritual metaphor in which the ascent to the summit of the mountain becomes the symbol of spiritual quest during which Michael undertakes a kind of self-realization. He realizes at the end that the greatest enticement came from his mother. To a good extent, "the new forms of dramatic poetry and allegory can be used with great power in treating contemporary material has been proved by the authors of *The Ascent of F6*" (Kernodle, 1940, p. 246). The play shows the direction in which poetic drama can move to reconcile the requirements of the poetic stage and popular theatre.

The Ascent of F6 shows a marked forward development from the authors' last play, *The Dog Beneath the Skin*: the construction is firmer, the verse is quite as fine, and the morality is rendered more explicit without loss of balance or inconsistency of texture" (Haffenden, 1997, p. 226).

However, the opposite strains of the thoughts of the two authors in the collaboration of producing this play proved that it lacks artistic fusion. The lack of integration is the only limitation of the play.

Auden employs free verse and sets a strain on the resources of syllabic meter by prolonging immensely the size of syllables in the verse line. The dissimilarities of free verse befall anywhere in the line. That can be easily seen through the conversation between Mr. A and Mrs. A:

MR A. Has anything happened?

MRS A. What should happen?

The cat has died at Ivy Dene,

The Crowthers pimply son has passed Matric,

St. Neots has put up light blue curtains,

Frankie is walking out with Winnie

And Georgie loves himself. What should happen?

Nothing that matters will ever happen.

MR A. No, nothing that matters will ever happen;

Nothing you'd want to put in a book;

Nothing to tell to impress your friends—

The old old story that never ends:

The eight o'clock train, the customary place,

Holding the paper in front of your face,

The public stairs, the glass swing-door,

The peg for your hat, the linoleum floor,

The office stool and the office jokes

And the fear in your ribs that slyly pokes: (p. 18)

The Ascent of F6, as in Auden's plays, provides assorted fear to the audience and has good lessons to teach and edify the younger practitioners of poetic drama. The poetic employment of prose is a noteworthy formal achievement of *The Ascent of F6* to be called a poetic play. The play, ultimately, shows wonderful modern verse although "the verse of *The Ascent of F6*... lacks flexibility and range" (Ure, 1961, p. 103). In addition, "the most telling characteristic of Auden's poetic drama is encapsulated in his prologue from *The Orators*:

By landscape reminded once of his mother's figure

The mountain heights he remembers get bigger and bigger:

With the finest of mapping pens he fondly traces

All the family names on the familiar places.

...

And yet this prophet, homing the day is ended,

Receives odd welcome from the country he so defended:

The band roars 'Coward, Coward', in his human fever," (Campbell, 2011, p 2).

It is clearly proved that "the contribution Auden [in collaboration with Christopher Isherwood] made to the revivification of verse drama at this period [1930s] was real enough" (Sharpe, 2007, p. 55).

Conclusion

Irrespective of the short career in verse drama, the path of Auden and Isherwood's short career in collaboration with verse drama designates to a good extent the possibility of achieving touchable objective. This objective is represented in the contribution of giving air again to drama in verse using modern language in a modern age through the use of rituals to signify an intelligible idea of the west spiritual tradition. The verse plays, so to speak, are born out of an obligation to the ritual origins of drama. They deal with a convenient amount measuring the difficulty of envisaging cultural consistency during the inter-war era of Europe. In the part of prose of *The Ascent of F6*, Auden proved that prose has the ability of communicating poetic matters as suitably as verse.

Though the verse plays described a flaw and inadequacy of the disappearance of tradition, they engaged with proper strategies and recreated several conditions of poetic formalities, with certain success. Additionally, the understudy play of Auden in collaboration with Christopher Isherwood, struggles with the problem of politics and culture of Europe. Jurak illustrates, (1974) the plays under collaboration confirming, *The Dog beneath the Skin* and *The Ascent of F6* share several logical, political, deep-thinking and social approaches, in addition to similarities in genre and manner. They can all be considered as politico-poetic plays. *The Ascent of F6* can be appropriately examined as an experiment in poetic drama. The play is based predominantly on expressionism, which is not the same from the line that Eliot, Yeats and several others followed.

The play signifies Auden and Isherwood's career as inspired and resourceful poet-playwrights. The poetic play offers our readers with an appreciated documentation of the competing demands of verse on the modern stage. This modern play brings to an end the authors' life-long concern with the problem of writing successful play of politics in verse. In spite of various shortcomings, the play *The Ascent of F6*, deserves more attention. After such an attempt utilizing the analytical and critical technique of this study, we might declare that the two collaborators, Auden and Isherwood, achieved success in dealing with contemporary poetic drama using modern language as an exceptional case.

About the Author:

Yahya Saleh Hassan Dahami is an Associate Professor of English Literature, Criticism and Language. He obtained his Ph. D. in English Literature from, New Delhi in 2004. He is a Board Member of English Department, Faculty of Science and Arts - Al Mandaq, Al Baha University. Dahami is Head of English Department, Faculty of Science and Arts in Al Mandaq 2010 – 2013 and a Board Member of Faculty of Science and Arts –2010 – 2013.

References

- Alba, A. & Knapp, B. L. (2004). *Multicultural Writers Since 1945: An A-to-Z Guide*. London: Greenwood Press.
- Auden, H. W. & Isherwood, C. (1939). *The Ascent of F6: A Tragedy in Two Acts*. (4th Ed.) London: Faber and Faber Limited.
- Bayley, J. (1975). 'Auden, W. H.' *Twentieth Century Poetry: Critical Essays and Documents*, Eds. Graham Martin and P. N. Furbank. London: The Open Univ. Press.

- Blamires, H. (2003). *A Short History of English Literature*, (2nd Ed). London and New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library.
- Bolus, M. P. (2004). *Sacred Play Parable, Morality, Myth: W. H. Auden as Dramatist*. Ph. D. Thesis. The City University of New York. UNI Microform.
- Campbell, A. (2011). Mammary Landscapes and Mother's Figure: Vengeance and matrilineal legacy in the poetic drama of W.H. Auden. *University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Journal of Culture and the Arts Issue Number 13*. Retrieved from <http://www.forumjournal.org/article/view/674/956> on 2 Feb, 2015.
- Desai, R. (2004). *W.H. Auden's Poetry: The Quest for Love*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.
- Garrington, A. (2013). What does a Modernist Mountain Mean? Auden and Isherwood's The Ascent of F6. *Critical Quarterly*, vol. 55, no. 2. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.sdl.idm.oclc.org/doi/pdf/10.1111/criq.12043> on 16 April, 2018.
- Gindin, J. (1990). The Complete Works of W. H. Auden: Plays and Other Dramatic Writings, 1928-38 by Edward Mendelson; W. H. Auden. *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 1. pp. 124-125. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/3207570 on 12 Jan, 2015.
- Haffenden, J. (1997). *W. H. Auden*. London: Routledge.
- Hanief, Mohammad. (2000). *The Dynamics of Criticism in T. S. Eliot*, Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors.
- Head, C. (1921). Influence of the Art-Theatre on Poetic Drama. *Poetry*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 37-43. Poetry Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20573294>. on 28 Jan, 2016.
- Henderson, A. C. (1915). Poetic Drama. *Poetry*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 31-35. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20570579> on 28 Jan, 2016.
- Izzo, D. G. 2001. *Christopher Isherwood: His Era, His Gang, and the Legacy of the Truly Strong Man*, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press.
- Jurak, M. (1974). Commitment and Character Portrayal in the British Politico-Poetic Drama of the 1930s. *Educational Theatre Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 3. pp. 342-351. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/3206079 on 14 Jan, 2015.
- Kernodle, G. R. (1940). England's Religious-Drama Movement. *College English*, Vol. 1, No. 5. pp. 414-426. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/370625 on 15 Jan, 2015.
- Lehmann, J. (1976). Two of the Conspirators. *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 22, No. 3, *Christopher Isherwood*. pp. 264-275. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/440504 on 13 Jan, 2015.
- Leslie E. A. (1968). *The Motif of the 'Guest' in the early Work of W. H. Auden*, A Thesis: Master of Arts: Simon Fraser University.
- Marcus, L. & Nicholls, P. (2004). *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century English Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McDiarmid, L. S. (1981). The Living Voice in the Thirties: Yeats, Eliot, Auden. *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 11, *Literature and Its Audience, II Special Number*. pp. 161-177. Modern Humanities Research Association. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/3506265 on 22 Jan, 2015.
- Morgan, C. (2013). *Dramatic Critic: Selected Reviews (1922-1939)*, London: Oberon Books.

- Niloufer, H. (1988). *Twentieth-century English History Plays*. New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books.
- Owens, C. D. & Radner, J. N. (2000). *Irish Drama: 1900 – 1980*, USA: The Catholic University of America Press.
- Quesenbery, W. D. (2008). Auden's Revisions. Retrieved from www.audensociety.org/Audens_Revisions_by_WD_Quesenbery.pdf on 30 Dec. 2014.
- Page, N. (2000). *Auden and Isherwood: The Berlin Years*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Patterson, M. (2007). *The Oxford Guide to Plays*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Piazza, P. (1978). *Christopher Isherwood: Myth and Anti- Myth*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Replogle, J. (1965). Auden's Marxism. *PMLA*, Vol. 80, No.5. pp. 584-595 Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/460852 on 12 Feb. 2015.
- Sharpe, T. (2007). *W. H Auden*, Oxon, New York: Routledge.
- Sharpe, T. (2013). *W. H Auden in Context*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stan, S. (2004). *The Cambridge Companion to W. H. Auden*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tydeman, W. (1991). Poetic Drama by Glenda Leeming. *The Review of English Studies, New Series*, Vol. 42, No. 167. pp. 451-452. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/518370 on 13 Jan. 2015.
- Ure, P. (1961). The Third Voice. Modern British and American Verse Drama by Denis Donoghue. *The Review of English Studies, New Series*, Vol. 12, No. 45, pp. 102-104. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/512371 on 13 Jan. 2015.
- Veronese, C. (1998). Auden's Verse and Auden's Poetry in The Ascent of F6. *Annali della Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature straniere di Ca' Foscari*, vol. 37.1-2, pp. 539-559. Retrieved from www.hdl.handle.net/10278/41177 on 2 April, 2015.
- Wasley, A. 2011. *The Age of Auden: Postwar Poetry and the American Scene*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- White, E. W. (1973). Britten in the Theatre: A Provisional Catalogue. *Tempo, New Series*, No. 107. pp. 2-10. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/944267 on 12 March, 2015.