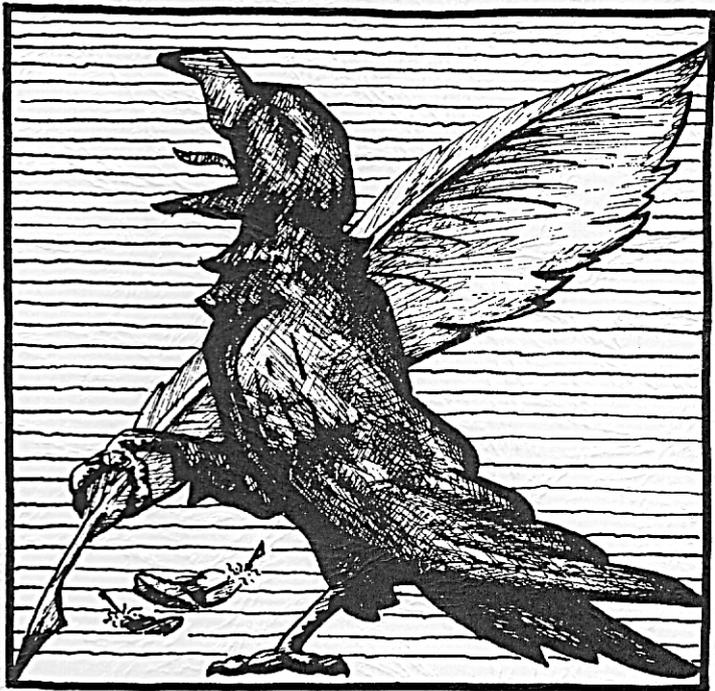


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About anyone so great as Shakespeare, it is probable that we can never be right; and if we can never be right, it is better that we should from time to time change our way of being wrong.

— T. S. Eliot

What we have to do is to be forever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions.

— Walter Pater

The problems (of the arts) are always indefinite, the results are always debatable, and the final approval always uncertain.

— Paul Valery

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Paul Ramsey: A Tribute

Paul Ramsey was a propelling force behind *The Upstart Crow* even before it was a glimmer in founding editor's Bill Bennett's eye. In preparing to write this tribute to Paul in honor of his recent retirement from the Department of English at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, I looked over the final notes Bill had jotted down about his beloved journal while he recuperated from a heart operation in a hospital bed. These notes appear in a copy of volume IV, certainly the fattest and finest issue he lived to see published, with contributions by Gary Schmidgall, Paul Gaudet, Robert J. Lordi, and G. M. Pinciss. In his meticulously correct handwriting he literally tore apart everything about the journal from its format and impressive contents to the negligible blemishes for which he held himself totally responsible and perpetually reprehensible. Even the cover was torn off. No editor I know dares to scrutinize his or her latest newborn so severely in the hopes of producing superior issue next gestation. There was one exception to this almost masochistic display of excoriation. Next to Paul Ramsey's name in the table of contents he wrote—most probably for me and all his Associate Editors who would survive to realize his quixotic dream—"Paul Ramsey, an editor of this magazine since the beginning. Publish everything he sends us."

Luckily for us, Paul Ramsey has indeed been contributing his editorial skills, essays, poetry, reputation, moral support and wonderful sense of humor to *The Upstart Crow* since its fledgling flight in 1977. I recommend each and every piece published for your consideration beginning with "*Othello: The Logic of Damnation*," in volume I. Paul's version of Sonnet 126 from his book on the sonnets, *The Fickle Glass*, appears along with two brief articles, "Of Truth: Self-Reflexiveness in Shakespeare's Sonnets and Plays" and "Denying Denial" in volume IV. Volume V, Bill's memorial issue, saw the publication of "Two Elegies for William E. Bennett" and the article, "Darkness Lightened: A. L. Rowse's Dark Lady Once More." And finally, in this present volume of tribute, two more brief poems appear along with his important article, "The Literary Evidence for Shakespeare as Hand D in the Manuscript Play *Sir Thomas More*."

Paul was born in Atlanta, Georgia. He took his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota. He has taught as a Visiting

Professor at Cornell University and the University of Rochester and was until his recent retirement Poet-in-Residence and Guerry Professor of English at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Paul has been Research Fellow at the Folger Library, the Newberry Library and Yale University. He has published translations from Greek, Latin, Italian and Japanese. Some five hundred of Paul's poems have appeared in over one hundred anthologies and periodicals including *Georgia Review*, *Hudson Review*, *Minnesota Review*, *Poetry*, *Shenandoah*, and *Southern Review*. He has been recorded reading his poetry in the Library of Congress and the Spoken Arts series. In addition to seven anthologies of his own poetry, Paul has published four books of scholarship and criticism to date including *The Art of John Dryden* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1969) and *The Fickle Glass: A Study of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (New York: AMS Press, 1979). Some fifty scholarly essays have appeared over the years in journals such as *Essays in Criticism*, *Sewanee Review*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, and *Studies in Philology*. In great demand as a lecturer, Paul has given over one hundred readings and presentations throughout the United States. Paul is married to artist Bets Ramsey and both are attempting to enjoy a retirement that Paul claims is busier than full time teaching. "We plan to remedy that soon," Paul writes.

We dedicate this volume of *The Upstart Crow* to Paul Ramsey who remains, next to founding editor Bill Bennett himself, first among the dedicated "Crow-nies" who bring you this journal annually.

James R. Andreas
Editor

Two Poems by Paul Ramsey

Commentary on Shakespeare's Sonnets

The heart is a memorandum book, Shakespeare insisted.
What did it remember, triangulated and in pain?
It tried to tell us, grandly and intricately,
And truly, and truly in pain.

On Reading the Alvechurch Parish Register, 16th Century

A "lame walking man" died,
One winter day,
In that far cold.

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

The Aspiring Mind of the King's Man by Kay Stockholder

The conception of the English Renaissance as a battleground between a Christian humanist refurbishing of the “great structure of unified, ordered and symmetrical thought built under the direction of Thomas Aquinas” and an anti-authoritarian and anti-moralistic challenge to that orthodoxy was advanced by Hiram Haydn in *The Counter-Renaissance*.¹ Despite Haydn’s monumental study of the naturalistic vision of such thinkers as Montaigne and Machiavelli, only more recent studies inspired by Foucault and post-structuralist theory have dislodged Tillyard’s hegemony over Renaissance literary studies. Haydn does not use the term individualism, nor does he discuss the ramifications of these conflicting values for conceptions of the person. However, his work provides a fruitful point of departure from which to see the ways in which a Machiavellian secular conception of power redefines the person. A conception of society as a divinely sanctioned hierarchy defines persons by their place in it, whereas Machiavelli’s conception drives a wedge between social roles and the persons who occupy them, making it possible to understand persons as capable of manipulating roles for their own purposes, as well as to understand roles as the objects of individual aspirations. This redefinition of the individual opens a conceptual space in which aspiring individuals can challenge the value system that would limit them to their inherited place in the social order.

New historicist critics, inspired by Foucault and post-structuralist theory, have given a new emphasis to Haydn’s view of the complex play of ideas and attitudes that characterized the time. They argue that the Elizabethan stage both manifested, and was a particularly apt vehicle for exploring, the conflicting views of the relation of the individual to the social hierarchy. Julia Briggs in *This Stage-Play World* argues that the stage was a particularly apt vehicle for exploring the problems of authenticity generated by the clash between a hierarchical conception which defined the person by his role in society, and an individualistic ethos which posited persons capable of manipulating roles for their own purposes. Quoting Stephen Gossen’s condemnation of the stage as a place for “swaggering about in the fine clothes of [one’s] betters,” she argues that the conditions and conventions of the theatre in themselves tended to subvert the social order that bred them.² Jonathan Goldberg concentrates on the problems inherent in the representation of authority

and the conflicting implications of James' "sense of himself as a royal actor."³ A more radical claim is made by Franco Moretti who sees the tragic form in itself disenfranchising the king of "ethical and rational legitimation. Having deconsecrated the king, it thus made it possible to decapitate him."⁴

These views of the Renaissance as a conflict-ridden age assume that dramatic works, whatever the conscious purposes of their authors, were necessarily embedded in the flux of conflicts and pressures that constituted their world. However, these critics, like their predecessors, conjure an image of Shakespeare either as one who calmly enshrined in his plays one version or another of philosophical conservatism or skepticism, or as a writer whose artistic impartiality transcended the specific issues of his age. Haydn gives priority to his "insistent interest in life as spectacle, rather than argument" (667), and Wilbur Sanders reads a Shakespeare who is above the stereotypes of his age, and who can, unlike Marlowe, assimilate creatively the "manifold and chaotic life around him."⁵ Robert Grudin finds Shakespeare's greatness in his ability to include the contrariety that characterizes his time.⁶ Jonathan Dollimore says that the concept of nature in *King Lear* "is interrogated and its multiple meanings, often contradictory, laid open,"⁷ a view close to that of Goldberg who argues that Shakespeare, by representing the ways in which the king represented himself, was "inevitably self-scrutinizing as well" (239). Stephen Greenblatt approaches an image of Shakespeare as touched by the conflict of his time in saying that as playwright Shakespeare was an Iago-like "master improviser" in a way that necessarily contradicted the hierarchical definition of selfhood his plays were intended to shore up. But Greenblatt obscures the issue when he adds that though Shakespeare, in contrast to Marlowe, was his culture's "dutiful servant," he was more interested in exploring the relations of power than in being an "unwavering apologist" for Tudor orthodoxy, and that his artistic subversion implied no "hidden malice" toward the views he supported.⁸

These comments, which glance at placing Shakespeare in relation to the conflicts that characterize his time, are made by critics who for the most part do not locate meaning on the site of authorial intention. In this essay I will assume that these conflicts that characterize the Renaissance were within as well as around Shakespeare. This assumption does not create an image of Shakespeare as standing aside from or above the issues raised in his plays, as though he could see the intellectual and social environment that produced him from a perspective like that we might have on his distant time. Rather my arguments will assume that his intentions were formed within the fray of his own time, and that his

work should be seen as expressing the ways in which he explored or struggled with the conflicting currents that shaped it. To think about Shakespeare in this way assumes that Shakespeare's conscious intentions, and the impulses that ran counter to them, both of which he imbibed from the conflicting currents of the world in which he lived, shaped and can be detected in his works and contribute to our sense of their meaningfulness. Statements about authorial intentions are no more or less capable of hard proof than are other critical assertions, and reasonable arguments can be based on observations of opposing value systems out of which sympathetic and unsympathetic characters are composed. The ways in which characters are placed in contexts that control the light in which they are seen, particularly when clear patterns emerge through many individual works as they do in Shakespeare's plays, provide clues to an author's controlling ideas. As well, drama that uses naturalistic or probable seeming characters allows one to discern the presence of conflicting impulses or beliefs that interfere with the articulation of conscious intention—when previously multi-dimensional characters in mid-stream become single-dimensional; when the multi-dimensional figures of one set of plays give way to single-dimensional characters who occupy structurally similar places in another set of plays; or when probable sequences of action are replaced by structurally analogous but improbable plots.

On the basis of an analysis of *The Tempest* and the relationship of its symbolic structure to motifs in the earlier and more naturalistic plays, I will argue that Shakespeare's trajectory was shaped by a finally unsuccessful effort to demonstrate that an individualistic ethos was destructive to every level of human life, and that only the hierarchical values of a traditional monarchy could preserve a viable form of human society. The arena in which Shakespeare confronted these issues was the theatre in which that ethos was most powerfully enshrined in Marlowe's overreaching protagonists. Shakespeare developed multi-dimensional figures to illustrate dramatically that self-seeking figures not only bring havoc to the body politic, but also violate the natural law inscribed in their own hearts. But as his individualistic figures acquired more rather than less theatrical force, he was driven in the course of time to abandon the naturalistic character portrayal in which he had sought a kind of proof that evil generated its own punishment.

Second, confronted with the force of his own portrayals of imperfect rulers, in *Richard II* and *King Lear* he had recourse to the doctrine of the king's two bodies to defend hierarchical principles while exploring the process by which imperfect men can be encouraged by the power they exercise to misuse it in the service of their individual aspirations.⁹ In this

way he drove a wedge between an ideal of authority that functioned as a conduit between the spiritual and political realms, and actual authority that was contaminated by individualistic aspirations. However, this strategy tended to erode the distinction between legitimate kings who made a mockery of the ideology of kingship and usurpers who, like player kings, wore false costumes and acted parts not their own. In this way the logic inherent in the mode by which Shakespeare sought to defend the principle of traditional hierarchy, despite the contamination of kings by individualistic passions, undermined the ideals he sought to confirm.

Finally, I will argue that both Shakespeare's penetration of the theatricality of power and his assertion of the ideal of traditional hierarchy culminated in *The Tempest* in ways which reveal that Shakespeare not only resorted to the individualistic ethos the play was designed to defeat, but also betrayed its author's suppressed affinity with aspirations at least as overreaching as those of Marlowe's heroes or his own villains.

Several large-scale contrasts between the plays in which Shakespeare incarnated this dramatic polemic and Marlowe's works suggest that Shakespeare defined himself and his dramatic enterprise against the individualist ethos dramatically most visible in Marlowe's protagonists, that Marlovian figures constituted a background against which Shakespeare shaped his plays, and perhaps that Marlowe himself was for Shakespeare a kind of silent antagonist to whom he addressed the orthodox polemic that shaped his dramatic project.

Despite the ambivalences that can be teased from the subtleties of the texts, Marlowe's characters are, as Greenblatt says, "virtually autochthonous."¹⁰ These figures do not arise from a familial nexus which their individualistic self-assertion violates, and the moral and hierarchical systems against which they pit themselves are not embodied in idealized characters. Rather, whatever ideals are expressed are voiced by figures who themselves share the vices they attribute to their grandly indifferent enemies, and who are so riddled with hatred and envy as to make Nietzsche's *resentement* seem an appropriate descriptive term. However Marlowe intended them to be judged, or however one may judge them, there is no doubt that his overreaching and Machiavellian protagonists are presented in such a way as to enable audiences to suspend moral condemnation of even their most outrageous acts, and to thrill to their sheer audaciousness. These powerful and conscienceless figures, like all tragic heroes, must suffer defeat in the end. But from Tamburlaine, who succumbs only to human mortality, to Faustus, who is Marlowe's closest approach to a Shakespearean figure,

none of them repents. While Marlowe's protagonists are at one with themselves, Shakespeare's dramas are constructed to depict the horrors that follow when his divided and tormented protagonists are tainted by the individualistic selfishness out of which he constructs his villains. From *As you Like It* to *Macbeth* and from *King Lear* to *The Tempest*, Shakespeare's characters are judged in terms of the hierarchical constraints and kin ties that they violate. No play includes a self-seeking villain who is not measured against a figure whose exemplary function derives from his or her self-definition in terms of and submission to a traditional hierarchical order.

Richard III, whose protagonist is Shakespeare's most Marlovian portrayal of the individualistic protagonist who challenges the limits of both the social and moral order, shows in a relatively simple form the dramatic devices by which Shakespeare throughout his plays would attempt to counter the dramatic persuasiveness of the amoral overreacher. Like Tamburlaine, Barabas or Faustus, Richard revels in his triumphs. His joy in his manipulative intelligence generates an alternative set of values as he triumphs over lesser characters who violate the morality they preach in condemning him. Unlike Richard, they place limits on their ruthless pursuit of power and privilege, yet their collaboration is both the condition of Richard's success and throws into relief the perverse courage of his single-mindedness. So seductive are Richard's wit and self-congratulation that Shakespeare in the last act abandons the relatively naturalistic mode and martial symbolic devices to offset his dramatic force. In the carefully balanced dream sequence Shakespeare constructs a theatrical argument that an evil doer will be punished by a level of his own nature that his evil has violated. When ghosts of his victims visit Richard, we understand that in assaulting the moral and social order he has also assaulted his conscience, the aspect of his nature that is part of the order he has attacked, and which, being injured, depletes his fighting energies.¹¹ Though Richmond's good conscience brings the forces of natural justice into the unconscious realm of dream where they transform right into might, his victory depends on Richard's unconscious collusion. The way in which the heavily symbolic action of the last act annuls the momentum of Richard's evil anticipates the relation of the late romances to the tragedies. It shows Shakespeare's difficulties in reconciling the demands of psychological naturalism to the project of dramatizing a psychological process by which divine justice manifests itself in defense of natural hierarchy.

Two major characteristics and concerns of Shakespeare's drama flow from the gap between the realistic and the symbolic modes of this play, both of which culminate in *The Tempest*. The first consists in those

portrayals of usurpers whose pangs of conscience diminish their pleasure in the fruits of their crimes. This theme appears in a minor key when Henry IV admits to an uneasy conscience before the "lineal honour" passes with the laundered crown to his son, and when Claudius' stolen crown momentarily loses its luster as he turns his eyes inward to the soul that he sees as a painted harlot. In these naturalistic portraits the pangs of conscience do not outweigh the joys of kingship.¹² Claudius' uneasy conscience is midway between the formulaic articulation of this motif in *Richard III* and the psychological depth at which Shakespeare replays the theme in *Macbeth*. Here Shakespeare illustrates the tormented conscience and the self-destructiveness of illicit ambition by portraying Macbeth's horror at his own deeds even as he contemplates and commits them. By endowing Macbeth with introspective consciousness Shakespeare obviates the need for a formulaic conclusion, such as he resorted to in *Richard III*. Macbeth himself enunciates the moral standards by which he is condemned, at the same time as the language of his desire has sufficient force to overwhelm his horror. Macbeth savours his own self-condemnation in a way that absorbs the moral standards by which he judges himself into the force of his own desire. In the intense conflict the desire and self-condemnation tend to fuse, giving the portrait its naturalistic force. Macbeth's horror becomes as exciting as his ambitions, with the consequence that the play's moral thrust pales against the magnitude of the self-tormenting figure. The tragic grandeur Macbeth thereby accrues creates an uneasy balance between revulsion from and fascination with evil.

After *Macbeth* Shakespeare abandoned the effort to envision conscience as an independent monitor of action. In *King Lear* Edgar is a self-appointed guardian of Gloucester's conscience and, somewhat improbably, inadvertently stimulates that of his brother. In *The Winter's Tale* the force of naturalistic character portrayal yields to ideology when it falls to Paulina to be the guardian and spiritual therapist of Leontes' conscience. She is a forerunner of Prospero, whose supreme power is exercised primarily through his ability to intervene in others' psychological mechanisms and activate their otherwise inert consciences. The persistence of this theme suggests that Shakespeare's intention was to prove, dramatically, that such overreachers not only bring disaster to others and come to a bad end, but also that in the process so deeply violate their own natures that sin itself triggers the process of the sinner's punishment.

The second mode by which Shakespeare attempted to overcome the dramatic force of individualistic characters was to embed them in a family nexus so that the most intimate of human ties are shown to be in

jeopardy from the violation of hierarchical constraints. Claudius' usurpation of a crown is associated with the sexual corruption that pervades the play and its protagonist's consciousness. Out of this combination of corrupt sexuality and corrupt authority Shakespeare creates his most evil figures and his most polarized worlds. In *Macbeth* an aura of erotic violence surrounds the regicide and permeates Macbeth's ambition, rendering it a polar opposite not only to an harmonious polity, but to normal procreation and the maternal nourishment represented by Duncan.¹³ Untoward ambition gathers to itself such deep violation of familial tenderness as to foreclose any argument. In *King Lear* Goneril, Regan and Edmund merge dramatically into a collective image of the political and personal consequences of hierarchical violation, corrupt sexuality joined to sadistic cruelty. Here the potential attractiveness of Edmund's delight in his villainy is not given sufficient dramatic scope to constitute a challenge to the play's moral vision, and the two sisters are prevented from generating such a challenge because they do not enjoy being themselves. Being doubles, their self-loathing appears in their competition with and hatred of each other which culminate in murder and suicide. Shakespeare relies on the dramatized physical violence perpetrated with hands rather than weapons to ground in his audience's bodily responses a revulsion from the outrage to hierarchy that their action also represents. However, like Iago in *Othello*, they waver between being psychologically plausible figures and symbolic representations of demonic evil invading sexuality, the family, the polity and the cosmos. Shakespeare counters their force by contrasting them to their symbolic opposites in a way that anticipates the more obviously allegorical romances. However, the greater the range of human passions he showed his overreachers perverting, the more substantial they became, and the less of ordinary humanity was left uncontaminated to flesh out and give dramatic force to the portrayals of their opposite numbers. Cordelia, like Desdemona before her, maintains the redeeming image of one whose actions flow from and manifest the correct hierarchical ordering of the deepest human feelings, but her portrait is too slight to bear its symbolic freight.

Shakespeare further amplified the corrosive powers of individualism by organizing these persistent themes around the issue of rule. From the early comedies to the late romances he filled his plays with kings and dukes, thereby fusing psychological to political issues in a way that rendered the subtleties and complexities of an ethos that used the family and the polity as models for each other, but he also rendered cataclysmic the dangers involved when his figures generated an

independent force that challenged the hierarchical values against which they were to be judged. His more naturalistic portrayals depict the powerful psychological forces that prevent actual kings from remaining uncontaminated by the ritual of reverence that celebrates the office. He shows that the conditions of royalty itself generate the weaknesses and failures of legitimate rulers, which in turn unleash the destructive forces represented in their antagonists and the depths of viciousness that the failure of authority empowers. *King Lear* follows *Richard II* in depicting the ways in which the doctrine of kingship, the force of which depends upon being staged by the king, blinds the king to his duties and deafens him to the voices that remind him that his body natural is not his body politic. At the same time as the vision of human virtue became more remote and insubstantial, the perceived need of a virtuous and wise ruler who could control and restrain otherwise chaotic human passions became more pressing. As Shakespeare's own creations made ordinary human imperfection seem increasingly antithetical to a conception of a viable human polity, Shakespeare resorted to more obviously symbolic character portrayal and improbable plots as a means to contain the individualistic energy with which he had inadvertently endowed them.¹⁴

Shakespeare's exploration of these issues culminates in *The Tempest*, a play which constitutes his answer to Marlowe's association in Dr. Faustus of intellectual aspiration with the diabolic. Here he undertook to demonstrate that correctly exercised authority could, at best, irradiate the innermost passions of those subject to it, and, at worst, contain if not transform the disorderly passions that contend against it. He endowed his protagonist with intellectual and magical powers by which he could stage a model of a redeemed humanity and polity. However, the supernatural setting in which Shakespeare articulated this model rendered the possibility of its actual embodiment still more remote, and this culminating exploration of the ways in which the world is like a stage also revealed the subversive potential of the intellectual or magical powers which he brought into play in order to shore up the claims of traditional order.

Prospero's magical powers, the fruit of his secret studies, initially are associated with his power to control his own and others' passions. He and Miranda are left to the mercy of the stormy elements that in *King Lear* represent the passions unleashed by Lear's catastrophic misunderstanding of his power. Prospero demonstrates his power to control those passions when the winds and seas amongst which he and Miranda are set adrift, doing them "but loving wrong," guide their rudderless boat to the safe haven of the island. On the island Prospero's control of

self-seeking passions empowers him to release Ariel, the spirit of random beneficence that inhabits the four elements, from Sycorax's spell. With Ariel at his disposal, and able to employ his occult knowledge to understand, though not control, the powers of Fortune, Prospero brings to his island the flattened versions of the individualistic figures who challenged right rule throughout the previous plays. In the midst of the sea-storm by which Prospero brings his enemies to his shores, the lowly Boatswain illustrates and declares the impotence of hierarchical authority. Irritated with its interference, he asks the court party, "what care these roarers for the name of King?" Since these roarers do care for the name of Prospero, the scene's lesson is that the abuse of hierarchical power renders it impotent to deal with the resulting chaos. Disaster can be averted only by a more potent and higher authority derived from transcendent wisdom. Interpreting his power over passions as entitlement to power over others, Prospero casts himself as their spiritual healer and as such adopts strategies like those that might be used by a modern therapist.

His irascibility toward Ariel and Miranda suggests the stress involved for one who assumes the power to act for the good of others without their consent. In this way the exercise of more than human power is shown to take its human toll at the same time as the play's structure affirms Prospero's prerogative to arrange the circumstances that will allow his subjects to re-enact the misdeeds that had previously resulted in Prospero's banishment. As the power behind the scenes, he elicits and then frustrates their aspirations for illegitimate power, confronts them with the illusory nature of their ill-gotten gains, and instructs them in the moral nature of the universe. Having led them through mazes that represent their own corrupt desires, Ariel deceives their senses with a lavish banquet which will not satisfy their appetites. This scene becomes an emblematic version of the naturalistic depiction of Macbeth's deprivation when, having gorged his appetite for power, he finds that he has "supped full of horrors." Ariel follows this illustration of the ultimate delusions involved in worldly goals with a lecture on the way in which a moral universe makes conscience its instrument. The voices of Ariel and the other spirits, as "ministers of Fate," combine a sense of the historical past with that of a personal unconscious when they inform Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio that contrary to appearances, wrongdoing is not forgotten, but has unending consequences that, "delaying not forgetting," from the "deep backward and abysm of time" will haunt "men of sin."

Though obscured within the comic mode, the emotionally immediate concomitants of political violation are depicted in the parallel action

of the Caliban plot. The drunkenness of Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo represents a threat to good order more fundamental than evil intent. As Trinculo says, "if th'other two be brain'd like us, the state totters" (III. ii. 6). Their drunkenness—like that of the carousing Danes, Duncan's drunken grooms, or the tipsy Cassio—symbolizes the power of passions to depose the intellectual faculty. They threaten Prospero's intellectual authority when they plan to steal his books. Just as in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, sexual disorder is associated with the violation of political order, so their subversion of the intellect is associated with disordered sexual passions, both in Caliban's previous attempt on Miranda and his offer of her to Stephano. The two plots together constitute dramatic images of the inextricably intertwined realms of intellectual, sexual and political disorder.

This overarching structure is articulated to demonstrate the process by which Prospero brings past crimes to the light of day, punishes them in such a way as to transform the consciences of those who perpetrated them, and creates a perfectly ordered polity. This second aspect of his project Prospero accomplishes through Ferdinand and Miranda. Ferdinand demonstrates his natural virtue by perceiving the island's beauty and by falling in love with the chaste and compassionate Miranda. In loving her, he loves the Good. But the taint that even this best of men must carry from the world of power politics appears both in his challenge to Prospero's power and in his readiness to announce himself as "Naples." Prospero punishes this nascent aspiration by reducing Ferdinand's nerves "to their infancy," forcing him to be a Caliban-like "log-man." But, unlike Caliban, and unlike Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, Ferdinand can restrain the flesh which would otherwise sully the good that he loves. When he accepts freely the servitude Prospero forces on him, he illustrates his virtuous capacity to submit to right authority as a precondition to exercising it. Ferdinand proves himself a suitably pure mate for Miranda when, witnessing the masque, he exclaims, "So rare a wond'ered father and a wise / Makes this place paradise" (IV. i. 122-23), and Prospero accomplishes his final purpose by sending this now Neo-platonically pure, but dramatically thin, couple back to the ordinary world to rule over a redeemed Naples.¹⁵

These are Prospero's public purposes. Shakespeare makes it abundantly clear that he intends to characterize Prospero as one who selflessly exhausts himself in rectifying the world. Both the play's structure and its relation to those that precede it point to Shakespeare's conception of Prospero as a dramatic incarnation of a pure and potent authority able to impose correct order on both passions and polity. However, this schema is undermined in several ways.¹⁶ First, the sheer

celebration of a power that exceeds any aspired to by a Marlovian protagonist goes beyond what is required by Prospero's overt purposes and gives the lie to his self-description as a "poor man" for whom his library was "dukedom large enough" (I. ii. 109-10). This quality permeates the play from the first scene in which the elements obey his will to Prospero's declaration that,

. . . to the dread, rattling thunder
 Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
 With his own bolt; the strong-bas'd promontory
 Have I made shake and by the spurs pluck'd up
 The pine and cedar. Graves at my command
 Have wak'd their sleepers, op'd and let 'em forth
 By my so potent art. . . .

(V. i. 44-50)¹⁷

Though Prospero's exultation emphasizes his righteousness in willingly surrendering his mastery, in its tone and images it resembles nothing on the Elizabethan stage so much as it does the "high astounding terms" of Tamburlaine who, "affecting thoughts coequal with the clouds" declares that he holds "the Fates bound fast in iron chains," that "Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven" to keep him safe, and that his host "with their weight shall make the mountains quake, / Even as when windy exhalations, / Fighting for passage, tilt within the earth" (I. ii. 65, 174, 180).¹⁸

Shakespeare clearly wants to domesticate and spiritualize such power in the service of harmonious rule, but the vision of such rule is subtly undermined within the play. First, Shakespeare can express his vision of harmonious rule that Ferdinand and Miranda are to bring to Milan and Naples only through Prospero's supernatural powers. But in having Prospero bury his book and drown his staff, Shakespeare subtly acknowledges that this transcendent vision cannot be translated to a real world, and Prospero's world-weariness suggests the limits to the human capacity to wield the authority that alone makes such a vision possible. If ideal authority can be glimpsed only through some magical or spiritual transcendence that in principle cannot be translated to a real world, then legitimate authority will always share in the corruption of those who challenge it. And if, in addition, catastrophic corruption is seen to flow from ordinary and inevitable human imperfection, then the grounds on which to defend hierarchy become fragile, and the case is weakened against the individualist aspirations to which Marlowe had lent such dramatic force.¹⁹

The second way in which the play betrays the contradictions at the

heart of Shakespeare's efforts to defend hierarchy is more serious, for if it can be shown that both Prospero and his creator share covertly in the individualistic aspirations their art was designed to condemn, then the ideal itself, apart from its practicality, is more deeply called into question. Leaving his creator aside for the moment, if one steps outside of the play's ideological assumptions rather than reading from within them, many of its aspects reveal that Prospero's power is itself predicated on the very individualism he exercises it to control. A convenient way to remove oneself from the play's magic is to regard that which is presented as supernatural as extrapolated from the natural. Since, as I suggested above, Prospero's techniques for the spiritual reformation of the other figures are analogous to those by which a modern therapist might lead his or her patient to self-understanding, his magical powers can be thought of as analogous to those by which a therapist manipulates the therapeutic situation in such a way as to cause his or her patient to re-experience past emotional forms. However, as the psychoanalytic theory of counter-transference recognizes, the therapist who assumes the right to manipulate others for their own good is in danger of deviously gratifying his own desires at the patient's expense. Prospero approaches a recognition of this possibility (one that could threaten to erode the distinction between his powers and those of Sycorax) when in response to Ariel's implied rebuke he forgoes a desire for revenge that he never acknowledged having. However, a more vital way in which Prospero serves his own interests comes into focus when his story is seen in the light that is cast backwards from Gonzalo's musing comment in the concluding sequence, "Was Milan thrust from Milan, that his issue / Should become Kings of Naples?" (V. i. 5-6).

Gonzalo's words suggest a naturalistic reading of Prospero's power in which Prospero has not only fulfilled what is in his own terms a legitimate aspiration to regain his dukedom, but has also in his own terms illegitimately pitted his personal power against the legitimate authority of the king in order to place his own issue on the throne. Seen in this way, Prospero's celebration of his power shows that his claim to a supernatural moral authority both serves and disguises his own desires for the worldly goals that he condemns. Prospero's pride in himself and his rivalry with Alonso are implicit when Prospero tells Miranda that in giving his power to Antonio, his state was "of all the signories . . . the first / And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed / In dignity, and for the liberal Arts / Without a parallel" (I. ii. 72-75). Prospero opposes his personal prestige to Alonso's power as king when he says that "this King of Naples" was "an enemy / To me inveterate" (I. ii. 121-2). The past enmity goes unexplained, but sketches a relationship something

like that between Oliver and Orlando in *As You Like It*. Duke Prospero assumes that King Alonso resents the fact that Prospero, his political inferior, can claim personal accomplishments greater than his own. With this shadowy fraternal, or quasi-filial, competition and resentment in the background, Prospero's withdrawal to pursue his secret studies becomes part of a strategy by which he translates his intellectual superiority into moral authority. He asserts that authority over Alonso by stage managing Antonio's seduction of Sebastian into an attempt on Alonso's life. Should that attempt not also have been prevented by Prospero's magic which makes him Alonso's benefactor, it would, by freeing Milan from Naples' power, have accomplished what Prospero by other means later brings to pass. Much like Edgar in *King Lear*, Prospero articulates their punishment as a kind of therapeutic education, casting himself as moral schoolmaster and protector of traditional order. Yet in the process his power has brought him as fully satisfying a revenge for past wrongs as could be desired. Neither Malvolio's nor Lear's thirst for revenge could be better quenched than by hearing from their persecutors what Prospero hears from Alonso:

. . . O, it is monstrous, monstrous!
 Me thought the billows spoke, and told me of it;
 The winds did sing it to me; and the thunder
 That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounc'd
 The name of Prosper; it did bass my trespass.
 Therefore my son i'th'ooze is bedded; and
 I'll seek him deeper than e'er plummet sounded,
 And with him there lie mudded.

(III. iii. 95-102)

When Prospero has assembled the court party and is ready to transform their "reasonable shore" that "lies foul and muddy" with the clear water of the higher reason represented by his own person, he has reversed the ordinary terms of reality and illusion, being himself the reality behind the illusions that constituted the reality for those on his island. In this way he enjoys a veritable feast of power even while denying the desire for it. As magus he raises the dead, first himself as Duke of Milan, then Ferdinand and Miranda, both of whom were in different ways "tempest lost." Like Orlando, he has the pleasure of hearing his hierarchical superior both beg his pardon and resign his dukedom, and the greater pleasure of hearing Gonzalo draw the conclusion that was implicit when Prospero told Miranda that all he did on the island was done for her. Macbeth had to commit regicide to gain a throne, and then suffered a "barren scepter." Prospero, having made

his ambition virtuous by converting it into the moral righteousness that gives him more than kingly sway, also assures the royalty of his issue.

With the help of his “tricksy spirit,” Ariel, Prospero is able to win this trickster’s victory because of the slippage between the politics of Italian duchies and the symbolism of Elizabethan rule. In the latter, a king’s rightful dominion over a duke makes the initial crime not Naples’ supremacy over Milan, but Prospero’s refusal to be a submissive Ferdinand. Prospero justifies his supremacy to Naples on the grounds of his superior knowledge and wisdom, a claim expressed through Ferdinand who says that Miranda “is daughter to this famous Duke of Milan, / Of whom so often I have heard renown, / But never saw before” (V. i. 192-4). But to base authority on personal wisdom or prowess violates the sanctity of inherited and traditional hierarchical order that so much of Shakespeare’s drama struggles to maintain. Though natural intelligence may seem better to qualify one for authority than Edmund’s natural lustiness, Prospero’s claim also opposes his personal worth and achievements to traditional entitlement. The logic inherent in the play’s plot subverts Prospero’s claim to transcendent wisdom in a way that allows us to see him as one who unconsciously shares the aspirations of his antagonists. The figure who more than any other asserts the values of hierarchy against those of individualistic aspiration, Prospero has an underlying kinship with the Faustian rebel. The fact that Shakespeare has recourse to a figure who as the defender of the principle of hierarchy incorporates the individualistic value system he condemns shows his failure to answer the individualistic challenge to traditional values.

It does not necessarily follow from this argument about the covert motivations that the play allows us to attribute to Prospero that Shakespeare also unconsciously undermined the values he consciously espoused. But there are strong reasons to suppose that he did so. As I have argued from the play’s structure, Shakespeare did not intend to portray Prospero as a Marlovian over-reacher, but rather expressed in him the values that organized his previous dramatic worlds. The discussion of themes in the previous plays indicates that the magical powers with which Shakespeare endowed Prospero were conceived as the culmination of his increasingly strenuous efforts to contain the energy of his individualistic antagonists. In previous plays Shakespeare had controlled such figures by creating characters who exercised some of his own power to shape events: Rosalind, Duke Vincentio, Edgar or Paulina. But he endowed Prospero with more of his own power over his staged worlds than he had any other of his dramatic creations, and in the process implied an analogy between what Prospero is to his world and

what Shakespeare is to him and to all his creations. That analogy gives interpretative encouragement to suppose that in Prospero Shakespeare represented not only his own values, but also himself as playwright—as maker and manipulator of worlds. This strong analogy not only makes it reasonable to suppose that Shakespeare identified with his protagonist; it also indicates that in endowing Prospero with his own conscious intentions, Shakespeare may inadvertently have endowed him with unacknowledged aspirations of his own that were at cross purposes to his espoused values.

In what now appears a naïve way, early interpreters of the play saw in Prospero's farewell to his magic the playwright's farewell to the stage. A more complex version of this identification is that in Prospero's abandonment of his magic Shakespeare acknowledged the limits of art's transforming power.²⁰ My reading of *The Tempest* adds a different dimension to that identification. For in a final twist to Shakespeare's metaphorical equation of the world with a stage, Prospero achieved his supreme power by attributing greater ontological status to his island world than to the real world of Naples and Milan. An alternate way to naturalize Prospero's supernatural power is to see it as an extrapolation of his creator's power to stage manage what his characters experience as reality. The island on which Prospero is king is the analogue to the stage over which Shakespeare reigns, and the logic of the analogy is one that might well press Shakespeare toward attributing to his dramatic creations a similar ontological superiority to the worlds they represented, and to himself as poet and dramatist a power superior to that of both stage and real kings.

I am not suggesting that Shakespeare would have made such a claim for himself. Indeed, as I have illustrated, such a claim would shatter the values that had structured his artistic enterprise. But I am arguing that the ideas with which he shored up traditional claims of hierarchy contained within them their own antithesis. However, the same antithetical ideas had an authentic place and appeared in a different light in another aspect of Renaissance discourse that both contributed to the shaping of Prospero and to the subversion of Shakespeare's theatrical argument. The Neo-platonic world view that is incorporated into the vision of the perfect polity over which Ferdinand and Miranda will reign was mediated through Sidney's *Defense of Poetry*. In Sidney's view the poet's imagination creates fictions that combine the ideal with the particular as neither philosophy nor history can. It is constituted by and reveals in its works the same laws that were obscurely embedded by God in His creation. The fiction thereby becomes a microcosm that makes visible, as mirrors make visible our

faces, what is obscured from us in the macrocosm we inhabit. As Stephen Orgel demonstrates, this mode of thought was used by Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones to assist King James in staging his conception of his kingship as divinely ordained.²¹ Logically, it could as easily be used to make the poet, whose assistance the King enlisted, his competitor for the exalted honours.²² Though claiming divine sanction, the king's entitlement is known by lineal descent and enshrined in church ritual, but the poet's imagination figures forth wisdom which for Shakespeare ultimately distinguishes a counterfeit from a real monarch. Shakespeare's defense of hierarchy and his conception of his plays as microcosms each gives the other its most definitive expression in *The Tempest*. But as Prospero's powers are generated and flourish outside of social roles and without the sanction of traditional authority, so do a poet's. Shakespeare's identification of his art with Prospero's would covertly endorse the individualistic aspirations that were rendered villainous within the orthodox value system from which Prospero had been generated.

In his previous dramatic worlds Shakespeare played on the metaphorical links between his stage and the world to comment in elaborate and subtle ways on the strategies of power. Our world is like a stage in that our life is brief, in that we play different roles at different times, and in that it is a microcosm for the cosmic macrocosm. It is a stage too in that men, like actors, assume disguises, wear clothing not their own, and thus play roles and claim privilege to which they are not entitled by their assigned place in the hierarchy. However, Shakespeare also perceived that real and feigned kings alike play roles. This is clear from Richard II's wonder at his loss of identity once he is bereft of his crown, and from *Henry IV*, in which Prince Hal knows that he must stage himself in order successfully to defend the throne he inherits from his father. In *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play* Anne Righter argued for Shakespeare's uniqueness in his emphasis on the comparison of an imperfectly virtuous ruler to an actor wearing borrowed robes.²³ The force and fear of that perception pervade *King Lear*, in which the reality of the "bare forked animal" beneath all roles challenges the abstractions on which the concept of legitimate power is based. *The Tempest* is most deeply conceived within the metaphorical comparison of the stage to the world. It explicitly confronts the questions raised when the already thin line between real and feigned roles begins to blur, and the conceptual distinction between the throne on which a king sits and that on which sits an actor playing the king becomes difficult to discern.

In *The Tempest* Shakespeare wants to rescue the difference between real and feigned roles by defining real kingship as the embodiment of a

transcendent ideal.²⁴ In the scene that brings together all the motifs of false clothing and usurped power that pervade his earlier worlds, Shakespeare most forcefully dramatizes this idealization of power. Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo are diverted from Prospero's cell and his magical books by a line of rich costumes, the "trumpery" with which Prospero directed Ariel to distract them. These rich costumes both represent and are the borrowed clothing in which Shakespeare's actors as feigned kings represent feigned kings.²⁵ The "glistening apparel" in which power stages itself can be stolen, lost, and worn by actors on the micro- or macrocosmic stage. When the lowly Caliban berates his companions for being distracted by these costumes, Shakespeare asserts that true authority cannot be counterfeited. Prospero's books, synonymous with his head or intelligence, into which Caliban would have Stephano "knock a nail," represent that power. As Prospero's intelligence determines who shall wear the costumes, making him superior to those whose power resides only in clothing, so Shakespeare's intelligence which cannot be counterfeited governs the use of his stage costumes. But the distinction between the role playing of usurpers and imperfect kings has already been eroded, leaving a real king defined as one who perfectly fulfills the abstract ideal of authority. Shakespeare in *King Lear* had dramatically illustrated the ways in which the very conditions of kingship, the necessity that power stage itself in order to remain itself, generate the psychological process by which royal clothing corrupts the man who wears it. Therefore, the implied analogy renders the dramatist a more perfect mediator of ideal authority than the player kings whom he represents on his stage. If seen by the court party, Prospero in his magical garments would be acknowledged by them to be more real than his magically induced illusions which represented the illusions that are mistaken for reality in Naples and Milan. Once again, the analogy drawn to its logical conclusion could give Shakespeare's dramatic representation of ideal authority claim to an ontological superiority over real kingdoms. And to the obvious objection that the greater permanence of courts and kings renders them more real than the ephemeral two-hour traffic of stage plays, Shakespeare and Prospero have already provided an answer. When Prospero disperses the marriage masque he says that the actor-spirits

Are melted into air, into thin air:
 And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
 The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
 And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,

Leave not a rack behind.

(IV. i. 151-57)

The ephemeral masque claims at least equality with the created universe, and could be seen as superior to it in that it becomes a figure that reveals the play-like ephemeral nature of that which is assumed to be real. Similarly, the dramatist who writes plays for the Globe theatre, a microcosm of the "great Globe," stands above both his stage kings and the counterfeit, because corrupt, kings they represent. In *The Tempest* Shakespeare pits the claims of imperfectly manifested hierarchical authority against the power of individual effort and talent, Prospero's magical power, or the playwright's theatrical genius. It would not be unlikely that the poet who in Marlovian tones declaimed that "Not marble, nor the gilded monuments of princes / Shall outlive this powerful rhyme" might have claimed, more outrageously for the time, a similar grandeur for his plays.²⁶

Shakespeare may have separated his private person from his role as dramatist, or poet-maker, as figured in Prospero, just as the King was expected to remember that his honours, privileges and powers were due to his body politic, rather than to his body natural. But it would be more probable that Shakespeare did not feel the loving submissiveness to his monarch that he rendered in Kent. Rather, one who portrayed in the figures of Richard II and King Lear the psychological difficulties of maintaining that separation might find in his soul more rebellious passions than his ideology accommodated. The Edmund-like version of natural law implicit in Tamburlaine's declaration that "Nature, that fram'd us of four elements / Warring within our breasts for regiment, / Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds" may have echoed in his memory when from his lowly place at the court at which his plays were performed he saw the "sweet fruition of an earthly crown" (II. v. 58-60, 69). Confronted with the contrast between the "swelling act / Of the imperial theme" and "a bare forked animal," dressed in "a little brief authority," he may have been troubled with frustrated if dim aspirations for honours and powers more exalted than a purchased coat of arms or the best house in Stratford.

Shakespeare may have shrunk from fully realizing the implications that could be drawn from his having identified his theatrical art with Prospero's magical art. As well, he may have intuited that the conceptual framework at his disposal could not provide a conclusive response to the individualist challenge to traditional authority and values that Marlowe had represented in his plays. He may have suffered the fatigue that he attributed to Prospero, who will return to

Milan with every third thought on the grave. Reminiscent of Macbeth's emptied inner world, the ashen weariness of the Epilogue embraces both Prospero, the actor who plays Prospero, and by implication the playwright creator:

Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
 And what strength I have's mine own,
 Which is most faint: now 'tis true,
 I must be here confin'd by you,
 Or sent to Naples. Let me not,
 Since I have my dukedom got,
 And pardon'd the deceiver, dwell
 In this bare island by your spell;
 But release me from my bands
 With the help of your good hands:
 Gentle breath of yours my sails
 Must fill or else my project fails,
 Which was to please. Now I want
 Spirits to enforce, art to enchant;
 Unless I be reliev'd by prayer,
 Which pierces so, that it assaults
 Mercy itself, and frees all faults.
 As you from crimes would pardon'd be,
 Let your indulgence set me free.

Prospero has defined his power and control within the ideology of beneficent magic, but only at the cost of a depleted energy has he contained "the deceiver." In that fatigue the image of the island transforms into and overlaps with the image of the stage, and the image of the London actor who plays Prospero overlays that of the island magus. When the merged figure says "I must be here confined by you, / Or sent to Naples," the "here" equates the bare stage on which he stands to the bare island on which Prospero exercised his power. As well, the actor's power, and by implication the dramatist's whose words the actor speaks, merges with Prospero's magical power to control the denizens of the island. The speaker feels confined to the barren island unless he can enter into the marriage celebration in Naples, and confined to the stage unless swept into a celebration of the performance. Since nothing on the bare island can release him from his isolation, he wishes instead for the ritual of audience applause to release him from the bare stage. There being no corresponding term to complete the analogy with the island, the speaker, now in Prospero's voice, equates the audience's applause with his power to send the others to Naples. By implication he now gives the audience the powers that belonged to Prospero on the island, and deviously identifies himself with the sinners whose reformation or

containment he, as Prospero, has effected. Unless released by applause, his ending will be despair like that from which he saved the court party when he confronted them with images to illustrate the illusory nature of worldly power and pleasure. With his actor face most visible, by equating himself with the island sinners, he empowers the audience to give him the fame as actor and playwright that will release him from the despair of the barren island stage. But the desire for applause and consequent fame hovers dangerously close to the worldly goals criminally pursued by Antonio and Sebastian and their more successful predecessors. Therefore, he quickly converts the magical power he has attributed to the audience's applause to its prayers, for which he begs instead. The combined figure of actor, playwright and Prospero who speaks the Epilogue, almost makes explicit that Shakespeare's project has failed, and that the energy used in defense of hierarchical values arose from the secret overweening aspirations of a lowly player, not far removed from Faustus' "peasant stock."

The University of British Columbia

Notes

¹Hiram Haydn, *The Counter-Renaissance* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1950) p. 67.

²Julia Briggs, *This Stage Play World: English Literature and its Background, 1580-1625* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983), p.164. Earlier, Anne Righter in *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962) focusing more particularly on Shakespeare, argued that the play metaphor "fixed the essential quality" of the Elizabethan Age (p. 76), and not only structured the plays, but also reminded the audience of the illusion within ordinary life, and lent dignity to the theatre, as well as to the drama as a form. Louis Adrian Montrose in "The Purpose of Playing: Reflections on a Shakespearean Anthropology," *Helios*, n.s., 7 (1980), 53-76, discusses the self-reflexivity of the stage metaphor as a response to the attack on the theatre rather than an aspect of aestheticism.

³Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and Their Contemporaries* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1983), p. 165.

⁴Franco Moretti, "'A Huge Eclipse': Tragic Form and the Deconsecration of Sovereignty," *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Norman, Oklahoma: Pilgrim Books, 1982), 7-40. p. 8.

⁵Wilbur Sanders, *The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1968), p. 326.

⁶Robert Grudin, *Mighty Opposites: Shakespeare and Renaissance Contrariety* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1979), p. 91.

⁷Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1984), pp. 190-201.

⁸Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 253-54. In this Greenblatt is in substantial agreement with Hayden who says that Shakespeare's greatness lay in his capacity to embody in his dramas the disputes of the age, and finds his essential humanism modified by a "deeper reservoir of passion" (p. 67).

⁹See Ernst Kantorowicz's discussion in *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), p. 41, on the ways in which Richard II manifests the stresses within "the king's twin-born being."

¹⁰Greenblatt, p. 212. Dollimore argues that the Renaissance did not generate individualism, but rather that the Jacobean malcontent was "a prototype of the modern decentered subject, the bearer of a subjectivity which is not the antithesis of social process but its focus, in particular the focus of political, social and ideological contradiction" (p. 50). Despite his cogent analysis of the age's contradictory impulses, his argument that the plays allow us to see the social construction of the self does not justify his conclusion that the dramatists were untouched by what we would now call individualistic ideas. Furthermore, his argument that Shakespeare intuited a void within individual assertion assumes the presence of such a value system. That the limits of individualism were intuited by capacious minds at the same time as its genesis does not make it less a phenomenon.

¹¹Robert N. Watson, *Shakespeare and the Hazards of Ambition* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984), puts the matter differently in saying that Richard, like Macbeth, suffers a restlessness that "evinces a vengeful reflex in the regenerative order he has consciously offended" (p. 33). I believe that Shakespeare in this play was searching for a psychologically naturalistic way to depict the sense of inner violation that he did not find until Macbeth.

¹²Though Angelo is far from acquiring any dangerous tragic grandeur, Shakespeare's interest in this theme also appears in the uneasy conscience he suffers when he realizes that Isabella's purity has aroused his lust.

¹³As Watson puts it, Macbeth's "vaulting ambition" has propelled him into a void, and Shakespeare insists that "only a restored lineal identity can restore existence to someone whom ambition has nullified" (p. 133).

¹⁴Greenblatt interestingly observes in his discussion of Wyatt that "realism as a discursive technique . . . is closely linked with a heightened sense of individuality" (p.155), and David Bevington, in *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1962) observes that realistic expression is in itself at odds with "the traditional rendition of a moral pattern" (p. 261). Bevington finds that the consequent irresolution produces a combination of secular and moral thought that characterizes the great achievements of the age. In a more general way it is commonplace to say that neither Shakespeare's plays, nor any literature, can be accounted for fully by their moral framework. A. J. Smith, in *Literary Love: the Role of Passion in English Poems and Plays of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1983), observes that in reading Shakespeare's plays we "follow out the unfolding of a state of mind" rather than merely "assent to the moralizing of a completed action" (p. 117). However I think it a mistake to suppose that because a work's greatness may depend on some complex play between the mimetic and moral, the two are not none-the-less in conflict, or that the author is in control of the ways in which they bear on each other.

¹⁵Leonard Tennenhouse, "Representing Power: *Measure for Measure* in its Time," *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Norman, Oklaho-

ma: Pilgrim Books, 1982), pp. 139-56, states this aspect of the play well in saying that the romances “restore traditional hierarchies, authorize father monarchs to arrange marriages, and return us to the mythical origins of the state in the natural family” (p. 150).

¹⁶For a full reading of the play as subversive of its formal purposes see my book, *Dream Works: Lovers and Families in Shakespeare's Plays* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1987), pp. 197-215.

¹⁷William Shakespeare, *The Yale Shakespeare*, gen. eds., Helge Kökeritz and Charles T. Prouty (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1954).

¹⁸Leo Kirschbaum ed., *The Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1962).

¹⁹Dollimore observes that the wavering between what he calls an “idealist and a realist mimesis” (p. 82) appears in Shakespeare’s movement from tragedy to romance, and culminates in *The Tempest’s* assertion of the priority of idealist mimesis, linked to reality only by art.” I agree with his statement that “the power in this way given the artist challenges the idealist mimesis it is intended to serve.” Most critics over time have seen the last plays in one way or another as expressive of Shakespeare’s resolution of the conflicts that generated the tragedies. Watson (p. 278) expresses a version of this view in saying that in the final plays the play metaphor is beneficial in the comedies where it allows the figures to forge new identities without denying the old. Views that suggest the kind of contradiction I have in mind are those of Cohen who says that “the subversive contradiction between popular presentation and royal ideology was inherent in Shakespearean dramaturgy even in the final plays” (p. 127), and Greenblatt who argues for the subversive impact of drama itself. Arguments, like that of Grudin, that Prospero’s failure “of reforming zeal” (p. 208) represents Shakespeare’s reconciliation to the “contrariety and the experience of the great tragedies” or of others who find Prospero representative of some kind of *senex*, ignore the play’s structure.

²⁰For example, Norman Rabkin in *Shakespeare and the Common Understanding* (New York: Free Press, 1967) suggests such a link between Prospero and his creator in saying that the last plays make a redemptive vision possible by calling attention to the artifice in a way that questions even as it creates the illusion (p. 211).

²¹Stephen Orgel in *The Jonsonian Masque* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1965) comments that the courtly masquer, unlike the actor, becomes identical with his masque (p. 118). That identity prepares the way for a vision of the ideal becoming a reality, like that in *The Tempest*.

²²Briggs observes that Platonism went in two directions. When integrated into the church, it could lead to withdrawal from the world but it could also, “more dangerously” lead to a celebration of man’s self-determining power under the guise of affirming the spiritual elements in man, as microcosm (p. 4).

²³Righter (p. 21). Her chapter on “The Player King” gives a detailed survey of the many changes Shakespeare rang on this trope.

²⁴Briggs calls attention to another consequence of the perception that all action and gesture can be imitated. She argues that, for Sydney, truth must be “felt along the heart” (p. 197) because of this perception. This need for reassurance of authentic feeling renders plays that point to their own artifice subversive of the social ritual they represent. “The need to discover or rediscover the self and its inner life within the desensitizing habits of convention is everywhere apparent in this period” (p. 200). Shakespeare’s efforts to root transcendent authentication in some authentic feeling that might give substance to the roles he found it all too easy to question are apparent in Cordelia’s and Miranda’s compassion and Edgar’s advice that the survivors should

“speak what [they] feel.”

²⁵The significance of this scene appears best in context with Orgel’s comment in “Familiar Greatness” that the old court clothes worn by actors in Blackfriars helped erase the distinction between the players and the audience. *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance*, pp. 41-48.

²⁶A related observation about the role of the writer who celebrates the authority he serves is made by Goldberg in “The Poet’s Authority: Spenser, Jonson and James VI and I” (*The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance*, 81-99) who, commenting on Spenser’s celebration of Elizabeth’s power, says “the poet’s subscription is paradoxical, since in voicing it he appears to give to the queen the very authority that he claims precedes his ability to write” (p. 83). He sees the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, a play easily seen as an early version of *The Tempest*, as a combined figure of the Playwright and Ruler. As such he becomes the vehicle through which the play equates the problems of representing authority with the problems of the dramatist and actor who also represent authority (p. 239). Montrose, in discussing the ways in which the theatre competed with the pulpit for moral authority points to a different but related way in which the dramatist claims for his works an ontological superiority when he says, “if Shakespeare and his fellows could convince their audiences that the *theatrum mundi* metaphor was both accurate and useful—if all the men and women were indeed merely players—then people might go to the playhouse to learn from experience.”

“A formal man again”: Physiological Humours in *The Comedy of Errors* by Alberto Cacicedo

Recent readings of Shakespeare’s *The Comedy of Errors* take as their starting point the psychological text most clearly inscribed in Syracusan Antipholus’ first soliloquy:¹

I to the world am like a drop of water
That in the ocean seeks another drop,
Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,
(Unseen, inquisitive) confounds himself.
So I, to find a mother and a brother,
In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself.

(I. ii. 35-40)²

The text underscores the double-edged character of Antipholus’ search. He seeks to rediscover relationships in order to find his own identity, and yet in doing so, he recognizes he is threatened with the loss of all identity. But then, as Barbara Freedman says, “The confusion of identity is . . . a necessary step in the recreation of identity.”³ To validate a conception of one’s own selfhood one must first recognize that there is a distinct self to validate: to have experienced a loss of identity is the most direct route to such recognition.

The brilliant interpretations of critics such as Freedman depend on modern psychoanalytic theory. And of course a play that treats the problem of identity will almost inevitably have a psychological foundation. The emphasis on psychoanalysis, however, seems to support Terry Eagleton’s witty remark that Shakespeare “was almost certainly familiar with the writings of . . . Freud” among other luminaries of the modern world.⁴ Indeed, at times one wonders whether *The Comedy of Errors* is a play at all or a fantasy of the psychoanalytic couch, “expressive,” to be sure, but also “therapeutic.”⁵ I do not intend to detract from the achievement of psychoanalytic critics in reading *The Comedy of Errors*. My contention is simply that the language of the play can be read not only in psychoanalytic terms, but also in terms of the psychology available to Shakespeare himself, as a comedy of humours. I hope to show that in *The Comedy of Errors* psychoanalysis and humour psychology coincide.⁶

Before I present my case for *The Comedy of Errors* as a comedy of humours, I should explain what I do *not* mean by the term. L. G.

Salingar points out that Shakespeare's "farces," among which he includes *The Comedy of Errors*, share a "vigorous clowning" with the humour plays of the period from 1595 to 1609.⁷ For the purposes of this paper, however, the connection of *The Comedy of Errors* with other humour plays goes no farther. Instead, the presentation and development of character in Shakespeare's play are more closely allied to an effort to discover the basis for character implicit in the faculty psychology of the Renaissance. Of course, Ben Jonson makes it clear in the 1598 version of *Every Man In His Humour* that the humour plays are derived from that same psychological tradition (III. i. 144-53).⁸ However, as it appears in Jonson's plays, humour "is a monster bred in a man by selfe loue, and affectation, and fed by folly" (III. i. 157-58), a "monomania," as Salingar calls it, and as such, in Jonas A. Barish's words, "it was amenable to purgation through ridicule."⁹ Hence, in *Every Man Out Of His Humour*, when the observer character Mitis asks why Jonson "should properly call it *Every Man Out of his Humour*, when I saw all his actors so strongly pursue, and continue their humours," his friend Cordatus, Jonson's spokesman, answers that "when in the flame, and height of their humours, they are laid flat, it fills the eye better, and with more contentment" (IV. viii. 163-64, 167-69).

By implication, the purgative effect of such comedy is upon the audience: *our eye is "filled" and more contented.* And, indeed, the "critics" in *Every Man Out Of His Humour* serve as a stage audience which at the end of the play articulates the desired effect of the play on the theater audience: "wee'le imitate your actors, and be out of our Humours" (V. xi. 70-71). Jonson's plays, like humour plays in general, are satirical "vehicle[s] for moral judgment," by means of which the audience can define and imitate true civility by contrasting it with all of the false civility of the humorous characters.¹⁰ Shakespeare's humour play, *The Comedy of Errors*, on the contrary, although it is peripherally concerned with "genuine 'civility,'"¹¹ is more concerned with the discovery of character and of identity. I begin, therefore, with the fact that the two Antipholi, physically identical though they may be, and so, in language that resonates with psychoanalytic implication, proper mirrors for each other, are nevertheless of very different physiological temperaments: they are distinct characters.

The first characterization that Syracusan Antipholus gives of himself indicates that he is of a melancholy disposition. His Dromio "very oft, / When I am dull with care and melancholy, / Lightens my humour with his merry jests" (I. ii. 19-21). This speech is important in two ways. First, the fact that Syracusan Dromio is called upon to "lighten" his master's melancholy "very oft" but not continually,

suggests that Antipholus of Syracuse suffers from "*hypochondriacal or windy melancholy*," one of the three kinds of melancholy defined by Robert Burton, who cites Thomas Erastus to the effect that "windy" as well as "whole body" melancholy is distinguished from "head" melancholy because it is "interrupt . . . com[ing] and go[ing] by fits," whereas "head" melancholy is "perpetual."¹² Later, Burton distinguishes between "windy" and "whole body" melancholy by their etiologies: "windy" melancholy begins "most commonly [from] fear, grief, and some sudden commotion or perturbation of the mind"; "whole body" melancholy, although it can be brought about by the same emotional causes, is related "especially [to] bad diet."¹³ Egeon's statement to Solinus, that Antipholus "At eighteen years became inquisitive / After his brother" (I. i. 124-25), echoes Antipholus' own statement as to his motivation (I. ii. 38), and suggests that at that time, for some unexplained (and according to Burton theoretically unexplainable)¹⁴ reason, commenced the "perturbation of the mind" that characterizes Antipholus' melancholy disposition as "windy" melancholy.

The speech in which Antipholus of Syracuse defines his Dromio's function in lightening his melancholy is also important in distinguishing Antipholus' temperament from his brother's. The Ephesian Antipholus has been variously characterized as being "stolid" or violent, and as having a "solid bourgeois complacency and fiery temper."¹⁵ In truth, the Ephesian Antipholus is much more violent than his Syracusan brother, and seems to be habitually so. At any rate, the Ephesian Dromio is very experienced at enduring blows. In the first "error" of the play, when Syracusan Antipholus demands of the Ephesian Dromio, "Where is the thousand marks thou hadst of me," the servant's response is, "I have some marks of yours upon my pate; / Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders" (I. ii. 81-83).¹⁶ Antipholus interprets the response as an ill-timed joke and begins to beat Dromio, who begs him "for God's sake hold your hands. / Nay, and you will not, sir, I'll take my heels" (I. ii. 93-94). Dromio's alacrity in legging it out of harm's way suggests that he knows his master's humour to be beyond lightening.

Dromio's assumption, of course, is that the man beating him is in fact his master, the Ephesian Antipholus. By implication, then, Antipholus of Ephesus must very often break out into beatings of this sort. By contrast, when the Syracusan Dromio is beaten by his master, he is surprised: "Hold sir, for God's sake; now you jest in earnest, / Upon what bargain do you give it me" (II. ii. 24-25). Clearly the two Dromios sound very much alike, but where the Ephesian's puns tend to distance Antipholus, the Syracusan's tend to bring him closer to his master, as if to help Antipholus seek out the cause of melancholy and

“lighten” the humour. And in fact Syracusan Dromio’s punning method works, for not long afterwards Antipholus also begins to pun (II. ii. 53-54), and soon he is joking along with Dromio (II. ii. 71-107). Dromio’s surprise at being beaten, moreover, occasions the only direct reference in the play to the physiological humour that governs Ephesian Antipholus’ temperament: choler (II. ii. 61-62, 65-66).

Syracusan Antipholus’ behavior, from the first “error” of the play onwards, seems to mimic his brother’s choleric temperament. Contemporary psychoanalytic interpretations of the similarity between the two brother’s identities suggest that the Antipholi are halves of a single personality struggling to reunify and form a complete whole.¹⁷ Alternatively, the twins are mirror images who “must be separated out from one another to know who they are; and yet they can know who they are only by seeing themselves mirrored in one another.”¹⁸ To psychoanalytic explanations of the twins’ characters can be added the explanation that would be common sense to Shakespeare’s contemporaries. According to the psychological literature of the Renaissance, changes in the “temperature,” or temperament, of a person by means of some “disease” are not unexpected. Juan Huarte, for instance, writes that

if a man fall into any disease by which his braine upon a sodaine changeth his temperature (as are madnesse, melancholy & frenzie) it happens, that at one instant he leeseeth, if he were wise, all his knowledge, and utters a thousand follies; and if he were a foole, he accrues more wit and abilitie than he had before.¹⁹

The Syracusan’s temperament does not convert into choler as such. Rather, as Syracusan Antipholus encounters “error” after “error,” his intermittent “windy” melancholy worsens into a kind of “head” melancholy. The deeper Antipholus goes into Ephesian strangeness, the less intermittent does his melancholy become, and the madder does he seem.

Burton points out that at their extremes of expression “*Madness, phrenzy, and melancholy* are confounded by *Celsus* and many writers; others leave out *phrenzy*, and make *madness* and *melancholy* but one disease,” but that if there is a difference between madness and melancholy, it depends on the greater violence of madness. “Phrenzy,” derived from physiological choler, is distinguished from madness by its “heat.”²⁰ Starting out from a temperament characterized as melancholy, Syracusan Antipholus grows into madness. So, as soon as he begins to experience the “errors” of Ephesus, the wandering Antipholus expresses a typical

symptom of madness:

They say this town is full of cozenage,
As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind,
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
And many such-like liberties of sin.

(I. ii. 97-102)

The images of sorcery, witchcraft, and demonic possession are repeated time and again in the play, and are finally identified expressly with madness itself:

Cour. How say you now? Is not your husband mad?
Adr. His incivility confirms no less.
Good Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer;
Establish him in his true sense again,
And I will please you what you will demand.

(IV. iv. 43-47)

As Burton says of madness, “the other *species* of this fury are . . . obsession or possession of devils.”²¹ Antipholus is obsessed with devils; others are convinced he is possessed.

That Syracusan Antipholus’ madness is related to melancholy and not choler is suggested by the fact that he shows the relatively “unfevered” symptoms of extreme melancholy—melancholy “adust,” in short. The “adust” humour is termed “unnaturall” by Timothy Bright, who says that such

an humour . . . [rises] of melancholie [the physiological matter itself] . . . , or else from bloud or choler, whollie chaunged into an other nature by an unkindly heate which turneth these humours, which before were raunged under natures government, and kept in order, into a qualitie whollie repugnant, whose substance and vapor giveth such annoyance to all partes, that as it passeth or is seated maketh strange alterations in our actions, whether they be animal or voluntarie, or naturall or not depending upon our will.²²

In the case of Antipholus of Syracuse, his responses to the “errors” he encounters are not especially violent and may even be considered rational reactions to apparently irrational circumstances: even the beatings of the Dromios are not excessive given Antipholus’ position in a foreign and, as he has been warned, hostile town. Knowing himself

sane, Antipholus displaces the insanity outwards onto the strange city he is visiting and comes to believe that others must be possessed. He therefore does all he can to protect himself—including brandishing a sword when he feels particularly threatened. When at the maddest point in the play the two Syracusans enter “with rapiers drawn” (IV. iv. 141 s. d.), one must recall that, in the sequence of the play’s action, they have just left the Courtesan with the words, “Avaunt, thou witch” (IV. iii. 76).

From the point of view of the citizens of Ephesus, of course, the demonic possession is localized in Antipholus himself, so that the accusation of witchcraft that Antipholus makes provokes from the Courtesan the conclusion that “Now out of doubt Antipholus is mad” (IV. iii. 78). When the Syracusans enter with their swords drawn, therefore, the Courtesan’s judgment seems to be vindicated. The Courtesan’s judgment and its effect in the treatment of Antipholus reflect exactly the physiological theory of humours, for, as Huarte indicates, those who seem to be possessed by demons in fact suffer “from a naturall distemperature.”²³ Thus, although Adriana urges Dr. Pinch to “conjure” away Antipholus’ madness and Pinch in her presence seems to comply, the method that he actually takes to cure the humour is strictly physiological: “They fell upon me,” says Ephesian Antipholus, “bound me, bore me thence, / And in a dark and dankish vault at home / There left me and my man, both bound together” (V. i. 247-49). Dr. Pinch, in short, gives them a dose of phlegmatical treatment, cold and wet, to counterbalance the frenetic heat and dryness of cholera adust, frenzy. Stephen Greenblatt’s remark that “exorcism is the kind of straw people clutch at when the world seems to have gone mad”²⁴ is perfectly correct from the point of view of Adriana’s turning to Dr. Pinch for a magical solution to her husband’s ills. But for Dr. Pinch himself it is the humours, not possession, that he must address: the good doctor’s title, honorific though it may be, nonetheless conveys the role that Pinch conceives proper to himself. He is this play’s version of what Greenblatt calls “the very slender reed of Jacobean [Greenblatt is writing about *Lear*] medicine.”²⁵

Pinch, of course, treats Ephesian Antipholus correctly, but for the behavior of his Syracusan brother. In fact, Antipholus of Ephesus evinces the “heated” behavior that characterizes choleric frenzy rather than the relative coolness of melancholy. From the point of view of situational dynamics, Gwyn Williams is correct to point out that the Ephesian Antipholus undergoes a much more distressing set of “errors” than his brother simply because he is in his home town and so cannot displace the apparent madness that he encounters out onto a “possessed”

world.²⁶ Antipholus of Ephesus is put in the position of accepting the way others perceive him—as mad, in short—or of reacting in fairly violent ways against that definition of himself, which he knows is incorrect.²⁷ Antipholus of Ephesus, like his brother, is threatened with dissolution of identity, but he must react to the threat violently because he has no means of withdrawing from the situation in which he finds himself.

The play suggests that Ephesian Antipholus' temperament has also changed: in him one can see the same three stages of the expression of temperament as in his brother, from the disposition itself, through its initial exacerbation, to its fully expressed manifestation. His Dromio's testimony suggests that he—as well as his wife—is habitually of a choleric humour. However, once again, the physiological humours will not lead to the temperamental disorders associated with them unless they are adust.²⁸ What we see in Ephesian Antipholus, then, is the same process of adustion that we see in his Syracusan brother. In the case of Ephesian Antipholus, the "unkindly heate" that changes his habitual temperament into the adust variety commences with his wife's treatment before the action we see in the play as such commences. Hearing of how Adriana has "reprehended" her husband, for instance, Emilia says, "And therefore came it that the man was mad / . . . / Thereof the raging fire of fever bred, / And what's a fever but a fit of madness" (V. i. 68, 75-76). Although Emilia goes on to say that Antipholus will therefore suffer from "moody and dull melancholy" (V. i. 79), her emphasis on fever suggests otherwise. The heat of fever, in fact, is the symptom that distinguishes choleric frenzy from melancholy madness.²⁹ The heat, as we see beginning with Ephesian Antipholus' first entrance in Act III, increases as "errors" multiply and he is forced to understand or resolve them. The result is choler adust and frenzy.

From the point of view of the physiological humours, in short, Ephesian Antipholus' reaction follows reasonably from his choleric temperament. "[I]magination," says Huarte, "consists of heat," and is therefore the reasonable faculty most closely related to choler.³⁰ As soon as Antipholus of Ephesus experiences his first "error," he jumps to an imaginative conclusion:

Ephesian Antipholus. There is something in the wind that we cannot get in.

Ephesian Dromio. You would say so, master, if your garments were thin. Your cake here is warm within; you stand here in the cold; It would make a man mad as a buck to be so bought and sold.

(III. i. 69-72)

Dromio's pun reveals whither his master's imagination tends. To be "mad as a buck" is to be "horn-mad," an expression Dromio has used before, as he claims, to "mean not cuckold-mad" (II. i. 57-58). In effect, Antipholus jumps to the same conclusion about Adriana that Adriana has jumped to concerning him. Balthasar's advice that Antipholus "Have patience" (III. i. 85) in fact echoes Luciana's advice to Adriana in the scene where Dromio defines "horn-mad" (II. i. 9), and suggests that husband and wife have the same choleric humour. Moreover, just as Adriana ignores Luciana's advice, so her husband, seeming to heed Balthasar's advice, actually ignores it: "that chain will I bestow / (Be it for nothing but to spite my wife) / Upon mine hostess there" (III. i. 117-19). This sort of rashness, which persists despite Antipholus' knowledge that "this jest shall cost me some expense" (III. i. 123), is typical of the "heat" of cholera.

That Antipholus of Ephesus is treated as his brother seems to deserve—that each twin, in fact, "is recurrently debited or credited for the transactions of the other"³¹—is part of the confounding of identity that Syracusan Antipholus' first soliloquy introduces into the play in terms of the water-drop image.³² The identity that Adriana wishes to establish between herself and her husband is marked by the same water-drop image:

How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it,
That thou art estranged from thyself?—
Thyself I call it, being strange to me,
That undividable, incorporate,
Am better than thy dear self's better part.
Ah, do not tear away thyself from me;
For know, my love, as easy mayst thou fall
A drop of water in the breaking gulf,
And take unmingled thence that drop again
Without addition or diminishing,
As take from me thyself, and not me too.

(II. ii. 119-29)³³

One may conclude with Kahn that here "Woman becomes identified with those engulfing waters in which Antipholus [of] S[yracuse] feared to 'confound' himself" and that therefore the primary psychological context for the oceanic imagery in the play is Freudian, "a representation . . . of our earliest sexual feelings" of identity with our mother. Freud associates such oceanic imagery with the origins of "the religious attitude," which in *The Comedy of Errors* may be expressed in the action of an Abbess who resolves all the problems.³⁴

Water imagery is in any case central to the play's presentation of identity and selfhood. Both Antipholus of Syracuse and Adriana use it to convey the idea of dissolution of personality in an encompassing set of relationships. One gets the impression of water as a universal solvent of the humours that constitute personal identity. From a medical point of view, water is indeed one of the more useful elements of diet in the treatment of melancholy.³⁵ Water is also associated with one of the humours, phlegm, a cold and moist humour that functions in a manner exactly opposite to choler.³⁶ Dr. Pinch attempts to use the characteristics of phlegm to cure Antipholus of Ephesus of his frenzy, and in fact a good dose of phlegmatic coldness and calmness might be what Antipholus needs.

Despite the imagery of water that she uses, however, Adriana is clearly not suited to administer such a dose to her husband. She, like Antipholus himself, suffers from the rashness and impatience characteristic of choler. Adriana herself suggests that she is converting her husband's substance into a noxious humour—"I do digest the poison of thy flesh" (II. ii. 143)—precisely in the way Bright indicates happens when "by perturbation of mind, by temper of aire, and kind of habitation" the natural humours contained in food and held in solution in the blood are made adust.³⁷ In the language of the physiological humours, in other words, Adriana in effect acknowledges that she is not the proper physician for her husband. The same physiological context is at work when Adriana tells Emilia that it is her wifely duty to "diet" Antipholus (V. i. 99). Emilia's response explicitly indicates why Adriana is not able to perform that duty: "Be patient" (V. i. 102).

To complicate matters further, the water image that Adriana uses is closely linked to the blood image with which she continues her efforts to teach her husband, as she supposes, that two are one:

I am possess'd with an adulterate blot,
My blood is mingled with the crime of lust;
For if we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Being strumpeted by contagion.

(II. ii. 140-44)

That Adriana is "possess'd with" her husband's sin connects the speech with the other cases of "possession" that the play presents and converts to humour psychology. Furthermore, just as phlegm is the exact opposite of choler, so the sanguine humour, blood, is the exact opposite of melancholy, moist and warm as opposed to cold and dry. Not incidentally, phlegm is "apt to be converted into the substance of pure

bloud if nature faile not in her workinge."³⁸ Blood is also associated with youthfulness, and perhaps Syracusan Antipholus gets exactly what he needs to cure his original melancholy when he falls in love with Luciana, whose speeches are so full of wise old saws taken literally that they betray her youth and inexperience. Adriana's speech is still more suggestive. The "mass of *blood*," as distinct from the sanguine humour as such, is that substance in which all four humours are "comprehended."³⁹ It is, in fact, the universal solvent that mediates the conversion of humours.⁴⁰ The link between water and blood at this point in the play suggests that water becomes an external sign of the "mass of *blood*." The women, particularly Emilia, are associated with the water imagery and become essential to tempering the Antipholi's humours.

Emilia's role in the denouement of the play illustrates that she, not Adriana or Dr. Pinch, "With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers" (V. i. 104) appropriate to physiological humours, is the one who will convert the humours of Antipholus into a proper balance and so "make him a formal man again" (V. i. 105). Because Emilia is so scantily developed, we might turn to modern psychological theory to read her function in the play, always with the proviso that, if we take the juncture of water and blood suggested by Adriana, then in the tradition of the physiological humours Emilia's function is to be the phlegmatic and sanguine counterweight to the frenzy of Ephesus.⁴¹ Emilia is both religious figure and mother figure. Under both categories she participates in the oceanic imagery of the play.⁴² Furthermore, if MacCary is correct to see Adriana and Luciana as "the split image of the mother, the one threatening and destructive, the other yielding and benevolent," then Emilia is the "unsplit" image of the mother, combining both aspects and, according to Jung, leading to self-knowledge if properly approached.⁴³

It is, perhaps, the dangerous aspect of the image⁴⁴ even in the "benevolent" Luciana that warns Syracusan Antipholus against yielding too readily to his sudden passion for his sister-in-law:

O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note
 To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears;
 Sing, siren, for thyself, and I will dote;
 Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs,
 And as a bed I'll take thee, and there lie,
 And in that glorious supposition think
 He gains by death that hath such means to die;
 Let love, being light, be drowned if she sink.

(III. ii. 45-52)

In MacCary's formulation, to Antipholus, Luciana seems part of a dream world that gratifies his every wish but who nonetheless can serve to lead him to conscious object-choice and so beyond his narcissistic search for the twin version of himself: the nightmare side of the dream is Adriana, his brother's temperamental counterpart, who works to extinguish all desire in undifferentiated relationship.⁴⁵ Both women, moreover, are figured in terms of water imagery. In their different ways, both of them represent the oceanic, womb-like world that, in his first soliloquy, Antipholus says he seeks and yet fears. That world is like the unitary world of infancy in which, as Jung puts it, every thing "bends over . . . [the child] and even forces happiness upon him."⁴⁶ So, when Angelo gives Antipholus the gold chain, Antipholus says, "I see a man here needs not live by shifts / When in the streets he meets such golden gifts" (III. ii. 181-82).

The satisfaction of desire is dangerous from either perspective: Adriana may seek to drown Antipholus in a "flood of tears," but Luciana is a "siren" luring him to his death. Having found his oceanic oneness, Antipholus discovers that it threatens to destroy his identity while at the same time it contains, in the person of Luciana, what seems to be the dangerous source of his potential salvation. The method by which Antipholus of Syracuse can find the relation he seeks without the sort of "narcissistic mirroring" that will destroy him depends, once again, on Emilia.⁴⁷ If Ephesus for Antipholus is a kind of womb-world that dissolves his identity, then there is only one way that he can recover his self, distinguish his identity from his brother's, and so be capable of winning Luciana for himself: he must break the circle of water, so to speak, and be born again. That function is mediated by his mother, Emilia. She is the actual agent, the mirror, that brings the Antipholi face to face. At this point the confusion of identity between the two brothers becomes useful, perhaps even therapeutic, simply because each brother can see himself objectively mirrored in the other. What each sees is his own melancholy or choler externalized in the twin. At the moment that the twins see each other mirrored by the instrumentality of Emilia, the play enacts what Jacques Lacan conceives as the "mirror stage," the moment at which identity is constituted, when "the I . . . is objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other."⁴⁸ In the end, seeing his own deformation by means of his brother's mirror image of his own passion, each Antipholus can objectify himself and so become a "formal man."

Despite Lacan's insistence that at this point in the life of the ego narcissism is always involved,⁴⁹ the danger of narcissism for the two Antipholi is minimized specifically because the oceanic madness of

Ephesus forces the two brothers to look not for similarity but for difference. Their second birth requires that they affirm their temperamental humours, and so can be considered an affirmation of ego identity. The language of the discovery scene in fact suggests that Emilia sees her role in precisely those terms: "Thirty-three years have I but gone in travail / Of you, my sons, and till this present hour / My heavy burden ne'er delivered" (V. i. 400-02). The delivery breaks the circle of water that has encompassed the twins and kept their identities in solution. Moreover, the Christian tenor of the "thirty-three years," a number not warranted by other figures in the text, suggests that the twins enter into a kind of spiritual adulthood, symbolized perhaps by the "gossip's feast" (V. i. 405) to which Emilia invites Solinus. There, drops of water will be poured over the children not to dissolve identity but to establish it. To balance a person's temperament is not to destroy it, but rather to bring it to its natural, non-adust condition. Neither Antipholus will lose his character, but both will be brought to a correct temperature.

Psychoanalytic readings of *The Comedy of Errors* elicit profound meaning from a play that, more often than not, has been treated as one of the less interesting of Shakespeare's youthful works. However, the complex patterns of loss and recovery on which such readings focus do not easily allow one to see that the most central loss and recovery involve the identities of the Antipholi themselves, and that those identities are differentiated on the basis of the psychology available to Shakespeare. Reading *The Comedy of Errors* from the perspective of the physiological humour psychology of the Renaissance helps to recenter the play on the twins themselves.

Albright College

Notes

¹See, for example, Coppélia Kahn, "The Providential Tempest and the Shakespearean Family," *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*, ed. Murray M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1980), pp. 217-43; Barbara Freedman, "Egeon's Debt: Self-Division and Self-Redemption in *The Comedy of Errors*," *English Literary Renaissance*, 10 (1980), 360-83; W. Thomas MacCary, "The Comedy of Errors: A Different Kind of Comedy," *New Literary History*, 9 (1978), 525-36; Janet Adelman, "Male Bonding in Shakespeare's Comedies," *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic": Renaissance Essays in Honor of C. L. Barber*, ed. Peter Erickson and Coppélia Kahn (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1985), pp. 73-103.

²All references to *The Comedy of Errors* are from The Arden Shakespeare edition, ed. R. A. Foakes (London: Methuen, 1968).

³Freedman, p. 363.

⁴Eagleton, *William Shakespeare: Rereading Literature* (London: Blackwell, 1986), p. ix.

⁵Ruth Nevo, *Comic Transformation in Shakespeare* (London: Methuen, 1980), p. 30.

⁶By the same token, I do not wish to suggest that the theory of humours allows for the complete intelligibility of Shakespeare's characters, even in so early a play as *The Comedy of Errors*. A thoroughgoing but nonetheless unsatisfactory attempt in the direction of reducing all of Shakespeare's plays to humour psychology has been made by John W. Draper, *The Humours and Shakespeare's Characters* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1945).

⁷L. G. Salingar, "The Elizabethan Literary Renaissance," *The Age of Shakespeare* ed. Boris Ford, *A Guide to English Literature*, vol. 2 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955), pp. 85, 83, respectively.

⁸References to Jonson's plays are from *Ben Jonson*, 11 vols., ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), vol. 3.

⁹Salingar, p. 79; Jonas A. Barish, *Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy* (New York: Norton, 1970), p. 217.

¹⁰Salingar, p. 79.

¹¹Salingar, p. 85.

¹²Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 3 vols., ed. A. R. Shilleto (London: Bell, 1926), vol. 1, p. 200. Although the first edition of Burton's *Anatomy* was not published until 1621, there is good reason to use the book as a source of information on humour psychology. After all, Burton sets out to compile as much traditional lore as he can find, and is therefore using material that must have been available to Shakespeare or any other writer in the late sixteenth century.

¹³Burton, vol. 1, p. 438.

¹⁴Burton, vol. 1, p. 194.

¹⁵Respectively, Karen Newman, *Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character: Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy* (New York: Methuen, 1985), p. 81; R. A. Foakes, Introduction, *The Comedy of Errors*, by William Shakespeare, ed. R. A. Foakes, *The Arden Shakespeare* (London: Methuen, 1968), p. xlv; Gwyn Williams, "'The Comedy of Errors' Rescued from Tragedy," *Review of English Literature*, 5 (1964), p. 64; Nevo, p. 28.

¹⁶See also IV. iv. 27 ff., where Ephesian Dromio accuses his master of plain cruelty.

¹⁷Freedman, *passim*.

¹⁸Adelman, "Male Bonding," p. 76.

¹⁹Juan Huarte, *Examen de Ingenios. The Examination of Mens Wits*, trans. R[ichard] C[rew] (1594; Gainesville: Scholar's Facsimiles, 1959), p. 41.

²⁰Burton, vol. 1, p. 160.

²¹Burton, vol. 1, p. 161.

²²Timothy Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholie* (1586; New York: Facsimile Text Society, 1940), pp. 2-3.

²³Huarte, p. 45.

²⁴Stephen Greenblatt, "Shakespeare and the Exorcists," *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Methuen, 1985), p. 173.

²⁵Greenblatt, p. 168. Greenblatt's point that the credibility of possession and of exorcism begins to attenuate in the new religio-political circumstances of the Jacobean period can very easily be extended backwards in time and internationalized. See, for example, Bright, p. iii. See also Huarte, p. 45.

²⁶Williams, p. 69.

²⁷Harold Brooks presents a very similar argument in "Themes and Structure in *The Comedy of Errors*," *Shakespeare, the Comedies: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Kenneth Muir, *Twentieth Century Views* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 14-15.

²⁸Burton vol. 1, pp. 197-98.

²⁹Burton vol. 1, pp. 160-61.

³⁰Huarte, pp. 64, 60.

³¹Freedman, p. 370.

³²A similar conflation of character occurs in relation to the two Dromios. When Syracusan Dromio tells his master about Nell's claims on him, he begins by saying, "I am an ass, I am a woman's man, and besides myself" (III. ii. 76-77). When Ephesian Dromio complains about his treatment, he says,

I am an ass indeed; you may prove it by my long ears. I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this instant, and have nothing at his hands for my service but blows.

(IV. iv. 27-30)

The conflation culminates after the brothers see each other, when the mirror image that underlies much of the confusion of character comes to the surface: "Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother" (V. i. 417).

³³MacCary points out that "The exact words of Adriana's address . . . are, of course, very like his [i. e. Syracusan Antipholus'] opening remarks" (p. 531). Adriana echoes not only the sense and imagery but also the orthographic and grammatical form of Antipholus' speech. Compare I. ii. 38 and II. ii. 122, for example. The general effect is to make Adriana into a kind of imperialist of character, overtly demanding identity with her husband and implicitly expressing identity with her brother-in-law.

³⁴Kahn, pp. 224, 221, respectively; Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. Joan Riviere (Garden City: Anchor Books, n.d.), p. 11.

³⁵Burton, vol. 2, pp. 26-29.

³⁶Burton, vol. 1, p. 169.

³⁷Bright, p. 35.

³⁸Bright, p. 5. Draper suggests a further association between the two when he says that phlegmatics "under Venus" include "Women, children, artists, and voluptuaries." "Under the moon" are included all those people associated "with movement and with water" (pp. 13-14).

³⁹Burton, vol. 1, p. 169.

⁴⁰Bright, pp. 4-5.

⁴¹Unlike Egeon (Freedman, p. 373), Emilia seems never to have considered seeking out her lost family. Her lack of movement may well be what leads Foakes to remark that Emilia's life story is not very fully explained (p. xxxi). Her passivity may also indicate a phlegmatic temperament very unlike the active women of other comedies, who must in any case disguise themselves as men in order to act. It is not until Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* that Shakespeare presents a character with a similar function.

⁴²Freud, *Civilization*, p. 11; and "The 'Uncanny,'" trans. Alex Strachey, *On Creativity and the Unconscious: Papers on the Psychology of Art, Literature, Love, Religion*, ed. Benjamin Nelson (New York: Harper-Colophon, 1958), p. 143.

⁴³MacCary, p. 531; C. G. Jung, "Aion: Phenomenology of the Self," *The Portable Jung*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, ed. Joseph Campbell (New York: Viking, 1971), p. 158.

⁴⁴Jung, p. 150.

⁴⁵MacCary, pp. 351-53.

⁴⁶Jung, p. 148. The threat to identity presented by the omnicompetent mother is most clearly represented by Volumnia in *Coriolanus*. But see Janet Adelman's analysis of the pervasiveness of mothers as sources of danger to identity in "'Born of Woman': Fantasies of Maternal Power in *Macbeth*," *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*, ed. Marjorie Garber, *Selected Papers from the English Institute*, ns 11 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 90-121.

⁴⁷Kahn, p. 223.

⁴⁸Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977), p. 2.

⁴⁹Lacan, p. 6.

The History of *Troilus and Cressida* by Mark Robert Dodd

Although *Troilus and Cressida* is entitled a history in both states of the 1609 Quarto, criticism of the work has neglected this aspect of the genre of the play.¹ Probably this is due to the critical dislike long associated with the play and the neglect of critical theory on the Renaissance history genre. The history play, although very popular in Renaissance England, was, unlike tragedy and comedy, not developed from classical theories. Modern critics have looked at Shakespeare's history plays, when they have done so, as basically popular plays about English history, rather than as plays with their own structural purpose. However, Shakespeare clearly did not do so. He turned English history into tragedy—*King Lear*, and comedy—*Cymbeline*; he turned the historical Richard II into the *Tragedy of Richard The Second*.

Instead, the genre of a play was determined for Shakespeare by what he did with the play, not by whether or not it had historical roots. *Troilus and Cressida* shows the characteristics of the history play. As defined by John Wasson in his "In Defense of *King Henry VIII*,"

A history play . . . while it may present the death of a major figure, is not organized to elucidate that person's character or his reaction to his fall. Instead the dramatist was faced with the task of selecting, telescoping, and rearranging a number of historical facts—frequently related only chronologically—into a coherent story having a suitable beginning, a stirring wave of dramatic action, and a satisfactory ending . . . to tell a good story, to capitalize if possible on the audience's chauvinism, and to remain true to the spirit of history without slavish accuracy of detail.²

The fall of Troy was regarded as the ultimate historical secular catastrophe by Renaissance England.³ As such, its characters were considered historical. In developing the play, Shakespeare borrowed from a variety of sources.⁴ Although, because of the subject, Troy rather than England, Shakespeare was freed somewhat from playing up to the patriotic values of his audience, as for example in *Henry V* with the good King Henry and the wicked Frenchmen, nevertheless, an Elizabethan audience would be sympathetic to the Trojan side (the English at this time were more familiar with Virgil than Homer) because of the ancient theory that Trojan refugees had come to England.⁵

Perhaps the best statement of what an audience could expect from a

history play is in the prologue to *Henry VIII*:⁶

I come no more to make you laugh. Things now
 That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
 Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe—
 Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow
 We now present. Those that can pity here
 May, if they think it well, let fall a tear.
 The subject will deserve it . . .
 Richly in two short hours. Only they
 That come to hear a merry bawdy play,
 A noise of targets, . . .
 Will be deceived. For, gentle hearers, know
 To rank our chosen truth with such a show
 As fool and fight is. . . .
 . . . Think ye see
 The very persons of our noble story
 As they were living. . . .
 . . . then, in a moment, see
 How soon this mightiness meets misery.

(1-7, 12-15, 17-18, 21-22, 25-27, 29-30).

Although some aspects of the history play stressed here are particular to this play, it is clear that there are five basic elements one can expect in a history play: one, "noble scenes as draw the eye to flow;" two, scenes "to make you laugh;" three, "a noise of targets" (battle scenes); four, historical truth; and five, entertainment for an hour or two. Clearly, the history play had a mixture of styles with a theme of what it was like to be alive at a particular time. The comic elements (not only in Pandarus and Thersites, but also in the wonderful lightness of the only scene where Helen appears) and battle scenes of *Troilus and Cressida* are well in evidence, and surely "the eye to flow," melodramatic elements, are also well-represented.⁷ It is hard to imagine anyone in the audience not feeling distress and sympathy for Troilus in Act V, scene ii, where Cressida's unfaithfulness is exposed before his and our very eyes; it is also hard to imagine an audience's being amused at the lovers' story as O. J. Campbell implies.⁸ Also, it was common in history plays to have some sort of pageant scene in which noble characters would pass in file across the stage. In this play, we have the passing of the Trojan warriors as they return from battle.

Another element of the history play was its episodic structure. This usually constituted four story lines. For instance, in *Henry VIII*, we have the fall of Buckingham, the fall of Wolsey, the death of Katherine, and the rise of Protestantism (culminating in the birth of Elizabeth). The playwright's skill determined how he would integrate these episodes,

otherwise connected only by history, into a whole that would entertain an audience for about two hours. *Troilus and Cressida* has the love plot of the two title characters, the Greek plot exemplified in the struggle to get Achilles to fight, the Troy plot, and the battle scenes of Act V which lead up to the death of Hector. The sense of chaos in the play is effectively brought out as the play flip-flops between Troy and the Greek camp—scene after scene. We should remember that after the play's first two scenes, in which we are introduced to the lovers, there are only oblique references to the love plot until Act III, scene ii—after nearly one-third of the play.

Troilus and Cressida's historical theme is announced in the play's first line: "In Troy there lies the scene" (prologue, 1). From the beginning the playwright says this is a play about what happened at Troy. We are then given an introduction to what has already happened before the play starts (this simply sets the beginning of the play; it is likely that the audience knew many of the events already). Indeed, Shakespeare may have turned to this plot because it was an "in" topic both on the stage and in print (Chapman's translation of eight books of Homer's *Iliad* had been printed a few years before Shakespeare's play). We are told there is a quarrel about the "ravished Helen" and that the audience can expect an exciting story which sets "all on hazard" (prologue, 22): "Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war" (prologue, 31). This is not setting the stage for either a comedy or a tragedy but is setting the stage for comic and tragic scenes—and a theme of war. The play also has a very suitable ending in the death of Hector because throughout the play he has symbolically represented Troy:

I wonder now how yonder city stands
When we have here her base and pillar by us.
(IV. v. 210-11)

The short, final scenes—with the Greeks and with Troilus—are dominated by the death of Hector as the Greeks celebrate a future victory and Troilus swears revenge. It is not necessary to "punish" Cressida at the end for a satisfactory ending, since most of the audience would have known the outcome of her story.

But in looking at *Troilus and Cressida* as not satire, but history, we must ask what is it a history of? I can only believe that it is Shakespeare's portrait of a pagan and, thus, a doomed and damned world. Whatever admiration Elizabethan Christians may have had for classical times, it must be remembered that they believed that all pagans, good and bad, were condemned to hell. The confusing and ambivalent moral nature of

the Greeks continue in confusion, and success comes only with the almost accidental death of Hector.¹⁰

However, Ulysses' emphasis upon the "general disdained / By him one step below" (I. iii. 128-29) seems either missed or ignored by Agamemnon:

The nature of the sickness found, Ulysses,
What is the remedy?

(I. iii. 139-40)

In other words, he has not been able to lead, and he will continue not to do so. Ulysses then introduces the information that Achilles has withdrawn from the fray and implies that what is wrong is due to Achilles' pride. Ulysses thus abandons hope of Agamemnon's ever gaining control (and certainly Agamemnon would rather see the problem with Achilles, than with himself), but the change to emphasizing Achilles' pride is really just the kind of plot manipulation that is common to histories. And as the quotation from Wasson suggests, in a history play, the focus of the playwright is on skillful plot manipulation and rearrangement toward an overall theme, not any consistent elucidation of character.¹¹

For example, Ajax is a bluff warrior in some scenes, a blockhead in others, and a noble warrior in others. Muir says that this is because Shakespeare either "confused, or fused . . . different Ajaxes" in his sources.¹² It is quite likely that Ajax was drawn from inconsistent, differing sources, but I do not believe Shakespeare was confused. His ability to recognize inconsistency of character was presumably not any *worse* than that of critics, so, instead, we should recognize that Ajax's recalcitrance in scenes with Thersites usefully adds humor to those scenes, and his nobility with his cousin Hector allows chivalry to be emphasized in those scenes. This is completely appropriate in a history play. When Ulysses originates the plot to have Ajax win the lottery to determine the challenger to Hector, we should not look for psychological motivation to explain Ulysses' actions but to the more logical and simple plot motivation. "[Shakespeare] invents the manipulation [as Ulysses' attempt] to arouse Achilles."¹³ However, Ulysses' actions, as well as Achilles' actions (or rather lack of action), do add to the thematic portrait of a doomed world in which individual actions contribute to chaos.¹⁴

Hector, it is true, is a character who could clearly have been tragic. Indeed, his decision to abandon his very rational arguments concerning

the return of Helen to the Greeks comes close to a *hamartia*. The decision “misses the mark” and leads to his death. However, Hector is just one of the characters in the history of Troy. The play is not dominated by the presentation of his character. Instead, he is shown as the noble best of men, and his death thematically reflects the doomed nature of the world. There is no restored order, unlike, for example, the situations after the deaths of Hamlet, Lear, or Macbeth; instead, Troilus simply swears revenge. Most importantly, nothing is made psychologically of Hector’s decision to agree with his brothers and not return Helen; indeed, in the play, Hector doesn’t really even provide a reason for his change—instead, he gets the plot going again by bringing up his challenge to the Greeks.

At the same time, thematically, throughout this scene, Hector does argue persuasively that proper moral order is not being followed:

. . . Nature craves
All dues be rendered to their owners.
(II. ii. 172-73)

. . . Thus to persist
In doing wrong extenuates, not wrong,
But makes it much more heavy.
(II. ii. 185-87)

If this is true, and Shakespeare’s audience would have thought it so, why does Hector change his mind? We don’t know. He doesn’t tell us. It is possible to say that Hector is proud—so are Achilles, Ulysses, Agamemnon, and others—and that he is more concerned with his challenge than with his city’s welfare. But in a history, as opposed to a tragedy, we experience the events, not the inner motivation of character dealing with events. Shakespeare is not, like Ibsen, saying that society itself is faulty; he is saying only that pagan, godless societies are faulty. I suppose, if we wish to go outside the play, because we are determined to have someone at fault, it is possible to say that “the wanton Paris,” when he seized Helen doomed the entire city of Troy. But the plain and simple fact is that Hector changes his mind because the plot demands it, and the genre accepts it. To many this must seem mechanical. However, if in moving the plot Shakespeare can develop his purpose of showing a society doomed to “hazard” and “chance,” the device is not mechanical but skillful.

This chaos of Trojan and Greek society and the manner in which characters seem pushed and pulled by events, rather than controlling events, is developed in many ways. For instance, much is made in the

play of Achilles' pride:

The great Achilles, whom opinion crowns
 The sinew and the forehead of our host,
 Having his ear full of his airy fame,
 Grows dainty of his worth, and in his tent
 Lies mocking our designs.

(I. iii. 141-45)

As with Hector, Achilles' withdrawal from the war could be an action which leads to tragedy; however, the play ends not in Achilles' death but in Hector's, except in the sense that everyone in the play is doomed to die. If Achilles' character had been developed consistently, the play could have taken on tragic or satiric motifs, rather than historic. Instead, in the latter part of the play, the motivation for Achilles' actions is his love for Priam's daughter, Polyxena.¹⁵ Shakespeare provides excellent plot motivation for Achilles, but it hardly builds up a consistent portrait of Achilles.

At the same time, this kind of characterization does allow Shakespeare to develop his theme of a society caught in the sway of chance and hazard. In Act IV, scene v, Achilles, feeling he has been challenged by Hector, says, "Tomorrow do I meet thee, fell as death" (IV. v. 267). This makes for a good dramatic confrontation in the particular scene. However, Shakespeare needs to delay the confrontation, so in the very next scene Achilles receives a letter from Priam's wife Hecuba reminding him of a previously sworn oath not to fight:

Here is a letter from Queen Hecuba,
 A token from her daughter, my fair love,
 Both taxing me and gazing me to keep
 An oath that I have sworn. I will not break it.
 Fall Greeks; fall fame; honour or go or stay;
 My major vow lies here; this I'll obey.

(V. i. 38-43)

This provides excellent plot motivation to prevent Achilles from fighting Hector until his friend Patroclus is killed by Hector. It also builds up the thematic portraiture of characters swinging with the "chance" of events.

The theme of chaos is also developed through the male characters' obsessions with women. For example, in Act III, scene i, we see Paris doting upon a coquettish Helen. This scene, thought by Alice Walker to be "the most brilliant scene of pure comedy in the canon,"¹⁶ is also the-

matically effective. From the prologue through the pleasant bantering between Pandarus and Cressida to the debates in the Trojan camp, Helen, although she is much discussed, is not seen. She is supposedly the cause of the whole strife. Shakespeare's portrait of a rather silly coquette brings the entire myth of the nobility of the Trojan war crashing down. She leads another prince of Troy. Paris says, "I would fain have armed today, but my Nell would not have it so" (III. i. 128-29). The scene also reflects the episodic nature of the play. It builds up the theme, but it has no other real connection to the rest of the play.

The characterization of both Troilus and Cressida also demonstrates the history play's emphasis on the individual scene rather than on a consistent elucidation of character. For example, in the first scene of the play, Troilus laments that he can no longer fight because

Each Trojan that is master of his heart,
Let him to field—Troilus, alas, hath none.

(I. i. 5-6)

But by the end of the scene he is ready to join Aeneas in combat. Is there any justification for this change? Pandarus has not indicated that he will do any more than he already has done to intercede on Troilus' behalf with Cressida (although, in point of fact, in the very next scene he does so): "Pray you, speak no more to me. I will leave all as I found it, and there an end" (I. i. 85-86). After Pandarus exits, in soliloquy, Troilus still says, "I cannot fight upon this argument" (I. i. 90). But Troilus must fight. It would be a serious stage omission if he did not appear in the next scene parading with the other Greek warriors to be seen by and discussed by Pandarus and Cressida. Compare this to Chaucer's treatment of the situation in which Pandarus and Troilus specifically set up his appearance in battle gear outside Cressida's window, and Pandarus tells Troilus that if he wants to win the lady he must show his bravery on the battle field. In the Trojan debate scene, Troilus, who "cannot fight upon this argument," argues against sending Helen back to the Greeks to end the war. He refuses to dishonor his king and country in such a manner, even though he thought it not dishonorable to abstain from fighting because of his unmastered heart. In this scene, it is necessary to have someone argue against Hector, and Troilus is the most logical choice although Shakespeare also has Paris do so. But to make Paris the only debater with Hector would make too much of a very minor character. It is much more practical stagecraft to make Troilus inconsistent.

Any semblance of an elucidation of character in the manner of

tragedy or comedy is destroyed in Act III, scene ii, when the characters speak almost presciently of their futures as myth. Troilus will be true; Cressida will be false; Pandarus will be pander. Yet even some of these characteristics are presented inconsistently. For example, when Troilus, who stalks about Cressida's door, "Like a strange soul upon Stygian banks" (III. ii. 8), learns that she will be traded to the Greeks for Antenor, he merely responds, "Is it so concluded?" (IV. ii. 66). If we compare this response to the debate in Chaucer between Pandare and Troilus on whether or not he should run off with her, we see the stock nature of Shakespeare's characters. Troilus, who vows "to weep seas, live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers" (III. ii. 72-73) and above all be "true" to his lady, does not even stay around to tell her she is to be exchanged. He cannot be worried about her reputation, as, for example, in Chaucer, although he tells Aeneas as they leave, "You did not meet me here" (IV. ii. 70), because it is plain that his relationship to Cressida is well-known:

Aeneas. (aside to Paris) . . . That I assure you:
Troilus had rather Troy were borne to Greece
Than Cressid borne from Troy.
Paris. (aside to Aeneas) . . . There is no help;
The bitter disposition of the time
Will have it so.

(IV. i. 45-50)

Aeneas certainly is aware that Troilus will be with Cressida when he comes to get her. We cannot look here for inner psychological reality. Instead, these strokes of inconsistency add brilliantly to the sense of characters unable to respond effectively to the chaos that is the theme of the play. They respond to plot and theme, not to any inner sense of reality.

Cressida is usually portrayed by the critics as a cold, calculating harlot.¹⁷ Since Cressida is unfaithful, she must be one. Woman is like that, after all. But although Cressida's history was firmly established, there is no evidence at the beginning of the play that she does not love Troilus or that, had circumstances been different, she would not have remained faithful to him. She predicts quite accurately that "men prize the thing ungained more than it is" (I. ii. 275), but in general she is given no credit for it. Her soliloquy, in Act I, scene ii, has been misread as the consistent psychological portrait of this cold calculating "daughter of the game." In Shakespearean theater, however, soliloquies were regarded by the audience as a means of telling what it needed to know, not as interior monologues of subtle subterfuge. Thus, we should believe that she is expressing honest fears when she tells us:

Yet hold I off: women are angels, wooing;
 Things won are done—joy's soul lies in the doing. . . .
 Then though my heart's content firm love doth bear,
 Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear.
 (I. ii. 272-73, 280-81)

Indeed, given that marriage is apparently not Troilus' goal (even though, as Muir notes, an "Elizabethan writer . . . usually assumed that the proper end of love was marriage"), her fears are justified. Muir adds that Shakespeare must have been bothered by Troilus' not being interested in marriage because he avoids mentioning the subject.¹⁸ She is not reacting fundamentally differently than do either Rosalind or Rosaline when their lovers moon over them. She is actually quite favorably drawn in the first part of the play (in which Shakespeare could be freer in her characterization, since it is more effective for the love-plot to have her a fair maiden), but in the end he makes her what she proverbially was—unfaithful. To have done otherwise would have been false to "history." But it is important to recognize that, at the end, she is not the sensible, rational woman of the beginning of the play. She must live up to her reputation. She gives in very quickly to the brutish Diomedes. As much as any character in the play, she is helpless in the face of events. Her fate is determined by the men. Thus, her story reflects in a straightforward way a society whose characters are at hazard to chance.¹⁹ She thematically adds to the play by her very name.

Thus, in character, in plot, and in theme, Shakespeare is writing in the genre of a history play. The play's uniqueness lies in the traditions of the subject, for it tells the story of a non-Christian, non-English history. This story allowed Shakespeare unusual freedom to develop a theme of chaos and horror, of unfaithfulness, deceit, and murder, in which small wrongs cannot be righted by an empty heaven and in which good men die at the hands of bad ones. The murder scene in which Achilles brutally kills Hector is one of the most powerful in Shakespeare. The play is experimental only in its subject—not as an example of an alienated Shakespeare bitter over the worth of men and women. It is true that such a subject may not have been any more popular in its time than it is on stage today. But its historical portrait of a society in chaos is convincing.

Washington State University

Notes

¹O. J. Campbell in his *Comical Satyre and Shakespeare's "Troilus and Cressida"* (1938; rpt. San Marino, CA: C. F. Braun & Co, 1970) argues that the play is a satire. Clearly there are satirical elements in *Troilus and Cressida*, although one might suggest that there is satire in many other Shakespearean plays (for example, *Love's Labour's Lost*) but, as Kenneth Muir has noted, "'Comical satire' hardly describes the most memorable scenes in the play—the two great debates, the dialogue between Ulysses and Achilles, Troilus' disillusionment, and the murder of Hector" (*Troilus and Cressida* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982], p. 37). Interestingly, Muir mostly mentions non-love plot episodes. On the other hand, Robert Kimbrough, *Shakespeare's "Troilus and Cressida" and Its Setting* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1964), argues that the play is a problem play even though he acknowledges that "such a label would have had little meaning in Shakespeare's day" (p. 177); in general, however, agrees with Campbell in emphasizing the satirical nature of the play: "*Troilus and Cressida* is comedy, but neither festive nor typical, only human. It tries neither to excuse nor to explain human behavior; it simply observes and reports. It could almost be presented in today's Theater of the Absurd" (p. 182). However, this tendency to observe and report seems much more typical of history plays than of other genres, but once again the most powerful scenes in the play seem unexplained by Kimbrough's treatment. For example, Kimbrough argues that although the "Hector we meet in *Troilus and Cressida* is a perfect knight, . . . Shakespeare did not allow him a noble, dignified death." He feels that the individual sense of honor, as opposed to the honor of the state, is a flaw that leads to his death. He notes that just before Achilles kills Hector, Hector nobly allows an Achilles "not in condition" to go free, and thus that "Hector's chivalrous nature will not let him take unfair advantage of another man, even his enemy" (p. 112). This seems to imply that Hector for acting nobly should be blamed for Achilles' murdering him. On the other hand, Muir says that in Hector's death Achilles is made more guilty and that Shakespeare increases the horror "by having Hector disarm Achilles at the first encounter, and by making Achilles and his Myrmidons murder Hector, an incident borrowed from the death of Troilus as described by Lydgate and Caxton" (Muir, *Sources*, p. 146).

²John Wasson, "In Defense of King Henry VIII," *Research Studies*, 32 (1964), 261-76, pp. 264-65. By "facts," Wasson means those events which the general play-going public at the time would have been aware of and would have considered to be historically essential. Richard III, for example, would have to have been portrayed as evil. However, details of events, not known by the general public, could often be altered to fit the particular plot needs of the playwright. For example, the fact that Richard II had favorites who contributed to his fall would be essential, and Shakespeare not only had to retain this fact, but also he had to find a dramatic use for it; however, the age of Richard's queen was not essential and thus could be changed by Shakespeare to fit his dramatic needs. By "chauvinism," Wasson seems simply to mean "patriotism."

³Kenneth Muir, ed. *Troilus and Cressida* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 35. All references to *Troilus and Cressida* will be cited parenthetically from this edition by act, scene, and line number.

⁴For detailed discussions of the sources selected, see Kenneth Muir, *Sources in Shakespeare's Plays*; Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, vol. 6 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1966), and Kimbrough, and for analysis of the specific relationship between Chaucer and Shakespeare, see E. T. Donaldson, *The Swan at the Well* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), especially chapters

four and five, and Ann Thompson, *Shakespeare's Chaucer: A Study in Literary Origins* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1978).

⁵Kenneth Muir, *The Sources in Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Methuen and Co., 1977), p. 13.

⁶References to Shakespeare's plays other than *Troilus and Cressida* are to William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford University Press, 1986).

⁷I am here distinguishing melodramatic from tragic. In a melodrama, outside forces or events bring about the protagonists' fall whereas, in tragedy, the protagonists are responsible themselves for the actions that cause their fall. In general, audiences seem to find melodrama more sympathetic.

⁸Oscar James Campbell, pp. 207-18.

⁹Muir ed., p. 40.

¹⁰Kimbrough, p. 139

¹¹It was a feature of the history play to have stock characters. Characters in the history play are recognized types such as the honest and fearless warrior, the disgusting coward, the conniving and untrustworthy enemy, the hypocritical self-seeker, the long-suffering mother, and the fair maiden. See Wasson, p. 265. Turn long-suffering mother into long-suffering wife (Andromache), and we have all these characters in *Troilus and Cressida*.

¹²Muir ed., p. 18.

¹³Muir, *Sources.*, p. 16.

¹⁴If one compares Chaucer's and Shakespeare's version of the story, it is clear how little divine providence permeates Shakespeare's play. Throughout Chaucer's *Troilus* the relation of man and fate, and man and moral order, is emphasized by the narrator. Also, in monologue, the characters discuss the philosophical questions raised by their actions. In Shakespeare we have none of this.

¹⁵Achilles' love for Polyxena, borrowed from Caxton, began, according to the source, a year after Hector's death. See Alice Walker, ed. *Troilus and Cressida* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1957), p. 192, n. 3; p. 192, n. 193-94. Kimbrough argues that Shakespeare borrowed this from plays by Peele or Greene where Achilles is in love with Polyxena before the death of Hector.

¹⁶Alice Walker, p. xxxi.

¹⁷For example, see Kimbrough, Campbell, and Bullough. Bullough, for example, says,

Cressida is a shallower person than in Chaucer or Lydgate, and though she is not patently wanton from the first, she is so conscious of her power, and uses it so obviously . . . that we are not surprised when Ulysses sees through her, and when she uses on Diomed the devices she used on Troilus (p. 109).

However, Bullough's comment seems to ignore the fact that it is Troilus who pursues Cressida, not she who pursues him. In an even earlier reaction to her (1896), Frederick Boas called her "a scheming cold-blooded profligate." E. T. Donaldson, who is more favorable toward Cressida, discusses her pejorative critical history in *The Swan at the Well*, note 213, p. 149, and in the chapter entitled "Criseyde Becoming Cressida."

¹⁸Muir, *Sources*, p. 142.

¹⁹E. T. Donaldson notes, "What more appropriate heroine could there be for a play, one of whose major themes is human inconstancy and inconsistency, than the woman

whose name had become a synonym for inconstancy?" (Donaldson, p. 79). Donaldson sums up the usual critical reaction to Cressida when he says that "reading comparisons of Shakespeare's heroine with Chaucer's, one often feels that Chaucer's heroine was somehow a better and more moral unfaithful woman than Shakespeare's, a nice girl sadly gone wrong, rather than just a tart." But he adds that "they behave in exactly the same way" (Donaldson, p. 78).

Inaction in *Othello* and *Hamlet* by Daniel W. Ross and Brooke K. Horvath

"We wait upon your lordship."

—*Othello*

"Stand, and unfold yourself."¹

—*Hamlet*

Both *Othello* and *Hamlet* are, as John Bayley has suggested, tragedies of mind,² although *Hamlet*'s is a very different sort of mind from *Othello*'s. *Hamlet*, a sixteenth-century Derrida, becomes so enmeshed in the infinite regress of consciousness engendered by truth's uncertainty—a regress that constantly defers the motives for conclusive action—that he becomes unable or unwilling to act. *Othello*, accustomed to the prompt actions necessitated by warfare and the mindset appropriate to his public self, becomes so confused, so cowed by the problematic pursuit of truth in the private sphere he has recently entered upon marriage to Desdemona that he releases this pursuit and its attendant actions to others. The result in both plays is the same: both characters ultimately feel so compelled to bring their crises to a close that they act in a hectic, emotional manner to escape the abstract world of thought that has ensnared them. If *Hamlet* appears the greater tragic hero, this may be because he has trapped *himself* in this abstract world in an effort to understand the nature of truth, while *Othello* has *allowed* himself to be trapped by permitting his search to be appropriated or directed by another. In short, whereas the scholar *Hamlet* brings about his own defeat, the general *Othello* surrenders.

It is not surprising that these two plays would evidence such concerns with a similar problem. Both were written during Shakespeare's "problem period"; indeed, G. B. Harrison, in his edition of Shakespeare, surmises that *Othello* was written immediately after *Hamlet*.³ One characteristic of the "problem period" is Shakespeare's apparent dissatisfaction with generic boundaries: *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure* violate many of the norms of comedy, and *Troilus and Cressida* has generated countless arguments about its classification. Equally problematic, *Hamlet* and *Othello* challenge our traditional assumptions about tragedy.

In making an issue of action and demonstrating that thought can preclude action, *Othello* and *Hamlet* broke new ground for tragedy. Aristotle was specific about the importance of action in tragedy: "Tragedy . . . is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete and of

a certain magnitude . . . in the form of action, not of narrative." Action, for Aristotle, must be the key both to the form and the substance of tragedy, and it must not be subordinated to another element such as character:

For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character: character comes in as subsidiary to the actions.⁴

But *Othello* and *Hamlet* do not prioritize action; rather, they question its sufficiency in a complicated, ambivalent world. We can say of these plays what John D. Barbour has said of Conrad's *Nostramo*—that they make action and thought inimical "because taking action requires a basic 'illusion': the belief that one's moral idea can be realized in practical terms."⁵ *Hamlet* loses any such illusion very early in his play, and so does *Othello*, once Iago initiates him into a realm of thought which raises endless spectres of doubt and suspicion in his mind. These two characters, thus, foreshadow the overriding problem that burdens post-Cartesian man: not only does thought validate their existence—it *becomes* their existence.

Writing of *Othello*, W. H. Auden remarked that he could not "think of any other play in which only one character [Iago] performs personal actions" and all others "only exhibit behavior."⁶ Indeed, all of the play's principal characters display two species of inaction that render them tractable so far as Iago is concerned: their readiness to act through intermediaries and their propensity to believe second-hand information or hearsay. Both species of inaction implicate most of the cast as responsible, through their irresponsibility, for the ensuing tragedy.

Among those who unwisely let others act in their stead, Brabantio retires to the Duke for justice rather than confronting *Othello* directly; Roderigo turns to Iago, surrendering his purse, for help in securing Desdemona's attention (just as the Moor had earlier turned to Cassio); Cassio unpolitically asks Desdemona to plead his cause; Desdemona relies on others' speculations and prognostications rather than questioning her husband concerning the cause of his discontent; and Iago fouls his plot by asking Emilia to steal the handkerchief and Roderigo to slay Cassio. Similarly, reliance on hearsay manifests itself throughout the play: just as the charm of *Othello*'s tales of exotic lands and improbable adventures (hearsay of a sort) first caused Desdemona to love him, so hearsay keeps Roderigo the dupe of Iago and causes Cassio

to accept the account of his dismissal as reported by Iago. Moreover, judgment based on hearsay characterizes every juridical proceeding in the play: Othello's account, in Act I, of what Desdemona will say placates the Duke long before she arrives; Othello's assessment of Cassio's error in Act II and his punishment of the lieutenant are arrived at with only one question's having been directed Cassio's way; and Emilia's uncorroborated accusation of Iago in Act V is sufficient to condemn him. This last example shows that even after the tragedy has been revealed, Othello's society has not changed its attitude toward hearsay.

Yet Auden forgot one character, the clown, who highlights hearsay and passivity as the grievous faults they generally are in Shakespeare by his steadfast refusal to fall victim to these strains of inaction. He first appears when sent by Othello to silence the musicians Cassio set playing below the Moor's bedroom window. Central among the scene's functions is the depiction of the clown as one who acts: entering upon Othello's business, he leaves on an errand for Cassio.⁷ Similarly, in his only other appearance, the clown is sent on an errand by Desdemona to Cassio. Although it is Desdemona who wishes to speak to Cassio, and for whom information concerning him is crucial, it is the clown who declares, "I will catechize the world for him . . . make questions and by them answer" (III. iv. 13-14). The clown understands that such an action is not a mere *pro forma* exercise but must engage a man's full intelligence and will. He knows also that any truth sought may be problematic but that to seek it "is within the compass of man's wit . . ." (III. iv. 21-22), an enterprise neither Othello nor Desdemona ever attempts.

The clown's insistence on purposefully misconstruing any utterance suggests his sensitivity to how meaning can be manipulated. Like Hamlet, he is aware that alternative meanings exist, that utterances can have more than one intention, that one must guard oneself against rhetorical sleight-of-hand. The clown would not be so quick as Cassio to believe ill of himself upon hearing reports of his drunkenness. The clown would not be so quick as Desdemona to plead Cassio's case. The clown would not be so quick as Othello to believe Iago's lies. The clown would check things out for himself. The clown would act.

Throughout the play we wait for Othello to act: not simply to listen gullibly to lies, to play the audience to Iago's staged encounters and then to wax mad, but to act directly—to confront Cassio and Desdemona with Iago's accusations and his own suspicions and so lay those suspicions to rest. Instead, he is led about by his ancient, listening to rumors, waiting for "evidence." These "actions," essentially nonactions, when coupled with similar behavior from Desdemona and Cassio,

precipitate both Othello's death and the death of his young wife.

But why is Othello the way he is and why, when eventually he does act, is his most decisive deed since marrying Desdemona the accomplishment of so violent a divorce? The answer to the first question is to be found in his attempt to transfer the military or public way of life to a private, domestic context where it does not belong. This tendency is obvious in Othello's use of ceremonial rhetoric in private situations and in the fact that this domestic tragedy takes place, oddly, in "the general camp," in the midst of a military campaign. Othello is accustomed to a world in which, for one in command, action is properly delegated and one must necessarily rely on the reports of others (though one would expect a general also to have cultivated a wary skepticism); however, what is appropriate to a general is not appropriate to the husband or lover. Lovers should not court by proxy; they should not commission others to spy on their wives; they should not expect their wives to act like enlisted men; and they should not respond to the intricacies of marriage with military tactics.

But Othello, a Moor and so an outsider in Venice, had gained his place in society, hence his self-worth and sense of identity, solely from his role in the public sphere. Telling her tales of his exploits, he had used that identity to woo Desdemona, thus uniting himself with upper-class Venetian society. But his marriage complicated his public role while adding a particularly problematic private role new to the Moor. As Ernest Becker has said, "as soon as a man lifts his nose from the ground and starts sniffing at eternal problems like life and death, the meaning of a rose or a star cluster—then he is in trouble."⁸ Othello's failure to understand these complications, the nature of his new role and relationship, is indicated in his naïve promise to the Duke that taking Desdemona to Cyprus will not alter or compromise his public role:

And Heaven defend your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant
For she is with me. . . .

(I. iii. 267-69)

But of course Desdemona's presence does change everything, lifting Othello's nose from the ground and making him no longer what Kierkegaard called an "'immediate' man,"⁹ but one who must confront the most problematic questions about life and human relationships. His sense of himself, hence of his world and its truths, grows complex in ways unfamiliar to him and threatening to his sense of self. Othello responds to these complications in a dual manner: on the one hand,

reducing his marriage to a web of subterfuge and his bedroom to a battlefield, he continues to employ a military pattern of solving problems; on the other hand, stymied by truth's problematic nature, he turns desperately to Iago to do his thinking and doing for him. In short, Othello attempts to simplify his problem's equation: for instance, he prefers merely to eliminate Cassio rather than to question him (which would likely add variables to the problem), and he cancels the constant of Desdemona's affection by symbolically casting it away:

... Look here, Iago,
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven—
'Tis gone. . . .

(III. iii. 444-46)¹⁰

Part of Othello's unease stems from his attempt to gain the same self-validation from the private sphere as he had enjoyed in the public. But the private sphere does not afford Othello the opportunity to display his public prowess. Auden, speaking of the historical shift of the source of man's freedom to "disclose himself to others" from the public to a private realm, tags as one consequence of this change the loss of "the man of action, the doer of public deeds."¹¹ Othello was this doer of public deeds, but his ability to act has been nullified by his removal to the private sphere.¹² In this respect it is emblematic that not the newly married general but a storm defeats the Turks. The changes in Othello's life lead simultaneously to his passivity and to his feeble efforts to remain an active, public figure. When he can no longer bear this compromise, he reverts to the warrior he had been and kills Desdemona (just as Hamlet's warrior-father desires a quick and bloody revenge of the injustice done him).

If Othello's problem arises from Iago's success at making something out of nothing, Hamlet tries to make nothing out of something.¹³ Othello reacts to his situation by saying, "Let's get this situation taken care of as quickly as possible so that we don't have to think about it." Hamlet responds to his situation by saying, "Wait! Let's think about this some more; let's not act too hastily." But inaction rarely bodes well in Shakespeare: think of Richard II, who cannot act purposefully and thus loses his crown; think of Lear, who desires to cease acting in his proper role.

Of course, the problem of inaction in *Hamlet* has long been recognized. As early as 1879, Henry Norman Hudson, an influential nineteenth-century editor of Shakespeare, complained that critics who insisted that Hamlet need only kill the king "with instant dispatch" did

not understand Hamlet's dilemma as well as the Prince himself did. Such hasty action, Hudson noted,

. . . would be both a crime and a blunder . . . How shall he justify such a deed to the world? How vindicate himself from the very crime which must allege against another? For, as he cannot subpoena the Ghost, the evidence on which he is to act is available only in the court of his conscience. To serve any good end, the deed must so stand to the public eye as it does to his own; else he will be in effect setting an example of murder, not of justice. And the Crown will seem to be his real motive, duty but a pretence. Can a man of his "large discourse looking before and after" be expected to act thus?¹⁴

Thus, Hamlet, like Othello, finds himself thrust into an unfamiliar realm: the public. Although Hamlet has ostensibly spent his time in that realm Becker called dangerous—the realm of abstract speculation—this had been Hamlet's way of keeping his nose to the ground. Now, at Elsinore, he has his head pulled up into that world in which Othello would have been at ease: the world of political action. Like Othello, Hamlet reverts to *his* old way of responding; that is, he immerses himself in analysis, introspection, scholasticism. Whereas Othello allows domestic tragedy to suffuse itself through "the general camp," Hamlet, who cannot justify his deeds as Hudson noted he must, becomes preoccupied with his dilemma's domestic side. Both Hamlet and his father's Ghost should realize their priorities confuse public and private issues and will lead to disastrous consequences. As Fortinbras says at the end, "Such a sight as this / Becomes the field but here shows much amiss" (V. ii. 412-13).

Because he is introspective, Hamlet, unlike Othello, understands the limitations and errors of his response to his crisis; he willfully falls into his introspective trap. In a sense, however, the trap is unavoidable, for knowledge is as much a curse as a gift. The knowledge Hamlet gains on the platform is particularly cursed as it casts him into an inescapable post-Lapsarian state. It is not merely the knowledge that Claudius has killed his father but an insight into life's mystery and evil—an insight for which Hamlet's previous intellectual exercises could not have prepared him. As Hamlet now realizes,

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

(I. v. 166-67)

Hamlet's new knowledge yields two overriding effects. First, it

forces on him a more terrifying isolation than any other Shakespearean character experiences. Whereas Lear has his Fool and his Kent, Macbeth his wife, Othello his Iago, Hamlet, in the words of David Leverenz, "is utterly alone, beyond the loving semi-understanding of reasonable Horatio or obedient Ophelia."¹⁵ Only the audience can empathize with Hamlet because only we have shared with him the encounter with the Ghost and the introspections that follow. Further, action becomes more problematic for Hamlet than for any other Shakespearean hero. Hamlet does not share Othello's illusion that killing his enemy will resolve his crisis; even if he kills Claudius, Hamlet must live with the political and personal consequences. Thus, every interpretation of truth remains problematic, every action based on that interpretation of dubious moral value. The result is a hesitancy to act not simply out of personal cowardice but out of a feeling that knowledge makes action impossible:

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
 And enterprises of great pitch and moment
 With this regard their currents turn awry
 And lose the name of action.

(III. i. 83-88)

At this point Hamlet questions the very efficacy of action. If action does not resolve crises satisfactorily, inaction or deferred action remains the only alternative. Indeed, Freud cited the tendency to substitute thought for deed as one of modern man's chief characteristics, and Hamlet and Othello may in fact be seen as two representatives of modern man.¹⁶ At one pole stands Hamlet, whose intense self-consciousness leads him to feign madness, a strategy which, according to Jacques Lacan, is nearly unique to modern heroes. As Lacan notes, earlier tragedies and legends offer few examples of feigned madness; madness was usually real, rarely a stratagem. But Hamlet puts on an "antic disposition" (I. v. 172) because he must accommodate the burden of self-consciousness.¹⁷

At the other extreme stands Othello, whose irrational rage drives him to true madness. In Othello's psyche, a compulsion toward self-forgetfulness replaces a rage for understanding, a tendency dramatized when Othello falls into a trance upon hearing what he considers conclusive proof of Desdemona's infidelity. Hamlet's self-obsession is an attempt to come to terms with who he is; Othello cannot afford to take that chance, for his identity renders him forever an outsider, self-delusions of belongingness notwithstanding. In contradistinction to

Hamlet's neurotic withdrawal into solipsism as he mulls over the nature of truth, is Othello's equally neurotic flight from thought caused by a fear of truth. It may be true, as Becker has said, that "beyond a given point man is not helped by more 'knowing,' but only by living and doing in a partly self-forgetful way. As Goethe put it, we must plunge into experience and then reflect on the meaning of it." But Becker goes on to say, just as "all reflection and no plunging drives us mad," so "all plunging and no reflection, and we are brutes."¹⁸ Insofar as Othello finally acts unreflectingly, he is the brute others have seen him to be throughout the play—and a victim of this brutishness as much as Hamlet is a victim of his paralyzing knowledge. All modern men are neurotic, some psychologists tell us, because man is the animal that thinks, that can be bound either by the limitations of the body or the infinite possibilities of the mind.¹⁹ It is this conjunction of cognition and creatureliness that is the problem: if man did not think, he would be a happy animal; if he thought but had no body, he would be happy because immortal. In *Othello* and *Hamlet*, Shakespeare, one might say, has taken the two sides of man's dilemma and given each its own showing. *Othello* foregrounds the problem of animality insofar as Othello's problem stems from the givenness of his body: its blackness locks him forever outside Venetian society. *Hamlet* foregrounds the problem of thought. If Hamlet appears the more tragic, it is because he errs on the side of infinity.

Columbus College and Kent State University

Notes

¹*Othello*, III. ii. 6 and *Hamlet* I. i. 2. Unless otherwise indicated, references to both plays are from *The Complete Works*, ed. G. B. Harrison (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1968).

²*Shakespeare and Tragedy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), Chapter 7.

³Harrison, p. 1056.

⁴Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher, *Criticism: The Major Texts*, ed. Walter Jackson Bate (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970), pp. 22-23.

⁵*Tragedy as a Critique of Virtue: The Novel and Ethical Reflection* (Chico: Scholar's Press, 1984), p. 99.

⁶"The Joker in the Pack," *The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 246.

⁷The scene has, arguably, several other functions. It may be largely comic relief after the events detailed in Act II, scene iii; it may be meant to parody the calculated clowning of Iago with Cassio (in both scenes one participant dupes the other); it may be meant to recall in the clown's puns Cassio's lament that with his reputation lost "what

remains is bestial" (II. iii. 264); and it may be meant to suggest that the music may be hindering, not enhancing, the Moor's amours.

⁸*The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press, 1973), p. 178.

⁹Becker, pp. 184-85.

¹⁰A stage direction—"hisses contemptuously"—inserted by an editor between lines 445 and 446, does much to clarify the sense of this passage. See Lawrence Mason's edition of *Othello*, rev. ed. Tucker Brooke (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1947).

¹¹"The Poet and the City," *The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays*, p. 80. Auden's description of the shift in focus from public to private worlds helps us see the extent to which Othello the soldier belongs to an older, obsolescent world, while Hamlet the thinker belongs to a new, modern one.

¹²This change of events is captured in the recurring figures of speech characters often employ when alluding to the Moor's marital state: Cassio calls Desdemona "our great captain's captain" (II. i. 74); Iago, convincing the dismissed lieutenant to make his appeal not to Othello but to Desdemona, says, "Our general's wife is now the general" (II. iii. 319-20); a few lines later, in a soliloquy, Iago depicts Othello's new impotence much more explicitly:

His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function.

(II. iii. 351-54)

¹³Of course, making something out of nothing was an enterprise that often captivated Shakespeare, the poet who made "much ado about nothing." At times "nothing" has sinister possibilities in Shakespeare. When Cordelia answers Lear's absurd desire for testimony of her love with "Nothing," the old man instigates his tragedy in his determination to show her that "Nothing comes from nothing." More positively, "nothing" can represent the imagination itself and all its generative possibilities. In *The Meaning of Shakespeare*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1951), Harold C. Goddard says, "Nothing," for Shakespeare, "was practically a synonym for creativity" (p. 272). Similarly, David Wilbern believes that "nothing" "represents fullness rather than emptiness, presence rather than absence, whole rather than hole." See his "Shakespeare's Nothing," *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*, ed. Murray M. Schwartz and Coppelia Kahn (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1980), p. 247. One reason Hamlet so fascinates readers and seems so likely an autobiographical figure (Keats, for one, was convinced that Hamlet was Shakespeare's self-portrait) is that he shares his creator's propensity to regard "nothing" as a creative force. From Hamlet's "nothing" (that is, his procrastination, his inaction, his idle thinking) comes a poetry which is an attempt to fill the void in a world that seems "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable."

¹⁴See Hudson's "Introduction" to *Shakespeare's Tragedy of Hamlet* (Boston: Ginn Publishing, 1904), p. 17.

¹⁵"The Woman in Hamlet: An Interpersonal View," *Representing Shakespeare*, p. 112.

¹⁶*Totem and Taboo*, trans. and ed. A. A. Brill, *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud* (New York: Modern Library, 1938), p. 930.

¹⁷See Lacan's "Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet," trans. James Hulbert, *Literature and Psychoanalysis: The Question of Reading: Otherwise*, ed. Shoshana Felman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1982), pp. 19-20. Nietzsche took a stance

similar to Freud's and Lacan's. Speaking of *Hamlet*, he noted that "true knowledge, an insight into the horrible truth, outweighs any motive for action." Once man has gained knowledge, he feels that "action could not change anything in the eternal nature of things." See *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. 60.

¹⁸Becker, p. 199.

¹⁹As Stephen Booth says, tragedy defies the notion of limitations; it depicts man reaching beyond all boundaries toward infinite possibility. See his *King Lear, Macbeth, Indefinition, and Tragedy* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1983), p. 85.

**“His quarry cries on hauocke”:
Is It Shakespeare’s Own Judgment
On the Meaning of *Hamlet*?
by J. Anthony Burton**

I.

When Hamlet instructs Horatio with his dying breath to tell his story to the world, the sound of Fortinbras’ army returning from its Polish campaign is already audible at Elsinore. Arriving a moment after Hamlet dies, Fortinbras speaks out:

Fortin. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it ye would see;

If ought of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

For. His quarry cries on hauocke. Oh proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternall Cell.

That thou so many Princes, at a shoote,
So bloodily hast strooke.¹

(V. ii. 371-77)

The phrase “His quarry cries on hauocke” is generally understood more or less as Kittredge explains it: “These dead bodies proclaim that a massacre has taken place. Quarry is the regular word for the game killed in a hunt. Havoc was the old battle cry for ‘No quarter’ . . . Cries on means simply ‘cries out’, ‘shouts’, not ‘calls for’ or ‘exclaims against’.”²

I think Kittredge’s interpretation is unsound, because “quarry” and “havoc” each have alternate meanings and the dramatic context strongly indicates that Kittredge chose wrongly in both cases. His explanation obscures the real meaning and central importance of the phrase, which appears to be Shakespeare’s own summary and closing judgment that the account of Hamlet’s fatal struggle with Claudius should be understood as a story of misguided, mutual self-destruction. There is also a great deal within the play to suggest that Shakespeare meant the phrase to be spoken by Horatio instead of Fortinbras, as well as evidence in the First Quarto that Horatio originally did so. My argument for a new interpretation does not require the phrase to be spoken by Horatio, and my argument for reassigning it to him does not depend on the new interpretation. However, each argument, if accepted, is strong additional evidence for the validity of the other.

Kittredge's explanation has Fortinbras saying, in plain English, "This is a real massacre," a vapid and mistaken observation that does not explain anything. Kittredge's prestige has surely diverted attention from the basic flaws of his explanation, beginning with the fact that "massacre" is a dubious way to characterize four bodies lying amidst a large number of onlookers dressed for entertainment rather than war; and, because the word suggests a single aggressor on whom blame can be laid, it dismisses in advance Horatio's promise that, when the facts are known, they will tell a complex story of accidental judgments and mistaken purposes fallen on their inventors' heads. Kittredge's explanation also has Fortinbras deliver a dramatically superfluous explanation to a group of people who know more than he. Neither Horatio nor the audience needs to be told what has just happened on stage; Fortinbras' role is to respond to a sight of woe and wonder, not explain it, and his sententious appraisal is out of place in circumstances that call for a spontaneous expression of astonishment or dismay. Fortinbras' shocked apostrophe "Oh proud death. . ." has the right degree of spontaneity to convey the reaction Horatio leads us to expect, but "His quarry cries on hauocke" intervenes awkwardly between his first sight of the corpses and his reaction to it. Consequently, the first phrase subverts the dramatic effect of the apostrophe to death by defeating its spontaneity and making it sound forced and artificial.

To a battle-hardened field commander fresh from a military campaign in Poland, the mere sight of four corpses (even if we forget to ask how Fortinbras knew who they were) is by itself unlikely to elicit flights of wonder. On the contrary, our few clues to Fortinbras' character show that he was vengeful, ambitious, pragmatic, and generally inured to the horrors of war and violence. Nor is there anything visually apparent in the scene itself to proclaim a recent massacre or suggest the bloody aftermath of a hunt; the four victims all have died of poison and show no signs of serious injury: Gertrude was unmarked, Hamlet only scratched, and the rapier wounds to Claudius ("I am but hurt") and Laertes were not severe enough to appear mortal. Hamlet had no inkling that either he or Laertes were mortally wounded until Laertes confessed having used an envenomed sword, and he stabbed Claudius, expecting to kill him with the poison: "Then venome to thy worke" (V. ii. 320).

II.

Let us look more closely at the meanings of the key words, "quarry" and "havoc." A hunter's quarry is not simply "the game killed," but a

bloody heap of torn flesh consisting of the entrails and undistributed scraps of a slain deer, all laid out on the hide (*cuirée*) as a reward to the hounds after the animal has been dismembered in the field and the desirable parts reserved for distribution according to the laws of venery. When Shakespeare used “quarry” in order to describe a scene of gory carnage, he knew how to make his meaning clear: “I’d make a quarry / With thousands of these *quarter’d* slaves, as high / As I could pick my lance.”³ Quartering was the last element in the gruesome punishment for high treason; the criminal was first hanged by the neck, next cut down alive and disembowelled, then beheaded, after which his body was quartered, or divided into four parts, for disposition at the king’s pleasure.⁴

But this was not the chief meaning of “quarry” in Shakespeare’s day, when hawking was at the height of popularity and its terms were as familiar to Elizabethans as stolen bases and foul balls are to Americans now. For them, “quarry” was the bird flown at by a trained hawk or falcon, and the English practice was to train each kind of hawk for a different quarry; the noblest, gerfalcons and peregrines, for example, were taught to fly at herons.⁵ Beginning with the first act, Shakespeare’s frequent use of allusions to falconry builds a context in which it is natural to understand “quarry” in the same sense and, as Hamlet and Claudius both often refer to themselves in falconer’s terms, the sport becomes a running image for the contest between them. After the first meeting with his father’s ghost, Hamlet calls Horatio to him like a falconer to his bird: “Hillo, ho, ho, boy; come bird come.”⁶ Parrying Rosencrantz and Guildenstern’s clumsy inquiries, Hamlet warns them not to underestimate him, “I know a Hawke from a handsaw,” (II. ii. 394) with “handsaw” widely considered to be a variant or corruption of “hernshaw,” an early word for “heron.”⁷ He means “I’m sane enough to know the hunter from the hunted,” an ironically mistaken opinion that leads him, in turn, to underestimate Claudius in the last act.⁸ He welcomes the travelling players in the same idiom, “wee’l e’ne / to’t like French Faulconers, flie at anything we see” (II. ii. 455-56). In the Q2 reading, Hamlet refers to the “pitch”—the height of a falcon’s flight before it swoops to the attack—of his own enterprise against the king: “enterprises of great pitch and moment, / With this regard they currents turn awry, / And loose the name of action” (III. i. 86-88).⁹

The same image creeps gradually into Claudius’ speech, starting with the apprehension that Hamlet constituted a vaguely avian threat over which his melancholy “sits on brood,” whose “hatch” will be a danger to Claudius (III. i. 145-46). Later, he pictures Hamlet’s unplanned return from the voyage to England as “checking,” a falconer’s word for

the act of a trained hawk turning from its correct prey to pursue an inferior one. By visualizing Hamlet as a recalcitrant falcon, Claudius places himself in the role of falconer, and enters the metaphorical framework wherein he and Hamlet are each simultaneously hunter and quarry.

* * * *

"Havoc" was a military command given at the fall of a besieged town or stronghold that released the victorious soldiers from their customary duty to take and preserve captives as hostages for ransom and freed them to engage in indiscriminate slaughter and looting. It was a rare punitive measure, used against towns that offended against the proprieties of war by "obstinate defense" when there was no possibility of relief from the siege, there being no duty or reason to resist at that point.¹⁰ Moreover, the laws of war apparently made it a strictly royal prerogative to order havoc, and Shakespeare's usage is regularly consistent with this meaning.¹¹ Since the king had a share in all ransoms, the collection of which was a principal means of financing military campaigns, it is easy to see why that source of income was jealously guarded.

A curious aspect of this specifically royal command is that it could have been given by Hamlet just as well as Claudius. Although the Renaissance laws of war are not clear on this point, the sovereign prerogative apparently extended to a prince of the blood who was next in line of succession, the prince royal. If the existence of an elective kingship in Shakespeare's Denmark raises doubts whether the Danish heir apparent had the same authority, Claudius' public designation of Hamlet as his approved successor serves to remove them and confirm Hamlet's privileged status. But Shakespeare does not let his double meaning rest exclusively on the promise of a succession that Claudius is doing everything in his power to prevent. There is a clear reminder in Hamlet's announcement at Ophelia's funeral, "This is I, / Hamlet *the Dane*," that he is also the princely avenger of a murdered father who, as such, can assert an immediate claim to the throne.

Claudius' murder of the old king made his own kingship, in the language of some political theorists, lawless "in entrance," *ex defectu tituli*; but, although the audience might have been gratified to reflect that Hamlet's cause was not entirely lawless, the argument was of no practical value to him, since he had no way to prove the facts. However, the same theorists held that even a lawful king could descend to the legal status of an usurper through misconduct, becoming lawless "in execution," *ex parte exercitii*.¹² In this regard, Hamlet's possession of the treacherous and inculpatory commission to England documented

Claudius' villainy, as damning to him as the Nixon tapes to Nixon, and balanced the long odds against deposing a reigning king by giving Hamlet the power to expose Claudius as a lawless tyrant. There is detail enough in the play to make it clear that Denmark was no safe haven for a lawless or even unpopular ruler. Claudius would gladly have disposed of Hamlet openly but for his fear of provoking a popular uprising, and Laertes showed how easy it was to mount an instant rebellion on the strength of Claudius' possible complicity in Polonius' unexplained death and secret burial. The very inclusion of these details raised politically sensitive issues of disobedience to authority that an Elizabethan playwright would ordinarily avoid, and their appearance here invites us to consider Hamlet as an uncrowned rightful king, whose authority in the matter of "havoc" was not derived from Claudius but in defiance of him.

The reciprocal roles of Claudius and Hamlet as both hunters and prey give "His quarry cries on hauocke" a special aptness for describing a story of mutual destruction by royal adversaries overcome by their own stratagems: "Behold the victim of his own command for all-out slaughter." All four deaths in the last scene were simultaneously the immediate result of both Hamlet's revenge against Claudius and Claudius' mirror-image counterplot against Hamlet. Within the context of *Hamlet* the phrase is perfect in its equivocality, and an Elizabethan would have been hard pressed to say who was the hawk and who the heron.

It is worth noting that the metaphor is reinforced in a remarkable way at the auditory level, because the medial "v" of "havoc" and its second syllable would both have tended to disappear in Elizabethan pronunciation, leaving the word a near if not exact homophone of "hawk" ("hawke" in F1, "hauke" in Q2).¹³ The range of early spellings for "hawk" reflects the close connection and possible common origin of the two words: "hafoc", "heafoc", "havec", "hevec", "hafek," "havek," "heavek," "hewek."¹⁴ If "havoc" and "hawk" were homophones, the phrase could make sense as colloquial sporting English for "the heron sent the hawk out to hunt," preserving the basic image of someone bringing destruction on his own head, although not the added subtlety of a wholesale killing by royal command. The play on words helps to insure that any playgoer who missed the military nuance of "havoc" would still understand the summation, and underscores the importance of ironic reversal as a principal leitmotif.

We can reject any romantic illusion that it would be out of character for Hamlet to order havoc. The arrival of the travelling players exposed his appetite for bloody deeds by reviving his memory of a speech

learned years ago, a particular favorite that he “chiefly loved” and retained well enough to recite perfectly for thirteen lines. Significantly, it is an account of the bloody slaughter at the fall of Troy, of all besieged cities in history the one which the English identified with their own ancient origins and national pride. In words that sound like a formal blazon of Havoc personified, Hamlet describes murderous Pyrrhus in heraldic style, all “*sable*” and in gory “*heraldry*,” “to take [Q2: total] *geulles*, horridly *trick'd* / With blood of Fathers, Mothers, Daughters, Sonnes, / Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets . . . with eyes like *Carbuncles*” (I. i. 475-86), and his obvious relish in the recital confirms his readiness for the bloody deeds to follow.

The summary description, “His quarry cries on hauocke,” suggests a story of stratagems boomeranging against their devisers, anticipating Horatio’s synopsis of “purposes mistook, / Falne on the Inuentors heads,” and revealing it as an explicit confirmation that ironic reversal is central to the tragic pattern, of a piece with the sense that the time is out of joint and the state of Denmark rotten, where the established city tragedians are dislocated by child actors who “exclaim against their own succession.” Claudius instructs Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to “drive” Hamlet to attend the players’ performance and arrives to find The Mouse-trap set for himself. There is self-defeating activity everywhere, from the false Danish dogs of Gertrude’s phrase, who run counter (i.e., follow a scent in the wrong direction, away from the prey and towards their masters), to hawks who check, engineers hoist with their own petar, and messengers victimized by their own messages; and the whole of Denmark seems at cross-purposes with itself.

Lily Campbell once asserted that “every character in a Shakespearean play is engaged in saying exactly what Shakespeare wanted the audience to know and in saying it over and over again,” and Hamlet, Claudius, and Laertes do just that, as each in his own characteristic metaphor directly associates himself with an image of ironic reversal.¹⁵ Hamlet proclaimed it poetic justice to overcome an adversary with the adversary’s own weapons, sending Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to their deaths without remorse: “they did make loue to this employment. / They are not neere my Conscience, their debate [Q2: defeat] / Doth by their owne insinuation grow: / Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes / Between the passe, and fell incensed points / Of mighty opposites” (V. ii. 59-63). His brusque dismissal evokes disquieting associations with The Mouse-trap he set for Claudius, because it was a commonplace of Renaissance theology to associate mousetraps with ironic reversal between the mightiest opposites of all, God and the Devil, and thus implies the further irony that Hamlet is as much out of

his depth as his two old friends.¹⁶ His better known expression of the same idea occurs in Q2 only: "tis the sport to have th'enginer / Hoist with his owne petar" (III. iv. 208-09).

Laertes, the portraiture of Hamlet's cause, openly proclaimed his own death as an ironic reversal for which he was culpable: "Why, as a Woodcocke / To mine Springe, Osricke. / I am justly kill'd with mine owne Treacherie. . . . the foule practice / Hath turn'd itself on me" (V. ii. 333-35, 348-49). The same can be said for Laertes' father, who concealed his identity (but not his presence in Gertrude's chamber) just well enough to be fatally mistaken for Claudius. The professional busybody, Polonius, learned too late how risky an occupation it was: "to be too busie, is some danger" (III. iv. 30).

Hamlet's attempt to reconcile with Laertes by disavowing any harm done to him as the unintended result of his own madness fits squarely into the thematic pattern:

*Hamlet is of the Faction that is wrong'd,
His madnesse is poore Hamlets Enemy.
. . . I haue shot mine Arrow o're the house,
And hurt my Mother.*

(V. ii. 188-94)

Within this metaphor, Hamlet's madness is just one more weapon that unexpectedly injures its wielder; and his next words, describing the fencing match as a "Brothers" wager, expand the image into a portrait of him and Laertes as two brothers united in woe by their mother's injury, while foretoking their own imminent union in death. Hamlet fell to Laertes in retaliation for killing Polonius, and Laertes to Hamlet in requital for his treachery, as each created the other's cause by disastrous assumptions about what his filial duty required.

In the same way, Claudius' language signals the convergence of his own destiny with the fortunes of Laertes and Hamlet, as he incorporates their characteristic metaphors of bird hunting and violent explosives into his own recurrent premonitions of self-destruction. "Oh limed soul, that strugling to be free, / Art more ingag'd" (III. iii. 71-72) prefigures Laertes' woodcock simile in the last scene;¹⁷ and his anticipatory vision of weapons that can "blast in prooffe" and kill the user recalls Hamlet's Q2 imagery of explosive military reversals: the enginer hoist with his petar, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern blown at the moon with their own mines. The same preoccupation animates Claudius' explanation to Laertes that his inaction after Polonius' death was out of concern for Hamlet's wide popularity, "So that my Arrowes / Too slightly timbred

for so loud a Winde, / Would haue reuerted to my Bow againe" (IV. vii. 33-35), and the image of a misdirected arrow anticipates Hamlet's use of the same metaphor in his attempted reconciliation with Laertes just before the duel. Preferring to avoid personal risk by letting others serve as his weapons, Claudius sees his worst fears come true as they all become agents of his own destruction. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, sent to escort Hamlet to his death in England, let their incriminating commission fall into his hands and the loud wind of Providence blows him directly back to Denmark. Laertes, another willing and convenient tool, was too slightly timbered for the storm of retribution breaking over Claudius' head and became his destroyer in the end by revealing to the court what Claudius needed most to conceal, "The King, the King's too blame" (V. ii. 351).

All the secondary characters in *Hamlet* are undone by the unforeseen results of their efforts to promote self-interest and, by offering seven variations on the theme of ironic reversal, they strengthen the case for interpreting "His quarry cries on hauocke" as a further expression of it as well as a description of Hamlet's own situation. The phrase is, if I may say so, a very "Shakespearean" kind of summing-up, putting the central idea in a nutshell while creating a perspective from which to understand its tragic meaning in light of the principal characters' declared intentions. It expresses the dominant theme of ironic reversal and destruction by one's own device in terms of the running images of falconry, hunting, and warfare, integrating the two streams of imagery and confirming Hamlet's description of Laertes' story as a reflection of his own, "by the image of my Cause, I see / The Portraiture of his" (V. ii. 79-80), right down to the self-destruction with which it ended.¹⁸ Elizabethan playgoers would have little trouble recognizing "His quarry cries on hauocke" as the coda to Hamlet's story; Shakespeare follows his usual practice by supplementing it with a partial explanation for the benefit of the stage audience plus the promise of a more complete one later, when he can tell of Hamlet and Claudius' competing claims to the Danish throne, the mutual and deadly hunt between them, and the double sense in which each was at the same time both the cause and victim of its fatal outcome.

The interpretation suggested here cannot, within the limits of this essay, answer the larger questions about the play's meaning, since mutual responsibility does not mean equal fault, and mirror-images are not copies but distortions. Nor is it alone sufficient to prove whether Hamlet's story is tragic or redemptive or, as I believe, both at once. These difficult questions require a broader study of *Hamlet*, proceeding from the fact that Hamlet is faced with a challenge to act justly in

difficult circumstances and taking into account that the setting of the drama extends from Denmark to the Afterworld—towards which the ghost, Hamlet, Claudius, Horatio, and Fortinbras repeatedly turn our thoughts. It remains for us to enrich our understanding of *Hamlet* by connecting these elements with the principle of poetic justice that he who lives by the sword will die by the sword, and the Bowman by his arrow; that the trapper will be trapped, the biter bit, and the deceiver deceived. The idea was a favorite medieval and Renaissance commonplace, found anywhere from the Bible to Aesop, Terence, Plautus, Ovid, Seneca, Chaucer, and Erasmus; and if Shakespeare has made it fundamental to the meaning of *Hamlet*, the connection should be explored thoroughly. The conclusion one draws will depend on one's view of what *Hamlet* is all about, a topic of widespread and intense disagreement over every detail. While it is not the purpose of this essay to interpret the play as a whole, I consider it obligatory to declare my own viewpoint before stating the implications of my argument.

* * * *

I see *Hamlet* as the expression of Shakespeare's extraordinary insight into the way that true justice is nothing more nor less than the Golden Rule in action, a cosmic law of cause and effect working directly from its celestial origin into the field of human activity according to the principle "Whatsoever you do unto others you do unto yourself." This is not to say the play is by any means a moral allegory, or to deny its character as revenge drama and popular entertainment. But the way Shakespeare glossed the central action with allusions to divine law, international law, customary law, and the law of the courts bears witness to his view of them all as facets of a greater whole which we are invited to recognize; the events of the play unfold in obedience to that higher law, even as the separate characters work out their destinies according to the demands of plot and character.

I intend to develop these ideas further in a study now in progress but, without exploring them here or resting any part of my argument on their validity, a few points are worth mentioning now. "Revenge" and "justice" were virtual synonyms in Elizabethan English; we, on the near side of Bacon's dictum that revenge is "a kind of wild justice," may think of it as personal, frequently excessive, and bad, and that justice, in contrast, is lawful, proportionate, and good. But in Shakespeare's day the distinction was not yet established; God's justice and His vengeance were one and the same. When the blood of a murder victim cries out from the earth, as it has done since Cain slew Abel, Shakespeare conceived it as crying for justice (*Richard II*) or, interchangeably, for re-

venge (*King John*).

Hamlet's task is to right a grave injustice, with freedom to go about it howsoever he chooses, and nothing in the Ghost's command requires him to commit any foul deeds of his own. Hamlet stamps that freedom with his individual and characteristically Renaissance determination to act only out of personal judgment and conviction, by learning the facts for himself. At the same time, he limits his freedom by electing to carry out his duty in accordance with a number of specifically Christian principles, which he then applies to the facts in a highly questionable way.

Like a set problem in a school examination, the play forces us to address a series of questions: "What was Hamlet supposed to do?" "Did he do it well or badly?" "Why then does Horatio think the Danes can avoid 'more mischance / On plots, and errors'" by understanding his story? Are we supposed to think of Hamlet as an everyday man, no more than his father's son and Claudius' subject; or as the godlike man of his own ideal vision, "the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals," in constant struggle with his earthly grossness? What is it *for him* to be or not to be himself? If Hamlet's death were poetic justice, he must have failed himself in some important respect. But the failure could not be simply his part in causing the deaths of the other victims, because the same evidence tells us that poetic justice required their deaths too. Trying to understand *Hamlet* is like trying to understand the Golden Rule itself, in the sense that one's view of what is right changes with every increase in wisdom and self-knowledge.

I am not by any means proposing a theory of relativism, or asserting that the meaning of the play is simply a matter of subjective opinion. Nor do I agree with those who claim that doubt itself is so integral to *Hamlet* that its meaning lies in its very ambiguity. The meaning I refer to is organic, like all living thoughts, and yet entirely objective and intelligible. Regardless of one's viewpoint about the play as a whole, this meaning is confirmed by a close reading of the text itself; but any attempt to reduce it to a single, fixed interpretation is bound to fail. It is safe only to say that the "meaning" of the play has to include the thought that, in this world or the next, each of us shall reap what we have sown, as Claudius put it, "even to the teeth and forehead of our faults."

III.

If "His quarry cries on hauocke" is recognized as central to the meaning of *Hamlet*, it can point to the solution of other problems in the last scene. Bernard Beckerman demonstrates how Shakespeare regularly

explained his plays in their closings, following a constant pattern that included a wrap-up of the action and a summary of its meaning. The function of each closing was to provide "a culmination of events that have beset the characters throughout the play," where the "uncertainties and confusions in the narrative are dispelled."¹⁹ In a deeper sense, the closing summaries are not so much an explanation of the plays as an authenticated point of departure for closer study, often introducing a view of the facts that might otherwise go unconsidered. Yet, without them, the other tragedies would be as much a mystery as *Hamlet*. What might we make of *Julius Caesar*, without Antony's judgment of Brutus to be "the noblest Roman of them all;" or *Othello*, without the Moor's self-judgment as "one that loved not wisely but too well;" or *Coriolanus*, without "the most noble corse that ever herald / Did follow to his urn?"

Although Beckerman never says so, *Hamlet* is clearly incomplete with respect to the closing pattern he described. Of Shakespeare's eleven tragedies, and the two histories (*Richard II* and *III*) described as tragedies on their First Folio title pages, all but *Hamlet* close with a judgment or clear allocation of responsibility, and a program for restoration of order by either formal sentence, punishment, or reconciliation. It is not likely that *Hamlet* would have been singled out during Shakespeare's lifetime as pleasing to "the wiser sort," if it were as enigmatic then as we find it now.²⁰ The prevailing style of moral exposition called for a well-defined conclusion, in the manner of the other tragedies; so it is fair to ask whether we have lost some meaning that was once felt to be evident.

Anne Barton, one of the few critics to express open dissatisfaction with *Hamlet's* ending, points out the disparity between what is expected of Horatio and his actual performance. She faults Horatio for his "startling" failure to tell Hamlet's story, saying "Horatio astonishes us by leaving out everything that seems important, reducing all that is distinctive about the play to a plot stereotype. Although his tale is, on one level, accurate enough, it is certainly not Hamlet's 'story'."²¹ Robert D. Hapgood, less charitably, dismisses Horatio's summary of Hamlet's story as "a sorry travesty of Hamlet's understanding of it."²² I think both critics are sound in their instincts; and there are good reasons, including textual evidence from Q1, for believing that Horatio originally summed up Hamlet's story quite competently, and was meant to do the same in both Q2 and F1.

The relevant text consists of two elements: Hamlet's dying instructions to Horatio, and Horatio's exchange with Fortinbras immediately after. The Folio reading is as follows:²³

Ham. Had I but time (as this fell Sergeant death
Is strick'd in his Arrest) oh I could tell you.
But let it be: *Horatio*, I am dead,
Thou liu'st, report me and my causes right
To the vnsatisfied.

Hor. Neuer beleeeue it.
I am more an Antike Roman than a Dane:
Heere's yet some Liquor left.

Ham. As th'art a man, giue me the Cup.
Let go, by Heauen Ile haue't
Oh good *Horatio*, what a wounded name,
(Things standing thus vnknowne) shall liue behind me.
If thou did'st euer hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicitie awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in paine,
To tell my Storie.

(V. ii. 337-52)

* * * *

Ham. But I do prophesie th'election lights
On *Fortinbras*. he ha's my dying voyce,
So tell him with the occurments more and lesse,
Which haue solicited. The rest is silence. O, o, o, o.

(V. ii. 361-64)

* * * *

Fortin. Where is this sight?
Hor. What is it ye would see;
If ought of woe, or wonder, cease your search.
Fortin. His quarry cries on hauocke. Oh proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternall Cell.
That thou so many Princes, at a shoote,
So bloodily hast strooke.

(V. ii. 371-77)

* * * *

Hor. And let me speake to th'yet vnknowing world,
How these things came about. So shall you heare
Of carnall, bloudie, and vnnaturall acts,
Of accidentall iudgements, casuall slaughters
Of death's put on by cunning, and forc'd cause,
And in this vpshot, purposes mistooke,
Falne on the Inuentors heads. All this can I
Truly deliuer.

(V. ii. 391-98)

What Horatio says in the fifty-five lines of dialogue after Hamlet's death is "startling" for more reasons than Professor Barton offers. To begin with, Horatio had two separate tasks and failed to perform either: he had to clear Hamlet's name by telling his story to the world, and brief Fortinbras thoroughly "more and lesse" on the "occurrents." Fortinbras' prompt arrival sets the stage with typical Shakespearean economy for

Horatio to do both at once and is a sign of authorial preparation for an immediate summary that makes Horatio's inadequate performance doubly surprising.

Beyond his failure to do what Hamlet asked, Horatio's line and a half reply to Fortinbras' "Where is this sight?" is a distinctly unresponsive answer to the question asked. All Fortinbras knows is that there is a "sight" to behold, and the natural thing for Horatio to do is point it out; his "What is it ye would see; / If ought of woe, or wonder, cease your search" misses the mark. Loosely paraphrased as "If you want to see something woeful and wonderful, stop looking," his response is only a thought fragment, an unattached subordinate clause that rebuffs Fortinbras more than it answers him. Grammatically speaking, it is an antecedent phrase, or *protasis*, that raises the expectation of something to come, followed by a disappointing omission of the consequent, or *apodosis*, needed to satisfy it. We expect Horatio to continue with something to the effect of, "Behold, the King and Prince just killed each other!"

IV.

Grammar alone is admittedly no bench mark for textual corruption, especially with Shakespeare, but a fragmentary thought at the center of an already problematical scene invites some effort to explain it. In this case, it invites a fresh look at the First Quarto of 1603, where the corresponding passage avoids the problems of Q2 and F1, and Horatio's answer to Fortinbras is grammatically complete and logically responsive.²⁴

Fortin. Where is this bloody sight?
Hor. If aught of woe or wonder you'd behold,
 Then looke vpon this tragicke spectacle.
Fortin. O imperious death! how many Princes
 Hast thou at one draft bloudily shot to death?

Despite its standing as a garbled and unworthy version of the play, Q1 is a useful control to consult in dealing with the better texts.²⁵ The language of this passage is a close paraphrase of the more polished Q2 and F1 versions, with exactly the same sequence of thoughts: (a) a *promise* to reveal a sight of woe and wonder, (b) a *declaration* on the scene, and (c) an *apostrophe* to death. The correspondence is heightened by J. V. Cunningham's demonstration that woe and wonder were the Renaissance equivalents of pity and fear, the classic Aristotelean response to tragedy.²⁶ Q2 and F1 lose nothing by omitting the "tragicke" of Q1,

because the promise of “woe, or wonder” is enough to confirm the tragic nature of the scene. The crucial difference is that in Q1 Horatio delivers the declaration as well as the promise, in words that suggest an accompanying gesture of disclosure for the benefit of Fortinbras: “Then looke vpon this tragicke spectacle.” I believe the declaration was never meant to be spoken by Fortinbras, and both the Q2 and F1 versions are faulty.

Misplaced lines and garbled passages are common in the texts of Shakespeare’s plays, and particularly so with *Hamlet*. A printer could, for example, drop a line from the end of one speech to the beginning of the next if he were working from an actor’s “part” or “side,” the continuous roll made up of that actor’s speeches written out on separate sheets and pasted together in sequence. Each passage in a part began with its cue, *i.e.*, the tail end of the previous speech. E. K. Chambers observed that “from these ‘parts’ the ‘original’ would be reconstructed or ‘assembled’ in the event of destruction or loss.”²⁷ The sheet containing Fortinbras’ “O proud death” would have begun with all or a portion of “His quarry cries on hauocke.” The title page of Q2 tells us that it was “Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie,” and if the copy itself had been arranged in actors’ parts, then misplacement of the whole phrase in Q2 is easy to explain. However, this conjecture is not necessary to prove my point; without proof of direct transmission from Q1 to the other editions, I am not offering the proposal that Horatio is the true spokesman for Hamlet as a textual argument, since it is not necessary to prove exactly how a mistake occurred to recognize it for what it is. But this does seem to be one of the rare occasions Harold Jenkins speaks of where Q1 “can supply, or guide us to, a reading which both better texts have lost”—in this case, one which reflects Horatio’s unique qualifications to sum up the play as a whole, in consequence of both his duty to carry out Hamlet’s instructions and his unique knowledge of the facts.²⁸

The phrase “His quarry cries on hauocke” has the same dramatic function as Q1’s “Then looke vpon this tragicke spectacle”; it directs attention to the four corpses as the outcome of a tragic conflict. But reassigning it to Horatio transforms it into a grammatical and responsive answer to Fortinbras, as well as the anticipated performance of his duty as Hamlet’s confidant and designated spokesman. The emended reading is:

Fortin. Where is this sight?
Hor. What is it ye would see;
 If ought of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

His quarry cries on hauocke.
Fortin. Oh proud death,
 What feast is toward in thine eternall Cell.
 That thou so many Princes, at a shoote,
 So bloodily hast strooke.

This simple change allows all three versions to correspond in both grammar and sense. "His quarry cries on hauocke" becomes the *apodosis* that fulfills Horatio's promise of a tragic disclosure. The pointing-out effect is more recognizable in the demonstrative "This" of Q1 and also Q2, which reads "This quarry cries on hauock," but I have chosen to use the First Folio text in this essay for two reasons. First, it is an open question whether F1 is an authorial revision of Q2 and therefore more authoritative, or simply a different version of the same play; in either case, it cannot be safely ignored in making a case for emending the text. And second, if the two texts are equally authoritative variants of one play, the case for making a change is clearer when it does not depend upon arbitrary selection of the most helpful version; although Q2 helps the argument of this essay more than F1, the difference between the two is marginal at most, and in respect to the passage quoted above, only superficial appearance makes Q2 look more helpful. In Elizabethan English, "his" was the genitive of "it" and can thus refer to any or all of the four corpses with the same demonstrative force as the "This" of Q2.²⁹

The punctuation indicates a corresponding emphasis in the speaker's delivery. By Elizabethan convention, the periods setting off "His quarry cries on hauocke" indicate full pauses and call attention to the special importance of the phrase. The new half line following it gives Fortinbras time for an appropriate gesture or gasp of astonishment before blurting out the dismayed apostrophe to Death that exactly conveys the experience of woe and wonder promised by Horatio.

V.

By the standard of Shakespeare's practice in the other tragedies, Fortinbras and Horatio are both permissible candidates for the spokesman's role in *Hamlet*, and to deliver the crucial "His quarry cries on hauocke." Generally, the closing summation is delivered by the chief authority figure on stage. Octavius in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Malcolm in *Macbeth*, Antony in *Julius Caesar*, Lucius in *Titus Andronicus*, Bolinbroke in *Richard II*, and Richmond in *Richard III* are all sovereigns or acknowledged successors to the sovereignty. While the pattern of these plays

seems to point to Fortinbras as the natural spokesman, it actually does not; a closer examination, and the example of two other plays, points more strongly to Horatio.

Albany is chief spokesman in the last scene of *King Lear* and, as Goneril's surviving husband, the highest ranking figure on stage. Edgar and Kent may be the recognized successors, but not by the automatic operation of law; it is Albany who designates them as such. And it is not so much his rank as his kingmaking role and its importance to the restoration of order that defines Albany as the principal authority figure in the closing scene. Horatio is in the same position at the close of *Hamlet*. Although long familiarity now makes us take Fortinbras' succession for granted, it was far from inevitable at Elsinore, where his election still lay in the future. Whatever his right to succession may be, Fortinbras was a presumptively hostile claimant from the Danish point of view, whom the nobility would ordinarily resist with force of arms. In consequence, Horatio still has an essential role to play in the orderly transference of power and, until he tells the electors of Denmark that Fortinbras has Hamlet's endorsement, the transfer of rule remains an unresolved problem clouding the future. Like Albany in *King Lear*, Horatio is the onstage kingmaker, and his power of disposition over the succession establishes him as chief authority figure.

Romeo and Juliet presents a different case. The uncertainties and confusions in the narrative are dispelled by Friar Laurence, whose authority derives from knowledge rather than rank. As the confidant of both Romeo and Juliet, he is the only one who knows of their secret plans and how they have miscarried. Likewise in *Hamlet*, only Horatio knew the facts of King Hamlet's ghostly visitation, of Hamlet's revenge and Claudius' counterplot, and how their secret struggle led to the deaths not only of Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Gertrude, Laertes, but also of each other. Where the revelation of unknown facts is so important to the closure as in both *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, the example of Friar Laurence tips the scales in favor of Horatio. No one else is so well qualified to act as spokesman, or to dispel the uncertainties of the narrative and lay the foundation for a peaceful restoration of order.

In contrast, Fortinbras was ignorant of everything that constituted Hamlet's story and made *Hamlet* a tragedy: Hamlet's mission to avenge his father's murder, Claudius' guilt, the cat and mouse game between them, and the deaths they caused. His first words—"Where is this sight?"—draw attention to his outsider's status and limited knowledge of recent events. Though we are free to suppose he already knew that the king, queen, and prince were all dead, it was beyond Fortinbras'

ability to capture in one phrase the ironic symmetries of a story about two royal hunters, each the other's royal prey, who have just brought death to themselves and devastation to the Danish court. Admittedly, Shakespeare's characters often say things that are ironically pregnant with a meaning of which they are unaware, but this is not such an instance. Unintended irony requires someone to comment on it, or a later occasion for the audience to see the speaker confronted with the unanticipated relevance of his own words. It is a device that has no place at the very end of a play, and none of the spokesmen in the other tragedies delivers a closing statement that takes its meaning from facts beyond his personal knowledge.

VI.

I have tried to show in this essay how the central meaning of *Hamlet* is illuminated in the last scene when, in the phrase "His quarry cries on hauocke," the principal themes and action all converge in "a culmination of events that have beset the characters throughout the play," and we come to see both Hamlet and Claudius as the victims of their own endeavors. Those who reject my proposal for reassigning the phrase to Horatio will have to acknowledge and defend the unstated assumptions on which the time-honored reading depends, among them, that Shakespeare either overlooked the rich double relevance of "His quarry cries on hauocke" when he wrote it or else saw it and vitiated its effect with singular ineptness by giving the words to Fortinbras. Also, that after completing his customary preparation for a spokesman to tell Hamlet's story and sum up the play, he vitiated that effort, too, leaving Hamlet's story untold and the play with nothing but a "travesty" of a summary. And again, that the Q2 and F1 texts ought to remain privileged despite the evidence of Q1 that neither imperfection would exist with Horatio as spokesman; and also, despite the awkwardness with which both interrupt Horatio in mid-thought just where Q1 lets him summarize the whole play, they preserve the same summary in paraphrase by tacking it on to the beginning of the next speech.

This extended sequence of improbable assumptions exists only to support a feature of the received texts which is irreparably discordant. The simple remedy that frees us from the need to defend them and harmonizes the discord is to accept a new explanation for "His quarry cries on hauocke" and then reassign it to Horatio.

Attorney at Law, New York

Notes

¹*The First Folio of Shakespeare*, The Norton Facsimile, ed. Hinman (New York: Norton, 1968). Line references are those supplied by Hinman in this edition.

²*Hamlet*, ed. G. L. Kittredge (New York: Ginn and Co., 1939), p. 297.

³*Coriolanus*, The Arden Shakespeare, ed. Brockbank (London: Methuen, 1976), I. i. 197-99.

⁴William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), vol. 4, p. 88.

⁵*Hamlet*, The Arden Shakespeare, ed. H. Jenkins (New York: Methuen, 1982), I. v. 118, note; *Hamlet, The New Variorum Edition*, ed. F. J. Furness (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1918), I. v. 116, note.

⁶James Edmund Harting, *The Birds Of Shakespeare*, (1871; rpt. Chicago: Argonaut, Inc., 1965), p. 55.

⁷There is an exact parallel in the proverbial "To know a cat from a cony," attested c. 1561 in R. W. Dent, *Proverbial Language in English Drama Exclusive of Shakespeare, 1495-1616* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: Univ. of California Press, 1984), p. 240. Most editors take Hamlet's statement to mean only "I know one thing from another," a pointless assurance in light of his entirely rational and sharp-witted performance during the preceding conversation.

⁸I have shown elsewhere how Claudius inveigled Hamlet into the fencing match with Laertes, by sending Osric to fill this thoughts with misdirected anger at Laertes, a poor woodcock himself, and thus divert his attention from the royal hunter lurking in the background. "Hamlet, Osric, and the Duel," *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 2(1983), p. 5.

⁹The First Folio reads "pith and moment" (III. i. 88). All Q2 quotations are from *Shakespeare's Plays in Quarto*, eds. Allen and Muir (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: Univ. of California Press, 1981), which does not have act, scene, and line references. All those used here are from the Arden edition.

¹⁰E. A. Rauchut, "'Guilty in Defence': A Note on *Henry V*, III. iii. 123," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 42 (1991), p. 55. The practice is dramatized in Henry V's confrontation with the citizens of Harfleur (*Henry V*, III. iii). The initial footnote to that scene in the Arden edition, ed. Walter, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1954), discusses the operation of military law in the circumstances.

¹¹*Julius Caesar*, ed. F. J. Furness, (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1913), III. iii. 302, note. Furness does not cite any authority for his conclusion, but later scholarship has not shown it to be incorrect, and three early English statutes of war make it a capital offense for anyone but the king to cry havoc. "The Statutes And Ordinaunces To Be Kaped In Time of Warre," "Ordinances Of War Made By King Richard II At Durham, Ao. 1385," "Ordinances Of War Made By King Henry V At Mawnt," *The Black Book of the Admiralty*, 4 vols., ed. Twiss (London: Longman and Co., 1871-1876), vol. 1, pp. 286, 455, 462. Shakespeare regularly associates lawful havoc with the deeds of princes, even when there is no military context; elsewhere, when it would constitute usurpation and unauthorized use to have given the command, he is careful to describe it with disapproval. See *Coriolanus*, III. iii. 272-73.

¹²Robert S. Miola, "Julius Caesar and the Tyrannicide Debate," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 38 (1985), pp. 274 ff.

¹³Helge Kökeritz, *Shakespeare's Pronunciation* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1953), pp. 323-327. Wilhelm Vietor, *A Shakespeare Phonology* (1903; rpt. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1963), p. 229. The "v" of "havoc" would be softened and its last syllable lost according to the phonetic rules of Elizabethan English. Kökeritz, *op. cit.*, pp. 283, 327;

E. A. Abbott, *A Shakespearean Grammar* (London: Macmillan, 1901), pp. 347-56.

¹⁴*Middle English Dictionary*, ed. Kuhn, Michigan (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1963), vol. 4 at "hauke."

¹⁵Lily Campbell, *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1963), p. 112.

¹⁶John Doebler, *Shakespeare's Speaking Pictures* (Albuquerque, NM: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1974), pp. 95-97.

¹⁷Polonius introduced the metaphor in his first act warning to Ophelia to mistrust Hamlet's "springs to catch woodcocks," a fine expression of Polonian cunning, dealing in small game and small thoughts.

¹⁸Shakespeare was not the first to employ the image of a bird of prey slain by an unexpectedly poisonous quarry, and combine it with the image of a hunter caught in his own snare in order to capture the idea of justice by ironic reversal. In about 1565, Thomas Palmer illustrated the proverbial "He that will smite with the sworde, shal be stroken with the scabbarde" with a picture of a raven holding a scorpion in its claws, accompanied by the following verse:

The raven a foule devouring foule
A scorpion vp hath raughte:
By venome of whose tayle, he hath,
What he entended, caught.
Ill comes to him that thinketh yll;
and syn rewardeth sin:
He layes a snare for others baine;
him selfe is faine therein.

The Emblems of Thomas Palmer: "Two Hundred Poses", Sloan Ms. 4794, ed. Daly (New York, AMS Publishing Co., 1988), p. 41. Daly points out in this introduction that, although the undated manuscript remained unpublished until its modern edition, Palmer's emblems were widely admired and known to such members of Shakespeare's circle as Jonson, Drayton, and Camden.

¹⁹Bernard Beckerman, "Shakespeare Closing," *The Kenyon Review*, 7 (1985), p. 810.

²⁰Gabriel Harvey, quoted in *Shakespeare Allusion Book*, ed. Munro (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1932), vol. 1, p. 56.

²¹*Hamlet, The New Penguin Shakespeare*, ed. Spencer (New York: Penguin Books, 1980), p. 52.

²²"*Hamlet and Its Thematic Modes of Speech*," in *Perspectives on "Hamlet"*, ed. Holzberger and Waldeck (Cranbury, N.J. and London, 1975), pp. 29-47. James R. Sionon also holds that Hamlet would have been dissatisfied with Horatio's performance, *Shakespearean Iconoclasm* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, Univ. of California Press, 1985), p. 212.

²³*The First Folio of Shakespeare*, op. cit., pp. 789-90.

²⁴*Shakespeare's Hamlet: The First Quarto 1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1931).

²⁵Dover Wilson, *The Manuscript of Shakespeare's "Hamlet"* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1934), I, p. 23. The authenticity and value of the First Folio are defended at length in Albert B. Weiner's introduction to his edition of the play, *Hamlet: The First Quarto, 1603* (Great Neck, NY: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1962).

²⁶*Woe and Wonder* (Denver: Univ. of Denver, 1951), especially chapter 2.

²⁷E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), vol. 3, p.

194; *William Shakespeare* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966), vol. 1, p. 122.

²⁸T.G.B. Jenkins, for example, adopts three readings from Q1 in preference to those of Q2 and F1. *The New Penguin Shakespeare, op. cit.*, p. 375.

²⁹Abbott, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

Cordelia's Kind Nursery by John Wasson

As anyone knows who has acted the role of King Lear, directed the play, or simply watched a performance, the opening scene of *King Lear* is fraught with problems. The actor playing Lear has a problem with motivation: what in Lear's personality could cause Cordelia's speeches to produce such a reaction in him except an uncontrollable and violent temper? Yet, if the actor explodes convincingly in this opening scene, he has nowhere to go with his part from there to the storm scene—how is he to "build" anger and exasperation? Michael Goldman, who argues that Shakespeare saw the difficulty and tried to give the actor some help, still is very aware of the performer's problem:

The actor is required to portray a quick-tempered, eighty-year-old, who five minutes into his first scene bursts into the greatest rage of his life at Cordelia. Two brief scenes later he bursts into a greater rage at Goneril and carries on with increasing intensity for nearly a hundred lines. Next he gets *really* angry at Regan; while he is raging at her, Goneril appears and he gets angrier. His fury and outrage mount wildly until the end of the scene, at which point he goes mad. This of course is only the beginning. Three long scenes of madness still lie ahead during which, among other things, the actor has to outshout a storm. . . . "The wonder is," as Kent says, "he hath endured so long," and most actors don't.¹

The solution in the 1982 Stratford-upon-Avon production may have been helpful to the actor but was of no help at all to the audience: Lear almost calmly disinherited Cordelia as if everyone knew it was going to happen anyway and there was no need to justify it. The other actors on stage, aside from Kent, did not even appear surprised.

The director's problem is related but slightly different. If in the opening lines Kent and Gloucester seem interested but not the least bothered by the coming division of the kingdom but are astounded by it when it happens, then their reaction must stem from the fact that Cordelia has been excluded from the division. (Gloucester is conveniently absent from the stage at this point so that he will not get himself banished along with Kent.) But if Cordelia is truly dutiful and an obedient daughter and says her lines to Lear with hesitant but loving humility, what in those lines could incite Lear's reaction? Jerry Turner, who directed 101 performances of *Lear* at the 1985 Oregon Shakespeare

Festival, decided that Cordelia would have to deliver her lines with a tone of inflexible and irritating self-righteousness rather than with loving concern for her father, even though this interpretation does not square with either Kent's assessment of her or the portrayal of her in Act V.²

For readers of the play, that opening scene is likely to seem like the plot of an improbable fairy tale: "Once upon a time, there was a king who had three daughters. . . ." And as usual the youngest is treated unfairly. We almost expect a wicked stepmother to be prompting the king, as in *Cymbeline*. Most teachers and scholars stress this fairy-tale quality of the opening to show how Shakespeare turns our expectations of the usual happy ending into a most devastating conclusion. On a more realistic level, Maynard Mack, who suggests that Lear's actions stem from guilt, goes on to argue that we are encouraged in this play to look not at the psychological causes of action but at the psychological results of that action.³ John Reibetanz agrees, suggesting that in *Lear* "Shakespeare shows no concern with pinning down exact cause-and-effect relationships," and concludes that A. C. Bradley was confused because "he brings narrative expectations to the play" which are simply not fulfilled by the way in which Shakespeare has constructed this tragedy.⁴

Freudian critics, on the other hand, attempt to make the scene believable by finding some explicable psychological motivation for Lear's disinheriting of Cordelia. Some of these analyses are sensible enough. John F. Danby, for instance, explains Lear's actions as the "neurosis of old age and absolute power combined." He finds Lear's reaction to Cordelia to be "a violation of Nature all the more monstrous for invoking the very sanctities it violates."⁵ Other analyses would appear to credit Shakespeare with better Freudian psychoanalytic skills than he perhaps possessed. William F. Zak explains Lear's behavior as the result of "a buried sense of vulnerability and shame for himself."⁶ And the late C. L. Barber came to the conclusion that the key to understanding Lear was in his lines,

I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery.

(I. i. 123-24)⁷

Lear's problem, he argued, was that he had been weaned too early, and, now in his second childhood, wanted to return to the nursery to be babied by his youngest daughter. When this hope was frustrated by Cordelia's stated intention to devote herself to her future husband

instead of to her father, Lear threw a temper tantrum.⁸

I would agree with Barber that those lines do indeed contain much of the explanation for what happens in the opening scene, but my understanding of those lines is very different. I will argue in this paper that in this case, at least, a historical approach rather than modern psychology is required to explain what Shakespeare had in mind. In fact, it seems to me that nothing needs to be added as interpretation to what is already specifically stated in that first scene of *Lear* to make good sense of it both rationally and dramatically, at least for a Jacobean audience—and without distorting the characterization which is assumed later in the play and which opening scenes are supposed to establish. But let us begin at the beginning.

We need to keep in mind that before Shakespeare transformed the Lear story into a tragedy, every known version of it did have a happy ending. The original Celtic myth, which Shakespeare may or may not have known, was about Lyr, the god of the sea, famous for his habit of creating violent storms. In medieval versions of the myth, the Lear-figure misunderstood his daughter's avowal that she loved him "as meat loves salt," became furious, rejected her, and did not understand her meaning or forgive her until years later when she served him meat without salt which he could not eat. However many versions he knew in addition to the old stage comedy, Shakespeare was indeed working from a familiar folk motif with many variations, so that he would not have felt any strong need to explain or justify Lear's rejection of Cordelia. Grigori Kozintsev, reflecting on *Lear* after his stage version and before his film version, found that literary historians had uncovered more than fifty different versions of this story. Despite their variations, he saw that their essence was the same in each version:

What exactly defines a man's real value—his possessions or his spiritual qualities? Does it depend on his position in life? Or is he this value in and of himself, even though he possesses nothing? And what is the relationship between wealth and the genuine worth of man?

The inner movement of the entire tragedy provides the test by which this worth is measured.⁹

Kozintsev seems to have understood both why Shakespeare was attracted to the myth and why his tragic version of it could better explore its thematic implications than could those with happy endings.

But the political implications of that opening "folk" scene which Shakespeare imposed upon his source, and their effect upon the remainder of the play, appear to have been missed by all modern

productions, from Kozintsev's at the Bolshoi in 1941 to those at Ashland, Oregon and Stratford, Ontario in 1985. For, other than the fact that the father in the folk stories is a ruler, there is no real political concern in the folk versions' misunderstanding between father and daughter. This Shakespeare has added to turn the play from romance into tragedy. And it is time to take a close look at what he did explicitly add to the basic story in that opening scene.

The first lines of the play, in which Kent and Gloucester discuss the coming division of the kingdom, tell us much. The nobles are naturally interested, but judging by what they say and the rapidity with which they change the subject they certainly are not worried about the effects of such a plan upon the kingdom. Then why, if they later object to the kingdom's being divided into two parts, should they not object to this tripartite division? The answer is that England is not to be divided at all, except into administrative divisions somewhat like the modern divisions of the United Kingdom. Albany and Goneril are to be in charge of Albany (the old name for modern Scotland), quite properly, as Albany is already the duke. Cornwall and Regan would of course administer affairs in Cornwall—to this day a separate division, although its parliament meets but seldom. But if Regan's dower were to equal Goneril's, one must suppose that she must also have been given Wales and the Welsh marches. (An extension of a line straight down from Offa's Dike through Glastonbury to the English Channel would have given her Wales and "the West," a fair enough equivalent in wealth if not in square miles to Goneril's portion.)

However much Regan was given in addition to Cornwall, what this means is that England itself was to remain virtually whole. And who was to be given this more generous portion? Cordelia, obviously. Whether or not my guess about Regan's dower is what Shakespeare had in mind (something Lear's map would have shown), what is clear is that Kent and Gloucester were not disturbed by any prospect that natural order was about to be upset by the dividing up of England. Kent appears only a little surprised that Cornwall is to receive as much as Albany; if the gift included Wales as well as Cornwall, he might well be surprised without being disturbed by any political implications.

But the main point is this: while the three daughters and their heirs are to be put in charge of these political divisions in perpetuity and to receive the profits from them, Lear does *not* name any of them "queen" or "monarch" over her territory. He himself is to retain the title of king over all. The common modern misunderstanding about this probably derives from the usual confusion of the word "dower" with "wedding dowry." But they are not the same at all, and Shakespeare's audience

surely would not have made such a mistake, one which confuses the entire issue. Goneril and Regan have obviously already long since received their wedding dowries. A dowry, on the other hand, is normally “the portion of a deceased husband’s estate which the law allows his widow for her life” (OED). Because Lear has no living wife, he is instead making public the dowries of his three daughters; these, obviously, will go to them upon his death, not before. The “wedding dowry” for Cordelia which Burgundy requests and which Lear revokes cannot be her “dowry,” England, but is probably either a previously agreed-upon sum or perhaps a dukedom as the other sons-in-law have.

Another thing we learn from Gloucester’s first speech in the play is that the exact divisions have already been determined, and Gloucester at least has personally seen and is clearly aware of what they are. When Lear enters, he has a map upon which those administrative divisions have already been drawn. What this means, of course, is that no protestation of undying love is going to increase any daughter’s inheritance. Certainly, since the other two portions have already been given out by the time it is Cordelia’s turn to speak, nothing she can say can possibly enlarge the remainder.¹⁰ Lear has already determined that she will receive the most generous portion, that is, England. Why, then, before he announces the dowries, does Lear ask his daughters,

Which of you shall we say doth love us most,
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge?

(I. i. 51-53)

It may well be that Lear has decided in advance which daughter loves him most and has apportioned the kingdom accordingly. But why then call for these public protestations? While psychological critics have suggested many possible subconscious reasons, the only answer which would have been understandable to a first-night audience is that Lear, with characteristic self-centeredness, intends as “Ring-Giver” to keep himself in the spotlight of the public ceremony he has arranged rather than the receivers of their inheritances. This is hardly appropriate conduct, but it certainly characterizes Lear as a king who not only is accustomed to being the center of attention but expects to be, who not only anticipates adulation but demands it.

Obviously there are such people, and they surface elsewhere in Shakespeare’s plays (Richard II is one example). Perhaps it is not surprising that an eighty-year-old king of Britain should over the years have become that sort of person. In any case, Lear has set up the rules of

the gift-giving, the other daughters have played his game, and now the daughter to whom he intends to give the most is unable to play by his rules. It makes her appear ungrateful and Lear appear a fool, and his reaction is outrage. His anger would be the greater if he had felt a need to justify giving the largest dower to his favorite daughter—who also happened to be the youngest and thus not by custom entitled to so much. If Cordelia could outdo Goneril and Regan in her pronouncement of love for Lear, then Lear could feel justified in the gift. Clearly, he expects her to say enough to deserve “A third more opulent than [her] sisters.” Lear knows his impetuous response is wrong—his attempt to stop Kent from giving him good advice testifies to that—but he is so furious at her answer and at the backfire of the situation he himself had created that Cordelia, the most deserving, receives no dower. This should not be difficult to portray on stage as long as Lear and his map, showing the division, are the center of attention.

Now we are back to the effect of this sudden change in plans. Recall that Kent and Gloucester were not disturbed by the original scheme, which was not a bad one considering that Lear had no sons or other male heirs. Cordelia is to govern England and apparently is to marry Burgundy (at least she is offered to Burgundy first, and Lear does not even offer her to France). This plan would keep England from eventually being annexed to the French crown, thus preventing “future strife” with Cornwall and Albany. It would also set up a rather tidy balance of power in Western Europe and sandwich France between the combined forces of England and Burgundy. Lear, of course, is to retain the title of king of Britain but give over the management to his daughters. And who is to be the next king? Lear tells us clearly in the passage cited earlier:

I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery.

(I. i. 123-24)

These lines are usually glossed as something like, “I intended to spend my remaining years relaxing under her gentle care.” But they do not mean anything of the sort and would not have been thus understood by Shakespeare’s audience. “To set my rest” is a phrase from gambling which means “to bet all I have left.” And Lear is betting all he has on Cordelia’s “kind nursery.” While “kind” sometimes has the sense of “considerate” or “courteous” in the Renaissance, that meaning is derivative and in addition to its normal definition. In the context the word surely carries its primary meaning, which the OED defines as

“natural,” “lawful,” “rightful (heir, etc.),” so that Lear is counting on a rightful heir from Cordelia’s nursery. His intention, then, is that at his death the crown will pass to Cordelia’s son, and he is betting everything that she will have such a son. As neither Regan nor Goneril has a son, and as Cordelia is the favorite, the arrangement seems sensible enough that Kent, outspoken as we know him to be, has no objection. Publishing the dowers now is intended to prevent either Cornwall or Albany from trying later to wrest the crown from Cordelia’s son—a possibility made illegal by the published arrangement and almost nil by sheer force of arms, as Cordelia’s inheritance will be reinforced with Burgundy’s power.

The full explanation of Lear’s plan is cut short in this scene by the disinheriting of Cordelia. But if we understand the phrase “her kind nursery” rightly, all the pieces do fall into place. It seems the best plan possible under the circumstances; thus Kent expresses surprise only that Cornwall’s portion is to be as rich as Albany’s, an expression which will later justify Kent as a good judge of character. The quick change of subject in the opening lines shows that neither Kent nor Gloucester is upset by the basic arrangement. And Kent’s obvious embarrassment at Gloucester’s public humiliation of his bastard son tells us that Kent is the sort of person on whose judgment we can depend.

But to the main point, Cordelia’s kind nursery. Although there are a few instances in Shakespeare’s plays where “kind” could carry something approaching its modern meaning, even these seem to include also the sense of “natural” or “rightful.” Think, for example, of Burgundy’s words in *1 Henry VI* when he deserts the English forces and rejoins his natural French allies:

Forgive me country, and sweet countrymen!
And, lords, accept this hearty kind embrace.

(III. iii. 81-82)

And the vast majority of Shakespeare’s uses of “kind” refer to “natural order” or “species” when it is used as a noun and to “natural” when an adjective. One notorious example of misinterpretation by modernizing is in the usual misunderstanding of Lady Macbeth’s statement about her husband:

...Yet I do fear thy nature;
It is too full o’ the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way.

(I. v. 16-18)

Macbeth's "nature," of course, is not sweet and gentle: he is a general, a fierce warrior who splits enemies from the navel to the chops. What Lady Macbeth is saying is that her husband has been raised to believe in the natural order (human kindness), the Great Chain of Being, and that while he may wish to be king, he is unwilling to upset the natural order by being "unkind" and achieving the crown any other way than naturally—by being named Prince of Cumberland, for instance. "Kind nursery" in *King Lear* carries that same sense of "natural" or "rightful."

Thus when Lear disinherits Cordelia, he does not merely do her an injustice, he completely upsets the scheme for the orderly succession to the throne. And this is the point at which Kent begins to protest. Lear has no alternative plan, and in his consternation he makes the worst possible error in judgment. Rather than naming Goneril, or Regan, heir to the throne, he divides England in half. And worse, he gives his crown to Albany and Cornwall to share between them in his own lifetime. This is Lear's *hamartia*, his "missing the mark," that error in judgment from which there is no going back, the beginning of a chain of cause and effect which will lead to the protagonist's downfall and to chaos in the kingdom. That *hamartia* is the key change which Shakespeare made in his sources and which turns a comic plot into a tragic one. In the old myth, the prototype of Lear could disinherit his daughter, later recognize his misunderstanding, and restore her to favor. But Shakespeare's Lear, having given away his power and split the kingdom, cannot restore either himself or Cordelia. He can recognize his error, and does, but he cannot reverse the inevitable reaction he has set in motion.

Further, Lear's personal error extends to the macrocosm. He has not merely guaranteed his own fall, he has upset natural order by dividing England in half and by giving away the crown. Before the play is over, he will see the world turned upside down, with chaos and injustice everywhere. Unnatural storms will rage, a bastard will become an earl, a banished lord will have to break the law and return from exile in order to be loyal, another loyal lord will be tried in kangaroo court, blinded, and banished, Lear himself will be banished from shelter, unnatural sexual liaisons will be attempted and murders plotted, dogs obeyed in office, and servants forced to turn against their master in order to be just. This is not, in short, a mere domestic tragedy. And all this because Lear has ignored the fact that being king was a lifetime occupation. There was no pension plan for retired kings, nor was there a place for them in the natural order. Lear is not a duke, not an earl, not even a serf. As the Fool, lowest in the ranks of created humans, reminds him, "I am better than thou art now; I am a fool, thou art nothing" (I. iv. 90-91).

By seeing clearly the enormity of Lear's *hamartia*, we can perhaps understand the force of Kent's reaction to it. He is not simply trying to restore Cordelia's damaged reputation or get her inheritance back: he wants the plan for succession to the throne put back into place. And he does not want Lear to give away his crown. His first advice to Lear is,

. . . Reserve thy state,
And in thy best consideration check
This hideous rashness.

(I. i. 150-52)

The "state" can refer either to Lear's royal position or to the throne itself, but both meanings render the same result. It was understood by the court that Lear would remain king, keeping his crown and throne. Obviously, if the decision to give away his power is "hideous rashness," it cannot have been part of the original plan to which Kent had no objection. In scene ii, Gloucester expresses equal amazement at this unexpected decision:

And the King gone tonight? Prescrib'd his pow'r,
Confined to exhibition? All this done
Upon the gad!

(24-26)

Back in scene i, Kent tells Lear that his only motive in giving advice is "Thy safety" (not Cordelia's welfare). And in his final outburst, Kent once more advises Lear to

. . . Revoke thy gift,
Or, whilst I can vent clamor from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

(I. i. 165-67)

I do not mean to suggest that Kent is unsympathetic to Cordelia's unfair treatment, only that Kent's chief concern is the upsetting of natural order by Lear's giving away the crown. Shakespeare is normally at some pains to make certain that the audience does not miss either the commission of the *hamartia* or its implications for the protagonist. Surely Kent's repeated statements in scene i and Gloucester's reinforcement of them in scene ii are sufficient to make this *hamartia* clear—as long as the audience is not misled into thinking that Kent is concerned only with Cordelia's welfare, or that Lear is a psychotic who wanted to return to the crib, or that Cordelia is a self-righteous prude who deserves

banishment. And while Kent is the spokesman in that opening scene, the rest of the court is equally shocked, shock which must be seen on stage if the other actors are properly acting and reacting: "Call France. Who stirs?"

The interpretation of the opening scene of *King Lear* which I have offered here seems to me to be clearly contained within the lines—if those lines are not given an anachronistic interpretation or their emphases ignored. It also seems to me absolutely vital for a full understanding of what happens in the remainder of the play. For the play is not merely about Lear's disappointment about not being babied, nor is it about the mistreatment of Cordelia, who does not appear again until Act IV. Rather, it shows an upset of natural order on a cosmic scale, as well as the inevitable downfall of a protagonist who commits *hamartia*. The audience should know from the opening scene that Lear has doomed himself: the question is not "Will he fall?" but "How will he fall?" Lear may by the middle of the play feel "more sinn'd against than sinning," but we must not forget that he was the one who gave the power to those evil people who are only thereby able to sin against him. It is therefore imperative that Lear's sudden decision to give away his crown rather than reserve it for Cordelia's kind nursery be stressed in the opening scene of the play.

Washington State University

Notes

¹Michael Goldman, *Acting and Action in Shakespearean Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1985), p. 72.

²Turner explained his decision during a panel discussion on *Lear* at the 1985 meeting of the Pacific Northwest Renaissance Conference in Seattle.

³Maynard Mack, *King Lear in Our Time* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1965), pp. 92-93. Mack gives a good historical review of some of the performance problems and approaches to solving them.

⁴John Reibetanz, *The Lear World* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1977), pp. 51-54.

⁵John F. Danby, *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), pp. 175-76.

⁶William F. Zak, *Sovereign Shame* (London and Toronto: Associated Univ. Presses, 1984), p. 124.

⁷All quotations are from David Bevington, ed., *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1980).

⁸I do not believe C. L. Barber was able to publish his interpretation of *Lear* before he died. He offered it to me in private conversation at a Shakespeare Association meeting.

⁹Grigori Kozintsev, *Shakespeare: Time and Conscience*, trans. by Joyce Vining (London: Dennis Dobson, 1967), p. 59.

¹⁰Kozintsev, p. 56.

Christian Vision and Iconography in *Pericles* by Sara Hanna

Vision is an especially complex subject in *Pericles*, very closely bound up with the play's medieval dimension. To some extent the very heroism of Pericles can be defined through the progress of his vision. Pericles appears as a chivalric hero, a young knight on a quest. While he is much more than an allegorical figure, we may see him in the medieval and Spenserian tradition as a knight of patience who must learn the virtue in question through severe trials.¹ Scholars have associated him with the Everyman protagonist of the morality plays and with the trials, sufferings, and miraculous recoveries of saints in legends and miracle plays. Influence from the medieval religious plays also appears in the parabolic qualities of language and events throughout the play and in the overall Christian scheme of patient suffering leading to ultimate spiritual reconciliation.² Whether we see Pericles as knight, Everyman, or saint, his adventures present life as a spiritual journey; and at important stages of development the hero's mode of vision changes, growing more profound.

The most influential theory of knowledge in the Middle Ages comes from St. Augustine's commentary on Genesis, Book XII of *De Genesi ad litteram*, which defines three stages of vision as man progresses into fuller knowledge of God.³ Francis X. Newman summarized these stages in his discussion of Dante's use of the Augustinian scheme in *The Divine Comedy* :

The first of these is the *visio corporalis*, the literal sight of the eye or, more generally, knowledge by means of the external senses. The second is the *visio spiritualis* or *imaginativa*, knowledge by means of the imagination. In "spiritual" vision we do not see bodies themselves but images that have corporeal shape without corporeal substance. . . . The third and highest of the classes of vision is *intellectualis*, the direct cognition of realities such as God, the angels, *caritas*, etc., which have neither corporeal substance nor corporeal shape. Whatever man knows he knows in one of these three ways, but Augustine is particularly interested in how we know God. In this regard he asserts that man can know God by means of any of the three visions.⁴

As Newman demonstrates, Dante's progression from Hell through Purgatory to Paradise is not only from near darkness to brilliant light but also from heavy corporeality through progressive dematerialization

as the pilgrim approaches a paradisiacal, unmediated vision of God. Even the lowest form, corporeal vision in Hell, can engender in the pilgrim knowledge of God through beholding Hell's parodic inversion of the cross and the Trinity embodied in the winged, three-headed Satan. Augustine chose St. John's visionary mode in the Apocalypse to illustrate the use of images in spiritual or imaginative vision and St. Paul's experience of being "caught up into paradise" (2 Cor. 12:4) to exemplify incorporeal, intellectual vision. Boethius' theory of knowledge in *The Consolation of Philosophy* uses a similar progression into higher forms of perception, although it posits a fourth type beyond human capability. In Chaucer's translation of this work, the four types are defined as wit (the senses), imagination (invented images), reason (incorporeal apprehension), and intelligence (divine knowledge).⁵ While it would be excessive to claim for *Pericles* the religious vision experienced by the apostles, there is, nonetheless, a clear progression in his vision from corporeal through imaginative to quasi-paradisiacal and from darkness through half-light to radiance.

It has long been recognized that *Pericles* creates powerful visual effects with a series of dynamic tableaux as we follow the adventures of the hero and his family throughout the Mediterranean world. Iconographic studies have explored some of the ways the play achieves its immense visual power. Mary Judith Dunbar examined the play's use of traditional motifs in stage properties, verbal images, and complex stage images, showing how the dramatic context alters these commonplace motifs by giving them new force and fuller significance. Bruce Smith demonstrated how pageants in *Pericles* and other late plays suggest a higher plane of reality, a metaphysical realm that is sometimes more arresting than the human action. Henry Green discovered the probable sources in emblem books of several devices of the knights at the court of Pentapolis, and William S. Heckscher and Gerald J. Schiffhorst have studied portrayals of Patience in the visual arts of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance that may have inspired Shakespeare's celebrated personifications of Patience in *Twelfth Night* and *Pericles*.⁶ These studies have effectively demonstrated how specific types of iconography (emblems, paintings, pageants, sculpture) contribute to the dynamic visual art of the play.

Yet there is another type of iconographic study to which *Pericles* lends itself, namely an examination of how certain of its visual features come together to create a coherent iconographical subtext. I think particularly of the studies of Chaucerian iconography by V. A. Kolve and Gail McMurray Gibson.⁷ Kolve uncovers a fascinating dimension of meaning in *The Legends of Good Women* through study of the medieval

Christian iconography Chaucer associates with his pagan figures of Cleopatra and Alcestis, and Gibson demonstrates how Resurrection functions as a submerged ironic icon in the secular *Shipman's Tale*. Something similar to the Chaucerian iconographic techniques appears in *Pericles*, the most consciously and thoroughly medievalized play in the Shakespearean canon; in fact, the iconography is so coherent and so compelling that it reveals a fundamental unity in the play's vision. While *Pericles* ostensibly presents a pagan milieu, it draws upon Christian iconography and biblical conceptions of patience to define the progress of the hero's vision.

I.

In the opening chorus Gower takes care to establish perspectives—temporal, moral, and visual—on the events we are about to witness. Already “ancient” (I. Ch. 2)⁸ to a Renaissance audience, this quaint medieval poet insists on the much greater antiquity of his tale, giving the audience the impression of looking far back through time. F. D. Hoeniger has traced the device of using the poet as presenter to the medieval miracle plays, and Bruce Smith has noted its affinities with the presenter of contemporary Renaissance pageants.⁹ Both possibilities point toward the mystery of the visual show and reflect the need for some type of interpretation. We also see in Shakespeare's Gower that favorite pastime of medieval narrative poets, unearthing pagan tales and allegorizing or moralizing them to fit them into a Christian framework. The historical Gower, obviously fascinated with this old tale of incest, found a place for it in his *Confessio Amantis* to illustrate the seventh deadly sin, lust or lechery. The Shakespearean Gower sustains the role of medieval moralist when revealing the sin of Antiochus and his daughter. Toward the end of the opening chorus Gower emphasizes visual perspective, pointing toward “yon grim looks” of the dead suitors (I. Ch. 40). They pose the first paradox of vision in the play: dead eyes, looks that cannot see, watch over all.

The scene Gower introduces functions somewhat as an emblem with the poet providing its motto or key, Sin framed by Death. That, however, is only the first stage of interpretation, an allegorical direction, not a final solution to the mystery. The ancient poet is only a mediator. Interpretation of events devolves finally upon the more sophisticated audience of later times; as Gower expresses it at the end of his opening chorus:

What now ensues, to the judgment of your eye

I give my cause, who best can justify.

(I. Ch. 41-42)

The legalistic terminology suggests an audience of jurors trying a case. In the preceding line the “grim looks” of the suitors “testify” to the crimes of Antiochus. Thus, while their dead eyes frame the action on stage, our active eyes frame the stage, judging its characters and events. And the disparity between what we see (already influenced by Gower’s perspective) and what Pericles sees creates the initial tension of the opening scene.

Pericles comes to the court of Antiochus determined to risk his life to win a beautiful wife. The choric Gower has already prepared the audience to expect a phenomenal beauty through his description of her as “So buxom, blithe, and full of face / As heaven had lent her all his grace” (I. Ch. 23-24); and Shakespeare continues to emphasize her ravishing face through the first two scenes. When Pericles first sees her, he finds “Her face the book of praises, where is read / Nothing but curious pleasures” (I. i. 16-17). Antiochus presents the temptation: “Her face like heaven, enticeth thee to view / Her countless glory” (I. i. 31-32). And Pericles explains to Helicanus later: “Her face was to mine eye beyond all wonder” (I. ii. 75). This unusually strong emphasis on “her face” may recall for us that other source of painful adventures in the Mediterranean world, “the face that launch’d a thousand ships.” Overwhelmed by the lady’s beauty, Pericles falls victim to naïve error, first in his assumption that beauty necessarily entails virtue:

See, where she comes apparell’d like the spring,
Graces her subjects, and her thoughts the king
Of every virtue gives renown to men!

(I. i. 13-15)

But the greater error involves succumbing to the tyranny of the senses, allowing corporeal vision to dictate action. In a bold visual metaphor Antiochus warns Pericles that “without desert because thine eye / Presumes to reach, all the whole heap must die” (I. i. 33-34). To paraphrase, if you presume to look on her without deserving to, you will die. My paraphrase, however, lacks the suggestiveness of the synecdoche, eye for man, which poses the real danger: the sensual eye can usurp rational powers and dominate a man. The rather grotesque image of a presumptuous, reaching eye captures the fatal temptation at Antioch.

Immediately after, Antiochus directs Pericles’ attention to the dead

suitors, "Yon sometimes famous princes," and paints a detailed portrait of their ghastly faces with "speechless tongues," "semblance pale," and "dead cheeks" (I. i. 33-40). When recounting this incident to Helicanus in the next scene Pericles explains, "against the face of death / I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty" (I. ii. 71-72). The audience has been prepared through Gower's medieval vision to see an emblematic quality in the opening scene. The emblem takes on fuller significance through the drama itself—face of death and face of sinister beauty yoked together by a tyrant of immense power—a relationship that Milton represented later when pairing Sin and Death as the incestuous offspring of the devil. Milton's allegory of the genesis of Death stems in part ultimately from a biblical passage:

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own
lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth
forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

(James 1:14-15)

Shakespeare, too, may have had this passage in mind. The general outlines of the visual scene, an incestuous pair and the death's heads, are of course present in the sources for the tale. But Shakespeare has filled in the sketch, moving it toward emblem through strong emphasis on the faces of sin and death and on the immense power of the tyrant. In the audience, if not in the pagan hero, this parodic inversion of the Trinity or the Holy Family can in an Augustinian manner engender knowledge of God.

It is also noteworthy that the allegory of Lust, Sin, and Death occurs in that book of the New Testament which is most fully devoted to the subject of patience. The Epistle of James begins with an explanation of patience (1:2-15), culminates in an exhortation to patience (5:7-8), and recalls "the patience of Job" (5:11), who in the Old Testament was repeatedly described as "the perfect and upright man" (Job 1:1; 1:3; 2:3). James explains that "the trying of your faith [amid temptations] worketh patience," and he exhorts, "let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:2-4). While the young Pericles is obviously a man in whom patience hath not yet had her perfect work, he implies in the course of the opening scene that perfection is his ideal goal. On discovering the incest of Antiochus and his daughter, Pericles sees the daughter as a castle of sin from which his "thoughts revolt" (I. i. 79), producing an apothegm on the ideal man:

For he's no man on whom perfections wait

That, knowing sin within, will touch the gate.

(I. i. 80-81)

This small metaphor coheres with the drama's larger scenic emblem, a Castle of Sin framed by Death.

For Pericles and the audience there is one more term in the visual paradoxes of the opening scene, which Antiochus does not see. Just after Antiochus warns Pericles by pointing to "yon sometimes famous princes" (I. i. 35), he observes that these heads have no covering but "yon field of stars" (I. i. 38), thereby initiating the important constellatory imagery of the play. For Antiochus the stars are only backdrop. However, when Pericles first grasps the meaning of the riddle, the stars take on new significance as the eyes of heaven:

... but, O you powers
That gives heaven countless eyes to view men's acts:
Why cloud they not their sights perpetually,
If this be true, which makes me pale to read it?

(I. i. 73-76)

Thus framing the scene ultimately is still another visual paradox, eyes that seem not to see, but do.

The opening scene also enacts a variation on the fall of man with its imagery of garden, celestial tree, forbidden fruit, and viper. But Shakespeare conceives the hero's change not as a fall into sin but as an advance into consciousness of good and evil, as a sudden shift from naïve sensual vision that sees no evil to a blinding of the sensual eye, producing insight into the depths of depravity, the darkness and "sin within" (I. i. 81). Understanding the riddle destroys the tyranny of the senses. Suddenly Pericles perceives the significance of the scene, but that perception takes the form of symbolic blindness in Pericles' famous identification of himself with the mole in the fallen garden:

... The blind mole casts
Copp'd hills towards heaven, to tell the earth is throng'd
By man's oppression; and the poor worm doth die for't.

(I. i. 101-03)

Near the end of the scene Pericles defines his extreme peril in less cryptic terms:

... wisdom sees, those men
Blush not in actions blacker than night,
Will shew no course to keep them from the light.

(I. i. 135-37)

But the price of wisdom, of seeing into darkness, is the temporary loss of the visual splendor of the world.

II.

Darkness clings to the hero's vision through the next two acts. Back in Tyre Pericles finds no relief from fear. Increasing dread of what Antiochus may do to his kingdom in order to destroy him preys on his mind:

Why should this change of thoughts,
The sad companion, dull-ey'd melancholy,
Be my so us'd a guest, as not an hour
In the day's glorious walk or peaceful night,
The tomb where grief should sleep, can breed me quiet?
Here pleasures court my eyes, and my eyes shun them.

(I. ii. 2-7)

While dull melancholy arises from seeing future consequences, it also produces in the hero that greater vision of a provident ruler looking out for the welfare of his subjects. Thus Pericles flees from Tyre to save his people, carries grain to Tharsus to relieve the famine, flees from Tharsus to save himself, and wrecks off the coast of Pentapolis. Here at the nadir of his fortunes, when he is resigned to death, Pericles overhears a witty conversation among fishermen that suggests the need for perseverance in faith.¹⁰ One fisherman compares rich misers to whales "who never leave gaping till they swallow'd the whole parish, church, steeple, bells, and all" (II. i. 33-34). Another insists that as belfry he would keep ringing his bells until the whale cast up the whole church. It is perhaps the fisherman's wit, combined with the providential gift from the sea of his father's armor, that awakens new faith in Pericles and leads him to present himself at Simonides' court as a knight of hope.

In a pioneering study of Shakespeare's use of the emblem tradition, Henry Green found close parallels between emblems in books popular in Shakespeare's day and the devices and mottos on the shields of the first five knights at the tournament in Pentapolis.¹¹ However, for Pericles' device of "a wither'd branch / that's only green at top" (II. ii. 43-44) with its motto "*In hac spe vivo*" (In this hope I live), Green found no close correspondence; and only one possible source for this emblem has been suggested to date. Alan R. Young discovered an *impresa* used for a tournament at Whitehall by Sidney in the attire of a desert knight, consisting of a tree half dead and half alive. The poem accompanying this device reveals that Sidney is expressing hope for favor from Queen

Elizabeth after his absence from court; as Young puts it, the device “suggests that his fortunes lie in the balance.”¹² Simonides interprets Pericles’ device in a similar fashion, assuming that it means Pericles hopes to improve his fortunes through Thaisa. Young also notes that borrowings in *Pericles* from the *Arcadia* suggest that Shakespeare had Sidney in mind and that Shakespeare might have seen Sidney’s device at the Shield Gallery in Whitehall. Gerald Schiffhorst has discovered a similar analogue to Pericles’ device, the emblem of *Victrix Patienti Duri*, which portrays a “bare tree with branches green only on top,” from Gabriel Rollenhagen’s *Nucleus Emblematum Selectissimorum* (Utrecht, 1611-13).¹³ While these proposals of source and analogue for Pericles’ device are certainly plausible, I think we can come closer to the branch with a green tip (rather than a tree) by pursuing Green’s and Schiffhorst’s lines of thought on the device a bit further.

In the book Shakespeare probably consulted for the devices of three of the first five knights, Claudius Paradin’s *Heroicall Devises* (1591), Green found two emblems somewhat similar in conception to Pericles’, both presenting green shoots rising from something dead, in one instance bones, in another a sepulchre (Fig. 1). The mottos for these two emblems, “*Spes altera vitae*” (Another hope of life) and “*Sola vivit in illo*” (She only lived in him), according to the explanations that accompany the emblems, express the hope of resurrection.¹⁴ Green naturally did not seek a source for the device in emblem books later than the composition of *Pericles* (1607-08). There is, however, one emblem from a later book, George Wither’s *Collection of Emblemes* (1635), that corresponds exactly to Pericles’ device, presenting a green shoot rising from a withered one with the motto: “*When Hopes, quite frustrate were become, / The Wither’d branch did freshly bloome*” (Fig. 2). In this book the author has added his own mottos and verses to emblems previously published by Rollenhagen (1611-1613); and several of these emblems derive from earlier times. Wither gives the biblical pedigree for this one, Aaron’s rod that budded, which serves as a type for the cross of Christ:

For, I, who by *Faith’s* eyes have seene,
 Old *Aarons* wither’d *Rod* grow fresh and greene;
 And also viewed (by the selfe-same *Eyes*)
 Him, whom that *Rod*, most rightly typifies,
 Fall by a shamefull *Death*, and rise, in spight
 Of *Death*, and *Shame*, unto the glorious height.
 Ev’n I, beleeve my *Hope* shall bee possess,
 And, therefore, (ev’n in *Death*) in *Hope* I’ll rest.¹⁵

Even without Wither’s verses, the small scenes behind the branch

associate the emblem with resurrection, the scene to the left (the cross with its side branches rising from the sepulchre) revealing the significance of the front branch. While I have not found this kind of branch used as a symbol of resurrection in emblem books prior to the composition of *Pericles*, its typological precursor, Aaron's rod, appears in Paradin's *Heroicall Devises* (Fig. 3). In the pagan context of the play *Pericles*' device and motto can suggest simply a hope for renewal; yet they do present the hero through the very special biblical emblem of new life rising from a dead branch, which for a Christian audience may contain association with resurrection.¹⁶

Pericles' vision of Simonides' court suggests that Shakespeare is continuing to explore the Christian implications of the emblem. At the banquet following the tournament we find *Pericles* still sunk in "melancholy" (II. iii. 54, 91) and Simonides determined to cheer him up. One moment during this scene stands out in defining a new stage of vision on the hero's part. We have seen *Pericles* looking at and behind the visual show at Antiochus' court. Now we see him looking at and beyond the spectacle of Simonides' court in a type of visionary imagination arising from dark melancholy:

Yon king's to me like to my father's picture,
Which tells me in that glory once he was;
Had princes sit like stars about his throne,
And he the sun, for them to reverence;
None that beheld him but, like lesser lights,
Did vail their crowns to his supremacy; . . .

(II. iii. 37-42)

The opening "yon" echoes those gestures at Antiochus' court that directed our gaze beyond its immediate scope towards the death's heads on the battlements: "yon grim looks" and "yon sometimes famous princes," set against the background of "yon field of stars." The ugly images of death that framed the action of Antiochus' court acted as *memento mori*, reminding the hero of human frailty and mortality. In *Pericles*' vision of Simonides' court Shakespeare creates the opposite effect, a picture of human nobility that even death cannot destroy: "yon king" reminds *Pericles* of his dead father, yet the courts of both noble kings present an image of eternal splendor.

Pericles' initial vision of this court of king and princes in the configuration of the sun surrounded by stars (II. 39-40) may owe its inspiration to Christian iconography. While at first glance the emblem seems merely an image of harmony in the heavens, it is from a naturalistic point of view quite the opposite, a phenomenon rarely to be

observed in the natural world. In Paradin's *Heroicall Devises* Shakespeare may have seen an emblem that the author calls "a starre garland, or crowne round about the sunne," which appeared in the reign of Augustus Caesar (Fig. 4). Paradin takes this natural wonder as a portent of the birth of Christ, "the true light, and true sonne of righteousness," and gives it the motto: "This age knoweth God aright."¹⁷ Pericles' image of stars around the sun may thus suggest the second stage in the Augustinian scheme, spiritual or imaginative vision; and the last two lines in the description of Simonides' court, in which the "lesser lights" take off their crowns (ll. 41-42), support this possibility through association with St. John's visionary mode.

Few devotional images would have greater iconic power for a Renaissance audience than the type of heavenly court Pericles envisages, since it presents a variation on a central Christian icon that most people would have seen or read about: St. John's vision of the divine court in the Apocalypse. This subject inspired some of the greatest art from the early Middle Ages through the Renaissance, appearing in paintings, bas reliefs, mosaics, tapestries, and illuminations, and throughout churches and cathedrals on altars, walls, portals, and stained-glass windows. The composition of the icon generally contains the same elements in the same configuration: the central figure of God enthroned in the sky with light radiating from his face (a sun aureole), surrounded by four beasts, seven candles, and twenty-four elders, either wearing "crowns of gold" (Rev. 4:4) or "cast[ing] their crowns before the throne" in a gesture of reverence (Rev. 4:10). Of the hundreds of magnificent representations of this subject from medieval and Renaissance art, Dürer's woodcut (Fig. 5) is especially effective in capturing the moment Pericles emphasizes, when the lesser kings "vail their crowns" (ll. iii. 42) to the supremacy of the greater, and in expressing the visionary mode so clearly in the relationship between the earthly castle, the divine court, and the visionary in the foreground of the circular court. While Pericles deprecates his own position at Simonides' court, comparing himself to "a glow-worm in the night" (ll. ii. 43), we can nonetheless see in this simile an advance over his position as blind mole at Antiochus' court.

At the allegorical level in the play the scenic emblem of the diabolical court (Sin framed by Death) thus gives way to that of the divine court (Virtue Crowned), and in the ensuing drama Shakespeare presents variations on the image of crowned virtue at key moments. In the scene following Pericles' vision of Simonides' court, Helicanus urges the knights of Tyre to spend another year seeking out Pericles and tells them that success in this venture will mean: "You shall like diamonds

sit about his crown" (II. iv. 53). When Pericles first finds Marina, he sees her as "a palace / For the crown'd Truth to dwell in" (V. i. 121-122). After the final reconciliation at the temple of Diana in Ephesus, Gower sees the whole family as an example of "Virtue . . . crown'd with joy at last" (Epilogue, 5-6).

III.

The changes in the vision of Pericles in the first two acts were all in some sense bound up with death—the dead suitors at Antioch, the prospect of the slaughter of his subjects at Tyre, and the memory of his dead father at Pentapolis. Yet the darkening of sensual vision that accompanied these threats and thoughts of death also precipitated more profound forms of vision—insight at Antioch, foresight in Tyre, and visionary imagination in Pentapolis. The last three acts sustain and amplify this conjunction of vision and death through presenting several striking variations on a single scenic configuration: characters looking on the grave of another. The opening scenes of the last three acts all contain such a spectacle. Act III moves from Pericles committing the coffin of Thaisa to the sea to Cerimon standing over the coffin at Ephesus; Act IV, from Marina at the graveside of her nurse to Pericles at the funerary monument of Marina; Act V, from Marina entering the tomb Pericles has made for himself to Pericles' perception of Marina as "Patience gazing on kings' graves" (V. i. 138).

While tempests dominate the scenes of death, the scenes of recovery from near death stress the opposite, namely an ordering of time and action through music and ceremony and the advent of light. The scene of Thaisa's awakening takes place in the early morning hours, and the most striking image, the moment when Thaisa opens her eyes, draws a part of its power from contrast with the imaginative pre-dawn obscurity. Cerimon, bending over the coffin of Thaisa, gives us a minute, even *precieux* description of this moment:

Behold her eyelids, cases to those
 Heavenly jewels which Pericles hath lost,
 Begin to part their fringes of bright gold.
 The diamonds of a most praised water
 Doth appear to make the world twice rich.

(III. ii. 100-04)

This description is also significant to the whole pattern of visual imagery in the play. Act I emphasized dead eyes and distant stars watching over

all; Act II moved from dull, clouded eyes to glimpses of heavenly harmony, crowns of diamonds and stars; the tempest opening Act III blotted out any perception of constellatory harmony, but this moment of awakening recovers elements of it in the “heavenly jewels” and “diamonds” of Thaisa’s eyes.

The scene of Pericles’ recovery brings out the full significance of that virtue the hero must achieve on his spiritual journey, patience. This powerful scene traces in slow motion the full range of aural and visual perception in the hero, from silence to the music of the spheres and from blindness to revelation. We begin in darkness and negation with Pericles’ refusal to hear, speak, or see. Marina’s song, like the music at Thaisa’s wakening, prepares the way for recovery, although it seems to have no effect on Pericles. Marina then introduces herself with a dynamic visual image:

. . . I am a maid,
My lord, that ne’er before invited eyes
But have been gaz’d on like a comet; . . .

(V. i. 84-86)

Neither this challenge to see nor the ensuing recitation seems to win Pericles’ attention, and we can imagine Marina glancing down, contemplating whether to proceed (V. i. 94-96). But her words “fortunes” and “parentage” have struck a sympathetic chord in him, leading to the moment when he first looks up and invites her to look upon him: “Pray you, turn your eyes upon me” (V. i. 101). In a first influx of vision Pericles perceives Marina’s physical qualities, those royal and divine traits that remind him of Thaisa, “As silver-voic’d; her eyes as jewel-like / And cas’d as richly” (V. i. 110-11). For the audience this description provides the fourth variation on a significant emblem. When Pericles understood the incest of Antiochus and his daughter in the opening scene, he described the daughter as “a casket stor’d with ill” (I. i. 78). In Act III we watched Cerimon opening the casket of jewels that Pericles had put in Thaisa’s coffin and the coffin itself to reveal the “heavenly jewels” of Thaisa’s eyes. Now we see the “jewel-like” eyes of Marina bringing life into the tomb of Pericles.

When Marina hesitates to tell her tale for fear it will sound like lies, Pericles begins to see her as a spiritual presence:

. . . for thou look’st
Modest as Justice, and thou seem’st a palace
For the crown’d Truth to dwell in.

(V. i. 120-22)

In addition to reinforcing the images of crowned virtue associated with the courts of Pericles' father, of Simonides, and of Pericles in Act II, the emblem of truth, reversing the image of Antiochus' daughter as a castle, shows virtue within rather than sin. It may also draw iconic power from association with the medieval allegorical motif of the beleaguered castle, as in *The Castle of Perseverance*. Another medieval iconographical tradition that may have contributed to Shakespeare's conception of the allegory in this scene is the Parliament of Heaven, which features the four daughters of God (Truth, Justice, Mercy, and Peace) arguing over the soul of man in the court of heaven.¹⁸ While Pericles first sees in Marina the two sterner daughters, Justice and Truth, the functions of the two gentler daughters, Mercy and Peace, merge in his next lovely allegorical emblem of her:

. . . yet thou dost look
Like Patience gazing on kings' graves, and smiling
Extremity out of act.

(V. i. 137-39)

Pericles' whole spiritual journey culminates in this vision of his daughter. G. Wilson Knight's commentary on this emblem suggests a significant parallel with Pauline thought:

We remember Viola's 'Patience on a monument smiling at grief' (*Twelfth Night*, II. iv. 116); but these lines hold a deeper penetration. The whole world of great tragedy ('kings' graves') is subdued to an over-watching figure, like Cordelia's love by the bedside of Lear's sleep. 'Extremity,' that is disaster in all its finality (with perhaps a further suggestion of endless time), is therefore negated, put out of action, by a serene assurance corresponding to St. Paul's certainty in 'O death, where is thy sting?' Patience is here an all-enduring calm seeing *through* death to everliving eternity.¹⁹

I could only wish that Knight had cited the sequel to Paul's comment on death, namely "O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55), since graves are such a dominant feature in the play.

It is, in fact, Paul who gives us the most farsighted conception of patience in the New Testament through connecting the endurance of persecutions and tribulations with the hope of eternal life. The following passages, selected from many of Paul's observations on this subject, demonstrate the essential connection between patience, hope, and vision:

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life.

(Rom. 2:7)

. . . but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope.

(Rom. 5:3-4)

For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

(Rom. 8:24-25)

How Christian philosophy and iconography inform the medieval pagan world of the play we see especially in the Pauline quality of the two principal emblems associated with Pericles, the device representing Hope on his shield at Pentapolis and the image of Marina as Patience, both of which contain intimations of eternal life.

While no exact parallels for Shakespeare's emblem of Patience have been found in the visual arts, William S. Heckscher has studied similarities in conception from medieval and Renaissance art, especially in funerary sculpture and in emblems that show Patience or Fortitude seated on cubes or stones.²⁰ Both types capture the monumental quality of Shakespeare's emblem. Closest to Shakespeare's conception is the figure of Patience in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1603), although the lady is not exactly smiling (Fig. 6). Other conventional emblems of Patience show a woman manacled, chained, yoked, or stocked. This tradition finds expression in the second edition of Ripa's *Iconologia* (1611), which features a lady bearing a yoke and manacles, her slight smile qualified by the tragic cast of her eyes (Fig. 7). Still other emblems of ladies near sepulchres suggest tragic loss, even Grief on a monument in Geoffrey Whitney's representation of a woman mourning for Ajax (Fig. 8).²¹ Shakespeare's figure of Patience thus gains power not so much from similarities with current emblems as from transformation of the conventional concepts of patience as a form of bondage and death as an occasion for sorrow.

The emblem of Patience draws together the whole complex of paradoxes associated with vision in the play, all of which involve confrontations with death, ways of looking upon death. Perspective on this emblem is particularly significant. In the dark hold of Pericles' ship, we watch Pericles looking at Marina and imagining her in the act of "gazing on kings' graves." The complex perspective gives the impression of looking deeply into darkness, of seeing through to

spiritual truth; and that truth itself is a type of vision: patience is not just the passive submission of conventional emblems but an active power, a way of seeing that can transform, “smiling extremity out of act.” Here we have perhaps the prime example in Shakespeare’s works of what E. H. Gombrich has defined as a symbolic icon, namely an allegorical image that raises the mind from vision to a revelation of higher reality.²²

The religious quality of the recognition scene between Pericles and Marina has often been noted. Andrew Welsh likened the influence of Marina to the operation of grace on the deadliest sin, despair or the medieval *wanhope*.²³ The allegorizing of Marina’s virtues in this scene may also recall Spenser’s House of Holiness, where the hospital of Patience and the instructions of Fidelia, Speranza, and Charissa heal the despair of the Red Crosse Knight. Hoenerger noted the archetypal quality of Pericles’ religious experience, a pattern found in several figures from the Bible, in the Red Crosse Knight, and in St. John of the Cross, for whom a period of utter darkness and negation is an integral phase of man’s journey to spiritual light.²⁴ In Pericles this pattern has been repeated with increasing intensity throughout his spiritual journey, each new phase of vision arising from some form of darkness—the symbolic blinding of Act I, the dull melancholy of Act II, and the dark despair of Act V. The whole process takes the form of incremental vision leading to revelation, with Patience an emblem of the most profound vision man can achieve without divine intervention. As Pericles hears the music of the spheres and sinks into sleep in a final darkening of the senses, Diana appears in a dream vision to direct him to Ephesus. This theophany epitomizes the paradoxes associated with vision throughout the play: the most exalted visions arise not just from darkness but from states of being close to death.

The reasons why Shakespeare chose Ephesus for the final setting have not yet been fully examined. J. Wilcock has pointed out that Shakespeare drew local color for the Ephesian setting of *The Comedy of Errors* from the Bible, the motif of sorcery from the Acts of the Apostles, and the theme of wifely obedience from the Epistles to the Ephesians.²⁵ More recently James Sanderson has noted that Ephesus is “a particularly appropriate setting for a play elaborating the theme of patience,” since the letters of St. Paul describe it as “a place of social discord and unrest.”²⁶ Yet a portrait of Ephesus even more relevant to the theme of patience emerges in St. John’s Revelation, where we are presented with a series of portraits of cities, the seven cities of Asia addressed at the beginning and the vision of the New Jerusalem evoked at the end. The first city Christ addresses is Ephesus, and the virtue for which he commends the Ephesians most strongly is patience (Rev. 2:2-3). The

importance of patience may be seen by the fact that it is also the last virtue for which Christ praises any of the cities (Rev. 3:10). Directly after that final commendation we hear the first mention of the New Jerusalem. In this sequence we can see the patience of Ephesus as a sort of first step toward a vision of the heavenly city.

The final scene of *Pericles* thus allows us to understand the whole play as a type of antique sacred drama, a spiritual pilgrimage culminating in religious vision. While the recognition scene at sea between Pericles and Marina emphasized natural, emotional restoration, the scene at Ephesus suggests a foreshadowing of ultimate spiritual reconciliation. This scene with its setting in a sacred temple, its atmosphere of miracle, and its imagery of silver, rich jewels, and stars, offers an earthly proximation to the heavenly cities envisaged by St. John, Dante, and the Red Crosse Knight. Here the hero's mode of vision undergoes a final change. He is no longer the outsider, trying to solve the riddle of Antiochus' court, or the sideline visionary, seeing in Simonides' court an image of divine harmony, but a participant in miraculous events. While it would be stretching matters to identify Pericles' experience with Augustine's highest mode of vision, direct cognition of divine reality, it is, nonetheless, similar in type to St. Paul's experience of being caught up into paradise. The audience's mode of vision has also changed, from that of jurors to that of witnesses to a religious event.

Bruce Smith has suggested that the references to Diana's altar combined with Pericles' direct address to the goddess may imply some visual representation of the goddess on stage, some emblem that would draw together the play's main themes. Smith has proposed a statue of the goddess based on a Cavalieri print, a robed figure with the usual symbols of a crescent moon on her head and an arrow in her hand.²⁷ Emphasis in the play's imagery falls on the silvery, ethereal qualities of the goddess, on "Celestial Dian, goddess argentine" with her "silver bow" (V. i. 246-48) and the "silver livery" (V. iii. 7) worn by her devotees. In fact, the final scene suggests an image of pure radiance—a silver icon of the goddess surrounded by Thaisa, Marina, and a group of virgins, all in silver garb.

If we imagine for a moment only the slightest alterations in this scenic emblem, changing the dominant color from silver to gold and the crescent moon on Diana's head to a halo, we would have an icon such as Christians portray on altars and elsewhere in Morations, Assumptions, and Coronations of the Virgin. Christian paintings may provide an interesting suggestion for staging the final scene. The Morations always feature the sepulchre, containing the Virgin's body with suggestions of

her spirit rising; the Assumptions keep the sepulchre but show the body rising, usually surrounded by haloed angels (Fig. 9). One way to catch this metaphysical drift in the staging of the final scene would be to give the altar the shape of a sepulchre with the silver statue of the goddess rising behind it.²⁸ The center of Shakespeare's final scenic emblem, the united family with Marina kneeling before Thaisa and Pericles, may recall the sacred event portrayed in Coronations of the Virgin. While many Coronations omit the Father, Dürer, who typically gets everything in, suggests the whole process from sepulchre to crown in his *Coronation*, and, like Shakespeare, emphasizes the union of the whole family (Fig. 10).

Pericles thus shows something of a divine comedy's progress through earthly versions of inferno and purgatory to paradise. Through the hero's spiritual journey the audience sees striking variations on the hieratic configuration of the divine court, from the diabolical castle of sin framed by death's heads, which suggests a crown of death, through the secular courts in Pentapolis and Tyre, which reflect divine harmony in their jewelled and constellatory crowns, to the religious temple at Ephesus, which in its silvery radiance presents a more ethereal variation on the divine court.

Gower in his epilogue treats the whole play as an emblem and gives us his final allegorical interpretation of the family: "Virtue preserved from fell destruction's blast, / Led on by heaven and crown'd with joy at last" (Epilogue, 5-6). As always in the play the allegorical emblem is open-ended and provocative, suggestive of higher spiritual truth. While the crown of joy may remind us of the crowned Holy Family in Coronations of the Virgin, it might also recall the "crown of life," which James presents as the reward of patient virtue:

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

(James 1:12)

St. John's Revelation also mentions "the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10) in conjunction with patience:

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

(Rev. 3:10-11)

Gower's final lines then expand the central concept of patience to include the whole audience: "So on your patience evermore attending, / New joy wait on you! Here our play has ending" (Epilogue 17-18).

New Mexico Highlands University

Notes

¹On the theme of patience in *Pericles* see John F. Danby, *Poets on Fortune's Hill* (London: Faber & Faber, 1952), pp. 95-106; F. D. Hoeniger, introd., *Pericles*, Arden ed. (London: Methuen, 1963), pp. lxxix-lxxxviii; Donald Stauffer, *Shakespeare's World of Images* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 266-78; and Gerald J. Schiffhorst, "Some Prolegomena for the Study of Patience, 1480-1680," *The Triumph of Patience*, ed. Gerald J. Schiffhorst (Orlando: University Presses of Florida, 1978), 1-31. This last book also contains important essays on medieval and Renaissance conceptions of patience in literary works and visual arts by Ralph Hanna III, Elizabeth D. Kirk, Priscilla L. Tate, and Albert C. Labriola.

²For influences of medieval religious plays on *Pericles*, see G. Wilson Knight, *The Crown of Life* (1947; rpt. London: Methuen, 1948), pp. 32-75; F. D. Hoeniger, introd., *Pericles*, pp. lxxxviii-cvi; and Howard Felperin, *Shakespearean Romance* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 13-29, 143-176.

³Saint Augustine, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, ed. Josephus Zycha, 28 (1), 379-435.

⁴Francis X. Newmann, "St. Augustine's Three Visions and the Structure of the *Commedia*," *Modern Language Notes*, 82 (1967), p. 59. Newman also documents the influence of the Augustinian scheme in the Middle Ages, pp. 60-61.

⁵Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2d ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), p. 379.

⁶Mary Judith Dunbar, "'To the Judgment of Your Eye': Iconography and the Theatrical Art of *Pericles*," *Shakespeare, Man of the Theatre*, ed. Kenneth Muir et al. (London: Associated University Presses, 1983), pp. 86-97; Bruce R. Smith, "Pageants into Play: Shakespeare's Three Perspectives on Idea and Image," *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theatre*, ed. David M. Bergeron (Athens, Georgia: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1985), pp. 220-246; Henry Green, *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers* (London: Trübner, 1970), pp. 156-86; William S. Heckscher, "Shakespeare in His Relationship to the Visual Arts: A Study of Paradox," *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*, pp. 13-14 (1970-71), 5-71; and Gerald J. Schiffhorst, *The Triumph of Patience*, pp. 13-24. Although Priscilla Tate's essay in *The Triumph of Patience*, "Patientia Triumphus: The Iconography of a Set of Engravings," pp. 106-37, does not deal with *Pericles*, its analysis of a set of engravings from 1555-59 is certainly relevant to the study of the play's iconography.

⁷V. A. Kolve, "From Cleopatra to Alceste: An Iconographic Study of *The Legend of Good Women*" and Gail McMurray Gibson, "Resurrection as Dramatic Icon in the *Shipman's Tale*," both in *Signs and Symbols in Chaucer's Poetry*, eds. John P. Hermann and John J. Burke (University, Alabama: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1981), pp. 130-178, 102-112.

⁸Quotations from *Pericles* are from the Arden edition of the play, ed. F. D. Hoeniger (London: Methuen, 1963).

⁹Hoeniger, introd., *Pericles*, p. lxxxvi; Smith, "Pageants into Plays," p. 238.

¹⁰For a fuller analysis of the fishermen's scene and the redemptive pattern it initiates in the play, see Maurice Hunt, "'Opening the Book of Monarch's Faults: *Pericles* and Redemptive Speech," *Essays in Literature*, 12 (1985), 155-70.

¹¹Green, *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers*, pp. 156-86.

¹²Alan R. Young, "A Note on the Tournament Impresas in *Pericles*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 36 (1985), pp. 453-456.

¹³Schiffhorst, *Triumph of Patience*, p. 14.

¹⁴Claudius Paradin, *The Heroicall Devises of M. Claudius Paradin*, trans. P. S. (1591; rpt. Delmar, New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1984), pp. 59-60, 320-21.

¹⁵George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes 1635* (Menston: Scholar Press, 1968), p. 217.

¹⁶This interpretation of Pericles' device follows Rosemund Tuve's concept of "double chivalry," by which an allegorical image has reference both to the moral life of man in this world and to his spiritual destiny, *Allegorical Imagery: Some Medieval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 3-55.

¹⁷Paradin, *Heroicall Devises*, pp. 199-200.

¹⁸For a full study of the Parliament of Heaven, see Samuel Chew, *The Virtues Reconciled: An Iconographic Study* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1947).

¹⁹Knight, *Crown of Life*, p. 65.

²⁰Heckscher, "Shakespeare in His Relationship to the Visual Arts," pp. 35-56.

²¹Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes 1586*, ed. John Horden (Menston: Scholar Press, 1969), p. 30. See also his emblem of Thetis by Achilles' coffin, p.193.

²²E. H. Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae: The Visual Image in Neo-Platonic Thought," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 11 (1948), 163-92.

²³Andrew Welsh, "Heritage in *Pericles*," *Shakespeare's Last Plays*, ed. Richard C. Tobias and Paul G. Zolbred (Athens, Ohio: Ohio Univ. Press, 1974), pp. 106-07.

²⁴Hoeniger, introd., *Pericles*, p. lxxxv.

²⁵J. Willcock, "Shakespeare and Ephesus," *Notes and Queries*, 12 (1916), p. 345.

²⁶James L. Sanderson, "Patience in *The Comedy of Errors*," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 16.4 (1975), p. 610.

²⁷Bruce R. Smith, "Sermons in Stone: Shakespeare and Renaissance Sculpture," *Shakespeare Studies*, 17 (1985), pp. 16-17.

²⁸Such a configuration showing a lady standing on a block of stone also ties in with the typical representations of Patience, usually seated on a cube or stone. Schiffhorst has discovered an emblem from Rollenhagen and Wither relevant to the standing image, which shows a crowned Constanca standing on a rectangular block with the motto in Wither, "*They, after suffering, shall be crown'd, / In whom, a Constant-faith, is found,*" *Triumph of Patience*, p. 19.



Figure 1. From Claudius Paradin, *Heroicall Devises* (London, 1591).

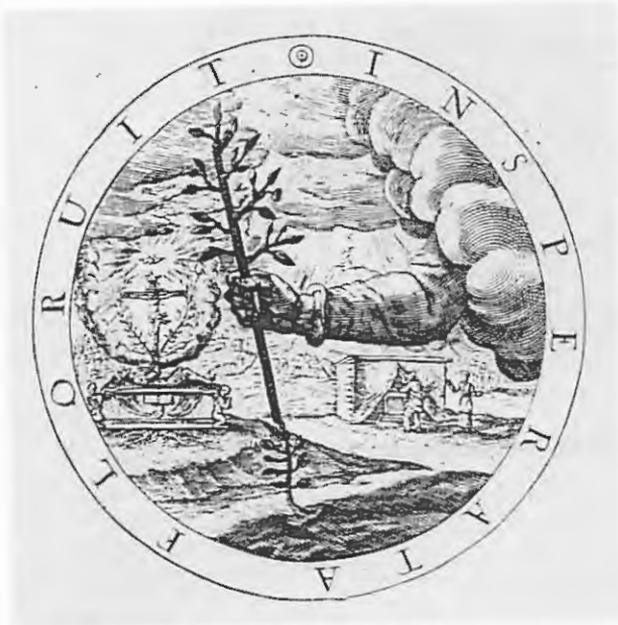


Figure 2. From George Wither *A Collection of Emblemes*, (London, 1635)



Figure 3. Aaron's Rod from Paradin

Hæc conscia numinis ætas.
This age knoweth God aright.

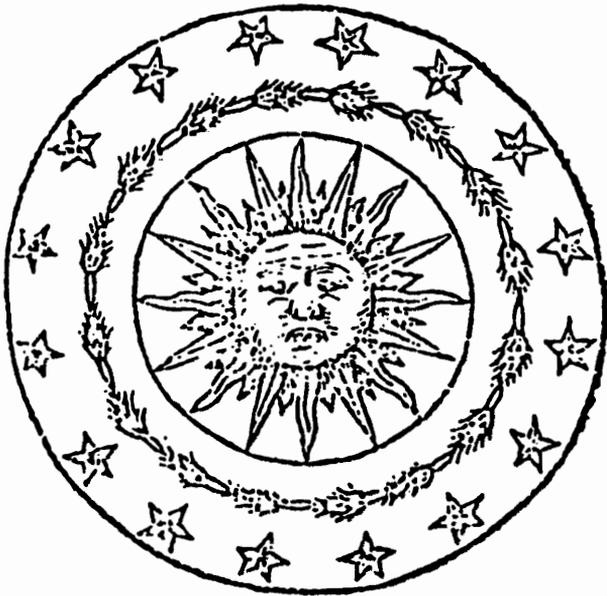


Figure 4. From Paradin's *Heroicall Devises*



Figure 5. Albrecht Dürer, *St. John Before God and the Elders*, from *The Complete Woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer*, ed. Willi Kurth (1927; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1963)



Figure 6. Patience, from Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Rome, 1603)



Figure 7. Patience, from Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Padua, 1611)



Figure 8. From Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leyden, 1586)



Figure 9. Paolo di Giovanni Fei, *The Assumption of the Virgin*
(National Gallery of Art, Washington)



Figure 10. Albrecht Dürer, *The Coronation of the Virgin*,
from *The Complete Woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer*

The “*Beste Noire*”: The Medieval Role of the Boar in *Venus and Adonis* by Robert P. Merrix

The boar in Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* has long been the *bête noire* for critics, both the most puzzling object in the poem and the most controversial. It has been interpreted realistically, allegorically and mythically. Generally interpretations of the boar, like those of Venus, are divided into antithetical categories of good and evil. On the one hand, the boar represents lust;¹ the evil effects of lust;² a surrogate of a lustful Venus;³ or something bent on the destruction of beauty.⁴ On the other hand, the boar is associated with strength and virility, and its destruction of Adonis is simply seen as the result of an unfortunate “amorous kiss upon the thigh.”⁵ Another time it is a worthy adversary, a “hard hunt” which prepares the hunter for the heroic life.⁶

The tradition Shakespeare had access to and from which he fashioned the boar is very complex and ambivalent. It was obviously Ovidian for the most part, but also medieval, first in that medieval writers moralized the *Metamorphoses* (e.g., Pierre Bersuieres’ *Metamorphosis Ovidina Moraliter* and the anonymous French *Ovide Moralisé*)⁷ and, secondly, in that Adonis’ quest for the boar falls within the medieval tradition of the hunt or the “chase.” In many medieval romances a solitary hero—a knight, a chevalier, or a king—hunts a boar, realistically a powerful adversary; fabulously a monster; allegorically a slanderer, pagan, devil or heathen. This medieval tradition itself owes much to the *Metamorphoses*. In addition to the hunter, Adonis, other characters in Ovid’s stories passionately hunt wild beasts, either being lured into the hunt or engaging in it in preference to love. These characters end up being transformed. Daphne, who wanted only to hunt in her beloved forest, spurned Apollo and was turned into a laurel tree (Bk. I). Picus refused the amorous advances of Circe and was lured into hunting a boar, and then transformed into a bird (Bk. XIV).

The medieval chase usually emphasized its compulsive nature and, often, the numinous or supernatural aura surrounding the confrontation between the romantic hero and the adversary. In most cases the confrontation occurs in alien environments with strange and fabulous settings which highlight the transcendental nature of the experience. Whatever the outcome, whether the hero kills the boar or is killed instead, the hero is self-actualized or transformed. Once initiated, the chase, whatever it represents, ends only with the death of the boar or the

hunter. Moreover, once started, the hunt transforms the world within which the battle rages.

I.

The complexity of the tradition handed down to Shakespeare may be demonstrated by some examples from medieval and early Renaissance writers. Attitudes about the boar run the gamut from its benign representation of power and fruitfulness to its malignant associations with death, destruction, and evil. In *Beowulf*, the Geats wear the boar-head emblem on their helmets, perhaps, as A. T. Hatto suggests, as a manifestation of "defensive magic";⁸ Tristan also carries the "black boar" device on his shield, made by no other than the mighty Vulcan.⁹ The boar had long been associated with plenty, in references to food and feasting in numerous medieval stories. It was also associated with food sacrifice. As a sacrificial offering to a god, it is reflected in the medieval Christmas ceremony, when servants bore the head of the "sovereign beast" to dinner, "in worchyp of hym that thus sprang of a virgin to redress all wrong."¹⁰

For medieval and Renaissance writers one of the most common associations of the boar was with lust or the concomitant "fleshy passions"—wantonness or gluttony. Shakespeare, of course, used this tradition most unambiguously in *Cymbeline* (II. v. 16-19) where Posthumus, alone, bitterly assails Jachimo as a "full-acorn'd boar" for his supposed seduction of Imogen. In the highly popular *Ovide moralisé*, the boar is associated with lust in general and with gluttony specifically: "Li pors [boar] puet noter glotonie."¹¹ Emblem writers such as Alciati and Ripa depict the boar or "hog" as an emblem of lechery¹² and the anonymous illuminator of a medieval hunting treatise by Gaston Phebus shows the boar "in coitu."¹³ The medieval Venus is often depicted riding on a boar.

The lustful nature of the boar is sometimes revealed in dreams. In Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, Troilo dreams that a boar is goring Creseida with his snout. To his dismay she seems to enjoy the sexual violation. Later Troilo discovers that the boar is Diomedo, who has successfully seduced Creseida.¹⁴ Chaucer changes the dream somewhat in his version of the story. The dreaming Troilus,

mette he saugh a bor with tuskes grete,
That slept ayeyn the bryghte sonnes hete.

And by this bor, fast in his armes folde,

Lay kissing ay, his lady bryght, Criseyde.
(Robinson's edition, V, 1238-41)

As Troilus fears, Diomedo, a descendent of Meleager, the Calydonian boar slayer, has won his Criseyde. In the medieval prose or Vulgate *Merlin*, an emperor named "Julius Caesar," but not *the* Julius Caesar, has a lecherous wife who keeps twelve young men disguised as women to attend her. One night the Emperor dreams of a huge sow embraced by twelve lions. He is told that the sow represents his wife and the lions her attendants. All of them are summarily burnt.¹⁵ In Gottfried's *Tristan*, Marjodoc dreams of a boar "fearsome and dreadful . . . foaming at the mouth and whetting his tusks."¹⁶ The boar dashes into King Mark's bed and "fouls the royal linen with his foam." Awakening, Marjodoc soon discovers the "boar," Tristan, lying with Mark's wife, Isolde.¹⁷

Another obvious use of the boar as emblematic of lust or rape is in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* where the boar, hunted by the Host, is one of the three animals paralleling the three sexual temptations undergone by Gawain. In killing the boar the Host "set sadly the scharp in the slot even, / Hit hym vp to the hult, that the hert schyndered . . ." a description quite similar to that of Arthur in *The Avowing of Arthur*.¹⁸

Sometimes the boar's traditional rage and deadliness are stressed. In Gower's "Seven Deadly Sins," Wrath rides upon a fierce boar.¹⁹ In *The Avowing of Arthur*, the boar is termed "a well grim gryse" (horror) and a "balefulle bare" which is "masly [massively] made."²⁰ In *Sir Eglamour of Artois*, the boar's "tusschus passen a yerd longe" and the boar is so powerful that Sir Eglamour fights him for four days.²¹ In Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*, Arthur dreams of a huge boar with "paws as big as a post."²² There are many other examples—*Garin le Loherin*, *Guy of Warwick*, and *Roman de Thebes*, which includes the story of the great Calydonian Boar.

In many of the romances the boar becomes more than a massive and fearful adversary and passes into the realm of the fabulous or the supernatural.²³ In *Aubery le Bourgoing* a game warden measures the boar's footprint and says: "Ce n'est pax beste." He terms it "maufes"—a fiend.²⁴ In *Culhwch and Olwen* a boar called Twrch Trwyth was formerly a king. Changed by God into a boar for his sins, Twrch has supernatural power and is never destroyed.²⁵ Also Arthur, in *The Avowing of Arthur*, alludes to the boar as Satan and, in *Bevis of Hamtoun*, Bevis terms the boar's lair "a devillus denne."²⁶ In *Sir Eglamour of Artois* the author stresses the demonic nature of the boar by emphasizing that the boar has been feeding on Christian men for fifteen years.²⁷

As Marcelle Thiébaux notes, the boar in medieval literature has become a conflation of several types of human adversaries—"the boar,

the heathen, the devil, and the devouring dragon whom the Christian saint must slay."²⁸ The role of the boar as "*beste noire*," a term used by Lady Ratio in an allegorical discourse, *Modus et Ratio*,²⁹ is certainly reflected in *Venus and Adonis*. Like Venus, Lady Ratio makes a careful distinction between the boar, a "*beste noire*," or animal of the "stinking foot," and the stag or deer, a "*beste rouge*," or animal of the "sweet foot." As a *beste rouge*, the benign stag—like Venus' roe or hare—is diametrically opposite to the boar. Although the allegory in the discourse becomes an elaborate comparison of the boar's qualities with non-Christian men, the boar's physical properties are similar to those given the boar by Venus. The boar is pugnacious, fierce, roots in the ground, is wrathful, as opposed to the stag, a gentle animal like the roe or hare.

The main function of the *beste noire* is to kill men by luring them into alien territories where they may be destroyed. In many of the works analyzed by Thiébaux, the boar acts as "a conductor [of men] into the fateful or the unknown,"³⁰ that is, in settings similar to the dark and alien one in the second part of *Venus and Adonis*. Once in this environment, the hero and boar struggle, sometimes briefly, sometimes for days, until one of them is killed. Following the battle, the hero undergoes a change, either a physical transformation, a self-actualization, or an apotheosis. These journeys recall those discussed by Frazer and, especially, Joseph Campbell, who associates the role of the boar or pig with "the underworld journey, labyrinth motif, and mysteries of immortality."³¹ The chase, then, for the mysterious and deadly beast is clearly an attempt to transcend the physical world and become something quite different and alien to man.

In his seminal essay on the boar, Thiébaux refers to four works in which heroes are "lured into danger or death" once they have begun chasing the boar. The hunters are Charlemagne in *Girat de Viane*, Aubrey in *Aubrey le Bourgoing*, Guy of Hamtoun in *Bevis of Hamtoun*, and the Duc de Begue in *Garin le Loherin*. To these we may add Arthur in *The Avowing of Arthur* and in *Culhwch and Olwen*, Sir Eglamour in *Sir Eglamour of Artois*, and Partonope in *Partonope of Blois*. In the last tale the boar lures Partonope to a new and dangerous mistress.

In the four tales dealt with by Thiébaux, three of the four heroes are killed after having been lured or "conducted" into alien territories. Only Charlemagne escapes, having been threatened with decapitation. In *Garin le Loherin*, one of the best examples, the poet emphasizes both the awful power of the boar and the dark and alien setting. The Duc de Begue, who hunts the boar, chases it for thirty miles in rain and darkness so that he finds himself unwittingly in the lands of his enemies. The boar destroys the dogs, trampling them or disemboweling them. Begue

finally kills the boar but foolishly blows his horn, betraying his presence to his enemies, and is killed.³² The two other heroes suffer similar fates.

The boar in *Sir Eglamour of Artois* has a more limited, though no less important, function than his counterpart in the other tales. The boar is the second of the three beasts that Sir Eglamour must kill to win the hand of Christabelle, the daughter of Frensamour, Earl of Artois. In sequence, Sir Eglamour kills a hart and its giant owner, Arrak; the boar and its giant owner, Marras, Arrak's brother; and a dragon that is besieging Rome. Importantly, after killing the boar, Sir Eglamour is granted a twelve-week rest before hunting the dragon. He becomes Christabelle's secret lover and impregnates her, leading to the banishment by the enraged Duke of both the mother and her baby boy. The ensuing story is a pastiche of romantic motifs involving separation, near incest, a battle between father and son, and final reconciliation. The boar Eglamour kills is so powerful "that he hase slayne fourty on a day, / Wele armede men and clene."³³ For fifteen years the boar has ravaged the land, killing men.

When he comes to the boar's den, Sir Eglamour, like Arthur in *The Avowing of Arthur*, finds evidence of the boar's ferocity:

Bryght helmes fond he strowed wyde where
That men of armes had leved there—
The wykked bore had hem sleyn.

(ll. 376-78)

The boar prepares for battle:

The bor saw hym er he stode,
And whetted his tuskys as he were wode,
And to hym come on syde.

(ll. 382-84)

The ensuing battle is furious. Sir Eglamour's "good spere asunder brast: /the hed wolde not in hym hyde" (the spear would not penetrate the boar's hide); and the knight's horse is killed. It takes Eglamour almost four days to destroy the boar, unlike the giant owner, whom he easily slays.

The Avowing of Arthur is a strange narrative mixture that is "by turns swaggering, heroic, comic and extremely cynical."³⁴ King Arthur, Sir Kay, Sir Gawain, and Baldwin of Britain avow to perform a series of tasks, beginning with Arthur's hubristic boast to kill a boar that has been destroying the land. The compulsive nature of the hunt and the excessive human pride are emphasized. Arthur vows that he will "To

brittun [cut to pieces] hym [the boar] and downe bring / Withoute any helpinge." The King then forces the other three to make equally difficult vows.³⁵ When Arthur reaches the boar's lair, he finds it filled with human and animal bones. Spying Arthur, the boar makes ready:

thenne his tusskes con he quette [whet]
 Opon the Kinge for to sette;
 He liftis vppe, withouten lette,
 Stokkes [tree trunks] and stonis
 With tussches of iii fote, [three feet]
 So grisly he gronus [rages].

(ll. 185-92)

Again the boar takes his toll of the hunter. Arthur splinters his great boar spear, so tough is the boar's hide; his horse is struck "starke ded"; and the King himself receives a hardy "dinte" from the creature. The frightened Arthur finally gets to his knees and prays, first to St. Margaret and then to Christ:

Send me the victore!
 This satanas me sekas

(ll. 227-28)

Only after humbling himself does Arthur gain the strength to kill the boar. Afterwards he again falls to his knees and thanks God for "this socur thou hase sent me / For thi Sune sake!" (ll. 267-68).

In *Partonope of Blois*, fashioned on the theme of Apuleius' Cupid and Psyche (*The Golden Ass*), the poet uses two boars, the first to demonstrate the traditional prowess of the hunter, and the second to conduct the hero into an enchanted land where a mysterious maiden woos him by night. One day, Partonope goes on a boar hunt with his uncle. The first boar they find is rather average and though there is "a grette stryfe" between Partonope and the boar, the animal is killed within one day. But the second cannot be brought to bay at all. Partonope pursues the boar "tylle darke nyght / So feste fell on in that tyde, / No ferther myghte he se to ryde."³⁶ Eventually the boar disappears and Partonope loses his way in the forest. Like Arthur he prays for help so that "thes wylde and wodde bestes / Devoure me not in thes fforestes" (ll. 662-63). When day breaks he comes to the seashore and sees a strange crewless ship. He goes aboard, falls asleep and is transported to a wondrous town made of marble and crystal.

The tale abounds with Courtly Love motifs—the demand for total faith, desire for secrecy, the pangs of separation, the superhuman quests

and the ecstatic reconciliation. In this tale the traditional "hard hunt" for the boar has become the "soft hunt" of love. Partonope's obsession with death is changed to an obsession for love and, with the help of Melior's sister, he regains the Queen.

One final example of the boar as "*beste noire*" occurs in *Culhwch and Olwen*, from *The Mabinogion* collection. It also contains the longest episode of the boar hunt in all the tales. The story, stripped of its linguistic formulae and tedious repetitions, is about Culhwch's quest for Olwen, the daughter of Ysbadden Chief Giant. In order to win the maiden, Culhwch must perform a series of tasks which includes convincing King Arthur to hunt Twrch Trwyth, a terrible boar, formerly a king but transformed by God for sinning into a beast. The major task is to obtain the razor, shears and comb Twrch Trwyth keeps between his ears, so that Ysbadden Chief Giant may dress his stiff and unyielding hair for the wedding.

As in *Partonope of Blois* the tale has two boars. The first, Ysgithyrwyn Chief Boar, must first be stripped of his tusks. This proves easy and Arthur and his men, gathered from Britain, France, Normandy and Brittany, go after the great boar. The battle rages over all of Ireland, Wales, Devon and Cornwall, where Twrch Trwyth is finally driven out to sea. At one point Arthur himself battles the boar for "nine days and nine nights."³⁷ Though he loses his razor, shears and comb, Twrch Trwyth remains alive. During the many battles he kills hundreds of Arthur's men and lays waste to much of Ireland, Devon and Cornwall. As in most of the other tales the compulsive nature of the quest and the mysterious and dangerous terrain are emphasized. Once he begins the quest, the hero is bound irrevocably into fulfilling it. Nothing else matters, even though the country, the animals and Arthur's army are destroyed.

II.

In *Venus and Adonis*, Adonis is faced with the choice of hunting the *bestes rouges* or the *bestes noires*. In lady Ratio's discourse, *Modus et Ratio*, the stag or deer and the hare are in the former, benign category; and the boar, the bear and the lion in the latter, malign group. Clearly the animals in the *beste noire* category are deadly, especially as Venus notes, the "blunt boar." Borrowing from Ovid's description of the great Calydonian boar in the *Metamorphoses* (Bk. VIII) and from the long and well-known medieval tradition, Shakespeare, through Venus, graphically depicts the boar's features and behavior, all similar to those found in the works earlier quoted.

"O, be advis'd: thou know'st not what it is
with javelin's point a churlish swine to gore,
Whose tushes never sheath'd he whetteth still,
Like to a mortal butcher bent to kill.

"On his bow-back he hath a battle set
Of bristly pikes that even threat his foes;
His eyes like glowworms shine when he doth fret;
His snout digs sepulchres where'er he goes;
Being mov'd he strikes whate'er is in his way,
And whom he strikes his crooked tushes slay

"His brawny sides, with hairy bristles arm'd,
Are better proof than thy spear's point can enter;
His short thick neck cannot be easily harm'd;
Being ireful, on the lion he will venter
O let him keep his loathsome cabin still;
Beauty hath naught to do with such foul fiends."³⁸

(ll. 613-38)

Instead of the boar, Venus urges Adonis to hunt the *beste rouge* animals:

But if thou needs will hunt, be rul'd by me ;
Uncouple at the timorous flying hare,
Or at the fox which lives by subtlety,
Or at the roe which no encounter dare.

(ll. 673-75)

This plea is followed by the famous hare digression, sometimes characterized as "Warwickshire realism," which Venus uses in her attempt to keep Adonis from hunting the boar.

But all is in vain. Adonis rejects Venus' plea to hunt the safe animals. He also rejects her other inducements—her plea to him to remain in the benign setting where she will "enchant his senses"; her suggestion that he imitate his horse and follow nature; and her final plea to "learn to love" (i.e., to procreate):

"I know not love" quote he, "nor will not know it,
Unless it be a boar, and then I chase it; . . .
My love to love is love but to disgrace it;
For I have heard it is a life in death. . . ."

(ll. 409-16)

Like the dozens of boar hunters before him, Adonis leaves the safe and comforting setting—"the primrose bank"—of Part One in the poem

(ll. 1-810) and enters the deadly world of the boar in Part Two (ll. 811-1194). Having spent the morning, noon and afternoon with Venus, he "Leaves Love in darkness," in such "a merciless and pitchy night," that Venus, who has followed him, is confounded and loses her way. In Part Two she enters a sinister and supernatural world similar to those in *Sir Eglamour of Artois*, *Aubery le Bourgoing*, and *Culhwch and Olwen*. That Shakespeare meant to emphasize the alien and horrific nature of this world is evident in his departure from Adonis' boar hunt in Book X of the *Metamorphoses*. In that episode Venus remains in her chariot until she sees Adonis from "on high" and leaps down to his side.

In *Venus and Adonis* Venus searches for the doomed Adonis in a cold and alien setting. She struggles through unknown lands where "bushes . . . catch her about the neck" or "twine about her thigh" (ll. 871-73). Images of "adders," "blunt boar, rough bear or lion proud" (the *bestes noires*) replace the *beste rouge* animals in Part One.³⁹ The hounds, vigorous and eager like their master in Part One, are now wounded, licking "venom'd sores and howling." The hostile environment adds to Venus' psychological state of mind as she stands "in a trembling ecstasy." She spies the boar "be painted all with red, / Like milk and blood being mingled both together" (ll. 901-03), a sexual image quite similar to the one in Marjodoc's dream in *Tristan*. Eventually Venus finds Adonis, his death verifying her earlier vision and justifying her warning to him. In engaging the boar, the composite of all that is antithetical to Venus, Adonis has found the kind of love implied in his earlier statement: "I know not love . . . nor will not know it, / unless it be a boar, and then I chase it." He has both chased and found that love. Unlike the love offered by Venus, a "life in death," this one is a "death in life"—a fulfillment of life through an erotic death. We should remember that both Ovid and Golding make clear that the boar's blow is an erotic coupling. Ovid says the "fierce boar" sank his tusks deep in "the groin" (*sub inguine*) of Adonis; and Golding in his translation states that the boar thrust his "tuskes" into Adonis' "coddcs."

III.

There are two transformations following the death of Adonis. The first, Adonis' being transformed into the anemone, reflects other Ovidian transformations of those who spurned love—Daphne, into a tree; Picus, into a bird; and Narcissus, transformed into a flower. As Marcelle Thiébaux states in *The Stag of Love*, "Too fervid a dedication to the chaste pursuits of Diana, a renunciation of Cupid's hunting, results in the loss of human form."⁴⁰

The second transformation in the poem is the one prophesied by Venus—the transformation of love from a simple procreative force to its Courtly Love equivalents. This type of love will “strike the wise dumb, and teach the fool to speak.” It will “be raging mad and silly mild / Make the young old, and old become a child” (ll. 1135-52).

The boar in *Venus and Adonis*, like many of its medieval predecessors, thus serves several functions. It is a “conductor into the fateful or the unknown,” a powerful force that draws man from domestic security into deadly worlds. The hunters, whether they be kings as old and as experienced as Arthur or as young and innocent as Adonis, cannot resist the compulsion of the hunt, the quest for the unknown, perhaps, even the search for apocalypse.

Medieval writers were keenly aware of this force and embodied it in their tales of Actaeon, the mythic representation of the hunting passion. In the *Lusiads*, Camoens castigates the young King Sebastian of Portugal, who is passionately devoted to the hunt, for not marrying. Sebastian’s symbolic persona in the work is Actaeon, and the hounds which tear him to pieces are corrupt subjects. The warning is clear that the king must rule his subjects and produce an heir.⁴¹ Ronsard’s Actaeon in a poem on the *Chasse d’amour* also reflects the compulsion of the hunt:

Freed from reason, slave of fury, I go hunting a wild beast, now
on the mountain, now along the shore, now in the forest of
youth and error.⁴²

The best example of the transcendent nature of the hunt appears in Giordano Bruno’s version of Actaeon in his *Gl’ Eroici Furen*. Bruno describes Acaeton’s ecstatic apotheosis:

In that divine and universal chase he comes to apprehend that it
is himself who necessarily remains captured, absorbed and
united. Therefore, from the vulgar, civil and ordinary man he
was, he becomes as free as the deer, and an inhabitant of the
wilderness; he lives like a god under the protection of the
woods in the unpretentious rooms of the cavernous mountains,
where he contemplates the sources of the great rivers . . . and
converses most freely with the divinity, to which so many men
have aspired.⁴³

The heroic quests are, in most cases, chaste, exotic, an anti-life force set against the fruitful domestic life by which humanity survives. In his *Love in the Western World*, Dennis de Rougemont characterizes this type of quest as “an alien factor . . . having the power to make instinct turn

away from its natural goal and to transfer desire into limitless aspiration, into something . . . which does not serve, and indeed operates against, biological ends."⁴⁴

The boar in *Venus and Adonis* may represent the militant chastity embodied in Diana as set against the fruitful fecundity of Venus and the hare, usually depicted with her. It is that, but as its medieval antecedents suggest, it is much more. It is not only militant chastity that drives those heroes from the safety of the hearth to the dangers of the hunt. It is an ego-eroticism, a compulsive need for apotheosis, for a transcendence from the known to the unknown. Like Adonis, the heroes, with few exceptions, move from familiar environments into alien and exotic places. Once there the hero prepares himself for the awful encounter with the force that has drawn him to his destiny. That force itself, represented in many medieval and Renaissance works by the boar, is subversive to all social and psychological restraints. Thus, it can be sinful, horrific, excessively chaste or excessively erotic. It is a need to experience life *in extremis*, indeed, to go beyond life to a death that at least for Adonis erotically annihilates existence itself.

In his later works Shakespeare uses several examples of the antithetical extremes of domestic love and the Romantic "other," e.g., a hunt, a war or a transcendence. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, the Adonis-like Bertram flees the domestically minded Helena, preferring the Tuscan wars to the marriage bed. No better parody on this compulsive "other" exists than Parolles' subsequent apostrophe to it:

. . . To th' wars, my boy, to th' wars!
 He wears his honor in a box unseen,
 That hugs his kicky-wicky here at home,
 Spending his manly marrow in her arms,
 Which should sustain the proud and high curvet
 Of Mar's fiery steed.

(II. iii. 279-83)⁴⁵

In *Troilus and Cressida*, Troilus worries that his upcoming encounter with Cressida may create an erotic transformation that can "lose" human distinctions:

Th' imaginary relish is so sweet
 That it enchants my sense; what will it be,
 When that the wat'ry palates taste indeed
 Love's thrice-repured nectar? Death, I fear me,
 Sounding destruction, or some joy too fine,
 Too subtle, potent, tun'd too sharp in sweetness

For the capacity of my ruder powers.
 I fear it much, and I do fear besides
 That I shall lose distinction in my joys,
 As doth a battle, when they charge in heaps
 The enemy flying.

(III. ii. 18-28)

He later bemoans the fact that such transcendence cannot be achieved: "the will is infinite and the execution confin'd, the desire is boundless and the act a slave to limit" (III. ii. 81-83). Unlike Troilus, who feared that he would die or lose "distinctions" if he could experience "Love's thrice-repured nectar," Adonis accepts such an experience, one in which distinction and limit no longer exist. "The loving swine," says Venus, "sheath'd unaware the tusk in his soft groin" (ll. 1115-16). With that erotic kiss, the culmination of his search, Adonis finds his exhilarating *death in life*; and, as Venus prophesies, he sets into motion the violent and compulsive yearning so ubiquitous in the history and literature of Western civilization.

The University of Akron

Notes

¹See, for example, Robert P. Miller, "The Double Hunt of Love," Diss. Princeton Univ. 1954, pp. 253-74; for an excellent summary of the changing critical attitudes in analyses of the poem, see Wayne A. Rebhorn, "Mother Venus: Temptation in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*," *Shakespeare Studies*, 11 (1978), 1-19.

²A. Robin Bowers, "'Hard Armour's' and 'Delicate Amours' in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*," *Shakespeare Studies*, 12 (1979), p. 9.

³Hereward T. Price, "The Function of Imagery in *Venus and Adonis*," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters*, 31 (1945), 275-97.

⁴J. C. Maxwell, ed., *The Poems* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1969), p. xiv.

⁵A.T. Hatto, "*Venus and Adonis*—and the Boar," *Modern Language Review*, 41 (1946), 353-61.

⁶Don Cameron Allen, "On *Venus and Adonis*," in *Elizabethan and Jacobean Studies Presented to Frank Percy Wilson*, ed. Herbert Davis and Helen Gardner (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959), 100-11.

⁷Pierre Bersuire, *Metamorphosis Ovidiana Moraliter . . . Explanata* (Paris, 1509; rpt. New York, Garland Press, 1979); *Ovide moralisé*, ed. C. de Boer, 5 vols. (Amsterdam, 1936).

⁸"Snake-swords and Boar-helms in *Beowulf*," *English Studies*, 38 (1957), 145-60.

⁹Gottfried Von Strassburg, *Tristan*, trans. A.T. Hatto (New York: Penguin, 1978), p. 109.

¹⁰Quoted From Marcelle Thiébaux, "The Mouth of the Boar as a Symbol in Medieval Literature," *Romance Philology*, 22 (1968), 281-99. Hereafter cited as "The

Mouth of the Boar." I am very much indebted to this important article for much of my essay. The quotation comes from "The Boar's Head Carol."

¹¹*Ovide moralisé*, IX, 981.

¹²See Andrea Alciati's comments on the Erymanthian boar, *Emblemata Cum Commentariis* (Padua, 1621; rpt. Garland Press, 1976), p. 595.

¹³"The Mouth of the Boar," p. 296.

¹⁴See Nathaniel E. Griffin and Arthur B. Myrick, eds., *The Filostrato of Giovanni Boccaccio: A Translation with Parallel Text* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1929), 440-41.

¹⁵*Merlin: or The Early History of King Arthur*, ed. Henry B. Wheatley, Vol. II, *EETS* (London: Kegan Paul, 1899; rpt. New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 421-31.

¹⁶Quoting from the *Patrologia Latina*, Thiébaux (p. 284) notes that the boar's foam was related to semen or "sea foam": "Aper is like Aper and Aphros."

¹⁷*Tristan*, pp. 219-21.

¹⁸*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, ed. J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), ll. 1593-94.

¹⁹*Confessio Amantis*, III, 843-64.

²⁰In *Middle English Metrical Romances*, ed. Walter H. French and Charles B. Hale (New York: Prentice-Hall 1930), pp. 608-09. Hereafter cited as *The Avowing*.

²¹Frances E. Richardson, ed., *EETS*, No. 256 (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965), pp. 27-31 (Cotton MS version, ll. 355-405). Hereafter cited as *Sir Eglamour*.

²²In *Arthur, King of Britain*, ed. Richard L. Brengle (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964), p. 265.

²³This tradition had been prepared for by earlier glosses on Psalm 80 (verse 13) which refer to "the boar out of the wood that does waste the vine" (King James version). The gloss by Cassiodorus, for example, refers to the boar as "*Diabolus fortis et ferox*." See the "Double Hunt of Love" for more on this, p. 234.

²⁴Quoted from "The Mouth of the Boar," p. 290.

²⁵In *The Literature of Medieval England*, ed. D. W. Robertson (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1970), pp. 172-86. Hereafter cited as *Culhwch*.

²⁶*The Romance of Sir Bevis of Hamtoun*, ed., E. Kolbing, *EETS*, ES, Nos. 46, 48, and 65 (London, 1885-86-94), see note 46, p. 37.

²⁷*Sir Eglamour*, ll. 628-31.

²⁸"The Mouth of the Boar," p. 291.

²⁹*Ibid*, p. 283. The full title is *Les Livres du roy modus et de la royne Ratio*.

³⁰"The Mouth of the Boar," p. 290.

³¹See Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology* (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), pp. 123-28.

³²"The Mouth of the Boar," p. 290.

³³*Sir Eglamour*, p. 32.

³⁴*The Avowing*, p. 607.

³⁵*Ibid*, ll. 117-44.

³⁶*Partonope of Blois*, ed. A. Trampe Bodtker, *EETS* (London: Kegan Paul, 1912), ll. 586-87.

³⁷*Culhwch*, pp. 184-85.

³⁸I use the edition by Edward Hubler, *Shakespeare's Songs and Poems* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1959).

³⁹The only animal not fitting the *Beste rouge-Beste noire* categories is the fox, which for Lady Ratio belongs to the *noire* grouping. However since she is speaking about sinful qualities of man, the fox as "subtlety" is logical for her design.

⁴⁰*The Stag of Love: The Chase in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell Univ. Press, 1974), p. 96.

⁴¹See Leonard Barken, "Diana and Actaeon: The Myth as Synthesis," *English Literary Renaissance*, 10 (1980), 317-59, for his discussion of Actaeon in the various works cited.

⁴²Barken, p. 339.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁴⁴Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1969, p. 62.

⁴⁵Quotations from the plays are from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, et. al. (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

**The Literary Evidence for Shakespeare
as Hand D in the Manuscript Play
Sir Thomas More: A Re-re-reconsideration
by Paul Ramsey**

In 1976 an essay of mine appeared about the much-vexed problem of whether Shakespeare had a hand, literary and holographic, in the manuscript play *The Booke of Sir Thomas Moore*.¹ That essay surveyed the various evidence and ended in agnosticism. In this essay I shall try to reassess once more the literary evidence as such. The conclusion will still be agnostic, though more negative than the conclusion reached in 1976. In my judgment, the literary evidence is strongly, though not quite conclusively, against Shakespeare as an author-reviser-copier of Addition II.3.² One reason it is hard to reach a conclusion either way (any way—there are varied options) is the muddling and infecting nature of the layers of possible revision involved. For instance, when in this essay later I show that the metrics of the passage are very unlike those of Shakespeare, a proponent is free eagerly to reply, “Ah yes! but those features of the metrics were present in the original text, where Shakespeare was just copying rather than revising.” Well, that is possible, but be it clearly and banefully noted that every such defense of Shakespeare as a possibility by just so much reduces the value of Addition II.3 as a key to understanding and studying Shakespeare. Perhaps therein lies the real moral of our tale.

I. Layers

The difficulties of attributing anonymous works to authors are notorious to begin with, and worsen when collaboration is involved. The *More* play is a collaboration, and the reviser or revisers were working from a scene there previously, of which a little remains.³ Some leaf or leaves sheets were missing before, so we cannot tell whether the scene was long or short. Virtually everything except the handwriting itself is thereby infected: spelling, words, images, ideas, meter, characterization. (Did the reviser or revisers follow closely most of the previous scene, only a little and invent most, or what in between?) The layers frustrate, since we do not even know what layers there are and how thick or thin. Who did what to whom, how much and when? For that matter, how many who's? More than one person may have had a

hand or mind or voice in the revising. Plays are a joint effort, and sometimes—ask any director or actor—cooperative.

Did reviser or revisers change fairly little of what Hand S (or Hand X and/or Hand Y) wrote? Was the original scene by Hand X (Heywood perhaps, to anticipate a later argument in this paper, or some other), copied or copied and revised by Hand S (agreed to be Anthony Munday's), and later perhaps was Hand S's passage revised (and expanded or contracted or left about the same length) again by Hand X or someone else? Or did Monday write the original scene, which was then revised only by Hand D? Or was there one or more than one intermediary? The questions are unanswerable in bulk and in particular, and could be further complicated without violating the intricate nature collaborations sometimes take.

In two collaborations I have done, each with one other person, every word was finally agreed on by both collaborators, whoever did the first draft of a given section. Therefore, each word is in a real sense by both authors. While one doubts that busy playwrights were all that fussy, something approaching that situation takes place in a theatrical collaboration; all parties would normally have some say about each other's work, and some mutual revising and rerevising would be done. Assuming, which is at least plausible and widely agreed on, that Hand C acted as general and more-or-less final editor and reviser, the other collaborators would have some say in criticizing Hand C's work. The attributionist-segregator's life is not a happy one.

Let us look at what we do have, the remnant of the scene presumably prior to the revision penned by Hand D.⁴

To persist in it, is present death. but if you yeeld yourselues, no
doubt, what p[unish] / ment you (in simplicities) have
incurred, his highnesse in mercie will moste graciously /
pardon.

All. We yeeld, and desire his highnesse mercie./they lay by
their weapons

Moore. No doubt his maiestie will graunte it you
But you must yeeld to goe to seuerall prisons,
till that his highnesse will be further knowne.

All. Moste willingly, whether you will haue vs.

The (somewhat) corresponding text in Addition II.3 follows. After a passage in which More has tried to get the rioters to imagine themselves as foreigners in a foreign land, More concludes the passage as follows:⁵

. . . what woold you thinck

all to be thus vsd, this is the straingers case
 and this your mo[un]tanish inhumanity
 fayth a saies trewe lets vs do as we may be doon by
LINCO weele be ruld by you master moor yf youle stand our
 freind to procure our pardon
moor Submyt you to theise noble gentlemen
 entreat their mediation to the kinge
 gyve vp your sealf to forme. obay the maiestrate
 and thers no doubt, but mercy may be found. yf you so
 se[ek it]

The reviser or revisers do not conclude the argument with the direct threat of instant death, and have appealed to the imaginative sympathy of the crowd, hinting nonetheless at the threat of death in lines in the revision such as “whett their detested knyves against your throtes” (line 257).

The reviser (or revisers) has converted prose (lines 473-75) to verse (lines 267-70), possible verse (line 476) to prose (lines 464-66), has repeated as well as dropping some of the argument, and repeated some of the concepts and language. The locutions *no doubt* and *mercy* occur in both, the first spelled the same, the second differently (“mercie” and “mercy”). The word “maiestie” is not repeated but synonymed as “kinge,” and very likely influenced the word and spelling “maiestrate.” The “weele be ruld” paraphrases “yeeld,” and the spelling “yeeld” may have influenced the spelling and choice of *eel* and *ld* in “weele be ruld.” That is to say, the relation of revised text to text-being-revised is intricate, unpredictable, and (even when both texts are extant) somewhat inascertainable. For instance, “maiestie” may not have influenced the choice or spelling of “maiestrate.” Quite likely, not even the reviser could have said. It is not even quite certain that the remnant was written before Addition II.3.

Hence, the problem of relating Addition II.3 to the lost text is quite sufficiently vexing, both as determining whether Hand D was Shakespeare (how for instance know whether striking likenesses to Shakespeare—for instance the *straing* and *scilens* spellings⁶—were in the original or the revised text?) and whether, if Hand D was Shakespeare, a given feature of the text (spelling or metrical preference, image or word) comes from Shakespeare or the text being copied and redacted?

Furthermore, it is not clear that the original text was simply by Hand S, or that all the revising was done by Hand D. Several possibilities have already been imagined. Furthermore, a copyist may have copied (and thus respelled and repunctuated) the text to take to Hand D.

Doing business is complicated, and not always perfectly efficient,

predictable or rational, and figuring back to how it was done is a highly dubious enterprise. D. F. McKenzie's article "Printers of the Mind" studied actual records to see what composers actually did, and the results are quite non-inferable or non-inductable after the fact.⁷ The lesson McKenzie teaches is powerfully cautionary to students of many a task, particularly studies of collaboration, since printing, like some playwriting and all play-producing, is a collaborative labor also.

Epistemology, fretting about how we think, is very apt to lead to the more desperate kinds of scepticism, and often unnecessarily so. Scientists go on doing science although paradoxes of induction and scientific method abound. My stance (and heart) are against scepticism. But the morass is morass-ish. We need to respect the evidence, and make the best judgments we can.

II. The Metrical and Rhythmical Evidence

Metrical tables were once held in much esteem. F. G. Fleay turned them out industriously, even—what a happy time of scholarship!—declaring them "infallible," and claiming by them to disintegrate Shakespeare's and others' texts, to divide out scene and verse author by author.⁸ Such disintegrations have not stood the test of time (or scholarly consensus, or reason) and have led to suspicion of the method. Such tables are nonetheless still sometimes used as a means of dating Shakespeare's and others' plays. This section of this essay will attempt to describe something of what is involved in such counting, and in metrical judgment, and to show that metrical and rhythmical study can speak importantly to the question of Shakespeare as Hand D.

D. J. Lake argues (accepting Shakespeare as Hand D) that the metrics of selected portions of Addition II.3 show that it was written by Shakespeare after 1600.⁹ Lake discusses broken ends (speeches which end with a less-than-full metrical line), feminine endings and alexandrines (6-foot lines, which I shall henceforth call hexameters). A close look at Lake's counting of feminine endings and alexandrines shows something of how such methods work.

Lake writes as follows: "In More's nine speeches I have counted eighty full lines of verse; of these full lines, twenty-two (27%) have feminine endings; three lines (4%) are hexameters (Add. II, 251, 259, 269) Chamber's Table III shows that the first Shakespeare play to average 27% feminine endings is *Merry Wives*. . . . The first play with anything like 4% alexandrines is *Measure for Measure*."¹⁰

One of the first problems of counting feminine endings, not acknowledged in the Fleay-Chambers Metrical Tables¹¹ is that minimum

and maximum counts are needed, in various ways.¹² Thus, in the Addition II.3 the following lines could be feminine or not. In Line 195, "graunt them remoued and graunt that this your noyce," "noyce" could be counted as disyllabic or as one syllable with a long diphthong. In Line 234, "make them your feet to kneele to be forgyven," "gyven" can be contracted to "giv'n" or disyllabic, and often is either in verse of the period.¹³ In Line 244, "and leade the matie [majesty] of lawe in liom," the "liom" can be counted as disyllabic or as one syllable with a long diphthong.

In such lines, the choice is between a pentameter with a feminine or masculine ending, that is, a pentameter with an iamb or an amphibrach (light heavy light) in the fifth foot. In Line 199, "plodding tooth portes and coste for transportacion," (plodding to'th [to the] ports and coasts for transportation) the "cion" can be one syllable or disyllabic (cion), and often is either in verse of the period. In Line 259, "owed not nor made not you, nor that the elaments," "elaments" can be contracted to "el'ments" or spoken as three syllables. In Line 269 "gyve vp your sealf to forme obey the maiestrate," the "maiestrate" can be contracted to "mag'strate," or spoken as three syllables. In such lines, if the contraction occurs, the line has a feminine (amphibrachic) ending; if it does not it is a hexameter, thus also relevant to Lake's alexandrine count.

Two lines present more complex problems and are awkward rhythmically as well as metrically. In Line 226, "his throne his sword, but gyven him his owne name," some emendation is essential, since "his throne sword" makes no sense. Some metrically unstressed monosyllable is needed in place of the deleted "his," for instance "and."¹⁴ To put back in the "his" would be to cross the author's visible intent, an odd thing for an editor to do, since the author deleted the "his"; yet the author might have put the "his" back in, when he completed the line metrically. An author may change his mind. Then, if "gyven" is read as two syllables, and "one" is stressed more than "name", the ending is feminine. If "gyven" is read as a monosyllable, the line is both masculine and awkward, ending in five strong syllables struggling for stress and rhythm.

Line 251, "To any larman pvince [prince], to spane or portigall," is, it stands or stumbles, either a truncated hexameter, "spane" constituting the truncated foot, or, if "portigall" is contracted to "port'gall" (clumsy but no clumsier than other metrical happenings in Addition II.3), then the line is three iambs followed by two trochees. If the line is emended to substitute something unstressed to replace the omitted "to," then the line is a regular hexameter if "portigall" is three syllables, or four iambs and an amphibrach (a feminine iambic pentameter) if "port'gall" is

sounded.

Of the 80 lines which Lake scans, according to my count, there are 15 lines definitely feminine, and 9 possible, making a minimum count of 15 in 80 (18.75%) and a maximum of 24 in 80 (30%). Lake does not include in the count the partial lines in More's speeches (lines 163, 170, 175, 180, 210, 218b, 220, 270b). If they are counted (4 are masculine, 4 feminine) the count becomes a minimum 19 in 88 (21.6%), and a maximum 28 in 88 (31.8%). The range (18.75% to 31.8%) undoes any judgments of dating. Chambers's Table III shows *Richard III* as having either 20% or 18% feminine endings (see different columns), and shows the first play with as many as 32% feminine endings to be *Cymbeline*, a gap that almost spans Shakespeare's career, the first half of the 1590s to near the end of the first decade of the 1600s. The study of feminine endings needs some clarification and qualification. Then such study can be valuable in studying style, attribution, and dating.

Lake does not, in describing the verse characteristics of the passage, deal with verse outside of More's speeches. Some lines are verse (for instance, lines 144, 152, 159, 176-77) and a number of other verses (especially the short lines) may be verse. I count 97 lines of verse.¹⁵

The hexameters fare even more troublesomely. Lake finds exactly three lines to be "alexandrines" in More's speeches, lines 251, 259, and 269. Each of those could be a hexameter or could be a five-foot line with (or in one possibility without) a feminine ending. See my discussions above.

Furthermore, the following lines do or could have six feet. In line 144, "Lin[coln] how say you now prenti prentisses symple down wth him," the "prenti" clearly needs deletion. Delete it, and what remains is a hexameter (modernized), "How say you now, prentices simple? Down wth him!" The scansion is iamb, iamb, trochee, and three iambs.

Lines 148-149, taken together, constitute a hexameter. Two speeches often constitute a verse line in Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

Line 148 hold in the kings name hold
149 frends masters Countrymen

The scansion is trochee, iamb, spondee, iamb, iamb. I have chosen not to count such two-line lines as hexameters, since they are a very different sort of thing from a one line hexameter, and would skew one-line comparisons.

Lines 176-177 are written as a hexameter and a dimeter (two-foot line), though perhaps an iamb and a trimeter were intended.

- Line 176 a plague on them that will not hold their peace. the
deule
Line 177 Cannot rule them

The oddity of writing a line containing more than one metrical line occurs several times in Addition II.3, a point to which I shall return.

Line 199, "plodding tooth portes and costes for transportacion" (plodding to'th [to the] ports and coasts for transportation), discussed above, can be a hexameter or a line with a feminine ending. One possible scanion of the metrically very peculiar line 263, "And this your momtanish [or, more likely, mountainish—with a minim missing, as occurs elsewhere in the manuscript] inhumanity," is a truncated hexameter, scanned as three iambs, a truncated foot, and two iambs.

Lines 144, 148-149 counted together, 176, 199, 251, 259, 263, and 269 can reasonably be considered hexameters ("alexandrines" in the term Lake uses). If forced to choose, I would count lines 144, 251, 259, 263, and 269 as best described as hexameters, assigning some other designation to the others. By Lake's count, 3 out of 80 lines are hexameters (3.76%, which Lake rounds off to 4%). By my count, 6 out of 96 lines are hexameters (6.2%). By a maximum count 9 out of 97 lines are hexameters (9.3%).¹⁶ Those statistics disturb.

Lake writes, "the first play with anything like 4% alexandrines is *Measure for Measure*."¹⁷ Chambers's Table III gives for *Measure for Measure* 117 short lines, 65 Alexandrines, 1395 five-foot lines. Assuming that is meant to be exhaustive, *Measure for Measure* has a total of 1577 lines (117+65+1395), thus yielding 4.1% (65 divided by 1577) as percentage of hexameters. *Measure for Measure* is the only play with anything like that high a percentage, the next highest being *King Lear* and *A Winter's Tale*, with 3.0% alexandrines (figuring the same way, from Chambers's Table III) and *Othello*, 2.9%, with the other Shakespeare plays well behind.

The figures of the Table may be inexact in various ways (I suspect that they are *high* for hexameters, as my count of hexameters in *Measure for Measure* will shortly suggest), but—by Lake's argument—rather than being a strong argument for a fairly late date for Hand D's stint, the percentage of hexameters is a strong argument against Shakespeare being Hand D. I did my own count of hexameters in *Measure for Measure*, using the Norton facsimile Folio text, and found 31 hexameters in 1512 lines of verse, or 2.1%.¹⁸ The discrepancy between my count of hexameters and the Table is explainable largely by my counting such lines (there are a number of similar ones) as through-line 1520, "thou wilt proue his. Take him to prison Officer," as a line with an amphibrachic ending, the "Officer" being contracted to "off'cer." The

discrepancy between my line count and that of the table may result from my counting two lines constituting a more-or-less pentameter as one line of verse, and not counting as verse some prose printed as verse.

The method I use for counting hexameters is consistent for the Addition III.3 passage and *Measure for Measure*. The result, combined with inferences from Chambers' Tables (and however inaccurate those tables may be, it is very unlikely that there are plays with a higher percentage of hexameters than the Table shows), is that the hexameter count discovers something very distinctly un-Shakespearean in the work of Hand D. One can (and I predict proponents will) explain the evidence away: a rough draft, an unusual passage, influence of the copy text, or whatever. Perhaps so, though none of those explanations is evidence as such for Hand D as Shakespeare. Yet that piece of metrical evidence is important, unbiased (so far as my powers of introspection reach), and distinctly negative. Addition III.3 has a much greater percentage of hexameters than any play by Shakespeare and over twice as many as is typical Shakespearean practice. No passage of like length in *Measure for Measure* has so many hexameters, and it seems unlikely that any passage elsewhere in Shakespeare does.

The meters are unusual in other ways. Using the definitions of unmetricality (a term I use without any intent of aesthetic derogation—some unmetrical lines in the *Sonnets* are beautiful) arrived at in *The Fickle Glass*,¹⁹ I am qualified to allow, as metrical, internal feminine endings (a light extra syllable before a pause or phrase—end within a line), and anapests (neither internal feminine endings nor anapests are allowed in the *Sonnets*—and actually not many anapests occur in the plays),²⁰ short lines at the ends of speeches, and any short line at the beginning of a speech following a short line at the end of the previous speech. The following lines, then, are unmetrical or metrically unusual.

Line 150 peace how peace I ~~sh~~ Charg you keep the peace
[Peace! Ho, peace! I charge you, keep the peace]

The line is truncated, scanning truncated foot (one strong syllable) followed by four iambs.

Line 157 Peace I say peace ar you men of Wisdome ar or

The line has three successive trochees. Scansion: trochee, iamb, three trochees.

Line 163 thus will they bere downe all things

There is a strong extra syllable here. Scansion: trochee, iamb, truncated foot, spondee (other legitimate scansions exist).

Lines 217 and 218 constitute four lines of normal verse written as two: “which oft thapopostle did forwarne vs of vrging obedience to authoru[ty] / and twere no error yf I told you all you wer in armes gainst god.” The scansion is five iambs, trochee and four iambs, five iambs, three iambs.

Line 173 peace peace scilens peace

This line has a strong extra syllable. Scansion: spondee, truncated foot, iamb (other legitimate scansions exist). One could argue this was intended as prose, but the context is immediately verse before and after.

Line 189 had bin tane from you, and the bloody tymes

This line has three successive trochees. Scansion: three trochees, two iambs.

Line 244 kill them cutt their throts possesse their howses

Scansion: five trochees.

Line 260 wer not all appropriat to your comforts

The scansion is normal here, if “appropriate” is stressed on the first syllable.

That the normal Elizabethan accentuation would be the same as ours is suggested by the connection with French *approprié*.²¹ Shakespeare rarely does stress tetrasyllabic words on the first syllable where modern practice would not, but not very often. Kökeritz lists 18 examples.²² Shakespeare does not elsewhere pronounce a word ending in -ate so as to lose the secondary stress on -ate, as APproPRIate would do.²³

Line 270, “and thers no doubt, but mercy may be found. yf you so seek it,” two lines written as one line. Scansion: five iambs, iamb, amphibrach (an alternative possibility would be a seven-foot line). Those 10 lines, plus lines 226 and 251, make 12 lines out of 97 which are unmetrical or metrically unusual, which is 12.5%, a whopping percentage which I very seriously doubt can be approached in acknowledged Shakespeare.²⁴

A proponent can reply that some of this evidence would be

explained if the passage were an unfinished draft. If so, and if this passage is at all typical, then Shakespeare revised very much (and very well) in his smooth drafts. In my judgment, much less than all is explained away by the rough-draft-ness. The rough-draft argument works very badly for hexameters. It would be very odd poetic procedure to write a great many hexameters in rough drafts, then scrape them out while making the smooth draft—odd enough to be quite unbelievable. Nor is the rough-draft argument satisfactory for the metrical anomalies. Shakespeare was a master metrist; one does not believe his ear went genuinely and fully to work only in revision. Both in hexameters and in unmetricalities or metrical peculiarities, Hand D and Shakespeare *severely* diverge.

Harder to verify, but more important, at least to me, the rhythmical argument works against Shakespeare. With the exception of lines 207-208, which are beautiful and could well be Shakespeare's (though some of his contemporaries sometimes wrote so well), Addition II.3 is the work of an uneven metrist or metrists, sometimes quite good, too frequently awkward or uninspired. Shakespeare is sometimes awkward, sometimes (comparatively) uninspired; and Hand D (whoever or how many he may be) is clearly a writer of talent; but the difference is vivid unto my ears between Hand D and Shakespeare, felt many times when reading comparisons of Hand D and Shakespeare's acknowledged work aimed at showing that Shakespeare was Hand D, and recently brought home again when I reread *Measure for Measure* for the not very poetically inspiring motive of counting its hexameters. My poetic and rhythmical responses and judgments are not infallible, but neither are they random: I respectfully request students of the problem to listen carefully when they reread Addition II.3.

III. Other Literary Evidence

Likenesses are limitless, alike and different, and what constitutes truly significant likenesses or differences is hard to say, individual judgment being inextricably involved. Yet to be reasonably sure of attribution or direct influence, one needs interworked and good likenesses, without compellingly important differences, and, even then, one needs to be able to tell what is influence and what the author's own. Authors have period likenesses, commonplaces, influences, accidentally-alike arrivals. Deciding is no simple task. Yet attribution is sometimes possible and reasonable. It is all but universally, and correctly, acknowledged that the author of Shakespeare's plays was also the author of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* of 1609. The likenesses, within and

between, adequately persuade.

Do the likenesses between Hand D's passage adequately persuade, all crucial differences being accounted for? Certainly many scholars think so.²⁵ Varied likenesses have been adduced. R. W. Chambers, one of the most vigorous proponents, overstresses some commonplaces and turns what he wishes to his uses, with polemical skill and grace, even glibness.²⁶ For a startlingly bold instance, he takes Heminge and Condell's praise of Shakespeare, "what he thought he uttered with that easiness that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers," and tries to make it sound consonant with Hand D as Shakespeare, an attempt which should give us fair warning of Chambers' stance and methods.²⁷ Heminge and Condell's comment likely has some memorializing hyperbole; as it stands, it is patently inconsistent with Hand D, who deletes, overwrites, and entangles within an unfinished draft.

So is Ben Jonson's comment, "I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakespeare, that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out a line,"²⁸ inconsistent with Shakespeare as Hand D. Some hyperbole allowed for, the implication still is that Shakespeare wrote, rapidly, drafts smoother than Addition II.3

Chambers, though he polemicizes and overstates, does along the way show some real likeness between Addition II.3 and acknowledged Shakespeare. He mentions likenesses to the Jack Cade scenes in *2 Henry VI*, including the unusual and joking "argo,"²⁹ likenesses between Addition II.3 and *Julius Caesar*, including the expressions "Peace Ho!" and "Countrymen,"³⁰ likenesses between Addition II.3 to *Coriolanus*, including the phrase "would feed on on[e] another" and a crowd saying "No no no no no"³¹ (a neat likeness, five *no*'s in each); the use of *shark* as a verb in Addition II.3 and in *Hamlet*.³² And there are some other metaphors and echoes but nothing that I find *necessary* to explain by authorship rather than by influence or likeness or subject or commonplace or chance. The web of ideas Chambers presents with zeal is a web of political commonplaces. Furthermore, Shakespeare influenced his contemporaries much and, until the dating is settled, one or any of the echoes could be explained by Shakespeare's influence on one or more of the authors of Addition II.3, even possibly *Coriolanus*.³³ I would not, however, press that argument, since first, authors echo themselves as well as other authors, and second, I am not convinced the links are strong enough to need the explanation of common authorship or influence.

Chambers' case is supported and somewhat extended by Louise Mahoney.³⁴ She finds references in acknowledged Shakespeare to washing with tears,³⁵ linking with "wash your foul minds with teares"

of line 231 of Addition II.3, two occurrences in acknowledged Shakespeare of the use of *unreverend* applied to parts of the body,³⁶ as in “your unreverent knees” of line 233 of Addition II.3, of having a personification chide,³⁷ as in lines 195-196 of Addition II.3, “your y noyce / hath Chidd down all the matie [majesty] of Ingland.” Mahoney states there are five uses, but only lists those two. One could add Sonnet 8.7, (quoted from my edition-in-progress). “They [the true concord of well-tuned sounds] do but sweetly chide thee;” *Othello*, II. i. 12, “The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds;” *1 Henry IV*, III. i. 43-44, “The sea / That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales” presents an interesting likeness, since the word *England* follows some form of the word *chide* in Addition II.3 and here. Sea-noise threatens, and the crowd has been analogized in Addition II.3 to water overpouring its bounds, lines 162-163, “whiles they ar ore the banck of their obedyenc / thus will they bere down all things.” Perhaps it is worth noting, on the negative side, that the verb *chide down* does not occur in acknowledged Shakespeare.³⁸

Mostly, though, the effect of Mahoney’s work crosses her intentions. She shows that Shakespeare and Addition II.3 use many of the same sorts of images and topics in varied ways. But so do other writers of the period speak of kings and clothes and smells and dogs and such (where, oh where, are the cabbages and sealing wax? the truly distinctive imagings?), and I am not struck often in her comparings with any close echoings of the sort one gets between Daniel and Shakespeare, Marlowe and Shakespeare, and Shakespeare and Shakespeare. And, once more, I am struck by the aesthetic distance between Hand D’s naïvely graceful or contrived handling of the images, and the images Mahoney adduces in acknowledged Shakespeare.

IV. The Literary Case for Heywood

Hand D is, paleographically, not Thomas Heywood’s hand. Hence any case of Heywood in Addition II.3 must put him at an earlier stage than the actual writing down of the scene by Hand D, and we are back among the perplexities of layering that the problems never escape. Did Hand D change fairly little of what Heywood or Munday or whoever wrote? Was the original scene by Hand X copied only or copied and revised by Hand S (agreed to be Anthony Munday), and later perhaps was Hand S’s passage revised (and expanded or contracted or left about the same length) again by Hand X or someone? Or did Munday write the original scene, revised only by Hand D? Or was there an intermediary or intermediaries between the original scene and what appears in Addition II.3? The questions are largely unanswerable and

work against proposing anyone (Shakespeare or Heywood or anyone else) as a writer of the scene.

Nonetheless it is quite plausible that someone besides Hand S and Hand D (and, rather incidentally, Hand C) had some, perhaps even a predominant part, in the passage. The case that this someone was Thomas Heywood is, in my judgment, impressive. I shall not claim that Thomas Heywood is, beyond reasonable doubt, the predominant author of the passage, but, rather, that since a strong case can be made for Heywood, the case for Shakespeare is thereby weakened in general and in one specific way. As is well known, Heywood is one of the most frequent imitators of Shakespeare.³⁹ Hence, if Heywood is shown to be a likely author, any given Shakespearean touch is apt to be there by influence rather than authorship.

Levin Shucking makes a case for Heywood.⁴⁰ He points out that “Heywood reminds one again and again of Shakespeare,”⁴¹ and that he is more sentimental than Shakespeare.⁴² Shucking also points out a number of fairly distinctive likenesses. In *The Four Prentices of London* the following speech occurs:

I wish that I could march vpon my knees
In true submission, and right holy zeale.
Oh, since our warres are Gods, abandon feares,
But in contrition weepe repentant teares.⁴³

Shucking compares to “your vunreuerent knees / that make them your feet to kneele to be forgyven” (line 233-234).⁴⁴ In both, knees become feet on a journey of contrition. (The image also occurs in Shakespeare’s *Richard II* [V, iii. 93, Riverside Edition], “Forever will I walk upon my knees.”) Shucking also compares “our Countrie is a great eating Country” (line 127) with the *The English Traveller*, Act I, scene i, “Our [English] appetites / Are not content but with the large excesse / Of a full table.”⁴⁵

Shucking points out the use of the verb *top* meaning “to lop off” in Addition II.3, (line 187) “that could haue top the peace” and in Heywood’s *The Rape of Lucrece* Act II, scene iii, “But when, in *topping* on[e] three *Tarquins* more / Like Hidraes heads grow to revenge his death.”⁴⁶

That *top-lop* meaning was at work in Heywood’s mind. Elsewhere in *The Rape of Lucrece*, “the proud king / *Lops* with his wand the heads of poppies off,” an action (we are told in the same speech) to be read as a threat that the King will “cut . . . off the great men’s heads.”⁴⁷ The meaning of the verb *top* “to lop off” does not occur in acknowledged

Shakespeare.

Schucking finds the combination of *shrevalty* and *sergeant* in Addition II.3 (“shrevaltry,” line 165, “Seriant,” line 166) and in Heywood’s *The English Traveller*.⁴⁸ The word *shrevalty* does not occur in acknowledged Shakespeare. Schucking also argues, and I agree, that Addition II.3 is unlike Shakespeare in its lack of interpenetrative imagery, and one should add diction and syntax.⁴⁹ R. W. Chambers gives as an example of Shakespeare’s elaborated imagery “and that you sytt as kings in your desyres” (line 200) and “and you in ruff of your opinions clothd” (line 202).⁵⁰ Those images do twist and pun a little, but for Shakespeare very little, and only in this and a few other lines does the language become even that lively. One would expect something more from Shakespeare even in a hasty revising.

A possible source for the “ruff” image comes from elsewhere in the play, and is a better, more nicely ruffled, piece of writing (lines 1427-1430, Original Text, Hand 5):

. . . heere, fierce riott,
ruffles not proudly in a coat of trust,
whilste like a Pawne at Chesse, he keeps in ranck
with Kings and mightie fellowes.

Schucking also finds the rhetoric and mob psychology of Hand D lacking, when compared to scenes of persuasion in acknowledged Shakespeare, ably argued, also, by Arthur Kinney, in an unpublished paper.⁵¹ Kinney shows that a More speech (lines 220-63) is a standard kind of rhetoric, following the fundamental rules of Aristotelian rhetoric, working with ethos and pathos, the speaker’s character and the audience’s (all-of-a-sudden noble and rational) feelings, and moving from enthymeme (probable argument) to enthymeme, and thus being at variance with what Shakespeare more subtly and psychologically and poetically does when an orator in one of his plays has a crowd to persuade.

The links are impressive (Schucking more gently says “not quite inconsiderable”), but not conclusive.⁵² Such evidence is, at least, comparably impressive to the literary evidence evinced by R. W. Chambers and Louise Mahoney to support Shakespeare as author. And there is more. The Jack Cade scenes in *2 Henry VI*, which scenes I believe to be by Shakespeare, have some likenesses (mostly of situation) with Addition II.3, and may have influenced it some, though there are no or very few really close echoes of style and cadence. But the Jack Cade scenes are much funnier, sharper of characterization, more varied and

graceful of dramatic motion and timing, and rely less on implausible and instant sentimental conversion, and have very many fewer metrical oddities (proportionately and absolutely) than Addition II.3. The Jack Cade scenes sound like Shakespeare; Addition II.3 sounds like good and somewhat uneven Heywood. Thomas Heywood sometimes is very good but very often is uneven.

Edward IV has likenesses to Addition II.3, especially in tone. It has not been proven conclusively that Heywood is the author of *Edward IV*, but the play is certainly very Heywoodian, in its charm, its sentiment, its comparatively simple grace of style, its vigor, and its comparative simplicity of characterization. Still, in this connection, it does not matter whether he is or not. I think Heywood has at least a major hand in *Edward IV*, but if he has not, the web of likenesses between *Edward IV* and Addition II.3 is against Shakespeare as Hand D. Proponents of Shakespeare can counterargue that Shakespeare was influenced in Addition II.3 by *Edward IV*, or vice-versa.

In *Edward IV* the phrase occurs "none shall harbour you / Or give you food or clothes to keep you warm," which links to the following lines in Addition II.3:⁵³

- 249 what Country by the nature of your error
- 250 shoold gyve you harber. . .
- 202 and you in ruff of your opynions clothd
- 198 ymagin that you see the wretched straingers
- 199 their babyes at their backs, and their poor lugage

The situations are parallel, which makes for some likeness. Words and cadency are alike, the clothes shifting from literal in one to figurative in the other, as often in genuine echoes. The quality of sentiment is very similiar.

In *Edward IV* there is reference to "an infectious heap of dung."⁵⁴ In the Addition II.3, the foreigners are called "Basterds of dung" (line 134) and some form of "infect" occurs three times in close context (lines 132, 134, and 135). Early in *Sir Thomas More* the foreigners are depicted as rich, arrogant, sensual, swaggering, and condescending. In Addition II.3 More makes an appeal for the foreigners as poor, pathetic, and put upon. To his reasoning the unruly, patriotic, and in some ways quite justly angry crowd responds instantly with tearful repentance. That sort of dramatizing is manifestly un-Shakespearean; it is abundantly Heywoodian, who time and time again has an instant conversion follow on a rapid appeal to sentiment or reason or both. There are many conversion scenes in the drama of the period, and acknowledged

Shakespeare has a few which strike modern taste as a little rapid, but nothing like Addition II.3. For Heywood, conversion is a sort of specialty, moving and honorable but not dramatically or psychologically subtle. The instant conversion seems to be in the the passage being revised (see my discussion above), hence rapidity of conversion is thereby lessened as an argument for Heywood, unless (as is quite possible) Heywood wrote the passage being revised also. And Shakespeare might be governed by the text worked on more than he is normally. Still the quality and fact of the instant conversion in the revision sounds more like Heywood and, if he is other than Heywood, the author of the relevant passages in *Edward IV*, than it sounds like Shakespeare.

The Queen and Jane Shore exchange forgiveness, kisses, and tears in *Edward IV, Part 2*,⁵⁵ as do Jane and her husband at the end,⁵⁶ with reciprocity, exactitude of mercy, and appropriate tears.

Shore. Jane, be content. Our woes are now alike.
With one self rod thou seest God doth vs strike.
If for thy sin, ile pray to heauen for thee,
And if for mine, do thou as much for me.

The healing grace contrasts with the self-drivenness of the ruffians in Addition II.3 who act "with sealf same hand sealf reasons and sealf right" (line 208), and "shark on" others (line 209), and at last on themselves. The self-rod opposes the self-right.

In Heywood's *The Foure Prentices of London*, Robert of Normandy talks in a five-line speech the furiously quarreling Eustace and Guy into amity and unity.⁵⁷ Later in the play Bella Franca stops six men from feuding with a single speech, converting them into a Christian army.⁵⁸

In Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, forgiveness is total from the husband to the wife and sometimes conversion to pity is *instantaneous*, as when Acton says:

I come to chide you, but my words of hate
Are turn'd to pitty and compassionate greefe.
I come to rate you, but my braules you see
Melt into tears, and I must weepe by thee.⁵⁹

In Heywood's *The English Traveller* Old Lionel offers another example and a sort of definition of the procedure.

. . . See what Fathers are,
That can three yeeres offences, fowle ones too,

Thus in a Minute pardon; And thy faults
Vpon my selfe chastise, in these my Teares.⁶⁰

Instant repentance and forgiveness, freely given tears, taking on oneself the sins of others, the Golden Rule writ plain, exact reciprocity of mercy past justice—these are not unique in an age professing Christianity, nor absent from Shakespeare. But Heywood has a special frequency and tone of combining them, a sort of naïvely insistent sympathy, and, in that important respect, Addition II.3 is in my judgment more like Heywood than like Shakespeare.

A speech by the Queen in *Edward IV*, Part 2, exemplifies those qualities and also follows the logical procedure of Addition II.3, the imagining oneself in someone else's place with sequent questions and repentance.

Why, as I am, thinke that thou wert a queen;
And I as thou should wrong thy princely bed,
And win the King thy husband, as thou mine?
Would it not sting thy soule? Or if that I,
Being a queene, while thou dist loue thy husband,
Should but haue done as thou hast done to me,
Would it not grieue thee?⁶¹

The word *transportation*, (Addition II.3, line 199, “transportacion”) which does not occur in acknowledged Shakespeare, occurs at least twice in Heywood.⁶²

Both Heywood and Shakespeare are very fond of playfully punning naming, perhaps more than most other authors of the period. Addition II.3 has a Sergeant Safe. Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West* provide what would be fit opponents for Sergeant Safe, the villains Goodlack and Roughman (alias Ruffman, another pun on ruff).

A striking echo of Addition II.3 occurs in *The Late Lancashire Witches* of which Heywood is co-author (the passage it occurs in is very Heywoodian).⁶³

Line 191 alas poor things what is yt you haue gott
Line 192 although we graunt you geat the thing you seeke
 Alas poore folks, they are as farre to seeke of
 how they doe, or what they doe.

These various considerations are not offered as a demonstration or proof beyond reasonable doubt that Heywood was the primary author of the Hand D passage. What they show is that much in the scene is compatible with Heywood as with Shakespeare, and that a good many

elements, including some major literary ones, are more compatible with Heywood than with Shakespeare. If that is so, the case for Shakespeare is reduced in probability.

V. Metrics Again

The metrics, which I have argued are not very compatible at all with Shakespeare, are very much compatible with Thomas Heywood. An example follows, from *The Faire Maid of the West, Part 2*.

- 1 Offence and you
- 2 Are like the warring elements, oppos'd.
- 3 And Fesse, why a king and not command thy pleasure
- 4 Is she within our kingdom? nay, withd *pathos*,
- 5 And therefore in our power: is she alone
- 6 The happinesse that I desire on earth?
- 7 What since the heavens have given up to mine hands,
- 8 Shall I despise their bounty? and not rather
- 9 Run through a thousand dangers, to enjoy
- 10 Their prodigall favours? dangers? tush ther's none.
- 11 We are here amidst our people, wall'd with subjects round,
- 12 And danger is our slave; besides, our war. (My lineation)⁶⁴

Lines 3 and 4 are hexameters, line 7 can be scanned as a hexameter, which is (even if one counts only lines 3 and 4 as hexameters) a larger percentage of hexameters than in Addition II.3. Furthermore, in 36 lines, including the ones above, of the same scene the following hexameters occur:

- 1 May it please your Highnesse, shall the Mask go forward
 - 2 To free me from these fires, I am deeper wrapt
 - 3 Have sweld our souls with all the sweet varieties
 - 4 In this your discontent all pleasures lose their sweetnesse
 - 5 And Fesse, why a king and not command thy pleasure
 - 6 Is she within our kingdom? nay, within our palace,
 - 7 What since the heavens have given up to mine hands,
 - 8 We are here amidst our people, wall'd with subjects round
 - 9 Rides the English Negro still within the harbour?
- (My lineation: I repeat the hexameters discussed above, to make the count easier)

The context is blank verse with most of the lines in speeches being iambic pentameters. These lines occur within 36 verse lines (39 lines, counted as by through line numbering). Hence 9 hexameters in 39 lines is well beyond the percentage of hexameters in Addition II.3. Take out

lines 2 and 7, which could be scanned as (odd) pentameters, the percentage of 7 hexameters out of 39 (17.9%), is still above the percentage of hexameters in Addition II.3, more than twice, since there are more hexameters in the 39 lines than in the 97 of Addition II. If one counts 97 verse lines from the beginning of the scene (using the methods by which I counted the verse lines Addition II.3), there are, besides the hexameters listed above, two more hexameters and a seven-foot line, as follows:

Sig. Clv	
(Seven-foot line)	Mount for th tilt: this day is yours, to you tis consecrate
(hexameter)	Captain, say Captain, I read a fortune in thy brow
Sig. C2	
(hexameter)	Thou hast a fate lade up to make thee chronicled

There are at least 9 hexameters and up to 14 hexameters-or-longer in the 97 lines, 9.3% to 14.4%. Suffice it to say, Heywood might well have written Addition II.3 with its hexameters; Shakespeare, on the evidence, did not, unless Addition II.3 is unique in respect to hexameters in his extant work. This evidence is not at all conclusive evidence for Heywood, nor do I intend it to be, since there may be other dramatists as given to hexameters as Heywood. A number of other dramatists are given to metrical exceptions and oddities. But it is, in truth, very good evidence against Shakespeare as Hand D.

In general, Heywood has more metrical anomalies than Shakespeare, in good part because of his enormous prolixity. Hence he is more likely than Shakespeare to have written Addition II.3, with its abundant metrical anomalies. That judgment is harder than the hexametric judgment to offer in statistical form, but at least some examples are apposite.

In *Edward IV*, the following lines occur:

<i>Smoke.</i>	Peace, ye slaues: or I will smoke ye else.
<i>Chub.</i>	Peace, ye slaues, or I will chub your chaps
<i>Spilcing].</i>	Peace, ye rogues; what, are you quarreling? ⁶⁵

The author liked the pattern, as he liked the plays on names. The scansion of each of the three lines is truncated foot and four iambs (even though the second line occurs in a prose context). Compare, in Addition II.3, the following lines: Line 150, "peace how peace I Charg you keep

the peace," has the identical scansion and begins with the same word as all three. "Peace then, ho!" occurs in the same scene in *Edward IV*.

Line 157, "Peace I say peace ar you men of Wisdome or" repeats the word "peace" (the word *peace* is used twice in a speech by Captain Spicing in the same scene in *Edward IV*)⁶⁶ and is similar in cadence, though odder in scansion: trochee, iamb, 3 trochees.

Line 173 "peace peace scilens peace" again repeats the word *peace* and has a truncated foot. The repetition of the word *peace*, when attempts are being made to get a crowd under control is not, by itself, very surprising, in either place. But the other links are so close as virtually to assure either that the same author wrote the lines or that one of the passages influenced the listening author of the other.

The oddity of writing in one line more than one line of verse, which occurs in Addition II.3, lines 217, 218, and 271, and perhaps 143 and 147, shows up in Heywood's texts, the compositor in those instances failing to regularize what was presumably from the text. It is most unlikely that compositors would set two lines written as verse as one long line of verse. In *Edward IV* occurs "Then out upon it, it is abhominable, I dare be hangde"⁶⁷ which is correctly regularized to two lines in Heywood.⁶⁸

Several such lines occur in *The Rape of Lucrece* in a context of iambic pentameter, for instance "I'm vext to see the virgin conqueresse weare shackles in my fight."⁶⁹ Such a line as "Remoue it we commaund, and beare his carkasse to the funerall pile"⁷⁰ shows, since such a line does not neatly break into an iambic pentameter plus another line, that Heywood's intent may be to write a very long line. Whether casual or intentional, such lines occur in Addition II.3 and Heywood, and constitute (another) likeness, unlike acknowledged Shakespeare.

Other metrical anomalies and unmetricalities in Addition II.3 occur in various places in Heywood, and I have collected some examples. Many of the varieties, perhaps all of them, also occur in acknowledged Shakespeare, so "pages of illustration" is not the point. The proportions are not close; Heywood much more frequently and typically than Shakespeare has the metrical anomalies of Addition II.3; the metrical and rhythmical evidence is for Heywood as an author or chief author of Addition II.3 distinctly better than for Shakespeare; the other literary evidence (likeness of style and diction and imagery and such) is at least as good for Heywood as for Shakespeare.

Since the evidence does not establish Heywood as the author (I think it quite likely he was involved), and since the metrical and rhythmical evidence, combined with the literary evidence, is much better for Heywood than for Shakespeare, the reasonable conclusion, on this evidence, is that Shakespeare was probably not Hand D. As an editor at

work on Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, I would very much like for Shakespeare to be Hand D, especially since it would give some nice touches of evidence (the *straing* spelling in *A Lover's Complaint* in the 1609 edition of the *Sonnets*, for one thing) for the manuscript's being holograph. But I have followed the evidence the best I may, and this is where I arrive. On the literary evidence, including the metrical and rhythmical evidence, Shakespeare is probably not Hand D.

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Notes

¹Paul Ramsey, "Shakespeare and *Sir Thomas More* Revisited," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 70 (1976), 333-46.

²I use "Addition II.3" as a purely descriptive term for the passage in (decided) question, Folios 8a, 8b, and 9a (Greg's designation) of the manuscript (British Library, the manuscript Harleian 7368), pp. 73-78 in W. W. Greg, *The Book of Sir Thomas More* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press for the Malone Society, 1911). According to Greg, the passage is in Hand D, earlier parts of Addition II being in Hands B and C. Talking of Hand D or the Hand D passage begs an authorial and a paleographical question, authorial since the scene is a revision of a scene a few lines of which are still in the manuscript in Hand S (Greg's designation) on Folio 10a, p. 17 in Greg's edition. Greg also notes that Hand C does some revising on the three pages. Thus there are, according to Greg, at least three authors. Furthermore, no thorough study exists to show that Hand C and Hand D are distinct hands, so reference to "Hand D" begs a paleographical question. Some scholars use the term Addition IIc, including G. Harold Metz in his highly valuable summary of scholarship in his *Four Plays Ascribed to Shakespeare: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1982). That term is neutral, but if one divides up the section consistently on that pattern, following Greg's designation of hands, one has Hand B writing Addition IIa, Hand C writing Addition IIb, and Hand D writing Addition IIc. When the term "Hand D" is used in this essay, it means the penman.

³Folio 10a, p. 17 in Greg's edition. See the previous note.

⁴Quoted from Greg's edition, p. 17, in one or two details emended by my reading of the manuscript Harleian 7368—see Note 2. I somewhat simplify Greg's markings, here and elsewhere. Those markings are useful for studying the manuscript, but are complex and require various sigla, hence confusing to a reader who has not read Greg's explanations, and are not relevant to my purposes in this essay.

⁵Quoted from Greg's edition, p. 78, lines 261-70. See previous note. Henceforth I normally quote from that passage from Greg's edition, using line numbers.

⁶See J. Dover Wilson, "Bibliographical Links between the Three Pages and the Good Quartos," pp. 113-31, esp. pp. 127-28, 128-29, and Appendix of spellings, pp. 132-41, in A. W. Pollard and others, *Shakespeare's Hand in the Play of Sir Thomas More* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1923). I think the "straing" and "scilens" spellings are far and away the best evidence for Shakespeare as Hand D, though for reasons I give in Ramsey, "Shakespeare and *More*," pp. 338-340, and because of the layer-problem

discussed in the text, and because we are not sure that the manuscripts for the relevant Shakespeare quartos were holograph, because the copy may have had *stränge* and *scilense* and the compositors dropped the final e (the compositors did not know that the words *strange* and *silence* were intended or they would probably have regularized the spellings), the evidence of “straing” and “scilens” is not conclusive. It remains impressive. Perhaps kindly scholars will forgive me for finding it spooky that the best evidence we have for Shakespeare as Hand D is *strange silence* strangely spelled.

⁷D. F. McKenzie, “Printers of the Mind: Some Notes on Bibliographical Theories and Printing-House Practice,” *Studies in Bibliography*, 22 (1969), 1-75.

⁸F. G. Fleay, *Shakespeare Manual* (London: MacMillan, 1878), p. 241.

⁹D. J. Lake, “The Date of the *Sir Thomas More* Additions by Dekker and by Shakespeare,” *Notes and Queries*, 222 (1977), 114-16. I have not discussed Lake’s discussion of broken ends.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 115.

¹¹For the metrical tables, and bibliography, see E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930). See vol. 2, pp. 397-408, p. 397 for bibliography and p. 400 for Table III, which includes counts of feminine endings and alexandrines. The tables are revised from Fleay’s.

¹²See Philip Timberlake, *The Feminine Ending in English Blank Verse* (Menasha, WI: George Banta, 1931), pp. 3-4, and Paul Ramsey, *The Fickle Glass: A Study of Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1979), pp. 83-84.

¹³See Ramsey, *Fickle Glass*, Appendix, pp. 191-208, esp. p. 203, #2.

¹⁴*The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans and others (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), p. 1692, line 103 gives the line with the second “his” deleted but with an ampersand added. Hence according to that edition “and” would not be an emendation. An ampersand is added to the “his” in the text, but appears to be also deleted by the interlineation, as best as I can tell from manuscript or the facsimile edition, *The Booke of Sir Thomas Moore*, ed. John S. Farmer, Tudor Facsimile Texts (Edinburgh and London: by the Editor, 1910), (fol. 9, eighth line down). In any event, “His throne and sword” is the most natural reading of the line, emended or not.

¹⁵The count depends on which column and which counting scholar one selects. See E. K. Chambers, *Shakespeare*, vol. 2, p. 400.

¹⁶I count More’s speeches as Lake does, only I also count 8 short lines in those speeches. I also count, outside of More’s speeches, the following lines as verse: 144, 150, 152, 157 (as two lines of verse), 159, 173, 176, and 177). $80+8+9=97$. Chambers rounds off all percentages to whole numbers, on the ground that “the use of decimals gives a specious appearance of scientific precision” (*Shakespeare*, vol. 2, p. 306). While one should normally avoid giving figures more precise than the nature of the material or the range of variation warrants, there is quite a difference between 3% and 4%, yet 3.49% would round to 3%, 3.51% to 4%. Therefore I have used decimals to make more meaningful comparisons.

¹⁷Lake, “Date of ‘More,’” p. 115.

¹⁸William Shakespeare, *The First Folio of Shakespeare*, ed. Charlton Hinman (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968). *Measure for Measure*, pp. 79-102.

¹⁹Ramsey, *Glass*, pp. 80-83.

²⁰See Dorothy L. Sipe, *Shakespeare’s Metrics* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1968), *passim* (the comparative rarity of anapests is the thesis of her book).

²¹See the *Oxford English Dictionary*, second ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), vol. 1, p. 586.

²²Helge Kökeritz, *Shakespeare’s Pronunciation* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ.

Press, 1953), p. 395.

²¹Inferred from Kökeritz, p. 337.

²²The term “acknowledged Shakespeare” here and later in the essay is used as purely descriptive jargon to mean “Shakespeare’s work excluding Addition II.3, whether or not Addition II.3 is in whole or part by Shakespeare.” The term “acknowledged Shakespeare” has its own problems (Oxonians would not love it), but at least it avoids question-begging and circumlocution. Such a phrase as “in Shakespeare” begs the question by implying that Hand D is not Shakespeare, while such a phrase as “in Shakespeare elsewhere” begs the question the opposite way.

²³Just over two-thirds of the scholars in Metz’s summary, in *Four Plays*, pp. 3-43 for “The Plays as a Group,” pp. 69-117 and for “Sir Thomas More,” believe that Shakespeare is Hand D. Many of those are not very confident. To adduce numbers to make a point about the spread of probability, over two-thirds hold that the odds (for justified belief) for Shakespeare are better than .50 (more likely than not); none or very few would hold that the odds are better than, say, .99; a number show varying degrees of doubt.

²⁴R. W. Chambers, “The Expression of Ideas—Particularly Political Ideas—in the Three Pages, and in Shakespeare,” in Alfred W. Pollard and others, *Shakespeare’s Hand in the Play of “Sir Thomas More”* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1923), pp. 182-87. See also R. W. Chambers, “Shakespeare and the Play of More,” in *Man’s Unconquerable Mind* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1939), pp. 204-49.

²⁵R. W. Chambers, “Three Pages,” p. 142; see the *Norton Facsimile of Shakespeare*, John Heminge and Henrie Condell, “To the Great Variety of Readers,” p. 7 (Sig. A3).

²⁶Ben Jonson, *Ben Jonson’s Timber or Discovery*, ed. Ralph S. Walker (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1953), p. 52.

²⁷R. W. Chambers, “Three Pages,” p. 215, and context. M. P. Jackson, in “A Non-Shakespearean Parallel to the Comic Mispronunciation of ‘Ergo’ in Hand D of Sir Thomas More,” *Notes and Queries*, 216 (1971), p. 139. Jackson has shown that the “argo” occurred also in Thomas Middleton and, anyway, jokes are often borrowed.

²⁸R. W. Chambers, “Three Pages,” p. 164.

²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 158 and 160 respectively.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 165. Chambers points out that the two earliest uses of *shark* as a verb noted by the *Oxford English Dictionary* are in *More* and *Hamlet*. That is notable, until one goes to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The use in *More* is of *shark on*, which is listed as a separate meaning from the *shark up* (quite a different meaning) in *Hamlet*. Several other uses of *shark* as a verb are listed by 1615, implying a number of unlisted since the “General Explanations” of the *Oxford English Dictionary* tell us, vol. 1, p. xxxii, “The need to to keep the Dictionary within practicable limits has also rendered it necessary to give only a minimum of quotations selected from the material available.” The noun *sharker*, clearly implying the verb, “One who sharks,” (quoted from the definition) has a 1594 example. *More* does have the earliest dated example, 1596, of *shark* as a verb, but the designation “Of uncertain origin” clearly implies the editors do not think that the use in *More* was the origin. And then, just to gild the icing, W. W. Skeat believed that “the verb was the source, not the derivative, of the two substantives.”

³¹A number of scholars give a date in the late 1590s or early 1600s, for instance, Carol A. Chillington, “Playwrights at Work: Henslowe’s, Not Shakespeare’s, *Book of Sir Thomas More*,” *English Literary Renaissance*, 10(1980), 439-79, who shows connections with playwrights connected with Henslowe during a period in the late 1590’s and early 1600’s. Chillington overstates her case in various ways, for instance, in her statement that Hand B has been “convincingly identified” (p. 440) as Thomas Heywood. See the careful study by J. M. Nosworthy, “Hand B in *Sir Thomas More*,” *The Library*, 5th series,

11(1956), 47-50, which offers reasons for seriously doubting the identification. And Chillington's identification of Hand D as John Webster has been ably argued against by Charles Forker in a seminar paper for the Shakespeare Association. Still, the Henslowe-group case, all told, is evidence against Shakespeare as Hand D. It is not conclusive, since much was fluid in the companies and playwriting of the day; much depends on negative evidence: we have Henslowe's records but not others. Shakespeare could have done some work for a different company, once, or several at unrecorded times. The argument of negative evidence, however, cuts a bit both ways. If Shakespeare had worked some for Henslowe, it is likely his name would appear in Henslowe's records. Nothing we know suggests that Shakespeare was averse to payment. The whole matter is too complicated to solve in a footnote, or perhaps beyond a footnote, and is outside of the scope of this essay, which is to discuss the literary evidence. Still, those who dismiss the Henslowe-group evidence might consider a supposing. Suppose all the evidence from theatrical records connected the play with Shakespeare's company. The proponents of Shakespeare as Hand D would cheerfully and decidedly take that as evidence for Shakespeare. Therefore, they should take the Henslowe-group evidence as evidence against.

³⁴Louise Mahoney, *Shakespearean Imagery and the "Book of Sir Thomas More"* (M. A. Thesis, Boston College, 1956).

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 65-68.

³⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 68-70. The references are (Riverside ed.), *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. vi. 14, "unreverend tongue"; and *Richard II*, II. i. 123, "unreverent shoulders." (The difference in spelling, or whether *unreverent* and *unreverend* are one or two words, does not affect her point.)

³⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 55-56. The references Mahoney gives are (Riverside) *Romeo and Juliet*, II. vi. 1-2, "So smile the heavens upon this holy act, / That after-hours with sorrow chide us not!"; and *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. i. 73-74, "Then it is likely thou wilt undertake / A thing like death to chide away this shame." Strictly, in the latter, the agency of chiding is personal rather than a personification: "you will undertake a thing like death in order for you to chide away this shame."

³⁸Here as elsewhere in the paper my authority for statements about what is in Shakespeare is Marvin Spevack, *The Harvard Concordance to Shakespeare* (Hildesheim, West Germany: George Olms, 1973).

³⁹See Charles R. Forker, "Shakespeare's Histories and Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 66 (1965), pp. 167-78, and his notes, esp. note 2, for further reference to Shakespeare's influence. See also Arlene W. Weiner, "Introduction" to her edition of Thomas Heywood, *The Iron Age* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1979), pp. xix-xxxv, for some discussion of mutual influence. See also the next note and relevant text.

⁴⁰Levin L. Shucking, "Shakespeare and *Sir Thomas More*," *Review of English Studies*, 1 (1925), 40-59. Shucking notes, p. 57, A. W. Pollard's comment, "If these pages were not Shakespeare's work, the dramatist to whom on the ground of style and temper would most readily assign them . . . would be Thomas Heywood." I quote from A. W. Pollard, "Introduction," *Shakespeare's Hand*, p. 15. Pollard's statement, as an admission against interest, should be given some weight.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁴³Quoted from *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood Now First Collected . . .* (1874; rpt. ed. 6 vols. New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), vol. 1, pp. 126-130. This edition is henceforth referred to as Heywood (Russell).

⁴⁴Shucking, p. 57.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷Heywood (Russell), vol. 4, p. 209.

⁴⁸Shucking, pp. 57-58.

⁴⁹Shucking, pp. 42-43.

⁵⁰R. W. Chambers, "Play of *More*," p. 162. Cf. Mahoney, pp. 51-52.

⁵¹Shucking, pp. 45-48.

⁵²Shucking, p. 58.

⁵³Heywood (Russell), vol. 1, p. 158.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 165.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 126-30.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 182.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 204.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 210-11.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 154-55.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 83.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 27.

⁶²*Edward IV*, Part 2, in Heywood (Russell), vol. 1, p. 172.

⁶³Thomas Heywood and Richard Broome, *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634) in Heywood (Russell), vol. 4, p. 130.

⁶⁴Thomas Heywood, *The Faire Maid of the West*, *The English Experience*, (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1973), p. 529. Facsimile of S. T. C. No. 13320 (London: for Richard Boyston, 1631), *The Second Part*, Sig. B4v to Sig. C1.

⁶⁵Heywood (Russell), vol. 1, p. 10, for all three lines. The first two are consecutive; the third line quoted is the sixth line after the second line quoted.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 8.

⁶⁷Quoted from Thomas Heywood, *The First and Second Parts of King Edward the Fourth*, Intro. by Seymour Ricci (New York and Philadelphia: Rosenbach, 1922). Facsimile of unique 1599 edition. Sig. A3.

⁶⁸Heywood (Russell), vol. 1, p. 5.

⁶⁹Thomas Heywood, *The Rape of Lucrece* (London: 1608), Sig. D2v.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, Sig. B2v.

**The 1991 Alabama Shakespeare Festival:
All's Well That Ends Well
by Craig and Diana Barrow**

All's Well That Ends Well presents directors and actors with difficulties in its action: the bed trick in which Helena substitutes herself for Diana; and more importantly, the reunion of Helena and a lying, slandering, disgraced Bertram, who supposedly is regenerated in the play's last scene. Helena's love for Bertram defies reason, since his only positive traits appear to be handsomeness and military prowess in a war that has neither nationalism as its defense nor any other ethical imperative to support it.

While Parolles is not a fit character to keep company with the young Bertram, as R. G. Hunter argues, "it is Bertram, who has the evil impulses and suggests the ignoble actions. Parolles need do no more than second the motion."¹ Bertram's treatment of Diana at play's end, when he is supposed to be free of Parolles' influence, confirms, as Hunter argues, that Bertram's character alone is responsible for his dishonorable behavior.² Since Shakespeare takes such pains to dramatize Bertram's immoral conduct in the play, it is small wonder that audiences and readers have been uneasy about the play's end. Aware of the play's lack of audience appeal, Kent Thompson and Jim Volz, the artistic and managing directors of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, have put *All's Well* in the smaller of the Festival's two theaters, the Octagon, rather than the more than three times larger Festival Stage.

In her "Director's Notes," Libby Appel has chosen to acknowledge the play's uneasy end by seeing it "as Chekhovian in its conclusions about our behavior." What this statement appears to mean is that characters are divided in their natures and aims, that they are victimized by others and, in turn, victimize still others, that they are of "a mingled yarn, good and ill together" (IV. iii. 70-71). Costuming reflects Appel's choice of a Chekhovian ending with a later nineteenth century look, so that the audience's predilection for disquiet at play's end is confirmed by the production. As Appel puts it, the union of Bertram and Helena "is a dubious affair."

While Appel has chosen to confirm the audience's uneasiness about both Bertram's conduct and Helena's love for him, other ways exist to make the play work in production. Pursuing the fairy tale tradition in the motif of the impossible tasks, as W. W. Lawrence advises in *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies*, is another possibility, but only for an

abbreviated version of the play. However, we believe that R. G. Hunter's contention that *All's Well* fits a genre he calls the "play of forgiveness" has the most merit, with Helena as a Virgin Mary figure and Bertram as the sinner. This notion fits Helena's character as healer and pilgrim. Bertram must be publicly humiliated in Act V before his reunion with Helena, a humiliation which must be arranged by his betrayed wife-physician before she can heal his soul. The underlying symbolic action of such a play is thus similar to the spiritual cleansing of an *Everyman*.

Of course, such a production would require a very powerful actress as Helena. R. G. Hunter's interpretive scheme is not a possibility for Libby Appel's production, since Suzanne Irving's representation of Helena is not the strongest in the play. Overshadowing Irving's Helena are Richard Farrell as King of France and Jill Tanner as the Countess of Rossillion. Greg Thornton's Parolles is also more compelling than Suzanne Irving's performance. When Irving comically spars with Thornton in Act I, she and the play are at their best. Martin Kildare's adolescent portrayal of Bertram, with all his fits, stomps, and tears, makes Helena's love for him even less credible. On the whole, this season's production of *All's Well that Ends Well* is only a partial success.

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Notes

¹ "All's Well That Ends Well," in *Essays in Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. James L. Calderwood and Harold E. Toliver (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 348.

²Hunter, p. 348.



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