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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MARLOWE'S AND CHAPMAN'S

HERO AND LEANDER

By

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DEDICATION

To my mother, Agnes Reardon Sinkhorn, in appreciation
for the many ways in which she has helped me.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My special thanks to Dr. Walter N. King for his guidance, encouragement, and patience.

My thanks also to the other members of my thesis committee, Dr. Vedder M. Gilbert and Dr. Vernon F. Snow.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To students of the Elizabethan period, Christopher Marlowe's Hero and Leander has been far more attractive than George Chapman's continuation of the poem. While Marlowe's two sestiams have received considerable detailed attention, studies of Chapman's four sestiams have been of a cursory nature, for the most part. References to Chapman's continuation usually are made in relation to his dramatic work or are included briefly as addenda to studies of Marlowe's poem. Chapman's sestiams have met with disapproval mainly for two reasons: most critics object to his style and his didacticism. The following capsule criticism is typical of the long-standing and prevalent opinion of his continuation: "The tedious conceits and ill-timed moralizing are obtruded with astonishing perversity."¹ A more recent writer calls Chapman's continuation a poem "which combines shuffling obscurity with snuffling morality."²

Many readers believe that the occasional beauties in Chapman's poetry are not commensurate with the difficulties presented by his style. The words "obscure" or "obscurantist" are probably the ones most frequently applied to his poetry. Chapman's style, often tortuous, makes rigorous demands upon the reader's perseverance, and his continuation

¹A. H. Bullen, Elizabethans (London, 1925), p. 52.

²F. L. Lucas (ed. and trans.), Greek Poetry for Everyman (New York, 1951), p. 376.

of Hero and Leander often seems obsessively contorted. Upon moving from Marlowe's second sestiad to Chapman's first (i.e., Sestiad III), the reader may feel in his mind a shifting down of gears. Marlowe's poem has a fluency lacking in the continuation. On the other hand, if we are to take at face value Chapman's letter to Matthew Royden, prefixed to "Ovid's Banquet of Sense," we can conclude that Chapman intended his poetry to be difficult.³

The introduction of stern moral comment by Chapman is also unwelcome to many readers of the continuation, readers who are no doubt conditioned against Chapman's ethical comment by Marlowe's amoral approach to the Hero and Leander legend. Marlowe rarely make any allusion to the tragic aspects of the legend, and nowhere does he impart moral instruction. Chapman, on the other hand, dwells on the tragic import of the story from the outset and focuses on ethical issues. He makes his intention clear early in the third sestiad:

More harsh (at least more hard) more grave and high
Our subject runs, and our stern Muse must fly.⁴
(III.3-4)

Chapman promises to "censure the delights" which Marlowe has been depicting (III.8) and begins with a long passage (forty-nine lines) in which the goddess Ceremony--a personification by Chapman--descends and

³See The Poems of George Chapman, ed. Phyllis Brooks Bartlett (New York, 1941), pp. 49-50. Chapman's seemingly concerted effort to make his poetry difficult has been discussed by Margaret Bottrall in "George Chapman's Defence of Difficulty in Poetry," Criterion, XVI (1937), 638-654.

⁴These lines and subsequent quotations from both parts of Hero and Leander are taken from Marlowe's Poems, ed. L. C. Martin (London, 1931), Vol. IV of The Works and Life of Christopher Marlowe, R. H. Case, general editor. Hereafter referred to as Marlowe's Poems.

reproves the incontinent Leander for the "bluntness in his violent love" (III.146) and his neglect of religious rites.

. . . how poor was substance without rites,
Like bills unsign'd, desires without delights.
(III.147-148)

Chapman's moral concern may be disconcerting to the reader who has followed the love-play of Hero and Leander in the first two sestiads, but it should not be surprising to anyone familiar with the Renaissance theory of art which held that the proper end of poetry is to instruct as well as delight.⁵ According to this esthetic theory, a poem is like a sugar-coated pill. If it is all medicine, it is distasteful; if it is all sugar, it is useless. Two things can be noted here. First, Chapman seems to be implying that Marlowe's poem lacks instructive "substance." In effect, he is repudiating Marlowe's treatment of the Hero and Leander story by shifting to moral issues in order to counter-balance Marlowe's implied philosophy of pleasure. In doing so, Chapman reveals what has been called "a didactic conception of poetry."⁶ But Chapman is not being merely didactic. The very fact that the total moral import of his continuation is bound up in a complex, allegorical interpretation of the legend, indicates that the complexity of his style may be designed to make the moral instruction more palatable. His continuation is evidence of his belief "that poetry should convey moral ideas, not in a bald,

⁵The Renaissance was indebted to the classics for this theory. In his Ars Poetica Horace stressed the necessity of blending profit and delight in poetry. Allen H. Gilbert's Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden (Detroit, 1962) affords the reader an excellent means of tracing the evolution of the theory.

⁶Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (Minneapolis, 1932), p. 214.

didactic manner, but indirectly, through novel figures, comparisons, symbols."⁷

Chapman's early introduction of moral concern is accompanied by a rapid shift in tone. An amused and detached Marlowe, portraying the blushing Hero standing before Leander, "all naked to his sight display'd" (II.324), is followed by a somber and judicial Chapman, whose "new light gives new directions" (III.1) to the story. The new tone, grave and eloquent, is in keeping with Chapman's intention, but the absence of any tonal transition between Marlowe's last sestiad and Chapman's first adds to the inability of some readers to accept Chapman's moral interpretation of the remainder of the legend. (It will be shown later that each of these poets maintains a tone suited to his particular approach to the story of Hero and Leander.)

With the somewhat justifiable objections to Chapman's continuation in mind, and with the understanding that any sequel to Marlowe's poem probably would have suffered by comparison, one need not be surprised that Chapman's four sestiads have been read with less enthusiasm than the two written by the poet of the "mighty line." Nevertheless, those prepared to take the pains needed to arrive at Chapman's meaning will discover that his continuation of Hero and Leander is not merely a collection of obscurely stated platitudes. And Chapman's philosophical seriousness need not detract from any inherent excellence which his continuation may have, if it is remembered that his purpose is quite different from Marlowe's.

⁷Ibid., p. 209.

The present study will show how Chapman's continuation differs from, and is related to, Marlowe's poem. Marlowe's two sestiams will be explicated first because the proper reading of the continuation depends in part on a correct reading of Marlowe's poem. Chapman's four sestiams will then receive detailed attention. One critical question to be answered is: did Chapman really finish Marlowe's poem, or did he write what is essentially a new poem? Implied in this question is another: is Marlowe's poem really unfinished?

In a study of this nature bibliographical data are of importance only in so far as they have bearing on the more significant aspects of the works in question. Since, however, the question of the finished or the unfinished state of Marlowe's poem is somewhat clouded by the fact of the poet's untimely death and the uncertain date of composition of the poem, some prefatory background information may prove helpful in establishing at least a working insight into the relation of Marlowe's poem to Chapman's continuation.

There is no question of the publication date of Marlowe's Hero and Leander. The earliest known edition of the poem was published in 1598 by Edward Blount. Later that same year it was published a second time, accompanied by Chapman's continuation. The title page of the latter publication bears the words, "Begun by Christopher Marlowe; and finished by George Chapman."⁸

Marlowe's poem, however, was entered in the Stationers' Register on September 28, 1593. Now, because Marlowe met his violent and premature

⁸See Martin, p. 1 of his introduction to Marlowe's Poems, for an account of the bibliographical facts.

end on May 30, 1593, it is commonly believed that Hero and Leander was his last work. On the other hand, a certain amount of internal evidence points to the possibility that it may have been written while Marlowe was still at Cambridge.⁹

This latter view has been opposed emphatically by Russell A. Frazer. Basing his arguments on Marlowe's sophistication and detachment in the poem, Frazer denies that Hero and Leander was a product of Marlowe's youth.¹⁰

A more reasonable attitude is that of Harry Levin:

. . . we need not infer that Marlowe was deeply immersed in it when he died. Though the material connects it with his early immersion in Ovid, it is much more highly polished than his academic exercises. Since his productive span was so short and his habits were so irregular, he may have been working at it intermittently over several years. Desunt nonnulla: something is clearly missing when it breaks off, but not very much of the narrative he has been paraphrasing.¹¹

Reasonable as Levin's theory is, however, it is no less conjectural than Frazer's. The important question still remains: is Marlowe's poem really unfinished? It could have been either early or late work and still have been left in its unfinished state simply because Marlowe had had his say on the subject. This possibility receives its strongest corroboration from the fact that the tone of the poem is consistently non-tragic--even comic--in spite of the fact that the story of Hero and Leander is unquestionably one of the most tragic of the classical myths.

⁹Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰Richard A. Frazer, "The Art of Hero and Leander," JEGP, LVII (1958), 747.

¹¹Harry Levin, The Overreacher (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1952), pp. 138-139.

This question will be explored further in the next chapter. For now, it is safe to say, judging from the poem itself, that Marlowe might not have been able to carry the legend to its end while still maintaining the mock-heroic tone of the two sestiams he wrote.

Levin, however, in writing on Marlowe's use of hyperbole, introduces an idea which may touch upon the issue of the finished or unfinished condition of Marlowe's poem:

Rather a figure of thought than a figure of speech, it [Marlowe's hyperbole] relates Marlowe's speech to his thought, his manner to his matter. It presupposes a state of mind to which all things are possible, for which limitations exist to be overcome.¹²

Levin, of course, makes this statement to explain in part his view of Marlowe as the "overreacher," but the suggested relationship between Marlowe's mind and his matter also suggests a possible explanation of the unfinished condition of Hero and Leander. If it is true that Marlowe's was a mind "to which all things are possible, for which limitations exist to be overcome," then perhaps his poem should be considered finished, because if he had gone on, he would have had to deal with an obvious--and perhaps insurmountable--limitation: the original story has, in fact, a tragic denouement; Hero and Leander die, as if doomed by an inscrutable fate. Yet Marlowe stopped short of tragedy. Isn't it possible, then, that tragedy and death were limitations which would have been incongruous with Marlowe's version of the story? This is not to imply that Marlowe could not handle tragedy. He did so in his plays. But in them he treated a tragic theme only for tragic purposes. His Hero and Leander,

¹²Ibid., p. 23.

on the other hand, cannot possibly be called a tragic poem. One need only compare it with its source to perceive the difference.

The source of Marlowe's poem is undoubtedly the account of the story of Hero and Leander written by Musaeus, the Alexandrian poet, who in the Renaissance was mistakenly considered to be one of the earliest of all Greek poets. This belief stemmed from a reference to the semi-mythical Musaeus made by Virgil in the Aeneid, vi.667. The final couplet of the sixth sestiad of Hero and Leander shows that Chapman, too, shared this notion:

And this true honour from their love-deaths sprung,
They were the first that ever poet sung.
(VI.292-293)

Because of this misconception, both Marlowe and Chapman use the epithet "divine" when referring to Musaeus. Marlowe writes:

Amorous Leander, beautiful and young,
(Whose tragedy divine Musaeus sung).
(I.51-52)

And in his dedicatory letter to Lady Walsingham, Chapman calls the subject of his four sestiads one "which yet made the first Author, divine Musaeus, eternal."¹³

Musaeus' poem, however, can hardly be considered a model for Marlowe's Hero and Leander. True, there are faint echoes of Musaeus in Marlowe's poem. Compare, for example, the following couplet of Marlowe's,

Hero's looks yielded, but her words made war;
Women are won when they begin to jar,
(I.331-332)

with this one by Musaeus:

¹³See Marlowe's Poems, p. 67.

(For all such signs betoken that a maiden means to yield
And by her very silence a girl's "Yes" is revealed.)¹⁴

Here, as well as throughout his poem, Marlowe followed only the bare outline of the earlier poem. For one thing, Musaeus uses a mere 341 lines to tell the entire tragic story, while Marlowe uses 818 lines to tell only a part of it. Marlowe elaborates on the story, expands and embellishes it, until his poem hardly resembles the Greek version. The remarkable variance between the versions of Musaeus and Marlowe, one tenderly tragic and the other amusing and urbane, is one of the keys to the proper interpretation of Marlowe's poem. Chapman himself acknowledged the difference between Marlowe's poem and the original version when he wrote of the "different character being held through both the style, the matter and the invention."¹⁵ Much of the embellishment in Marlowe's poem may be due to an Ovidian influence. "A paraphrase from the Greek, . . . it is suffused with an Ovidian fragrance."¹⁶

As for Chapman's continuation, it appeared for the first time in 1598 when it accompanied the second printing of Marlowe's poem. It was Chapman who divided Marlowe's fragment into two parts, calling them "Sestyads." To these he added four "sestyads" of his own and prefixed the verse arguments to each of the six sestiyads. The word "Sestiyad" no

¹⁴These lines and subsequent quotations from Musaeus' poem are taken from the translation by F. L. Lucas in his Greek Poetry for Everyman (New York, 1951).

¹⁵See Chapman's letter "To The Commune Reader," prefixed to his translation of Musaeus' poem about Hero and Leander in The Works of George Chapman: Poems and Minor Translations, with an Introduction by Algernon Charles Swinburne (London, 1904), p. 93.

¹⁶Levin, op. cit., p. 18.

doubt derives from "Sestos," the city in which Hero dwelt, according to the legend. It has also been pointed out that the complete Hero and Leander is divided into six parts, and so the word "sestiad" has sometimes been used to mean "one of the six parts of any poem so divided."¹⁷

If Chapman's reasons for undertaking this work were clear, the unfinished condition of Marlowe's poem might be more easily understood. If, for example, it could be determined that Marlowe had wanted Chapman, or someone else, to complete his poem because he felt his life to be in danger, the logical inference would be that Marlowe himself did not think it a finished work. However, evidence of this kind has not yet been discovered. The only evidence which scholars have to go on is that found in Chapman's words in the third sestiad:

Then thou most strangely-intellectual fire,
That proper to my soul has power t'inspire
Her burning faculties, and with the wings
Of thy unsphered flame visit'st the springs
Of spirits immortal; now (as swift as Time
Doth follow Motion) find th' eternal clime
Of his free soul, whose living subject stood
Up to the chin in the Pierian flood,
And drunk to me half this Musaeon story,
Inscribing it to deathless memory:
Confer with it, and make my pledge as deep,
That neither's draught be consecrate to sleep.
Tell it how much his late desires I tender
(If yet it knows not) and to light surrender
My soul's dark offspring, willing it should die
To loves, to passions, and society.

(III.183-198)

These lines are obscure enough, but it would be unfair to argue that Chapman should have been specific about the "late desires" to which he refers. One could hardly expect him to write, "On the 29th day of May,

¹⁷See L. C. Martin's gloss in Marlowe's Poems, p. 27.

1593, Kit Marlowe expressed the desire that I finish his poem," even if such a conversation had taken place, and even if it could have been turned into a rhymed couplet. Poets are not in the habit of using their works as diaries.

The meaning of the passage is not fully clear. We do know that the possibility of a death-bed desire that Chapman complete the poem has to be ruled out since Marlowe's death came quickly and unexpectedly. Furthermore, "And drunk to me half this Musaeus story" could mean that Marlowe had read his unfinished poem to Chapman; "his late desires" could refer to a request by Marlowe that, in the event of his death, Hero and Leander be completed by Chapman. But there is no external evidence to support such a view. One might as easily--and perhaps more accurately--say that Chapman's lines should be read figuratively as his pledge to the dead poet.

There is the possibility, of course, that Marlowe had expressed some such desire before he died. Miss M. C. Bradbrook points out the probability of a friendship between Chapman and Marlowe, and remarks that Chapman's continuation of Hero and Leander "is proof of the depths of his friendship for Marlowe."¹⁸ Miss Bradbrook's arguments, however, leave much to be desired. She bases her conclusions on the premise that Marlowe and Chapman were intimate associates in the so-called School of Night, a coterie of which Sir Walter Raleigh supposedly was the leader. Concentrating on the similar beliefs of the members of this group, she quickly passes over their dissimilarities, and apparently ignores her

¹⁸M. C. Bradbrook, The School of Night (London, 1936), p. 25.

own description of Chapman as a "remarkably independent" man,¹⁹ when she makes her case for the close unity which she says existed among the members of the School of Night.²⁰ In spite of the attractiveness of this supposition, according to which some of the greatest names of the Elizabethan period are united, there is little reason to believe that Chapman and Marlowe were at all intimate. Moreover, it is misleading to say that Chapman's continuation of Marlowe's poem should be seen as proof of a deep friendship between the two poets. When we note the differences between Marlowe's poem and Chapman's continuation--differences which cannot be attributed merely to the fact that Chapman is dealing with the tragic denouement--we find it difficult to believe that Chapman's primary motivation for undertaking this work was his feeling of friendship for Marlowe. Miss Bradbrook's hypothesis carries with it the implication that Chapman was primarily interested in finishing Marlowe's unfinished poem. If this had been his primary concern, however, he might better have included a transition after the second sestiad. According to Musaeus, Leander swam the Hellespont many times to be with Hero. By the end of Marlowe's second sestiad, Leander had made the trip only once; nor does Marlowe imply that the tragic denouement will immediately follow. Chapman could have created a transition between Marlowe's poem

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Paul H. Kocher, in Christopher Marlowe: A Study of His Thought, Learning, and Character (Chapel Hill, 1946), opposes such a theory: ". . . a close relationship of either Chapman or Royden to Raleigh or to a school surrounding him is very far from being proved" (p. 17). As to Marlowe's relations with the other members of the group, Professor Kocher acknowledges that Marlowe probably had a genuine friendship for Walsingham, but he adds that evidence does not exist for such a friendship between Marlowe and the others (p. 318).

and his own by briefly describing, as Musaeus does, several of Leander's subsequent trips across the Hellespont. Since Chapman obviously makes no such transition, it would seem that he is more interested in abruptly changing the entire tenor of the poem than he is in rounding out Marlowe's fragment.

Worth adding here is the reminder that Chapman's dedicatory letter to Lady Walsingham, prefixed to the continuation, is the logical place to look for a clear prose reference by Chapman to a request by Marlowe that Chapman continue the poem. Unfortunately, the dedication is of little help in the matter. Chapman tells Lady Walsingham of his "being drawn by strange instigation to employ some of my serious time in so trifling a subject." Chapman's meaning is as elusive in prose as in poetry. "Strange instigation" could mean a request from Marlowe that he finish the poem; but it could as easily mean that Chapman has been moved by the strangest of all instigations--poetic inspiration.

Speculation as to the possibility of a collaborative agreement between Marlowe and Chapman is of interest, then, but we might wonder indefinitely about Chapman's meaning in the passage quoted above from the third sestiad. In the meantime, more significant problems await our attention. Did Chapman really finish Marlowe's poem, or did he write what is essentially a new poem? Is Chapman's poem to be considered only an overly didactic treatise presented in an unnecessarily difficult style? Should Marlowe's poem be read with Chapman's continuation, or should the reader stop at the end of Marlowe's two sestiads?

Critics, as I have already said, are usually content to write off Chapman's effort as an unnecessarily obscure and obtrusively moralistic

sequel to a brilliant poem. Of little interest to them are the ethical import behind Chapman's lines and the possibility that the continuation may possess value as a work in itself. They prefer to ignore it as a bothersome appendage to a more attractive work.

But not all of the criticism of Chapman's continuation has been unfavorable. C. S. Lewis, for one, believes that "Marlowe's poem is best read with Chapman's conclusion."²¹ He suggests that neither of the poets could have told the entire story of Hero and Leander as well as it is told by both of them together:

The very nature of the story utilizes the differing excellences of its two narrators and gets told between them better than either could have told it alone. It is certain that Marlowe could not have done the tragic "waking" very well. Hero in her first love (as he had conceived love in his two Sestiads) is half an animal, half a goddess: Hero in her grief would have to have been a woman and Marlowe's women are uninteresting.²²

Lewis correctly points out that Chapman's Hero is a true tragic figure because of "a real wisdom, a real psychological insight, and a grandeur of passion" displayed by Chapman in his continuation of the poem. Nevertheless, he places too much emphasis on the necessity for seeing the two poems as one complete work. Such a theory minimizes the efforts of each poet. Moreover, it would seem that Lewis bases his theory partly on a misinterpretation of Marlowe's poem when he states that Marlowe is not trying to awaken the reader's sense of humor.²³

²¹C. S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama (London, 1954), p. 488.

²²Ibid., p. 514.

²³Ibid., p. 487.

Regrettably, there is one lingering opinion of Chapman's continuation which must be confronted and dismissed immediately. It is that Chapman's poem should be disregarded. The following is the most flagrant --if not the most recent--expression of this opinion:

Had Hero and Leander remained, as its author left it, unfinished, it had been well. . . . [Chapman's] long-drawn sequel has much retarded the popularity and the effect of Marlowe's masterpiece. The fall from Marlowe and Youth and Beauty to Chapman and Ceremony is too disillusionive. Let the reader close the book where Marlowe breaks off, with the roseate flush of his imagination still flooding the page, his warm passion still palpitating through the rustling leaves, and the music of his verse still lingering in the air, "like the sweet South, that breathes upon a bank of violets."²⁴

This writer is doing the reader, and even Marlowe, two dubious services. First, he is expressing his own narrow and inflexible point of view. Second, he is saying that his evaluation is the correct one and, therefore, the reader need not trouble himself with a personal examination of the poem. On the contrary, we must find out what Chapman's continuation of Hero and Leander is about. Otherwise, our impression of Chapman's poem may be as absurd as this critic's opinion of Marlowe's poem, which cannot be described in words that make sense only to Shakespeare's Orsino.²⁵

²⁴John H. Ingram, Christopher Marlowe and His Associates (London, 1904), pp. 219-220.

²⁵See Twelfth Night, I.i.5-6.

CHAPTER II

MARLOW'S HERO AND LEANDER

In his Practical Criticism I. A. Richards complains about "the rapidity with which many readers leap to a conviction as to a poem's general intention, and the ease with which this assumption can distort their whole reading."²⁶ These words appropriately introduce the present chapter on Marlowe's Hero and Leander, in which I shall deal initially with the tone and general intention of the poem. Professor Richards' comment seems especially appropriate because it appears at the beginning of a chapter entitled "Sense and Feeling," a chapter which deals at the outset with matters of tone. Tone, it will be shown, is the key to the correct interpretation of Marlowe's poem.

A comparison between the poems of Marlowe and Musaeus is worth making at this point because Marlowe's poem is better understood when seen in relation to that of Musaeus. Musaeus rendered the story of Hero and Leander simply and sincerely. The tragic theme, emphasized at the outset of his poem by ominous lines, is never forgotten by the poet or the reader. Musaeus sets the scene carefully, devoting much of the opening passage to the lamp that guides Leander as he swims the Hellespont to be with Hero.

Tell of the lamp that witnessed Love's secret, Goddess, tell
Of the Youth that fared to his nightly tryst across the black sea-swell;
Of Sestos and Abydos, of Hero the midnight bride,
And that dark troth that never the deathless Dawn espied.

²⁶I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgment (New York, 1929), p. 206.

For I sing of Leander's swimming, of the lamp that faithfully
 Served the Cytherean and bore across the sea,
 For Hero, bride of darkness, the message of her love--
 That lamp which was Love's glory once; which Zeus above,
 When its long task was over, should have hung in heaven afar,
 High in the constellations, and named "Love's Pilot-star."
 For it shared the pain and passion of two lovers to the last,
 A sure, unfailing herald of their sweet vigils passed
 Together--till broke upon them the tempest's bitter blast.
 O Goddess, sing thou with me that final night that found
 The lamp at last extinguished Leander lost and drowned.
 (11.1-15)

After this symbolic beginning Musaeus moves quickly to the first encounter between the ill-fated pair. He gives some physical description of the lovers, but the reader sees them essentially as a beautiful maiden and a fair youth doomed to the darkness of a midnight tryst which will have a tragic outcome. The poet simply calls the two lovers "each the brightest star/Of the cities that had bred them" (11. 22-23). True, Musaeus describes Hero in greater detail than he does Leander. After briefly describing the setting for their encounter, the feast in honor of Adonis and Aphrodite, Musaeus lingers momentarily on the loveliness of Hero:

Like budding rose of double hue, those cheeks aglow
 Against the whiteness of her skin; there seemed to blow
 A meadow full of roses through all the loveliness
 Of her young limbs; and under the pure white of her dress
 Rosy shone her ankles, as she glided on her way,
 Grace in every motion.

(11.58-63)

But even this description has a simplicity which does not distract from the central theme of the poem.

The lines already quoted from Musaeus also convey the tone--tender and sympathetic, and yet ominous--that prevades the entire poem. Even the part of the story Marlowe seems to have enjoyed dealing with most--

the sexual consummation of the love affair--Musaeus treats with simplicity and pathos:

His skin she bathed, and anointed his body fragrantly
 With oil of roses, to take away the harsh tang of the sea;
 Then in her bed, piled deep with rugs, laid him to rest,
 Still breathing hard, and drew him with fond words to her breast--
 "Ah love, so sorely tried as never lover yet,
 O dear and sore-tried love, the bitter waves forget!
 Forget the booming breakers, the harsh, fish-reeking brine,
 And rest thy weary body within these arms of mine."
 He hearkened; then her girdle he loosened and the will
 Of glorious-hearted Cypris they turned them to fulfill.
 (ll. 262-271)

With Marlowe the legend of Hero and Leander undergoes a distinct change. Marlowe barely touches upon the tragedy in the story. He alludes to it fleetingly in the opening couplet:

On Hellespont, guilty of true love's blood,
 In view and opposite two cities stood.
 (I.1-2)

Then, as if his extravagant imagination were eager to break away from the traditional tale, he lavishes forty-five lines upon praise of Hero's beauty. No longer is she simply Aphrodite's priestess, an innocent maiden of remarkable beauty. Now she is so beautiful that Apollo has courted her for her hair. What in Musaeus was "the pure white of her dress," becomes in Marlowe a vividly colorful robe that seems like a piece of tapestry:

The outside of her garments were of lawn,
 The lining purple silk, with gilt stars drawn;
 Her wide sleeves green, and bordered with a grove,
 Where Venus in her naked glory strove
 To please the careless and disdainful eyes
 Of proud Adonis that before her lies.
 (I.9-14)

She wears a veil of artificial flowers so realistically beautiful that they deceive both man and beast. Her breath has the fragrance of flowers.

The decorative quality of the images here is obvious, but Marlowe carries it even further:

Buskins of shell all silvered used she,
 And branch'd with blushing coral to the knee;
 Where sparrows perch'd, of hollow pearl and gold,
 Such as the world would wonder to behold:
 Those with sweet water oft her handmaid fills,
 Which as she went would cherup through the bills.
 (I.31-36)

Leander's appearance, described briefly and in general terms by Musaeus, receives as many embellishments and as much hyperbole by Marlowe as does Hero's:

His dangling tresses that were never shorn,
 Had they been cut, and unto Colchos borne,
 Would have allur'd the vent'rous youth of Greece
 To hazard more than for the golden Fleece.
 (I.55-58)

He is linked in various ways to several of the mythological gods and legendary mortals:

Fair Cynthia wish'd his arms might be her sphere. . .
 (I.59)

Jove might have sipt out nectar from his hand. . .
 (I.62)

Those orient cheeks and lips, exceeding his
 That leapt into the water for a kiss
 Of his own shadow . . .
 (I.73-75)

Had wild Hippolytus Leander seen,
 Enamoured of his beauty had he been.
 (I.77-78)

The difference between the two versions of the legend should be discernible enough by now. The difference becomes more distinct, however, as Marlowe's muse leads him further into the story. With these early lines, devoted almost entirely to set descriptions of the two lovers, we notice several things which seem to be strictly of Marlowe's

doing. His images are markedly sensuous. Touch, smell, sight, hearing, and taste--all the senses are utilized in the sharp, albeit extravagant imagery. But Marlowe lingers over these images at the expense of the tragedy and pathos implicit in the story. Unlike Musaeus, he does not seem to be primarily concerned with tragedy. Nothing in the Greek poem draws the reader away from the sense of doom which underlies every line. The tone is fervent, sincere, and ominous. Musaeus is clearly respectful of the material with which he is working.²⁷ Marlowe, on the other hand, just as clearly shows a strong disinclination to treat the legend in the traditional way. He makes a point of pulling the reader away from the tragic aspect of the legend, even though he alludes to it with a word or two here and there. He has, even in the early stages of his poem, created a tone which indicates his detachment from his material. At this point, however, Marlowe has not yet achieved the tone of detachment that enables him to convey the sophisticated humor with which he views the two lovers later in the poem.

Marlowe's attitude toward his subject matter becomes fully clear in his treatment of the secret meeting between Hero and Leander in the second sestiad. Actually, Marlowe divides the tryst into two nightly meetings of the lovers in Hero's tower. This prolonging of the initial sex-play is in itself a highly contrived but effective embellishment by Marlowe. On the first night Hero is seen passing through several moments of vacillation during which she strives in vain against the god of love.

²⁷Cf. Lucas, op. cit., p. 376: "On the whole [Musaeus] remains wise enough not to spoil a good story with coxcombs. . . . Musaeus does keep his eye on the subject."

Marlowe spends more time on Hero's irresolution than does Musaeus, but his lines do not evoke the same feeling of warmth and sympathy in the reader as do those of the Greek poem--primarily because he does not want them to. When Hero fears that her hesitation may displease Leander, she throws herself

Upon his bosom, where with yielding eyes
She offers up herself a sacrifice.

(II.47-48)

Marlowe is sympathetic with the naiveté of the young lovers, but he immediately undercuts any sense of tenderness in his lines by raising Leander's naiveté almost to the point of cynical comedy:

Like Aesop's cock, this jewel he enjoyed,
And as a brother with his sister toyed,
Supposing nothing else was to be done,
Now he her favour and good will had won.

(II.51-54)

By no means does this type of comedy depend upon these two couplets.

Marlowe follows them up shortly with two more:

Albeit Leander, rude in love, and raw,
Long dallying with Hero, nothing saw
That might delight him more, yet he suspected
Some amorous rites or other were neglected.

(II.61-64)

Dawn interrupts this "dallying," and Leander, so near his goal, is forced to postpone his pursuit of it until the following night. This interruption affords Marlowe the opportunity for an even more gaily mischievous treatment of this romantic part of the story. The next night, Leander, naked, weary and wet after having swum the Hellespont, knocks at the door of Hero's tower. According to Musaeus, Hero silently clasped Leander in her arms and led him to her chamber. Marlowe, however, burlesques the situation in a manner akin to that of mock heroic:

She stayed not for her robes, but straight arose,
 And drunk with gladness, to the door she goes;
 Where seeing a naked man, she screech'd for fear,
 Such sights as this to tender maids are rare,
 And ran into the dark herself to hide.

(II.235-239)

Hero then takes refuge in a most pregnable place--her bed. When Leander seeks to join her, she shrinks away, conveniently making room for him. Marlowe then creates a picture which moves his poem completely into the realm of comedy. Leander's impulsiveness puts an end to his pleading:

His hands he cast upon her like a snare,
 She overcome with shame and sallow fear,
 Like chaste Diana when Actaeon spied her,
 Being suddenly betrayed, div'd down to hide her.
 And as her silver body downward went,
 With both her hands she made the bed a tent,
 And in her own mind thought herself secure,
 O'ercast with dim and darksome coverture.

(II.259-266)

Marlowe finally permits the two lovers to enjoy the spoils of the battle in which they are both victorious. The consummation of the affair is presented in pleasantly erotic imagery:

Leander now, like Theban Hercules,
 Enter'd the orchard of th' Hesperides;
 Whose fruit none rightly can describe but he
 That pulls or shakes it from the golden tree.
 And now she wish'd this night were never done,
 And sigh'd to think upon th' approaching sun.

(II.297-302)

But Marlowe does not permit his poem to end without one final bit of humorous incongruity:

Again she knew not how to frame her lock,
 Or speak to him who in a moment took
 That which so long, so charily she kept,
 And fain by stealth away she would have crept,
 And to some corner secretly have gone,
 Leaving Leander in the bed alone.
 But as her naked feet were whipping out,
 He on the sudden cling'd her so about,

That mermaid-like unto the floor she slid,
 One half appear'd, the other half was hid.
 (II.307-316)

The essential difference between the poems of Musaeus and Marlowe is by now clear. Musaeus treats the legend reverently. His tone is romantic and tragic. His poem is presented with a simplicity that allows the beauty and the sadness of the tale to be predominant. In Marlowe's poem, however, youth and beauty are celebrated, while pathos gives way to sophistication. In his early lines Marlowe avoids the tragic theme and makes abundant use of glittering and decorative imagery which helps him achieve a detached tone. This tone ceases to be merely detached in the later stages of his poem. It evolves into one of sophistication, betraying Marlowe's unsentimental attitude toward the tragic and romantic classical legend.²⁸

In one respect, critics of Marlowe's Hero and Leander can be put into two categories: those who have not recognized the detached, sophisticated, and amused tone in the poem, and those who have. There has been a noticeable shift to the latter view in recent years. Those who have failed to recognize the tone have not all interpreted the poem in the same way. One Marlowe critic, in comparing Hero and Leander with later burlesques and parodies of the classical legend, writes of "the passion

²⁸Cf. Erich Segal, "Hero and Leander: Gongora and Marlowe," Comparative Literature, XV (1963), 338: "What is interesting about their versions of the Hero and Leander story is that, while their approaches are similar, they stand diametrically opposed to all previous treatments of the legend. Both poets have made mock heroic a tale hitherto treated only with high seriousness, casting an unsentimental eye on what was traditionally the tenderest of love stories. In their cynical interpretations, Marlowe and Gongora employ similar images, make similar mythological allusions, and describe their protagonists in similar artificial terms."

and sincerity and beauty of Marlowe's poem."²⁹ One translator of Musaeus' poem writes that Marlowe "remains far closer to Ovid than to anything Greek," but he implies that Ovid sold himself to cleverness, and then accuses Marlowe of making the same mistake in Hero and Leander, calling it a poem in which "every paragraph is bedizened with quips, quirks, and conceits."³⁰ Swinburne uses similar language in criticizing Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis": "It is burdened and bedizened with all the heavy and fantastic jewellery of Gongora and Marini." But Swinburne does this for the purpose of pointing out that Marlowe's poem is not guilty of the same ornamentation. He writes,

Not one of the faults chargeable on Shakespeare's beautiful but faultful poem can justly be charged on the only not faultless poem of Marlowe. The absence of all cumbrous jewels and ponderous embroideries from the sweet and limpid loveliness of its style is not more noticeable than the absence of such other and possibly such graver flaws as deform and diminish the undeniable charms of "Venus and Adonis."³¹

Swinburne has high praise for Hero and Leander, but his praise is misdirected. Apparently blind to the decorative quality of much of Marlowe's imagery, he uses the ambiguous term "sweet and limpid loveliness" when describing Marlowe's style. Evidently referring to the comic element in the poem, he writes it off as some kind of trait of the period: "Faultless indeed this lovely fragment is not; it also bears traces of Elizabethan barbarism."³² Hallett Smith acknowledges the "gravely mocking

²⁹John Bakeless, The Tragicall History of Christopher Marlowe (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1942), II, 140-141.

³⁰Lucas, op. cit., p. 375.

³¹Introduction to The Works of George Chapman, pp. lix-lx.

³²Ibid., p. lix.

asides" in the poem, but he concludes that "the final effect is not ironic; the asides merely control the extent of the romanticism in the poem and subdue the excesses of lavish decoration."³³ Evidently seeing no humor in the poem at all, C. S. Lewis speaks of Marlowe as a poet who is

realistic enough to keep us in touch with the senses (for his theme is the flesh) yet never so realistic as to awake disgust or incredulity. Nor our sense of humour: laughter at the wrong moment is as fatal in this kind as in tragedy.³⁴

In the last two decades a number of studies of Hero and Leander have been published in which the comic element and sophisticated tone in the poem have been emphasized.³⁵ Perhaps the most assertive and arresting of these is the comprehensive criticism of the poem by Russell A. Frazer. Placing Hero and Leander in the tradition of the Ovidian narrative (recognition of which had been established by earlier critics),³⁶ Frazer asserts that Marlowe's poem transcends the others in the tradition:

³³Hallett Smith, Elizabethan Poetry: A Study in Conventions, Meaning, and Expression (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1952), p. 79.

³⁴Lewis, op. cit., p. 487.

³⁵See Segal, op. cit., pp. 338-356; Paul M. Cubeta, "Marlowe's Poet in Hero and Leander," College English, XXVI (1965), 500-505; and Clifford Leech, "Marlowe's Humor," in Marlowe: A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1964), pp. 167-178. See also Kocher, op. cit., pp. 294-297. The shift in interpretation of Marlowe's poem has not been abrupt. In 1936 Miss M. C. Bradbrook had written, "Hero and Leander is written in a mood of exultant comedy, in which all pretensions to chastity are bemocked" (The School of Night, p. 122). See also Rufus Putney, "'Venus and Adonis': Amour with Humour," PQ, XX (1941), 545.

³⁶For a thorough account of Ovid's influence on Marlowe's Hero and Leander, see Bush, op. cit., pp. 124-130.

It is not merely amusing . . . it is the innermost clue to Marlowe's success in cleansing his poem of the insupportable languor, the stickiness, the laughter manqué that one associates with the Ovidian tradition. . . . Against these poems --coarse, merely ruttish, or cloying--the audacity of the language, the incongruity of what is described, affected by Marlowe and flung . . . in the teeth of the reader, serve by their very enormity to enfranchise the poet and his poem.³⁷

Up to this point, I have stressed the sophisticated, detached, amused, and unsentimental tone of Marlowe's Hero and Leander. This does not mean, however, that the only critical issue is the tone of the poem.³⁸ There is also the question of Marlowe's concept of love.

Before urging that we "consider Marlowe's work for what it is: a witty variation, albeit one sensuous and sweet, on an ancient theme,"³⁹ Frazer refers to Leander's "shrewd denigration of virginity" on the one hand, and the youth's inept and naive courting of Hero on the other: "[Marlowe] has in the process altogether the best of both worlds, that of the cunning amorist whose banner proclaims carpe diem, and that of the callow, ingenuous youth lacking wit enough to bring his hand to the buttery jar."⁴⁰ This comment points to Marlowe's concept of love in Hero and Leander. For it is largely through Leander's characterization that Marlowe's attitude toward love is revealed.

³⁷Frazer, op. cit., pp. 744-745.

³⁸Marlowe's poem should not be interpreted as merely a ribald, rebellious travesty of a revered classic. In spite of the amusing incongruities and playful eroticism, Hero and Leander is not a crude poem --a fact which is readily discernible if one compares it to the purely satirical, mocking--and sometimes crude--prose version of the Hero and Leander legend by Thomas Nashe in his Praise of the Red Herring. See Thomas Nashe: Selected Writings (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965), pp. 317-321.

³⁹Frazer, op. cit., p. 751.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 748.

Douglas Bush recognizes that Marlowe's descriptions of Hero and Leander are not highly individualized portraits.

The human values of the story suffer from the cumulative effect of artifice in description and narrative. They suffer also from the excess of rhetorical speech-making. Leander's plea is so long and subtle that one forgets, because Marlowe himself does, that he is a flesh-and-blood lover; he becomes the suasoria of a naturalistic philosophy of love. Thus for all the picture-making we seldom really see the lovers--indeed, despite the prevailing sensuousness we are not sure that they have bodies and faces--and for all the expression of feeling we seldom really feel with them.⁴¹

This criticism is valid up to a point. Marlowe does not permit the reader to feel the passions which Hero and Leander are supposed to be experiencing. In the first sestiad, for example, Hero is still striving to resist her emotions when Cupid "beats down her prayers with his wings" (I.369) and wounds her with an arrow of love. The reader sees her weep because she knows her religious vows are being broken. At this point compassion might be felt for her--if Marlowe would permit it. Instead, the poet brings the reader back to the level of luxurious imagery. Cupid is moved to sympathy and

. . . as she wept, her tears to pearl he turned,
And wound them on his arm, and for her mourned.
(I.375-376)

Note also Marlowe's treatment of the near-drowning of Leander in the second sestiad. Neptune, mistaking Leander for Ganymede, seizes the youth and drags him to the bottom of the sea. There are no lines describing what Leander is feeling at the moment. Instead we read:

Leander striv'd, the waves about him wound,
And pull'd him to the bottom, where the ground

⁴¹Bush, op. cit., p. 131.

Was strew'd with pearl, and in low coral groves
 Sweet singing mermaids sported with their loves
 On heaps of heavy gold, and took great pleasure
 To spurn in careless sort the shipwreck treasure.
 (II.159-164)

Bush, however, sees only half of what Marlowe is doing with the feelings of Hero and Leander. He sees the result but not the intention. He does not consider the possibility that the "human qualities" of the story are not the qualities with which Marlowe is primarily concerned. It is presumptuous to say that Marlowe forgets that Leander is a flesh and blood lover. The human qualities Marlowe celebrates here are flesh and blood--not pathos and sentiment. If Bush had recognized the tone of the poem, he might have seen that Marlowe does not intend for us to really feel with Hero and Leander.

Moreover, Bush fails to see that Marlowe intends Leander to be "the suasoria of a naturalistic philosophy of love." Marlowe is not attempting to convey a conventional Christian moral code or standard in this poem. His attitude toward love is neither moral nor immoral. The tone in the poem makes it quite clear that Marlowe is not implying any moral necessity in observing marriage rites and ceremonies, as does Chapman in his continuation of the poem. It is also obvious that the eroticism in the poem does not produce an immoral response because as soon as the reader is likely to get any erotic feeling from passages such as the love scenes in Hero's tower, he is forced to laugh at the fumbling lovers.

Marlowe's attitude is based on a philosophy of "natural" love, a philosophy whose value lies in the acceptance of sexual love as a natural act practiced by all of nature's animals, including man.

Marlowe's amused and sophisticated manner has relevance to this attitude, for he gently mocks the romance and avoids both tragedy and any moral allegory which might be drawn from it. It seems reasonable to conclude that he does so, among other reasons, to convey, primarily through a celebration of the senses, an overall picture of love, beauty, and youth as natural phenomena.

This picture is enhanced by Leander's sophisticated argument to Hero in the first sestiad. During the course of the argument Leander chides Hero for doing Venus an injustice:

. . . The rites

In which love's beauteous empress most delights,
 Are banquets, Doric music, midnight-revel,
 Plays, masques, and all that stern age counteth evil.
 Thee as a holy idiot doth she scorn;
 For thou in vowing chastity hast sworn
 To rob her name and honour, and thereby
 Committ'st a sin far worse than perjury:
 Even a sacrilege against her Deity,
 Through regular and formal purity.

(I.299-308)

Although it is Leander who argues here, one senses that Marlowe himself is fully aware of the irony implicit in a legend in which a beautiful and innocent young maiden makes a vow of chastity to the goddess of love. This irony is prefigured in the line, "So lovely fair was Hero, Venus' nun" (I.45), and echoed again when Leander says to Hero,

Then shall you most resemble Venus' nun,
 When Venus' sweet rites are perform'd and done.
(I.319-320)

The term "Venus' nun" was Elizabethan slang for prostitute.⁴²

Nor is this the only irony to be found in Leander's speech.

⁴²Kocher, op. cit., p. 295.

There is also a hint of irony in the use of aphorisms, or sententiae, by which Leander attempts to seduce Hero, e.g.,

The richest corn dies, if it be not reapt;
Beauty alone is lost, too warily kept.
(I.327-328)

One critic points out that the use of aphorisms "to promote vice is a comic touch worthy of Marlowe's intelligence."⁴³ There is, moreover, the obvious irony in the characterization of Leander as a champion of love when his own naiveté makes him "rude in love, and raw" (II.61).

Underlying his entire seduction speech, however, is the implication that love is a natural thing and that Hero is being unnatural in denying herself to Leander. In the following lines Leander's argument relates natural amorous desires to the glorification of the senses:

This idol which you term Virginitie,
Is neither essence subject to the eye,
No, nor to any one exterior sense.
(I.269-271)

And later, when Leander is naively toying with Hero, "supposing nothing else was to be done" (II.53), Marlowe attributes to man a natural desire to be found in all nature's creatures:

But know you not that creatures wanting sense,
By nature have a mutual appetence,
And wanting organs to advance a step,
Mov'd by love's force, unto each other leap?
Much more in subjects having intellect
Some hidden influence breeds like effect.⁴⁴
(II.55-60)

This notion of love freely exchanged and enjoyed is echoed again when

⁴³Putney, op. cit., p. 546.

⁴⁴See L. C. Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 54: "In ll. 55-8 Marlowe is probably thinking of magnetic attraction which he associates with the idea of love."

Leander is reprimanded by his father:

Leander's father knew where he had been,
 And for the same mildly rebuk'd his son,
 Thinking to quench the sparkles new begun.
 But love resisted once, grows passionate,
 And nothing more than counsel lovers hate.
 For as a hot proud horse highly disdains
 To have his head controll'd, but breaks the reins,
 Spits forth the ringled bit, and with his hooves
 Checks the submissive ground: so he that loves,
 The more he is restrain'd, the worse he fares.
 (II.136-145)

It is not difficult to see a connection between these lines and Marlowe's overall portrayal of Hero, for it is precisely Hero's restraint which is the butt of much of the humor in the poem.

That Marlowe's celebration of the senses glorifies youth as well as beauty and love is evident early in the poem in the famous line, "Who ever lov'd, that lov'd not at first sight?" (I.176). By love Marlowe means young love, love at first sight, which is usually experienced only by the young, who are inexperienced enough not to realize the possible illusion in such immediate attraction. But Marlowe is by no means criticizing such love. He is, in effect, implying that strong physical desires are natural to the young. He does this, however, without magnifying the importance of those desires. Even though vestiges of the Petrarchan language of love appear in his poem, the sophistication of his tone and the comic incidents prove that he is not sentimentalizing love.

The rationale behind Marlowe's concept of love and his glorification of the senses in Hero and Leander could be called hedonistic or Epicurean. Epicurus willingly made room for bodily pleasures in his system of ethics: "How is it possible to conceive of good, except in

terms of taste, of sound, of sight, and of sexual pleasure?"⁴⁵ These terms are precisely those on which Marlowe's attitude toward love is based in Hero and Leander. But the above quotation does not give as accurate picture of true Epicureanism. Sensory pleasure is not the only justification for life to a true Epicurean.

The goal of life is serene joy, a state in which there is no disturbance in the soul, and such a state is not possible when the soul is vexed by an unlimited desire, whether of the flesh, of for wealth, for honor and applause from the multitude. No pleasure is a bad thing in itself, but the causes of some pleasures bring with them discomforts many times greater than the pleasures. We must not violate nature, we must obey her, and we shall obey her if we fulfill all necessary desires, including those of the body, that is if they bring no harm in their train, for if they do we must reject them.⁴⁶

Necessarily, wisdom, judgment, knowledge, and reason are essential to Epicurean ethics because they enable an individual to perceive whether or not the discomforts of a particular act will outweigh its pleasures. Absence of pain is just as strong a tenet of true Epicureanism as is the pursuit of pleasure.

Thus, Epicurean beliefs are not entirely applicable to Marlowe's poem. Marlowe may be implying that no pleasure is inherently bad and that we must obey nature by satisfying all necessary physical desires, but one could hardly read an undisturbed state of serene joy into either Marlowe's life or his works. Marlowe's life of intrigue, espionage, street fighting, and imprisonment was not exactly serene; and neither Tamburlaine, Faustus, nor Leander are dissuaded from their actions by

⁴⁵Henry Dwight Sedgwick, The Art of Happiness, or the Teachings of Epicurus (Indianapolis, 1933), p. 74.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 74-75.

the consideration of any possible future discomfort and pain.

We should also remember that Epicurean ethics are neither immoral nor amoral. Morality plays an integral part in the teachings of Epicurus.

Morality is not an isolated part of life; it enters into every choice, into every avoidance. Reflex action is not moral, neither is instinctive action. Morality arises when the self is confronted by a choice; the choice is good when it leads to pleasure, bad when it leads to pain.⁴⁷

But Marlowe's poem is essentially amoral. It expresses no conventional code or standard. It is the morality in Epicureanism which distinguishes it from Marlowe's celebration of the senses and natural desire in Hero and Leander. The actions of the two lovers are reflexive and instinctive. They are not confronted with the choice of pleasure or pain. Their choice involves the acceptance or denial of pleasure--not the consideration of possible pain.

One might argue that Marlowe, in the so-called digression on Mercury and Cupid at the end of the first sestiad, is looking ahead to the pain which the Fates have in store for Hero and Leander because of their inability to see the nature of the choice they are making. True, Marlowe considers the enmity between Love and the Fates important enough to be given a long explanation in this passage, but it has been correctly pointed out that "the amorous mood so predominates in this, too, that we read it rather as a digressive parallel of the main amorous tale than as ominous forewarning."⁴⁸

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 72.

⁴⁸Rosemond Tuve, Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery (Chicago, 1947), p. 57.

Epicurus, let me repeat, did not advocate the indiscriminate pursuit of pleasure such as we see it in Mercury.

Pleasure, then, is our goal, but the term requires amplifications and qualifications. . . . Sensations of pleasure are multitudinous; and may be broadly classified as pleasures of the body and of the mind. . . . As between the pleasures of the mind and those of the body, Epicurus had no hesitation in preferring the former; and that is one of the reasons why it is better to regard happiness, which implies an enduring condition, rather than pleasure, which is more naturally the concept of a momentary sensation, as the goal of Epicurean philosophy.⁴⁹

Marlowe, on the other hand, is glorifying bodily pleasures. Compared with Epicurus' preference for the more enduring pleasures of the mind, Marlowe's naturalistic philosophy of love is more like the hedonism implied in the classical concept of carpe diem. Youth and beauty must be enjoyed while they last.

I have touched upon Marlowe's use of imagery earlier, in the comparison between his poem and the Greek poem which provided its framework. In connection with the difference in tone between the two poems, I have mentioned briefly the glittering, decorative, sensuous, and sometimes erotic qualities of much of Marlowe's imagery. But the imagery deserves more detailed examination because it is one of the more striking aspects of the poem, and because it supports Marlowe's attitude toward love and the glorification of the senses in Hero and Leander.

The images in the poem are in general unrelated to any tragic theme, a fact which gives added credence to the assertion that Marlowe is not much concerned with the tragic implications. To be sure, one

⁴⁹Sedgwick, op. cit., p. 57.

might say that Marlowe's early descriptions of his protagonists include images which briefly allude to tragedy. The border of Hero's robe, for example, contains the image of Venus wooing Adonis. Marlowe also makes use of tragic, mythological imagery in his description of Leander when, for example, he compares Leander to Narcissus. It has been noted, however, that "Marlowe flies rapidly over images."⁵⁰ Any tragic implications in such imagery are rapidly subordinated to sensuousness. Moreover, there is a hint of a pattern in the early descriptions of Hero and Leander. More significant than any purely tragic allusiveness is a pervasive irony with regard to the later actions of Hero and Leander. In his early lines, for example, Marlowe devotes considerable time to the description of Hero's garments. She is fully clothed in a robe, a kirtle, a veil, and buskins. There is a touch of irony in the juxtaposition of this picture of Hero with that of "Venus in her naked glory" (I.12), striving to please Adonis whose eyes are "careless and disdainful" (I.13)--in view of the fact that at the end of Marlowe's poem it is Hero herself who stands naked before the reclining but hardly disdainful Leander:

So Hero's ruddy cheek Hero betray'd,
 And her all naked to his sight display'd,
 Whence his admiring eyes more pleasure took
 Than Dis, on heaps of gold fixing his look.
 (II.323-326)

Similarly, the comparison between Leander and Narcissus is ironic in the sense that Leander, whose beauty may exceed that of Narcissus, can hardly be compared to him otherwise. For Leander is anything but

⁵⁰Smith, op. cit., p. 83.

aloof and scornful in his impulsive and maladroit courting of Hero. One might even suspect an unintended irony in the comparison between Narcissus, who "died ere he could enjoy the love of any" (I.76), and Leander, who is permitted to enjoy the love of Hero and then--because Marlowe's poem does not reach the tragic ending in the Greek poem--does not die at all.

That Marlowe's attitude toward love is revealed in large part by means of the celebration of the senses is evidenced by the images used in Leander's rhetorical declarations on love, beauty, and virginity. Hero's beauty is compared to "sparkling diamonds" (I.214). Women are like brass vessels which "oft handled, brightly shine" (I.231). Marriage and virginity differ as much as water and wine (I.262-264). Virginity is also likened to a "fair gem, sweet in the loss alone" (I.247). Indeed, Marlowe has a predilection for associating love, beauty, and virginity with jewels:

Like Aesop's cock, this jewel he enjoyed . . .
(II.51)

Like to the tree of Tantalus she fled,
And seeming lavish, sav'd her maidenhead.
Ne'er king more sought to keep his diadem,
Than Hero this inestimable gem . . .
(II.75-78)

And ran into the dark herself to hide;
Rich jewels in the dark are soonest spied.
(II.239-240)

These images appeal to various senses. Implied in this imagery is the notion that sensual pleasures should not be denied. Physical beauty should be enjoyed while one possesses it. Youth should enjoy sexual love while it can. To refuse would be to deny natural amorous desires.

The appeal of the images in Hero and Leander to the senses has been recognized in various ways by all the critics. One speaks of Marlowe's "material imagination" and the "concretes" by which that imagination is expressed, and detects a "quality of hardness" in the poem.⁵¹ Another asserts, "Marlowe's pictures are almost all highly stylized, ornate, artificial."⁵² Claiming that Chapman's imagination "is conceptual, where Marlowe's was more immediately perceptual," Harry Levin writes:

In celebrating the senses, Marlowe exercises them; above all others, he exercises the faculty of vision. His surfaces are richly overlaid with such decorations as Hero's tears, which Cupid changes into a string of pearls. But the eyesight is involved more organically; for Marlowe was not less prepossessed by books than he was by words; and the motivating impulse of the poem is love at first sight.⁵³

One of the most thorough studies of Marlowe's imagery, however, is that of Rosemond Tuve, who frequently uses Hero and Leander to illustrate her remarks on Elizabethan imagery. Miss Tuve points out the metaphorical relationship between the sensuous images and the poem as a whole:

The way all physical things conspire to make "natural" amorous desires the only reality, the flattery with which the headstrong human being is courted by the sea (set against our knowledge of the piteous irony of Leander's death), the careless disregard of the mermaids for the symbols of human wealth and disappointment--all these have still their descriptive vividness, but they also help to weight the poem as a whole with meanings which are not irrelevant to Leander's long and sophistic argument that the authority of nature is behind man's wilful desires.

⁵¹Lewis, op. cit., pp. 486-487.

⁵²Frazer, op. cit., p. 749.

⁵³Levin, op. cit., pp. 140-141.

It is not that these meanings are indisputably "in" each of these and similar images. Such extra significance will flash out upon us in one reading and not be there in the next. My point is that metaphor has this power, of making the conceptual meanings of whole pieces present to us even in "sensuous" images.⁵⁴

These remarks indicate that Hero and Leander is a unity in that the sensuous images cannot be written off as mere glitter and glare. The concrete, material, and decorative qualities of the images help Marlowe establish his detached tone; but on another level the sensuous details, which exist primarily to give pictures of physical beauty, are related to Marlowe's naturalistic concept of love.

The question of unity also involves the apparent digressions in the poem. There are several indications, however, that the digressions are not as irrelevant as they might seem. It has been pointed out that "Hero and Leander is digressive because Marlowe turned aside to pick up the plums of humor that lay along the way."⁵⁵ An example of these digressive "plums of humor" can be found in the first sestiad when the poet explains why the Destinies are implacable when Cupid asks them to allow Hero and Leander to enjoy each other's love. Mercury, it seems, had once been enchanted by a country maid. To win her love, he stole some of the nectar of the gods from Hebe. Jove, furious over this act, thrust Mercury down from heaven. Mercury complained to Cupid, who in turn wounded the Destinies with arrows of love and forced them to dote on Mercury. They granted Mercury's request that Jove be banished into hell and Saturn put into his place. But Mercury then rejected the love

⁵⁴Tave, op. cit., p. 159.

⁵⁵Putney, op. cit., p. 545.

of the Destinies, whereupon they turned their wrath on both Cupid and Mercury, restoring Jove to Olympus. This bit of mythological inventiveness provides the framework of Marlowe's first digression. That he partially uses this framework as a vehicle for comedy is attested to by the following lines:

. . . On her this god
 Enamoured was, and with his snaky rod
 Did charm her nimble feet, and made her stay,
 The while upon a hillock down he lay,
 And sweetly on his pipe began to play,
 And with smooth speech her fancy to assay,
 Till in his twining arms he lock'd her fast,
 And then he woo'd her with kisses, and at last,
 As shepherds do, her on the ground he laid,
 And tumbling in the grass, he often stray'd
 Beyond the bounds of shame, in being bold
 To eye those parts which no eye should behold;
 And like an insolent commanding lover,
 Boasting his parentage, would needs discover
 The way to new Elysium.

(I.397-411)

Several things are evident in this passage. First, this digression is evidence of what has been called "the poem's intertwining of gods and mortals,"⁵⁶ a device Marlowe uses in such a way that the actions of the gods seem absurd. Marlowe is also manipulating the comic tone of the poem in this passage. He has just given evidence of his sympathy for Hero:

Wherewith she strooken, look'd so dolefully,
 As made Love sigh, to see his tyranny.

(I.373-374)

But he immediately undercuts that feeling with the amusing and incongruous lines on Mercury's rough-and-tumble pursuit of the country maid. Here again Marlowe adjusts the tone of the poem back to the level of

⁵⁶Leech, op. cit., p. 175.

sophistication and detachment. Moreover, Mercury's experienced antics are in ironic contrast to Leander's inept seduction of Hero in the second sestiad. And finally, this digression enlarges the scope of Marlowe's naturalistic philosophy of love by presenting another type of it. Mercury's naturalistic love, however, is a different species from that of Leander. His seduction of the country maid is all sex and no feeling. Leander, on the other hand, does love Hero in the manner of impassioned youth. Sexuality in Leander is a natural expression of feeling.

The only real irrelevancy in this digression is Marlowe's mythological explanation of the poverty of scholars and the low estate of "learning" (I.465-482) which appears to be a personal diatribe, but which is echoed in the lines,

And who have hard hearts, and obdurate minds,
 But vicious, hare-brain'd, and illit'rate hinds,
 (II.217-218)

found in the other long digression in the poem, Marlowe's description of Neptune's amorous pursuit of Leander as the youth swims the Hellespont. Aside from the above couplet, however, this digression, too, has its relevance to the poem as a whole. Neptune, thinking that Leander is Ganymede, pulls the youth to the bottom of the sea, but realizing his mistake, heaves Leander to the surface to prevent him from drowning. He is still enchanted by Leander, however, as the following passage indicates:

The god put Helle's bracelet on his arm,
 And swore the sea should never do him harm.
 He clapp'd his plump cheeks, with his tresses play'd,
 And smiling wantonly, his love bewray'd.
 He watched his arms, and as they open'd side,
 At every stroke, betwixt them would he slide,
 And steal a kiss, and then run out and dance.

And as he turn'd, cast many a lustful glance,
 And throw him gaudy toys to please his eye,
 And dive into the water, and there pry
 Upon his breast, his thighs, and every limb,
 And up again, and close beside him swim.

(II.179-190)

Since tradition has it that Marlowe once gibed, "All they that love not tobacco and boys were fools,"⁵⁷ these lines might at first glance seem like a manifestation of Marlowe's possible preference in matters of sex. They need not be read that way, however.

We can read [these images] from Hero and Leander as though they were literal descriptions of Neptune's actions, a kind of inspired fanciful toying with ancient story. Remembering that the substitution of the physical ocean for Neptune was as natural as breathing to any Elizabethan, we can re-read the images as convincing and accurate descriptions of the caressing flow of water.⁵⁸

This metaphoric interpretation of the Neptune-Leander episode provides an answer to those who are prone to view the episode as evidence of homosexuality in Marlowe.⁵⁹

This digression can also be seen as another example of the ridicule to which Marlowe can subject a god. The picture of the gamboling Neptune is, in its own way, as absurd as the antics of Mercury. Marlowe's attitude is just as irreverent toward the gods as it is toward the romance and tragedy in Musaeus' poem.

In Marlowe's poem, then, "the affairs of men and gods are seen as a spectacle engagingly absurd."⁶⁰ In the matter of digressions,

⁵⁷See Levin, op. cit., p. 5.

⁵⁸Tuve, op. cit., p. 157.

⁵⁹See, for example, Lucas, op. cit., p. 375, and Kocher, op. cit., p. 209.

⁶⁰Leech, op. cit., p. 169.

therefore, Hero and Leander can be considered a unity in that these passages run parallel to the surface of the story and broaden the range of the love theme.

The explication of Marlowe's Hero and Leander in this chapter does not provide any clear-cut answer to the question of whether or not the poem should be considered finished as it stands, but it does offer a basis for speculation. I have shown how Marlowe's tone is one of detachment, amusement, and sophistication as opposed to the romantic and tragic tone of the poem by Musaeus. I have also shown that the comic incidents and the sensuous imagery support--and in turn are supported by--the tone. Furthermore, I have discussed what I consider to be Marlowe's naturalistic philosophy of love in this poem--a philosophy which is directly related to Marlowe's theme of the glorification of the senses--and the imagery that supports that concept of love. Finally, I have shown that Marlowe's poem is a unity in that the sensuous imagery and the so-called digressions are fully relevant to the poem as a whole. Now, there is no indisputable evidence as to what Marlowe would have done with the poem had he lived longer (assuming it was his early death that prevented him from completing it). Needless to say, any answer to such a question must remain speculative. If anything, however, Marlowe's attitude toward the legend, indicated primarily by his comic tone, suggests one of two things. Either he had no intention of working toward a tragic denouement, or he found himself unable to continue the poem without undoing what he had already done. At any rate, Marlowe's poem is complete in effect; he had had his thematic "say," so to speak. When compared with Chapman's continuation, his poem should be considered finished, though Chapman does make use of some elements from Marlowe's poem.

CHAPTER III

CHAPMAN'S CONTINUATION

I. CHAPMAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD LOVE

After reading Marlowe's sophisticated, yet irreverent approach to the legend of Hero and Leander, we can easily imagine the difficult problem Chapman faced in his continuation of Marlowe's poem: how to return the poem to its traditional tragic mode. That Chapman's poem is tragic is undeniable. That it has not always been considered as acceptable tragedy has been noted at the outset of this thesis. It is one of Chapman's peculiarities as a poet, however, to write so that his poetry will be acceptable only to those few whom he would consider enlightened enough to comprehend his meaning. Whether the reader needs more enlightenment than perseverance to grasp the meaning of Chapman's continuation of Hero and Leander is a moot point. His poem is not easy to comprehend, but the difficulties are often caused as much by complexities of style as by subtleties of meaning.

One of the more obvious characteristics of Chapman's poem is its length. Marlowe, as I have already indicated, embellishes the story of Hero and Leander until his 818 lines correspond to the first 282 in Musaeus' poem. Chapman, who deals with the tragic denouement, expands that part of the legend until his 1558 lines correspond to the final 59 in the Greek poem.

But just what is Chapman doing in his expanded telling of the deaths of Hero and Leander? It is obvious at the outset that Chapman's

attitude toward love is different from Marlowe's. His moral earnestness is revealed immediately. Chapman subjects Marlowe's poem to his own "stern Muse" (III.4). He leaves no doubt that he disapproves of "love's stol'n sports" (III.16) as depicted by Marlowe. While Marlowe glorifies the senses and sensual love between youthful and beautiful lovers, Chapman points out the transitory nature of such love:

Joy graven in sense, like snow in water wastes;
Without preserve of virtue nothing lasts.
(III.35-36)

Leander, swimming back to Abydos after his night with Hero, is now guilty as he never was in Marlowe's poem:

And as amidst th' enamour'd waves he swims,
The god of gold of purpose gilt his limbs,
That, this word gilt including double sense,
The double guilt of his incontinence⁶¹
Might be express'd, that had no stay t' employ
The treasure which the love-god let him joy
In his dear Hero, with such sacred thrift
As had beseem'd so sanctified a gift.
(III.23-30)

Two things are clear from these lines. When Chapman calls Hero's love "so sanctified a gift," he is elevating love to a sacred or spiritual level which is not attainable by all human creatures and thereby taking issue with Marlowe's naturalistic philosophy of love according to which man's sexual desires are natural in that they are shared by all of nature's creatures.⁶² In his criticism of Leander, who "had no stay t' employ/The treasure which the love-god let him joy," Chapman also

⁶¹See L. C. Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 72: "Chapman, apparently, does not mean that the incontinence represented a double sin, but that Leander was (1) guilty of it and (2) gilt or tinged with it."

⁶²See II.55-60.

prefigures what is to be his main objection to Marlowe's rendering of the love affair: the headlong rush into sexual union without the formal observation of sanctifying marriage rites.

It should be remembered that in "the Elizabethan age, with its ethical reading of the ancients, its general moral seriousness and glowing idealism,"⁶³ Chapman's version of the story was the more traditional. Marlowe was the renegade. Whereas Marlowe could poetically propound a philosophy of freely exchanged love by relying on nature, in a naturalistic sense, for ethical support, it is Chapman who relies on nature, in the Elizabethan sense of "order" or "reason," to substantiate his philosophical view of love and marriage in a way readily understood by any Elizabethan. To the Elizabethans nature was subject to the laws of order. E. M. W. Tillyard points out that "the Elizabethans talked much about nature, and she cannot be omitted from the world picture. That there was a law of nature was universally agreed."⁶⁴ It was commonly believed that the obedience of creatures to the law of nature maintains order in the universe and keeps the world from plunging back into chaos. Tillyard also reminds us of the importance in Elizabethan poetry of the theme of cosmic order, of which "the gorgeous emblematical figure of Ceremony coming to rebuke the lawless loves of Hero and Leander in Chapman's continuation of Marlowe's poem is yet another, and far more explicit and academic, version."⁶⁵

⁶³Bush, op. cit., p. 287.

⁶⁴E. M. W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture (New York, 1944), p. 42.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 12-13.

It is in the description of the goddess Ceremony that Chapman makes explicit his objection to Leander's role in the love affair. Ceremony descends with a "bench of deities" (III.115) in her flaming hair to judge Leander for his incontinence. She is accompanied by other personifications:

And in a chain, compact of ears and eyes,
 She led Religion; all her body was
 Clear and transparent as the purest glass,
 For she was all presented to the sense;
 Devotion, Order, State, and Reverence
 Her shadows were; Society, Memory;
 All which her sight made live, her absence die.
 (III.116-122)

In his gloss of these lines, L. C. Martin comments that the ears and eyes of Religion "are perhaps to watch for any violation of religious ceremony."⁶⁶ Significantly, order is one of the concepts that Leander has violated by disregarding ceremony, i.e., the law of nature in a formalized sense, in his pursuit of Hero. That Leander has violated the law of nature is indicated further in the description of the burning-glass carried by Ceremony:

One hand a mathematical crystal sways,
 Which gathering in one line a thousand rays
 From her bright eyes, Confusion burns to death.
 (III.131-133)

Ceremony, then, has the power to eliminate confusion, or disorder. In neglecting ceremony in his courtship, Leander has failed to obey the law of nature and has invited the disruption of the entire cosmic order:

Her other hand a laurel rod applies,
 To beat back Barbarism and Avarice,
 That followed, eating earth and excrement
 And human limbs; and would make proud ascent
 To seats of gods, were Ceremony slain.
 (III.137-141)

⁶⁶Marlowe's Poems, p. 75.

Completing this entourage are the Hours and the Graces, symbolic of order and beauty in nature.

Ceremony reproves Leander "for the bluntness in his violent love" (III.146). Her words portend tragedy as she berates the youth for his neglect of nuptial rites.

Told him how poor was substance without rites,
 Like bills unsign'd, desires without delights;
 Like meats unseason'd; like rank corn that grows
 On cottages, that none or reaps or sows;
 Not being with civil forms confirm'd and bounded,
 For human dignities and comforts founded,
 But loose and secret, all their glories hide;
 Fears fills the chamber, Darkness decks the bride.
 (III.147-154)

This last line obviously points ahead to Hero's fear of Venus,

. . . in whose fane she did prefer
 Her virgin vows; from whose impulsive sight
 She knew the black shield of the darkest night
 Could not defend her, nor wit's subtlest art. . .
 (III.286-289)

and to the picture of Hero covering herself with a robe

Exceeding large, and of black Cypress made,
 In which she sate, hid from the day in shade,
 Even over head and face down to her feet.
 (III.293-295)

In the fifth sestiad Hero marries two young lovers named Alcmane and Mya. At the wedding feast "a nymph that haunted the green Sestian groves" (V.63) suddenly appears. This is Teras who has the gift of prophecy. She begins what Chapman calls "The Tale of Teras," a tale about Hymen, the god of marriage. The concept of order in nature that I have been discussing can be detected in Teras' description of Hymen:

In such pure leagues his beauties were combin'd
 That there your nuptial contracts first were sign'd.⁶⁷
 For as proportion, white and crimson, meet
 In beauty's mixture, all right clear and sweet,
 The eye responsible, the golden hair,
 And none is held, without the other, fair:
 All spring together, all together fade;
 Such intermix'd affections should invade
 Two perfect lovers.

(V.97-105)

Hymen's appearance symbolizes harmony and proportion, which is another way of representing cosmic order. These qualities befit Hymen, above all, because he is the god of marriage. Marriage, therefore--with all its rites--is a ceremony that ritualizes one of nature's laws. To neglect that law is to rebel against nature. Moreover, Hymen's beauty can be compared with that of Leander:

Such was his beauty that the force of light,
 Whose knowledge teacheth wonders infinite,
 The strength of number and proportion,
 Nature had plac'd in it to make it known
 Art was her daughter.

(IV.140-144)

But this description of Leander's beauty is ironic in that the harmony and proportion in his appearance are deceptive. They cannot represent cosmic order because they foreshadow destruction rather than bliss.

Furthermore, in affirming traditional ideas of order, proportion, and harmony, Chapman is no doubt attempting to contradict Marlowe's perverted use of the concept of cosmic order in the first sestiad when Leander attacks Hero's virginity:

But this fair gem, sweet in the loss alone,
 When you fleet hence, can be bequeath'd to none.

⁶⁷See L. C. Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 111: "Referring, probably, to the persons here addressed; but the reference may be general and 'your' nearly equivalent to 'our'."

Or if it could, down from the enamell'd sky
 All heaven would come to claim this legacy,
 And with intestine broils the world destroy,
 And quite confound Nature's sweet harmony.

(I.247-252)

Chapman's attitude toward love is also indicated in his condemnation of Leander's impetuosity. From the outset of his poem Chapman makes it clear that he believes the proper fruition of love requires time.

Thus Time and all-states-ordering Ceremony
 Had banish'd all offence: Time's golden thigh
 Upholds the flowery body of the earth
 In sacred harmony, and every birth
 Of men and actions makes legitimate,
 Being used aright.

(III.59-64)

Chapman's notion that time upholds the earth in harmony is added evidence of the reverence for the Elizabethan concept of cosmic order in his poem. In addition, Chapman contrasts Leander's impulsive wooing of Hero and Hymen's restrained courtship of Eucharis, whose name means pleasing or gracious.⁶⁸ Of the young men in the temple at the beginning of Marlowe's poem, Leander is the only one bold enough to speak to Hero whose position as priestess of Venus should have made her sacrosanct. He not only speaks to her, he urges her to "abandon cold Virginity" (I.317). Hymen, on the other hand, is discreet and patient in his attempt to win Eucharis.

His judgement yet (that durst not suit address,
 Nor, past due means, presume of due success)
 Reason gat Fortune in the end to speed
 To his best prayers.

(V.139-142)

Hymen realizes that the proper end of his courtship of Eucharis depends on his pursuit of the proper means to win her.

⁶⁸See L. C. Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 112.

Before Chapman gives Hymen his "due means" to win Eucharis, his rescue of the virgin maids from the band of rovers, the poet indulges in the language of Petrarchan love:

. . . but many a dart
 And many an amorous thought enthrall'd his heart,
 Ere he obtain'd her; and he sick became,
 Forc'd to abstain her sight; and then the flame
 Rag'd in his bosom. O what grief did fill him:
 Sight made him sick, and want of sight did kill him.
 (V.145-150)

These lines may appear to weaken Chapman's overall argument. If we were to choose between the merits of an impetuous lover and those of a sickly, indecisive one, we might select the former. But such a choice would be unfair because the Petrarchan language of love was not necessarily considered an expression of timidity or of poetic "sickliness" in the Elizabethan period.

Chapman's attitude toward love is revealed further in his use of the word "bashfulness." This word appears three times in the poem and in each case the implication is that bashfulness becomes a lover more than does impulsiveness. In the fourth sestiad Hero convinces herself that "contempt of silly bashfulness" (IV.176) is the proper course for her to take. Chapman, of course, is implying just the opposite. In the fifth sestiad Hymen has resolved to wait for the proper opportunity to court Eucharis. Chapman comments:

. . . but strange it seem'd indeed
 That Fortune should a chaste affection bless;
 Preferment seldom graceth bashfulness.
 (V.142-144)

His comment is ironic. He is implying that unfortunately bashfulness is not often enough rewarded with preferment. Again in the fifth sestiad the word appears in the account of the marriage of Hymen and Eucharis:

Nothing they spake, for 'twas esteem'd too plain
 For the most silken mildness of a maid,
 To let a public audience hear it said
 She boldly took the man; and so respected
 Was bashfulness in Athens, it erected
 To chaste Agneia, which is Shamefastness,
 A sacred temple, holding her a goddess.

(V.370-376)

There can be no doubt that this glorification of bashfulness is an invidious reflection upon the relationship between Hero and Leander.

Hero, as I have already shown, has rationalized her dilemma to the point where she is contemptuous of bashfulness. Chapman is once again contrasting the two love affairs to show that sanctioned love is superior to lawless love.

Thus far in my analysis of Chapman's attitude toward love I have concentrated on his celebration of marriage as opposed to the naturalistic philosophy of love in Marlowe's poem. Nowhere in his poem, however, does Chapman imply that sexual intercourse is inherently bad.

The clearest evidence of Chapman's attitude toward sex is found in "The Tale of Teras" in the fifth sestiad. The tale concludes with the nuptial rites of Hymen and Eucharis and the epithalamion. The couple enter Juno's temple and stand before the priest.

Before them on an altar he presented
 Both fire and water; which was first invented,
 Since to ingenerate every human creature
 And every other birth produc'd by Nature,
 Moisture and heat must mix: so man and wife
 For human race must join in nuptial life.

(V.359-364)

The mixture of fire and water symbolizes the sexual union of the bride and bridegroom. Procreation is the purpose of that union. Sex, then, is not necessarily bad. Any virtue or vice associated with it depends upon the ends to which it is directed. The end of the sexual union

between Hero and Leander is merely to satisfy natural amorous desires. According to Chapman's concept of love, such motivation is without virtue.

The part sex plays in the nuptials is further emphasized when, at the end of her epithalamion, Teras says, "Rise, youths! Love's rite claims more than banquets; rise!" (V.463). Note also the advice Teras gives to the young maidens in attendance at the wedding of Alcmane and Mya.

Rise virgins! let fair nuptial loves enfold
Your fruitless breasts: the maidenheads ye hold
Are not your own alone, but parted are;
Part in disposing them your parents share,
And that a third part is; so ye must save
Your loves a third, and you your thirds must have.
(V.473-478)

Since Chapman has described Teras as a nymph who is "great in virtue" (V.71), we can assume that her words here are grounded in virtue. Her exhortation to the maidens, then, implies Chapman's own view of virginity. Chapman, after all, is glorifying chastity, not virginity. Moreover, it is not difficult to see the relationship between these lines and the fact that Hero's part in her love affair is without parental approval. Furthermore, these lines are in ironic contrast to Leander's plea in Marlowe's poem that Hero part with her virginity.⁶⁹

Notice also how Chapman describes the loss of Eucharis' maidenhead:

The custom was that every maid did wear,
During her maidenhood, a silken sphere
About her waist, above her inmost weed,

⁶⁹See I.199 ff.

Knit with Minerva's knot, and that was freed⁷⁰
 By the fair bridegroom on the marriage-night
 With many ceremonies of delight:
 And yet eternis'd Hymen's tender bride,
 To suffer it dissolv'd so, sweetly cried.
 The maids that heard, so lov'd and did adore her,
 They wish'd with all their hearts to suffer for her.
 So had the matrons, that with comfits stood
 About the chamber, such affectionate blood,
 And so true feeling of her harmless pains,
 That every one a shower of comfits rains;
 For which the bride-youths scrambling on the ground,
 In noise of that sweet hail her cries were drown'd.
 (V.389-404, my italics)

The obvious contrast between this symbolic account of a virgin's initial sexual encounter with her husband and Marlowe's erotic description of Hero's deflowering⁷¹ is evidence enough that Chapman is deliberately defining an ordered sexuality and is true to his word when he says to the reader, "I fail if it profane your daintiest ear" (III.182). In this passage Chapman also subtly reminds the reader of the importance of ceremony, now implying that the observance of ceremony can result in delight (i.e., "ceremonies of delight").

In discussing the epithalamion and the nuptial rites in the fifth sestiad, I do not mean to suggest that Chapman was the first poet in the western tradition to introduce this kind of sexual material. In the epithalamic tradition--which extends back to the Latin poet, Catullus, and to which Sidney and Spenser had contributed--it was conventional for the poet to express his desire that the bridal couple be blessed with offspring. Such poems were "constructed around the events of the

⁷⁰A symbol of chastity, according to L. C. Martin in his gloss of these lines. See Marlowe's Poems, p. 123. Also worth noting is the fact that Minerva is the goddess of wisdom. Wisdom, then protects chastity.

⁷¹See II.297-306.

wedding day itself--the religious rites, the banqueting, the bedding of the bride and bridegroom (itself a ritual), and the sexual consummation.⁷² Moreover, the word "epithalamion" is derived from the Greek thalamos, meaning "bed chamber."⁷³ Chapman, therefore, is not introducing something new in his account of the sexual consummation in "The Tale of Teras." Instead, by his idiosyncratic use of epithalamic material, Chapman points out even the physical contrast between sanctified and lawless love.

Before I leave the topic of Chapman's attitude toward love, I wish to clarify what may seem to be an inconsistency in his continuation of Here and Leander. There are two protagonists in this poem. At first glance Chapman appears to be using contradictory criteria for judging them. On the one hand, he is condemning Leander's incontinence. But Chapman objects only to Leander's misuse of time and neglect of marriage rites. We can conclude, therefore, that Chapman sees nothing wrong in Leander's loving a priestess of Venus who is sworn to chastity. On the other hand, Hero's error, if we are to judge by her fears and by the long passage devoted to her encounter with Venus, is that she has broken her vow of chastity as one of Venus' nuns and has convinced herself that she must be deceitful in order to carry on her affair with Leander. It should be noted that her deceitfulness is evidence that she, too, is guilty of violating the concept of ceremony by avoiding nuptial rites. The question is: how can Chapman censure her for not remaining chaste when he has already implied that her love for Leander would be proper

⁷²Thomas M. Greene, "Spenser and the Epithalamic Convention," Comparative Literature, IX (1957), 219.

⁷³Ibid.

were it sanctioned by ceremony? The question can be resolved by a closer look at the passage in which Venus descends to rebuke Hero. There is, indeed, a parallel between this passage and the earlier one describing Ceremony's descending to reprimand Leander. But it is Ceremony, not Venus, who speaks for Chapman. The poet makes this clear when he allows Venus herself to be chided by Leucote,⁷⁴ one of the swans who draw Venus' chariot. Ecte, Chapman's goddess of pity,

Gave bright Leucote voice, and made her speak,
 To ease her anguish, whose swoln breast did break
 With anger at her goddess, that did touch
 Hero so near for that she us'd [practiced] so much;
 And thrusting her white neck at Venus, said:
 "Why may not amorous Hero seem a maid,
 Though she be none, as well as you suppress
 In modest cheeks your inward wantonness?
 How often have we drawn you from above,
 T' exchange with mortals rites for rites of love!
 Why in your priest then call you that offence
 That shines in you, and is your influence?"

(IV.272-283)

These lines indicate that Chapman, as well as Marlowe, sees the irony implicit in the relationship between the goddess of love and her beautiful priestess who is sworn to chastity. If anything, he sympathizes with Hero for "forging a fantastic vow" (III.349).

This examination of Chapman's attitude toward love shows three things clearly. First, Chapman glorifies a love both physical and spiritual while Marlowe glorifies sheer sexuality. In elevating love to a more spiritual level, Chapman takes issue with Marlowe's apparent naturalistic philosophy of love. Second, the tale about Hymen is an idealized portrait of love which Chapman contrasts to the love between

⁷⁴From the Greek word meaning "whiteness," according to L. C. Martin in his gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 101.

Hero and Leander. But this tale is not entirely removed from reality. It is ideal in that it portrays sanctioned and therefore lasting love. It is real in that it does not ignore physical desire and sexual union. Chapman is implying that appetite should be governed--not denied. As an end in itself it is without virtue. As a part of an ordered love relationship it is virtuous and good. Finally, the framework within which Chapman is working should be evident now. Both poets rely on nature to support their respective attitudes toward love. Chapman, however, uses nature in its universal or cosmic Elizabethan sense: nature as a concept that includes order and discipline and self-restraint when applied ethically. Marlowe, on the contrary, uses nature in the sense of self-will, individual appetency, and abandonment of restraint. The difference between the two is the difference between the classic and the romantic visions of life.

II. THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONTINUATION

The obscure quality of Chapman's continuation of Hero and Leander can be attributed in part to the structure of the poem. One critic writes, "As regards the whole poem, there is an obvious lack of architectonic power."⁷⁵ To be more specific, Chapman's expression of his view of love is frequently clouded by material which seems (and often is) tangential to his purpose. And Chapman's digressive editorializing is often puzzling enough to seem pointless. In the fourth sestiad, for example, Hero has convinced herself that her duties lie more with Leander

⁷⁵Bush, op. cit., p. 210.

than with her holy office. At this point Chapman interjects the following comment:

And rail the brain-bald world at what it will,
That's the grand atheism that reigns in it still.
(IV.190-191)

If in this couplet Chapman is referring to "the great heresy or negligence of God, viz. the holding to religion in profession and theory while neglecting its practice,"⁷⁶ then his comment is awkwardly introduced. He has suddenly shifted to a criticism of Elizabethan religious hypocrisy, thus weakening his account of Hero's rationalizing. He repeats the same inept comparison a few lines later:

O lovely Hero, nothing is thy sin,
Weigh'd with those foul faults other priests are in;
That having neither faiths, nor works, nor beauties,
T' engender any scuse for slubber'd duties,
With as much count'nance fill their holy chairs,
And sweat denuncements 'gainst profane affairs,
As if their lives were cut out by their places,
And they the only fathers of the Graces.
(IV.210-217)

These lines do little more than emphasize Chapman's digressiveness. They are not relevant to his central theme of love and marriage.

In the sixth sestiad Chapman becomes even more digressive. The Fates, at Leucote's request, consent to quell the Winds so that Leander may swim the Hellespont in safety. In doing this, however, the Fates

. . . showed their favours to conceal their hates,
And draw Leander on, lest seas too high
Should stay his too obsequious destiny.
(VI.16-18)

Chapman elaborates on this deceit by appending to the passage an extended simile on the Fates,

⁷⁶L. C. Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 99.

Who like a fleering slavish parasite,
 In warping profit or a traitorous sleight,
 Hoops round his rotten body with devotes,
 And pricks his descant face full of false notes;
 Praising with open throat, and oaths as foul
 As his false heart, the beauty of an owl;
 Kissing his skipping hand with charmed skips,
 That cannot leave, but leaps upon his lips
 Like a cock-sparrow, or a shameless quean
 Sharp at a red-lipp'd youth, and nought doth mean
 Of all his antic shows, but doth repair
 More tender fawns, and takes a scatter'd hair
 From his tame subject's shoulder; whips and calls
 For every thing he lacks; creeps 'gainst the walls
 With backward humbless, to give needless way:
 Thus his false fate did with Leander play.

(VI.19-34)

Once again Chapman has digressed, this time to present an involved epic simile which has nothing to do with the narrative and little, if anything, to do with the nature of fate.

A digression more obvious and more irrelevant follows shortly when Chapman counters Leander's optimism with another incongruous comparison:

As short was he of that himself so priz'd,
 As in an empty gallant full of form,
 That thinks each look an act, each drop a storm,
 That falls from his brave breathings; most brought up
 In our metropolis, and hath his cup
 Brought after him to feasts.

(VI.108-113)

I need not quote the entire simile. Chapman continues it for twenty-three more lines, describing an idle, empty London gallant who travels merely for pleasure, embellishes his conversation with pompous oratorical speeches, and in general makes much ado about nothing. Not only does this passage in no way clarify Leander's state of mind, but it is "at this point in the story . . . an astonishing prelude to tragedy."⁷⁷

⁷⁷Bush, op. cit., p. 209.

Another, but shorter, digression comes just before Leander's fatal swimming of the Hellespont. Addressing Leander, Chapman strangely laments the youth's doom:

I must describe the hell of thy dis-ease,
That heaven did merit: yet I needs must see
Our painted fools and cockhorse peasantry
Still, still usurp, with long lives, loves, and lust,
The seats of Virtue, cutting short as dust
Her dear-bought issue: ill to worse converts,
And tramples in the blood of all deserts.

(VI.142-148)

Again Chapman has turned from the narrative to complain about his own world.

And finally, as Leander is drowning Chapman interjects the following comparison between self-seeking statesmen and the Winds:

The Destinies sate dancing on the waves,
To see the Glorious Winds with mutual braves
Consume each other: O true glass, to see
How ruinous ambitious statistis be
To their own glories!

(VI.185-189)

All the passages cited above are extraneous material. There are only two possible justifications for their inclusion, but neither is completely satisfactory. For instance, in the third sestiad Chapman depicts Ceremony and all her attendants, one of whom is Society. Of Ceremony Chapman says:

. . . all the sweets of our society
Were spher'd and treasur'd in her bounteous eye.
(III.143-144)

These references to society may indicate that Chapman is writing with social ills in mind. But his denunciation of religious hypocrisy, "slavish parasites," "cockhorse peasantry," and "ambitious statistis" are so ill-timed that they cannot be justified by his earlier account of the

relationship between ceremony and society. On the other hand, the digressions may be the result of Chapman's peculiar kind of imagery--a subject I shall deal with later.

It may be true, then, as Douglas Bush writes, that "Chapman's irrelevance is incurable."⁷⁸ Bush, however, is too comprehensive in his criticism of Chapman's poem. The poem is not as devoid of structural design as Bush suggests. We miss many of the structural elements if we concentrate on the irrelevances. Concerning the fourth sestiad, for example, Bush writes that Chapman "makes a digression of some eighty lines concerning Leander's picture and the lessons it teaches, lessons more in the vein of Marlowe than of our moralistic Chapman."⁷⁹ This simply is not so. Bush is referring to lines 136-217, a passage in which Chapman tells of the mysterious powers of pacification that Leander's picture has for Hero and, subsequently, for the inhabitants of Sestos and Abydos. It is here also that we learn of Hero's decisions to "banish quite/All thought of any check to her delight" (IV.174-175); to make "Leander her chief Deity" (IV.182); and to dissemble:

Thus would she still proceed in works divine,
And in her sacred state of priesthood shine.
(IV.204-205)

This long passage is not entirely digressive. The only real irrelevances in it, as I have already noted, are lines 190-191 and 210-217 in which Chapman attacks Elizabethan religious hypocrisy. To call the rest of the passage digressive and "more in the vein of Marlowe" than of Chapman,

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 207.

⁷⁹Ibid.

is to overlook the delineation of Hero's character, which is included in the passage and which I shall discuss later, and the implicit irony in the description of Leander when it is compared with that of Hymen in the fifth sestiad. As I mentioned in my analysis of Chapman's attitude toward love, the descriptions of Leander and Hymen both emphasize harmony and proportion. The passage referred to by Bush, then, is related to Chapman's central theme.

Similarly, Bush fails to recognize all the implications in "The Tale of Teras" in the fifth sestiad. He admits that the tale "is not a mere ornament" and that "it shows ardent love governed by decorum and arriving at a moral consummation,"⁸⁰ but he does not acknowledge that the tale is the strongest evidence of structural cohesiveness in Chapman's poem because of the contrast between the love affairs of Hero and Leander on the one hand, and Hymen and Eucharis on the other. When, at the end of the tale, Chapman declares, "I use digressions thus t^o increase the day" (V.496), we should not be fooled by his words. He is not making an "ingenuous apology for the episode,"⁸¹ nor is he simply delaying the tragic end of his poem.

Many elements in "The Tale of Teras" correspond to the affair between Hero and Leander. Some of these have already been noted. There are enough others to indicate that the tale has complete structural significance in the poem. As Teras is about to begin her tale, Chapman warns us of that significance:

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 209.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 208.

And first this amorous tale that fitted well
 Fair Hero and the nuptials did she tell.
 (V.89-90)

The first four lines of the tale suggest two things. Teras tells of

Hymen, that now is god of nuptial rites,
 And crowns with honour Love and his delights.
 (V.91-92)

Thus, from the very start of the tale Chapman implies that the love between Hero and Leander is without honor. Hymen is then described as

. . . a youth so sweet of face,
 That many thought him of the female race.
 (V.93-94)

This is an obvious allusion to Marlowe's description of Leander:

Some swore he was a maid in man's attire,
 For in his looks were all that men desire.
 (I.83-84)

Chapman also establishes a parallel between Hero and Eucharis: In Musaeus' poem, Hero tells Leander, "I come from wealthy parents--how angry they would be!" (l. 125). Chapman describes Eucharis as "the noblest, fairest, and richest maid" in Athens (V.120). Later, when Chapman describes the sexual consummation of the nuptials of Hymen and Eucharis, Hymen's deification is mentioned again:

And thus blest Hymen joy'd his gracious bride,
 And for his joy was deified.
 (V.405-406)

In this couplet Chapman is apparently implying that Hymen's deification is the result of the decorous way in which he has conducted his courtship of Eucharis. If so, a comparison with Leander is also implied. Far from being deified (except in Hero's mind), Leander is destroyed.

Thus, all the parallels and contrasts between "The Tale of Teras" and the surface of Chapman's poem indicate that the tale is by no means

irrelevant. It is not just a vaguely moral digression. In his long account of the courtship and marriage of Hymen and Eucharis, Chapman points out the happiness implicit in such a love as opposed to the "stol'n love" (III.16) of Hero and Leander, which leads inevitably to mutual self-destruction.

III. CHAPMAN'S CHARACTERIZATION OF HERO AND LEANDER

I have noted Chapman's abrupt change in tone and his early introduction of ethical judgment into the love affair. But how do these changes affect the characterizations of Hero and Leander?

Chapman devotes more space to characterizing Hero and to Leander. More than half of the third sestiad is given over entirely to Hero's thoughts after her night with Leander.

Sweet Hero left upon the bed alone,
Her maidenhead, her vows, Leander gone,
And nothing with her but a violent crew
Of new come thoughts, that yet she never knew.
(III.199-202)

Chapman has changed Hero as abruptly as he changed the tone of the poem. Marlowe's Hero at the end of his poem was attempting to leave the bed because of her self-consciousness and embarrassment. Our last glimpse of her shows her standing naked and blushing before Leander's admiring eyes. But this picture does not convey any sense of guilt on Hero's part. Now, however, her mind is filled with fear, doubt, and compunction.

Strange thoughts possess'd her, ransacking her breast
For that that was not there, her wonted rest.
(III.225-226)

Her first fear is that she will not be able to conceal her thoughts.

She mus'd how she could look upon her sire,
 And not show that without that was intire.
 (III.233-234)

But she is unwilling at this point to adapt herself to "the world's
 stale cunning" (III.253). She does not believe she can be deceitful.

Chapman comments on her thoughts:

But custom, that the apoplexy is
 Of bed-rid nature and lives led amiss,
 And takes away all feeling of offence,
 Yet braz'd not Hero's brow with impudence.
 (III.265-268)

L. C. Martin interprets "custom" as "the culminating seizure that attacks
 diseased Nature, and paralyzes conscience."⁸² We must keep in mind that
 according to Chapman's view of love Hero is as guilty as Leander of
 rushing headlong into sexual love. Though she has been guilty of faulty
 judgment, nevertheless Chapman is pointing out that her judgment has not
 yet been undermined to the point where she can salve her conscience with
 self-justification.

Another aspect of her guilt is revealed in her fear of Venus, to
 whom she has made a vow of chastity. "This was the point pierc'd Hero
 to the heart" (III.290). This line might seem to indicate Hero's chief
 error in her love for Leander, but as I have already pointed out in my
 comments on Chapman's attitude toward love, Chapman gives ample evidence
 to indicate that he sees the irony implicit in Hero's vow of chastity.
 Hero's fear of Venus, then, can be seen as her inability to realize the
 true nature of her error. This idea is corroborated by the following
 lines:

⁸²See the gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 83.

. . . then wrought her wit
 With her broke vow, her goddess' wrath, her fame.
 (III.310-311)

Even so, the three things which Hero fears do not correspond to Chapman's attitude toward love as he develops it in the poem. He acknowledges the naturalness of amorous desires, provided they are properly channeled so that they lead to an ordered and a lasting joy. He is not advocating sexual abstinence. Moreover, he is implying that one need not fear def- amation, as Hero does, if one is virtuous.

The turning point in Hero's characterization comes after a fit of passion

Which makes her strow the floor with her torn hair,
 And spread her mantle piecemeal in the air.
 (III.313-314)

Up to now her feelings of guilt and fear have lessened her esteem for Leander,

. . . but now turn'd the flood,
 And all her fleet of spirits came swelling in,
 With child of sail, and did hot fight begin
 With those severe conceits she too much mark'd;
 And here Leander's beauties were embark'd.
 (III.324-328)

The thought of Leander not only dispels her fears, it convinces her that she is wrong "to check the true joys he deserv'd in her" (III.334).

Surely Chapman is emphasizing Hero's delusion here. The irony in these lines is recognizable when we compare them with Chapman's conception of true joy as it is manifested in the marriage of Hymen and Eucharis.

Then follows a passage in which Hero rationalizes her broken vow and her love for Leander:

That is a good deed that prevents a bad:
 Had I not yielded, slain myself I had.
 Hero Leander is, Leander Hero;

Such virtue love hath to make one of two.
 If then Leander did my maidenhead git,
 Leander being myself I still retain it.

(III.355-360)

Her casuistry resembles Leander's sophistical argument in the first sestiad. Moreover, that Hero's rationalizing is unsatisfactory is evident when she weeps and begs of Venus, "O goddess, pity love, and pardon it" (III.382). But by the end of the sestiad she is convinced that her arguments and Leander's beauty will pardon her offense.

Thus her sharp wit, her love, her secrecy,
 Trooping together, made her wonder why
 She should not leave her bed, and to the temple;
 Her health said she must live; her sex, dissemble.

(III.397-400)

Although the entire fourth sestiad deals with Hero's characterization, much of it is devoted to the descent of Venus. At the beginning of this part of the poem Hero is about to burn her torn hair and robe as a sacrifice to Venus and Cupid. She puts on her sacred clothing, one item of which is a scarf,

In midst whereof she wrought a virgin's face,
 From whose each cheek a fiery blush did chase
 Two crimson flames, that did two ways extend,
 Spreading the ample scarf to either end;
 Which figur'd the division of her mind,
 Whiles yet she rested bashfully inclin'd,
 And stood not resolute to wed Leander.

(IV.38-44)

Chapman is using this scarf to symbolize Hero's divided mind: one part loves Leander; the other part fears to express that love openly.

Chapman then turns to Hero's sacrifice of the hair and the torn robe:

She odours burn'd, and from their smoke did rise
 Unsavory fumes, that air with plagues inspired,
 And then the consecrated sticks she fired;

On whose pale flame an angry spirit flew,
 And beat it down still as it upward grew;
 The virgin tapers that on th' altar stood,
 When she inflam'd them, burn'd as red as blood.
 (IV.123-129)

These portents of doom frighten Hero, but once again she overcomes her fears by turning her thoughts to Leander. She

Search'd her soft bosom, and from thence she pluck'd
 His lovely picture: which when she had view'd,
 Her beauties were with all love's joys renew'd.
 (IV.135-137)

This account of the power which Leander's image has to calm Hero emphasizes her delusion. Every time she receives a warning about the outcome of their relationship, Leander's beauty dispels her fears. Now she vows to abandon "all thought of any check to her delight" (IV.175). She makes "Leander her chief Deity" (IV.181), and resolves to continue as priestess of Venus in spite of her broken vow of chastity. "Love would not leave her conscience perplex't" (IV.195). Now her judgment gives way completely to thoughts which paralyze the conscience.

Pleasure atones Falsehood and Conscience:
 Dissembling was the worst (thought Hero then)
 And that was best, now she must live with men.
 (IV.199-201)

Chapman makes ironically clear what he thinks of Hero at this point:

O virtuous love, that taught her to do best,
 When she did worst, and when she thought it lest!
 (IV.202-203)

But Chapman is implying more than he is saying in his delineation of Hero's character. For one thing, when Hero makes a god of Leander, she is placing the creature before the creator and is therefore guilty of idolatry. Furthermore, her vow to allow her passion for Leander to go unchecked is, in Elizabethan terms, a violation of the moral and

psychological order within men. If desire is completely ungoverned, the result will be moral decay and psychological instability.

There is a more significant meaning here, however, one which brings us back to Chapman's framework of order in nature. One way in which Elizabethans pictured universal order was in terms of the ancient chain of being. Everything in creation, animate or inanimate, is linked in this chain. Within the chain man occupies a position between the animals and the angels. Poets could make use of this concept by relating it to the perennial conflict between passion and reason in man. If passion alone rules man, he becomes bestial and disrupts the natural order of things. If reason and passion are in harmony with each other, however, man may become, morally speaking, like the angels. This movement toward the angels does not disrupt the chain of being because

the chain is also a ladder. The elements are alimantal. There is a progression in the way the elements nourish plants, the fruits of plants beasts, and the flesh of beasts men. And this is all one with the tendency of man upwards towards God. The chain of being is educative both in the marvels of its static self and in its implications of ascent.⁸³

Moreover, what separates man from the beasts and allies him with the angels is his ability to understand. But the angels understand intuitively while man must use his reason discursively. The paramount subject of understanding in man is himself. "Not to know yourself was to resemble the beasts."⁸⁴ All of this relates to Hero's decision to abandon "all thought of any check to her delight." Chapman is implying that Hero does not understand herself. Her passion is stronger than her

⁸³Tillyard, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 66.

reason; therefore, she is lowering herself in the chain of being and is abetting disorder.

In the fifth sestiad Hero decides to administer marriage vows to Alcmane and Mya, another maid who has sworn a vow of chastity. Her decision is ironic because she has given no indication that she is willing to submit to public marriage vows herself. Her attitude toward the young guests at the nuptials reveals that she still harbors some fear.

For all these Hero made a friendly feast,
 Welcom'd them kindly, did much love protest,
 Winning their hearts with all the means she might,
 That when her fault should chance t' abide the light,
 Their loves might cover or extenuate it,
 And high in her worst fate make pity sit.

(V.47-52)

In these lines Chapman indicates that Hero is still more concerned with her reputation than with the lawlessness of her affair with Leander.

The final revelation of Hero's character comes in the sixth sestiad as Hero lights the torch which will signal Leander on to his death.

Yet Hero with these thoughts her torch did spend:
 When bees make wax, Nature doth not intend
 It shall be made a torch; but we that show
 The proper virtue of it make it so,
 And when 'tis made, we light it: nor did Nature
 Propose one life to maids, but each such creature
 Makes by her soul the best of her free state,
 Which without love is rude, disconsolate,
 And wants love's fire to make it mild and bright,
 Till when, maids are but torches wanting light.
 The right of nought is glean'd, but the delight.

(VI.66-77)

These thoughts reveal that Hero is still rationalizing. More importantly, however, they are implicitly ironic in that they further reveal Chapman's attitude toward love. We can assume that he would agree that love improves one's soul. But his idea of the "proper virtue" of love differs

from Hero's. If the last line of the above quotation means that "the right condition or state of anything is to be discovered ('gleaned') only (by nought else but) by its proper fruition,"⁸⁵ then Chapman is implying that Hero is not aware of the "proper fruition" of love which, to him, should be a properly sanctioned love leading to lasting joy.

Chapman's characterization of Leander is far less involved than his characterization of Hero, though his attitude toward love is conveyed more explicitly through his portrayal of Leander. Chapman uses the first half of the third sestiad to tell of Leander's error. We are not made privy to Leander's thoughts, but we are told that

. . . he shook with passionate desire
To put in flame his other secret fire.
(III.105-106)

Martin suggests that the "other secret fire" is the fire of Leander's love and is in contrast to the earlier lines,

. . . his senses' flame
Flowed from his parts with force so virtual,
It fir'd with sense things mere insensual.⁸⁶
(III.88-90)

If so, then Chapman may be making a distinction here between the spiritualization of love and mere gratification of the senses.

At this point Leander is guilty of neglecting nuptial rites, for which he is severely rebuked by the goddess Ceremony. Leander is convinced by Ceremony's arguments.

She vanished, leaving pierc'd Leander's heart
With sense of his unceremonious part,
In which, with plain neglect of nuptial rites,

⁸⁵L. C. Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 130.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 75.

He close and flatly fell to his delights:
 And instantly he vowed to celebrate
 All rites pertaining to his married state.

(III.155-160)

He arranges the nuptials with his father and "There we leave him" (III. 169).

We do not see him again until the final sestiad when he and his father preside over the slaying of sheep and cattle for the nuptials at Abydos. It is at this point that Chapman compares Leander's feeling of good fortune to the unwarranted self-esteem of a London gallant.

Then, almost reluctantly, Chapman begins the account of Leander's drowning. Chapman reveals his sympathy for the youth:

O sweet Leander, thy large worth I hide
 In a short grave; ill-favour'd storms must chide
 Thy sacred favour: I in floods of ink
 Must drown thy graces, which white papers drink,
 Even as thy beauties did the foul black seas;
 I must describe the hell of thy dis-ease,
 That heaven did merit.

(VI.137-143)

Leander sees Hero's torch and leaps into the Hellespont. The winds begin their assault on the water and Leander calls to Neptune for help, but the seagod is powerless because the waves must submit to the Fates.

Chapman's sympathy for both Hero and Leander is revealed in his moving account of their deaths. Leander's bruised and torn body is placed by Neptune on the rocks below Hero's tower. With the coming of dawn,

She saw him, and the sight was much, much more
 Than might have serv'd to kill her, should her store
 Of giant sorrows speak? Burst, die, bleed,
 And leave poor plaints to us that shall succeed.
 She fell on her love's bosom, hugg'd it fast,
 And with Leander's name she breath'd her last.

(VI.268-273)

Some general deductions may be drawn from this analysis of Chapman's characterization of Hero and Leander. Chapman has described his protagonists from the time of their separation after their tryst, to the time of their deaths. He repeatedly points out what, during this time, they are as compared with what they could have been, had they not plunged headlong into illicit love. He has also compared them with what they were before their meeting. He contrasts Leander's "large worth" (VI.137) to his impulsiveness and his tragic end. Similarly, he states that Hero was "directed with an earth-exempted mind" (III.46) before she met Leander. As Chapman develops Hero, however, she acquires a heaven-exempted mind, i.e., she takes Leander for her deity.

We should note also that "Hero and Leander as characters soon cease to exist."⁸⁷ There are moments of pathos and beauty, but they are usually cut short by Chapman's digressive comparisons and his involved imagery. We are never in Leander's mind and, although Hero's thoughts are revealed in some detail, we are seldom permitted to really feel with her. The descriptions of Hero and Leander too often turn into set pieces. In the fourth sestiad, for example, we are told little of what Hero feels during her period of false hope. Instead, her feelings are woven into her scarf and it is from there that we must draw any further conclusions about her state of mind. Chapman's characterizations of Hero and Leander do not, then, consistently enhance his central theme of the need for an enduring love. Nevertheless, they do contribute something to the framework of order in nature (or universal order) in which Chapman develops his theme.

⁸⁷Bush, op. cit., p. 209.

IV. CHAPMAN'S IMAGERY

I have said that the difficulties in reading Chapman's continuation of Hero and Leander are often caused as much by complexities of style as by subtleties of meaning. I do not mean that the style and the meaning are unrelated. On the contrary, in his dedicatory letter prefixed to "Ovid's Banquet of Sense," Chapman implies that the style of his poetry must be coped with before his meaning can become fully clear. Chapman's meaning is often obscure because his style is complex; and part of that complexity is the result of his use of imagery. In this section I shall examine Chapman's imagery, which, in general, is of three kinds: imagery that reflects the setting of the poem; imagery that changes or expands the thought in certain passages of Marlowe's poem; and imagery that relates to Chapman's theme and attitude toward love. Lastly, I shall examine Chapman's imagery as it relates to imagery characteristic of metaphysical poetry.

Since in Chapman's poem the sea is a major setting, he makes much use of imagery that brings pictures of the sea to the reader's mind. In the third sestiad Hero's tortured mind has led her to strew the floor with her torn hair and mantle. She calms herself when her matron comes to her to see what is wrong.

She rose, and to her bed made forced way,
And laid her down even where Leander lay;
And all this while the red sea of her blood
Ebb'd with Leander.

(III.321-324)

In this case the sea-blood image connotes Hero's passion. "Ebb'd" carries with it the idea of flux, impermanence, and instability. The main

point to be made here is that Chapman has combined the sea-blood image and the image of flux, thus relating the setting of the poem to the psychological depiction of Hero and to Chapman's theme. Chapman is, after all, attempting to show the flaws in the unsanctioned affair between Hero and Leander by constantly placing the myth within the larger framework of law and ceremony with their resulting order and stability. Chapman repeats this particular image in the fifth sestiad when, in "The Tale of Teras," Hymen begins to woo Eucharis, who is properly shy until she begins to feel the power of love.

It stirr'd her blood's sea so, that high it went,
And beat in bashful waves 'gainst the white shore
Of her divided cheeks.

(V.230-232)

Chapman obviously is using this image to once again compare Eucharis' virtuous love for Hymen with Hero's ungoverned love for Leander.

Chapman frequently and subtly reminds the reader of the sea-myth he is working with, as, for example, when he describes the veil Hero wears as she is about to sacrifice her torn hair and mantle to Venus and Cupid:

It was as blue as the most freezing skies;
Near the sea's hue, for thence her goddess came.

(IV.35-36)

Again in the third sestiad, when Hero is struggling with her fears, Chapman calls the sea "Neptune's skies" (III.336) through which ". . . her star [Leander] wander'd, wash'd in smarting brine,/For her love's sake" (III.337-338). Since there is more to such an image than mere reference to the sea, I shall have more to say about this passage shortly.

Chapman's many images of swimming have an obvious relationship to the sea. The following quotations are typical examples of this type of

imagery:

Her plenteous hair in curled billows swims
On her bright shoulder . . .
(IV.25-26)

'Tis strange to see 'gainst what an extreme stream
A lover strives . . .
(V.154-155)

. . . but now turn'd the flood,
And all her fleet of spirits came swelling in,
With child of sail, and did hot fight begin
With those severe conceits she too much mark'd;
And here Leander's beauties were embark'd.
He came in swimming painted all with joys,
Such as might sweeten hell; his thought destroys
All her destroying thoughts.
(III.324-331)

The imagery in these examples varies in its complexity. In the first illustration Chapman creates a simple but sensuous picture of beauty as he describes Hero preparing to make her sacrifice to Venus and Cupid. The second quotation is taken from "The Tale of Teras." I have already shown how Chapman contrasts this tale about Hymen and Eucharis with the love affair between Hero and Leander. The lines quoted here refer ostensibly to Hymen who has become ill because of his secret love for Eucharis. There can be no doubt, however, that the image of a lover striving against an "extreme stream" pertains as well to Leander. The last example is the most complex; and it combines the images of swimming and sailing. Up to this point in the third sestiad, Hero's fears have been gradually weakening her passion for Leander. Now her fears begin to be replaced by the rationalizing thoughts ("her fleet of spirits") that she uses to quell her conscience. According to L. C. Martin, "With child of sail" means "with sails filled out and looking pregnant."⁸⁸

⁸⁸Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 86.

In other words, this is Chapman's unique way of saying that Hero's new thoughts are powerful enough to overcome her fears. In the second part of this conceit, Hero is further strengthened by the thought of Leander whom she imagines as swimming into her mind and dispelling her fears.

Many of Chapman's images reflect, but change or expand, certain lines of Marlowe's poem. For example, the following lines are part of Marlowe's description of the first fumbling encounter between Hero and Leander in the tower:

But know you not that creatures wanting sense,
By nature have a mutual appetence,
And wanting organs to advance a step,
Mov'd by love's force, unto each other leap?
Much more in subjects having intellect
Some hidden influence breeds like effect.

(II.55-60)

These lines refer to Leander who

. . . as a brother with his sister toyed,
Supposing nothing else was to be done,
Now he her favour and good will had won.

(II.52-54)

But they also contain Marlowe's implicit statement that sexual love should be accepted as a natural act practiced by all of nature's creatures.

Now notice what Chapman does with Marlowe's idea. In the third sestiad, when Leander has returned to Abydos, Chapman writes:

Love-blast Leander was with love so filled,
That love to all that touch'd him he instilled,
And as the colours of all things we see
To our sight's powers communicated be,
So to all objects that in compass came
Of any sense he had, his senses' flame
Flowed from his parts with force so virtual,
It fir'd with sense things mere insensual.

(III.83-90)

In this elaborate simile Chapman draws an analogy between "the colours of all things" and the radiating power of Leander's love. Each is capable of strongly affecting "things mere insensual." As colors affect sight, so Leander's love affects all objects he encounters. This simile is typical of much of Chapman's imagery. The comparison being made seems logical only after the reader has struggled with it for a while. Furthermore, in this simile Chapman seems to be glorifying the senses much as Marlowe does throughout his poem. In reality, however, he is using this sensuous imagery to emphasize the sensuality of Leander's love so that he can more dramatically introduce the goddess Ceremony confronting Leander.

Chapman also makes imagistic use of Marlowe's line, "The richest corn dies, if it be not reapt" (I.327), from Leander's sophisticated and persuasive speech urging Hero to abandon virginity. Chapman, however, uses Marlowe's words to create an image that serves his own purpose. When the goddess Ceremony descends to rebuke Leander, she tells him that sexual union, not sanctioned by religious rites, is

. . . like rank corn that grows
On cottages, that none or reaps or sows,
(III.149-150)

Furthermore, Marlowe and Chapman both deal with the subject of good deeds. In part of Leander's argument to Hero, Marlowe writes,

What virtue is it that is born with us?
Much less can honour be ascrib'd thereto,
Honour is purchas'd by the deeds we do.
Believe me Hero, honour is not won,
Until some honourable deed be done.
(I.278-282)

Marlowe, of course, is ridiculing virginity in this passage. Since it can never be acquired through good deeds, it cannot be good. The

sophistry in this argument is obvious. Chapman, on the other hand, makes the idea of doing good deeds conform to his own purpose. When Hero begins rationalizing in the third sestiad, she says to herself,

Good vows are never broken with good deeds,
 For then good deeds were bad; vows are but seeds,
 And good deeds fruits; even those good deeds that grow
 From other stocks than from th' observed vow.
 That is a good deed that prevents a bad:
 Had I not yielded, slain myself I had.
 Hero Leander is, Leander Hero.

(III.351-357)

One must recognize the dramatic irony in this passage. Hero is rationalizing her own "deed" so that it will seem good rather than bad to her. But she does not realize how her thoughts apply, tragically, to her affair with Leander. A good deed may very well prevent a bad one; but in the end Hero really does slay herself. Chapman is implying that the tragic end of the two lovers might have been prevented if Hero had kept her love for Leander virtuous. Chapman does this through his use of plant imagery. "Fruit" signify organic, physical growth. "Good deeds" signify organic moral development. Each type of growth contributes to order in nature. Once again, then, we are brought back into the framework of world order with which Chapman is working. Further evidence in support of this interpretation of the imagery in the above passage can be found in the fifth sestiad. Hymen's courtship of Eucharis is virtuously fruitful because it is grounded in good deeds. First, Hymen rescues Eucharis and the other maidens from the band of rovers who had abducted them. This was the deed that made Eucharis aware of him and of his love. Then Hymen performs the crowning good deed in his courtship by marrying Eucharis in the traditional nuptial ceremony.

Finally, I repeat what I said earlier when I examined Marlowe's imagery: he has a predilection for associating love, beauty, and virginity with jewels. Chapman, too, uses the jewel image, but manipulates it for his own purpose:

Like a poor snail, her gentle supple limb
 Hung on her turret's top so most down right,
 As she would dive beneath the darkness quite,
 To find her jewel; jewel! her Leander;
 A name of all earth's jewels pleased not her
 Like his dear name.

(VI.247-252)

Marlowe uses the concrete jewel image to make abstractions appear more sensuous. Here Chapman has reversed the process by using the jewel image to signify Leander's great worth and excellence in the eyes of Hero.

The imagery I have cited above from Chapman's poem is often difficult to cope with, but no more so than in many twentieth-century poems. If the reader wants to understand such imagery, he must persevere. If he does, he will recognize that much of Chapman's knotty imagery supports his theme and his attitude toward love in this poem. Perhaps the most striking example of such imagery is that used to describe Chapman's personification of Ceremony and her entourage:

The goddess Ceremony, with a crown
 Of all the stars, and heaven with her descended,
 Her flaming hair to her bright feet extended,
 By which hung all the bench of deities;
 And in a chain, compact of ears and eyes,
 She led Religion; all her body was
 Clear and transparent as the purest glass,
 For she was all presented to the sense;
 Devotion, Order, State, and Reverence
 Her shadows were; Society, Memory;
 All of which her sight made live, her absence die.
 A rich disparent pentacle she wears,
 Drawn full of circles and strange characters;
 Her face was changeable to every eye;
 One way look'd ill, another graciously;

Which while men viewed, they cheerful were and holy,
 But looking off, vicious and melancholy;
 The snaky paths to each observed law
 Did Policy in her broad bosom draw:
 One hand a mathematic crystal sways,
 Which gathering in one line a thousand rays
 From her bright eyes, Confusion burns to death,
 And all estates of men distinguisheth.
 By it Morality and Comeliness
 Themselves in all their sightly figures dress.
 Her other hand a laurel rod applies,
 To beat back Barbarism and Avarice,
 That followed, eating earth and excrement
 And human limbs; and would make proud ascent
 To seats of gods, were Ceremony slain;
 The Hours and Graces bore her glorious train;
 And all the sweets of our society
 Were spher'd and treasur'd in her bounteous eye.

(III.112-144)

I have quoted the entire description of Ceremony and her attendants here because the entire passage represents one complex image. In spite of its complexity, however, this picture of the goddess Ceremony is the image which most explicitly supports Chapman's attitude toward love in this poem. Very early in his poem Chapman labels Leander's fault "incontinence" (III.26). Now, echoing this early sentiment, Ceremony reproves Leander for the "bluntness in his violent love" (III.146). She tells him that his affair with Hero, "not being with civil forms confirm'd and bounded" (III.151), can only lead to a disrupted life in which "fear fills the chamber, Darkness decks the bride" (III.154). This last line obviously points ahead to Chapman's account of Hero's mental anguish. We know, then, why Ceremony appears before Leander. Chapman makes this clear. His full meaning in the passage quoted above is not clear, however, until the imagery has been understood. Ceremony represents order. She is as transparent as glass so that her full import can be recognized --through the use of the senses. In other words, Chapman utilizes an

image which is concrete and will appeal to the senses so that his abstract meaning will be more clear. The deities accompanying Ceremony (the personifications of devotion, order, state, reverence, society, and memory) can live only in her presence (i.e., if ceremonial laws and rites are observed). Ceremony also wears a pentacle⁸⁹ containing circles. Since the circle is a symbol of perfection, Chapman is also presenting Ceremony as an image of perfection. He who does her honor will lead a life close to perfection. Then Chapman makes this idea more explicit by stating that men who look at Ceremony (i.e., observe her laws) are "cheerful" and "holy," while those who look away from her (i.e., ignore or neglect her) are "vicious and melancholy." Lines 129-130 in this passage are ambiguous. Perhaps, as L. C. Martin says, "Policy may mean Government in the abstract, or Prudence; Policy depicts either in her own bosom or in that of Ceremony, the difficult, tortuous paths which must be followed if each law of Ceremony is to be fully observed."⁹⁰ Such a reading would, of course, be consistent with Chapman's theme. Throughout his poem he implies that the path to virtue may be difficult but is well worth the traveling in the long run. But the word "policy" had more than one meaning to Elizabethans. It also meant cunning, or craftiness, or even dissimulation. If Chapman had this definition of the word in mind here, then "the snaky paths to each observed law" are the paths to be avoided if Ceremony is to be properly observed. Next in the description of the goddess is the "mathematical crystal" (probably a burning-glass), carried by Ceremony, which gathers "a thousand

⁸⁹A symbol, usually a five-pointed star, formerly used in magic.

⁹⁰Martin's gloss of these lines in Marlowe's Poems, p. 76.

rays/From her bright eyes." These rays are directed at Confusion, another personification introduced into the complex image. Significantly, Confusion is destroyed by these rays from the eyes of Ceremony. This crystal is also used as a mirror by Morality and Comeliness, two more of Ceremony's attendants. Ceremony also carries a laurel rod (perhaps symbolizing victory) with which she beats back Barbarism and Avarice who "would make proud ascent/To seats of gods, were Ceremony slain." The last two of the many personifications in this passage are the Hours and the Graces, signifying order and beauty in nature. The overall picture conveyed by this complex imagery is one of disorder being defeated by order because of the power of ceremony. One more thing should be kept in mind here. The presence of Leander should not be forgotten. He, as well as the reader, is viewing the goddess Ceremony as Chapman describes her. Chapman may be moving away from the misjudgments of Leander as an individual, but Ceremony is there, ostensibly, to rebuke Leander for his incontinence. In a sense, however, Leander's incontinence is the incontinence of man in general. The ultimate significance of the imagery describing Ceremony is that it emphasizes the chaos of a lawless love by making that chaos correspond to the disorder that would result in a universe not ruled by natural law. Such an association between man and the universe, or microcosm and macrocosm, was conventional in Chapman's time. "The idea of man summing up the universe in himself had a strong hold on the imaginations of the Elizabethans."⁹¹

Other images are less striking and less explicit in their support of Chapman's attitude toward love. In the account of the courtship of

⁹¹Tillyard, op. cit., p. 85.

Hymen and Eucharis, for example, Chapman writes,

But Hymen and his Eucharis had laid
This plat⁹² to make the flame of their delight
Round as the moon at full, and full as bright.
(V.264-266)

Since the moon was a symbol of chastity to Elizabethan poets, Chapman no doubt uses it here to symbolize the chaste relationship between Hymen and Eucharis as opposed to what Chapman considers the merely lustful affair between Leander and Hero. The roundness of the moon also conveys the picture of a circle, a traditional Elizabethan image of perfection.

Some of the images supporting Chapman's theme and attitude toward love are directly related to his own earlier lines. Of the marriage of Hymen and Eucharis Chapman writes,

First, a gold-lock'd Hymen did to church repair,
Like a quick off'ring burn'd in flames of hair.
(V.309-310)

Compare this image with the earlier account of Hero's sacrifice to Venus and Cupid:

Now from Leander's place she rose, and found
Her hair and rent robe scatter'd on the ground;
Which taking up, she every piece did lay
Upon an altar, where in youth of day
She used t' exhibit private sacrifice:
These would she offer to the deities
Of her fair goddess and her powerful son,
As relics of her late-felt passion.
(IV.1-8)

But Hero's sacrifice is not successful. Venus descends and angrily rebukes Hero for breaking her vow of chastity and for being deceitful, after which she turns her anger on the sacrifice.

. . . Fierce lightning from her eyes
Did set on fire Hero's sacrifice,
Which was her torn robe and enforced hair.
(IV.286-288)

⁹²plot.

The resulting flames become Dissimulation, another of Chapman's personifications. All of this is in ironic contrast to the image of Hymen, triumphant in his chaste courtship of Eucharis, approaching the nuptials "like a quick off'ring burn'd in flames of hair."

Similarly, when Hymen wins the love of Eucharis, Chapman calls Eucharis' mind "the brib'd, but incorrupted garrison" (V.253), an image which contrasts sharply with the earlier description of Hero immediately after Leander departs:

Sweet Hero left upon the bed alone,
 Her maidenhead, her vows, Leander gone,
 And nothing with her but a violent crew
 Of new come thoughts, that she never knew,
 Even to herself a stranger, was much like
 Th' Iberian city that War's hand did strike
 By English force in princely Essex' guide,
 When Peace assur'd her towers had fortified,
 And golden-finger'd India had bestow'd
 Such wealth on her, that strength and empire flow'd
 Into her turrets, and her virgin waist
 The wealthy girdle of the sea embraced;
 Till our Leander, that made Mars his Cupid,
 For soft love suits, with iron thunders chid,
 Swum to her town, dissolv'd her virgin zone;
 Led in his power, and made Confusion
 Run through her streets amaz'd.

(III.199-215)

In these last examples Chapman has again expressed his attitude toward love by making invidious comparisons in favor of the Hymen-Eucharis courtship.

Since several critics have labeled Chapman poetry "metaphysical," I must, of course, say something about the metaphysical quality of his continuation of Hero and Leander. The critics who have seriously studied Chapman's works have generally agreed that there is something of the metaphysical poet in him. Miss Bartlett writes, ". . . in wit, he is a poet of the seventeenth-century metaphysical school, who naturally

delights in expressing his convictions through devious figures of speech."⁹³ In attempting to establish Chapman as a link between the Elizabethan and Metaphysical poets, George Williamson writes, "In Chapman . . . we must recognize a poet whose qualities have so much in common with the Metaphysical school that he might be called the first Metaphysical poet."⁹⁴ Professor Williamson bases his conclusions primarily on the dedicatory epistle that Chapman wrote for "Ovid's Banquet of Sense." It is in this letter that Chapman explicitly states his poetic dicta:

The profane multitude I hate, and only consecrate my strange poems to those searching spirits, whom learning hath made noble, and nobility sacred. . . . That Energia, or clearness of representation, required in absolute poems, is not the perspicuous delivery of a low invention; but high and hearty invention expressed in most significant and unaffected phrase; it serves not a skillful painter's turn, to draw the figure of a face only to make known who it represents; but he must limn, give luster, shadow, and heightening; which though ignorants will esteem spiced, and too curious, yet such as have the judicial perspective, will see it hath motion, spirit and life. . . . Obscurity in affection of words and indigested conceits, is pedantical and childish; but where it shroudeth itself in the heart of his subject, uttered with fitness of figure and expressive epithets, with that darkness will I still labour to be shadowed.⁹⁵

Williamson correctly points out, "Intellectual energy, the philosophical conceit, and the darkness that is the shadow of thought, all of which characterize Donne's poetry, are here set forth by Chapman as his poetic ideals."⁹⁶

Other critics are somewhat more cautious in calling Chapman a metaphysical poet. Douglas Bush suggests, "Chapman is most satisfying,

⁹³See The Poems of George Chapman, p. 15.

⁹⁴George Williamson, The Donne Tradition (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1930), pp. 58-59.

⁹⁵See The Works of George Chapman, p. 21.

⁹⁶Williamson, op. cit., p. 62.

not when he is most subtle, but when his metaphysical strings have just been touched into vibration, when the rich imagery of ordinary Elizabethan writing is quickened by a peculiar intensity."⁹⁷ But Chapman is not so easily labeled, as Bush acknowledges when he writes,

. . . Chapman is so uneven that no poem is good as a whole. He does frequently fuse thought and emotion. Even more frequently what appears to be metaphysical poetry results from Chapman's failure to remove the cumbrous scaffolding, the debris of bricks and mortar, that remain from his wasteful operations.⁹⁸

Miss Tuve comes to a similar conclusion. In analyzing the metaphysical conceit in general, she arrives at the following definition:

For I would suggest that an image based simultaneously on a number of predicaments or common places in logic has a particular character which is formally distinguishable, is naturally allied to certain types of function (often closely resembling those of dialectic), and is stylistically very striking. I would suggest that a "metaphysical conceit" is just such an image, framed with especial subtlety.⁹⁹

Much of Chapman's abstruse imagery is "based simultaneously on a number of predicaments." The trouble is that the predicaments considered by Chapman do not always seem to fit together. This is the reason why his conceits are often digressive. This is also the reason why Miss Tuve is forced to conclude,

Chapman gives us expositions of certain elements in the state of mind of Hero¹⁰⁰; he also uses these as springboards (not always quite strong enough for a successful dive) to discuss more than one of the philosophical problems with which we know he was preoccupied. . . . I think that it would be just to say

⁹⁷Bush, op. cit., p. 205.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 215.

⁹⁹Tuve, op. cit., p. 264.

¹⁰⁰Miss Tuve is referring to VI.50-77.

that he is fond of introducing an unexpected logical complication into an image. Sometimes this is because he is really pursuing a philosophical or psychological element in the situation which we had not realized was in it. But not always.¹⁰¹

Sometimes the complication introduced by Chapman makes sense. The elements in the sea-blood image I cited earlier have their logical relevance to both the setting and the action of the poem. Since the same image is used to describe the states of mind of Hero and Eucharis, the image also logically relates to Chapman's attitude toward love in this poem.

Similarly, there is coherence in the following conceit, part of which I quoted earlier:

Her fresh heat blood cast figures in her eyes,
 And she suppos'd she saw in Neptune's skies,
 How her star wander'd, wash'd in smarting brine,
 For her love's sake, that with immortal wine
 Should be embath'd, and swim in more heart's ease
 Than there was water in the Sestian seas.

(III.335-340)

Here Chapman shows what he is capable of doing with an image. In calling the sea "Neptune's skies," he does two things. He reminds the reader of Neptune's role in the story, and he establishes a relationship between the sea and the heavens so that Hero's "star," with its own multiple meanings, can be added to the sea-image. On one level this star represents Leander swimming the Hellespont. On another level it can easily represent the fate of Leander and Hero. "For her love's sake" their common fate is to be "wash'd in smarting brine." Furthermore, implied in the words "her star wander'd" is the idea that Leander has morally wandered, that is, strayed from virtue. Chapman makes this conceit even

¹⁰¹Tuве, op. cit., p. 267.

more conceptual by juxtaposing illusion, reality, and ideality in the imagery. What Hero "suppos'd she saw" in her love for Leander represents illusion. "Wash'd in smarting brine" brings the imagery back to the tragic reality of the myth. The last three lines represent the ideal end of the love affair as desired by Hero and, implicitly, by Chapman. True, such imagery is like a puzzle at first, but with perseverance the reader can make the pieces fit.

Too often, however, the pieces do not fit. One of the characteristics of metaphysical poetry is that it contains elaborate, if far from obvious comparisons or "conceits." Donne, in "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," could write the following about the souls of two lovers without being digressive:

If they be two, they are two so
As stiffe twin compasses are two,
Thy soule the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th'other doe.

True, the comparison between souls and a geometrical compass is not obvious, but it is one whose implications in relation to the total poem can be understood with some thought.

Chapman's digressions, however, do not always fit logically into the conceits in which they have been placed. Near the end of the poem, for example, when Leander and his father are preparing for the nuptials, Chapman compares Leander to

. . . an empty gallant full of form,
That thinks each look an act, each drop a storm,
That falls from his brave breathings; most brought up
In our metropolis, and hath his cup
Brought after him to feasts; and much palm bears
For his rare judgement in the^l attire he wears.
(VI.109-114)

Chapman extends this simili for twenty-two more lines, ending on a

puzzling note:

And so short of himself in his thought
 Was our Leander in his fortunes brought,
 And in his fort of love that he thought won;
 But otherwise he scorns comparison.

(VI.133-136)

Ordinarily the two things being compared in a simile need not resemble each other closely. The important thing is that the feeling normally associated with one can be associated with the other. In the so-called philosophical or metaphysical conceit, the feeling applicable to both parts of the simile is often replaced by an intellectual link as in the above conceit by Donne. Chapman himself is capable of such imagery. But this comparison between a love-hungry youth, confident of a happy outcome to his love affair, and a pompous London gallant seems more topically than philosophically orientated. Neither emotionally nor intellectually do the elements in the simile seem comparable.

It would appear, then, that Chapman tries, although unsuccessfully, to do what the metaphysical poets were able to do with more success: fuse feeling and thought in what has come to be known as the metaphysical or philosophical conceit. I must conclude, therefore, that Chapman is a forerunner of the metaphysical poets. The poetic ideals he expresses in the dedicatory epistle he wrote for "Ovid's Banquet of Sense" could very well have appealed to the poets of the Metaphysical school. And I agree with Williamson when he writes, ". . . however he may bungle in his 'tenebrous' style, they are the ideals which govern his practice, beginning with "Ovid's Banquet of Sense."¹⁰²

¹⁰²Williamson, op. cit., p. 62.

CHAPTER IV

EPILOGUE

In my opening chapter I cited a remark made by C. S. Lewis in his criticism of Marlowe's Hero and Leander and Chapman's continuation of the poem: ". . . the very nature of the story utilizes the differing excellences of its two narrators and gets told between them better than either could have told it alone."¹⁰³ I stated then, and I repeat, that Lewis places too much emphasis on the necessity for seeing the two poems as one complete work. There are too many basic differences in the poems for one to see them as Lewis does. Nevertheless, his remark does suggest one significant relationship between the two poems.

Each poet has turned to the classics for inspiration. This interest in the classics, of course, was not limited to their versions of the myth of Hero and Leander. In his university years Marlowe translated Ovid's Amores and the first book of Lucan's Pharsalia.¹⁰⁴ Chapman's interest in the classics included translations of the Iliad and the Odyssey and Musaeus' poem about Hero and Leander. After studying Hero and Leander, however, one would have to conclude that the appeal of the

¹⁰³Lewis, op. cit., p. 514.

¹⁰⁴See Levin, op. cit., p. 9: "Ovid, long exiled among the Goths, moralized by the Middle Ages, spoke again directly to the Renaissance; and his Metamorphoses supplied the Elizabethans with their favorite handbook of mythology. Where their Petrarchan sonnets dwelt upon the psychological tergiversations of courtship, Ovid's Amores brought a pair of lovers together in physical shamelessness, glorying like rediscovered sculpture in the naked contours of the body. Little of this erotic tension is lost in Marlowe's translation."

classics was different for Marlowe and Chapman. Captivated by the pagan joyousness and erotic playfulness of Ovid's Amores, Marlowe clearly had these same Ovidian characteristics in mind when writing Hero and Leander. Chapman, on the other hand, was drawn more to the restraint and desire for order typical of the classical mind.

As I write this, I am fully aware of Chapman's own apparent glorification of the senses in "Ovid's Banquet of Sense." I can only say that I am not attempting to present the complete Chapman. I make no more claims for him than can be corroborated by his continuation of Hero and Leander. I might add, however, that "Ovid's Banquet of Sense," despite its sensuousness, is quite unlike Marlowe's Hero and Leander. It is, as Douglas Bush writes,

an abstruse and subtle treatment of the sublimation of the senses into a series of pictures marked by a voluptuousness at once lavish and dry. Like Spenser, Chapman has both a fear of the senses that compels a desire to master them, and also as a poet, a fervent belief that the senses, bestowed by nature, by God, are a means through which man may rise above himself to a vision of ideal beauty. But whereas Spenser allows sense to have its way, and then reins it in with reason, in Chapman sense is analytical and logic becomes sensuous.¹⁰⁵

Bush might have included Chapman's continuation of Hero and Leander in this criticism because here, too, Chapman is sublimating the senses, although without Platonic overtones.

In the continuation of Hero and Leander, however, the classical point of view, emphasizing restraint, is more obvious than sublimation of the senses. Chapman implies that had Leander and Hero exercised restraint in their love affair, they could have achieved an ordered and enduring love which would be spiritual as well as physical.

¹⁰⁵Bush, op. cit., p. 204.

Both Marlowe and Chapman are attracted to a classical poem, then, although for different reasons. One is drawn by classical eroticism, the other by classical restraint. It would be a mistake, however, to call either Marlowe or Chapman a writer in the classical style merely on the evidence in Hero and Leander. As I have remarked earlier, when Marlowe uses nature to support his attitude toward love, he uses nature in the sense of abandonment of restraint. When he writes, "Who ever lov'd, that lov'd not at first sight?" (I.176), he betrays a vision of life that is essentially romantic--not classical. Chapman's classicism must also be questioned. He does indeed have the classical vision of life in this poem. The content of his poem is formal, intellectual, and characterized by severe restraint. But classicism involves technical mastery as well as a vision of life or a point of view. Chapman's poem lacks the unity and control of true classical poetry.¹⁰⁶ As I mentioned in my analysis of the structure of his poem, Chapman digresses too often --a trait which cannot be satisfactorily attributed to metaphysical imagery in the poem. Moreover, this same digressiveness contributes to the inconsistent tone in Chapman's poem. There are too many comparisons which have neither emotional nor intellectual coherence. Chapman's tone,

¹⁰⁶Cf. Bush, p. 215: "Obviously the classics did not teach Chapman anything of clarity, selection, form, restraint. He had enough knowledge of ancient literature to profit, if his mind had been attuned to them, by the great exemplars of 'fulness in the concise and depth in the clear.' But his powerful and individual mind was more medieval than classical. . . . But despite mental and stylistic vagaries, Chapman is more truly humanistic than many who have received the epithet. Without disowning the senses, of which he is such a curious explorer, and with full admiration for the complete personality, he insists upon law for man and law for thing, upon the necessity of man's dominion over experience, over the restless animal within. His ideal is secular and humanistic, not ascetic or pagan, and it is bound up with learning and culture."

which for the most part is eloquent, grave, tragic--and yet sympathetic --becomes harsh in the manner of diatribe when Chapman looks away from his subject briefly to express his dissatisfaction at some social ill primarily of topical significance. This lack of technical control is evidence of Chapman's inability to make the form of his poem as consistently controlled as his vision of life. Paradoxically, it is Marlowe --with his romantic vision of life--who has the better control over his poem.

At the conclusion of this thesis I feel obliged to repeat something I said at the beginning: the very fact that the total import of Chapman's continuation of Hero and Leander is bound up in a complex allegorical interpretation of the legend, indicates that the complexity of his style may be designed to make the moral instruction more palatable. If Chapman had such a design in mind, is his poem, then, a success? I suggest that the flaws in structure, tone, and imagery in the poem prevent it from being an aesthetic success. Furthermore, while Chapman's philosophy of life and love--as it is shown in this poem--based on order and restraint is plausible in theory, Chapman is unable to make that philosophy as attractive as Marlowe's, partly because he is too much concerned with rhetorical coloring that clouds his theme in obscurity.

I also suggest, however, that Chapman's poem does not deserve to be stigmatized because of the poet's moral earnestness. It is precisely because Chapman's characteristic of restraint is the result of a broad, classical view of life, that his poem is not merely didactic. Chapman's

vision includes all of nature in the traditional Elizabethan sense of the word. He is not merely sermonizing. Hence, he should not be condemned for striving--however unsuccessfully--toward order and truth.

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