

RECONSIDERING THE MARXIST AESTHETICS OF CHRISTOPHER CAUDWELL

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Who is the major English Marxist critic? Christopher Caudwell, *bélas*¹
— Terry Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology* (1976)

If you were to mention the name Christopher Caudwell to a student of literary or critical theory today, the chances are that you would draw a blank. A small number may remember seeing his name associated with something called “Vulgar Marxism”, but it is unlikely that they would be able to recall much more detail than that. Indeed, this is not surprising. The recently published *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, perhaps the most authoritative anthology in this field, contains no entry on him.² Neither does Terry Eagleton’s popular guide, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*.³ The few accounts that do mention Caudwell almost always do so in brief, as a convenient example of “Vulgar Marxism” that can be quickly quoted and dismissed. Peter Barry, for example, in his primer *Beginning Theory*, describes the “overall result” of Caudwell’s work as providing “little more than ‘sound-bites’ on literature for use in political argument”.⁴ Even those writing from Marxist perspectives often pay Caudwell scant attention. Raymond Williams’s *Marxism and Literature*, for example, discussed Caudwell for all of about half a dozen lines in the introduction; while Terry Eagleton’s *Marxism and Literary Criticism* devotes perhaps a couple of pages in total.⁵ Caudwell gets one sentence (and that only in the bibliography) of David Forgacs’s chapter on “Marxist literary theories”, and a similarly cursory appraisal in Moyra Haslett’s recent guide on Marxist cultural theory.⁶ Caudwell, it would seem, is a critic destined to feature as a minor footnote in British intellectual history—a figure that may attract a chapter of a PhD thesis every few decades, but otherwise forgotten.

Yet Caudwell's work deserves more than to be condemned to obscurity or remembered only negatively. As E. P. Thompson has noted, it is "easy to tidy Caudwell away, as an episode in the prehistory of British Marxism", but such a move would obscure the fact that Caudwell's work represents "the most heroic effort of any British Marxist to think his own intellectual time".⁷ This paper will offer a short reassessment of Caudwell's writing, reception and influence. While by no means blind to the many faults and problems of Caudwell's work, I will argue that the disparaging treatment of Caudwell's writing by critics has often been perfunctory and ill-founded, and that Caudwell deserves to feature as an important figure in any intellectual history of twentieth-century British literary criticism.

Christopher Caudwell was the pen name of Christopher St. John Sprigg, born in London in 1907. Caudwell left school at the age of sixteen to begin working as a journalist; and after three years working as a newspaper reporter, he joined an aeronautical publishing company. Before the age of twenty-five, Caudwell had already become a prolific reader and author, publishing five textbooks on aeronautics, an article on the design of an infinitely variable gear, several detective novels and a number of poems and short stories. It was not until 1934, however, that Caudwell developed a serious interest in Marxism, leading him to plunge into studying Marxist philosophy and join the Poplar branch of the Communist Party in December 1935. In December of 1936, Caudwell left to fight for the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil war. In a tragic twist, when a high-ranking Party official in England read the as yet unpublished draft of *Illusion and Reality*, he sent a letter to Spain requesting Caudwell be spared from the fighting and be returned to England—but the letter arrived too late, and Caudwell was killed in action on the Jarama on 12 February 1937, covering the retreat of his battalion.

During his painfully short career as a Marxist, Caudwell wrote at a truly amazing rate. His most famous work, *Illusion and Reality*, was written in only a few months in 1935, at the rate of around 5000 words a day. In this study, Caudwell attempts to sketch a materialist understanding of poetry, rewriting the English poetic canon in the light of a historical materialist view of history, class-relations and the progress of capitalism. *Illusion and Reality* was followed by a series of wide-ranging essays, collected and published posthumously as *Studies in a Dying Culture*, *Further Studies in a Dying Culture*, *The Crisis in Physics* and *Romance and Realism*.⁸ In these essays, Caudwell addresses a

phenomenal range of issues, offering studies of George Bernard Shaw, D. H. Lawrence, love, Freud, religion, aesthetics, history, philosophy and science. Caudwell did not live to see his work in print or to witness its reception, for none of Caudwell's Marxist work was published during his lifetime—*Illusion and Reality* was in press when Caudwell went to Spain, and his other works were compiled after his death.

In this paper, I will make no attempt to cover the range of Caudwell's work. Instead, I will focus on *Illusion and Reality*, the study on which it could be said Caudwell's reputation stands. It is obvious that such a focus risks doing a grave injustice to the enormous breadth of Caudwell's intellectual interests, and as E. P. Thompson has argued, it is also doubtful whether *Illusion and Reality* is indeed Caudwell's most significant work.⁹ As *Illusion and Reality* is the work that critics hostile to Caudwell usually single out and attack, however, it would seem the most important place to begin any reconsideration of Caudwell's writing.

It would be no exaggeration to claim that *Illusion and Reality* is one of the most ambitious works in all of English literary criticism. Caudwell attempts to write, almost *ex nihilo*, a historical materialist account of the origins of poetry, ranging from the function of song and primitive poetry in tribal life, the role of poetry in religion and mythology, through to the development of modern poetry in the age of capitalism and a quasi-Freudian psychological exploration of the dream-work of the poetic. As one commentator has argued:

At the heart of *Illusion and Reality*, constituting its epicentre and ... the mainspring of its inception, is a concern with the function of poetry in relation to the other great symbolic systems of religion, science and the other arts; a concern with mankind's psychical development within the wider spectrum of human evolution. It is within this context that Caudwell offers valuable and thought-provoking insights into the role of language and literature, insights which are not specifically Marxist in their importance.¹⁰

Caudwell displays an impressive range of reading and references, crossing with ease the divide between art and science, in a bold dialectical attempt to synthesise the two elements of culture that he saw as being artificially separated in bourgeois society. He argues that, as "art is the product of society, as the pearl is the product of the oyster", any criticism of art must not separate it into a separate

autonomous realm, but instead understand it within the context of the whole society:

But physics, anthropology, history, biology, philosophy and psychology are also products of society, and therefore a sound sociology would enable the art critic to employ criteria drawn from those fields without falling into eclecticism or confusing art with psychology or politics.¹¹

The first chapter of *Illusion and Reality* opens with a deceptively simple statement that serves as a good guide as to the significance of Caudwell's work:

This is a book not only about poetry but also about the sources of poetry. Poetry is written in language and therefore it is a book about the sources of language. Language is a social product, the instrument whereby men communicate and persuade each other; thus the study of poetry's sources cannot be separated from the study of society.¹²

The ideas expressed here by Caudwell are now so orthodox in current literary criticism and theory that it is difficult to appreciate the importance and originality of his sentiment. In recent years, statements regarding the materiality of culture have been offered as the most avant-garde of radical critical theory positions. As the Foreword to Jonathan Dollimore's and Alan Sinfield's cultural materialist manifesto, *Political Shakespeare*, aggressively declares:

"Materialism" is opposed to "idealism": it insists that culture does not (cannot) transcend the material forces and relations of production. Culture is not simply a reflection of the economic and political system, but nor can it be independent of it. Cultural materialism therefore studies the implication of literary texts in history.¹³

Dollimore and Sinfield offer this definition of materialism as if they have discovered some radical new theoretical innovation, but there is little in their claims that had not been prefigured by Caudwell fifty years earlier. Indeed, Caudwell's statement is remarkably similar to what Raymond Williams would suggest a true form of cultural materialism might resemble:

I have my own reasons for believing that the most practical and effective new direction will be in the analysis of the historically based conventions of language and representation: the plays themselves as socially and materially produced, within discoverable conditions; indeed the texts themselves as history.¹⁴

This is not to say there have not been significant advances made by Dollimore, Sinfield and Williams in terms of the materialist theory of culture, and it is also evident that contemporary cultural materialists are far more sophisticated and nuanced literary critics than Caudwell ever was. Rather, what I wish to suggest is that, instead of being a decisive break from theories of the past, contemporary forms of cultural materialism are in fact more a continuation which build upon the fundamental premises already explored by Caudwell.

The most famous (or notorious) sections of *Illusion and Reality* are the chapters devoted to the discussion of modern English poets. Caudwell divides what he terms "bourgeois" English poetry into three corresponding categories of capitalism—"Primitive Accumulation", "The Industrial Revolution" and "The Decline of Capitalism"—and links each major movement in poetry and literature to the wider world economic and political situation. Caudwell even goes so far as to provide a chart entitled "The Movement of Bourgeois Poetry", giving a technical summary of the characteristics of various historical and literary movements from 1550 to 1930, in categories such as "The Bourgeois Revolt, 1625-1650", "The Era of Mercantilism and Manufacture, 1688-1750", and "The Decline of British Capitalism, 1825-1900".

In these chapters, Caudwell's technique is to give a broad outline of the development of a particular moment in capitalism, and show a corresponding concern in the literature of that age. Thus, the rise of the Renaissance "Prince" or absolute monarch is said to correspond with the movement in Renaissance literature towards princely heroes:

Elizabethan poetry in all its grandeur and insurgence is the voice of this princely will, the absolute bourgeois will whose very virtue consists in breaking all current conventions and realising itself. That is why all Shakespeare's heroes are princely: why kingliness is the ideal type of human behaviour. Marlowe, Chapman, Greene, but above all Shakespeare, born of bourgeois parents, exactly express the cyclonic force of the princely will in the era, in all its vigour and recklessness.¹⁵

Caudwell describes the advance of the Industrial Revolution, with its breakdown of traditional economic relationships, as having a profound but paradoxical effect on the poets of the age:

It has the effect of making the poet increasingly regard himself as a man removed from society, as an individualist

realising only the instincts of his heart and not responsible to society's demands—whether expressed in the duties of a citizen, afeared of God or a faithful servant of Mammon. At the same time his poems come increasingly to seem worthy ends-in-themselves ... Blake, Byron, Keats, Wordsworth and Shelley express this ideological revolution, each in their different ways, as a Romantic Revolution.¹⁶

And in 1929, Caudwell claims, the somewhat optimistically termed "final economic crisis of capitalism" resulted in a move towards symbolism and the "poetic craft revolt" of surrealism:

The *surrealiste* is somewhat equivalent to the craftsman who makes trifling models and toys in his spare time to exercise his skill. This is the way he expresses his revolt and secures some free outlet for his craft, by deliberately making something of its nature useless and therefore opposed to the sordid craftlessness of mass-production.¹⁷

This is only a very brief sketch of Caudwell's argument, but even from this small sample we can see obvious problems with Caudwell's approach. He covers large amounts of history and literature in broad sweeps, going into very little detail about specific authors or their work. He rarely pauses to cite a poem, instead offering generalised statements: such as, "Byron is an aristocrat—but he is one who is conscious of the break up of his class as a force, and the necessity to go over to the bourgeoisie. Hence, his mixture of cynicism and romanticism".¹⁸ It would thus be easy to dismiss Caudwell at this point, as Raymond Williams once remarked, for not even being specific enough to be wrong. Yet to do so, I would argue, is to fundamentally misunderstand the significance of Caudwell's work. Caudwell is not attempting a work of "close critical analysis" as we now understand it; to judge and condemn him by this criterion is almost an irrelevant exercise. Instead, he was attempting a historical materialist overview of the entire English literary canon: a kind of broad grid, which asserts the material factors in literature, that later critics could then refine and focus.

Caudwell's sketch of the ages of poetry directly corresponding to developments in capitalism may now strike us as crude—a totalising vision which grates against our postmodern sensibilities, trained as we are to distrust grand narratives and instead focus on the gaps, silences and omissions of any meta-theory. In the context of the literary

debates of the 1930s, however, we can appreciate the importance and innovation in what Caudwell was trying to achieve. The 1930s was a decade that saw a crucial shift in the history of English studies, away from philological and historical concerns, towards those of practical criticism and close textual analysis, championed by the writings of such critics as T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis. As has been well documented, this was not simply a shift in critical practices, but also marked a definite development in critical ideology, as these writers reformulated the English poetic tradition according to their wider and largely implicit political beliefs.¹⁹ For example, take the famous case of T. S. Eliot, and his reworking of the literary canon in terms of "sensibility". Eliot's grand view of the English poetic tradition, sketched out in his famed review, "The Metaphysical Poets" (1921), proposed that the high point of English was achieved in the opening decades of the seventeenth century, with the poetry of Donne, whose "mechanism of sensibility ... could devour any kind of experience".²⁰ Since that time, a disastrous "dissociation of sensibility" has set in on the back of Milton and Dryden—a dissociation from which, Eliot piously informs us, "we have never recovered".²¹

Eliot's scheme was, of course, strongly reactionary, advocating an escape from what he saw as the poverty of modernity into a mythical, quasi-organic rural society. It was also wholly idealist—poetry and literature existed in a separate realm of ideas and feelings, to be judged on the nebulous criteria of sensibility, removed from the concerns, politics and sociology. Indeed, it has often been suggested that Eliot's low opinion of Milton had less to do with the faults of Milton's poetry, and more to do with the uncomfortable intrusion of revolutionary political sympathies into Milton's work. Yet this did not stop Eliot's writing from being enormously influential—for generations of students and teachers in schools and universities, the New Critical and Leavisite movements formed the dominant critical paradigm.

Eliot, it would have seemed for many years, had convincingly won the argument, as Caudwell's work slipped into obscurity.²² Yet few in the academy would now seriously defend Eliot's version of the poetic tradition; rather, as was noted above, the basic premise of Caudwell's theory has become the dominant paradigm in contemporary literary and cultural studies. Thus, Christopher Caudwell's attempts to offer a materialist account of literature and poetry, and reassert the impact of the political and economic on art, while often clumsy and crude in places, served as a brave counter-narrative to the formalist and liberal

humanist idealist views of literature—a counter-narrative that time has proven more correct than many would have ever expected.

Caudwell's Reception

Caudwell has been regarded mainly as a source of embarrassment by subsequent generations of Marxist critics, and served as a convenient "Vulgar" Marxist who can be sacrificed so as to demonstrate the theoretical sophistication of later movements. Raymond Williams's famous and scathing comment in *Culture and Society*, that Caudwell was "not even specific enough to be wrong", perhaps set the precedent for subsequent hostile evaluations (although it should be noted that, at this stage, Williams was more left-Leavisite than Marxist, and thus this statement is not indicative of Williams' later views).²³ Caudwell was also unfortunate enough to be damned with faint praise by those who professed to be sympathetic to his work. A notable example is that of Sol Yurick who, in the introduction to the combined volume *Studies and Further Studies in a Dying Culture*, states that it is perhaps "lucky after all" that Caudwell had died young, speculating that it is likely that Caudwell would have either gone to the right, "been bought off" and become "a cold warrior" if he had survived into the sixties, or would have become a "cautious, reformist ... numbed apparatchik".²⁴ Not content with this strange speculation, Yurick goes on to label Caudwell's work as being marred by "a certain Stalinist crudity", and states that when "one begins to read ... one is annoyed by the crudity, the groping" and the "simplistic world views".²⁵ With friends like Yurick, one could comment, Caudwell has little need of enemies, and it is not surprising that Caudwell has languished outside of critical favour.

Terry Eagleton's *Criticism and Ideology* represents another major work that engages with Caudwell in a mostly negative light. In this study, Eagleton undertakes an assessment of the history of British Marxist literary theory, and rightly lists Caudwell as one of the major theorists. Yet, for Eagleton, the fact that Caudwell is the major theorist prior to Raymond Williams is itself symptomatic of the problems of the British Marxist tradition:

For though Caudwell is the major forebear—"major", at least in the sheer undaunted ambitiousness for his project—it is equally true that there is little, except negatively, to be learnt from him. Not that we can learn

only from the English, or that Caudwell's limitations were just his own. Insulated from much of Europe, intellectually isolated even within his own society, permeated by Stalinism and idealism, bereft of a "theory of superstructures", Caudwell nonetheless persevered in the historically hopeless task of producing from these unpropitious conditions a fully-fledged Marxist aesthetic. His work bears all the scars of that self-contradictory enterprise: speculative and erratic, studded with random insights, punctuated by hectic forays into and out of alien territories and strewn with hair raising theoretical vulgarities.²⁶

It is hard to escape a sense of gloomy pessimism in Eagleton's discussion; and his labelling of Caudwell's work as a "historically hopeless task" and a "self-contradictory enterprise ... strewn with hair raising theoretical vulgarities" smacks of a certain theoretical blindness, for Eagleton himself was, at this stage of his career, engaged in an attempt to construct an Althusserian science of the text which would in retrospect seem every bit as self-contradictory as Caudwell's work. This disparaging treatment of Caudwell, however, can be seen to tie in with a wider cultural cringe that permeates *Criticism and Ideology*. Indeed, Eagleton is quite open with his sense of embarrassment at the opening of the work:

Any English Marxist who tries now to construct a materialist aesthetics must be painfully conscious of his inadequacies. It is not only that so many issues in this field are fraught and inconclusive, but that to intervene from England is almost automatically to disenfranchise oneself from debate. It is to feel acutely bereft of a tradition, as a tolerated house-guest of Europe, a precocious but parasitic alien. These essays which follow labour under these embarrassments.²⁷

Caudwell, with his gruff, pre-structuralist style, is thus (to continue Eagleton's metaphor) the embarrassing associate who must be hidden away in a closet, lest Eagleton's European hosts revoke their tenuous hospitality. It can therefore be speculated that Eagleton's scathing assessment of Caudwell in *Criticism and Ideology* stems more from a self-conscious desire to keep up appearances in front of his respectable Parisian neighbours than out of any serious engagement with Caudwell's work. Furthermore, given that Eagleton has subsequently renounced many aspects of his Althusserian work, it is likely that Eagleton would now be inclined to view Caudwell's writing in a more favourable light.

While these high-profile criticisms have been the most influential with regard to Caudwell's reputation, there have nonetheless been a number of important reconsiderations and defences of Caudwell. In 1974, Francis Mulhern wrote a substantial essay dedicated to Caudwell in the *New Left Review*, arguing that "Caudwell's work is best seen not as a system to be appropriated or discarded as a whole, but as a copious source of insights and arguments needing critical reflections".²⁸ This was followed by E. P. Thompson in 1977, who offered a substantial challenge to how critics had received Caudwell (this will be discussed in more detail below). The eighties saw two book-length studies published on Caudwell offering sympathetic expositions of Caudwell's writing, and providing vital examinations Caudwell's work in its wider intellectual and historical context.²⁹ Thus, it would seem there has been a small but nonetheless distinct movement to recuperate the reputation of Caudwell, and attempt a serious understanding of his work.

Perhaps the most significant was that offered by E. P. Thompson, in an essay that reconsiders the value of Caudwell in the British Marxist tradition—a move that, by implication, can be seen as part of Thompson's wider argument at the time against Althusser and theory. Thompson remains deeply sceptical of Caudwell's credentials in many fields: "Caudwell (it is agreed) was a poor critic. His credentials as a theorist of aesthetics, as a scientist, and as a Marxist have all been questioned. His political judgement was honourable but naïve".³⁰ Thompson also states that he "did not wish to contest [the] judgement" of Raymond Williams, who had contended that Caudwell "has little to say, of actual literature, that is even interesting".³¹ From this list of criticisms, it would seem that Thompson sees very little of value in Caudwell's work, but this is not the case. Instead, Thompson argues that Caudwell should be re-evaluated in a radical new way, by downgrading the emphasis placed on *Illusion and Reality*, and upgrading *Studies in a Dying Culture* and parts of *Further Studies* and *The Crisis in Physics*. Such a move, Thompson contends, serves to salvage Caudwell's most important work, and allows us to focus on what is truly significant about Caudwell's writing.

Thompson specifically takes aim at those who simply dismiss Caudwell as a "Vulgar Marxist" who slavishly adhered to the party line, reducing art to a mechanical reflection of the economic base. It is argued that, in fact, Caudwell "was potentially a heretic within the orthodox Marxist tradition", in his attempts to produce a Marxist

aesthetics that consciously resisted the vulgar tendencies of the orthodox line:

The entire body of Caudwell's work may be read as a polemic against mechanical materialism of this kind, masquerading as Marxism. Men can do nothing significant without consciousness and passion; all that they do is passionate and conscious. In *Illusion and Reality* he is "making out a case" for the part played by the arts in the generation and organization of spiritual energies ... Caudwell's insights (however disorderly) were bought at a cost which orthodox Marxism was unwilling to pay.³²

Caudwell thus emerges in Thompson's account as a radically different critic than has commonly been supposed, and a far more sophisticated and important Marxist thinker than has often been recognised.

Overall, the case made by Thompson in this article for Caudwell is a persuasive one. My only criticism of Thompson is that he seems too quick to cut his losses and sacrifice *Illusion and Reality* in order to save *Studies in a Dying Culture*, meekly deferring to the prior judgement of Raymond Williams rather than critically examining Williams' claims. Aside from this, Thompson's careful and intelligent study can leave little doubt as to the significance of Caudwell's place in British Marxism, and offers a compelling case for Caudwell's importance in the Marxist tradition.

Apart from Thompson, one of the most interesting sympathetic reappraisals of Caudwell was recently offered by Leonard Jackson, in his work *The Dematerialisation of Karl Marx*.³³ Jackson is something of an anomaly. A non-Marxist critic hostile to almost all the currents of Western Marxism, he nonetheless singles out Caudwell as one of only a few Marxist thinkers to praise:

In terms of the depth of the philosophical problems that he was prepared to tackle ... and in terms of the range of empirical theory that he brought to bear on literature ... and in terms of his ability to integrate these into a single coherent theoretical structure within the framework of a modified dialectical materialism, far the greatest British literary theorist was Christopher Caudwell.³⁴

Jackson's study surprisingly praises Caudwell precisely for the reason other critics have dismissed him—his adherence to the vexed base/superstructure formula of classical Marxism. Jackson contends that this has not resulted in Caudwell's work displaying vulgar

characteristics, but that it rather offers a sophisticated, dialectical mediation. As he argues:

What is clear however is that he has given, not a simple mechanical account of the relationship of culture to society, but a complex, nuanced, dialectical one of the whole development of social consciousness, as expressed in the characteristic social phantasies underlying the development of an art form.³⁵

Jackson's book is by no means without its problems, as he belligerently dismisses whole swathes of other Marxist thinkers without much in the way of argument. What this study does suggest, though, is that if Jackson, as a hostile non-Marxist, can find sufficient material in Caudwell's writing to praise, it may be wise for Marxists and other leftists to reconsider the value of Caudwell, and no longer simply dismiss him out of hand.

It would seem time, finally, to allow Christopher Caudwell's work the respect that it deserves.

Notes

- 1 Terry Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology* (London: Verso, 1978; first edition 1976), p. 21.
- 2 *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Vincent B. Leitch, ed. (New York: Norton, 2001).
- 3 Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).
- 4 Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 161. I do not intend this as a wider criticism of Barry, for I think that, aside from this point, his book is one of the better in its field. Instead, it demonstrates how Caudwell is widely perceived in the general field of literary and cultural theory, and how disparaging appraisals are perpetuated.
- 5 Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 3; Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1976), pp. 23-4, 54-5.
- 6 David Forgacs, "Marxist Literary Theories", in *Modern Literary Theory: A Comparative Introduction*, Ann Jefferson and David Robey, eds (London: B. T. Batsford, 1986), pp. 166-203; Moyra Haslett, *Marxist Literary and Cultural Theories* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000), p. 19.
- 7 E. P. Thompson, "Christopher Caudwell", in *Critical Inquiry*, 21 (Winter 1995), pp. 305-53 (p. 306, 353). This is a reprint of an essay that was first published in 1977.

- 8 Christopher Caudwell, *Illusion and Reality* (New York: International Publishers, 1955; first published 1937); *Studies in a Dying Culture* (London: John Lane, 1938); *Further Studies in a Dying Culture*, (London: John Lane, 1949); *The Crisis in Physics* (London: John Lane, 1939); *Romance and Realism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970).
- 9 See Thompson, "Christopher Caudwell", p. 313.
- 10 Robert Sullivan, *Christopher Caudwell* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 77.
- 11 *Illusion and Reality*, p. 18.
- 12 *Illusion and Reality*, p. 13.
- 13 Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, eds, *Political Shakespeare: Essays in cultural materialism*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. viii.
- 14 Raymond Williams, "Afterword", in Dollimore and Sinfield, *Political Shakespeare*, p. 289.
- 15 *Illusion and Reality*, p. 86.
- 16 *Illusion and Reality*, p. 101, 103.
- 17 *Illusion and Reality*, p. 126.
- 18 *Illusion and Reality*, p. 104.
- 19 For the best known example of this argument, see Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*.
- 20 T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (London: Faber, 1961; first published 1932), p. 287.
- 21 Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 288.
- 22 It should be noted that, while Eliot was probably not familiar with Caudwell's work, he did in fact see his critical project as competing with the critical projects of other Marxists, referring to them as worthy adversaries and devoting, as Bernard Bergonzi remarked in his *T. S. Eliot* (New York: Macmillan, 1978), p. 125, a "remarkable amount of space to discussing the work of Marxist writers".
- 23 For discussion of the shifts in Williams's critical evaluation of Caudwell, see John Higgins, *Raymond Williams: Literature, Marxism and Cultural Materialism* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 100-24.
- 24 Caudwell, *Studies and Further Studies in a Dying Culture*, Sol Yurick, ed. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971); p. 7.
- 25 *Studies and Further Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 13, 29.
- 26 Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology*, p. 21.
- 27 *Criticism and Ideology*, p. 7.
- 28 Francis Mulhern, "The Marxist Aesthetics of Christopher Caudwell", in *New Left Review*, 85 (May/June 1974), pp. 37-58 (p. 58).
- 29 See Sullivan, *Christopher Caudwell*; and Christopher Pawling, *Christopher Caudwell: Towards a Dialectical Theory of Literature* (New York: St. Martin's, 1989). David N. Margolies wrote a monograph on Caudwell, entitled *The Function of Literature: A Study of Christopher Caudwell's Aesthetics* (London:

- Lawrence & Wishart, 1969), which is a valuable study, despite its age. There is also a chapter on Caudwell by Michael Draper, "Christopher Caudwell's Illusions", in *The 1930s: A Challenge to Orthodoxy*, John Lucas, ed. (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1978), pp. 78-102.
- 30 Thompson, "Christopher Caudwell", pp. 312-3.
 - 31 Thompson, "Christopher Caudwell", pp. 307-8.
 - 32 Thompson, "Christopher Caudwell", pp. 328-9.
 - 33 Leonard Jackson, *The Dematerialisation of Karl Marx* (London: Longman, 1994).
 - 34 *The Dematerialisation of Karl Marx*, pp. 127-8.
 - 35 *The Dematerialisation of Karl Marx*, p. 134.